

# THE HEARTT PROTOCOLS <sup>TM</sup>

**HOLISTIC  
EMPOWERMENT  
ARTS-BASED  
REGENERATIVE  
TRAUMA  
THERAPIES**



**DEVELOPED BY DANIEL MCBRIDE, AKA DALIEN, AKA 13 HANDS  
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Below is a series of excerpts and overviews from the 1st phase of study and implementation of the HEARTT PROTOCOLS method in traditional-based therapeutic, trauma healing groups. The 1st phase, full report is 40 pages with phase 2 currently being documented and compiled.

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**Healing Group Results Report**

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## **SECTION 1**

### **DESCRIPTION OF GROUP**

Adult Group

- Duration: Aug 2009 – Mar 2010 (8 months)

- 1 Weekly 2.5 hr. group

Age of Clients: 18 – 63

Attendance: 30 outreach and shelter clients attended the group sessions.

Children's Group

- Duration: Aug 2009 – Mar 2010 (8 months)

- 2 Weekly 1.25 hr. groups

Age of Clients: 5 - 12

Attendance: 23 outreach and shelter clients attended the group sessions.

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### **SIGNIFICANT RESULTS / MAJOR BREAKTHROUGHS**

For all of the adult and children clients who have attended the groups, whether the client was able to attend a few groups or a majority of sessions, there have been powerful and life-changing effects for each of the clients. The protocol methods developed and implemented by Daniel McBride of 13 HANDS / NOMADYOGA, contributed to the significant, client breakthroughs listed below.

- 100% of the clients who attended four or more group sessions (equal to 20 clients) reported a significant and unquestionable decrease in the severity of their PTSD symptoms.
- In self-reports and symptom tracking the clients reported noticing drastic changes in being better able to manage their remaining PTSD symptoms, sleep patterns and daily life stressors.
- Adult clients reported feeling more connected with their bodies and that they could begin to trust themselves again which is crucial for survivors of sexual and domestic abuse.
- Through the use of Daniel's specifically composed, ambient music CDs and specific exercises at home, adult and child clients reported measured improvements in their somatic symptoms; sleep disturbance symptoms and quality of sleep markedly improved for the clients. Child clients reported being better able to manage their stress and anxiety by using the CD after their parents had been fighting.

- Clients showed amazing breakthroughs in reclaiming their own personal power after having experienced multiple incidents of power-based personal violence and abuse in their lives. The breakthroughs were powerful in that the clients discovered and tapped into new levels of confidence, empowerment and assertiveness within themselves so that most were successfully able to progress from victim to survivor modes of healing from abuse.
- Sexual assault clients who were not able to grieve due to the repressed trauma of their prior abuse/s were able to open up, cry and express themselves once they felt safe and an environment of support and trust was created.
- Clients who had not laughed in years due to living in horrendously abusive conditions in the home and in relationships were able to laugh while engaging in the group exercises; thus benefiting from the healing effects of laughter.
- Clients who had moved from one abusive relationship to another were able to feel secure in being alone as they learned to trust themselves (some for the first time in their lives) and turned the focus on their own healing, empowerment and life goals; subsequently beginning to end the cycles of violence for their own lives and families.
- Clients who had learned to fear men and lost the ability to trust a man after enduring years of sexual and/or domestic abuse by the significant men in their lives were able to emotionally trust Daniel, which was a huge personal breakthrough for many of them. Daniel's presence of a caring, grounded and safe man was significant to the clients' healing processes, especially as they came to feel safe with processing intimate and difficult experiences of abuse with Daniel as a group co-facilitator.
- One specific empowerment exercise had a deeply moving, profound effect on many of the clients...One client ended up getting so fired up and was shouting things like, "I wish I had left my husband sooner!!!!" She walked away feeling like she could focus on her adversity and stress at home while tapping into a confidence she has not felt in herself in a very long time.
- Child clients reported feeling for the first time in their lives that they had a safe space to "vent and talk about our problems" and reported to their parents that they hope they never "age-out" of the group so they can keep coming for years.
- Child clients who were not able to lie still and relax due to anxiety and stress-related disorders were able to lie still and meditate to the healing music which Daniel would play for them during the group to help calm their nervous systems.

