



Members of the New Haven group met with Chief Campbell and Victim Advocate Officer Jillian Knox to make a presentation about working with homicide survivors using EMDR therapy. Both Officer Knox and Chief Campbell were very interested and thrilled to have this offer of support come from the Greater New Haven TRN.

“What Jillian and the folks from Trauma Recovery/HAP didn’t know is that I’ve had a family member experience EMDR therapy. Anxiety from a fire in our home had left one of our family members nervous and distraught. It was getting worse and becoming a real issue,” said Chief Campbell. “After just a few sessions of EMDR, we saw improvements. In a few months, the trauma related issues were gone. It was amazing.”

The New Haven Police Department, in cooperation Trauma Recovery/HAP, have established a pilot program to match victims of violent crime with EMDR therapy professionals. For the pilot program, therapists are offering therapy on a pro bono basis. The Chief continues, “So far, there have been about twelve people go through EMDR therapy, with outstanding results. We would like very much to expand the program, but we’ll need to find funding to do that. We appreciate all the time the therapists are giving for free, but to reach the full potential of the program, we will have to fund it. Right now we are building a base of success before we can grow the program.”

Chief Campbell believes EMDR therapy can be useful not only with the community his department serves, but also within his department. “What sets EMDR therapy apart is that it is laser focused on the traumatic event, so it involves fewer sessions. And you don’t have to explore every facet of your life. That makes it more appealing to the victims we present it to. It also makes it more appealing to our professional staff. Most everyone who has experienced a traumatic event wants nothing more than to get back to work - get back to life - as quickly as possible. I believe EMDR can be a very useful tool to help make that happen.”

With successful early results and the ongoing support of the Mayor’s Office and the New Haven Police Department, we are hopeful that EMDR services can expand. The hope is that this program will serve as a model for other cities around the country and around the world.

Who are the Humanitarian Heroes in your Community?

On May 4th, we will be honoring two leaders in the greater New Haven area as “Humanitarian Heroes”. Their work represents a community collaboration, led by Trauma Recovery/HAP to address trauma with EMDR therapy. One of these leaders is Interim Chief of Police, Anthony Campbell.

Like most metropolitan regions, New Haven has its share of violent crime, including homicide. Unfortunately, there are not enough services for those affected by community violence and the resulting trauma can be both life-long and devastating. A group of our New Haven volunteers, who formed the local TRN group, decided to help address the problem.

It was the work of the steering committee: David Eliscu, Cheryl Kenn, Millie Grenough, Lynn Persson and Coordinator, Don DeGraffenried, that led us in this direction. Their strategy embraced the strengths and interests of their group within the TRN model. Organizers began by scheduling a meeting with New Haven’s mayor, Toni Harp. Mayor Harp was already familiar with the benefits of EMDR therapy and she had even met Dr. Francine Shapiro! Mayor Harp suggested that a meeting be scheduled with New Haven Police Chief, Anthony Campbell.

We know how using EMDR therapy to address trauma can change lives and change the impact of trauma in our communities. In our next article, we will share the story of our second Humanitarian Hero, Colette Anderson, who understands this as well. As Executive Director of the CT Women's Consortium, she has been an advocate for trauma informed care throughout the state of Connecticut. Our collaboration with Colette and her staff began nearly five years ago. We look forward to sharing with you our successes through this collaboration and how this has made such a difference in Connecticut and beyond.

We are privileged to have relationships with leaders in our community that recognize the difference that this organization and EMDR therapy can make! They stand with us to bring EMDR therapy to those who are suffering. I hope that you will let us know about the "Humanitarian Heroes" in your community!