



national **latin@** network

ENHANCING CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS TO SURVIVORS OF FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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Trauma and Mental Health: The Journey of Hispanic and Latino
Populations

Casa de Esperanza

Starting from a small group of Latina activists in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1982, Casa de Esperanza has grown into the premier Latin@ domestic violence organization in the country.



Our mission—to mobilize Latin@ communities to end domestic violence—is served through our five core values:

- Latina leadership
- Entrepreneurship
- Organizational excellence
- Living free of violence
- Community-driven solutions

Core Beliefs

- We recognize that it is the community that will end domestic violence, not any system or organization.
- We emphasize developing social capital (i.e. trust, social capital, reciprocity, information and cooperation) because we believe it decreases domestic violence.

The National Latin@ Network

- The **National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities** (NLN) is a project of Casa de Esperanza that is working at ending violence and promoting the health and well-being of Latin@ communities around the country.
- NLN is a national resource center funded through the Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPSA) division of HHS.

The National Latin@ Network

- The main goals of the NLN are:
 - Public Policy
 - Research
 - Training & Technical Assistance



Guiding principals



- Be mindful of your thoughts, reactions and body language.
- Reflect on your own privilege/biases.
- Create and maintain a safe learning space.
- Be self-aware.
- Share the space.
- Honor diversity.
- Be present.

This is a dialogue...



- I do not presume to know all the answers...this is a dialogue!
- I acknowledge that I have been conditioned to be heterosexist, homophobic, ageist, racist, etc.



**But, it doesn't mean we're singing the same
note!**

EXAMINING CULTURE

What it is and How it impacts our work



Tree of Life
Artist Jose Juan Lara Jr

- What is *culture*?
- Why do we need to know about *culture*?
- Why does *culture* matter?

Identity and Power



Stereotypes





First...Latin@ Immigrant Survivors

- **Intersecting Identities**

- Immigration status
- LGBTQI identities
- People with disabilities
- Older adults
- Religion

- **Family**

- Many Latin@s live in mixed-status families
- Some may have family members living overseas and they may be targets of threats of violence

Triple Trauma: Immigrants & Refugees

Sources

- Refugees: Conflict, civil war, disasters
- Immigrants: Journeys and status in U.S.

Triple Trauma

1. Home: Oppression, conflict, GBV in home countries
2. Transit: Violence on transit routes & countries, in camps
3. Resettlement: Systems and community failures in resettlement countries

Impact?

Culturally Specific Communities

- **Individual and collective factors have buffered the effects of collective trauma**
 - Cultural traditions
 - Strong cultural identity
 - Cultural stories
- **Communities provide healing**
 - Individual strengths
 - Collective knowledge and wisdom
 - Restoring balance





Cultural
Competence

Cultural
Responsiveness

Cultural Humility

Latin@s and Domestic/Sexual Violence

- While the number of studies examining DV/SA in Latin@ populations is growing, research on this issue continues to be limited in quality and breadth.
- The most recent prevalence information published on Latin@ populations must be considered within the context of how the information was collected, the questions asked and the social/community conditions where the research was obtained (e.g., new immigration laws).

Experience

This component addresses a Latina's daily experience.

Factors:

- Age when she immigrated or was she born here.
- Education level and socio-economic level—here and in her country of origin.
- Language ability in both Spanish and English.
- Immigration status in the USA.
- Past experience with mainstream* systems and individuals.

Reality

This component addresses her “way of living.”

Factors:

- *Familia* comes first, regardless of good or bad, triumph or turmoil.
- *Familia* is made up of nuclear and extended members as well as close friends.
- Daily decisions are based on the good of the “whole,” not the “individual.”
- Religion/Spirituality can have a fundamental influence.

