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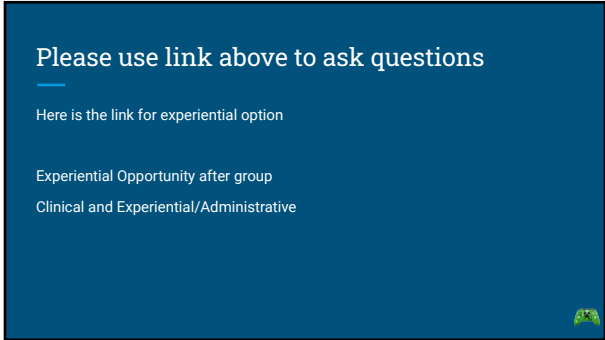
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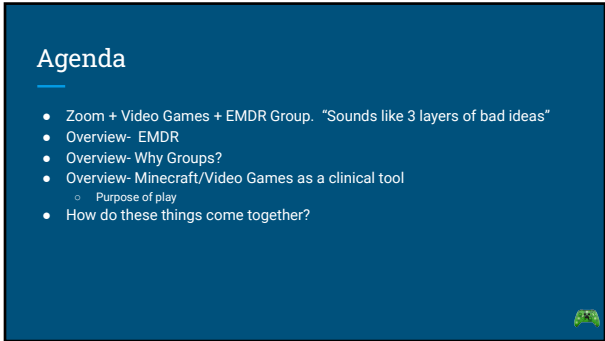
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## M the aspiring skateboarder

- 11 year old
- Socially isolated
- Struggles making friends
- Started services January 2020
- Hoping to learn skateboarding to impress the new neighbors he wants to friend



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## M Benefits from Therapeutic Play

- Sandtray
- Role Plays
- Building blocks



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## Benefits of Play

- Play provides language
- A opportunity to build relationships and connections
- Children express, learn, and teach through play
- A way to recreate and process important experiences
- Provides opportunities for identity development



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## March 2020 crisis

- Therapeutic play went remote
- Safe space was hard to find in a small apartment
- The small community got even smaller with social distancing
- The idea of connection seemed even harder



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“You can come into my world”- M



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Let down



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But, We meet people where they are at



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We had many M's  
We needed  
community more  
than ever



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## Benefits of a Group/Community

- Provides participants in-vivo opportunities to take healthy risks
- Connection is an ingredient of wellbeing and a buffer for trauma
- Improves Clinician capacity and efficiency
- Builds community of healing
  - Amplifies trauma healing
  - Hides the medicine
- Fun



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# We Needed a Community

We needed to make one central space for people to meet

It needed to be safe

It needed to be accessible and manageable



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## Creation of a Central Safe Place

- We started with a replica of our community center eliciting the cheap labor of a 7 year old
- We worked with our innovation lab to make sure it passes the various tests and has all the supports
- We invited the community



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## The Community built a Safe Place

A Community Center turned into a Town, Turned into a City, Turned into an inclusive World



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Together we built  
diverse  
communities



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## The Power of Connection and Parallels of Play

The purpose of our community  
evolved as the real world changed.  
This became a safe venue for  
discussing traumatic events



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## 2020-2024

Racial injustice  
Covid Isolation  
Equity  
Health Disparities  
Shootings  
Wildfires  
Migrant crisis  
LGBT+ Struggles



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# Uvalde

May 2022

"It's hard to feel safe when people can just do that"



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## To Do list

- Equitable
- Focus on established models
- Position Video game to enhance our mission not to distract

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## Why Minecraft

Why video games?

- Little to no training
- Customizable
- Safety features
- Equity
- Compatible cross play
- 15 years of metaphors built in
- This is their language and place of strength



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# Why EMDR

Why we should love it

- Evidenced-based intervention
- Trauma-informed
- Effective for a variety of clinical presentations
- Requires minimal sharing
- Based on the Adaptive Information Processing model
- Can address both small and big T trauma



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# EMDR and Groups

\*Julie W is now Julie P



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# EMDR Phases and application to other modalities



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## Phase 1: Assessment and Treatment Planning

- Referrals and clinician assessment
- "Will they burn down the town?"



