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Using a supportive community group process to cope with the trauma of social fragmentation and promote re-socialization in Bahamas

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The Family: People helping people project is a supportive group process modality involving the sharing of personal stories, self-examination, reflection and transformation using psychotherapeutic principles. The group process was developed to confront the prevailing social fragmentation in the Bahamas associated with or caused by the continuing effects of the country-wide crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980s and the fall-out due to the recent international financial downturn. Facing community disintegration, high youth unemployment and burgeoning rates of violent crime and murder, many persons have been severely traumatized. This paper reviews the major themes presented in 776 group process sessions indicating the pervasive nature of the negativity of the shame process expressed in the high incidence of anger, violence, grief, relationship issues and abuse. This innovative project has been proven to enhance the re-socialization of many participants in the program.

Biography

Keva Bethell has completed her Master's in Public Health from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Centre and Bachelor of Science in Biology (Pre-med) from Oral Roberts University. She is the Director of Research for the Family: People Helping People project, a community based project which provides free group therapy in marginalized Bahamian communities. The project's goal is to encourage re-socialization of participants who attend the weekly group sessions. She has published four papers in reputed journals and is currently working on a manuscript detailing a phenomenon called 'The Evil Violence Tunnel'.

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