Consciousness

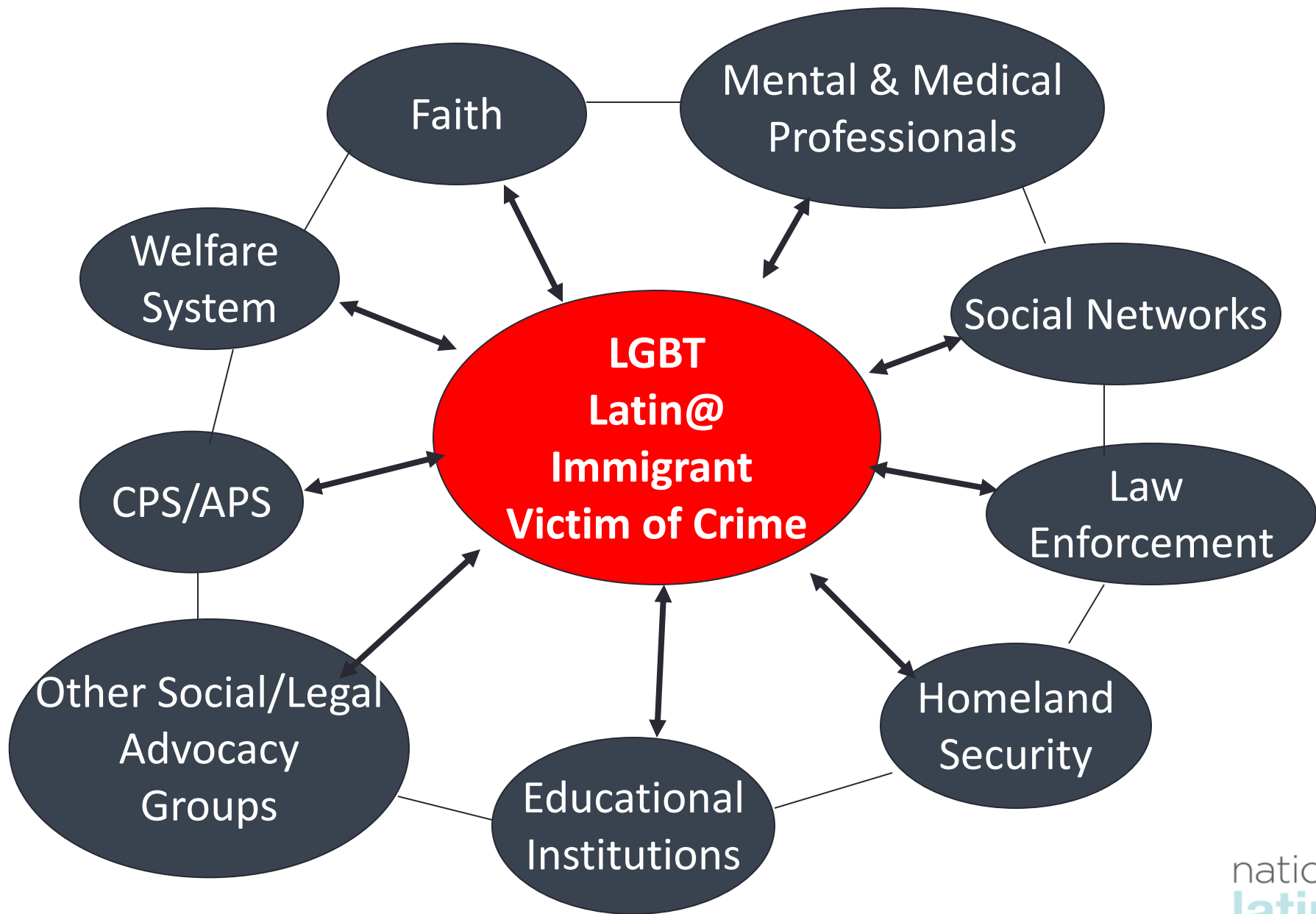
This component addresses the “way of thinking.”

Factors:

- Socialized with an extended family structure.
- Interdependent, highly relational.
- Story-telling is a method of communication.
- Great importance is placed on traditions, cultural celebrations, sharing of food, music, art, and dance.
- Living in the moment—not in the future.

