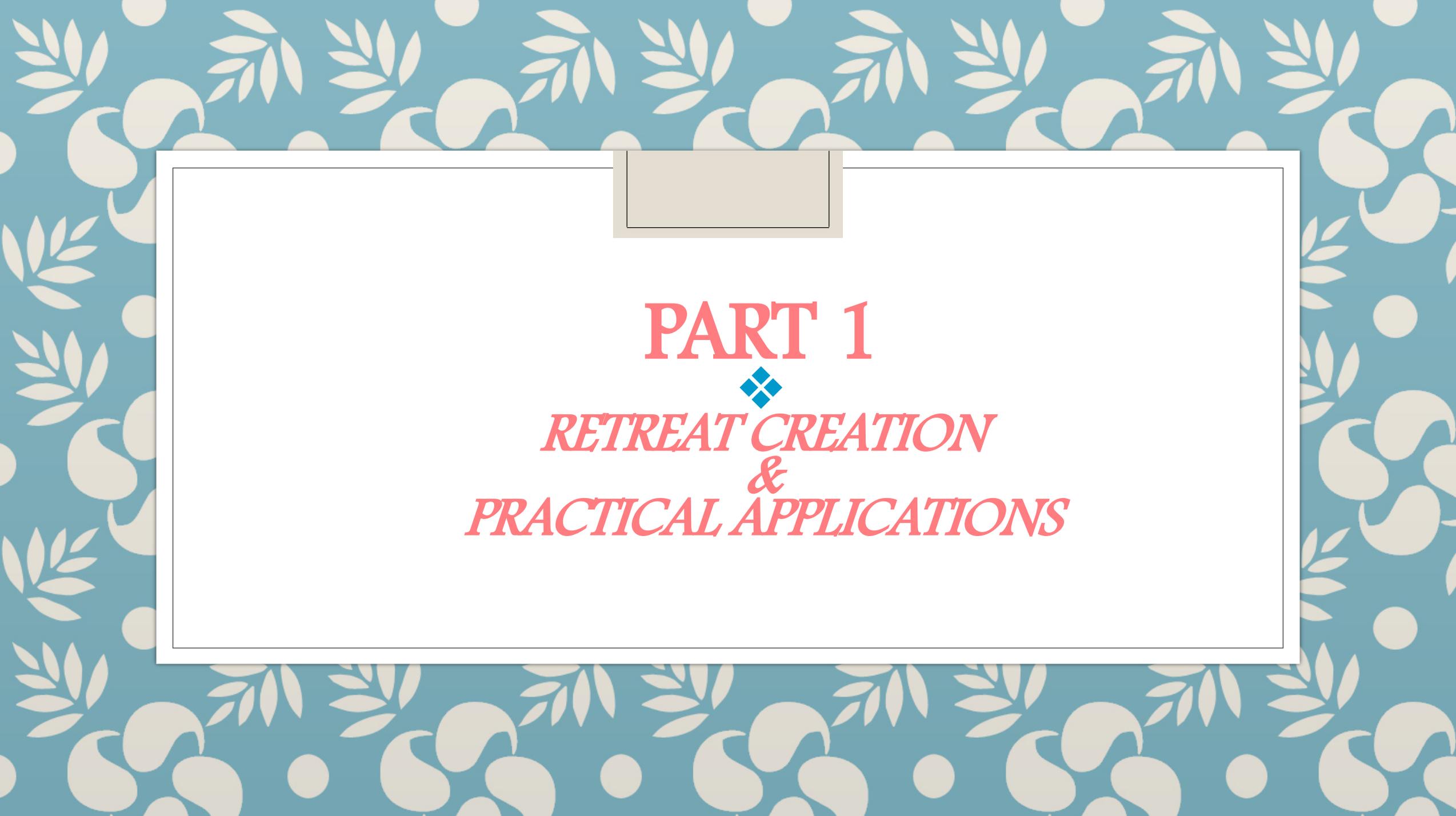




# EXPERIENTIAL HEALING

*As found in*

***THE WAY: A RETREAT FOR  
ADULT SURVIVORS OF ABUSE***



**PART 1**



*RETREAT CREATION  
&  
PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS*

# CREATION

## Why Stations of Cross?

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- So much of the brainstorming culminated and rang true through the Stations:
  - Journey
  - Path to follow
  - Jesus went first
  - Shame to victory
  - Suffering to new life
  - Passion to Resurrection
  - Living as we walk the Way
- **ALL OF THESE THINGS ARE WHAT VICTIMS NEED AND LONG FOR BUT DON'T KNOW HOW TO DO!**