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## Phase 2: Resourcing and Preparation

- Intro to "Tap it in"
- Strengthening adaptive information and neural networks
  - Safe/Calm Place
  - Container
  - Good Vibes room (Resource Development and Installation protocol)
  - Allies



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## Safe/Calm Places

- Foundation of our safe world
- "Build a safe space that is uniquely you. A place that gives you sense of calm, safety, and peace. A place that could never be unsafe"



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## Containers

Ender Chest



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## Good Vibes Room

Anchoring  
adaptive memories  
of mastery



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## Smart

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Confident

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Compassionate

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Connected

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## Courageous

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## Capable

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## Relational Resources: Allies

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- "Think of a figure that you associate with support, maybe nurturing or protection. It could be a person, an animal, a figure from a movie /book. We want this to be a 100% pure positive ally. Take a moment and add that to your build"



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## Nurturing Figures

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## Wise Figures

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## Protective Figures

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Emotion-Focused reprocessing - Phases 3-8

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Emotion-Focused reprocessing - Phases 3-8

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**Group Traumatic Event Protocol**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3 PAST RESOURCE**  
Heading: \_\_\_\_\_  
[0.....10]

**Step 2 PAST DANGEROUS EVENT**  
Heading: \_\_\_\_\_  
[0.....10]

**Step 5 Post Level Processing**

Pod 1  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]

Pod 2  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]

Pod 3  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]  
[0.....10]

**Step 4 DESIRED FUTURE**

POD  
 I'm not sure  
 I can't imagine  
 I can't get help  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I can't imagine  
 I can't cope  
 I will be OK

**Step 6 EPISODE level**  
Episode SUD: [0.....10]  
Episode PC: [0.....10]

**Step 1 PRESENT SAFETY**

Before [0.....10] after [0.....10]  
SAFE PLACE: Earth-Air-Water-Fire [0.....10]

DATE THEN [0.....10] TRAUMATIC EPISODE DATE TODAY [0.....10]

SHARE © TOP WORKSHOPS LTD. See: Trauma-882.8

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## Resourcing - Steps 1 and 3

**Step 1 PRESENT SAFETY**

Before  After

[0-10] Earth - Air - Water - Light [0-10]

SAFE/ CALM REMINDER \_\_\_\_\_

DATE TODAY

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## Resourcing - Steps 1 and 3

**Step 3 GOOD MEMORY**

Heading\_\_\_\_\_

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## Assessment - Steps 2 and 4

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## Assessment - Steps 2 and 4

0-10 Step 2 THE BEGINNING OF THE DIFFICULT TIME

Heading .....

DATE THEN

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## Assessment - Steps 2 and 4

**Step 4 POSITIVE THOUGHTS**

- I can cope/ handle it
- I did what I could
- I'm safe (enough) now,
- I have strengths
- I can (learn to) choose how to respond.

Other.....

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## Desensitization - Step 5

**Step 5 PoD Level Processing**

PoD1

PoD2

PoD3

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## Installation and Evaluation of target - Step 6

### Step 6 OVERALL

Overall level of disturbance [0-10]

Positive thought that feels most true \_\_\_\_\_

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## Leveraging Community for Healing

Opportunities for using both therapeutic and peer relationships for positive reinforcement

Validation of shared experiences

Grounding through connection



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## Challenges

- The treatment trajectory is difficult to plan out
  - Some kids graduate very quickly
- Clinician training in EMDR
- Technology



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## Considerations

Integrating Online play  
with trauma therapy



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## We Received Help

Supervision  
Wellpower Innovation Lab  
Many consultations with  
stakeholders  
Tailored groups for different  
ages and diagnoses  
Quality and compliance  
Evaluation team



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## Efficacy

- 2021-2023 Wellpower did a two-part pilot with our assessment department
- They surveyed, interviewed, and followed the clinical chart to track participant progress
- We focused on the following areas:
  - Reported ability to trust others
  - Feelings of happiness
  - Sense of being valued
  - Reported use of coping skills
  - Ability to not get easily distracted
  - Reported frequency of intrusive memories
  - Reported frequency of distressing emotions
  - Reported frequency of arguments
  - Reported frequency of worrying about being liked
  - Reported frequency of worrying in general
  - Reported change in motivation



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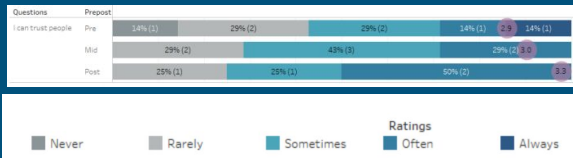
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## Overall increased ability to trust others




