HOʻĀLA HOU O NĀ WĀHINE MAOLI:
REAWAKENING OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN
EXPLORING THE PATHWAYS TO POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH AND HEALING
OF FORMERLY INCARCERATED NATIVE HAWAIIAN FEMALE TRAUMA SURVIVORS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

SOCIAL WELFARE

May 2019

By

Tammy Kahalaopuna Kahoʻolemana Martin

Dissertation Committee:

Meripa Godinet, Chairperson
Meda Chesney-Lind
Francie Julien-Chinn
Kalei Kanuha
Susan Nakaoka
Karen Umemoto

Keywords: Posttraumatic Growth, Healing, Native Hawaiians, Incarcerated Women
COPYRIGHT

By

Tammy Kahalaopuna Kahoʻolemana Martin

2019
‘ŌLELO HO‘OMAIKA‘I: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A‘ohe hana nui ke alo ʻia.¹
No task is too big when done by all.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 18)

The huakaʻi (journey) of completing my dissertation has been one of personal and professional transformation from my initial level of understanding at the start point of this process to my re-awakened understanding and acceptance of who I am, where I come from, why I am here, and where I am going. The ʻōlelo noʻeau, Hawaiian wise saying, referenced above reflects my truest feelings about how this dissertation has manifested. While I accepted the kuleana (right, privilege and responsibility) given to me by my mother and hānai parents,² I have been incredibly blessed to have so many individuals contribute to my overall dissertation experience and completion.

First and foremost, I want to thank Dianne Jane Martin, my amazing mother, for being my foundation. I am so grateful for your unconditional love and consistent support throughout the all the years of my life. Without your loving guidance and encouragement, I would not have been able to complete this huakaʻi (journey). You have been there for me through everything, from birth to adulthood. You have stood by my side no matter what has happened in my life and loved me through it all. I am so grateful for being able to come home and write during the final stages of my dissertation. I was undistracted by the outside world in a peaceful setting where all of my basic needs were taken care of by you. I am certain my canoe would have capsized in the ocean and I would have been lost at sea if you were not bringing me

¹ Each section of this dissertation begins with an ʻōlelo noʻeau or quote to reclaim my language and conceptualize my learning process in a dual manner between my Native Hawaiian Worldview and one that is Western.
healthy food and reminding me that I am going to make it back to the shoreline. There are no words to fully describe how much I love you and how much it means to have my love for you returned to me. You are the strongest female role model I have ever had in my life.

To ‘Anakē (Aunty) Lynette Paglinawan and ‘Anakala (Uncle) Likeke Paglinawan, my hānai parents: My deepest love and compassion to both of you for your constant faith and belief in me to complete this dissertation. I have such deep heartfelt gratitude for the aloha you have shared with me. The two of you and my mother are my role models and mentors to live the respective values, cultural ways of being and healing that all of you have instilled in me. I am so blessed to have you in my life. Although Uncle Likeke is not here in the physical realm, I still feel his teachings coming through in words spoken by you ‘Anakē Lynette, through your videos and written text. In quiet moments of reflection, I continue to receive his wisdom and guidance. I am so grateful for your encouragement to articulate Nohona Hawai‘i (Hawaiian essence-based methodology). To my ancestors: My na‘au (seat of intellect and perceptual wisdom) has listened and acted upon to your guidance throughout this process. It is my sincere ‘i‘ini or desire and hope that I can honor the kuleana (responsibility) you have chosen for me in this lifetime.

To the beloved women who have participated in this journey with me: I am so incredibly grateful to the opening of your hearts and for sharing your profound life stories so willingly with me. Your powerful mo‘olelo (stories) of your lives with respect to your initial traumas and ongoing growth and healing have inspired me and will be imprinted upon me forever. I admire and respect each and every one of you. I am so impressed with your capacity to overcome all that you have in your lives thus far. I am fully aware that your willingness to share with me stemmed from a true desire to help other women in similar circumstances. It is
with humility, aloha, and gratefulness that I have compiled this dissertation. Without your stories, I would not have a dissertation! Together, I am hopeful that we can create pathways for many years to come to support the growth and healing journeys for our incarcerated women in Hawai‘i, particularly Native Hawaiian women.

To Dr. Meripa Godinet, my doctoral chair: I appreciate the ongoing support I have received from you for several years, including your commitment to my success from the beginning of my doctoral program. I have valued your critique to invite me to reassess choices I have made along my doctoral pathway. I respect your leadership as a female Pacific Islander. Mahalo for your encouragement to keep moving forward despite various obstacles I encountered, particularly near the end of my studies, during this journey.

To my committee members: I have valued each and every one of you for the various ways you have guided and supported my research. To Dr. Karen Umemoto: Words cannot fully express the gratitude I have for your presence in my life and incredible guidance and insight through this doctoral journey. Many heartfelt thanks to you for your willingness to join my committee and for staying with me through the end. I have valued our numerous long talks regarding how I was approaching and analyzing the data. In particular, I will never forget that fated day when you looked deep into my eyes and encouraged me by saying “Stop listening to everyone else, go deep within, and trust your na‘au (instincts).” Your tremendous support and ongoing encouragement have anchored and uplifted me in moments when I lost my way during the many twists and turns of my doctoral journey. My heart is filled with gratitude for your scholarly and empathetic advice when I needed it the most. You are an inspiration to me and I deeply admire, respect, and value your encouragement to have the courage to embrace my Hawaiian language and culture in the development of my conceptual framework and inclusion
of culturally grounded metaphors, such as the 'ōhiʻa lehua tree to represent the pathway to posttraumatic growth and healing of our beloved wāhine maoli.

To Dr. Susan Nakaoka: For many reasons and on multiple levels, I am deeply appreciative of your involvement in my life. I valued your advice and support during this doctoral journey. Your insight on how to collect and conceptualize the data have been invaluable to me. Your consistent encouragement to keep moving forward in times when I lost my confidence will always be remembered and treasured. To Francie Julien-Chinn, mahalo nui loa (thank you very much) for joining the committee in the final stretch of my doctoral journey to assist with my doctoral manuscript, particularly the editing and formatting aspects. I am also very grateful for your positive, uplifting energy, support, and encouragement to finish the final edits so that I can complete this part of my life journey.

To Dr. Meda Chesney-Lind: I appreciate and admire the tenacity with which you have served women and girls, particularly your research and advocacy work to reverse the colonizing impact on Native Hawaiian women and girls. As an expert feminist criminologist researcher in your field, I valued learning from you through classes and many lengthy discussions about the over-incarceration of Native Hawaiian women. To Dr. Kalei Kanuha: Mahalo (thank you) for your encouragement of my choice to embark on a qualitative study about the growth and healing pathways of our women. You inspired me to step out of my comfort zone and embrace a qualitative research study. Mahalo for your support particularly in

---

3 Wāhine Maoli refers to Native Hawaiian women. It is a term that is comprised of two words: wāhine (female, woman) and maoli (real, true, original, pure aboriginal blood) (Silva, 2004, Pukui & Elbert, 1986). Although there are few pure-blooded Hawaiians alive today, this term will be used interchangeably with Native Hawaiian women as a reminder that we are women who share linguistic and familial relationships with other peoples of Oceania and we are located in the center of the Pacific and “not an appendage of the U.S. West Coast.” (Silva, 2004, p. 13)
the early stages of my doctoral journey as well as valuable comments on my dissertation manuscript.

To the many, many, many individuals within the community that have opened their doors and hearts to me and assisted me with different aspects of my study from recruitment to final conceptualization of my posttraumatic growth and healing model. To Talia Cardinas (YWCA Program Director), Aunty Mahealani Kaawa (YWCA Cultural Specialist), and Hiʻilani Shibata (YWCA Cultural Consultant), Roshan Lafaele (YWCA Assistant Manager and all around go-to person at Fernhurst) and the staff at Ka Hale Hoʻāla Hou No Nā Wāhine (Reawakening for Women): Your support in conducting my research from initial referrals to logistics to discussion of my preliminary findings, particularly from a Kānaka Maoli perspective were invaluable to me. Talia, my heart is full of gratitude for being by my side every step of the way and believing in my when I struggled to believe in myself. Mahalo Anakē Lynette Paglinawan, Hiʻilani Shibata and Moke Kaʻāpana for your consultation on the Hawaiian conceptualizations and language articulated in this dissertation. It is my intention to continue the momentum we have begun and keep uplifting of our women.

To Toni Bissen (Pūʻā Foundation Executive Director): Mahalo nui loa for your invitation to teach the women the Queen’s Prayer within the prison that sparked my ʻiʻini (desire and passion) to conduct research that would honor and serve our women. Thank you for supporting the recruitment of women on Hawaiʻi island. I am grateful to you and your staff as well as the Catholic Church of Hawaiʻi for hiring me as a Housing Support Specialist to guide

---

4 Ka Hale Hoʻāla Hou No Nā Wāhine (Home of Reawakening for Women) is a program in Hawaiʻi to empower women to successfully transition from prison to the community.
http://reawakeningforwomen.org/
and promote “harmony in the hale” at Mercy House.\textsuperscript{5} It is through observation and participation that I was able to gain greater insight as to the true experiences of our women and be part of a tangible solution to support our women.

To Carole Vida (MEO Family Strengthening Manager): Many thanks for inviting me to the Maui Coming Home Consortium to share my research intentions and assist me in recruiting Maui and Moloka‘i women to participate in my research. It has been my honor to deepen our personal and professional relationship throughout the years.

To Dr. Ku‘umealoha Gomes: I admire all of the work you have done to serve our community, particularly within academic settings. Your prophesy of my connection to the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree as a metaphor for my life purpose has finally blossomed through this research. I especially appreciate your in-depth knowledge of the concept of naʻau and huliau (time of change). To Dr. Sam Gon III: Your insights on the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree have been invaluable to me. To Poka Laenui Hayden Burgess and Puanani Burgess: Mahalo for your support and willingness to share your perspectives about the Kānaka Maoli worldview and various terminology used in this dissertation.

To Dr. Manulani Aluli-Meyer (Director of Indigenous Education, UH West O‘ahu): Your long-standing work to inspire our lāhui (nation) is profound. Mahalo piha (full of gratitude and thanks) for creating a safe foundation for forthright discussion regarding what it means to be an emerging indigenous scholar in my homeland and inviting me to stand in my own power. You’ve inspired me to articulate Moʻolelo Narrative as my Nohona Hawai‘i (Hawaiian way) of writing my research as I strive to be pono (in balance) with my research and all other areas of my life.

\textsuperscript{5} Mercy House is the first transitional home for women exiting prison in Hawai‘i on the grounds of the Diocese of the Catholic Church of Hawai‘i.
To all other Native Hawaiian scholars that have come before me, particularly Dr. Kaiwipuni “Punihei” Lipe (Native Hawaiian Affairs Program Officer): Your research and writing style inspired me to reach out to you and grasp the importance of articulating my research from both a Hawaiian and Western perspective. Your advice was deeply liberating for me. I will always remember your resounding words, “Just do you.”

To Anakala Kamilo Lara: I have profound gratitude to you for sharing my journey to pledge my life to God and for your support for the brief time that I trained under the direction of ‘Anakē Lynette Paglinawan with other Hawaiians to be a vessel for spiritual healing in Haku Ho’oponopono. Your wisdom has grounded me in more deeply understanding myself as a Hawaiian and as a Catholic woman navigating the 21st Century world in which I live. I also appreciate your insights about the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree.

To PhD Colleagues Momilani Marshall, Adrienne Dillard, and Sophia Kim: You are all women I deeply admire and respect. I am absolutely certain that I would not have been able to get through this doctoral journey without your consistent love and support year after year, particularly in the final push to complete our PhDs. We will be interconnected for the rest of our lives as we strive to serve our respective communities.

To my Financial Supporters: Mahalo to all of the scholarship committees of Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate, Kua‘ana Student Services, Ke Ali‘i Pauahi Foundation, Office of Hawaiian Affairs for your monetary support of my doctoral education. Special thanks the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work for selecting me as a Graduate Division Merit Scholarship recipient. Mahalo to the Founder Region Soroptimist International Fellowship

---

6 Haku Ho’oponopono in this context refers to an individual who is training to be a facilitator of Ho’oponopono: a Hawaiian family process to resolve family problems (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014).
Program for your generous doctoral research award that allowed me to lessen my workload and devote my time and energy to complete the final year of my doctoral program.

Finally, and most importantly, I am deeply grateful to Akua (God), Jesus, the Blessed Mother, my ancestral gods, nā ‘aumakua (ancestral guardians), and Queen Lili‘uokalani (last beloved Queen of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i) for guiding me throughout this journey to stay grounded in my faith and onipa‘a (steadfast) in my kuleana (responsibility) of service here in my Native homeland.
ABSTRACT

Trauma research has historically focused on the negative outcomes of adversity. Although trauma can have devastating effects, growth can also arise in one’s life through overcoming life’s challenges. Posttraumatic Growth (PTG), the positive psychological change and personal transformation that often occurs as a result of processing through trauma offers hope that individuals can and often do overcome adversity. To honor the 10 Native Hawaiian women’s leo (voices) and mo’olelo (personal narratives), this study used semi-structured interviewing to: 1) better understand the pathways and processes to achieve PTG and healing across the life span for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated across the life span; and 2) identify factors that contribute to healing and PTG for these women, including Native Hawaiian ethnic identity, class, gender, trauma, interpersonal violence, and incarceration. A grounded theory approach was employed along with Nohona Hawai‘i as a complimentary methodology that actualizes the Hawaiian epistemological and ontological viewpoints.

The study found that pathways to healing are not linear, yet rather a process of a gradual ascension in conscious awakening as actions are taken, internal intellectualization occurs, insight is gained, release of hurt from the past occurs and reconnections are made to self, others, and culture. A three-phase dynamic conceptual model is presented to describe the interactive processes that occurred for the women in this study as they moved between Na‘aupō (“Night” mind), Huliau (Time of Transformative Change), and Na‘auao (“Daylight” mind). Three major motivations to change were critical during the Huliau phase: ‘I‘ini Hulihia (Desire to Overturn); ‘Ōlelo Ho‘ohiki (Conscious Commitment Ensures Accountability); and Ho‘omana (Being Spirit-Led versus Ego-Driven). Core factors that supported their overall
transformation process include: a meaningful spiritual belief system, multiple trustworthy support networks, making conscious commitments to change, receiving and giving love, acceptance/recognition, forgiveness, cultural reclamation, education, and reflection time.
# PAPA KUHI KUHI: TABLE OF CONTENTS

‘ŌLELO HO‘OMAIKA‘I: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ..........................................................................................III

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................................................... XI

LIST OF TABLE ........................................................................................................................................ XVII

LIST OF FIGURES ....................................................................................................................................... XVIII

LIST OF APPENDICES .......................................................................................................................... XX

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................... 1

Mo‘olelo Narrative: Writing Style of the Dissertation .............................................................................. 1
Organization of the Chapters ...................................................................................................................... 3
Personal Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 5
Native Hawaiian Women and the Dual Problem of Trauma and Incarceration ........................................ 11
Purpose of the Research ............................................................................................................................ 14
Conceptual Frameworks .............................................................................................................................. 15
  Posttraumatic Growth Defined .............................................................................................................. 15
  Hawaiian Worldviews .............................................................................................................................. 18
Importance of the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) Research .................................................. 21

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ............................................................................................... 25

Posttraumatic Growth Literature ........................................................................................................... 25
  PTG and Gender ..................................................................................................................................... 27
  PTG, Gender, and Violence .................................................................................................................... 28
Posttraumatic Growth with Incarcerated Individuals .............................................................................. 30
Gaps in PTG Literature ............................................................................................................................... 34
  Native Hawaiian Historical and Cultural Trauma Context .................................................................. 36
  Disproportionality of Native Hawaiians in Hawai‘i’s Criminal Justice System ...................................... 38
  Native Hawaiian Incarcerated Women .................................................................................................. 41
  Creating a New Vision for Healing at Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC) .............. 45

CHAPTER 3: HAWAIIAN ONTOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ............................................. 51

Constructivist Grounded Theory (Form) .................................................................................................. 55
Nohona Hawai‘i (Essence) ......................................................................................................................... 57
  Guiding Principle #1: Nānā i ke kumu – Look to the Source ................................................................. 58
  Guiding Principle #2: Pono - Strive to Maintain Harmony and Balance ............................................... 60
  Guiding Principle #3: Nānā ka maka, hana ka lima - Observe with the eyes, work with the hands ...... 61
Recruitment and Sampling ......................................................................................................................... 66
Nā Wahine Maoli: Native Hawaiian Women in the Study ....................................................................... 68
Consent Process .......................................................................................................................................... 70
Semi-Structured Interviewing ................................................................................................................... 72
Data Analysis ............................................................................................................................................... 74
Nohona Hawai‘i Examples ......................................................................................................................... 76
  Visit to Kalapana, Hawai‘i (Ho‘okuakahi, Ho‘ailona & Ho‘olokahi) .................................................. 76
  The Mana Wahine Conference ............................................................................................................... 78
  Nana ka maka, hana ka lima .................................................................................................................. 79
Returning Transcripts, Conducting Follow-Up Interviews & Sharing Draft Findings ............................. 80
Visiting a Sacred Site (Ho‘okuakahi, Ho‘ailona, Ho‘olokahi) ................................................................ 80
Seeking Expert Knowledge ....................................................................................................................... 82
  Naming of the Framework ..................................................................................................................... 85
APPENDIX L: CONSENT FORM – MODIFICATION #2 ................................................................. 345
APPENDIX M: PTG INTERVIEW GUIDE ........................................................................... 348
APPENDIX N: SAMPLE REFERRAL RESOURCES SHEET .................................................. 352
APPENDIX O: MERCY HOUSE CORE VALUES ................................................................. 353
APPENDIX P: E HO MAI CHANT AND TRANSLATION ..................................................... 356
APPENDIX Q: OLI MAHALO (GRATITUDE CHANT) AND TRANSLATION ..................... 357
APPENDIX R: KŪKANILOKO PROTOCOL ........................................................................ 358
REFERENCES .................................................................................................................. 359
**LIST OF TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.1 Disproportionate Impact of the Criminal Justice System on Native Hawaiians</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.2 Comparison of Incarcerated Males &amp; Females by Ethnic Group</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.3 Profile of Female Offenders</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.1 Nohona Hawai‘i (Methods/Practices)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.2 Women’s Demographic Data – One</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.3 Women’s Demographic Data – Two</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>A Model of Posttraumatic Growth (Tedeschi &amp; Calhoun, 2006)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Hawaiian Worldview Framework – macro (collective) level</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Hawaiian Worldview Framework – micro (individual) level</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Form and Essence</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Nohona Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Essence-Based Methodology)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Offering to Pele on Lava Fields, Kalapana, Hawai‘i (December 2016)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Mana Wahine Conference (January 2017)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Mercy House Christmas (November 2017)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Na Pōhaku Hānau o Kūkaniloko (Birthing Stones of Kūkaniloko) 10-23-2017</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Hō‘ailona – Double Rainbow of Confirmation</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Ho‘a Hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Uluhaimalama in Pauoa Valley</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Blossom</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree Metaphor</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Na‘aupō – “Night” Mind – One</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Na‘aupō – “Night” Mind – Two</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Na‘aupō – “Night” Mind – Three</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Three Internal Turning Points to Prepare for Personal Transformation</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Huliau Stage One: Healing the Spirit Processes &amp; Strategies</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Huliau Stage Two: Growing Into Inspired Alignment</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Na‘auao Phase Processes &amp; Strategies within the ‘Ohi’a Lehua Metaphor</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Na‘auao Phase – Two Mutually Influential Processes</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Factors that Influence PTG and healing</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A:  Glossary of Types of Trauma Terms
Appendix B:  IRB Approval – Original
Appendix C:  IRB Approval for Parolees
Appendix D:  IRB Approval for Use of Names
Appendix E:  Letter to Professional Contacts
Appendix F:  Recruitment Flyer
Appendix G:  Screening Eligibility Script
Appendix H:  Screening Eligibility Form
Appendix I:  Demographic Information Form
Appendix J:  Consent Form – Original
Appendix K:  Consent Form – Modification #1
Appendix L:  Consent Form – Modification #2
Appendix M:  Interview Guide
Appendix N:  Sample Referral Resources Sheet
Appendix O:  Mercy House Core Values
Appendix P:  E Ho Mai Chant and Translation
Appendix Q:  Oli Mahalo (Gratitude Chant) and Translation
Appendix R:  Kūkaniloko Protocol

xx
This dissertation is about 10 wāhine maoli who have survived intensive and multi-layered trauma and loss and lived to tell the story. Similar to their ancestors, they are survivors and thrivers. However, it is not only the collective transformative journey of the women, it is also a story of my own transformational journey as a Native Hawaiian female trauma survivor who is ever evolving into a wāhine maoli researcher in the field of Social Work. These women have gifted me with their stories and now I am retelling the collective story of their journey toward growth and healing from trauma. Before I embark on this journey, I highlight the process through which I will share this story, which is both personal and collective.

Moʻolelo Narrative: Writing Style of the Dissertation

Moʻolelo Narrative is a writing style where the insider researcher conveys the personal voice of his/her journey (including critical reflexivity) as well as the collective voice through stories/narratives told by participants in qualitative research within the social sciences. The term insider researcher refers to a scholar that studies their own social group or society (Kanuha, 2000; Kaomea, 2016). To understand this writing style begins with an understanding of the term moʻolelo, which is comprised of two words. The first translates to a “succession, series, especially a genealogical line, lineage” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 263) and the second term is ‘ōlelo which translates to “language, speech word, quotation, statement, speak, say, talk, converse” (Pukui & Elbert, 1983, p. 284). Thus, moʻolelo, at first glance, is the term for story in our Hawaiian language. However, as with many words in our Hawaiian language, there is typically a kaona or deeper, hidden meaning for words within the Hawaiian language.
Mākua, Aluli-Meyer, and Wakinikona (2019) add to the depth of understanding in their articulation of moʻolelo:

Moʻo are mythic creatures embodied in the mix of fresh and saltwater. They are often female protectors and vital to Hawaiian life and lore. The term moʻo also relates to things that are segmented, like the succession of a story, a grandchild, or one’s genealogy. ʻŌlelo - stitched into moʻolelo - to speak, converse or tell, reminds us that our words hold mana while the vibration of sound when uttered has power to heal, and likewise has power to destroy. Moʻolelo, our Hawaiian word for story, is thus the speaking of recollections that inspire continuity through generations… The collective body of our moʻolelo is passed down from our poʻe kahiko (ancients) in the aural/oral tradition. If a story is to remain, however, it goes through our naʻau, our stomach region where feelings are nourished and one remembers (pp. 1 – 2).

As noted above, moʻo are female protectors within our cultural framework that forms the root of the term moʻolelo. Therefore, Moʻolelo Narrative is, in essence, an opportunity to respectfully and intentionally breathe life into both the story of the researcher’s journey and the stories of the Native Hawaiian women. It is a first-person narrative shared from a unique Hawaiian understanding of storytelling, linked to our genealogy, our aural traditions, and deep reflection in our naʻau or gut.

At the point of data collection, the women are the haʻi moʻolelo (storytellers) of their own personal narrative of their lives. In analyzing the data, reporting the findings/results, I weave together the richness and depth of their stories of growth and healing from trauma as the haku moʻolelo (story author) to write their collective moʻolelo narrative. Finally, at the conclusion, I reflect once again on my insider researcher journey in what I have learned from this transformative experience.

With clarity about how this story will be told, I invite you to imagine that you are a co-traveler in a waʻa kaulua (double-hulled canoe) embarking on this journey with me as we travel through uncharted waters, guided by the wisdom of those that have come before us and
the deep wisdom of the women. The knowledge of both Western and Native Hawaiian scholars/practitioners and the moʻolelo of the women support an emerging understanding of how wāhine maoli grow and heal from cumulative trauma (e.g. traumatic loss, violence, and incarceration).

Additionally, the term haku refers a composer as well as a lei maker and lei haku is a particular type of lei that is braided with ferns and flowers typically worn on the crown of the head (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 200). Thus, the creative endeavor of writing a dissertation is also metaphorically linked to lei making. Noted below is the layout of the chapters that presents each of the “flowers” and “ferns” that have been carefully selected and woven together into a braided lei within each of the chapters.

**Organization of the Chapters**

This dissertation is organized into ten chapters. In this first chapter, I present an introduction to moʻolelo narrative as a style of writing that aligns closely with my own cultural heritage as a Native Hawaiian woman as well as my own personal moʻolelo, ʻāuamo kuleana or responsibilities I carry and kūlana or spiritual purpose in this creative research endeavor. I explain the purpose and importance of this research through a brief review of the literature from feminist criminology scholars who have contributed to the emerging literature on the pathways to prison. I also explore the widespread problem of trauma with a specific emphasis on incarcerated Native Hawaiian women in their context here in Hawaiʻi. Additionally, two conceptual frameworks: Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) and the Hawaiian Worldview are presented to contextualize this dissertation.

In the subsequent eight chapters, I braid together various segments of this metaphorical lei. Offering a lei is a way to show love and respect for the person you give it to. It is my hope
that by the final chapter, the lei I have weaved here will honor the women’s voices as wāhine maoli, their lived experiences, and may shed new light on our collective awareness of the pathways to PTG and Healing for the women in this study.

In Chapter 2, I summarize the various literature on posttraumatic growth (PTG) in the general population, PTG among incarcerated individuals, and highlight gaps within the current literature. I also provide a brief overview of historical and cultural trauma and the context of Native Hawaiian incarcerated women. In Chapter 3, I explain the methodologies used for this study. I highlight the Hawaiian concepts of Form (technical aspects of the research including interviewing) and Essence (the Hawaiian way in which I approached this dissertation) to encompass the research format and process in its entirety. Form and some of the essence of the process was anchored in Grounded Theory. However, the overall aspects of Essence in terms of how the research was approached, including initial and ongoing engagement with the women during recruitment, data collection, subsequent analysis, and reporting the findings were grounded in Nohona Hawai‘i (Hawaiian essence-based methodology). This process was anchored in my Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldviews.7

In Chapter 4, I introduce the Ho‘ala Hou O Na Wāhine Maoli (Reawakening of Native Hawaiian Women) as a Hawaiian Conceptual Framework for a three-phase dynamic model of Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) across the life span. I make the declaration that PTG and healing for the 10 Native Hawaiian women who experienced multi-layered trauma is a constant evolution over time. I provide a Hawaiian conceptualization of PTG through the use of the Bowl of Light metaphor and the ‘ōhi’a lehua tree and briefly introduce the conceptual model

7 ‘Epistemological worldview’ is defined as, “an individual’s collective beliefs about nature and acquisition of knowledge…[it] includes all of one’s explicit beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about the acquisition, structure, representation, and acquisition of knowledge and knowledge justification. (Shraw, Olafson, Veldt, and Ponder, p. 79)
that that emerged from the women’s stories. A non-linear PTG and Healing pathway occurred for the women in this study as they engaged in a cyclical healing and growth processes.

In Chapters 5 – 8, I present each phase of the model to articulate what is unique to each phase: Na’aupō (“night” mind); Ho‘omākaukau Huliau (time to prepare for change); Huliau (time of change); and Na‘auao (“daylight” mind). Each phase has overlapping themes/processes. Within each process, there are strategies described using English, Hawaiian, and terminology from the women as a way to honor their voices. The women’s words also demonstrate how the use of Hawaiian and Hawaiian creole language (pidgin) conveys Hawaiian core values and epistemological and ontological viewpoints.

In Chapter 9, I use a metaphor of the hapu‘u ferm to articulate the factors that influence PTG and healing. Finally, Chapter 10 concludes the findings as a completed haku lei. Main insights to this study, limitations, implications for practice, and future research considerations are identified based on the insights gained from an in-depth analysis of the women’s mo‘olelo.

Before we set sail to begin this dissertation journey, I provide a personal introduction of my mo‘olelo, which is linked to my ‘auamo kuleana and kūlana.