# CREATION

## Embodiment

- Stations of the Cross the backbone of the retreat
- How to organize it into an organic experience?
  - I am a visual and linear thinker and learner
  - I next took the stations and plugged them into Excel with these headings
    - Station
    - Connection to Abuse
    - Scripture
    - Emotion
  - I watched the clip of each station from the Passion of the Christ and filled in each heading for them
  - I knew the retreat couldn't last more than two days total so I didn't have time to present each station with its own reflection and processing, so I grouped them

# CREATION

## Embodiment

### STATION GROUPINGS

<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Jesus prays in the Garden</b>	<b>AT THIS MOMENT IN TIME</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>Jesus is betrayed by Judas</b>	
	<b>3</b>	<b>Jesus is denied by Peter</b>	
<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Jesus is scourged</b>	<b>HUMILIATION/SUFFERING INTENSIFIES</b>
	<b>5</b>	<b>Jesus is crowned with thorns</b>	
	<b>6</b>	<b>Jesus is condemned to death</b>	
	<b>7</b>	<b>Jesus takes up his cross</b>	
<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Simon helps Jesus to carry his cross</b>	<b>INTERCESSION/HELP OF OTHERS</b>
	<b>9</b>	<b>Veronica wipes the face of Jesus</b>	
	<b>10</b>	<b>Jesus meets his mother</b>	
	<b>11</b>	<b>Jesus falls</b>	
<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Jesus is nailed to the cross</b>	<b>**WATERSHED MOMENT**</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Jesus dies on the cross</b>	<b>LIMBO</b>
	<b>14</b>	<b>Jesus is laid in the tomb</b>	
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Resurrection of Jesus</b>	<b>NEW LIFE</b>

# CREATION

## Embodiment

	Station	Connection to Abuse	Scripture	Emotion
2	Jesus is betrayed by Judas	Betrayal, one of the most debilitating effects of abuse - wrecks our trust in others and self, sense of truth, our security and groundedness. With this action put upon us by our abuser, our development and growth in certain areas was arrested and imprisoned.	Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death... (Psalm 23:4)	helplessness, rejection, worthlessness
4	Jesus is scourged & Jesus is crowned with thorns (presented together)	Each instance of abuse was a scourging of our heart, soul, mind, body, and spirit; who we were meant to be from our creation could have gotten crushed under it all, but we are children of God...we may have had a crown of thorns thrust upon us instead of a crown of honor as God intended, but we are his chosen ones. Christ remembered this throughout his scourging and crowning with thorns and he beckons us to believe this now...we are His...we can walk this way with Him and come out of the tomb a new creation...what He has wanted for us since he formed us in our mother's womb.	He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree...By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24); And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.... (Matthew 10:28-31)	paralyzed, afraid, extreme pain, trapped, attacked, humiliation, degradation

# CREATION

## Embodiment

	Station	Connection to Abuse	Scripture	Emotion
8	Simon helps Jesus to carry his cross	You may have told someone about your abuse along the way thus allowing them to help carry the burden for a while...may have been a friend, spouse, sibling, or therapist. We can continue to do so along this healing journey and add more sharing of our story - it is in the telling that healing begins. This is also an opportunity to minister to others by sharing how we have traveled the way to healing and also may give someone an opportunity to minister to us as we have ministered so many over the years.	But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. (Luke 10:33-34)	temporary relief, refuge, rest, companionship, support, recognized, loved, helped, worthy