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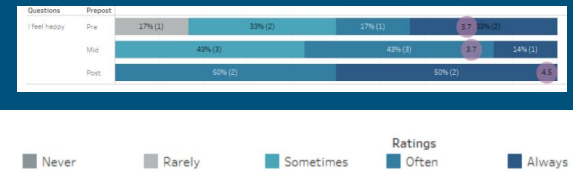


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## Increase in feelings of happiness




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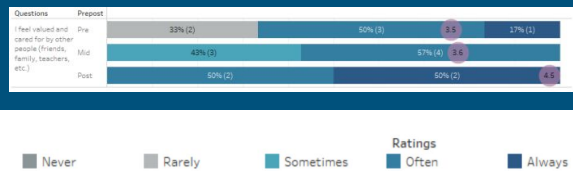


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## Increased sense of being valued




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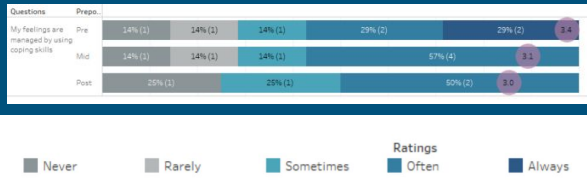


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## Slight decrease in use of coping skills




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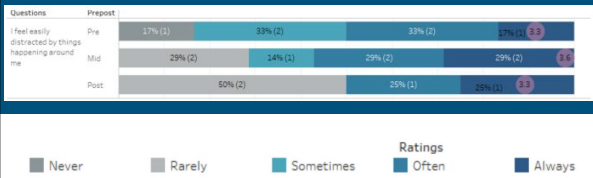


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## Equally easily distracted




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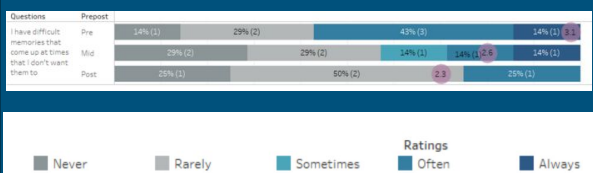


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## Decrease in intrusive difficult memories




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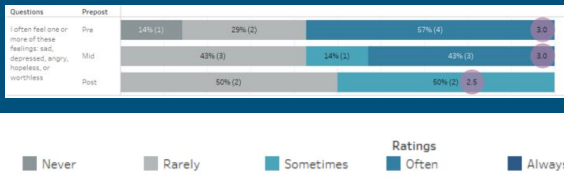


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## Decrease in distressing emotions




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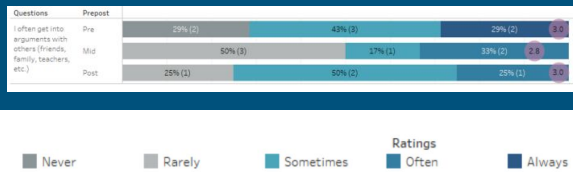


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## No major change in arguments




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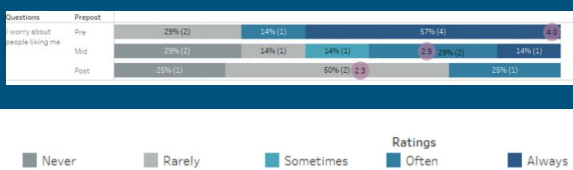


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## Decrease in worrying if they are liked




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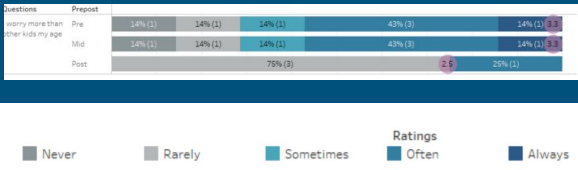


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## Decrease in worrying




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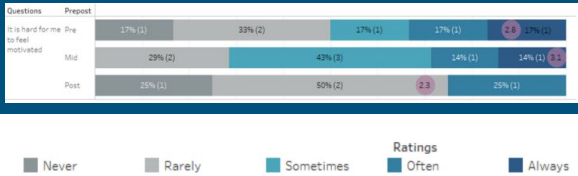


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## Increase in motivation




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## Questions, Comments, Demonstration/Experiential

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 Julie Perlin [julie.perlin@wellpower.org](mailto:julie.perlin@wellpower.org)




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