**Personal Introduction**

Customary to Hawaiian culture, an understanding and description of one’s genealogical

---

8 Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1986), 30 and 179: pole or stick to carry burdens across the shoulders; responsibility. The book format citation of this dictionary is noted here because of the extensive cultural, practical, and historical knowledge as defined by deeply respected Hawaiian elder Mary Kawena Pukui. ‘Auamo kuleana is also described as a “mythic connection of life with others when you find purpose and express it with excellence and trust.” (Mākuʻa, Aluli-Meyer, and Wakinekona, 2018, p. 6)

9 Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, 179: station, rank, position, attitude. I use the term kūlana to describe not only my positionality as a Kānaka Maoli researcher from a Western perspective, but also my spiritual purpose in being guided to engage in this research endeavor.
connections and experiences shape one’s identity and purpose in life (Kanahele, 2012). It is my intention to be transparent about the three social identities I have in common with the women in this study: Native Hawaiian, female, and trauma survivor. My life experiences and how they shape and inform my perspectives about the literature, methodology, and interpretation of our women’s stories are also included. I briefly highlight my academic training in Social Work and Women Studies as well as my own lived experiences as a female trauma survivor to provide an understanding of my positionality and ontological worldview (Shraw, Olafson, Veldt, & Ponder, 2010) through which I see the world. My lived experiences developed my personal ontological worldview that shaped, informed, and influenced how I conceptualized my ‘auamo kuleana and kūlana which led me to ultimately pursue a PhD in Social Welfare.

My full name is Tammy Linda Hazel Kahalaopuna Kaho‘olemana Martin. I was named after my Hawaiian and my Hawaiian and Chinese grandmothers, respectively. Although I did not know either of them during my upbringing, my mother wanted me to have the strength of both of my family lineages in my name. My Hawaiian cultural identity was not one that I claimed or even understood at a conscious level growing up, as I did not meet my Hawaiian father until I was 27 years old.

I was raised by a very resilient, loving, single Catholic mother of Chinese and Portuguese descent, who, despite financial struggles, always managed to provide for us and sent me to private schools whenever she could afford to do so. My mother always helps others who struggle in life and instilled in me the value of reciprocity to “give back” to society for all that I have been given. She repeatedly reminded me that, “There are all the flowers in God’s

10 The term ‘ontological worldview’ is used here to describe ...“an individual’s collective beliefs about the nature of reality and being.” (Shraw, Olafson, Veldt, & Ponder, 2010, p. 80)
11 My Hawaiian names were added to my birth certificate when I discovered them as an adult.
garden even the weeds have flowers too and your job in life is to see the flowers in everyone and reflect that back to them.” My mother’s actions and life philosophy taught me to be determined to succeed despite obstacles, to care for others, particularly those less fortunate than myself, and to see the good in others. Although she is not Hawaiian, what she has taught me is aligned with Hawaiian values such as onipa’a (steadfast), mālama (to care for) and aloha (love and compassion).

Although I grew up dancing hula (Hawaiian dance), chanting, and singing throughout my life, I was unaware that I was Hawaiian. I chose to pursue my Hawaiian ancestry while working on a project with my peers to learn about Hoʻoponopono (Hawaiian family process to resolve problems) (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014). I was fascinated that we, as Native Hawaiians, have a process to restore and maintain family harmony through the resolution of family challenges.

A particular member of the group, Keʻaulana Holt, a well-respected Native Hawaiian leader, close friend, and benevolent man that lives his culture, observed my behavior in the group (e.g. expressing ongoing concern for the well-being of all group members, having a sincere desire to take care of my peers and maintain harmony amongst a very diverse group of individuals, and ensuring that everyone had access to any articles I found). He asked me, “You sure you’re not Hawaiian?” I replied, “Not to my knowledge.” At that time, I knew names were important to Native Hawaiians and carried responsibility, but I was not ready to know the truth of who I was genealogically and the responsibility that knowledge may carry. Thus, I chose not to pursue the matter any further even though I felt a strong spiritual connection in my naʻau that I was Native Hawaiian.
As time moved forward, the seed planted by him grew within me. I became increasingly curious to know whether or not I actually was Hawaiian. My mother shared with me that she was not sure if my father was Native Hawaiian. Through researching my genealogy via my birth certificate, I traced my ancestry back to my great, great grandmother who was 100% Hawaiian which gave me a deep sense of connection to my ancestral heritage. It also enabled me to receive a scholarship from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to continue my education.

Although I did not grow up knowing my family genealogy, through researching family birth and death records as an adult, I discovered that Kahalaopuna was the name for the rainbow goddess of the Mānoa Valley and was told by Ke‘aulana Holt that the name Kahoʻolemana carried a high degree of responsibility. My mother did not know anything about my Hawaiian family name or how to find my father, so I continued on without this knowledge and conducted extensive research on Hawaiian concepts, constructs, and worldviews, including participating in hālau hula (hula training school). Through this learning, I began the reawakening within me of the fullness of my identity as a wāhine maoli.

Without living relatives knowledgeable about the history of my family name, I finally asked Ipo Vaughn, the mother of my kumu hula (hula teacher) Hiwalani Vaughn, about her interpretation of my name. I was told kahoʻolemana held the responsibility of gathering knowledge from many sources, containing it, infusing it with my mana or divine power, and giving it back to others. Finally, I understood what I was meant to do with my life – gather knowledge and integrate it with my mana from my rich cultural heritage to make sense out of what I gathered. Then, share what I have learned back with the broader community through
Discovering this knowledge validated my choice of social work as a professional career. Social work was well suited to both the values instilled by my mother and my ‘auamo kuleana and kūlana as a Hawaiian woman through a deeper understanding of my Hawaiian family name.

My identity is as a social worker continued to grow and after 5 years of working in the field with a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree, I was blessed with an adjunct faculty position at the University of Hawai‘i Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. From this experience, I realized that I enjoyed teaching and learning from MSW students. I also continued to embrace and live the six core values of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics that align closely with the values instilled by my mother and those of my cultural heritage. Through my training, I adopted an understanding that clients, or those we serve, are the experts in their own lives. This understanding aligns with the Hawaiian belief that teaching and learning is a reciprocal process in which our clients teach social workers and vice versa.

Prior to entering the doctoral program, I sought the advice of my hānai parents and my mother. They guided me to conduct research that would: 1) give back to the Hawaiian community and 2) lead to the betterment of our Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians). With

---

12 The Hawaiian term hoʻo means to bring to causation, ‘ole means “without or to deny” and mana refers to divine power. With that interpretation, kahoʻolemana could be viewed as me denying my power from my ancestors, which is what I did for most of my life. But when I researched the related term ‘olē, with an ê, I realized that it means “conch (trumpet)” and “tapa beater.” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 283) Thus, my renewed understanding of the kuleana (responsibility) of my name is to draw upon my mana to communicate through the use of stories.

13 NASW values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence (NASW, 2018, pp. 5 – 6).

14 Pukui & Elbert, Hawaiian Dictionary, p. 56: adopted child. It is further translated as to “feed, nourish, and sustain”. I have also been taught that hānai means “adoption by affection” (Lynette Paglinawan, personal communication, Feb. 17, 2009).
humility and grace, I entered the program ready to draw upon my mana - my gifts and talents - bestowed upon me through my ancestral lineage to live my kūlana as a wāhine maoli armed with the strength of my genealogy, cultural heritage, and cultural practices that has continued to reawaken my spirit and guide me on my journey.15

Beyond my professional training, I am a female trauma survivor who experienced incestual abuse in early adolescence. Two key events led me to my research emphasis and methodology. First, I was deeply moved and touched by observing women, in both minimum to maximum security, singing the Queen’s Prayer together at the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC). Regardless of all of the challenges they faced, the women could still find a space within them to sing together. The women were taught this mele (song) as part of a cultural series that I helped teach. Queen Liliʻuokalani composed this beautiful mele while imprisoned in her own palace (Liliʻuokalani, 1898). She described turning to her higher power and seeking forgiveness as a way to work through the pain and hurt of the hewa16 (wrongful act) caused by the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi and her prison experience. This was a deeply moving experience since I have always felt a powerful spiritual connection to this Queen and made a profound connection to the women on this fated day.

Second, I became emotionally exhausted from learning about all of the challenges faced by women, particularly Asian Pacific Islander women. I scoured the literature in search of a way to refocus on growth rather than trauma and was guided to Posttraumatic Growth (PTG). PTG is known as the “positive psychological change experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging circumstances” (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, p. 1). With encouragement, I conducted a pilot study that led to my doctoral proposal to incorporate a

15 Kingdom of Hawaiʻi was overthrown on January 17, 1893 (Sai, 2011).
A qualitative research design using semi-structured interviews with the Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have exited prison.

My mo‘olelo articulates an example of the cultural loss and trauma many Native Hawaiians have experienced due to the illegal overthrow of the islands, particularly loss of language and genealogy (Duponte, Martin, Mokuau, and Paglinawan, 2010; Sai, 2011). Fortunately, according to Kanahele (2012), well respected kumu hula and wāhine maoli scholar, our ancestral memories, including knowledge and experiences from our ancestors exists within our DNA and can be recovered. It has been five generations since anyone in my family has been willing to reclaim my family name and carry forward the genealogical knowledge and experiences of my ancestors that lives in my DNA that was passed down from generation to generation (Kanahele, 2012). While dormant in my family for many generations, it has reawakened and guided my study in a uniquely Native Hawaiian way.

**Native Hawaiian Women and the Dual Problem of Trauma and Incarceration**

It is well documented that trauma is a “widespread, harmful, and costly public health problem” (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 2). According the World Health Organization (WHO) survey data from 20 countries, the most commonly reported traumas include: death of a loved one (30.5%); witnessing violence toward others (21.8%); and experiencing interpersonal violence (18.8%) (Stein et al., 2010). In the United States, 60.7% of men and 51.2% of women report exposure to at least one lifetime traumatic event (Kessler, Chiu, Demler, & Walters, 2005; Kessler, Sonnega, Broment, Hughes, & Nelson, 1995) and trauma from assaultive violence is more common than in most other developed countries (Kessler, 2005). Specifically, trauma from interpersonal violence occurs at higher rates for women than men (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012; Zlotnick, 1997, 2003)
The following types of trauma caused by interpersonal violence are significantly harmful for women: sexual abuse and assault; physical abuse or assault; emotional abuse or psychological maltreatment; neglect, and victim or witness to domestic violence (see Appendix A) (Anda et al., 2008; Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012; Catelano, Smith, Snyder & Rand, 2009). Some of the negative psychological outcomes of this type of violence against women include: posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD); complex PTSD (Cox, Kenardy, & Hendrikz, 2008; Herman, 2015); depression (Anderson, Saunders, Yoshihama, Bybee, & Sullivan, 2003); and generalized anxiety disorders (Brown, Fulton, Wilkeson, & Petty, 2000).

Trauma caused by interpersonal violence is particularly detrimental for incarcerated women because it often leads to extensive mental health needs (Bloom & Covington, 2006; Zlotnick, 1997, 2003;). For example, individuals who experience unremitting physical and/or sexual abuse often initiated by a trusted caregiver in childhood commonly experience feelings of shame, betrayal, and humiliation (Herman, 2015; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; SAMHSA, 2014). Abused children and those who experience domestic violence, particularly women, are often threatened by their abuser, which leads to “silencing and fear of reaching out for help” (SAMSHA, 2014, p. 8).

Understanding the impact of trauma is essential when studying incarcerated women of color as the long-lasting adverse effects of trauma can occur immediately or have a delayed onset (Herman, 2015). The negative psychological effects of early childhood abuse may not manifest until adulthood and unique mental health needs caused by interpersonal violence are often unaddressed within criminal/legal systems in the United States. (Lynch, Fritch & Heath, 2012; Zlotnick, 1997).
Furthermore, the prevalence of mental illness is higher among incarcerated individuals than the general population (Diamond, Wang, Holzer, Thomas, & Cruser, 2001). Female offenders also have different risk factors for offending compared to male offenders (James & Glaze, 2006). Specifically, female offenders report more mental health problems and serious mental illness than do male offenders (James & Glaze, 2006; Steadman, Osher, Robbins, Case, & Samuels, 2009). They also report higher rates than male offenders regarding substance dependence and past physical and sexual abuse (James & Glaze, 2006). Elevated experiences of interpersonal violence, substance dependence, and related symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder in female offenders have also been reported (Green, Miranda, Daroowalla & Siddique, 2005; Lynch, Fritch & Heath, 2012).

According to the United States Bureau of Statistics, the number of incarcerated women has risen from 15,118 to 112,797, which is a dramatic increase of 646% between 1980 and 2010 (Cahalan, 1986; Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011). Female offenders comprise 13% of the estimated 774,524 persons that were admitted to local jails in 2012 (Minton, 2012). Currently, more than 205,000 women are incarcerated (Minton, 2012). Overall, the vast majority of incarcerated women have experienced high rates of trauma (Anderson, Havig, & Davis, 2012; Chesney-Lind & Rodriguez, 1983; Covington & Bloom, 1993;). The long-standing effects of traumatic experiences throughout their lives has resulted in higher incidences of mental health problems, severe mental illness, and substance dependence compared to men (James & Glaze, 2006; Steadman, Osher, Robbins, Case, & Samuels, 2009).

Incarceration rates for women have dramatically increased over the past three decades Native Hawaiian women are disproportionately overrepresented (OHA et al., 2010). Compared to all other states, Native Hawaiian women comprise the highest proportion of women relative
to their percentage in the general population (West & Sabol, 2009). Native Hawaiian women represent 44% of the incarcerated women in Hawai‘i although only 19.8% identify as Native Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian in the general population of Hawai‘i (OHA et al., 2010; West & Sabol, 2009).

**Purpose of the Research**

Despite the high rates of trauma experienced by women, little is known about how formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian women grow and heal from extensive trauma and violence. The purpose of this study was to add to the knowledge in PTG literature and build upon the valuable work of scholars who have studied PTG and who have studied incarcerated women in Hawai‘i, such as Alder (2016), Brown (2006), Chesney-Lind (1983), and Keahiolalo (2012).

This research marks a critical first step toward gaining a more in-depth understanding of how Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated grow and heal from trauma. The intention of this study is to identify the pathways to PTG and healing and what factors influenced the growth and healing processes of 10 Native Hawaiian women who have the lived experiences of multi-layered trauma, and their subsequent processes of growth and healing.

An additional gap in the literature that this study seeks to fulfill are strategies to intertwine Western and Hawaiian ways of writing about and conducting research in Hawai‘i (Kaomea, 2013). Many Kānaka Maoli researchers, struggle to “find our voice” in Western academic institutions (Lipe, 2014). To address this gap, I first sought to honor the voices and profound stories of the wāhine maoli who have been incarcerated as their voices have often been silenced. Second, I identified a way of conducting and describing research that would
honor my cultural way of transmitting information. I did this through applying moʻolelo narrative and through the use of metaphor particularly in the findings section to bring forward Hawaiian ways of passing on information.

When I shared this decision with my hānai mother, who is a wāhine maoli herself, she said, “Maikaʻi!”\(^{17}\) Moʻolelo and metaphor are the desired ways of passing on information” (L. Paglinawan, personal communication, Feb. 26, 2018). Usually when you ask a kupuna or elder a question appropriately and they have decided to offer you an answer, they will say, “Well, let me tell you a story…” and the story will often include a metaphor and a life lesson. With some encouragement from my committee, other Native Hawaiian scholars, and my hānai parents, I applied my Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldview and language in my methodological approach to this dissertation.

**Conceptual Frameworks**

Initially, one Western framework was explored and referenced to conceptualize this dissertation: Posttraumatic Growth (PTG). I used it to conceptualize the positive psychological changes and transformed perceptions the women had of their worldviews that occurred through their struggling with adversity. However, given that all of the women are wāhine maoli trauma survivors and I wanted to examine healing as an aspect of PTG from a Hawaiian worldview, it was essential that I also include a Hawaiian epistemological and ontological worldview at the macro and micro levels to articulate the way in which the women shared their stories as well as my own moʻolelo as an insider researcher.

**Posttraumatic Growth Defined**

As a construct first introduced by Tedeschi and Calhoun in 1996 and revised over time,
PTG is defined as “positive psychological change experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging life circumstances” (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004, p. 1). These authors further propose that PTG may also be conceptualized as both a process and an outcome of positive change (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1998). Thus, posttraumatic growth involves both an individual’s ability to adapt and function in life as well as a transformation of a person’s worldview and beliefs about the self and others (Calhoun, 2006). In other words, PTG refers to the various ways in which individuals grow and are ultimately transformed by processing the adverse circumstances they have survived.

Initial qualitative studies by Tedeschi and Calhoun (1995) noted that PTG occurred in three domains: changes in the perceptions of self, changes in interpersonal relationships, and changes in philosophy of life. Eventually, a 21-item scale entitled the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) was designed to measure various aspects of PTG. Five domains were identified on this tool, including: 1) greater appreciation of life and changed sense of priorities; 2) warmer, more intimate relationships with others; 3) greater sense of personal strength; 4) recognition of new possibilities for one’s path or life; and 5) spiritual development (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 1996).

According to Tedeschi and Calhoun (1995), in order for growth to be initiated within an individual, the trauma must be of sufficient magnitude to cause significant emotional distress. It must also challenge the individual’s higher-order beliefs and goals, existing life narrative, and fundamental schemas (Tedeschi, Park, & Calhoun, 1998; Calhoun, 2006). Additionally, multiple individual characteristics may influence the extent to which the struggle with the aftermath of the trauma produces positive outcomes, most notably: 1) how a person perceives a traumatic event, and 2) how a person responds to the challenges the situation poses.
(Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1998). Other individual characteristics that promote growth following trauma include: extraversion, openness to experience, self-efficacy, locus of control, hardiness, optimism, sense of hope, flexibility, and creativity (Schaefer & Moos, 1998; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995, 1996). Finally, if growth is to occur over time, the individual engages in deliberate rumination in which existing fundamental schemas have been invalidated by the crisis and an individual restructures her/his life narrative to incorporate the traumatic event. Through restructuring his/her narrative, an individual experiences PTG and the individual gains life wisdom (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1998; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

The most prevalent model to explain the PTG process is offered by Tesdeschi and Calhoun (2004) as a transactional model whereby the different aspects of the model interact with one another in a reciprocal manner and insight is gained through feedback loops (see Figure 1.1). The main elements of the model include: a person’s pre-trauma characteristics, a seismic event or negative life event (implying that trauma is a singular event that is brief in duration and has an extraordinary quality); management of emotional distress, rumination (both automatic and deliberate), self-disclosure, proximate social-cultural influences (e.g. impacts of real people with whom an individual interacts) and distal socio-cultural influences (e.g. impacts that are geographically removed or through impersonal means, such as movies, books, social media), narrative development, and eventual wisdom (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004).
Although this model provided a starting point to examine PTG, it does not consider the Hawaiian ontological worldview that informs how Hawaiians view and interact in the world. Therefore, an expansion to include the Hawaiian worldview is a necessary step to gaining a fuller understanding of the women’s moʻolelo.

**Hawaiian Worldviews**

The ontological worldview of Kānaka Maoli begins with an explanation of the Hawaiian Worldview starting with the moʻolelo of Hāloa as summarized below by Lipe (2014) based on the version of the story by Kameʻeleihiwa (1992).

Papa is earth mother and Wākea is sky father. They parent many of the Hawaiian islands together. In addition, they produce a human child, Hoʻohōkūlani. Later, Wākea
seduces Hoʻohökūlani and she becomes pregnant. Her child is born prematurely and does not survive. They name him Haloa-naka and bury him in the ground. From his burial site grows the first, kalo, or taro plant, which becomes the staple food of the Hawaiian people. Wakea and Hoʻohökūlani mate again, and their second child is a healthy boy, whom they name Haloa-naka in honor of his elder sibling. Haloa is the first high child of Hawaiʻi and is the common ancestor of the Hawaiian people (p. 10).

This is an important story because it highlights the moʻokuauhau or genealogical relationship with the spiritual realm through Papa and Wākea as well as our familial connection with the land. As such, we pray to the gods for support and care for the land as our elder sibling. In return, the land nourishes and feeds us both physically and spiritually. These interdependent relationships can be visually represented by a diagram of a triangle with three equal sides (see Figure 1.2). On the macro (collective) level, at the apex of the triangle are akua and ʻaumakua (God and the ancestral gods) and spirituality. On the other two corners of the triangle are humanity (nā kanaka) and the environment, which includes the ʻāina (land), moana (ocean), and lani (heavens) (Duponte, Martin, Mokuau, & Paglinawan, 2010; Martin, Paglinawan & Paglinawan, 2014).

Figure 1.2 Hawaiian Worldview Framework macro (collective) level (Duponte, Martin, Paglinawan, & Mokuau, 2010, p. 9)

The practice of niʻaupiʻo mating or an incestuous relationship was reserved for gods/goddesses and aliʻi nui (high chiefs) (Kameʻelehiwa, 1992 as cited by Lipe, 2014, p.10). The children born of this type of union are akua children or divine (Malo, 1951 as cited by Lipe, 2014, p. 10).
On the micro (individual) level (see Figure 1.3), at the apex of the triangle is ʻuhane (spiritual essence) and on the two corners are kino (body) and manaʻo (thoughts, feelings, and inner light). Hawaiians believe that both lōkahi (unity and harmony) and pono (balance) can be achieved through harmonious interdependent relationships at multiple levels which is noted by the bidirectional arrows in Figures 1.2 and 1.3. However, if there is a spiritual disconnectedness from one’s ancestors, an overuse of resources, or difficulty in relationships amongst people, then disharmony is present. If one of the sides is lengthened or shortened, then the triangle is lopsided or out of balance (Duponte et al., 2010; Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014).

Disconnection from a higher power and one’s ancestors, poor health practices, and self-destructive behaviors (substance use, domestic violence, criminal activity) results in an imbalance at the individual or micro level, which was true for many of the women in this study during the first 30+ years of their lives. Thus, the goal for Kānaka Maoli, at both the macro and micro level, is to work toward being pono or to seek balance to maintain harmonious
relationships within all areas of life and manage resources wisely to ensure sustainable life for present and future generations.

This brief explanation provides a preview of the ontological assumptions with which I approached this study. It also contextualizes the importance of interdependent relationships that have been either nurtured or disrupted over the course of the lives of the women in this study as they work to achieve PTG and healing. Finally, as the haku moʻolelo or story author of this dissertation, I incorporate these ontological assumptions throughout this dissertation.

**Importance of the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) Research**

With an understanding of the various frameworks I used to conceptualize this study, a brief overview of what has been studied with respect to pathways to PTG literature and research that has been conducted in Hawaiʻi is provided here to highlight the importance of PTG research. Research on PTG has developed over last 30 years with studies exploring issues that are specific to women (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012; Draucker, 1992; McMillen, Zuravin, & Rideout, 1995; Vishenovsky, Cann, Calhoun, Tedeschi & Demakis, 2010). However, only recently has the PTG literature articulated pathways to posttraumatic growth for incarcerated individuals (Ferrito, Vetere, Ashead, & Moore, 2012, Guse & Hudson, 2014; van Ginneken, 2016, Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2015a;). However, I have found no research that is specific to the pathway of PTG and healing among incarcerated women across the life span who have exited prison. In the absence of robust pathway models for PTG with women, I relied on research from feminist criminologists that has generated informative literature regarding the structural oppression and gender-based victimization that has deeply impacted the lives and criminal activities of incarcerated women (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2004; Chesney-Lind, 1977; Daly, 1992; Dehart, 2008; Richie, 1996;). Feminist criminologists
have also spent nearly 30 years cultivating an explanation for how women become placed on a path to prison (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Daly, 1998). Through the examination of trauma history and juvenile and criminal offending, it has been theorized that girls and women who experience child maltreatment (including physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, etc.) coupled with issues of class, race, and gender in the broader context of society, are more likely to become offenders (Chesney-Lind, 2000; Maeve, 2000; Widom, 2000).

Although no studies on pathways to PTG specifically for incarcerated women were identified, evidence has been found to support the pathways theory that is relevant for Native Hawaiian women in Hawai‘i (Brown, 2006, Chesney-Lind & Rodriguez, 1983; Yuen, Hu, & Engel, 2005,). For example, Brown (2003, 2006) found that the pathway to becoming involved in the Hawai‘i criminal/legal system for Native Hawaiian women is the result of dysfunctional family situations, child maltreatment, interpersonal violence, substance abuse, and losses, often include losing custody of children (Brown 2003, 2006). Similar to other indigenous and minority groups, Native Hawaiians are often live in poverty and are less educated as compared to all other ethnic groups in prison, resulting in limited employable skills (Brown, 2003). Subsequently, they engage in criminal activities (such as property crimes, prostitution, and substance-related crimes to generate income (Brown, 2003, 2006; Daly, 1998;).

Alder (2016) examined the relationship between gender, race, and crime for women in a work furlough program. She discovered that incarcerated women, in general, navigate through four relational domains or sites of social interaction: family, intimate relationships, drug networks and the criminal justice system. Alder’s (2016) conceptual model highlighted the fact that women reach a “critical tipping point” whereby they engage in a process called,
“running it hard or focused engagement in the drug networks” (p. 23). In Alder’s model, drug networks were at the center of the four relational domains.

By contrast, the Native Hawaiian women in this study were found to situate their families at the center of their relational interactions which was attributed to the importance of family within the Native Hawaiian culture (Alder, 2016). Finally, Alder (2016) advocated for two culturally grounded interventions: 1) having a puʻuhonua (place of sanctuary) for the women to live a forgiven life and 2) providing hoʻoponopono (Hawaiian family process for resolution of problems) to support future generations of Native Hawaiian women from becoming overly involved in their drug networks and returning to prison (Alder, 2016).

This dissertation examining the pathways to PTG and healing for Native Hawaiian women contributes to the previous literature on pathways to PTG and incarcerated women in Hawaiʻi in three ways. First, this study is the first of its kind in terms of exploring the pathways to PTG specific to Native Hawaiian incarcerated women. It explores their life stories to hone in on how they experienced life, entered prison, exited prison, and successfully transitioned back into the community. Therefore, this study goes beyond what most feminist criminologists and sociologists have explored thus far with respect to pathways theory, which focuses on the pathways to entering prison.

Second, this study qualitatively explores healing as an aspect of the PTG growth which has been understudied among incarcerated or non-incarcerated men or women in general and has yet to be studied among Native Hawaiian women. This study included a sample of formerly incarcerated women from communities across the Hawaiian Islands. While no studies exist on PTG among incarcerated women in Hawaiʻi, prior studies on incarcerated women in Hawaiʻi have interviewed women in the state correctional facility (Chesney-Lind & Rodriguez,
1983), women on parole (Brown, 2006), and women in work furlough both quantitatively and qualitatively (Alder, 2016; Yuen, Hu, & Engel, 2005). My study included women in the general community (either on parole or not) who were formerly incarcerated on O‘ahu, Maui, and Hawai‘i islands.

Third, this study examined the pathways to PTG and healing using a Hawaiian epistemological and ontological worldview, including mo‘olelo and metaphors to explain the pathways and factors that contribute to the life course pathways to PTG and healing. For Native Hawaiians, knowledge development comes through experience and the preferred way of sharing information is through the use of mo‘olelo and metaphor (Aluli-Meyer, 2003; Kanahele, 2012, OHA, 2017). Findings may provide practitioners, advocates, researchers, and policy makers with insight as to how to facilitate gender-specific, culturally-grounded, trauma-informed services. It is the hope that these types of services will promote growth, address mental health needs, and work toward the reawakening of wāhine maoli; a vulnerable, yet resilient population.
CHAPER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Aʻohe pau ka ʻike i ka hālau hoʻokahi.
All knowledge is not taught in one school.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 24)

As we continue our journey through the vast oceans of knowledge and wisdom in the form of Western published books and literature, the above ʻōlelo noʻeau (Hawaiian proverb) reminds us that there is much wisdom to be gained from multiple sources. Many individuals have contributed to the emergent understanding of Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) and a growing number of scholars are beginning to study PTG among those who have been imprisoned.

**Posttraumatic Growth Literature**

Posttraumatic Growth is not a new concept in terms of individuals overcoming adversity and growing as a result of processing and making sense of significant life-changing experiences. It is, in fact, thousands of years old (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Vanhooren et al., 2017). Early teachings and writings from ancient cultures and religions, including Hebrews, Greeks, Hinduism, Buddhism, early Christians, and Islamic traditions all refer to the potential for growth and positive change through suffering and experiencing distress (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 1995; Vanhooren et al., 2017). For example, within Christian traditions, the suffering of Jesus and his execution has the power to transform others (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Yet, scholarly interest and research on how individuals who experience trauma grow and expand in consciousness when overcoming a traumatic event began in the 1990s (Vanhooren et al., 2017).