# CREATION

## Embodiment

	Station	Connection to Abuse	Scripture	Emotion
12	Jesus is nailed to the cross	Jesus is nailed to the cross: We often crucify ourselves, putting ourselves down, condemning ourselves for choices we continue to make, not being able to change, blaming ourselves for our abuse. We can continue to do this, nailing ourselves to the cross of our abuse OR we can nail our abuse to the cross with Christ, allow him to be take on our pain, wounds, past and heal them.	Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5); he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases." (Matthew 8:16-17); He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24)	condemnation, self-hatred, self-disgust, helpless, ashamed, separate from OR free, unchained, released, relieved, joyful, unburdened, whole

# CREATION

## Embodiment

	Station	Connection to Abuse	Scripture	Emotion
14	Jesus is laid in the tomb	<p>1) As His body is taken down from the cross, we are called to experience what life would be like without our wounds afflicting us day in and day out...past no longer having power over us...Christ's power has out done it! The power to have this lies with Christ...he can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves;</p> <p>2) Looking forward to days of 'real' life instead of living as if we are dead, not feeling, not smiling, barely doing...no longer engaging in actions that often felt empty, devoid of life, just going through the motions. Jesus takes our pasts into the tomb with him, closing us off from the wounds we have suffered.</p>	<p>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10); I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord. (Psalm 118:17); For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:19-20)</p>	<p>1) trust, giving over, surrender, glimmer of hope (<u>Deposition</u>: witness' testimony, removal from power, evidence, declaration, authentication or <u>Lamentation</u>: expression of sadness – song/poem);</p> <p>2) undone, anticipation, eager to taken on new life, peaceful</p>

# CREATION

## Embodiment

	Station	Connection to Abuse	Scripture	Emotion
15	Jesus rises from the dead	God does not want a living death for us, He created us for an abundant life of knowing, loving, and serving Him; Jesus has taken our wounds and past onto Himself and into the tomb He was laid in. Now, when he comes forth from the grave, He leaves all of those wounds and past in the death He left behind. We are free to choose the life God wants for us, free to learn ways to live abundantly, love freely, and trust in the Christ who loves us as we are, including our wounds of the past, which He has begun and will continue to heal.	When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. (1 Cor 13:11-12); Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live... (John 11:25); When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor 15:54); And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing wrong, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven... (Col 1:21-23)	reconciled, released from self, opened, fresh, hopeful, eager, whole

# CREATION

## Embodiment CONFERENCES

- **FRIDAY**

- God's Original Plan for You
- Abused 101

- **SATURDAY**

- Experience of Prayer
- Sacraments & Healing
- On Being Men (TW4M only)

- **SUNDAY**

- Continued Healing

# CREATION

## Embodiment SYMBOLS

- Sym·bol: a thing that represents or stands for something else, representing something abstract
- Journey – Path – Jesus ally on journey, going from darkness of past to light of present, death to resurrection

<b>STATIONS</b>	<b>SYMBOL KEEPSAKE</b>
<b>STATIONS 1-3</b>	<b>CRUCIFIX</b>
<b>STATIONS 4-7</b>	<b>HAND MIRROR WITH PRINCESS CROWN/HERO STICKER</b>
<b>STATIONS 8-11</b>	<b>HOLY CARDS: STATIONS CARD, PIETA, VERONICA'S VEIL</b>
<b>STATION 12</b>	<b>SILENCE, INCENSE SACHET</b>
<b>STATIONS 13-14</b>	<b>STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR SURVIVORS OF ABUSE</b>
<b>STATION 15</b>	<b>INSTRUMENTS OF CELEBRATION, PRINCESS CROWN/CHALLENGE COIN</b>

# CREATION

## NECESSITIES

- Engage in all types of learning: Visual, Auditory, Sensual, Kinetic, Spiritual, Silence