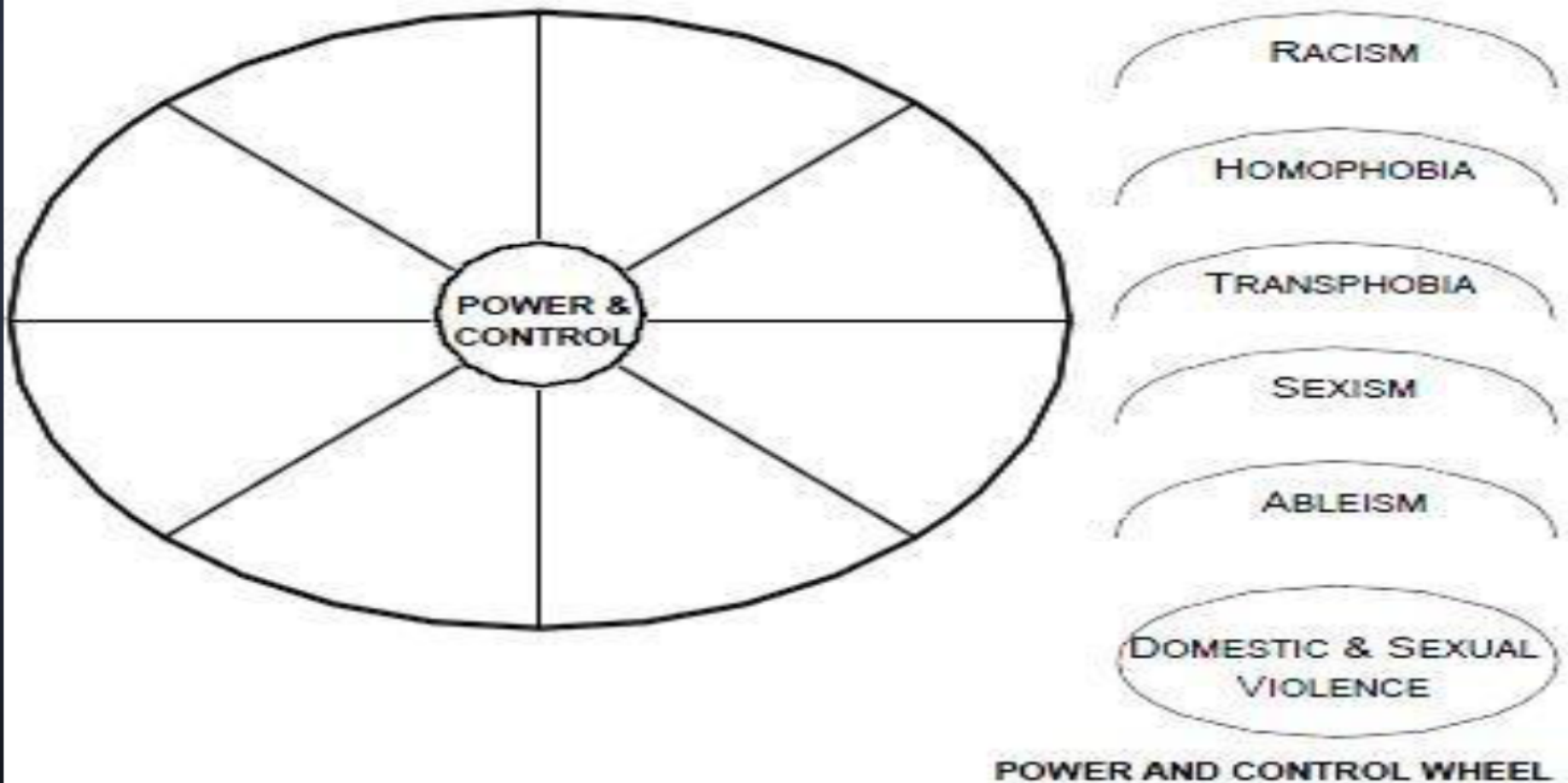
Latina Cultural Context and Advocacy

- Cultural context shapes everyone's life. It is critical for domestic violence advocates working with Latin@s to be knowledgeable of Latina cultural context and to allow that context to inform their advocacy.
- The cultural context of Latinas' lives includes three components: experience, reality, and consciousness.