The term Posttraumatic Growth was first introduced into the positive psychology literature in 1996 by Tedeshi and Calhoun. Early qualitative studies in PTG focused on trauma experiences that were either natural disasters or chronic illnesses (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2006).
Although research in the area of PTG began in the field of psychology, scholars from other disciplines including psychology, sociology, and social work have begun to explore PTG with various populations within the United States. Additionally, researchers from many disciplines and around the globe have conducted both quantitative and qualitative studies on PTG for diverse populations, such as, those suffering from chronic illness and natural disasters, and survivors of child physical abuse and/or sexual abuse (Devine, Reed-Knight, Loiselle, Fenton, & Blount, 2010; Draucker, 1992; McMillen, Zuravin, & Rideout, 1995).

Literature on PTG describes this process as a paradoxical phenomenon whereby growth occurs as the result of finding meaning from adverse circumstances (Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004). For example, following the trauma, survivors will concurrently describe an increased sense of vulnerability and a greater sense of personal self-competence and strength (Tedeschi et al., 1998). Early literature on PTG referred to the growth from understanding and finding meaning from deep reflection on their trauma as “positive aspects” or the “transformation of trauma” (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1991; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1988, 1995; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2000).

PTG is considered a process and an outcome. Thus, other terms used to describe PTG are “positive psychological changes” (Yalom & Lieberman, 1991) and “stress-related growth” (Park, 1998). Furthermore, Zoellner & Maercker (2006) reviewed potential effects of acceptance or reappraisal coping to overcome the trauma and found that the ability to accept situations that are unchangeable is a crucial component to adapting to situations that cannot be altered. Schaefer & Moos (1998), Zoeller & Maercker (2006) and argue that, “Reappraising the crisis in a more positive light is one path to the emergence of PTG” (as cited in Prati & Pietrantoni, 2009, p. 366). Thus, PTG includes acceptance and reappraisal coping as well as
focusing on change in a person’s ability to move beyond pre-trauma levels of functioning and experience a personal transformation (Prati & Piertrantoni, 2009; Tedechi & Calhoun, 2004).

An individual who experiences PTG gains insight and wisdom from processing their trauma and “bounces beyond” the adaptation to the crisis or that which cannot be altered. Tedeschi and Calhoun (2006) argue that the personal transformation occurs as a result of the “struggle” to overcome the trauma and not the trauma itself (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2006). Thus, a highly resilient individual may not demonstrate a high degree of PTG, because his/her baseline functioning is already well-equipped to cope with adverse circumstances (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2006; Prati & Piertrantoni). Additionally, if an individual experiences PTG, he or she does not return to the same level of functioning as he or she did prior to the traumatic experience(s).

**PTG and Gender**

Recent PTG studies have demonstrated that gender is a significant predictor of growth from trauma (Linley and Joseph, 2004; Swickert & Hittner, 2009). In a meta-analysis of Posttraumatic Growth conducted by Vishenevsky, Cann, Calhoun, Tedeschi & Demakis (2010), 70 studies (both published and unpublished) yielded the following findings: women were more likely than men to report strengths and growth following a traumatic event; women reported more growth than men as the mean age of the sample increased, and individuals in the age range of 35 years and older reported more growth than those 18 – 24 yrs. Thus, gender and age are considered significant predictors of PTG (Vishenevsky, Cann, Calhoun, Tedeschi & Demakis, 2010).

Positive growth from processing traumatic experiences is dependent on a number of factors. One of the biggest factors to contribute to PTG, particularly for women, is social and
emotional support (Swickert & Hittner, 2009). Social support has been found to act as a mediator between women and posttraumatic growth and enhance family closeness and other social networks (Swickert & Hittner, 2009).

Furthermore, in gender-based studies on mediating effects of social support and empathy on PTG, females reported higher levels of social support and empathy than males, with empathy having a stronger mediational effect than social support in the association between gender and posttraumatic growth (Swickert, Hittner, & Foster, 2012). Not surprisingly, since females tend to respond more empathetically than males, they seemed to gain more benefits from the positive connections between empathy and posttraumatic growth (Swickert et al., 2012).

**PTG, Gender, and Violence**

Emergent literature on PTG among women who have experienced some forms of interpersonal violence, such as witnessing battering and childhood sex abuse, has noted positive post-trauma outcomes, including transformations for women as a result of processing trauma caused by interpersonal violence (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012; Draucker, 1992; McMillen, Zuravin, & Rideout, 1995).

For example, in a study by McMillen, Zuravin, and Rideout (1995), 154 low-income women, who experienced sexual abuse as children, reported that sexual abuse was harmful. The women also identified valuable positive changes within themselves that resulted from processing what happened to them such as: protecting children from abuse, self-protection, increased knowledge of child sexual abuse, and feeling stronger or more self-sufficient. Additional literature suggests that women who are sexually abused as children (Faller, 1989) are more likely to have children who are sexually abused and often experience re-victimization
as they get older (Mayall & Gold, 1995). Thus, PTG literature offers hope that rather than feeling helpless in their lives as a result of being sexually victimized, “some women may be empowered by [processing and finding meaning from] their abuse experiences to take concrete actions to protect themselves and their children” (McMillen, Zuravin, & Rideout, 1995, p. 1042).

More specifically, interwoven meaning-making between the cause and effect of domestic violence and the significance in suffering experienced by exposure to domestic violence in childhood leads to positive transformation for women that have suffered from exposure to domestic violence in childhood (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012). Specific factors that contributed to their ability to gain insight and wisdom included: distancing from their parents, education on domestic violence, accessing therapeutic support services, and having a spiritual connection (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012). Thus, despite challenging circumstances experienced in childhood, adult women struggling to heal from the pain of the past can experience positive transformation. In particular, breaking free of the abuse, creating distance, and detaching from the trauma gave these women a new vantage point to “deconstruct old schemas and worldviews on the nature of families, relationships, accountability, and other often previously unchallenged ideas about life that were part and parcel of the abuse environment” (Anderson, Danis & Havig, 2012, p. 155).

The reflective process of integrating one’s thoughts and feelings about the past with new, more compassionate perspectives provided opportunities to accept, rather than avoid, traumatic events. Through this integration process, women were able to develop a reconstructed narrative of the self, the traumatic experience, and one’s future (Anderson et al., 2012; Cadel, Regehr, & Hemsworth, 2003; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006). Overall, despite the
fact that women, particularly women of color, experience substantial violence more frequently than men (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012), women may be more equipped than men to engage in deep reflection and integration about their thoughts and feelings about the past. With greater compassion, they are able accept what happened and formulate a new narrative about themselves, their traumatic experience, and their future (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2011).

**Posttraumatic Growth with Incarcerated Individuals**

Recent literature on PTG with prisoners highlight positive changes and possible pathways that lead to having a perceived meaningful purpose in life (Ferrito, Vetere, Ashead, & Moore, 2012, Guse & Hudson, 2014; van Ginneken, 2016, Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2015a;). Maruna (2001), one of the leading researchers on desistance from crime or cessation from offending, closely examined ex-prisoners that desisted from crime and ex-prisoners who persisted in criminal activities. The findings of his research noted there were no differences between sociodemographic background, types of crimes committed, personality structure, and the number of crimes committed. Yet, one key finding was that those who did not re-offend showed differences in a perception of having a meaningful life. The desisting group had self-transcendent values and a desire to have meaningful relationships with others. Comparatively, the life purpose of persisting offenders reflected “empty meanings” and a self-serving hedonistic happiness, focused on hyper-consumption and engaging in thrill-seeking behavior (Maruna, 2001). Persisting offenders have a low level of self-efficacy and do not have

---

19 Desistance is defined as, “ceasing to do something” (Laub & Sampson, 2001, p. 5). “Desistance from crime is an unusual dependent variable for criminologists because it is not an event that happens, but rather it is the sustained absence of a certain type of event (in this case, crime)” (Maruna, 2001, p. 17).
a clear sense of purpose and meaning for their lives (Maruna, 2001).

Changes in meanings in life are a common result of disruptive life experiences (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). However, PTG scholars argue that posttraumatic growth and changing one’s meaning of life only occurs after spending time processing a distressing event that has disrupted the basic foundation of a person’s life. Furthermore, the act of committing a crime and spending time in prison can disrupt a person’s self-perception and worldview (Liebling & Maruna, 2011; Vanhooren et al., 2015a). The entry phase of incarceration has been documented as particularly distressing for prisoners and is identified as a highly vulnerable time period with elevated rates of suicide and self-harm (Crawley & Sparks, 2011; Harvey, 2011; Liebling & Maruna, 2011).

The experience of being incarcerated can cause multiple levels of disruption for prisoners (Haney, 2003; Harvey, 2011) including living environments that are physically uncomfortable and perceived to be unsafe. Prisoners also feel that they lack privacy, have limited safety and agency, and do not trust each other or the prison guards and staff (Haney, 2003; Liebling & Maruna, 2011, Riley, 2013). The impact of being incarcerated also leads to breakdowns in relationships with the outside world (Haney, 2003). Prison studies also highlight that incarceration also leads to losing one’s identity and meaning in life (Harner & Riley, 2013; Jewkes, 2011; Maruna et al., 2006). Offenders can change for the better or for the worse depending on their ability to cope with their prison experience (Haney, 2003; Liebling & Maruna, 2011; Phillips & Lindsay, 2011).

The experiences related to incarceration are not only disruptive but can also cause shock that people can then grow from as the shock prompts a desire to make sense of what has happened. Van Genneken (2014) conducted a small study on posttraumatic growth with six
purposively selected first-time female prisoners conducted in a medium-security prison in England. The study highlighted the importance of meaning-making while in prison as a pathway to posttraumatic growth. Three themes emerged from the data: “Initial shock of incarceration” (loss of freedom, separation from loved ones, and being surrounded by a punitive system); “A silver lining” (finding benefits from their prison experience through reflecting and focusing on what they learned about their lives and creating a new start); and “Personal Development” (taking opportunities to make self-improvements, coming to terms with traumatic experiences, and changing how they respond to setbacks) (van Genneken, 2014, pp. 214 - 218). These findings show there is potential for growth and positive change, even within the prison walls, particularly when women take time to reflect on their situations (van Genneken, 2014, pp. 214 - 218).

The process to achieving PTG is initiated by losing meaning, feeling distressed by this sense of loss, being confused, and questioning the meaning of one’s life (Maruna, Wilson, & Curran, 2006). Offenders then seek answers for why they did their crimes and have a desire to answer existential questions such as “Who am I?” There is also a sense of emptiness that surrounds these questions (Braswell & Wells, 2014). The distress that results from the negative impact of loss and posing questions to themselves to make sense of what has happened in their lives prompts prisoners to search for new meanings in their lives (Ferrito, Vetere, Adshead, & Moore, 2012). Muruna et. al (2006) noted that prisoners seemed to have a strong desire to find a new sense of purpose in their lives as well as why they committed the crimes they did and what happened in their own lives. Processing and gaining an in-depth understanding of early childhood experiences was another critical component to whether or not someone experienced Posttraumatic Growth (Mapham & Heffron, 2012).
Given that both qualitative and quantitative studies highlighted a content shift in the meaning of life (Ferrito et al., 2012; Guse & Hudson, 2014; Maruna, 2001), Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter (2017) in a Belgium prison examined a possible pathway to posttraumatic growth for both male and female inmates (N=10). The results of their study included five themes that seemed to imply a linear pattern of PTG: (a) dehumanization and disconnection; (b) guilt, despair, and loss of meaning; (c) ways of coping; (d) positive change; and (e) remaining pains and anxiety for the future. Vanhooren, Leijssen, and Dezutter (2015a) reported that many of the prisoners talked about their experiences in prison being marked by a lack of privacy, physical discomfort, feeling unsafe, and being treated harshly by the guards. Feelings of guilt, despair and losing meaning in life left many of the participants ashamed and suicidal. Coping strategies included: social and emotional supports, searching for meaning, and avoidant strategies (e.g. contact with others, using drugs, not taking responsibility) (Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2015a).

When incarcerated individuals are ready to make a positive change, it is the result of insight to their personal story and dynamics of how they interacted with the world and having a higher level of self-worth (Maruna, 2006; Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2015a,). A more nuanced way of thinking and interacting as well as building relational skills, particularly empathy, was also part of what contributed to a positive change (van Ginneken, 2016; Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2015a;).

In sum, multiple studies highlight potential pathways to PTG which involve deeply reflecting on one’s crimes and life experiences, understanding who one is, and identifying a clear reason to live which marked turning points in the lives of incarcerated individuals (Elisha, Idisis, & Ronel, 2009; Guse & Hudson, 2014; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; Maruna et
al., 2006; van Ginneken, 2016; Vanhooren et al., 2015a). Self-reported posttraumatic growth in all of these studies is aligned with PTG growth in the general population: a changed perception of self, a deeper appreciation of relationships, and a changed philosophy of life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). What is unique about PTG among prisoners is that their PTG also included a recognition of the consequences of their criminal activities and subsequently taking responsibility for their victims (Elisha et al., 2009; Ferrito et al., 2012; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012).

Gaps in PTG literature

In general, progress on positive post-trauma outcomes have been made in investigating some gender differences and predictors of PTG for women who have experienced interpersonal trauma and incarceration in recent years. Yet, there continues to be several important gaps in PTG literature. As most post-trauma theories focus almost exclusively on the psychological conceptualization of PTG, an analysis of how race, class, and gender influence PTG has not been considered in depth (Anderson and Collins, 1995; Stanton, Bower, & Low, 2006).

Feminist theorists were instrumental in identifying the fact that interpersonal violence against women, such as sexual abuse, domestic violence, and rape, is a gendered issue (bell hooks, 2007; Hooper, 2007; O’Toole, Shiffman, Kiter, & Edwards, 2007). They have also highlighted the importance of the interconnectedness of gender, race, and class, the structural dominance and oppression that results from sexism, racism, and classism, and how these factors impact the socially constructed realities of women’s lives. Yet, the most comprehensive model of PTG introduced by Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) does not account for how PTG is influenced by the structural inequalities related to race, class, and gender, and the unique
positionalities of women in the social hierarchy, particularly women of color (Anderson & Collins, 1995).

Additionally, since most PTG studies have focused on a singular traumatic event or experience and the resulting PTG (including correlates and predictors of PTG), researchers have not fully examined the differences in PTG between chronic trauma (e.g. sexual abuse) and singular trauma (e.g. rape) (McElheran, Briscoe-Smith, Khaylis, Westrup, Hayward, & Gore-Felton, 2012). These studies have also overlooked the various life experiences of individuals before, during, and after their trauma(s). Thus, understanding how the chronic nature of sexual abuse and other forms of interpersonal violence impact PTG throughout the individual’s life have yet to be explored. Emerging studies are beginning to explore PTG among those who have experienced child sexual abuse. However, this is a paucity of literature in this area (McElheran, Briscoe-Smith, Khaylis, Westrup, Hayward, & Gore-Felton, 2012).

Early studies in PTG focused on growth following singular events, such as natural disasters or rape (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Thus, critics of this model highlight that the emphasis on singular seismic event does not reflect the cumulative and repetitive traumatic experiences commonly experienced by women of color and poor individuals (Anderson et al., 2012). Tedeschi and Calhoun’s (2004) model also does not account for how gender-related issues, the cultural context, and the socio-economic status of the women impacts the PTG process (Anderson & Collins, 1995). Furthermore, this model also does not account for caregiver post-trauma responsiveness and the long-standing impact of abuse and neglect that occurs during childhood (Kilmer, 2006; McElheran, Briscoe-Smith, Khaylis, Westrup, Hayward, & Gore-Felton, 2012).
Very little is known about the PTG of survivors of different types of trauma, such as domestic violence, child abuse and other forms of interpersonal violence (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012). Hence, theoretical development on PTG that is specific to women requires more studies with a range of female populations who have experienced various types of trauma, interpersonal violence, and losses to gain insight on the PTG process, pathways, and what contributes to PTG for female trauma survivors. In particular, more exploratory work on PTG for formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors may elicit clarity on how race, class, gender, trauma, interpersonal violence, and incarceration influence the individual PTG process for these women.

**Native Hawaiian Historical and Cultural Trauma Context**

Although posttraumatic growth examines an individual’s transformation and growth as a result of processing trauma, understanding the context of historical and cultural trauma for Native Hawaiians in general and Native Hawaiian incarcerated men and women in particular is relevant to better understanding the societal oppression and disparate treatment experienced by Native Hawaiians. Thus, this section will briefly articulate historical and cultural trauma, followed by information from a study conducted by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (2010) on the disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians, including information from a follow-up study on why Native Hawaiians are overrepresented in Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system. Finally, specific information about incarcerated Native Hawaiian women will be highlighted to provide a greater context of the women included in this study.

Historical trauma can be defined as cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across the lifespan of generations, which emanates from massive group trauma experiences (Braveheart, 1998/1999; Braveheart, Chase, Eltkins, & Alschul, 2011). Other scholars have
used the terms historical trauma and cultural trauma interchangeably to refer to the “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding caused by traumatic experiences that extend over an individual’s life span that is transmitted from one individual to the next generation to the next” (Kaholokula, 2017, p. 15). Another way to conceptualize this phenomenon in the Hawaiian language is offered by Resentez III (1996) as the Kaumaha syndrome which is rooted in a collective sadness and moral outrage felt and shared by many Hawaiians. It can be understood as a generational ‘ʻeha (pain, hurt, aching) that is carried within the ancestral memory of Native Hawaiians (L. Paglinawan, personal communication, April 18, 2019) and continues to be experienced by Native Hawaiians in the present day in the form of racism, oppression, and a multitude of mental health conditions.

Cultural trauma can be defined as, “loss of identity and meaning which negatively impacts group consciousness...it marks a change in them in fundamental and irreversible ways, often resulting in the loss of language, lifestyle and values” (Paglinawan, Paglinawan, Kaulukukui, Krief, & Kim, 2014). Although cultural trauma and loss of identity can be found among many indigenous groups throughout the world, specific to the Hawaiʻi context is the illegal occupation of the United States in Hawaii which led to the overthrow of a once thriving Kingdom in Hawaiʻi (Sai, 2011).

Kaholokula (2017) highlights the effects of historical trauma in terms of the health inequities that are often experienced by indigenous peoples around the globe including those in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Austrailia (Mohatt, Thompson, Thai, & Tebes, 2014). According to Kaholokula (2017), Hawaiians having higher rates of depression,

---

20 Quote from University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work online course titled: SW: 774 Cultural Factors in Work with Native Hawaiians, Module 2. For more detail see citation in reference list.
psychological distress, trauma (e.g. PTSD and sleep disturbances) related to accidents and abuse, adverse child experiences (e.g. living with a family member with substance abuse, having a family member in prison, witnessing domestic violence, experiencing physical and verbal abuse), and chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease (Kaholokula, 2017).

According to Kiest, Freyd, and Foynes (2013), Native Hawaiians report more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and symptoms of trauma over the life span than Japanese, Filipinos, and Caucasians (as cited by Kaholokula, 2017). However, Native Hawaiians have not only experienced more ACEs and symptoms of trauma. They have also experienced higher rates of incarceration.

**Disproportionality of Native Hawaiians in Hawaiʻi’s Criminal Justice System**

Since 1977, the number of incarcerated individuals in Hawaiʻi has increased more than 900 percent (Hawaii Criminal Justice Data Center, 2008 – 2009). A collaborative study between the State of Hawaiʻi and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA, Justice Policy Institute, University of Hawaii, & Georgetown University, 2010) revealed that both Native Hawaiian men and women are disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system in Hawaiʻi. Although they comprise 24% of the general population, the disproportionate percentage of Native Hawaiians increases at each stage of the criminal justice process. At the time of the study, Native Hawaiians represented 27% of all arrests, 33% in pre-trial detention; 29% of probation admissions; 36% admitted to prison, 39% were incarcerated, 39% released on parole, and 41% had their parole revoked (see Table 2.1). When compared to other ethnic groups, Native Hawaiians who were found guilty were more likely to receive a prison sentence. Native Hawaiians were also more likely to receive longer prison sentences and
remained on probation longer compared to most other ethnic groups. (OHA, 2010 as cited by Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 307).

Table 2.1  Disproportionate Impact of the Criminal Justice System on Native Hawaiians, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 2010, p. 11

![Table 2.1 Disproportionate Impact of the Criminal Justice System on Native Hawaiians, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 2010, p. 11](image)

In addition to the quantitative analysis of this study, qualitative data revealed key findings as to why Native Hawaiians are disproportionately represented in Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system and what can be done to address this grave concern. Two areas were identified as critical reasons for this disproportionality: 1) Policies, procedures, and laws and 2) Separation from culture. Recidivism was imbedded within the discussion of policies, procedures, and laws (NHJTF, 2012).

**Reason #1 for Disproportionality: Policies, Procedures, and Laws**

Four areas were articulated by study participants who offered either written or audio-recorded testimony about their knowledge of current policies, procedures, and laws related to the criminal justice system, public services, and prisons: 1) inequitable/disparate sentencing; 2)
lack of access to quality legal representation (e.g. working with overburdened public defenders); 3) inability to get jobs, housing, education, and other public benefits; and 4) transfer of Hawai‘i prisoners to the continent (e.g. difficult to be away from “home” although some felt that they were “treated worse” at home than on the continent) (NHJTF, 2012). Thus, current policies, laws, and procedures make it difficult for prisoners to successfully transition into the community, desist from crime and avoid recidivism, because they have difficulty obtaining strong legal representation and struggle to find employment, housing and education (NHJTF, 2012).

Reason #2 for Disproportionality: Separation from Culture

In addition to legal and logistical challenges of reintegrating into the community following incarceration to avoid recidivism, many of the participants described historical causal factors associated as reasons for overrepresentation of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system. Varied perspectives included: “historical trauma,” “generational trauma,” “cultural trauma,” “loss of identity,” “loss of connection to culture,” “discontinued use of cultural practices such as ho‘oponopono,” “loss of self-governance,” and “disconnected from land” (NHJTF, 2012, p. 36). The historical causes leading to separation from culture were directly linked by participants to the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom that resulted in a dramatic shift in the economic and political balance of power and a dismantling of the Kānaka Maoli social structure, including families (Brown, 2003; Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchichi, 2013; Sai, 2011).

Due to the loss of land, sovereignty, language, and cultural practices, Native Hawaiians experienced a decrease in psycho-social wellbeing (NHJTF, 2012). A quote from one of the participants in the NHJTF study succinctly summarizes the impact of cultural historical
trauma, and intergenerational trauma that has contributed negatively to the disproportionality of incarcerated Native Hawaiian women and men in the Hawai‘i criminal justice system.

Cultural historical trauma is the aftermath of colonization, the aftermath of dominant, one culture over another. It’s psychological, it’s economical, it’s social, it’s emotional and here’s a corker, it’s intergenerational. And why is it intergenerational? It’s intergenerational because when that trauma happens, there’s usually grief, depression, existential grief, a certain numbness, cultural wounding, a sense of not belonging...I don’t belong here, I don’t belong there. The makua, the parents and grandparents who are suffering from, or have been impacted by cultural historical trauma, have a real tough time getting out of that and raising their kids in a healthy way....We in the Hawaiian community have understood that trauma was such an important link to a lot of the disparities, a lot of the socio-economic issues that affect our people (NHJTF, 2012, p. 36).

Thus, this wounding which often creates deep sadness and grief and a “sense of not belonging” or feeling of disconnectedness has led to many negative outcomes for Hawaiians, including Native Hawaiian women.

**Native Hawaiian Incarcerated Women**

Historical and cultural trauma, intergenerational trauma, other current interpersonal traumas such as physical and sexual abuse, neglect, and other forms of maltreatment as well as psychological, social, educational, and economic effects of trauma have been found to contribute to the disproportionality and multi-layered trauma that is specific to Native Hawaiian women in Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Brown, 2003, 2006; Chesney-Lind, 2000; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Daly, 1992; Yuen, Hu, & Engel, 2005).

Native Hawaiian women experience a unique social positionality in their homeland. Due to the illegal occupation of the islands by the United States, Native Hawaiian women have experienced subjugation and dominance throughout their lives, including incarceration (Brown, 2003; Chesney-Lind, 1977; Keahiolalo-Karasuda, 2010; Sai, 2011). As a result, they
often have relatively low socio-economic status compared to other populations living on their indigenous homeland (Brown, 2003; Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013). Thus, the history of colonialism, particularly in the criminal/legal system, and trauma associated with structural racism and sexism and violence against women has negatively impacted their well-being (Brown, 2003, 2006; Chesney-Lind, 2013; Keahiolalo-Karasuda, 2010).

More specifically, Native Hawaiian incarcerated women are significantly affected by this disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians in Hawai‘i criminal justice system. In comparison to other states, Hawai‘i has the largest proportion of incarcerated women. Although Native Hawaiian women only comprise 19.8% of the general population that self-identify as Native Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian, they represent 44% of the female incarcerated population, which is 7% higher than the percentage of Native Hawaiian men (see Table 2.2) (OHA et al., 2010, Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).

Table 2.2 Comparison of Incarcerated Males and Females by Ethnic Group, Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 308

![Bar graph showing comparison of incarcerated males and females by ethnic group.](http://wwwohaorgpage/native-hawaiians-criminal-justice-system)
Although the literature on Hawai‘i’s female offenders is still emerging, women, particularly mothers, experience many personal losses, including losing custody of their children through foster care placements and/or parental rights being terminated (Brady & Sakai, 2008; Brown, 2003; Yuen, Hu & Engel, 2005). Being separated from one’s children is a particularly significant stressor and trauma for Native Hawaiian women as traditional cultural values are centered on “connections to family, the community, and place” (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).

Current Hawai‘i state laws allow the Family Court system to terminate parental rights when a parent is unable to provide care for their child within the foreseeable future. Individuals with a criminal history are also unable to become foster or adoptive parents; therefore, many incarcerated women with long sentences for substance-related crimes may lose their parental rights as was the case for many of the women in this study (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, Brady & Sakai, 2008). Therefore, the guilt over the loss of children caused by incarceration makes it difficult for mothers to shift out of feelings of despair.

In addition to losses, Native Hawaiian women also experience significant trauma due to varying forms of interpersonal violence (Brown, 2006; Peterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013). Table 2.3 displays various factors that impact women’s pathways to criminality from a study conducted by Dr. Meda Chesney-Lind (2000) on Hawai‘i’s female offenders (as cited by Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 312). The three most common characteristics highlighted in descending order are: history of substance abuse, experiences of violence, and childhood physical and sexual victimization. Additionally, 60% of the women were mothers and 40% of the women in this sample were likely to be of Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian ancestry. Unfortunately, Native Hawaiian women with substance addictions, violence and victimization
continue to be overrepresented in the prison population at WCCC (Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 2010).

Table 2.3 Profile of Hawai‘i’s Female Offenders (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 312)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristic</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likely to be a woman of Hawaiian/part Hawaiian ethnicity</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely to report childhood and sexual victimization</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has experienced some violence in her life</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a history of substance abuse</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a history of mental health problems</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the mother of at least one child</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving time for a felony drug charges</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving time for property offenses</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Yet, the dual impact of multiple forms of trauma and incarceration on the overall health and well-being for Native Hawaiian women is not well understood. Even less known is how Native Hawaiian women heal and grow beyond the traumas they have experienced. There has also been no analysis of the relationship between multiple identities held by Native Hawaiian women and how those identities impact their PTG and healing process and subsequent transformation. Furthermore, although great strides have been made in the understanding of and advocacy for trauma-informed care and gender-responsive treatment for women at the national level (Bloom & Convington, 1998; Covington, 2003; Covington & Bloom, 2006), this type of service delivery is a very recent and evolving addition within the Department of Justice in Hawai‘i and within community partners that also serve the women.
Creating a New Vision for Healing at Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC)

Since all of the women were incarcerated at the WCCC during the time a Trauma Informed Care Initiative (TICI) was launched at WCCC, a brief overview of this new vision as well as current initiatives at WCCC is included here to demonstrate efforts being made to address the long-standing effects of historical and cultural trauma and the impact it has had on the women at WCCC. When former Warden Mark Patterson arrived at WCCC in 2006, one-third of the 270 women housed at WCCC were on psychiatric medications and 90% of their crimes were substance related. Seventy-five percent of those who were addicted to drugs had a history of emotional, physical, or sexual trauma. However, despite the minor infractions and minimum security classification for those 270 women, all of the women housed at WCCC were treated in a similar manner to the 80 women who required greater levels of security. Upon reflection, he realized that, “these women don’t need punishment, they need a place to heal” (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 315).

Hence, a paradigm shift occurred in 2009 at the WCCC from a punitive model of incarceration to a trauma-informed model, focused on healing. Upon recognition of the unique needs of the female inmates, former Warden Mark Patterson worked collaboratively alongside his staff and colleagues to, “create institutional cultural change at WCCC within a visionary framework of creating a pu‘uhonua – a place to live a forgiven life, a place of transformation that nurtures healing within the individual, family, and community, and reduce recidivism” (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 315).

