

# SOCIALLY JUST QUALITATIVE RESEARCH WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE EXPERTS IN THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

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Dissertation Committee:

Chair - Brianna Black Kent, Ph.D., RN (ret.)

Jodi Clark-Locascio, MD, MPH, CWWS

Sandrine Galliard-Kenney, Ed.D.

# INTRODUCTION

- Current position: Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Education
- Ph.D. in Health Science from Nova Southeastern University Aug. 2022
- Developing Scholar Member - Global Association of Human Trafficking Scholars
- Involved in the anti-trafficking/anti-exploitation movement since 2016



## RESEARCH TOPIC AND WHY ITS IMPORTANT

- *Research topic:* Lived experience experts' roles and purpose in the movement, supports and barriers to fulfilling roles.
- *Presentation aim:* Understand importance of using socially just, responsive and participatory approaches to partner with survivor experts.



**OVCTTAC**

OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME  
Training and Technical Assistance Center

# BACKGROUND & LITERATURE REVIEW

## Literature Review –

- Helpingstine et al. (2021). Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Experiences Working in Service Organizations
- Lockyer (2022). Beyond Inclusion: Survivor-Leader Voice in Anti-Human Trafficking Organizations.


## Guiding Resources –

- Survivor Alliance – Allyship Training
- Office for Victims of Crimes – Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC-TTAC)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# ETHICAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE CONSIDERATIONS

## Risk of:

- Re-traumatization
- Tokenization
- Secondary and vicarious trauma
- Compassion fatigue
- Burnout
- Oppression and disempowerment



SURVIVOR-  
CENTERED  
CONSULTATION  
FOR:

- Research approach
- Research questions
- Participant support resources – appropriate to mitigate discomfort
- Interview questions - vetted and did not identify triggers

# METHODOLOGY

Qualitative study

Interpretative  
phenomenological  
analysis (IPA)

Epistemological  
framework of  
social  
constructivism

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Empowerment theory



Resiliency theory



Trauma-informed approach



Strength-based approach



## TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

The study design and research questions adhered to trauma-informed principles established by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2015), which include:

- safe and inclusive environment
- share power
- build trust through transparency
- demonstrate cultural awareness and cultural humility
- avoid harm through re-traumatization and secondary trauma



## STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH

- Grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma
- Focused on the physical, psychological, and emotional safety of survivors
- Creates opportunities for survivors and lived experience experts to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment

(Hopper et al., 2010)



PARTICIPANTS

**STUDY ON THE LIVED  
EXPERIENCE OF**

**SURVIVOR  
ADVOCATES AND  
SURVIVOR  
LEADERS IN THE  
ANTI-TRAFFICKING  
MOVEMENT**

Research Participants Needed

**Participant Eligibility:**

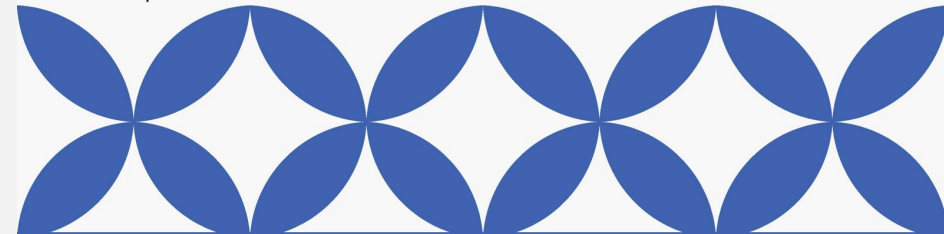
- Age 18+ and comfortable interviewing in English
- At least one year of experience as a survivor advocate and/or survivor leader
- Minimum of two years has passed since any personal experience with exploitation

**What to Expect:**

- 60-90 minute interview on Zoom
- The focus of this research is on your experience and role as a survivor advocate and survivor leader

**Additional Info:**

- Withdraw at anytime
- May request interview questions prior to interview
- Researcher available for questions
- Participants will be paid for time and effort



# WHERE?

Data Collection:

In-depth interviews

Instruments:

Zoom - Audio  
recording only



## INTERSECTIONS OF THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

- Labor trafficking/forced labor
- Sex trafficking/exploitation
- Familial trafficking
- Gender-based violence
- Domestic violence/intimate partner violence
- Foster care system
- LGBTQIA+
- Substance use recovery
- At-risk youth
- Immigration reform
- Healthcare
- Non-profits and coalitions
- Policy development
- Research
- Technology