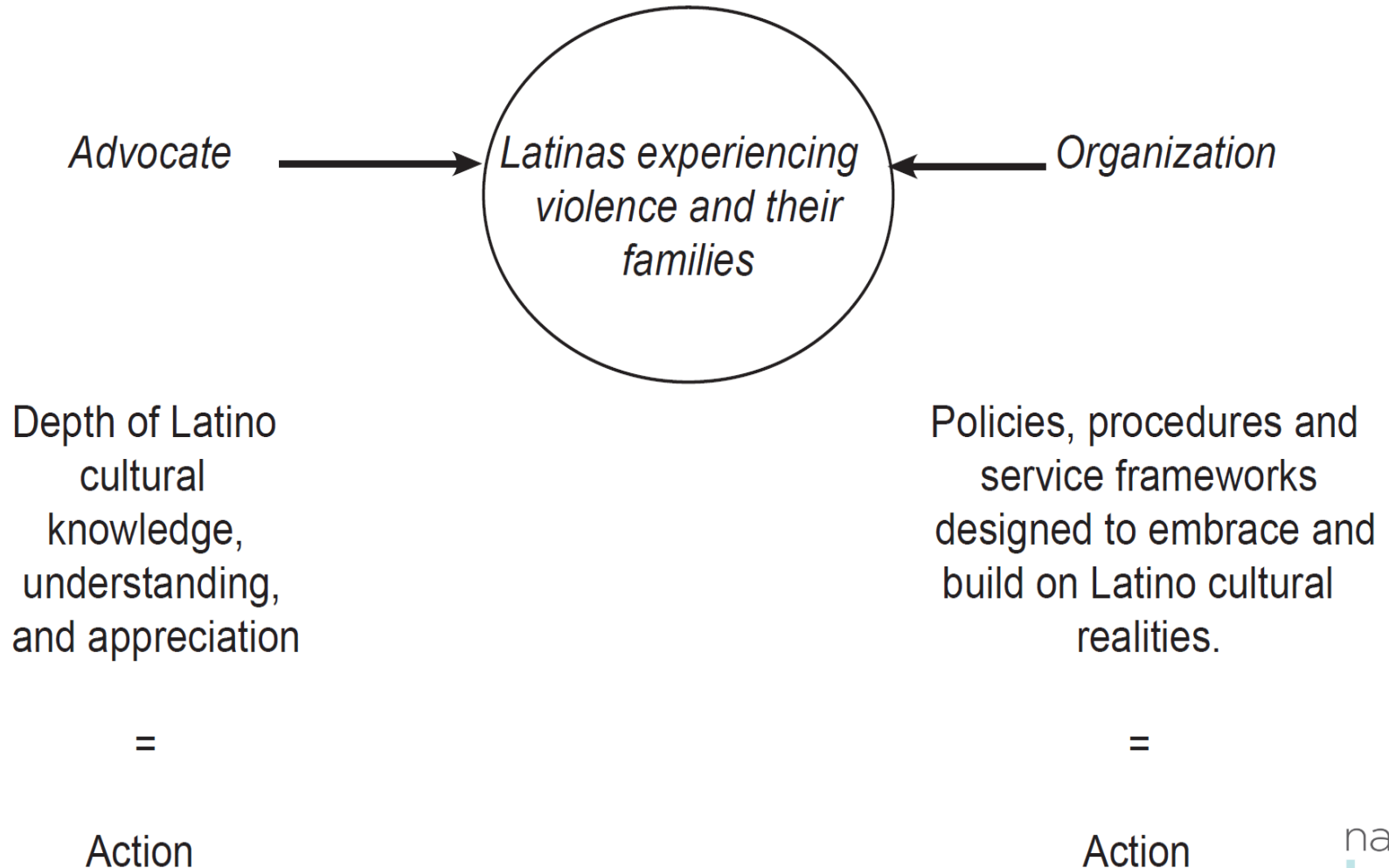
An Intersectional Approach...

The below wheel is a model that includes a safer more intersectional framework for oppressed communities. The spokes in the wheel are blank to offer space for victims to draw on their own experiences based on abuse tactics that include historical trauma and institutionalized oppression.



Source: Shades of Change : Providing Culturally Relevant Services to LGBT POC Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence (In Our Own Voices <http://www.inourownvoices.org/>)

Organizational commitment:





Enhanced Safety Planning



Community

- Critical role in providing support and serving as first line of response
- Sometimes unsupportive
 - Anti—immigrant sentiments
 - Homophobia
 - Transphobia
 - Racism
 - Misogyny

Benefits of Collaboration

- Survivor/Community safety
- More resources for survivors
- New ideas about how to approach a case
- Shared ownership and responsibility for case outcomes

Who is NOT in the room?





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