With a community-building approach to healing and well-being using a mind, body, spirit, and place perspective and a trauma informed care framework, WCCC implemented a Trauma-Informed Care Initiative (TICI), community-based participatory action research
project in 2009. The aim of this project was to implement a system of care that was both trauma-informed and culturally appropriate with the intention of providing a model of quality treatment and care to better prepare inmates to successfully reintegrate into the general society following incarceration. The first step in implementing this type of initiative involved conducting a needs assessment that revealed a need for greater consistency, comprehensiveness, and coordinated efforts to ensure that all 13 on site programs, contractors, and volunteers at WCCC were providing quality trauma-informed assessments and care. Only two of the 12 programs that participated in the needs assessment inquired about cultural issues (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).

Three primary TICI activities included: 1) establishment of universal trauma screening for women placed at WCCC; 2) establishment of uniform trauma assessments for women with positive responses to trauma screening; and 3) basic trauma awareness and sensitivity training to all WCCC staff members. Additionally, a nine-member focus group (divided into 2 smaller groups) met for four sessions facilitated by Puanani Burgess, a consultant with the Pū‘ā Foundation. Activities from Burgess’ “Building a Beloved Community” curriculum provided safe and trusting environment among the members of the group as they participated in check-ins, “shared information about their names, communities they came from, identified personal gifts, and cultures they identified with” (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 321). The women also generated vision “maps” of their future and how they would achieve their visions. Finally, Burgess used storytelling as an illustrative way to convey how personal information could provide in-depth insights into their lives which facilitated more personal disclosure of the women’s personal stories (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).
The final session invited the women to provide authentic feedback about mental health screening and assessment. As the women were focused on ways to get out of jail and have not had the desire to answer personal questions during intake, there is a limitation that the assessments may not be fully valid. Also, the women in the study reported that they may not be “awake” yet because they are coming off drugs when they first arrive and often they do not recall the Mental Health Screening Interview. They may also be hesitant to disclose information that could affect their sentencing or their rights with respect to the legal custody of their children (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).

The focus group respondents also noted that prison is traumatizing for first-time inmates and having a peer support who can be a role model or big sister to assist new inmates in adjusting to prison life is helpful (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013). This is consistent with other literature on incarcerated women and PTG (Clone & DeHart, 2014; Prati & Pietrantoni, 2009). Finally, Puanani Burgess’ Building a Beloved Community processes were effective in creating a safe and trusting environment that encouraged the women to feel secure and willing to share their traumatic experiences and other personal information (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).

Data from the focus groups led to the development of a 10-week Orientation program for peer supports facilitating orientation activities assisted in the ability of new inmates to “increase feelings of safety and trust in their adaptation to incarceration at WCCC” (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 325). Basic trauma awareness and sensitivity training for WCCC staff was provided and focused on understanding trauma and stress, and their neurobiological and psychological effects on individuals, and how to work with individuals in a trauma-informed way to avoid or mitigate trauma and re-traumatization. Additional training
focused on a trauma treatment model, developmental effects of trauma, how to manage trauma, and the impact of early chaotic relationships and coping skills. Follow-up training and consultation was provided to senior leadership and middle level management to reinforce trauma-informed care principles. Preliminary feedback from participants noted that trauma informed care training helped them understand their own families better (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013).

The culmination of these efforts resulted in three system change recommendations to the Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force to eliminate Disparate Treatment of Native Hawaiians in the Criminal Justice System (Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013, p. 334 – 335)

1. Form public-private-individual/family partnerships for community healing and well-being using a MIND, BODY, SPIRIT, PLACE perspective, and incorporating a Trauma Informed Systems of Care framework to work toward community healing and well-being

2. Make every community partner, public and private, a puʻuhonua, a place of healing, including state agencies, private providers, nonprofit organizations, churches, schools, and community health centers.

3. Create an Integrated System of Care including public and private entities that incorporates a Trauma Informed System of Care as a shared core approach that encompasses the “twinkle to wrinkle” span of life and provides prevention, intervention, and after care support for infants, children, adolescents, adults, and families that is connected—inclusive—dynamic and founded on shared values and common principles.

Other initiatives were implemented within the prison from 2009 to 2013 that focused on a series of culture sessions focused on hula, Hawaiian language (reading Hawaiian newspapers), learning the Queen’s prayer, and work in the loʻi or kalo fields. While those initiatives are not currently in place, with the exception of the loʻi facilitated by the Total Life Recovery program and cultivated by the Workline at WCCC, hālau classes facilitated by Kumu Malina Kaulukukui are currently ongoing at WCCC.
Kaulukukui calls the program “Hula as Healing” and the women learn both kahiko (ancient) and ʻauana (modern) dances as well as explore themes of power and control through various mele (songs) and oli (chants) and in their own lives with the intent to heal (Enos, 2018). Kaulukukui (2018) emphasizes the following in her intention and teaching:

We have to arm our women with skills and choices that make sense culturally. Here we happen to use hula. They are also expected to demonstrate discipline and caring for their hula sisters. I tell the women if they want to know their own naʻau – standing in their own truth, knowing my own naʻau. Once you have that, you can start to heal (as cited by Enos, 2018, p. 14).

This effort allows the women to reclaim their worth and value. Through learning and engaging in their cultural practices, they strengthen their cultural identity and practice self-love. As stated by Ashley Soares (2018), one of the women in the hālau, “Finding hula again, in here, has grounded me. When I dance, nothing else matters. It’s part of me learning to love myself first” (as cited by Enos, 2018, p. 21). Ashley is an alakaʻi or person who has the kuleana or responsibility to prepare the classroom, organize her hula sisters, and ensure that basic hula protocols are followed (Enos, 2018). According to Fernandez (2018), WCCC Offenders Services Administrator, Ashley is “finding her voice, not just culturally, but who she is: her self-worth” (as cited by Enos, 2018, p. 21). Ashley provides an example of the impact of the culturally grounded healing efforts that are currently occurring at WCCC.

Other efforts that are focused on providing practical educational cultural materials are co-occurring beyond WCCC through partnerships with other organizations that serve incarcerated women. For example, the 2019 Kūlana Mahina (Hawaiian Lunar Calendar)\(^\text{21}\) was

\(^{21}\) Contributors to this calendar include cultural specialist Hiʻilani Shibata, story editors Lorraine Robinson and Moriah Tate, and members of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Department of Public Safety – WCCC and YWCA of Oʻahu Laniākea and Fernhurst Residence who provided much of the artwork featured in this calendar. Electronic version can be found at www.wpcouncil.org/2019-hawaii-lunar-calendar
produced by the Western Regional Fisheries in partnership with the YWCA O‘ahu, which is the oldest women’s organization in Hawai‘i. The theme of the calendar is focused on Hina, a Hawaiian goddess in her many forms noted through various mo‘olelo or stories. Included in the calendar are the traditional names of the months of the calendar as well as the moon cycles, tides, and a Hawaiian value for each month of the calendar.

This calendar has been distributed to every woman at WCCC as well as other select members of the community that are involved in supporting the successful reintegration of women into society, including the women that have graciously shared their mo‘olelo in this dissertation. Additionally, Nicole Fernandez has made a commitment to start studying the moon at WCCC (N. Fernandez, personal communication, December 6, 2018) as part of the overall effort to facilitate healing for the women at WCCC. Reconnection to culture is a powerful strategy to assist the women in knowing who they are and was also articulated by the focus groups of the OHA study as a strategy to address the disproportionality of Native Hawaiian women who are incarcerated (NHJTF, 2012). Overall, the initiatives at WCCC have been included here to highlight work that has potential to positively impact Native Hawaiian women who are dramatically overrepresented within the population at WCCC.

In sum, this chapter has reviewed the existing PTG literature and current gaps as well as literature on historical and cultural trauma for Native Hawaiians. Specific efforts to address the unique needs of Kānaka Maoli incarcerated women was also included to provide an overview of the topic studied and the target population within a structural context of WCCC including former and current initiatives to support the women.
CHAPTER 3: HAWAIIAN ONTOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

E kuhikuhi pono i na au iki a me na au nui o ka ʻike.
Instruct well in the little and large currents of knowledge.
In teaching do it well; the small details are as important as the large ones.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 40)

The purpose of this study was to explore how Native Hawaiian women who have survived multi-layered trauma grow and heal from their trauma over the course of their lives. I was particularly interested in the pathways and contributing factors that supported the women in their transformational journeys. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What are the pathways and processes to achieve Posttraumatic Growth and healing for formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors?

2. What factors influence the PTG and healing process for these women?

In order to answer these questions, I explored the mo‘olelo of 10 Native Hawaiian women who have the lived experiences of overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles at different points in their lives and not only survived, but almost all are beginning to thrive as they process through their various traumas and continue to heal their spirits.

Additionally, as Kanaka Maoli scholars advance in Western education, it is often a challenge to concurrently employ the Western methods they have been trained in and honor the cultural and spiritual context of who they are and their ancestral ways of being and knowing on their academic journeys. Insider researchers in particular have often been told in subtle and not so subtle ways that their ways of being and knowing are not as valid as Western methodologies (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Lipe, 2014). Although I began my research using constructivist grounded theory, there were other protocols and interactions that I engaged in along the way that were anchored in my spiritual and Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldview.
To ensure that my methodology was understandable by multiple audiences, it was essential for me to closely examine the definition of methodology and then identify how to best study PTG and healing of these women in a manner that would strike a balance between my Western training and my Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldviews. Tuhiwai Smith (2012) defines methodology in the following manner, “Methodology in its simplest definition generally refers to theory of a method, or the approach or technique being taken, or the reasoning for selecting a set of methods” (p. ix, as cited by Lipe, 2014, p. 30). Specific to indigenous methodology, Smith (2012) declares,

Indigenous methodologies tend to approach protocols, values and behaviors as an integral part of methodology. They are ‘factors’ to be built into research explicitly, to be thought about reflexively, to be declared openly as part of the research design, to be discussed as part of the final results of a study and to be disseminated back to the people in culturally appropriate ways and in a language that can be understood (p. 15 – 16, as cited by Lipe, 2014, p. 30).

As stated in the above ‘ōlelo no‘eau, indigenous cultural approaches are becoming a much more acceptable methodology of conducting research and gaining knowledge in mainstream, Western academia. Thus, my rationale to present my overall methodology as a hybrid of Western and Indigenous methodologies is part of a decolonizing effort for myself and future indigenous scholars. It is my intention to create a pathway for future Kānaka Maoli researchers to consider as they are likely to encounter similar challenges to my own. It is my hope that what I present here will create a bridge of understanding for both Western and Kānaka Maoli scholars.

Constructivist grounded theory (Western methodology) was the Western-based methodology for my study. However, Nohona Hawai‘i (Hawaiian essence-based
methodology)\textsuperscript{22} is a term that honors my ancestors and gives indigenous ways of being and knowing equal merit and value to Western knowledge.

Figure 3.1 Research Methodology and Hawaiian Ontology (Form and Essence)

For the purposes of clarity, I present the concepts of Form and Essence\textsuperscript{23} that when intertwined together equal the Total Experience (see Figure 3.1). These concepts are offered in the way that they were taught to me by my hānai parents. Form refers to the technical aspects of an individual’s experience. Essence involves an openness to the spiritual aspects and deeper meaning of an experience that results in a way of expressing oneself sincerely and authentically. It is about how you conduct yourself and come across in your interactions with others and the world around and within you. Finally, when Form and Essence are fully

\textsuperscript{22} Nohona Hawai‘i was a class that taught Hawaiian ways of being and knowing (Wiles, 2017). Taught by Lynette Kahekili Kaopuiki Paglinawan, U.H. West O‘ahu faculty and Dr. Manulani Aluli-Meyer, U.H. West O‘ahu Director of Indigenous at West O‘ahu in the Fall 2017 term. Used with permission.

\textsuperscript{23} The terms Form and Essence were developed by Uncle Likeke Paglinawan and then carried forward by Aunty Lynette Paglinawan. Dr. Manulani Aluli-Meyers used this concept in her dissertation entitled, “Native Hawaiian Epistemology: Contemporary Narratives” (1998) and in her book, “Ho‘oulu Our Time of Becoming: Hawaiian Epistemology and Early Writings” (2003). Form and Essence are also referred to in a book chapter co-authored by Richard and Lynette Paglinawan and myself (2014) entitled, “Healing the Native Hawaiian Spirit through Culturally Competent Practice.”
intertwined, the experience is holistic and authentic; in that sense, balance is restored to the individual, families, groups, and others.

Listed below is an example from a social work perspective of these two concepts individually and then how they can be intertwined.

**Form:** A Native Hawaiian client may enter a service program appearing to have low self-esteem. In an effort to guide this client toward improved well-being, the practitioner may assist her in becoming a member of a hula hālau (hula school). Initially, she may make a few friends and learn a few simple dances…When one observes a performance, one might say that the dance was technically accurate or the form was well done (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014, p. 75).

**Essence:** Over time, she may learn in greater depth the spiritual aspects of hula and the *kaona* (hidden meaning) within the dance…As she becomes more spiritually aligned, she recognizes that the dance itself is more than just hula motions...With this understanding, she is able to have a fuller expression in her dancing. With this deeper ‘*ike*, or perceptual wisdom, she can begin to gain a sense of cultural pride and strengthen her self-esteem (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, pp. 75-76).

**Total Experience: Intertwining of Form and Essence:** The cultural pride and strengthened self-esteem gained from her deeper understanding of her cultural practice of hula, gives her the confidence to delve deeper into restoring balance within her spirit. Now when she dances, she is trained in the form or technical aspects of the dance and expresses herself with a deeper understanding and connection to the dance.\(^{24}\)

Similar to the Native Hawaiian client who was guided by her social worker to learn the Form or technical aspects of hula dancing, I was initially guided to use constructivist grounded theory as my research methodology. The technical aspects of this research methodology represented Form, because it closely resonated with my own perspectives about research as I understood them from my Western academic training. I organized the research proposal for IRB approval without a deeper connection between my research process and my own cultural

\(^{24}\) Added insight to Form and Essence came from a discussion with my hānai mom (L. Paglinawan, personal communication, April 11, 2018).
ontological and epistemological worldview. Then, similar to the hula dancer, who gains a deeper understanding of the spiritual and hidden aspects of hula and is able to more fully express herself as a dancer, my Essence emerged more fully as I began to engage in my cultural ways of being and knowing. Through incorporating my epistemological and ontological worldview, I grasped the deeper, hidden meanings of my research journey.

Specifically, my essence came through in how I interacted with the spiritual realm, the land, the women, other Kānaka Maoli and my own inner knowing during recruitment, data collection, data analysis, and conceptualization of the findings, which are in alignment with the Hawaiian worldview. With increased cultural pride and self-esteem, I began to dance my way through the research process using CGT as my starting point and applying Hawaiian methodologies to the overall research process.

**Constructivist Grounded Theory (Form)**

Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) was used as an initial methodology because it is a multi-stage analytic method that uses an iterative process to generate meaning from the data (Charmaz, 2014). In other words, CGT allowed for a conceptualization and exploration of the data in multiple stages to glean the deeper meanings of the responses of the women. CGT honored “the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 14).

Grounded theory, the precursor to constructivist grounded theory, has been recognized as a qualitative method originated by Glaser and Strauss in the late 1960’s. Glasser (2001) identifies that the purpose of grounded theory is to “identify complex and hidden psychosocial processes” (as cited by Anderson, Danis, and Havig, 2011, p. 155). It has evolved for some
scholars to incorporate the constructivist viewpoint offered by Kathy Charmaz (2014) and others. In her description of grounded theory as a methodology, Charmaz (2014) states that it “begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between the data and analysis, uses comparative methods, and keeps you interacting with your data and emerging analysis” (p. 1).

Constructivist grounded theory was also selected as the initial methodology for this study, because the five foundational assumptions are well-suited for the topic of study and are in alignment with the researcher’s professional standpoint: “1) multiple realities exist; 2) data is mutually constructed through interaction; 3) researcher constructs categories; 4) data representation is viewed as problematic, relativistic, situational, and partial; and 5) researcher’s values, priorities, positions, and actions affect viewpoints” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 236).

Two key differences exist in cgt interviewing compared to objectivist grounded theory (OGT): 1) greater attention is paid to the situational realities that occur during the interview (participant’s story, silences) and 2) more emphasis is placed on what is occurring between the researcher and the participant (Charmaz, 2014). As stated by Reinharz (1992) “A woman listening with care and caution enables another woman to develop ideas, construct meaning, and use words that say what she means” (p. 24). During my interviews, I often asked the women for the deeper meaning of what they were sharing with me. In cgt, there is an active pursuit of the “participant’s views and voices” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 236) as data is analyzed and ultimately developed into theory (Charmaz, 2014).

Since the PTG process is still an evolving and complex area of study, a qualitative approach to study the PTG process for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors was appropriate as it gave me an opportunity to gather thick, content rich descriptions of the
women’s stories. PTG is an ongoing process of PTG and healing after experiencing and deeply reflecting on traumatic events, particularly those stemming from interpersonal violence, traumatic losses and incarceration. Emphasis was placed on transferability, rather than generalizability. The focus was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of a sample of historically oppressed, Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors, who were formerly incarcerated as they worked to overcome adversity, began to heal, and started to thrive in society.

**Nohona Hawaiʻi (Essence)**

Figure 3.2  Nohona Hawaiʻi (Hawaiian Essence-Based Methodology) (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 269)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nohona Hawaiʻi (Hawaiian Essence-Based Methodology)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nohona Hawaiʻi – Hawaiian way of being</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEFINITION:**

Hawaiian essence-based methodology in which an insider researcher recognizes and honors the value of creating opportunities to actualize his/her Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldview when conducting qualitative research.

* Nānā i ke kumu – “Look to the Source”
* Pono – Strive to maintain harmony and balance with all aspects of the research process (data collection, data analysis, sharing preliminary findings)
* Nānā ka maka, hana ka lima - “Observe with the eyes, work with the hands”

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, Nohona Hawaiʻi is the complementary methodology that I used to honor my ancestral ways of being and knowing (see Figure 3.2). This is the Essence component in the overall equation of Form and Essence of my methodologies. The term Nohona Hawaiʻi is comprised of two words. Tūtū Pukui\(^{25}\) teaches us that nohona refers to “dwelling, seat, mode of life, existence, relationship” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 269).

\(^{25}\) Mary Kawena Pukui is affectionately known by the Hawaiian people as Tūtū or grandparent given her vast knowledge on Hawaiian culture, language, and cultural practices.
Hawai‘i, in this instance, refers to the Hawaiian Islands (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 141). Thus, Nohona Hawai‘i refers to the Hawaiian way of being.

To further explain Nohona Hawai‘i as a Hawaiian essence-based methodology, I draw from Aluli-Meyer’s (2003) dissertation findings regarding the duality of education systems. As Aluli-Meyer questions “what it means to be Hawaiian in a current [educational] system that contradicts most aspects of cultural expressions specific to learning” (p. 148), she identifies that the Kānaka Maoli mentors she interviewed placed a value on both formal education (Form) and lifestyle learning (Essence) and engaged in both. The quote below emphasizes the importance Lynette Paglinawan (1997) places on the hands-on aspect of learning to understand experiences at a deeper essence level.

Let’s get at, not only the form. Too often, what is happening in our zealosity to become Hawaiian, we do our form. We can talk about this, we can talk about that, but do we really feel it, because we haven’t experienced it? So, the point is how do we provide opportunities so that the essence is gotten at (as cited by Aluli-Meyer, 2004, p. 149)?

Nohona Hawai‘i is thus a Hawaiian essence-based methodology in which an insider researcher recognizes and honors the value of creating opportunities to actualize his/her Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldview when conducting qualitative research. It was developed in a Kānaka Maoli way through prayer and deep, purposeful dialogue between Anakē Lynette Paglinawan and myself. Three guiding principles and five methods/practices were employed to engage in this methodology.

**Guiding Principle #1: Nānā i ke kumu – Look to the Source**

For Kānaka Maoli, seeking knowledge for understanding involves going to the appropriate and multiple sources. The Hawaiian translation of the term nānā is “to look at, observe, see, notice pay attention to” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 20) and kumu is defined as a
“base, foundation, beginning, source, teacher” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 182). Hence, to deeply understand something, it is essential to see it from multiple perspectives, pay close attention to those that you are trying to learn from, and be open to what they are teaching you. Embedded in this Hawaiian way of knowing and being, is the belief that in order to learn, it is imperative that you engage in direct practice and make a connection with that which you are attempting to learn from.

From the Kānaka Maoli perspective, the term kumu is multi-layered and evokes strong feelings of respect and reverence when spoken and heard by Kānaka Maoli, because it is linked to the Kumulipo26 (Hawaiian creation chant), our deep connection to the spiritual realm, the environment, our ancestors as our teachers (both living and those who have passed on), and our kūlana or spiritual purpose in life. As a doctoral candidate in a Western institution, I followed the traditional path of researching journal articles and books on PTG and constructivist grounded theory to obtain knowledge and gain understanding. However, to supplement my understanding of how the women in my study grew and healed from trauma from a Kānaka Maoli perspective I returned to the literature. I had a sincere desire learn from those that have come before me in the Hawaiian community to ensure that my thoughts, feelings and actions in this research journey remain grounded in a Hawaiian worldview. I closely examined works of Kānaka Maoli scholars such Tūtū Pukui, David Malo, Dr. Kekuni Blaisdell, Dr. Pualani Kanahele, Dr. Lilikala Kameʻeleihiwa, Dr. Malcom Naʻea Chun, Dr. Manulani Aluli-Meyers, Hale Makua and many others to re-familiarize myself with the moʻolelo or succession of stories of those that have paved the path before me.

In addition to literary sources, I sought the knowledge from the spiritual realm, the environment, the women, Native Hawaiian speakers and cultural experts as my teachers to guide my journey, our language, and my own inner guidance by deeply listening to my naʻau.

**Guiding Principle #2: Pono - Strive to Maintain Harmony and Balance**

The concept of pono is not an easy term to explain as there are many meanings for the term pono.²⁷ In all of my interactions, I took special care to be pono or to interact in a manner that maintained balance and harmony with the spiritual, environmental, and human realms. Likeke Paglinawn (1997) further emphasizes this point with his definition of pono, “Pono in my mind, it is the integration of self with your environment, in the way you relate to people” (as cited by Aluli-Meyers, 2003, p. 152). In other words, I was very mindful of how I came across in my interactions with each individual that crossed my path in this journey (cultural consultants, Hawaiian language experts, and other Kānaka Maoli scholars). I was particularly mindful of how I interacted with the women who gifted me with their moʻolelo.

From a Kānaka Maoli worldview, it is believed that that when you give to someone, you do so freely without expecting anything in return. At the same time, those who receive also have a desire to give back to ensure that there is balance in the relationship. It is not because it is expected, but because it is a Kānaka Maoli way of being (Pukui, Heartig, & Lee, 1972a). I found creative ways to give back to the women and those that helped me along the way, whether it was a woman who made efforts to “host” me on a neighbor island or experts gifting me with their knowledge with no expectation of anything in return.

---
Guiding Principle #3: Nānā ka maka, hana ka lima - Observe with the eyes, work with the hands

In addition to looking to multiple sources for knowledge, including myself, and striving to be pono in my interactions with all aspects of the research process, it became evident to me that there seemed to be an imbalance in my deep-seated belief in “giving back” for what I have been given both from the women I interviewed and the from the members of the community that gave their time to consult and share their knowledge with me. The ‘ōlelo no’eau “Nānā ka maka, hana ka lima tells us to observe with the eyes and work with the hands. Just watching is not enough. Pitch in and help” (Pukui, 1983, p. 247).

Simply interviewing and observing them during the interview was not pono (rather, was out of balance) from a Hawaiian worldview. From a cultural standpoint, I also knew that the research I was conducting was for my people, by my people, with my people and not for my sole benefit. I wanted to do something that would be helpful. Yet, I was conflicted on what to do. Following a hōʻailona I received at Kalapana, Hawai‘i, I realized that my kuleana involved not only interviewing the women but supporting the efforts of the group I was studying. This inner knowing of what I needed to do to be pono was further confirmed when I was given a hōʻailona (divine message) on my travels to Kalapana, HI that was Now is the time to rise. My interpretation of this message was to get involved and “give back” to the women.

By accepting a position and getting directly involved as the Housing Support Specialist at Mercy House (transitional home for women exiting prison that was gifted by the Catholic Diocese of Hawai‘i with support staff funded by the Pū‘ā Foundation). I became intimately familiar with the lives of the women, aware of the struggles they encountered, and assisted in identifying ways to overcome their challenges. Through keen observation and direct interaction
with the women and topic being studied, I was able to discover knowledge that would not otherwise have been available to me. In this manner, I was engaged in a Nohona Hawai‘i method and availed myself to all the sensory experiences as an insider researcher.

Simultaneously, I was able to “pitch-in” and help contribute to the solution of the exact topic of my study - pathways and factors that influence growth and healing.

With these three guiding principles in mind, I engaged in the following five methods/practices (see Table 3.1) steeped in Hawaiian ontology to understand and gain insight to the women’s moʻolelo or stories.

Table 3.1 Nohona Hawai‘i Methods/Practices (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, pp. 11, 124, 130, 140, & Pukui & Elbert, 1986, pp. 210 & 212)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kānaka Maoli Method/Practice</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
<th>Source of Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hoʻokuakāhi</td>
<td>“Clearing the Way”</td>
<td>Spiritual Realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chant and Prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoʻolōkahi</td>
<td>“To bring about unity and balance”</td>
<td>Spiritual &amp; Environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit sacred sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>Realms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hīʻailona</td>
<td>“Watch for Divine messages/signs”</td>
<td>Environmental Realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for signs in the heavens and nature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʻŌlelo Hawai‘i</td>
<td>Hawaiian Language</td>
<td>Written and Oral text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate Hawaiian language in data collection, analysis, &amp; framework development</td>
<td>Human Realm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoʻolono i koʻu naʻau</td>
<td>Listen to researcher’s naʻau or visceral mind</td>
<td>Researcher’s intuitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in deep reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>guidance-Human Realm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hoʻokuakāhi.** To connect to the spiritual realm as a source for knowledge and support throughout the various steps of this dissertation journey, I engaged in a process of hoʻokuakāhi, which is the Hawaiian term for “clearing the way.” It is part of the Hawaiian philosophy that “any project should be preceded with prayer” to remove “spiritual obstacles that might endanger or delay an undertaking. Through this type of pule (prayer), the gods would smile on the venture and bring it to a successful conclusion” (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972b, p. 130).
engaged in daily prayer, before and after each interview, during transcribing interviews, and as I analyzed data and wrote my dissertation. This practice was undertaken for protection and to remove any spiritual obstacles that might hinder or delay my dissertation journey.

Hawaiians of old “cleared the way” with prayers before they began an undertaking. Modern Hawaiians – and their multi-cultural brothers [and sisters] – open meetings and begin projects with convocations to a supreme being. Only the deities and languages are different: the concept is universal (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972b, p. 140).

By remaining mindful of the process that I was engaged in and having reverence for both my Hawaiian and my Catholic faith, I practiced certain rituals to help me stay in spiritual alignment throughout the research process. I chanted “E Ho Mai” (chant for spiritual guidance and centering oneself)\(^{28}\) daily while I collected and analyzed the data and worked on the dissertation manuscript. I also prayed the rosary and did novenas\(^ {29}\) consistently throughout my journey.

**Hoʻolōkahi.** To connect with the environmental realm, particularly the ʻāina, I engaged in a practice called hoʻolōkahi “to bring about unity; make peace” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 210). I made efforts to remain balanced in mind, body, and spirit through land-based spirituality. I actualized the Hawaiian worldview by travelling to Moku o Keawe (Hawaiʻi island) and engaging in protocols both in Kalapana, Hawaiʻi and Kūkaniloko (birthing stones) in Wahiawa, Oʻahu. I was able to gain a sense of unification and inner peace through acknowledging and participating in interdependent relationships with the spiritual realm and the environment. This process further prepared me to engage with the women at different points in the research with genuineness, authenticity, and aloha (love & compassion).

---

\(^{28}\) see Appendix P for E Ho Mai chant and translation composed by Edith Kanakaʻole.