### **3-pronged approach to each grouping of stations:**

1. Meditations
2. Work
3. Prayer

### **With a side of:**

1. Moving
2. Breathing

# CREATION

## NECESSITIES

### RITUALS

#### Psychology of Rituals

- Research on my part found the following that is fundamental to addressing and healing the psychological wounds of victims of abuse and can be found in participation in rituals:
  - **Blocks** out anxious **intrusive thoughts**, choreographed physical movements of all involved **generates** perceptions of **unity and cohesiveness**, satisfies need for **order** and reestablishes feelings of **control**, collective unspoken but acted agreement of the meaning of the ritual **promotes trust and belonging**, allows all a moment of coming out of themselves and being **part of a greater whole**. (*Hobson et al. 2017*)
  - Ritual **connects people** on a visceral, fundamental level and **meets a need** in us that is lacking or needs shoring-up. (*Hobson et al. 2017*)

# CREATION

## NECESSITIES

### RITUALS

#### **Psychology of Rituals**

- Effects of ritual happen because of two reasons, because rituals are:
  - ceremonial, deeply meaningful acts that are shared between people and embedded in a system of historical/cultural significance (top-down mechanisms)
  - arbitrarily structured, highly repetitive set of action sequences that follow a rigid script (bottom-up mechanisms) (*Hobson, 2017*)
  - This unique combination of psychological forces, the bottom-up meeting the top-down, where rituals gain their unique ability to address what needs healing or shoring up in us (*Hobson, 2017*)
- One great desire of survivors of abuse is to be 'seen' as who they are at their core:
  - past/despite/beyond their perceived difference from others and what has been done to them.
  - at the same time this is terrifying for them as they are not sure of the response they will experience when someone does 'see' them.
  - Ritual provides much of this in a safe, familiar and communal setting.

# CREATION

## NECESSITIES

### RITUALS

#### **Rosary:**

- Retreatants take parts to lead and everyone reads the **“all” sections which are prayers to Jesus thanking him for his sacrifice and love of us**

#### **Adoration/Foot of the Cross Ceremony:**

- **Adoration:** Exposition, **dialogue with Jesus as write letters**, Benediction with Prayer for Healing (USCCB) & Blessing with the Blessed Sacrament, Divine Praises
- **Incense:** symbol of the prayer of the faithful rising to heaven
- **The Veneration of the Cross:** In venerating the crucifix we are paying the highest honor to our Lord's cross as the instrument of our salvation

# CREATION

## NECESSITIES

### RITUALS

#### • **WAY OF THE CROSS FOR SURVIVORS OF ABUSE**

- Culmination of the entire weekend – recap and internalization of what they have done all weekend
- Physically walking in Jesus' footsteps through his passion, the cross, and ultimately resurrection
- Retreatants take parts to read and **everyone reads the “all” sections which are prayers said out loud voicing how they identify with Jesus suffering in an intimate and personal way.**
- Celebration after the last station which is the Resurrection, silent part of the retreat ends, Alleluia! Women decorate the cross as Easter is here/Men share their medallion that is received from off the cross/Both make joyful noise to the Lord with the noisemakers and instruments.
- Women receive a tiara, crowned as the princess she is/Men receive a Challenge Coin with a scripture they can adopt as their motto

# CREATION

## NECESSITIES

### RITUALS

Chaplain for the weekend to provide:

- **Sacraments**

- Confession
- Mass
- Healing

- **Sharing the good news that they have not sinned in being abused – the sin is all on the abuser.**

- Many have not been to Reconciliation for years
- Sacrament of Healing often brings the strength and courage they need to go to Confession for the first time in a very long time

- **Spiritual Direction**

Share the message again that YES they are eligible/worthy of Heaven as they have done NOTHING wrong in being abused

- Reiterate from a different angle that they are NOT AT FAULT for their abuse

# CREATION

## CONSIDERATIONS

### Work of Holy Spirit

Welcomed and highlighted throughout the retreat:

- Every station grouping is begun with a different prayer to the Holy Spirit
- Go with His direction and prompting
  - Don't stress: when things go sideways at times over the weekend, and they will, work with it – God knows best – He is the retreat director, not me
  - Nothing about this experience is about me
    - *I am a little pencil in God's hands. He does the thinking. He does the writing. He does everything and sometimes it is really hard because it is a broken pencil and He has to sharpen it a little more. - Mother Teresa*