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## **SECTION 6: CLIENT TESTIMONIES**

As the groups progressed there was a noticeable difference in the changes and progressions that were being made by the clients who had been attending individual counseling for more than a three month period prior to starting the group as opposed to the clients who began individual group sessions simultaneously (meaning that the clients had only one to three intake sessions with a counselor prior to beginning the groups). All of the clients who began attending groups as existing clients in individual therapy, showed a drastic increase in their abilities to manage their stress, improve their sleep and manage their anxiety and/or depression symptoms in a relatively short amount of time. The clients, who began the groups as new clients to the agency, showed a rapid progression in being able to manage their PTSD symptoms and sleep problems almost immediately, allowing for a deeper level of processing in their individual sessions towards healing.

16 clients attended a majority of the group sessions consistently. These clients are considered the core group clients and are significant for two main reasons:

1. These 16 clients have shown the most significant breakthroughs due to attending the groups consistently.
2. It is important to note that any previous study which has been conducted with PTSD clients and yoga as a healing tool, have had extreme difficulties in client attendance and consistency with the yoga classes and study. (2.) We can surmise that the approach with which these exercises are presented has a significant impact on the clients attending consistently, with being able to provide a safe, nurturing place for clients to heal in their own time, and with the clients being able to gently re-connect with themselves while managing their PTSD symptoms. (2 van der Kolk (2006).

The remaining 16 clients who were unable to be consistent in their attendance of the groups, only participated in 1 - 3 sessions. 9 of these 16 clients were shelter clients and in order to maintain strict confidentiality, their stories will not be included in this report. These 16 clients verbally reported experiencing some positive effects from the groups they were able to attend, however, some of these clients did have difficulties with participating in a therapeutic group setting for various reasons. Most of these clients were not ready to process the traumatizing effects of their abuse and as a result, were too fearful and not ready to fully participate. For these clients, it was also difficult for them to maintain individual counseling. Since the remaining clients were unable to attend a significant number of individual and / or group sessions, it was difficult to evaluate their progress.

A common thread and theme among all of the clients is that all of the clients are the ones in their families and with their friends who is the caregiver, the nurturer, the one who sacrifices her own needs for the needs of those she loves, lack of self-love, self-worth and self-respect. Daniel's protocols work to empower the clients with connecting with the self worth and self love that they need in order to find their way back to themselves that they lost and that was taken from them.

In the course of five short months the core clients were able to move through the healing processes of victim to survivor to thriver in a phenomenally short amount of time. In all my years as a therapist I have never seen sexual assault and domestic violence trauma clients move through these stages of healing so quickly.

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## **SIGNIFICANT CLIENT QUOTES**

- After an empowerment exercise Daniel conducted with the clients, one client reported, "I felt like I was finally able to fight back...for the first time in my life my body felt free and strong, it was so powerful!" Other clients had similarly powerful reactions to the exercise and some had difficulties with connecting with their personal power; however that realization in itself was a powerful breakthrough for them as it helped the clients to focus in on the areas of their lives they desired to improve upon and strengthen.
- One child client reported, "I feel really stressed when I come home from school or after my parents have been fighting and I get headaches, so I put in Daniel's CD and lie down and try to relax and then I feel better and I can do my homework or draw."

From an Easter Seals worker who works individually with one of the clients: "This is the most innovative program that I've ever heard of and (the client) has made such strides in such a short time, more then I've ever seen in her! Why don't we have more of these programs?"

"I'm not afraid of men anymore and I'm not afraid to fight back now if someone tries to take my power away from me again!"