\(^{29}\) I use the term Novena to describe Roman Catholic devotions consisting of prayers or services held on nine consecutive days or weeks honoring Mary, the mother of Jesus. (Brown, Anatolios, & Palmer, 2009)
Hōʻailona. Hōʻailona is a “sign, symbol, representation, omen” (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1986, p. 11). Throughout the research, I made sincere efforts to be attentive and notice the signs/divine messages that were in the environment, particularly in the heavens and in nature. There were many of them along the way, but it was particularly true when I visited Kalapana, Hawaiʻi and Kūkaniloko (Birthstones) and received divine messages from the spiritual realm related to my kuleana to work at Mercy House and to write my dissertation. Then again, it occurred after I conceptualized a fluid three phase model of PTG and healing. I have been taught by Lynette Paglinawan and other Kānaka Maoli scholars that when you are asking for a sign to see if you are “on track” and you see a sign in nature, it confirms that you are in alignment spiritually with your endeavor. Seeing or receiving a hōʻailona gives you confidence that the project you are undertaking, in my case of conducting a doctoral study, is pono (in balance and in perfect harmony with the universe). Thus, you are able to move forward with a clear path.

ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi. The term ʻōlelo is a very important term for Hawaiians as words have great power, both spoken and heard. In the text, Nānā I Ke Kumu, Vol II (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972b), the term ʻōlelo is described in the following manner, “ʻŌlelo, “word” or “speech,” was far more than a means of communicating. To the Hawaiian, the spoken word did much more than set into motion forces of destruction and death, forgiveness and healing. The word was itself a force” (p. 124). Indeed, this proved true in my dissertation. During the interviews, some of the dialogue occurred in Hawaiian, and some of my coding was in Hawaiian. While I do not speak ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi fluently, I have been exposed to and learned from various experiences such as understanding the words to various mele (songs) in hālau, learning chants, and through the teachings of my hānai parents. Therefore, when Hawaiian
language came up during the interviews, it seemed to create a stronger connection between the women and me.

In order to make sense of the findings, I felt drawn to research words in Hawaiian from multiple perspectives to gain different layers of meaning. I said them out loud to feel their mana and allowed them to resonate within me. Researching the deeper meanings of the terms and consulting with ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) experts to create models that were grounded in Hawaiian language and metaphors, and therefore Hawaiian worldviews, assisted me greatly in being able to not only understand at a deep na‘au level what they were sharing, but also to answer my research questions. It was more than interviewing, transcribing, coding and identifying themes (Charmaz, 2014), which was a beneficial starting point. But, the overall process was a much deeper, spiritually guided process from my ancestors via many sources, including our language.

**Ho‘olono i ko‘u na‘au.** The final source to gain understanding in Nohon a Hawai‘i is my own. Throughout the research journey, I engaged in a process of recognizing and attending to the messages received in my na‘au (gut and seat of our intellect) (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a). It is the place from which Hawaiians digest ideas, develop meaning of those ideas, and reawaken to the wisdom that resides within us (Aluli-Meyers, 2003). For Kānaka Maoli, it is also the internal guidance system that nudges us to pay attention and listen to our sensory system to gain “signals” for how to conduct ourselves.

In order to truly bring forth the essence of who I am as a wāhine maoli, I needed to look within and connect with myself as a source of information, not just as at a cognitive level, but deep within my viscera – my na‘au. Hoʻolono literally translates to “listen, hear, obey, obedient” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 212).
For months I struggled with this process, vacillating back and forth between satisfying the requirements of me as a doctoral candidate and deeply listening to my na‘au. All of the information I received was digested in my na‘au to be understood and then represented through the Hawaiian language and cultural metaphors. Listening with my na‘au enhanced my ability to listen deeply as opposed to hearing what people are saying through my own frame of interpretation.

To summarize Nohona Hawai‘i, for me to fulfil my kuleana in a balanced and authentic manner, I reconnected with my essence through my cultural values and spiritual beliefs. As Tuhiwai Smith (2012) stated, I “approached protocols, values and behaviors as an integral part of [my] methodology” (pp. 15-16 as cited by Lipe, 2014, p. 30). In reflection, the protocols that I followed and methods/practices I employed were those that were deeply embedded in my Hawaiian epistemological and ontological worldview. They assisted in grounding me as a researcher and also supported the interactions that occurred between the women and myself.

**Recruitment and Sampling**

Ten women were in the final sample for this study from three islands (O‘ahu, Maui, and Hawai‘i). All the women were selected based on meeting the study criteria via an eligibility screening tool in which they articulated self-reported PTG (see Appendix G & H). Initially, purposive sampling was used to select women for this study, because they were able to provide information that was particularly relevant for understanding the PTG and healing processes for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated (Maxwell, 2013; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008).

This type of sampling required that all of the women selected were able to “meet some predetermined criterion of importance” to gather information-rich data (Patton, 1990, p. 212).
The eligibility criteria for the women were: Native Hawaiian, female, incarcerated at any time prior to study, over 18 years old, and witnessed or experienced one or more of the following (domestic violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse or neglect). Five of the 10 women were referred by agency experts and an organization that serves women (see Appendix F).

Snowball sampling was also used via word-of-mouth referrals since this type of sampling is useful for hard-to-reach populations (Engel & Schutt, 2009). This was accomplished by asking the women if they knew of any other women who met the eligibility criteria and may be interested in being interviewed. The women were humbly asked to have their “sister” contact me by phone if she was interested. “Sister” is the affectionate way the women refer to other women they formed bonds with while incarcerated. The women were also given the option to discuss the research with their “sisters” and then ask if it was permissible for me to contact the women directly. Of the three women referred via snowball sampling, only two met the criteria for the study.

Two women referred themselves based on seeing a flyer (see Appendix F) at an agency. Both women met the eligibility criteria and were able to minimally self-report PTG via the screening tool. The final woman in the study who was screened and deemed eligible was considered “unique,” because she was the only intersex woman who had corrective surgery to become a biological female. Additionally, she had not experienced substance abuse issues like the other women in the study, and she was wrongfully arrested, housed, and incarcerated. Interestingly, she was also the only woman who was given special permission to teach classes on her culture within WCCC. Of the 10 women in the final sample, only one of them was on parole at the time of her first interview and as a result I requested approval from the IRB office
to revise the consent form so that she could be included in the study.

Nā Wāhine Maoli: Native Hawaiian Women in the Study

Table 3.2 Women’s Demographic Data – One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMOGRAPHIC AREA</th>
<th>RANGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>40 – 63 yrs (Median = 50; Mode = 49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</td>
<td>HETEROSEXUAL – LESBIAN - INTERSEX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Female” and are</td>
<td>8 – Heterosexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biologically females</td>
<td>1 - Lesbian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 – Intersex (Corrective Surgery at 18 yrs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 MOTHERS W/ CHILDREN</td>
<td>1 CHILD – 9 CHILDREN (Median = 6; Mode = 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL STATUS</td>
<td>SINGLE (5) – MARRIED (2) – DIVORCED (1) – IN A RELATIONSHIP (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPES OF TRAUMA</td>
<td>WITNESS OR EXPERIENCED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV), PHYSICAL ABUSE (PA),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEXUAL ABUSE (SA), &amp; CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (CAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9-DV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7-SA &amp; PA/ 3 (SEXUAL ASSAULT AS ADULTS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the women in the study were born and raised in the Hawaiian Islands and resided in Hawai‘i at the time of the interviews. One woman was on parole at the start of this study, all of the other women had successfully transitioned back into the community and were no longer on parole. The women identified as “females” between the ages of 40 – 63 years, with a mode of 49 yrs. Among the 10 women, eight identified as heterosexual, one identified as a lesbian, and one identified as an “intersex” woman who had corrective surgery at 18 yrs. Seven of the women were mothers, with a range of 1 – 9 children. While three women had no children, the median for the mothers was 6 and mode was 8. Five women were single, two were married, one was divorced, and two were in a long-term relationship.

All of the women experienced one or more of the following traumatic experiences (witness or experienced domestic violence, physical abuse, including sexual abuse, and child
abuse and neglect. Of the traumatic experiences, nine experienced or witnessed domestic violence. Seven experienced child sexual abuse and adult physical abuse and three of those seven also experienced sexual assault as adult women. Four experienced child abuse and neglect/abandonment by at least one caregiver. Four women experienced or witnessed domestic violence, child sexual abuse, physical abuse, and child abuse and neglect.

Table 3.3  Women’s Demographic Data – Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMOGRAPHIC AREA</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ETHNICITIES</td>
<td>Hawaiian, Samoan, Filipino, Puerto Rican, Portuguese, German, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL       | Some high school – MSW candidate  
1 – MSW candidate  
3 – BA degrees  
3 – AA degrees  
2 – HS diploma/ Some college classes  
1 – Completed 10th grade/working on GED |
| (INCOME LEVEL)          | $5K/yr - $70K/yr (Mean = $23K, Mode = $5K - $15K) |
| TIME IN PRISON          | 6 months – 18 yrs (Mean = 9.8, Mode = 10; 18; Outlier 6 months) |
| TIME EXITED FROM PRISON | 2 yrs – 17 years; (Mean = 6.1, Mode = 6; outlier 17 yrs) |
| YEARS OF SOBRIETY       | 2 yrs – 12 years (Mean = 9; Mode = 12) |

All women self-identified as Hawaiian and other ethnicities included: Samoan, Filipino, Puerto Rican, Portugueses, German, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. Educational levels were as follows: one post-baccalaureate candidate, two with baccalaureate degrees, three with Associate degrees, two high school graduates with some college, and one completed 10th grade and working on her GED). All were living in Hawai‘i with various socio-economic backgrounds. Annual Income ranged from ($5,000 - $70,000 per year) with a mean of $23,000/year and a mode of $5,000 - $15,000/year).

Time in prison ranged from 6 months to 18 years with a mean of 9.8 years, and modes of 10 and 18 years. There was one outlier who only served six months in prison. Time exited from prison ranged from two years – 12 years, with a mean of 6.1 years, and a mode of six
years. There was one outlier who exited from prison 17 years ago. Finally, years of sobriety ranged from two years to 12 years, with a mean of 9 years, and a mode of 12 years (see Table 3.3).

Consent Process

Respecting and earning the trust of the women was very important to me, as many indigenous people, including Hawaiians have experienced great harm in being involved with research (Smith, 2012; Lipe, 2014). Given my belief that words have power, I struggled to find terms that would adequately reflect how I perceived the women. The terms “research subjects” and “study respondents” made me feel that I was putting the women in a subordinate status to be examined. My viewpoint was the exact opposite. On my IRB application and consent forms, I referred to the women as “participants” which seemed to imply that they were participating in a process to lead to the betterment of other incarcerated women rather than being studied.

As I did not have the lived experience of being addicted to substances or incarceration, they were the kumu - the sources of knowledge, my teachers - and as such, deserved my absolute respect and admiration. I was the humble and grateful student. Given that I initially had no prior connection to the women during the early interviews to gain their trust, it was essential for me to be humble and sincere in my interactions with them. The women in my study have already experienced so much violation and broken trust in their lives, that I made every effort to interact with them in ways that were respectful and honoring of them as women and of their moʻolelo such as taking time to answer all of their questions prior to the interview and allowed them to share information with me that they did not want recorded or delete information that was transcribed.
My research proposal was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Hawai‘i Committee on Human Studies, and I received approval on January 12, 2016 prior to the start of any recruitment and/or data collection. However, prior to and after I received IRB approval, I informally talked with agencies that served women that might be potential participants, and also generated recruitment flyers to share with agency administrators. I also sent emails about my research to see if they might be interested in assisting me in recruiting women for this study (see Appendix E).

The consent form highlighted the purpose of the study, potential benefits and risks, time commitments, privacy and confidentiality, and voluntary participation (see Appendices J, K, and L). Prior to interviews, potential risks to the women, their rights, and any individual concerns were discussed. Once this process was completed and they agreed to participate and be audio-taped, signed consents were obtained.

Each woman selected to be interviewed was given a code number to protect her confidentiality. All pertinent identifying information for each woman was kept in a hard copy file that was labelled with a code number. All files were contained in a securely locked file cabinet. Recorded interviews were given the same code number that was assigned to the hard copy file. Once the interviews were transcribed, the digital recordings were destroyed.

Eight of the women interviewed had a desire to use their own names, because they wanted to be transparent and claim their identity. I was grateful for these women, because, although I wanted to protect their confidentiality, I was uncomfortable with them being referred to as a number rather than a person. They noted that they were known for the wrong they did and now they wanted to be known for how much they had grown and were making positive changes in their lives and the lives of others. Thus, I submitted a request to IRB to
allow women to use either a coded number or a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality, or their actual names in English or Hawaiian (see Appendix L). Once I received IRB approval, all the women were given the various options and asked to re-sign the revised consent form. As a result, four chose to use their Hawaiian names, four women chose to use their legal English names, and two chose pseudonyms.

Reclaiming their names was a way for the women to be honored and recognized for their valuable contribution in society. Discussion about the potential dangers of using their real names were discussed. Equally important was the option to allow women to choose a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality. Giving the women options for how they wanted to be identified provided a space for their voices and choices to be validated.

**Semi-Structured Interviewing**

Semi-structured interviewing was selected as the data gathering method to interview the women for three reasons. First, pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and healing are multi-layered and complex topics which cannot be easily answered through a survey questionnaire (Reinharz, 1992). Semi-structured interviewing “focuses on the topic while providing interactive space and time to enable the research participant’s views and insights to emerge” more naturally (Charmaz, 2014, p. 85). Second, semi-structured interviewing allowed Native Hawaiian women’s voices to be heard through the re-telling of their personal growth and healing journey. This data collection method created space for gathering knowledge that was hidden and not yet articulated by these women to be uncovered (Hesse-Biber, 2017). Third, by engaging in live interactions that facilitate storytelling, the interview process was also in congruence with Native Hawaiian culture (Kanuha, 2000; Lipe, 2014). Storytelling was a key
aspect that allowed the women to feel comfortable sharing their lived experiences and the meanings they assigned to particular topics in the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

The interview guide drew from the McAdams’ (1993) Life Story Interview as well as questions specific to traumatic experiences, PTG and healing processes, and potential factors contributed to the manifestation of growth and healing. Although this guide was used, I was flexible in modifying how questions were worded and the order in which they were posed to allow for fluidity during the interview and to match the personal style of the interviewees.

Interview Locations and Connections

Private, confidential spaces/locales to conduct the interviews on a date and time that was convenient for the women helped to promote a sense of autonomy (Charmaz, 2014; Brinkman and Kvale, 2015). Interview sites included agency spaces, hotel rooms for the neighbor island women, the University of Hawai‘i Hilo campus, and personal residences based on the women’s preference. Although all interview participants were willing to share with me for the purposes of helping other women, those that I interviewed in their homes seemed to form a deeper connection with me as an insider researcher and I was able to observe them in their natural environments. This closeness appeared to contribute to a deeper understanding of how posttraumatic growth and healing occurs for formerly incarcerated women who have been strengthened through the struggles with adversity.

The O‘ahu women met with me either at the referral agency or at their residence. Being invited into their homes was an honor and a sign of trust as an individual’s home is a private sanctuary. For the neighbor island women who met me at my hotel to be interviewed, I made efforts to be welcoming by having coffee and snacks at my hotel room or taking them to dinner to show my appreciation for meeting with me following the interview. Regardless of interview
location, cultural exchanges became an important aspect of my research in terms of deeply caring for our beloved women and prioritizing the relationship connections (Essence) over the research tasks (Form). Similar exchanges including “talking story” before and/or after the interview, bringing food or small tokens of appreciation, such as a calendar, for the women when I met with them occurred across all of the interviews. The culturally grounded ways of interacting actually enhanced the process and created relationships that have continued until now, over a year beyond the interview dates.

Six-month or one-year follow-up interviews were also conducted for seven out of the 10 women. The women also shared advice and recommendations for what would be helpful for other formerly incarcerated female trauma survivors. The same constructivist grounded theory coding process from verbatim transcriptions completed by me was followed and this newer information was incorporated into the final data analysis. When possible, completed transcripts from this second wave were either hand-delivered to the women or mailed depending on the women’s identified preferences. Culturally appropriate exchanges occurred again as described in the previous paragraph.

**Data Analysis**

Verbatim transcriptions of interviews from digital recordings were completed by me following each interview, including: pauses, sighs, and laughter. Audio recording allowed me to concentrate on the topic and interactions occurring during the interviews and not become overly focused on note-taking. It also provided a permanent record of the interview to be listened to numerous times to sensitize me to the nuances of the interview (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).
I listened to each interview at least three times while reviewing verbatim transcriptions to ensure accuracy of data gathered, and to listen for nuances that were articulated within the women’s stories.

All transcribed interviews were coded using grounded theory techniques: Pre-coding, initial coding, focused coding, and axial coding. Eventually analytic categories were developed. Pre-coding of each interview was done by circling and highlighting significant segments of the interview that stood out (Saldana, 2013). Line-by-line coding from 299 pages of interview transcripts was conducted for all 10 interviews to closely examine details within an interview, remain open to the nuances in the data, and “reduce the likelihood that researchers merely superimpose their preconceived notions on the data” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 125). Subsequently, invivo codes were identified to capture the essence of meanings from the women’s stories (Charmaz, 2014; Saldana, 2013).

Next, focused coding for all interviews provided me with an analytic lens to sift through the initial codes and engage in an emergent and comparative process within and across interviews (Charmaz, 2014). Broad categories were created through identifying dominant codes, deleting synonyms, and removing redundant codes. I also created linkages between those categories and sub-categories (Charmaz, 2014). This level of coding allowed me to organize the data into a “coherent whole” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 147) and create an analytic story of the women’s “pathways” to PTG and healing. Finally, theoretical coding was utilized to work toward developing a conceptual framework for PTG and Healing (Charmaz, 2014).
Nohona Hawaiʻi Examples

The practices of Nohona Hawaiʻi were lived throughout the dissertation research process. While it is impossible to describe all of the examples of what this way of researching involved, I share several examples below.

Visit to Kalapana, Hawaiʻi (Hoʻokuakahi, Hōʻailona & Hoʻolōkahi)

The emotional saturation from listening to six recordings repeatedly over numerous hours to create verbatim transcripts compelled me to travel to Hawaiʻi Island. As a trauma survivor, I just knew, at a deep naʻau level, that it was time for me to connect with Pele (Hawaiian fire goddess) and her mana (Divine power) on her homeland of Hawaiʻi island to release and clear away some of the heaviness I had absorbed during the interviews. Reestablishing my interdependent relationship with the environment and spiritual realm was a necessary step to release remnants of my own residual pain as a trauma survivor.

During this trip, I danced hula near the shoreline as hoʻokupu (offering) to the ‘āina for healing me. I spent time on the lava rocks and chanted E Ho Mai (Hawaiian chant to reveal hidden knowledge and to center oneself) (see Appendix P) to gain guidance from the spiritual realm. I sat in deep reflection and conducted memo writing for hours. Before I left, I placed an offering for Pele at the base of an ‘ōhiʻa lehua tree and noticed two white crosses on the lava rock (see Figure 3.3). Once again, the merge of my Hawaiian and Catholic foundation was evident in nature.
The next day, I chanted again at the ocean. I entered the ocean to cleanse myself and gave all of my pain and sorrow to the depths of the ocean to not resurface again. On the last day of my healing journey in Kalapana, Hawai‘i, I chanted Oli Mahalo (gratitude chant) and gave thanks to Akua (God) and my ancestors for the healing that occurred on that trip. Through this experience, I was practicing cultural ways of healing which is defined as, “strategies derived from an individual’s or family’s cultural group that restore balance and harmony to the individual and overall family relationships...a pathway to invite Native Hawaiians to heal through connecting to themselves, each other, their culture, and land-based spirituality” (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014, p. 75).

The night before I left Kalapana, Hawai‘i, I gazed upon the moonlight and remained open to any messages that the spiritual realm wanted to share with me. I received the following message, “Now is the time to rise.” As I intellectually internalized this divine message in my na‘au, I understood that was time for me to rise up to guide and truly support our women, not just in words or through research, but through hands-on, tangible action. When I returned
home, I felt more pono. My spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional balance was restored and I was at peace. I was grounded again and ready to engage in the next part of my canoe journey to continue the data collection and analysis of the interviews.

The Mana Wāhine Conference

In January 2017, I attended the Mana Wāhine (Empowerment Conference for Women Exiting Prison) and reconnected with the women I interviewed on Maui and Hawaiʻi island. I also connected with other women that were interested in participating in the study. Every morning we all went down to the ocean to engage in our cultural practice of chanting E Ala E! to encourage the sun to rise. In those moments, the illusionary line between insider researcher and the women was very thin and we were all wāhine maoli sharing and listening to stories engaged in our cultural practice. It was a powerful moment of healing in our collective lives.

Figure 3.4 Mana Wāhine Conference Artwork\(^{30}\) (January 2017)

\(^{30}\) Meleanna Meyer, well respected artist, teacher, and filmmaker, initiated this artwork and invited all conference participants to contribute to its creation by adding their mana (life force energy) to the painting.
Nana ka maka, hana ka lima

As a contracted Housing Support Specialist for Mercy House, my role was to promote “Harmony in the Hale” or “Harmony in the Home”. The women, Pū‘ā Foundation staff, and I engaged in collaborative decision-making to develop a list of Mercy House Core Values with wording and graphics selected by the women (see Appendix O). The women expressed pride in their finished product and I was very grateful for the opportunity to serve the residents. Every month we did strengths-building activities and the management team, including myself, made a very conscious effort to uplift the women with aloha.

A few months after my start date, I was baptized Catholic at the Easter Vigil. Anchored in my culture and my faith, I truly felt blessed to be part of the Catholic Diocese effort to support the women. I learned so much through observation and lovingly supporting each and every woman involved with Mercy House for a year. We worked together to create an orientation manual, including policies and procedures with instructional guidelines to support the continued “Harmony in the Hale.” I promised the women we would maintain our relationship and I returned with my mother to decorate for Christmas (See Figure 3.5). The aloha continues to flow between all of us.

Figure 3.5    Mercy House Christmas (Nov 2017)
Returning Transcripts, Conducting Follow-Up Interviews & Sharing Draft Findings

Although I gave all of the women thank you cards at the initial interviews, I also wanted to gift them back their transcripts to demonstrate my gratitude and respect for their stories. So I tediously formatted their transcripts, placed them in folders, wrote new thank you cards, and assembled some small gift items (e.g. cookies, calendars, and flash drives for the four students pursuing higher education). Efforts were made to meet with each woman individually (including women on the neighbor islands) and take her out to lunch or dinner to further show my appreciation for her participation in the research process.

Furthermore, once the preliminary findings were complete (conceptual framework and the ‘Ōhi’a Lehua Tree metaphor), I shared the findings with nine women who expressed interest either in person, by phone, or via email depending on the women’s availability and preference. The women expressed excitement when they either viewed or listened to the description of the fluid three phase model of their own growth. Based on comments from the women, the Bowl of Light and ‘Ōh‘ia Lehua Tree metaphor were helpful ways for the women to understand their growth process. The Bowl of Light metaphor emerged from one of the women during an interview which is highlighted in the Findings chapters.

Visiting a Sacred Site (Ho‘okuakāhi, Hō‘ailona, Ho‘olōkahī)

After completing all 10 interviews, I knew in my na‘au that I needed to go to a sacred site to get grounded and reconnected again with the environmental and spiritual realms. I also went to Na Pōhaku Hāna‘u o Kūkaniloko (Birthing Stones of Kūkaniloko) in Wahiawa, O‘ahu to be attentive to any hō‘ailona I would receive regarding guidance for the next step of my research journey. This sacred site is known as the piko (navel) of O‘ahu and it is where women of chiefly rank would be taken to give birth. This was done to ensure the child born was of
chiefly status. There were many attendants to assist in the birth as well as bear witness to the sacred birth. It was also a cite where Kānaka Maoli would engage in astronomical practices. Some have noted that this site may have been like a Hawaiian Stonehenge. However, much of knowledge of exactly how the stones were used is unknown (T. Lamchenko, personal communication, Oct. 23, 2017).

This experience was another opportunity for me to actualize the Kānaka Maoli worldview through engaging in an interdependent relationship between the spiritual realm, the land (Birthing Stones of Kūkaniloko), and the people (Nohona Hawai`i students and kumu). It was a profound experience to be actively involved in the protocols to enter the space (see Appendix R); preparing to enter through pi kai (salt water cleansing); preparing an offering (hoʻokupu); and listening to the chant of the kumu (teacher) to ask permission to enter. As we entered, I felt the sacredness of the space and experience within my whole self (mind, body, & spirit).

One of the most profound aspects of this experience occurred during the Mele Aloha (chant of Welcome to all both the seen and unseen) and Mele Pale (chant asking peaceful beings to clear a path from any negative or unwelcome presence) conducted by the Kahu or caretakers of this sacred place (hoʻokuakāhi – “clearing the way”). As this chant began, all who were present received a powerful blessing from the rain that poured down from the heavens and as the last line of the chant was uttered, the rains gently stopped. This was much more than synchronicity. It was a true interdependent connection between mankind and the spiritual realm. I saw this as a hoʻāilona (sign) from the gods that they heard our request and responded. With permission from the spiritual realm, we peacefully entered the sacred space.

Once in the space, Tom Lamchenko, caretaker of Kūkaniloko, shared stories with us
about the space and how it was used. When he was done, we were invited to connect to the stones that we were drawn to. Of all the stones in the space, three spoke to me personally: one for time, one for birthing, and one for healing (See Figure 3.6). When I tuned into my naʻau (seat of intellect) to make sense of the message that was revealed to me, I concluded that the divinely inspired message connected to my research was “Now is the time to birth our healing.”

Figure 3.6 Na Pōhaku Hānau o Kūkaniloko (Birthing Stones of Kūkaniloko)- 10-23-2017

Once I received the powerful message from the land and spiritual realm and made sense out of its meaning, I knew in my naʻau that it was time to engage in an even deeper analysis of the data from a Kānaka Maoli perspective.

**Seeking Expert Knowledge**

Understanding a person’s language and cultural frames offers a window into understanding a person’s worldview and who they are in totality. Since I do not speak the language of my ancestors, I turned to cultural experts and fluent Native Hawaiian language speakers to write this moʻolelo from a Kānaka Maoli perspective. This process started when I
began to realize that the PTG model was oriented in a Western framework and did not fully reflect how the women were sharing about the PTG and healing journey.

Although I have told stories all my life, I searched for guidance on how to be pono in telling a story in a Hawaiian way. I spoke with Lynette Paglinawan and reflected deeply on how she shared moʻolelo. I also found a powerful video from Dr. Pualani Kanahele entitled, “Living the Myth, Unlocking the Metaphor” (TEDx, 2012). From these two sources, I felt in my naʻau that it was imperative for me to share the women’s stories through a storytelling format. When I reflected deeply on how the women shared their personal stories with me, I realized that they were using metaphors, particularly trees and nature, and two of them shared songs and poems they had composed. As a result, I searched deep within myself to consider what metaphor would be appropriate to accurately reflect our women and their moʻolelo (stories). As I digested this within my naʻau, I reflected on the Bowl of Light metaphor articulated by one of the women and many hōʻailona (signs, divine messages) came to me about using the ‘ōhiʻa lehua tree and how it grows as a metaphor of a common everyday practice that would be easily understandable to women and the general public.

Using the Bowl of Light and ‘Ōhiʻa Lehua Tree as metaphors to summarize how the women achieved PTG and growth most accurately and authentically reflected the way that the women shared their moʻolelo. Furthermore, I also felt strongly about organizing the “model” using the Hawaiian language which is very rich and filled with multi-layered meanings. Hale Makua, deeply respected kupuna (elder) of the Hawaiian people, has stated, “There is always a loss of course, because the English language is limited. It can never convey the depth or the richness that our Hawaiian words carry” (Wesselman, 2011, p. 39).

Using metaphors allowed me to ground the women’s moʻolelo in a visual language that
has cultural resonance and can convey the depth of spiritual meanings that are specifically carried by the Bowl of Light and ‘ōhi’a lehua tree. I then proceeded forward to conceptualize and share the findings from a Nohona Hawai‘i perspective. Hence, I continued to pray and chant E Ho Mai daily to call upon both Hawaiian and Catholic forces to ensure that my pathway remained clear. To deepen my re-awakening of Hawaiian knowledge, I turned to several books about Hawaiian culture, including Aluli-Meyer’s (2003) book on Hawaiian Epistemology31 and several articles written by Kānaka Maoli scholars about Hawaiian culture, worldviews, and healing. I also reviewed newly published articles on PTG, particularly articles about PTG with prison populations.