# CREATION

## CONSIDERATIONS

### Guided Imagery

- Psychology of guided imagery is neutral...nothing to shy away from
  - Over the past 40 years, its effectiveness has been validated by research - positive impact on health, wellness, attitude, behavioral change and peak performance.
- Find a trusted resource, like Belleruth Naparstek, and VET each one yourself for any hint of new-age ideology.
- Acts as a depth charge dropped beneath the surface of the self, where it reverberate again and again, catalyzing continuous change:

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## Assessment/Screening/Consent Process

- Marketing
- Application
- Population
- Consent
- Assessment

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## Set Up

- Separate ROOMS preferable but separate AREAS will work too for:
  - main room/area:
  - work room/area:
  - chapel and/or sacramental/prayer
  - 3 confidential areas
  - kitchen
  - eating area
  - outside area

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## Possible Sources for Funding

- Diocesan grants
- Diocesan offices
- Sponsors
- Therapists
- Other ministries

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## Retreat Team Considerations

- The Way Retreat Team
  - Retreat Leader
  - Chaplain – Diocesan Priest – usually ‘retired’
  - 2 Therapists
  - Gina - Office Staff Program Assistant
- Trauma treatment informed and/or trained
- Experience working with survivors of abuse
- Catholic or Christian
- Know your team

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## *Ministry Support*

- Stephen's Ministers
- Prayer Ministries

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## Participant Numbers

- 2 women's retreats/year
- 1 men's retreat/year
- Max 15 participants
- 5 Minimum to do retreat

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## *Separate Men & Women vs. Co-Ed*

- Most women abused by men
- Rooming issues
- Norming behaviors less of an issues
- Opposing approaches to retreat experience

# PRACTICAL/IMPLEMENTATION

## Budget Considerations

- Retreat Participant Fee
  - \$250 per person suggested
  - Scholarships
- The Way Budget
  - based on 10 participants & 4 staff

<b>Office Budgeted</b>	<b>7800</b>
<b>Participants (Average \$50 each due to Schol)</b>	<b>500</b>
Mileage	<b>-250</b>
Advertising - GA Bulletin	<b>-335</b>
Retreat Materials (\$50 per participant)	<b>-500</b>
Retreat Manuals (\$50 each)	<b>-500</b>
Retreat Center	<b>-3000</b>
Catering	<b>-2000</b>
Stipends (T1 \$500; T2 \$500; C \$500; P1 \$100)	<b>-1600</b>
Misc/Surprises	<b>-100</b>
<b>REMAINING</b>	<b>15</b>



# PART 2



## *DEMONSTRATIONS*

# DEMONSTRATION

DR. GERRY CRETE, PhD

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO MALE SURVIVORS

*My Image of Myself*

Do I see myself as  
**BETTER** than others?

↙ **MORE THAN** is *Pride*

***Humility = God's Image of ME***

*Seeing myself as God sees me*

↘ **LESS THAN** is *Pride*

Do I see myself as  
**LESS** than others?

*Where does my image of myself  
fall on this graph?*



# PART 3



*EXPERIENCE OF RETREAT THERAPIST*

# Experience of Therapist

DR. ANN HOWE, PhD

- Take part in all activities of the weekend including some presentations
  - Continued Healing
- One-on-ones
  - Process products of the work time especially art
- Reporting abuse disclosures
- Safety Net
- Confidentiality
- Non-cooperation and/or Inappropriate behavior
- No Shows
- Break Downs
  - Grounding
- Dual relationships



*THE WAY PARTICIPANTS*  
*SHARE*

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Treasures

The following...helped me. The prayer cards, kind words of consolation beautiful crown, reminded me that I am a child of God, beautiful and uniquely created. Unique to Him alone..