“I need to go to these groups every week because they help me so much, and the group members told me they really want me to keep coming until I have to leave in June; everyone I know says they notice a big change in me; I love these groups!”

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### **SECTION 3: TSC-40 SCORE RESULTS**

The clients were administered Trauma Symptom Checklists-40 (TSC-40) prior to entering the groups and then two months after attending the groups. The TSC-40 scores measure dissociation, anxiety, depression, SATI (sexual abuse trauma index), sleep disturbance, and sexual problems that the clients report they are experiencing within the past two months.

Of the 32 clients who participated in the groups over the five-month period, 22 clients completed the TSC-40 tests, with 10 clients choosing not to complete them. The pre and post tests showed the following scores:

Dissociation (Total=18):

Pre-test:

7 clients scored in the 1-5 range (low);  
2 clients scored in the 6-10 range (medium);  
13 clients scored in the 11-18 range (high)

Post-test:

9 clients scored in the 1-5 range (low);  
9 clients scored in the 6-10 range (medium);  
4 clients scored in the 11-18 range (high)

Significant results: Of the 13 clients who scored with high dissociation prior to attending groups, 8 clients scored in the medium range after attending groups;  
The 2 clients who scored with medium dissociation prior to attending groups scored in the low range after attending groups.

Anxiety (Total=27):

Pre-test:

7 clients scored in the 1-10 range (low);  
7 clients scored in the 11-19 range (medium);  
8 clients scored in the 20-27 range (high)

Post-test:

7 clients scored in the 1-10 range (low);  
11 clients scored  
in the 11-19 range (medium);  
4 clients scored in the 20-27 range (high)

Significant results: Of the 8 clients who scored with high anxiety prior to attending groups, 4 scored in the medium range after attending groups.

Depression (Total=27):

Pre-test:

7 clients scored in the 1-10 range (low);

8 clients scored in the 11-19 range (medium);  
7 clients scored in the 20-27 range (high)

Post-test:

10 clients scored in the 1-10 range (low);  
8 clients scored in the 11-19 range (medium);  
4 clients scored in the 20-27 range (high)

Significant results: Of the 7 clients who scored with high depression prior to attending groups, 3 scored in the medium range after attending groups;  
Of the 8 clients who scored with medium depression prior to attending groups, 3 scored in the low range after attending groups.

SATI (Sexual Abuse Trauma Index) (Total=21):

Pre-test:

7 clients scored in the 1-6 range (low);  
7 scored in the 7-11 range (medium);  
8 clients scored in the 12-21 range (high)

Post-test:

7 clients scored in the 1-6 range (low);  
13 scored in the 7-11 range (medium);  
2 clients scored in the 12-21 range (high)

Significant results: Of the 8 clients who scored high with sexual abuse trauma prior to attending groups, 6 scored in the medium range after attending groups.

Sleep Disturbance (Total=18):

Pre-test:

4 clients scored in the 1-5 range (low);  
4 clients scored in the 6-10 range (medium);  
14 clients scored in the 11-18 range (high)

Post-test: 8 clients scored in the 1-5 range (low);

14 clients scored in the 6-10 range (medium);  
0 clients scored in the 11-18 range (high)

Significant results: All of the 14 clients who scored high for sleep disturbance prior to attending groups, scored in the medium range after attending groups; 4 of the clients who scored medium for sleep disturbance prior to attending groups, scored in the low range after attending groups.

Sexual Problems (Total=24):

Pre-test:

10 clients scored in the 1-8 range (low);  
7 clients scored in the 9-17 range (medium);  
5 clients scored in the 10-24 range (high)

Post-test:

10 clients scored in the 1-8 range (low);  
7 clients scored in the 9-17 range (medium);

5 clients scored in the 10-24 range (high)

Significant results: There were no significant results in the clients scores prior to attending group and after attending.