I humbly asked key individuals from the Hawaiian community that I had personal relationships with to meet with me to discuss how to conceptualize the women’s pathways to PTG and healing from a Hawaiian perspective. To appreciate them, I treated them to coffee or dinner or gave back their story in the form of transcript if the meeting was recorded. In this manner, I intertwined a Nohona Hawai‘i interaction style with a Western form of data collection. All of the cultural consultants said that I did not need to do anything, but graciously accepted when I did. Thus, data collection was done in a “talk story” format rather than formal interviews, which resonates with culturally appropriate ways to engage with an insider researcher and her people (Kanuha, 2000; Tengan, 2008).

As I processed all the information, I kept reflecting on the women’s mo‘olelo, key terms from the Hawaiian culture namely na‘au and pono, and wisdom shared by Native

31 Her inscription on the inside flap was, “Eo Kalahaopuna [my family name], Because the ho‘oulu [growth and inspiration] is on and your role helps us inspire our collective evolution....Me ke aloha pili mau [with close enduring love], Manulani.” I was deeply touched by her words, because it strengthened my sense of purpose while simultaneously directing the foci of our work as Kānaka Maoli: to uplift the collective.
Hawaiian consultants. Hi‘ilani Shibata, fluent language speaker, offered na‘aupō and na‘auao as terms to describe the positive posttraumatic growth of the women. Aluli-Meyer’s (2003) dissertation included extensive information about na‘au, pono, na‘aupō and na‘auao.

Eventually a non-linear pathway for PTG and healing emerged from my extensive coding and reflexive process that incorporated various terms connected to na‘au. The end result was a three-phase dynamic model moving from Na‘aupō (“night” mind) to Na‘auao (“daylight” mind) with a Huliau or transformative process between the two phases. Additionally, a Ho‘omākaukau Huliau or time to prepare for change within the Huliau phase emerged upon deep reflections amongst the women.

**Naming of the Framework**

As I contemplated an appropriate name for my conceptual framework, I was guided to use a modified version of a name of a transitional housing program for women exiting prison. The name of their program was Ka Hale Ho‘āla Hou No Nā Wāhine (The Home of Reawakening for Women). This title focused on the hale or home where the women engaged in a personal transformation and my study involves the pathways of reawakening and awakening of the women. Because all things have mana or divine power from a Kānaka Maoli perspective (Kanahele, 2012), the women were never disempowered. But, many of the women were not fully aware of their inner power and potential. Thus, the name of the framework was intended to be both relevant and reflective of the life journeys toward PTG and healing of the women and the Hawaiian worldview.

However, before I could actually use the modified name of Ho‘āla Hou No Nā Wāhine for my conceptual framework, I humbly requested and successfully obtained permission from Talia Cardines, YWCA Fernhurst Manager to use the name. Asking permission is an important
step to ensure that the process of an endeavor involving the use of cultural information is pono (done appropriately and in alignment with our cultural values of respect and humility). The two well-respected Hawaiian kupuna (elders) referenced in Talia Cardines’ message were: Haunani Apoliona, MSW, Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Officer, composer and singer and Aunty Malia Craver, former Hawaiian cultural consultant for Queen Liliʻuokani Children’s Center (QLCC). In a follow-up conversation with Mrs. Cardinas, she noted that the intention of the kupuna was to “breathe life” into the name which would “reflect the spirit and resilience of the women and the process of change and empowerment experienced by the women” and “the program has worked diligently to uplift the women” (T. Cardines, personal communication, April 23, 2018).

In summation, I realized that all the women in my study are on a pathway toward overall reawakening. Our kupuna (elders) named YWCA Fernhurst as the home of the reawakening journey of our women. My conceptual framework encompasses their reawakening process and ongoing goal of becoming pono or in balance as they move through life, exit from prison, and re-establish themselves in the community.

**Receiving Hōʻailona about the Model**

On the day that I completed the conceptual model from a Hawaiian worldview, I had a strong feeling in my naʻau to go outside and look to the heavens. Looking up in the sky, I saw a double rainbow in an arch from the heavens to directly over my home for the first time after chanting E Ho Mai daily for months (See Figure 3.7). Immediately, I started chanting E Ho Mai. But, my naʻau guided me to “capture the moment” with a photo which I did. I also realized that I no longer needed to have “hidden messages” revealed to me as indicated by the chant. I finally received a sign!
Subsequently, I chanted Oli Mahalo (Gratitude chant) to express my profound gratitude for receiving a divine sign, which is also appropriate cultural protocol. Anakē Lynette Paglinawan has taught me that, “When you ask for a sign and it is received, it builds confidence because the sign confirms that we are on a pono [proper, well balanced] track” (L. Paglinawan, personal communication, November 11, 2017). As I uttered the last word of the chant, the double rainbow faded away. If I was not paying attention to my naʻau guidance urging me to go outside and look to the heavens, I would have missed the opportunity to gain confirmation that I was on a proper track. Since then, I have received double rainbows at significant milestones on my doctoral journey.

As is proper cultural protocol, in addition to an in-depth review of Aluli-Meyer’s dissertation and enriching discussions with her about Hawaiian nā mākaʻa o ka naʻauao or “vistas of knowledge” (Aluli-Meyer, 2004, p. 83) and my doctoral journey, I asked and was granted permission to utilize the information from her dissertation to further build upon the knowledge she generated about our shared cultural heritage 20 years ago.

Figure 3.7 Hōʻailona – Double Rainbow of Confirmation
Memo-Writing

In some ways, my insider perspective made what the women were sharing clearer to me as I have had similar trauma experiences and the Hawaiian words used by women were familiar to me. The process was, nonetheless, subjective. Thus, it was important for me to safeguard against the possible misrepresentation of data, including where I may be overly influencing the data and/or overly influenced by the data. To ensure that the collective “story” that emerged from the data was from the women and not my own, I wrote numerous memos about my thoughts and feelings prior to the interview, the interactions that took place between the women and myself (including silences, pauses, and other non-verbal gestures) during the interview, and after each interview. Memos were also written at the completion of interview transcriptions and at various coding stages. I also wrote memos about the messages I received from the spiritual realm and the environment throughout the research process.

Memo writing assisted me in gaining greater clarity of my recollections of both the interactive process and content that was gathered during the interviews. It also provided a space to actively engage in the data gathered, support the development of ideas, refine subsequent data-gathering, and allow the me to engage in ongoing critical reflexivity (Charmaz, 2014). Memo writing also supported my reflective process during data analysis to assess what themes were being revealed to me through the research process and to see where I might be blocked or confused by the information shared during interviews.

Support from mentors was also requested to gain greater clarity about some of the main ideas I was conceptualizing and the use of moʻolelo and metaphor to share the findings. Feedback was solicited from participants to see if the conceptual model and the ʻōhiʻa lehua tree metaphor reflected their PTG and healing pathways and interactive processes with
“factors” I identified as to what helps women grow and heal from trauma (Reinharz, 2014). Advice from the doctoral committee was also utilized to validate coding and conclusions. These strategies ensured that I shared the stories and meanings as they were shared by the women and not from my personal stance on the topic studied.
CHAPTER 4: INTRODUCTION TO HOʻALA HOʻO NĀ KANAKA MAOLI WĀHINE:
A HAWAIIAN FRAMEWORK FOR REAWAKENING OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN

The aim of this dissertation was to better understand the pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing based on the experiences of 10 formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian women. To understand possible pathways from a Kānaka Maoli worldview begins with an closer examination of what PTG is and its related outcome and then identifying parallel Hawaiian terminology conceptualization through metaphor. Language conveys the epistemological and ontological worldviews through which a cultural group conceptualizes and lives in their world (Shraw & Olafson, 2008). Imbedded in the language are also cultural values and beliefs that became essential in more fully understanding the women’s moʻolelo of their personal transformation and recovery process from multi-layered trauma, violence, incarceration, and addiction.

Hoʻāla hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli is the Hawaiian name of the conceptual framework for the dissertation findings. Ala is the Hawaiian term for path as well as awaken or stay awake. Ala also means to renew, restore, revive, rise up, or arise (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 16). Hoʻāla is an action-oriented term that refers to awaken, stir up, renew, and raise (Ibid, 1986, p. 74). Hou is the Hawaiian term for “again” (Ibid, 1986, p. 83). Nā Wāhine translates to “the women.” (Ibid, 1986, p. 377). Nā is the plural form of a Hawaiian term, but it also translates to “belonging to” (Ibid, 1986, 257). Maoli translates to Native Hawaiian (Ibid, 1986). When all terms are combined, Hoʻāla hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli translates to the pathways of collective reawakening of the women.

While this study was based on a constructivist grounded theory approach in which this framework emerged from the empirical findings, I have chosen to place this framework at the start of this section of the dissertation and have organized the findings according to this
framework to better explain it. The framework reflects the themes that emerged out of the mo‘olelo that were shared with me but sharing these themes according to the structure of the framework will help the reader better understand what is articulated in the findings chapters.

Furthermore, three key points about the Hawaiian language are essential to more fully understand the Kānaka Maoli context in the Hawaiian conceptualization of Posttraumatic Growth (PTG). First, Hawaiian language is descriptive and words do not come with judgement (H. Shibata, personal communication, March 28, 2019; K. Gomes, personal communication, April 15, 2019). Second, Hawaiian words have many levels of meaning, including literal, kaona (deeper, hidden meanings), and noa huna (esoteric meanings) that have come through in this dissertation. Therefore, in describing the three phases of this Hawaiian framework, the literal translation will be offered and, at times, the kaona or noa huna meaning will be given for greater depth of understanding the women’s mo‘olelo regarding pathways to PTG and healing.

Finally, prior to explaining the framework, I briefly revisit PTG as a search for meaning which is very relevant to growth among offender populations (Maruna et al., 2006; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; Feritto et al., 2012) and the ultimate outcome of attaining wisdom (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2012) to better articulate my rationale and connection to a Hawaiian conceptualization of PTG using both the Bowl of Light and ʻŌhiʻa lehua tree metaphors.

**PTG: A Search for Meaning**

Although PTG has been studied since the 1990s, it is a phenomenon that has existed since early biblical writings (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Joseph et al., 2012). Within ancient religious texts both men and women have struggled during times of stress and have questioned their life purpose and meanings in life (Tedschi & Calhoun, 1995). Existential philosophers Kierkegaard and Jaspers articulated how specific states of mind such as despair and
experiences of failure (which were words often used by the women to describe their circumstances to varying degrees) challenge individuals to relate to themselves and the world in more authentic ways (Gee, Loewenthal, & Cayne, 2011; Kierkegaard (2004); Vahooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2017).

Subsequently, other scholars and researchers such as Janoff-Bulman (2013), Vahooren et al., 2017; Joseph and Linley (2012), Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) have translated this search for meaning into more contemporary psychological language. This existential examination of life is understood in terms of life stressors, including traumatic experiences which cause disruption in one’s basic assumptions and meanings which then prompt individuals to question the meaning of life in general.

A desire for change or to live a meaningful life has been noted in the PTG literature for incarcerated individuals (Feritto et al., 2012; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; and Vanhooren et al., 2017). Losing identity and meaning in life followed by a subsequent search for meaning, that includes a search for new purposes in life, a deeper comprehension of their crime, and their life story, is identified by several scholars as a central role in prisoners making changes (Maruna et al., 2006; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; Feritto et al., 2012). Moreover, reconstructing a person’s understanding of “who one is and what or who to live for” (Vanhooren et al., 2017, p. 3) marks a major turning point in their lives that is triggered by committing a crime and subsequent incarceration. Within the general population, PTG is marked as growth in a change in perception of self, deeper appreciation of relationships, and a changed philosophy in life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). However, with offenders, there is an added layer of PTG in which they take responsibility toward their victims and the consequences of their crime (Elisha, Idisis, & Ronel, 2013; Ferrito et al., 2012; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012).
Although PTG has been studied with a range of populations and various traumatic circumstances (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006; Cho & Park, 2013), PTG studies for offenders and prisoners is very recent and mostly the result of qualitative studies (Elisha, Idisis, & Ronel, 2013; Guse & Hudson, 2014; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; van Ginneken, 2014; Vanhooren, Leijssen, & Dezutter, 2015). PTG for offenders is typically triggered by incarceration and the crime committed and many incarcerated individuals experience a loss of meaning as a consequence of incarceration (Maruna, 2001; Vahooren et al., 2015). Therefore, as a female offender works through issues that are triggered by a traumatic event, such as incarceration, she engages in a process of meaning-making and can even gain wisdom. In other words, as a woman engages in deep reflection and constructive meaning-making following a loss of meaning that results from trauma, she experiences personal transformation. Through this process of personal transformation, which involves acceptance of herself, others and her experiences, she attains wisdom. Tedeschi and Calhoun (2012) define wisdom as:

Wisdom is the summit of what people can reach through posttraumatic growth. Wisdom as a basic assumption doesn’t prevent life from being painful from time to time. On the contrary, wise people demonstrate a remarkable amount of resilience in times of life stress because they accept ambiguity as the true nature of things. (p. 161 as cited by Vahooren et al., 2018)

**Hawaiian Conceptualization of Pathways to PTG and Healing**

Given that wisdom or enlightenment is the “summit” or ultimate outcome of PTG, I reflected deeply on the women’s stories and turned to the Hawaiian language to find parallel language from the Kānaka Maoli culture that expressed the process of meaning-making and wisdom. The Hawaiian term for wisdom is naʻauao which has at its core the term naʻau.
Naʻau (Gut Feeling; Instincts; Visceral Mind)

The Kānaka Maoli term naʻau is often translated as a “gut feeling” or instinctual knowing that comes from one’s mana or divine power located in the stomach. It is an internal guidance system that guides a kanaka on how to conduct oneself. It is also defined as, “guts, bowels, guts, mind, heart, affections; of the heart or mind; mood, temper, feelings” (Pukui, 1986, p. 257). Therefore, the “mind” for Hawaiians is both in the brain (lolo) and in the viscera (naʻau). Hawaiians comprehend what they have learned and make sense of their learning by internally intellectualizing “information” obtained through direct experiences with the spiritual, environmental, and human realms (Aluli-Meyers, 2004). Thus, the lolo is the cognitive mind and the naʻau is the visceral mind and they simultaneously work together to develop perceptual wisdom (naʻauao). For example, knowledge can be gained through the cognitive mind, but to gain understanding relies upon processing in the naʻau.

The term naʻau was selected as a foundational term for the conceptual model that emerged from the dissertation findings, because Posttraumatic growth is growth that occurs, not from the trauma itself, but rather the psychological growth and transformation that occurs from an intensive period of processing through challenges that one encounters during times of adversity (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Specifically, Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) identify this type of growth as significant shifts in how an individual connects with oneself, in strengthened relationships with others, in a greater appreciation for life, in an amplification of personal strength, in changed priorities, and in enhanced spiritual development. It is through an

32 Ibid, 1986, p. 211: lolo ʻeleu is active mind. But, lōlō refers to paralyzed, numb, feebleminded, crazy. Thus, when the lolo and the naʻau are not working in harmony with one another, they one could be acting “crazy”. All of the women used the term “crazy” in describing their state of mind and behavior when they were in the Naʻaupō phase.
intensive search for meaning and processing through various adverse situations that one gains wisdom which is the ultimate outcome of PTG.

The women in this study repeatedly talked about taking actions, “internalizing their feelings” about their actions and “processing it in their naʻau” to make sense of their experiences and then “bringing it back out” in a proper manner in their actions, attitude, and behavior. They also talked about growth and healing coming from deep within their naʻau where their mana resides. To give an illustration of the way in which women characterized the centrality of the naʻau, Noenoe described it in this way.

It comes from within. You grow within. It has to come from within for you to actually bloom and blossom. When you grow, everything comes from within. You no more that, you cannot grow. I believe that. It comes straight from my mana [divine power]. Um, deep down in my mana, my stomach. (March, 13, 2018)

Deeply imbedded in the Hawaiian worldview is the fact that all things have mana or divine power, because it is believed that the people are descended from gods and given mana from their ancestors. Mana is a term to describe a universal energy that animates all life and elements in the universe (Johnson, 1983). It is the divine spiritual source of power that resides within each of us. Thus, it is a cosmic intelligence passed down to us through DNA. It is one’s ancestral memory and, once reawakened, it manifests in our talents and abilities (Kanahele, 2012; Kanahele, 1986).

Another way to conceptualize the PTG pathway from a Kānaka Maoli perspective is through understanding the Bowl of Light metaphor.33

---

33 The “Bowl of Light” is a moʻolelo (story) from the Kai-akea family of the Moʻo clan whose lineage is traced back to at least 800 B.C. Kaʻiliʻohe, Kai-akea’s granddaughter, was chosen to learn the genealogy and chants of the family. Kaʻiliʻohe was born in 1816 and lived until 1931. This moʻolelo is from the book, Tales of the Night Rainbow, as recorded by her moʻopuna kuakahi (great-grandchildren) Pali Jae Lee and Koko Willis.
Bowl of Light Metaphor

Each child born has at birth, a Bowl of perfect Light. If the child tends to his [or her] light, it will grow in strength and [the child] can do all things - swim with the sharks, fly with the birds, and know and understand all things.

If, however, [the child] becomes envious or jealous gets into pilikia [trouble] and/or has thoughts of fear, worry, doubt, judgment, anger, resentment, [the child] drops a stone into the Bowl of Light, and then some of the Light goes out. Light and the stone cannot hold the same space.

If [the child] continues to put stones in the Bowl of Light, the Light will go out, and [the child] will become a stone. A stone does not grow, nor does it move. If at any time, [the child] tires of being a stone, all the [child] needs to do is turn the bowl upside down and the stones will fall away and the Light will grow once more (Lee & Willis, 1990, p.18 – 19).

In this moʻolelo, every child is born as a perfect bowl of light. As Noenoe illustrated, strength to grow comes from mana located deep within the naʻau. Therefore, the Kānaka Maoli term naʻauao or wisdom can also be conceptualized as a “daylight” mind, because naʻau is the visceral mind and ao is the Kānaka Maoli term for light. If an individual’s light is not blocked, then he or she can grow in strength and feel empowered to “know and understand all things”.

However, when there is trauma, one’s light is blocked. A child may develop thoughts of fear, worry, doubt, judgement, anger which turns into resentment and bitterness which is metaphorically represented as pōhaku or rocks that are placed in the bowl. Over time, the light is diminished and the child is no longer radiating light. Because light and stone cannot hold the same space and one’s mind or naʻau can become dark. The Kānaka Maoli term for this is naʻaupō, because pō is the term for darkness or night. From this context, an individual with a “dark” mind is unable to develop wisdom, because he or she are viewing their lives through a lens of anger, feel, guilt, and resentment. Thus, the more rocks that are in one’s bowl, the darker the mind can become. The idea of “darkness” was repeatedly referenced by the women
in articulating traumatic times in their lives, such as during childhood and adult trauma and during their addictions.

The remedy for restoring light is to huli or turn over the bowl. However, it is not always so easy to turn over the bowl and dump out their rocks or trauma. It is a process that emerges over time. As each trauma is processed and rocks are taken out of the bowl, the “darkness” that is blocking one’s light can be uncovered. Thus, in conceptualizing the pathway to PTG from a Kānaka Maoli perspective it can be considered the re-awakening of women, because there is a belief that the light or mana (life force energy) was always there. It may be dormant, because of trauma. However, it is still there waiting to be reawakened or uncovered.

The details of the overall conceptual model presented in the subsequent chapters emerged from the women’s moʻolelo across their life span from birth to their current age. In their storytelling, the women did not articulate a linear pathway to their personal transformation over the course of their lives. Although there was variability in the intensity of their traumatic experiences, all of the women expressed spending a long time in “darkness” described as despair, fear, and anger, resentment, and feelings of abandonment before they arrived at various turning points to turn over their bowls, get rid of their rocks and change their lives for the better. However, within the “darkness” were patches of light.

Given this context, despite all the trauma, violence, and loss they experienced, at some point, they can enter a time of transformative reawakening and awakening as they find their way out of the “darkness” and are able to restore their light. Deeply imbedded in the Hawaiian worldview is the fact that all things have mana or divine power, because we are descended from gods and given mana from our ancestors. Therefore, the movement from dark to light is

34 Quotation marks are verbatim words and/or phrases from the women.
not a linear movement from being disempowered to empowered. But rather, a reawakening and awakening in their overall reawakening or rediscovering of the mana within themselves.

The below brief introduction to the Kumulipo in relation to Hawaiian cosmology and the terms ao, pō, and na‘au allows for an understanding of the connection to and the rationale for the terms na‘aupō and na‘auao used within the Ho‘ala Hou O Nā Wāhine framework.

**Kumulipo (Hawaiian Creation Chant)**

The Kumulipo, Hawaiian cosmological and genealogical chant organized by various time periods, is translated as the “source of darkness” or the “beginning” of all creation (Beckwith, 1951; Johnson, 1981). Kumu translates to “base, foundation, main stalk of a tree, teacher, beginning, source, origin” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 182) and lipo translates to deep, dark; sea (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 208). Kumulipo is translated as “origin, genesis, source of life, mystery; name of Hawaiian creation chant (see Beckwith, 1951 and Johnson, 1981)” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 182). This chant explains that out of the pō or fertile darkness, ao or light is born. Pō is defined as a “time of” or “state of” or “night and unconsciousness” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, pp. 332 - 333). Ao is translated a “time, daylight, and to regain consciousness” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 26). Light brings illumination out of the darkness. Mankind is born in the time of ao, therefore, consciousness is born out of unconsciousness.

Specific to this dissertation, pō is linked to na‘aupō, which literally means “night mind” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 333). Ao is linked to na'auao or “daylight mind” as well as “learned, enlightened, intelligent, wise, wisdom” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 257). To achieve enlightenment (na‘auao) is to awaken in consciousness (growth).
Overview of the Three Phases

Based on the women’s storytelling, three phases emerged to form a framework of Posttraumatic Growth from a Kānaka Maoli perspective: Naʻaupō (“Night” mind); Huliau (Time of Transformation) and Naʻauao (“Daylight” Mind) (See Figure 4.1). In the Naʻaupō (“Night” mind) phase, a woman can experience various challenges. This does not mean that she does not have many strengths, agency, or resiliency. The focus of conceptualizing this phase is to highlight the various traumas the women experience which can be considered rocks in a woman’s naʻau or metaphorical Bowl of Light, because that is the start point of the PTG journey. In describing this phase, the traumatic experiences are highlighted to emphasize the struggles that a woman experiences. Hoʻomauhala can be the grudges and resentments that she may carry as a result of the extensive trauma she endures. Hoʻolahalahala are the judgement and criticisms she may have experienced or that she may have had toward others which leads to Hana Hūpō or acting “rebelliously” in the words of the women.
During the **Huliau** (Time of change) phase, a woman can begin to process through her various traumas and can start to change her perspectives and relationships with herself, others, and the world. An aspect of this phase involves a preparation for this change called **Hoʻomakaukau Huliau** (Preparation for Change). This is in alignment with the idea that whenever Kānaka Maoli are going to engage in an endeavor, there is a period of preparation. In this dissertation, the endeavor is working toward positive change,. The turning points or motivations for change can include: (iʻini hulihia – desire for change, ʻōlelo hoʻohiki – commitment ensures accountability, and hoʻomana -being spirit-led versus ego-driven).

Within the broader context of the **Huliau** phase, a woman can begin to live in the “light” of faith, hope, and love, and make conscious efforts to overcome guilt that may be self-imposed and resentment as well as systematic oppression. Three strategies can be employed to support healing one’s spirit. **Hoʻopono** can involve “getting the ʻopala out” or cleansing and making amends. **Hoʻopili** can refer to the process of making connections with a higher power and others in order to build multiple, trustworthy support networks. **Hoʻopili hou** may involve a process or making reconnections with one’s family and one’s culture. Strengthening family relationships and one’s cultural identity can assist them in healing. The second and overlapping stage of the **Huliau** phase can involve a woman’s ability to **Hoʻoulu pono** or grow into inspired alignment through taking responsibility for her choices and the impact she has had on others. She can choose to shift her mindset, attitude toward herself and others, and begin to practice humility and work toward being pono or in balance.

In the **Naʻauao** (“Daylight” mind) phase, she can begin to thrive. During this phase, a woman can reawaken to her fuller potential through redefining her identity in multiple areas of her life. She can see a broader perspective of herself and can recognize that she is a wāhine
maoli who comes from a rich and abundant history. With proper support, she may feel that she deserves to be forgiven, loved, accepted, and supported. In return, she may share her forgiveness, love, acceptance, and support with her ‘ohana, including immediate family, her “sisters” (other incarcerated women), and her respective home community. As a result, she may be more likely to continue to holomua or move forward and progress in life.

However, there may be times when she can huli ho‘i or may revert back to the “darkness” either through feeling “trapped” by a substance addiction, for example, being triggered by traumatic events that remind her of the past, and/or having inadequate support. Once back in the “darkness,” she can remain there until she makes a conscious decision to holomua or move forward and can begin the cycle of reawakening again. Overall, although the women move between each of the phases throughout their lives non-linearly, each phase will be discussed in individual chapters for clarity.

To illustrate the Ho‘ala Hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli conceptual model through another mo‘olelo and metaphor, I present the story of Uluhaimalama, Biocultural Significance of the ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree, and the ‘Ō‘hi‘a Lehua Metaphor.

**Uluhaimalama**

Figure 4.2 Uluhaimalama in Pauoa Valley
According to ancient Hawaiian lore, Uluhaimalama is a garden that is situated in the heart of the realm of Kane-huna-moku (hidden land of the gods) where fragrant flowers grow (See Figure 4.2). The Queen loved plants and flowers and was a passionate gardener. It is said that she believed that the greatest compliment one could give was to liken a person to a flower (Kneubal, 2015).

Uluhaimalama literally means “inspiring offering to enlightenment” (Ibid, 2015). On October 11, 1894, following her own imprisonment for “treason” for seven months, Queen Liliʻuokalani gifted a portion of her personal lands for a garden in Pauoa Valley on ‘Auwaiolimu Street. She did this to alleviate fear and provide reassurance to her people from the oppression they experienced as a result of the historical and cultural trauma caused by the illegal overthrow of the once thriving Hawaiian Kingdom (Sai, 2011).

Thus, this “gardening” event was the Queen’s call to her people to live her motto of onipa’a (to stand firm and be steadfast) in their cultural knowledge and ways of being and “to understand what is going on so that your response will be correct” (Kneubal, 2015). Queen Liliʻuokalani wanted the people to know what was happening to their kingdom and be pono or correct/appropriate in their responses to the overthrow in a manner that maintained political unity and support for her and the country. It was her cultural way to uplift and bring hope to her people (which is the kuleana given to me in completing this dissertation).

---

35 Ibid, p. 186: to cause growth; sprout. “A hoʻokupu is the capitol letter at the beginning of a sentence and not the period” (M. Kaʻäpana, personal communication, Aug. 29, 2018). Thus, her offering given 118 years ago was meant to be a start point, not an end point, in the process of the enlightenment of Kānaka Maoli.

36 She worked to restore her kingdom with two political groups: Hui Kalaiʻāina and Hui Aloha ‘Āina (7,500 men) and a women’s branch entitled Hui Aloha ‘Āina o Nā Wāhine with 11,000 members. Thus, both men and women worked together toward the restoration of the kingdom.
A brief summary of the event and the trees that were planted for specific reasons is noted here:

Queen Liliʻuokalani named the garden, Uluhaimalama...Throughout the day sacred trees were planted, first the ʻōhiʻa lehua, symbolic of Her Majesty because its flowers were loved by the gods. Other trees and flowers were planted in a circle around the lehua, symbolizing the encircling love of the people for their Queen, the hala polapola because it was the Queen's favorite lei, the kukui to bring light to the government, the pilimai [grass] so that "the love of your people clings fast to you, O heavenly One; cling fast to your land, your people, your throne, O our Queen!" 37

Similar to the fear and anger held by the people being oppressed following the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, the women in this study were initially seeing through a lens of fear, anger, and resentment; yet, they were able to mōhalahala or evolve and learn from (Pukui & Elbert, 1986) not only their own mistakes, but also from the oppression and trauma they experienced in their lives. It also meant that they were “freed or recovered from fear, worry, or illness (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 251).

The allegorical meaning of Uluhaimalama is, "As the plants grow up out of the dark earth into the light, so shall light come to the nation” (Hawaii News Now, 2011).