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

♦ **Crown:** I keep it, until this day because it reminds me that I am the daughter of God and he loves me more than anything. ♦ **Stations:** so special because it reminds me that God was with me all the time and I wasn't alone like I thought. I was able to see it here page by page. At the beginning of my readings there were many tears, guilt, shame and many others negative feelings, but with time all is gone. Now, I can read it and I know that God is here...I feel worth it. ♦ **Rosary:** just beautiful knowing that I have a loving mother that loves me more than anything (this is about faith) ♦ **Letter from Jesus:** I remember the very first night that I read it, it was so painful. Finally, someone loves me, it was a real love. I did not know that I was priceless. I did not know that I could be reborn again. I know that God is here with me and always will be. I could talk for hours about this letter, his love is always unconditional. ♦ **Handy little chart:** what a beautiful way to reprogram your brain/life/the way of thinking/of seeing things. Just love it, it was hard at the beginning, but with time it became easy to think that God loves me no matter what, even though I did things wrong. It has helped me to heal ♦ **List of songs:** love it!!! Every single song reminds me that God loves me no matter what. Wonderful lyrics, so big, so touching!!!

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

God's Original Plan for You ~ TOB

Where You are Now

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time ~ Painting

Single mom - with PTSD from child abuse.  
Felt I made a good connection that I was  
blessed with a family- me and my two kids  
putting down roots and growing. The  
retreat was nurturing....appreciate that I  
was able to attend...

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

Work Time ~ Painting

**NEW LIFE: Sacred  
Heart...Cross of Life...Holy  
Spirit...Richness of Life**

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

Work Time ~ Painting

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time ~ Painting

Until the retreat, the last time I remember painting was in kindergarten. Yet, I found myself painting a hope-filled, healing portrait of the Trinity, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon my marriage, the Blessed Virgin, the Rosary, the angels, the Word-Made-Flesh, and the royal couple - my husband as a prince and I as a princess, including wearing the pearls spoken of in one of the talks. As I was taking my portrait out to the car and carefully laying it on the back seat to dry, I thought of giving it to my husband. He really liked it and suggested I frame it for him, which I did. Thanks to the Lord and an inexpensive frame! It now hangs in our bedroom. May it bring healing and restoration to all who see it. God's peace.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time ~ Painting

- ♦ ...very healing to paint...an extremely cathartic exercise and helped the child within me to feel age-appropriate innocence, to relax - probably for one of the first times since the abuse - and to feel at ease from many of the heavy emotions I was experiencing.
- ♦ The cross was painted first and in black because, while recognizing the cross of my abuse as an opportunity for grace, at the time it was only an incredibly unwanted burden. Painting it felt like I just threw the cross up on the canvas, reluctant to keep going through the muck of the trauma, but knowing I needed to in order to heal.
- ♦ The darker background colors painted first with lighter colors going on last/on top of the darker ones...each color felt like a different emotion...the darker the color, the heavier/harder the emotion...put...all on the page at random, in no ...organized shape, felt much like...freedom...to paint and be liberal with the brushstrokes and color stood in stark contrast to all the control I exerted over my emotions and responses to the abuse and lingering triggers.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time ~ Painting

♦ Most importantly, I didn't have to explain anything to anyone - again, in stark contrast to my reality where I felt I constantly had to explain myself and my actions in response to my abuse to those around me. ♦ The white marks were the final color to go on and painting them was the best feeling. They felt like hope. ♦ When I look at this painting, I'm able to appreciate the gravity of all the work I did to heal my hurting heart. It's probably why it's the only one I kept since then as the others were certainly cathartic, but didn't mirror the hope and peace I left the retreat with. They were from a more caged in spirit.

I've kept the journal certainly to continue to write in, but even more so to reflect back on what I felt and experienced during the retreat.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time – Painting & Sculpting

♦ The first painting (neon green splatters, dark colors) is from the first night of the retreat...I had a vision in my mind that I wanted to paint but as I kept painting I feel like my mind took over and voluntarily started painting over my vision and showed me what I was actually feeling inside. At times I dwell with my true feelings that I have buried deep down that I don't actually know how to feel. But this painting helped me see what my self internally is actually feeling.