## WHAT WENT WELL -

Autonomy

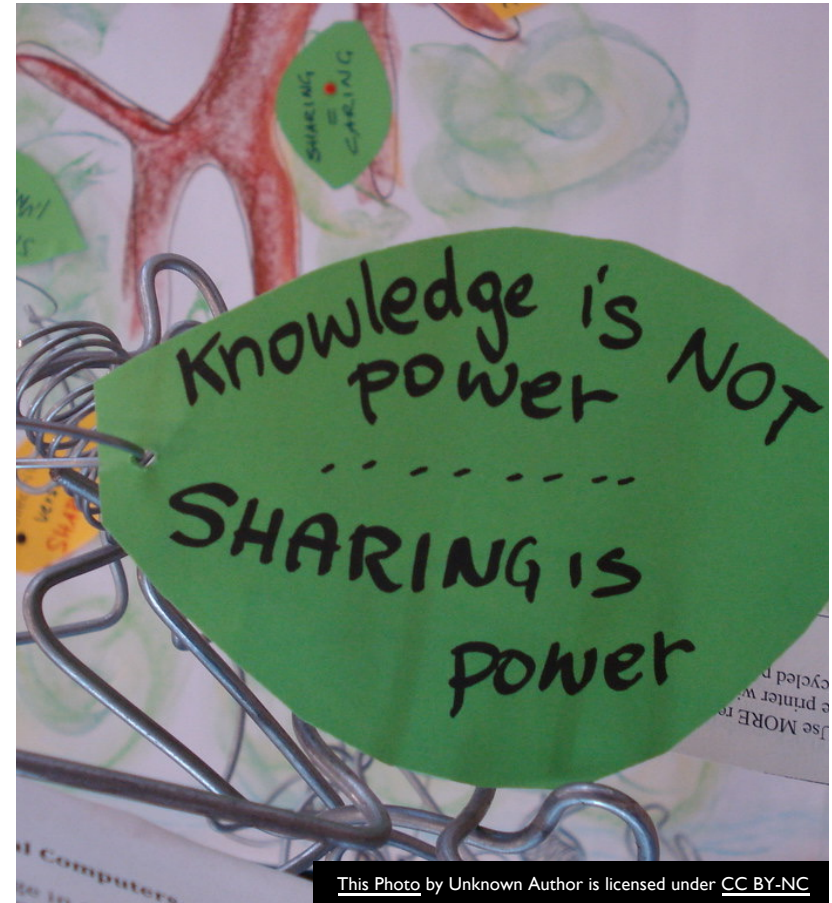
Shared power

Transparency

Rapport building

Temporal context of data collection period (i.e., COVID epidemic and Zoom life)

Participant resources



# AUTONOMY

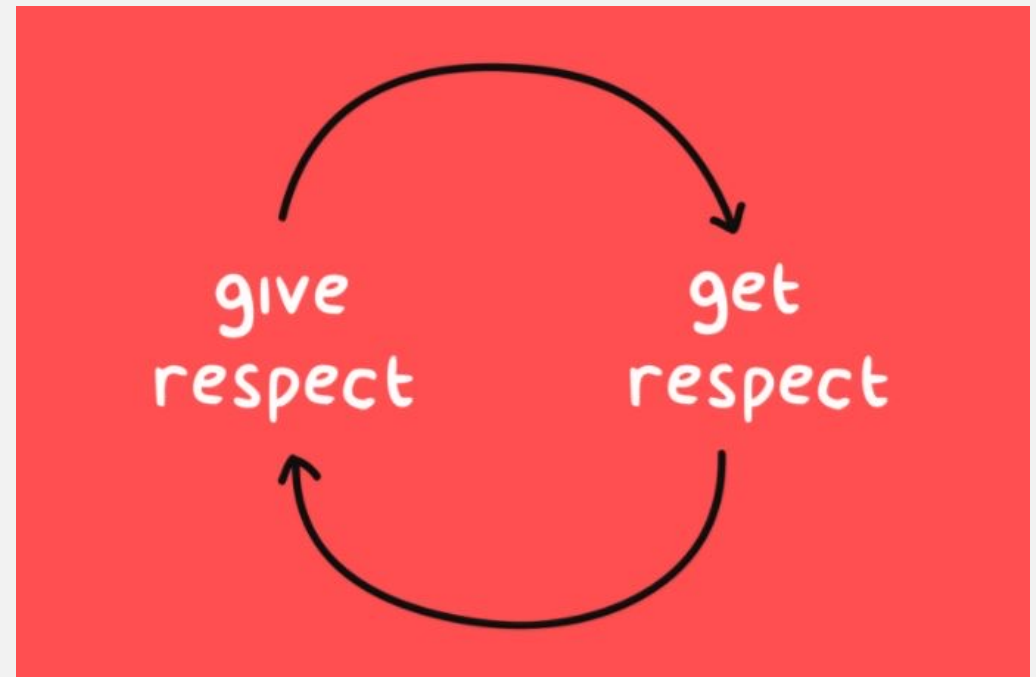
- Choices
- Interview questions were available upon request prior to interview
- Flexibility to schedule and reschedule as needed
- Member checking





# RAPPORT, RESPECT, SHARED POWER & TRANSPARENCY

- Interview focus on advocacy and leadership experience, not trauma
- Preliminary meeting prior to interview for informed consent
- Consistent correspondence
- Safety of chosen Zoom environment



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## PARTICIPANT INCENTIVE & RESOURCES

- Honorarium \$50 digital gift card
- Reviewed resources and planned for mitigating discomfort
- Instructions for trouble shooting tech issues

The logo for Crisis Text Line, featuring the text "CRISIS TEXT LINE" in white, bold, uppercase letters on a red background, followed by a vertical white bar.

Image retrieved from <https://www.crisistextline.org/spread-the-word/>

## LIMITATIONS – WHAT NEEDED TO BE BETTER

- Recruitment efforts ineffective for NHTDWWG
- Funding for respectful incentives that are commiserate with time invested
- Payment options
- More optimal resources for mitigating discomfort
- Structure of the dissertation process – participatory action research necessary


# SOCIALLY JUST QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- Survivor-centered and survivor-driven
- Strength-based
- Trauma-informed
- Anti-oppressive
- Accountable
- Practical dissemination
- Equality and equity
- Capacity building
- Economic empowerment
  - Amount
  - Timing
  - Mechanism
- Participatory approaches
- **Gold standard: National Survivor Study by Polaris**



## DISCUSSION

- How do we break down barriers for lived experience experts as primary investigators and co-investigators? From a system-level to individual-level, improving access, equality, and equity.
- How do we address the profound lack of representation from the disability and Deaf community, men, and LGBTQIA+ in anti-exploitation research efforts?
- What are we doing in the academy to change the paradigm for qualitative research in partnership with lived experience experts?



QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

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