Metaphorically, it represents the transformative reawakening and awakening process of moving within and between the Naʻaupō phase, the Huliau phase, and Naʻauao phase from unenlightened to enlightened; from darkness to light; from despair to hope. The ʻōhiʻa lehua is the first plant that emerges from the lava fields which can symbolically represent the women emerging from the dark soil into the light to grow and bring their light to the nation. Thus, this offering by the Queen can be considered an ideal cultural framework to begin to understand, at a deep and culturally grounded level, the lived experiences of the women.

Biocultural Significance of the ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree

The biocultural significance of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree and its blossoms is important to understand the ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree metaphor, because understanding the significance can support a clearer understanding of how important incarcerated women are to the overall well-being of Kānaka Maoli people. The ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree is a major supplier of the watersheds for our islands which is an essential element for our forests to survive (Gon III, 2013). As such, it is considered the “mother plant” of the Hawaiian rainforest (Gon III, 2013). Similarly, the wahine maoli are also considered sacred to the Hawaiian people as they give life to future generations.

This endemic, evergreen tree is the most prominent tree of the Hawaiian rainforest and can grow in very diverse ecosystems ranging from sea level to recent lava flows to high mountain bogs (Mueller-Dombois, Jacobi, Boehmer, & Price; Tomich, 2003). ‘Ōhi‘a lehua is known by Botanists as metrosideros polymorpha in Greek, which is translated to “heart of
iron” because of its hard wood, and “many forms” because of the great varieties of this plant (Krauss, 2001, p. 104) ranging from tall trees to medium-sized gnarled shrubs depending on the environmental conditions within the ecosystem. The bark can be rough and cracked or smooth. Their leaves can be round or narrow, thin or thick, blunt or pointed, smooth or woolly. Although they bloom in an array of colors, the most frequent color is red. (Krauss, 2001, pp. 104 – 105). Similarly, the women are very diverse in their socio-economic backgrounds, educational levels, and sexual orientations. They also vary in their demeanor: some have a rougher exterior, while others are softer in their mannerisms. Similar to the ‘ōhi‘a lehua plant, the women are also highly adaptable and can grow in multiple environments.

In addition to the incredible value of this tree from a from an ecosystem’s standpoint, it is also very culturally significant for Hawaiians. The ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree belongs to the wao akua (realm of the gods) and is sacred to the Hawaiian people. It is symbolically representative of the many gods/goddesses as well the last reigning Queen (Kanahele, 2003; Gon III, 2014). Because the wood is so strong, it is incorporated into sacred structures such as the heiau (temples), anu‘u (oracle towers), ki‘i akua (god figures) as well as weapons. However, as with all aspects of Hawaiian culture that incorporate spirituality and strive for balance, the wood was not only for honoring the gods and to create weapons, the wood was also used for agricultural tools including the ‘ō‘ō or digging stick. As the women worked their way through the Huliau (time of awakening and reawakening) phase, they used their own metaphorical ‘ō‘ō or digging stick via educational classes, therapeutic counseling, and treatment exercises, etc. to uproot the ‘opala or rubbish from their lives and “fill the void” by planting new “seeds” to grow in their garden of life.
The liko lau (leaf buds) and aʻa lewa (aerial roots) were used for medicinal purposes to stimulate appetite and treat infections (Gon III, 2013; Kepler, 1998). The combination of the women’s inner strength developed over time and other supports can help to “stimulate their appetites” for life and rid themselves of toxins (unhealthy relationships with themselves, others, and substance use). Many legends include the ʻōhiʻa lehua and it is one of the most highly referenced trees in the ʻōlelo noʻeau (wise and poetic Hawaiian sayings) that are derived from moʻolelo and oli (Gon III, 2013).

He lāʻau ku hoʻokāhi, he lehua no Kaʻala.
A lone tree, a lehua of Kaʻala.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 79)

This ʻōlelo noʻeau highlights the admiration people have of an outstanding person; one who is “unequaled in beauty, wisdom, and skill” (Pukui, 1983, p. 79). The findings chapters will describe how the women in this study have attained wisdom and skill from overcoming adversity and shared their mana (talents, abilities, and skills) from their ancestors with others. The crimson red blossom is symbolic of blood during war and thus the first fallen warrior in battle is called lehua. It can be concluded then that lehua is strong in life and in death (Gon III, 2013; Pukui & Elbert, 1986).

All the women in this study fought numerous battles on multiple levels, including near death experiences and have survived all of them. As such, they represent the first warriors to enter battle and chart a potential course for the next generation of Kānaka Maoli sisters and brothers that will follow behind them in successfully breaking intergenerational cycles of oppression and incarceration. However, before they can become emerging leaders, they symbolically must first go through a series of growth stages beginning as a tiny seed and
evolving over time into fully blossomed flowers which is best explained through the use of the ‘ōhia lehua tree metaphor.

ʻŌhiʻa Lehua Tree Metaphor

Figure 4.4 ʻŌhiʻa Lehua Blossom

I use the ‘ōhiʻa lehua tree and its blossoms (See Figure 4.4) to represent the women as they go through their transformative growth and healing journey to develop insight and eventual perceptual wisdom from overcoming seemingly unsurmountable obstacles throughout their lives. The three distinct, yet overlapping phases experienced by the women as they move from dark to light in their consciousness in the Hoʻala Hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli model will be metaphorically related to the growth process of the ‘ōhiʻa lehua tree from a seed, through the cycles of growth and development, and emerging toward a full blossom. Examples given to describe metaphorical meanings of each phase are drawn from the women’s stories shared during their interviews.
Naʻaupō Phase

The ʻōhiʻa lehua plant begins as a tiny seed in the darkness. ʻAnoʻano is the Hawaiian term for “seed” and figuratively refers to “offspring.” The ʻanoʻano goes through many stages from seed to seedling, to shrub or tree, to branching out, to leaf bud, to flower, representing the women’s thoughts and feelings as they develop a clearer identity, make realizations in their lives and have a better understanding of who they are. Hoʻano is a related term that means to “take a definite shape or produce a resemblance.” ʻAno refers to one’s character or disposition. Ano without the okina before the “a” refers to “awe, reverence, peacefulness, sacredness, holiness, fear, or oppression (Pukui et al., 1986, p. 25-26).

Depending on the level of conscious awareness in the thoughts and feelings of the women, they can grow their attitude and demeanor into any one of these states. When the women are in a Naʻaupō state of consciousness, despite protective factors that can mitigate their pain, they are oppressed by the abuse and trauma they experience as well as the oppression of their own thoughts and feelings about themselves, others, and the world around them. Their fear-based thinking of not being enough and/or not having being enough leads them to be focused on ego-driven self-destructive patterns that include addiction, selfish desires, criminality, and a need to “control” their lives. Like the seed in the dark soil, the fuller awareness of their condition and potential is still encased in the embeddedness of their situation.

The Hawaiian term lepo refers to “dirt, earth, ground, or soil,” but it can also mean “filth, rubbish, excrement” (Pukui et al., 1986, p. 204). In the Naʻaupō phase, the lepo of the women was filled with opala or ‘rubbish’ in their lives. They did not understand why they were abused, neglected, removed from their homes, involved in toxic relationships with themselves,
lovers, and substances. In some cases, they did not know why they reacted with such anger and hostility.

Additionally, eight of the 10 women in this phase did not have a strong sense of cultural identity for the first three or more decades of their lives. These women were not schooled in Hawaiian language and not fully aware of their genealogy and the cultural values and practices their families may have once lived. And while they may embody and enact aspects of those cultural values and Hawaiian knowledge systems, they may not see them as a source of pride and strength during this phase. Therefore, their seedlings were unable to form strong roots and instead of growing in nourishing soil, their shame from feeling less than and not knowing who they are and guilt about the people they harmed was intertwined in the dark soil of secrecy. Seeds that are underground are metaphorically considered asleep from a Kānaka Maoli worldview even though they continue to move beneath the surface (H. Shibata, personal communication, February 18, 2018). Similarly, although the women made numerous decisions and subsequent actions during the Na‘aupō phase, their na‘au was still in a dormant state.

**Huliau Phase**

In the Huliau phase, the women prepare themselves to make positive changes focused on healing and growing as they overcome the trauma they have experienced. Surviving traumatic experiences and developing internal realizations strengthens their desire to change and make a commitment to change. However, it is not until they develop a strong, meaningful spiritual belief system that they have the inner strength and motivation to hold themselves accountable to their commitments.
Seeds are the primary way that trees reproduce and they need light, water, and a fertile environment to grow. To visualize the transformative awakening (growth) and healing (reawakening) that occurs for the women, it is important to understand that a tree grows both below and above the surface. As the first tree to colonize the lava fields in Hawai‘i, the ‘ōhi‘a lehua seedlings, need crumbly, and well aerated soil to kupu, germinate or sprout (Pukui et al., 1986, p. 186). As the women begin to grow, the lepo becomes fertile ground for growth and healing. Ea has many translations including, “sovereignty, rule, independence” but its additional meanings include “life, air, breath, spirit” (Pukui, et al., 1986, p. 36).

In the context of the women, their “sovereignty” and independence can be restored as they have nourishing soil (education) and air (stabilizing supports and resources) to breath during the Huliau and Na‘auao phases. Given the availability of education and necessary supports, they have an environment where they can push out from a more encased state to grow their mind, body, and spirit.

As the women continue to grow in their consciousness, their seedling forms an embryonic root that eventually develops into a tap root that goes straight downward. Over time, the tap root dissolves and wide-spreading lateral roots branch out from it and grow horizontally. The tips of the roots gather water and nutrients to transport them to all other parts of the tree. Eventually, the women can metaphorically “grow” above ground and evolve into a mature tree.

**Na‘auao Phase**

In the mature metaphorical rainforest, the women are the kumu or stalk of the tree and the flowers. The ‘I‘iwi bird (rare and endangered red Hawaiian Honey Creeper birds). ‘Iwi is also the Hawaiian term for bones and one’s ‘aumakua or ancestral guardian (Pukui & Elbert,
Thus, the ‘I’iwi bird and insects represent their ‘ohana or family and extended ‘ohana of “sisters” and the broader community. As a tree in the rainforest, the lehua provides the habitat and food for ‘I’iwi birds and insects. In return, the ‘I’iwi birds and insects pollinate the tree. Once the women mature\(^{38}\), find a purpose in life, and manamana or branch out and broaden their experiences, they can grow their desire to provide “shelter” and feed their ‘ohana or family, extended ‘ohana, and community. As the women shift from being a tightly closed bud unwilling to listen to their hearts (na‘au) to opening their hearts to blossom, they can eventually provide nectar that feeds the ‘I’iwi and other insects. Therefore, the interdependent relationships between the lehua tree and its blossoms and the ‘I’iwi or Honeycreeper bird and insects in nature are required for survival and growth and to maintain balance in the Hawaiian rainforest. Symbolically, both the lehua and the ‘i‘iwi give and receive the following to each other: forgiveness, praise and validation or recognition, love, and help.

**Huli Ho‘i (Backslide) or Holomua (Move Forward)**

The journey in and through these three phases is neither linear nor determined. Oftentimes, the women in the study took “two steps forward and one step back,” underscoring the fact that the process is often marked by Huli Ho‘i (Backslide) or Holomua (Move Forward). This movement can often be influenced by the level of toxicity within the women’s lives and level of support available to them. The rainforest ecosystem symbolism of toxicity in the women’s lives (e.g. toxic relationships with themselves, others – including family, lovers, and husbands; substance use, or systematic oppression) can be seen in the metaphor of the tree by what is known as Rapid ‘Ōhi’a Death (ROD), a tree disease that was initially noticed by

\(^{38}\) ‘Ōhi’a-ku-makua refers to mature conduct. (Gutmanis, 1983, p. 92)
landowners in the Puna district of Hawaii island in 2010 and leads to rapid decline of and ultimate fall of the tree (UH News, 2018).39

The primary pathway for ROD entering the tree is through a wound in the tree.40 Once entered, the disease cuts off the “life giving water” supply to this tree, which represents the love in the form of social and emotional supports in the ecosystem symbolism that interacts with this tree. This disease can be viewed as the toxicity which changes the woman’s outlook about herself, others and the world she lives in as well as how she interacts with others and her environment though it may not destroy her. For example, a woman may be raised in a violent, abusive and/or neglectful home, may form a negative self-image of herself and starts using substances to self-medicate and cope with her pain and anger. She may also be abused by a lover or husband which can leave heavy or cumulative wounds. As a result, she might wreak havoc in the community, engage in criminal activity, and may eventually go to prison. Over time, women can eventually backslide due to unattended or repeated wounds.

But, to counteract the toxicity, she may have a loving grandparent or someone who showed her love and empathy in her life which supports her ability to holomua or move forward and continue to heal and grow. She may build a meaningful spiritual belief system, find safe spaces to purge her pain caused by repeated wounds, may engage in forgiveness, and

39 These plant pathogens, which are believed to have come from Asia and Latin America, have been given Hawaiian names: Ceratocystis huliohia – changes the natural state of the ‘ōhi’a and Ceratocystis lukuohia – destroyer of the ‘ōhi’a.

40 Wounds can be caused by: weed-wacking, cutting, pruning, breakage, root abrasion, root trampling, lawn-mowing, and strong winds (College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources – CTAHR, 2018). While humans can transport infected wood, tools, gears and vehicles that have been contaminated from one location to another, wood boring beetles, such as the ambrosia beetle, bore into the trees and create a fine, dust that mixes with Ceratocystis fungal spores which can be carried by the wind and spread the disease.
gain wisdom through processing her trauma. She may also reconnect to her family and culture and restore peace, balance and harmony in her life.

The life cycle of this tree and the setbacks it may experience represent the cyclical growth process of these women in their awakening of consciousness and reawakening of who they are as wāhine maoli. The natural elements within the Hawaiian rainforest ecosystem represent the many factors that contribute to the women’s ability to experience personal transformation. ROD explains the toxicity in the women’s lives and “trauma triggers” that can occur for the women as they move between the three phases.

Thus, the ‘ōhi’a lehua tree metaphor helps to explain what is unique to each of the phases in the Hoʻāla Hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli conceptual model and how they overlap with one another in the overall pathways to reawakening of wāhine maoli over the course of their lives. Figure 4.5 provides a visual representation of the ‘Ōhi’a Lehua Tree Metaphor and the three phases of the Hoʻāla Hou O Na Wāhine Maoli conceptual framework.

Figure 4.5 ‘Ōhi’a Lehua Tree Metaphor

The following chapters will describe each of the phases in detail to identify what is unique to each of the phases using Hawaiian and English terminology that is associated with
each phase. References to the Bowl of Light and/or the `ōhi`a lehua tree will be incorporated within each phase as they provide are culturally grounded and provide visual imagery to aid in understanding the complex pathways to PTG and healing for these women. Linguistic metaphors are also “linguistic tools for expressing issues that are confusing, complex, hidden, and difficult to state analytically or literally” (Redden, Tracy, & Shafer, 2013, p. xx). Therefore, metaphors and phrasing from the women will be incorporated in the describing the various processes and strategies the women engaged in along their pathways.
CHAPTER 5: NAʻAUPŌ – “NIGHT MIND”

_Ua pio ke kukui._
The light is extinguished.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 312)

The Naʻaupō phase is the first phase of a dynamic three phase model of reawakening and awakening. The above ʻōlelo noʻeau highlights the state of consciousness of the naʻau for the women in this phase. Tūtū Pukui’s wisdom describes this mental state as, “a person who has fallen asleep and is no longer aware of anything” (p. 312). Similarly, the women’s visceral minds were in a dormant state of darkness and their inner light of understanding in their naʻau was “extinguished.” In this phase, they did not yet fully understand the impact of the trauma they experienced. Most of the women also did not have a strong understanding of their culture and cultural identity. The disconnection from culture and loss of cultural identity can be directly linked to the long-standing and detrimental effects of historical and cultural trauma (Kaholokula, 2017; Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014; Paglinawan & Paglinawan, 2014). Furthermore, since the naʻau is also the seat of intellect and where one’s ancestral memory resides, it can also be conceptualized that Kānaka Maoli, including the women in this study, carry the pain and trauma in their naʻau that was experienced by their ancestors that continues to their current reality (L. Paglinawan, personal communication, April 18, 2019).

Thus, naʻaupō or “night” mind is a way to describe the state of consciousness of the women’s naʻau from a Kānaka Maoli perspective. The women were resilient and had various protective factors in their lives such as a loving parent or grandparent, However, four overlapping themes characterize the first set of traumatic experiences for the women in this phase: 1) Yearning for Love, Acceptance, and Support; 2) Living in Shame, Silence, and Secrecy; and 3) Suffering from Grief, Loss, and Separation; and 4) Escaping Pain and Poverty.
Yearning for Love, Acceptance, and Support

While seven of the ten women described being raised in fear of their families as a result of being exposed very early to alcoholism, high violence, physical abuse, and sexual abuse, all of the women expressed a desire to feel loved, accepted, and support by someone in their families at some point in their lives. This left them feeling unworthy and yearning for love, acceptance and support. They felt rejected or abandoned by their family members and often did not understand why they were abused, rejected, and/or why their family members either kept hurting them or could not love and accept them. These women longed for someone to “be there” for them and help them through life’s challenges.

Margaret, mother of eight children, shared disruptive, cyclical family patterns.

There was a lot of abuse, a lot of drinking, a lot of violence in my home. We lived a life of constantly walking on egg shells. My father’s extremely violent and it escalated with his drinking... I had numerous hospital events, you know, broken bones and abuse situations... the violence just repeated. It was a vicious cycle. It was...It was horrible.

She did not understand what happened in the courtrooms, but she always ended up back home with her siblings and the cycles of violence continued. Margaret experienced extensive trauma and pain both physically and emotionally and shared feeling very sad during her childhood.

As a child, I just wanted to be with my brothers and sisters even though we constantly hovered in the room for many, many nights just holding each other crying because we hear dad beating mom up. It was really, really traumatizing you know for many years.

We grew up at some point in elementary school in the CPS system so we lived for many years until the age of 18 in and out of the CPS system due to his abuse and violence.
I mean at some point, yeah we were in and out of foster homes and living in foster houses, but for some reason, you know I was a child so I don’t really understand what was happening in the courtrooms, but it always bottled down to we ended up back at home with dad. No matter what happened we always seemed to find a way back home.

If they were not living in fear, they may have been criticized by their family members and/or felt like they “didn’t fit in” in their social contexts. The women described themselves as
the “kolohe one” or the “rascal” in their families that did not follow the rules and got into “trouble.”

Another example of the longing for love, acceptance, and support was offered by Noelani. Although Noelani was raised as the eldest child in a very violent home as an adolescent, she was initially raised by her great grandmother from the age of three to 14 years old who loved and protected her. Thus, Noelani felt loved, accepted, and supported by her great grandmother. However, when she passed away, she was no longer protected and Noelani struggled with the rejection and abuse from her father. She felt inadequate and unloved for most of her life. The deep hurt that she experienced in childhood was not resolved until she was in her late 50’s.

Jamie also was raised in violence and felt rejected by her mother for different reasons. Her brother was the favored child and her mother often criticized her. She longed for love and acceptance and support from her mother. But, her mother never praised her for anything that she did. Instead, she would find fault with her actions. She often forced Jamie to do things against her will (e.g. taking golf lessons when she did not want to, marrying a man she did not want to marry, and going to therapy). Her mother always criticized Jamie for her “rebellious” behavior rather than inquiring as to why Jamie was “acting out,” which was due to her sexual abuse as a child. Therefore, Jamie expressed feeling invalidated and confused as to why her mother treated her the way she did.

Amy, a single mother with two grandchildren, had a mixed experience because she and her siblings travelled back and forth between her mother and father’s home. When she lived with her mother, she lived in fear and surrounded by drugs and alcohol. However, when she
lived with her father during the summers, life was stable with no exposure to drugs and alcohol or sexual abuse.

She loved both her parents, but longed for the stability and safety that her father provided.

My mom used to smoke weed. I mean only weed and alcohol, but still ... She was getting beaten up too. She would get abused from men too. Everybody I knew used to drink. Everyone was drinking. We just surrounded by alcoholics. My cousins used to come over and do drugs and then eventually when we was like 13 or 14, my and my sister started drinking and my mom told us, “If we wanted for drink, we had to drink at home.” She just wanted us for smoke cigarettes, smoke da weed at home and drink at home where she could see us. She would buy our beer too. She would buy um ‘cause we couldn’t buy our own beer. There was this store close to our house and that lady used to sell us the beer for thinking of for my mom she would wrap it up in a bag, tie it up and then I could carry it home when I was like 9 years old.

I used to come Maui on summer vacation and stay with my dad and his girlfriend and her 3 kids and that was totally different. Nobody was drinking. We was into... my dad was into racing cars, building cars, fishing. He was always da kine person who took us to beach on weekends, uh worked all week and family-oriented. So, it was the total different switch up. His girlfriend used to sew us all of our clothes [laughs]. She neva have to work. She just stay home and watch us kids and my dad go out there work. Me and my sister didn’t wanna come back stay with my mom. But, my mom would be crying. Crying to my dad, “Bring my girls back.” And then he would have to send us back home. We would beg my dad, “We don’t wanna go home.” But, he would send us back home. But, at least summer time, every summer we used to come Maui.

Amy’s mo‘olelo highlights the two varied situations. On the one hand, she felt “safe” with her father, but she longed for love, acceptance, and support in a stable home with her mother. Thus, this is one example of how both protective factors and risk factors were present in the lives of these women.

Pōmaika‘i was never abused or molested. So, she never lived in fear like some of the other women. She stated, “I never grew up in an abusive home. I was never abused. I wasn’t beaten or sexually molested. We always had a nice home and nice things.” Her upbringing was “safe” from any sexual abuse or violence. But when her father returned from Vietnam, he was a “drunk” and was “abusive.” Her mother divorced him after the first time that he hit her. The
majority of her trauma initially began through her feelings of abandonment from her father and resentment toward her step-mother.

So, I have an evil stepmother [giggles] that I hated all my life. She was real jealous of mine and my dad’s relationship. So, you know, if he showed me any affection, he would have to push me away or she would give him the silent treatment for 2 weeks... So, it was like, to me, that was the core issues of my addiction. It was like abandonment issues. Cause now he has a wife, a new kid, a step kid, a sister in law that he treated as his own child. So, he took all three of them, and kinda shunned me away, his own blood and chose them over me.

Throughout the years he would like, foster kids, and um, he had a canoe club, Hui O Ikaika where he would take troubled children off the streets and put them into canoes. He had all this love and stuff for all these other people, but for his own children, he just couldn’t show that kind of love and affection. I just didn’t understand. (January 9, 2017)

Pōmaikaʻi expressed a feeling of hurt by her father’s choice to withhold love and affection for his own family and willingly chose to share his love and support for foster children and his wife’s children even though they were not his biological children. She did not understand why he would make the choice to abandon his own children. In sharp contrast, her mother was “always there for her,” thus, she felt very loved, accepted, and supported by her mother. However, her father’s abandonment was still very painful and left an “emotional scar” that she carried into adulthood.

The experiences of the women in this study varied with respect to exposure to violence and drugs, and sexual and physical abuse, however the feelings of rejection and abandonment were similar for all of the women. At some point in their lives, they longed for love, acceptance, and support from one or more of their primary caregivers. Subsequently, they entered “toxic relationships” with themselves, lovers/boyfriends, and struggled with addiction (for nine of the 10 women).
Living in Shame, Silence, and Secrecy

In addition to yearning for love, acceptance, and support, the women lived through shame, silence, and secrecy in which they felt ashamed of the abuse they experienced as children, did not voice their feelings, and hid their emotions, abuse, and/or substance use from their families. This is not to say that they did not have strengths or some protective factors to assist them in coping with the abuse, neglect or abandonment. The point of analysis in this phase is to identify the traumas the women experienced that blocked their naʻau from being able to maximize their potential. All of the women were traumatized as young girls to varying degrees and six of the ten women were sexually abused by close family members and friends. These women lost their innocence at a young age and five of the six women carried their secret shame until they were adult women in prison or until their early 60’s after being released from prison.

Kehaulani, a 52 year old mother of nine children, was molested in childhood, which left a deep and lasting impact on her.

Yeah, um, actually, um my father and his friends used to come over to our house. And um they used to drink and eat pupus and you know, they used to come over on the weekends. But I can remember one time I was like probably eight or nine years old when um one of my father’s friends snuck into the room and you know touched me while I was sleeping. So, I guess that left uh somewhat of an impact on me throughout my childhood. Uh, I was kinda in fear and shame. Didn’t want to tell anybody because I was too shame. I was scared.

I didn’t actually overcome these traumas. Actually, I lived with it throughout my lifetime and it wasn’t ‘til I did time in prison that I found out dat I could um talk about this traumas and address them and kinda deal with it.

Kehaulani shared that she felt shame and fear as a young child. She kept herself silent all throughout her childhood, adolescence and early adulthood. It was not until she went to prison for the third time that she discovered that other women, primarily Native Hawaiian
women, also experienced sexual abuse. She was raised by her single father, because her mother “ran away” from her father when Kehaulani was three years old, which led to Kehaulani’s feelings of abandonment. Several years later, her mother reconnected with her and stated that she left due to the abuse she experienced from her father.

On the other hand, Kehaulani did not recall her father being abusive toward her mother. She described her father as a “loving father” and made the following statements about her upbringing:

So, my dad raised us. We had a pretty good childhood. He put us through school. He provided well. You know he’s very caring and loving. So, I believe that I had a pretty good childhood.

Kehaulani, Amy, and Dion’e felt loved and supported by at least one of their parents during their childhood and throughout their adulthood. By contrast, Margaret, Jamie, and Noenoe did not feel supported or protected by their fathers or mothers and kept all of their sexual abuse hidden from their parents. From their perspective, they were “too ashamed” to tell anyone what happened. Margaret’s recollection of sexual abuse from a close family member adds a deeper level of understanding of the overlapping impact of yearning for love and acceptance while being raised in fear, rejection, and confusion and living in shame, silence, and secrecy.

Until my mom’s sons came home and that’s when the sexual abuse came on and he was, because he was the oldest, we had to stay home and listen to him and my mom and dad went out. And then I woke up in the middle of the night and I found that my brother was trying to have sex with me and you know I really at this point in my life is where I believe something happened in me spiritually and in my soul that really ruined me from that point on.

How many times I rememba I really wanted my mom and dad. I really wanted my mom and dad to help me, but how was I supposed even think you know ‘cause as a child I didn’t know whether I was the right or wrong one you know. You so scared for - you no like get lickin for ‘em. For dem tinking you lying and you know you shame and you just cannot fucking believe something like dis when happen. I mean you so humiliated
and terrified and you cannot even get up and tell him, “What the fuck you doing?” I cannot even express. You just you wake up and you just you know try move your body, make movements hoping to God that he would take the signs and get off and he didn’t you know. He didn’t. And it was a secret. It was a terrifying secret that I held for so many years. I never ever told anybody until the age of 30 something years old.

Not only was she controlled by her abuser as the eldest in the family, she was spiritually violated which led her to crime and substance use. She intended to take that secret to the “grave” because she did not know how to or had any desire to talk about it with anyone. This pattern of not talking about sexual abuse was true for all six of the women who were sexually abused. Margaret and Amy both talked about feeling unsafe, early exposure to violence, alcohol and drugs in their families and being silenced as children. Amy shared the following:

[My mom] started having relationships after relationships. It was really unsafe for me and my sister. [Begins to tear up] And my mom’s boyfriend used to come into our room and I used to see him and my sister. My sister was sleeping and she would wake up and she would be screaming and she’d be snapping and she would kick him out of the room and she go outside and look for my mom and my mom wouldn’t even be home. She would be like across the street at the bar. And I would lock the door, the bedroom door. Several times her boyfriend would come into our room when my mom not home.

It happened to me when I was nine years old yeah. I never told my mom. I didn’t tell my sister. But, my sister, she never did share with, you know, me about that, if anything happened to her. I mean it was just something that, you know we didn’t talk about. When I seen my mom’s boyfriend in my room by my sister’s bed, I would freeze up and I wouldn’t say anything. I would be so scared and act like I sleeping... You know how I grew up, “You’re seen and not heard.” I never told anyone until I was 30 in treatment at Hina Mauka.

Amy shared that she hid her shame for many years and it was not until she went into treatment that she finally disclosed what happened to her as a young girl. Margaret linked being separated from her family spiritually (because of the undisclosed sexual abuse) to a similar “rule” about not speaking unless you are approached by an adult.