♦ The second painting (rainbow, bright colors) was made on Saturday night. After we talked and connected more with the Jesus I felt led along in my walk and more understanding. And all of that I felt came out in this painting.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time ~ Sculpting

♦ The third work of art I did was a sculpture. This was on our last day where it all came together. Two mountains, one being steep and the other wide. I feel we all have our different sizes of mountains to overcome but at the end we know our goal is God. As well as our cross that we carry with us to the top.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

Work Time ~ Sculpting

I really enjoyed creating these shapes - doing so was restful and brought peace to my soul.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

Work Time ~ Collage

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time ~ Collage

- ♦ Here are my two collages. As a counselor, I'm aware of their beauty. As a survivor, they still make my heart sad. The first contains words/pictures that are reminders/emblems of my interactions with Fr. C.
- ♦ ...the abuse continued into my 20s, and this is something I wasn't really even willing to acknowledge at the time of the retreat, yet it's on my artwork
- ♦ the little fox in the bottom corner - Fr. C at...a retreat had drawn my name as a prayer partner - told the whole group how special I was to him & gave me a stuffed fox - I remember vividly his sitting in front of me and telling me in front of all how I tamed his heart - it seems so brazen now to me that...no one found anything strange
- ♦ so many secrets from family and friends

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work Time

- ♦ And the second picture - is where I hoped I'd be after the retreat weekend was over; at peace and free...I find now all these years later I am still praying for that freedom and peace; and forgiveness of Fr. C is an ongoing daily process into God's mercy.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work & Prayer Time

You are welcomed to share anything from my book...A Blank Canvas? All those poems were either written at the retreat or in the short months following. My life has drastically changed and *The Way* was the threshold upon which this transformation began to take place. I am eternally grateful...

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Work & Prayer Time

### **This all began**

as I sat in a chapel.  
What did I pray for there?  
Honestly,  
I don't rightly remember.  
The usual I'm sure,  
"Help me to understand better!"  
And, I'd heard that help  
could be found in the psalms letters.  
I think that stained  
the request in its flow  
into His hands  
to humorously unfold.

The urge to open  
the empty journal on my lap  
came to me like a loving parent's  
slap.  
The pen hit the paper,  
and these words were what flowed.  
In every line,  
much of my history  
is grudgingly in tow.

Although, all of what  
is written was born from truth,  
every line that I write  
is truly meant for you.  
So, please understand  
as forward you read  
the poems are not  
with title, category or tag.  
it's not my heart,  
but yours they're to be flagged.

For every word  
to you and to me  
will always reveal  
itself differently.  
Allow these words  
around you to take hold;  
simply trust in Him  
and meaning will unfold.

Now, what have I learned  
from God's sense of humor?

*...it was a simple little red journal I'd been given that morning...the journal...desired entry. I'd barely ever spoken, let alone written of what the blank pages now begged...I had had an extremely complicated relationship with God, and now here I was – with no one else. So I reluctantly prayed. And this [book] was the response that poured onto those blank pages...His eyes, His ears, His words...letters woven into a history that began to make sense.*

*-Kimi N., [A Blank Canvas](#)*

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Prayer Sticks

This is what I made. I keep it hanging above a door frame to the sunroom. I see it every single day. I remember at the retreat being intimidated by healing art and panicked thinking that my art would be lame. But it turned out ok. The best part was writing down the desperate prayers and wrapping them in the string and connecting them to the art piece. It represents healing to me. Prayerful, intentional, creative, restorative healing.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

Medallion ~ What You Want Christ to Resurrect in You

Thank you for all your help and, of course, your prayers. I believe in my heart that the pictures I am sharing wouldn't be possible without your help.

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

## Medallion ~ What You Want Christ to Resurrect in You

I keep this medallion on my desk at all times. When creating it, I wanted a mark for each of the 7 swords piercing Mary's heart. The 6 around the outside of the cross were easy, but I couldn't figure out the location of the 7th, until, with Holy Spirit's help, the fact that it belonged in the center--in the center of my heart, in the cross of Christ. In my woundedness, I am whole. Thanks for the retreat...

# SHARING FROM THE WAY

Resurrection!

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