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## **CONCLUSION**

Daniel's system of holistic and alternative health, mind, body protocols were specifically designed and implemented to help the clients move from the victim or struggling stage of dealing with symptoms and life challenges, to an empowered, more positive, focused and embracing themselves in a new way; while feeling excited to start better managing the various symptoms and life challenges associated with their PTSD symptoms. He implemented various holistic empowerment and mind-body exercises specifically designed to build confidence, reconnection and trust in themselves and their bodies.

The protocols developed by 13 HANDS / NOMADYOGA incorporate approximately 30 plus types of exercises that are specifically implemented with the clients in an organized timeline, but it also relies on intuition in order to gauge when the clients are ready to move the next series of exercises as to continue strengthening the healing and growth process.

This approach was developed as the result of the limits to treating chronic PTSD symptoms in abuse victims and other trauma related circumstances.

The protocols are designed to:

1. Assist the clients in re-integrating themselves with their bodies, therefore allowing the clients not to fear their own internal emotional reactions to stress;
2. Empower clients to make more positive and healthier life and relational choices for themselves.
3. Merge together therapeutic group processing interventions with alternative health strategies for a more effective treatment of PTSD symptoms on a somatic level.

Empirical evidence, as conducted by various psychologists and psychiatrists in the field of trauma, has been finding that yoga is an effective tool in healing PTSD symptoms in abuse victims. (1 ) However, those studies seem to limit the clients to solely using yoga as a way to heal the body. The limiting factors to using yoga as the sole healing modality for the treatment of long-term PTSD symptoms include: the client's inability to commit to a long term yoga practice due to a fear-based avoidance reaction of re-connecting with their bodies too quickly; the client's inability to physically practice the postures in order to gain the necessary treatment effects due to physical, immune system and financial limitations.. What makes this program different from the methods used in previous studies is that it offers clients a wide range of alternative-based holistic strategies (instead of solely relying on yoga as a single healing modality) as well as the added benefits of a supportive, group processing experience; thus healing chronic PTSD symptoms on a longer-term, core-level basis using a compassionate, non-threatening approach with victims of abuse.

For children who have witnessed domestic violence and/or been abused themselves, interpersonal therapy, and even play therapy, limits a child's healing from the abuse on a somatic level. The alternative and holistic approaches used in this program - of various movement, empowerment, yoga and music/sound- based therapies - is necessary for children to connect with their own power, opening them emotionally to confidently express themselves in a trusting environment and to break the cycle of violence for themselves as they mature into adulthood. The long-term goal is to reduce the risk of young witnesses becoming perpetrators and/or victims of power-based personal violence. Therapeutic techniques, such as relaxation, mindfulness of cause and effect in their actions and words,

grounding exercises and group processing, are integrated with movement, mind-body and rhythm / music activities  
And - of course - bringing an element of fun to this process. (They're still kids.)

1 Ogden, et al (2006).

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**CONTROL GROUPS**

It would of been highly unethical to turn clients away and to only have allowed a certain number of clients access to the groups and the HEARTT protocol methods.

It actually worked out in our favor by doing the right thing and not setting up a control group. Several clients who tried the group for approximately 1-3 sessions dropped out early citing, "they were not emotionally ready to explore this level of group work" or they did not feel comfortable. The clients who dropped out were still seen in individual counseling but not in the group; hence born the control group. The growth and healing process for clients who were consistently attending the groups and those clients only in individual session was night and day .....in favor of the clients consistently attending groups.

It is also important to note that these trauma groups were being provided in a traditional talk therapy setting for over a year before the addition of the holistic methods and various protocols introduced by Mr. McBride. The depth of breakthroughs and growth for the clients had never been reached or seen prior to his involvement.

**SECTION 10 REFERENCES**

1 Ogden, P., Minton, K., Pain, C. (2006). Trauma and the body: a sensorimotor approach to psychotherapy. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

2 van der Kolk, B.A. (2006). Clinical implications of neuroscience research in PTSD. New York Academy of Sciences, 4, 1-17.

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