At the same time, we were really separated spiritually you know. You know that saying, “Kids don’t speak unless they’re spoken to.” Well that was really encouraged in our house. We actually couldn’t speak at all unless we were approached.
As a young girl, Pōmaikaʻi did not voice her feelings and instead she kept them hidden.

Well as a young girl, I didn’t voice my opinion, you know, I kinda just stuffed it. But my mom knew and she saw what was going on. So, the last time I lived with dem, I just came home and I just didn’t even bother already. It’s like whatever.

After going through repeated feelings of rejection and abandonment from her father, she started to lose hope and “just didn’t even bother” trying to gain her father’s love and acceptance.

In addition to hiding their sexual abuse, they also hid the familial violence, trauma, neglect, and substance use occurring within their home from child protective services and other law officials out of family loyalty and to “protect” their family and themselves from shame. They concealed their abuse from child welfare services, the police and other law enforcement personnel. Margaret shared the importance of belonging to family was the most important for her and she would lie to “protect” her father and her ability to remain with her family.

I was constantly beat from my dad and I hid a lot of it from the schools you know because ...even though I got you know dirty lickens from my dad and my house was all screwed up and you know it just it was horrible. I just didn’t care, because at the end of da day I still wanted to be home with my family. It was still my family. That was still my dad no matter what...You belong to your family no matter what. It doesn’t matter how much times you got kicked in the ass whatever your loyalty was always to your family. So, if an officer would question me about my dad all of us would immediately lie. We’d always protect my father. I mean, you know, it’s hard to explain but dat’s - I would rather be in the home of my parents as fucked up as they was, excuse my profanity, then to wake in the house with some strangers. So that was really, really, I mean, it was sad for me you know.

Jamie, a 52 year old mother of six (three boys, three girls) described her childhood as an “unhappy one” due to family tension. She was also molested by her aunt’s husband and raped by her golf instructor:

My mom’s younger sister’s husband used to molest me, but it was crazy because, you know what, ... I never said anything to my family ’cause I already know what the result is going to be to where um, I was also raped by my father’s cousin. And it got to the
point where I even wacked him in the shin with the golf club right and he wacked me
back with it. He was raping his step-daughters too. Cause when he was doing this to
me, he was telling me, “Oh you know what, they all loved it and this and that.” And I
would say, “I’m gonna scream.” He says, “Scream all you like ‘cause no one’s gonna
help you ‘cause they don’t really care about you.”

Jamie, who was sexually violated from nine years old and throughout her adolescence,
also felt that her voice was silenced and that her family did not care and would not protect her.
At 16 years old, she became pregnant and was “forced” to marry her boyfriend even though
she did not want to, because he was able to “provide” for her and her family. Without the
protection of her family, she continued to enter violent relationships with men. She felt that she
could not live without a man in her life and she always hid her relationship problems and drug
use from her family which was true for many of the women in this study.

Nahe was not sexually abused; however, she provided another example of living with
shame and concealing her violent relationship and substance abuse from her family. She
became involved with a boyfriend in high school whom she “clinged onto for dear life” to fill
the spiritual and emotional “void of a mother or father figure.” Eventually, he started dealing
drugs for her brother and introduced Nahe to marijuana and cocaine. As her addiction
increased, she became more and more disconnected and separated from her family, because
she hid his violence and her drug addiction. She spent most of her adult life “on the run” and
being ashamed of her inability to stop her drug addiction.

**Unaddressed sexual abuse.** Four of the six women who disclosed sexual abuse in their
interviews did not address it until they were in their 30’s or not at all. Noenoe, the eldest
woman, disclosed her sexual abuse by a close family member for the first time during a tearful
moment during her initial interview, which meant she held that secret within her for 63 years.
Thus, there remained deep hala, ‘eha, and hihia with respect to sexual abuse that led to
substance addictions and entering relationships with violent and manipulative men and numerous suicide attempts throughout her adolescence. NoeNoe’s story is similar to the other sexually abused women. Their light was blocked by all the pōhaku in their bowl and they lived their lives in the darkness.

By contrast, Dion’e, grew up with a strong, faith-based home, grounded in her culture. She was protected from drugs and violence. But, she lived in shame, silence, and secrecy during her childhood and adolescence because she was fearful to talk about her sexual abuse by her step-father and other individuals in her church:

I was so afraid that I didn’t even want to talk about it. If my parents had talked to me, I always tried to divert the conversation or divert the situation, you know, just ignore it and um, not want to talk about it.

Although she had a very strong relationship with her mother and grandmother, she carried ho’omauhala or deep resentments toward her step-father and felt that he “took her mother” away from her, because she could not talk to her mother about the sexual abuse. Amongst the women in this sample, six of the 10 women lived with the shame, silence and secrecy of sexual abuse. Six women who were sexually abused also engaged in multiple suicide attempts at various times in their lives or lived their lives very recklessly. The remaining four women did not experience sexual abuse at any time in their lives. Three of them had very rebellious attitudes and fought back against their potential abusers such as Noelani and Lisa and/or had strong female role models in their lives to guide and protect them (Lisa, Pōmaika‘i, & Nahe).

Regardless of the whether or not the women experienced sexual abuse, the hala or emotional bondage stemming from living in shame, silence, and secrecy and yearning for love, acceptance, and support was amplified by the isolation experienced from suffering from multi-layered grief, loss, and separation from their families.
Suffering from Grief, Loss, and Separation

Grief, loss, and separation due to death or abandonment of a parent through divorce or a break-up of their parents at a young age left a deeply lasting imprint on the self-image and worldviews of the women in this study. Nine out of the ten women described coming from a “broken home” due to divorce or separation. Only Noelani’s parents remained married; however, as stated earlier, she was raised in an extremely violent home. Both of her parents drank heavily and she witnessed her father beating her mother and siblings frequently as well as being physically, mentally, and emotionally abused herself.

Many of the women experienced extensive grief and sorrow as a result of losses throughout their lives beginning in childhood and continuing through their adult years. In particular, parental losses due to death or abandonment left the women longing for love and connection to loved ones that died or broke contact with them for many years due to the struggles and entanglements stemming from family trauma and addictions for 9 of the 10 women. Nahe, a 52 yr old woman, was raised as one of five children in a loving, nurturing home. Yet, she described “a lot of death in my family growing up, I mean my grandfather, my dad, my great grandmother… a lot of death in our family.” Despite living with two loving parents during her early childhood, Nahe was devastated and felt “extremely disconnected” from her family and the world when her father, whom she loved dearly, died due to lung cancer which turned into brain cancer when she was only nine years old. After her father’s passing, she longed for a “father figure or a mother figure” to “fill that void,” as her mother became very depressed and was unable to be supportive of Nahe.

Kehaulani felt the painful loss and separation from her mother and shared, “And then um, you know, the pain of not having my mother there when I was growing up.” In addition to
losing close family members, such as parents and grandparents, the women also talked about
the sadness they felt losing family members due to illness, incarceration, and/or sudden deaths
of family members as they entered adulthood. Both Amy and Margaret struggled with their
fathers being incarcerated for a portion of their lives. Three of the women talked about losing
their mothers while other traumas were co-occurring. For example, Nahe lost her mother while
she was in treatment. Dion‘e’s mother passed away during her trial for a mistaken identity
case. After Amy was released from prison and caring for her mother, Amy lost her mother due
to illness.

As they became mothers, the women also lost their children due to child welfare
services removing their children from care. Nahe, like the other mothers, had two of her
children removed from her care due to testing “positive” for drugs upon their births. NoeNoe,
who was raised by her aunt and uncle as her hanai parents, often ran away from home due to
her rebellion for the undisclosed sexual abuse she experienced as a child. As a young adult, she
became a mother of 9 biological children (three sets of male triplets).

Because she was in a very violent relationship with a substance using husband, she
suffered the “loss” of not being able to raise her children. NoeNoe’s in-laws did not “blame
her” for being homeless with her husband and nine children, they took her children to Alaska
to raise them and she has not been able to see them for many years. Additionally, Noenoe lost
“three of her sisters” due to suicide, because they had nowhere to go when they left prison.

All of the women suffered from various multi-layered trauma, including the grief, loss,
and separation that began in childhood and continued throughout their adult lives. As a result,
many of the women found themselves wanting to escape the pain and poverty that was either
part of their childhood or resulted from their increased substance use addiction.
Escaping Pain and Poverty

Nine of the ten women began using substances during adolescence to cope with the violence they witnessed and/or abuse they experienced. Because of the hala and ‘eha the women suffered in childhood, they found ways to escape through using substances. Drugs and alcohol provided a means to “forget” about the mental, emotional, and physical abuse they experienced.

Additionally, five of the 10 women were “raised on welfare” or grew up with very limited financial resources. Three of the five women who struggled with poverty during their upbringing were raised by single mothers. Therefore, those women initially started using drugs to “escape” or “stuff” their pain. Due to financial stress within their family either during adolescence through middle adulthood, they also started “dealing drugs” to make money to pay for basic needs. However, as their addiction increased, they were unable to continue dealing drugs and eventually found themselves back in prison.

Noelani, a 59 year old, self-identified lesbian, lived through extreme poverty and violence throughout her life (e.g. witness to domestic violence, intensive mental, emotional, and physical abuse) particularly at the hands of her father. Similar to the other women in this study, she did not have anyone to talk to her and help her cope with the trauma after her grandmother passed away when she was 14 years old. Without someone to help her “process” her feelings, she became anger, bitter, and deeply resentful toward her father.

I saw a lot of violence and heard a lot of violence, you know. Was subjected to some of the physical violence, especially and the mental and emotional and verbal abuse, you know. I didn’t have, you know, someone I could… really help me thru dis you know at that age. I would talk to myself, you know and um it would be you know like ugly, mean thoughts having ugly mean thoughts toward my father you know of my dad, you know. “I’ll kill. I’ll kill you one day.” you know for hitting my mom you know for beating her up you know. And I never you know, I… all of that turned into hate and
bitterness and anger and rebelliousness, you know. I lost I had no respect for my father-no respect, you know.

She engaged in heavy substance use to “escape the pain” she experienced as a result of rejection and extreme physical and verbal abuse from her father.

I escaped, you know. I escaped mentally and emotionally. I was escaping the pain mentally and emotionally. By running away. By sniffing paint. By taking downs, you know. Going surfing you know all high you know ‘cause it gave me a rush. Made me forget about what was happening at my house at home you know.

Noelani was the only lesbian among the women and as such, she experienced intense discrimination and rejection from her father and left her home at a very young age. She became a “pimp” to gain respect on the streets and used drugs to escape the pain of her father’s rejection. For most of her life, she was on a path of self-destruction through her involvement in a criminal and substance using lifestyle as a pimp and drug dealer that resulted in four long rotations at the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC). As an inmate, she rebelled against the guards who treated her harshly and reminded her of her father although she did not realize that she was seeing the male guards in authority as a representation of her father.

She did not know why she was so angry with them and why she responded the way she did. Her spirit of “rebellion” resulted in 100 write-ups (e.g. violations of the prison policies and procedures - including fighting and not following the rules) within a few months of being in prison for her first three rotations of incarceration. She was the eldest child and the only girl, she witnessed a high degree of violence and did not have anyone to help her through her struggles.

---

41 See Mo‘olelo O Na Wāhine for her rap song entitled, Until I Met the Savior to review her mo‘olelo in her own words.
Noelani’s description of the violence and her escaping the pain was described by many of the women on multiple occasions throughout their lives. The women often turned to drugs and alcohol to “escape” and were not fully aware of why they did what they did and continued to move in the darkness of their lives, unenlightened and suffering with hala and ‘eha with both physical and emotional wounds. Margaret, who was sexually and physically abused and exposed to a high degree of violence in her home, “escaped” the reality of her abuse by starting to drink at the age of 12 years old.

At the age of 12 years old I started experiencing drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, taking from dad’s liquor cabinet. I just basically, you know, doing substances to escape the reality of what was happening in the house.

She left home at a very young age after having her first child who was taken from her by her mother, who was an “alcoholic.” Thus, her pain was compacted by the abuse, the loss of her child, and the ongoing hope that her family would love, accept, and support her. For the next 20 years, she experienced even greater abuse. Her addiction and rage intensified and she began engaging in even greater acts of rebellion and inflicting harm on others including her family. She was so deeply enraged, that she was living unconsciously and completely unaware of why she was doing what she was doing.

I’d been loaded for over 20 years. I’ve never been sober. I’ve been mentally, chemically imbalanced for so long that I’m now in one state where I’m in maximum security and I’m like, “Fuck I’m never getting out. I hate da world...I hate my parents the most.” At this time of my life it wasn’t even about my parents because from when I left home ‘til now I went through so many fucked up broken relationships that went into more intensive abuse and more intense sick and twisted stuff... I was tied to the bed. I was beat with shot guns. I was raped repeatedly. I was left in the cane fields the pineapple field fo’ die you know. The cop on my body you know.

By then my crimes escalated. I was holding parents at gun point. Tying parents in front of their kids you know. I was pipe burning people’s bodies. I was robbing anybody cold blooded. I was stabbing people. I stabbed somebody right through the cheeks...Out of rage. I tied a woman down on da toilet one time in Jack Hall Housing and I literally pipe burned her whole body. I lit the pipe with a torch until the glass came red and I
burnt her whole body over money. But, I tink it was just rage. Just complete rage. I was so angry. I think there was no. If you asked me what I was angry about it would be a fuckin’ lost question. It was too much. It was just escalated one big ball of fucking anger and hate ova from 9 years old.

Margaret’s anger and addiction is reflective of a deep, spiritual wound beginning with the sexual abuse and continuing to other violent assaults she experienced and inflicted upon others. However, she did not understand the reasons for her “rage” of not being loved and protected until several years later.

Kehaulani explained her perspective of why she turned to substances that reflects many of the women’s stories that were sexually abused and/or abandoned:

I thought at one point I was doing it [using drugs] to hide the pain, you know of all the what I went through when I was younger…like um not telling anybody about, you know, um my father’s friend touching me when I was small. And then um, you know, the pain of not having my mother there when I was growing up, you know because… right from intermediate 7th grade I started smoking marijuana and started drinking. And them um I experienced cocaine about 10th grade and 11th and 12th grade, I was already snorting a lot of cocaine.

Kehaulani, who was sexually abused and abandoned by her mother when she was three years old and did not reconnect with her mother until many years later, highlights a pattern that occured for the women in terms of escalating their involvement with drugs as they got older.

Pōmaikaʻi also started using substances at 13 years old to cope with the abandonment she experienced as a young child when her mother divorced her father because of his violence and alcoholism. When asked about her addictions, she offered the following reflections:

So, it was like, to me, the core issues of my addiction… was like abandonment issues. Den I started drinking, at age 13, smoking weed, doing cocaine, popping pills, and just stupid kine stuff. But, I really feel that this was a big factor, not being able to grow up with a dad.

Being raised by a single mother, Pōmaikaʻi also chose to sell drugs to alleviate the financial burden on her family. Although her initial strategy was to lessen the financial stress
on her family, it started her on a trajectory of a cyclical pattern of drug dealing, addiction, and incarceration.

So, like at 15 almost 16 years old, I met this drug dealer in Aliamanu, and um, he was my boyfriend, and I saw the kind of money he was making. I was like, you know if I go, I not going have to burden my mom. She no have to buy anything. She no have to buy me clothes. She no have to buy those things. I went out on my own at 15 to kind of alleviate the stress level from me being at home. But, you know, it still didn’t compensate, because she knew I was drinking and doing drugs and stuff. But, all she asked is that I graduate from high school and I did. So that was her only thing. Then after high school, you know, me and da boyfriend was killing each other. We was on meth. ‘82 I started smoking meth and then I graduated in ‘84.

From ‘88, I wasn’t smoking meth already, you know, once I got pregnant yeah. I had my son in ‘89. From 88-92, I had my daughter, my first daughter; I stayed clean for maybe a little while. And den his friend came over and had meth. You know, we smoked. You know, I was huge and I thought if I would smoke little bit, maybe I could drop some weight, and it was just, you know. Once I wen smoke it was over. It just unleashed a dragon that I had no control over. Automatically I was picking up, selling, getting back into stuff.)

What I see in my own pattern is that, whenever things get hard, I go to get stuff. Not only because I make money, but because every time I get clean, I pick up a lot of weight. So, I know if I smoke I can trim down, you know, I can make money, and I’m an extremist. I take it to the extremes. So, I’ll just run it until the wheels fall off. I just keep going girl, no more end. Every time I get sober, I self-sabotage.

Pōmaika‘i’s mo‘olelo is reflective of many of the women in this study during their Na‘aupe phase of their lives. Her description of “unleashing the dragon” was common among the women in their attempt to use a metaphor to describe and separate themselves from how they viewed themselves when they were substance addicted versus when they were sober.

Many of the women attributed their addiction to “ice” like a “devil” that they had no control over. They repeatedly self-sabotaged their lives and chose to return back to drugs after being sober.

The women’s circle of influence centered around drug networks and many of them did not know any other life during their Na‘aupe phase. Furthermore, many of them continued to
default back to their life of substance addictions and unhealthy relationships as a primary means to cope with their multi-layered trauma and often relentless emotional, mental, and physical turmoil.

The following Hawaiian terminology highlights the impact of the trauma they experienced and helps to contextualize the first four overlapping “themes” within the Na‘aupō from a Kānaka Maoli perspective: Hala, ‘Eha, and Hihia (Emotional Bondage, Pain, & Entanglement).

Hala, ‘Eha, Hihia (Emotional Bondage, Pain, & Entanglement)

Figure 5.1 Na‘aupo – “Night” Mind - One

All of the women experienced numerous and varied traumatizing events from childhood through middle or late adulthood rather than a singular traumatic event. The Hawaiian terms that best encompass the traumatic experiences the women experienced and/or created and the resulting physical and emotional pain and entanglements are hala, ‘eha, and hihia. Hala is defined as, “fault, transgression, error; to transgress” or “sin” after the introduction of Christianity to Hawai‘i (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 71). ‘Eha is defined
as, “hurt, pain, in pain, aching, injury, ailment, suffering; to hurt, cause pain, suffering” (Pukui & Elbert, 1983, p. 37). When there is a wrongful act between the offender and the victim, it is a binding cord that keeps the offender bound to her deed and the victim. Similarly, the victim holds onto the cord and becomes equally bound thereby creating hala or emotional bondage (Pukui, Heartig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 71).

Inevitably, others are drawn into the original conflict. In the words of Tūtū Pukui,

As hala is visualized as a cord that binds culprit, offense, and victim, so hihia⁴² is viewed as a larger, yet tighter network of many cords tied in numerous, stubborn knots... Emotions, actions and counter-actions and counter-emotions spread to the family or close associates. Soon everyone concerned is entangled in a network of resentment, hostility, guilt, depression, or vague discomfort. Cause sparks effect; effect brings about cause. The net tightens, yet expands at the same time.” (Pukui, Heartig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 71-72)

This concept of hihia was expressed by Amy, who felt that her sexual abuse which led her to substance addiction kept her “stuck in a bondage.” In the following quote, Amy emphasized her realization of the impact “addicts” have on others. In this manner, hihia can be conceptualized as stemming from the culprit (substance user), offense (addictive behaviors), and victims (family members and close associates):

And you know what somebody else told me is that, “You know [Amy], you can picture one fish net?” I said, “Yeah.” He goes, “Every addict is a eye on the fishnet and everybody around them. Well, an eye on a fishnet is a addict, and that person affects everybody around them.” So, I was like, “Whoa. That’s not other people. Everybody is affected somehow.” I bet you everybody knows somebody in prison. Or knows somebody who’s an addict.” (November 30, 2016).

During the Naʻaupō phase, all 10 women expressed being in a state of emotional bondage, pain, and suffering in this phase to varying degrees. During their early childhood and adolescence, the women’s consciousness in terms of their visceral mind was in a state of

⁴² Pukui & Elbert, 1972a, p. 71: entangled, enmeshed, fish net. Can also be considered an “entanglement of emotions, actions, and reactions all with negative connotations” or a “network of ever-spreading unpleasantness.”
“darkness,” because of the hala and ‘eha they experienced due to violence and extreme abuse and or feelings of abandonment, particularly in childhood. Despite experiencing horrific abuse or abandonment in childhood and adolescence, they still held onto to some hope that the abuse would end and they could have a sense of belonging and connection to their family.

For example, despite the horrific abuse Margaret experienced, she still had hope as a child that she had a family to “go home to.” This helped her to see past the abuse she was experiencing:

As a child growing up even in the insane abuse and insane you know in and out of the system- CPS I still had the hope and belief as a child dat I could have the sense of family you know. Hoping and believing for a happy family...I tink most of all it was really really important for me as a child...It gave me da ability to see past da abuse -see past how fucked up my parents was, see past all da tings that was happening because I still had dis piece of me that as no matter what’s going on in the reality of my life, I had one house to walk in and one family to go home to. Maybe it wasn’t the definition of a functional family, but I had my mudda, my fadda, and my sistas and bruddas.

Connection to family and family loyalty was very important to Margaret and the other women in this sample, despite the abuse they experienced. Margaret was able to reframe the view of a normative family. Like other women in this study, her loyalty to family helped to mediate the pain of being seperated from her loved ones. However, over time the women experienced the cumulative impact of multi-layered trauma and their sense of hopefulness began to diminish and the women began to experience feelings of despair.

**Haʻule manaʻolana (Feelings of Despair)**

The women may have held onto to hope in childhood despite fear and oppression. However, as they experienced more trauma, they entered a state of despair which is the absence of hope. The term haʻule manaʻolana is the Hawaiian term for despair and is comprised of three words: haʻule (fallen, loss, failure, neglect, defeat) (Pukui & Elbert, 1986); manaʻo (thoughts, ideas, beliefs, opinion, theory, feelings, desire, want) (Ibid, 1986); and lana
The kaona or deeper meaning of the term manaʻo is one’s inner light.\textsuperscript{43}

Embedded in this definition is the Hawaiian belief that, at the individual level, manaʻo (cognitive and visceral mind), kino (feelings in the body), and uhane (spiritual essence) are not separate from one another. Instead, they form an interdependent triangle (as presented in Chapter One) with the idea that pono or balance and perfect harmony is at the center of the triangle. Thus, when the women are in a state of despair, they are pono ‘ole or not pono which can also be translated to be without hope since another meaning for pono is hope (Ibid, 1986).

Their feelings become out of balance and their inner light is diminished. Their viewpoint of themselves, others, and the world they live in is obscured, because of their various traumas they have experienced which can be represented by the pōhaku or rocks. Without supports to restore hope, they can become very depressed, lose the will to live, and return to using drugs and alcohol as their primary coping strategy in life. Thus, the second set of interactive themes help to explain the behavioral choices made by the women during the Naʻaupō phase.

Figure 5.2 Naʻaupo – “Night” Mind Two

\textsuperscript{43} Kumu Hula (Hula Master) John Lake learned this from his kumu, hula master, Aunty Maʻiki Aiu Lake. (State Foundation on the Culture and the Arts, 1984)
Being Controlled by Toxic Relationships

Although the women were involved in “toxic relationships” (including co-dependent relationships) began in adolescence and continued throughout middle or late adulthood, over time, the women described being “controlled” by their “toxic relationships”. Nine of the 10 women viewed themselves negatively and became “trapped” by their addictions, and “caught up” in negative relationships. The women identified three areas of toxic relationships: self, substance use, and others (lovers/husbands or family members). Additionally, as the toxicity of their relationships increased, their desire to live decreased and they lost the will to live (See Figure 5.2). More specifically, during the times that they felt “caught up” in their addiction, they isolated themselves from their families and used the phrase, “I didn’t care” about anything.

Toxic relationship with self. The self-hatred they felt toward themselves based on the beliefs they formed based on the physical and psychological abuse and/or abandonment they experienced and the harm they had caused made them feel unworthy and unlovable. They women often felt ashamed of all of the things they did while trapped by their addictions. Much of their reflection of their guilt and remorse occurred while they were in prison. As Pōmaikaʻi said, “You get a lot of time fo’ think in prison.” But, without proper support and some type of “intervention”, the women maintained a negative viewpoint of themselves. Without healing from the guilt, anger and shame they felt from their own self-destruction as well as the destruction they caused for others, they spent the first half of their lives or more viewing themselves in a negative manner and their Bowl of Light remained filled with rocks.

They described themselves in negative ways and noted that the societal viewpoint of incarcerated women is very negative. Kehaulani described herself as, “a terror in this town”:
I was one terror in this town. Like I told you. I lied. I stole. I cheated. I manipulated every single person I crossed paths with. Every single one. I mean, the things I did to people. I didn’t care about anybody or their feelings or respect anything. I had no respect for not even myself, you know. And um, I didn’t wanna give up myself for sex in my addiction...I had to a few times.

And I had guys looking for me. Contracts out on me. People wanting to shoot me and kill me, yeah. ‘Cause I ripped off big drug dealers making like I was going with them in the room, have sex with dem and by the time they turn their back, I’m like gone with their …all their stuff. I took so much risks. I lived life on the edge. I… Yeah, I didn’t care about anything. I don’t think I even cared if they shot me or not at that time. I didn’t even value my life at all, yeah.

Kehaulani, shared that she felt that a lot of her addiction and subsequent behavior was likely the result of the hala or emotional bondage she experienced and created and ‘eha she experienced when she we was younger that was never addressed until she went to prison.

Margaret, also “lived on the edge” in her rebellion to the hala and ‘eha (e.g. being raped in foster homes; being raped, beaten, and left to die in the cane fields by extremely abusive boyfriends, and being mistreated in prison), she experienced as she got older. Her extensive trauma and continued abuse eventually turned into rage:

I was literally called da menace of society. It was too much already. I was rebellious at its highest. And den at one time I came out - I came out in the papers numerous times. I burned down a whole game room. Tried to lock people them in the game room trying to burn them in the game room. I did numerous, you know, gun shot scenes. I mean I escaped out of police custody to get the cops off. I ran and I mean I had helicopters. I mean I had massive scenes. It’s not small scenes. I literally had the mindset and the behavior and the attitude of a person who believed, “FUCK DA WORLD!” That the world went like, I wasn’t against one person personally. I tink at one point in my life, I was against everybody.

In Margaret’s self-reflection on her high-risk behaviors and their meaning, she stated, “I was crazy, but I wasn’t evil.” This statement highlights the truth of all of these women. None of them were evil. None of them were inherently bad. But, due to the hala and ‘eha, they experienced, they committed hala by acting in ways that were disruptive to themselves and to society and caused ‘eha.
They were not inherently “evil or bad” which would be conceptualized in Hawaiian as naʻau ino or malicious and evil whereby actions are taken with the intent to harm (Pukui & Elbert, 1986). They were traumatized and acting out their trauma through self-destruction and hurting others. NoeNoe talked about how the women are perceived both inside (by some of the prison staff) and outside of prison, “We’re considered as losers or a lost cause and I know we’re not.” Yet, negative perceptions from their families and society were difficult to overcome while they were in the Naʻaupō phase of their lives.

**Toxic relationship with drugs and alcohol.** To cope with their trauma and negative feeling about themselves, they became lost in their addictions. They wanted to stop, but felt “trapped” in their addictions. Over time, they became severely addicted to substances and engaged in behaviors that were disrespecting of themselves and others and acted out of rage and/or no longer caring about themselves. Nine of the women described a desire to stop, but were not able to break free from the “grip” of their addictions. Kehaulani stated the following and the negative impact it had on her children:

I wanted to stop and I would be like, “No. I need to stop. I wanna stop so bad.” And I could not. I just couldn’t break free of that grip. The devil had a hold on me so tight that I kept - I would go to treatment. I would get the kids back. I would relapse right back on the stuff. And the kids would be taken away again. I would do the treatment and I would get them back and it was just …yeah. The kids suffered they really did. I was just trapped by my addiction.

As they could not break free of their addictions, many of the women, particularly the mothers, felt guilty about the suffering their children experienced as a result of their inability to live their lives sober. In addition to the negative impact on their children due to broken promises and being taken away from their mothers because of their addictions, all of the women described their inability to be behave responsibly during their addiction.
Many of the women also felt that their addiction increased over time. As Pōmaikaʻi shared, “I just started needing more, you know. There was never enough.” The women also engaged in self-destructive behaviors without thinking about the consequences on themselves and others. Their addictions led them to more criminal activities and caused a lot of “destruction” along the way.

**Toxic relationships with others.** Initially, intimate relationships were rooted in a desire to feel loved, accepted and/or protected, because the women did not feel lovable. They felt rejected or controlled by their close families members, they entered co-dependent, often violent, abusive and/or manipulative relationships with men or women depending on their sexual orientation. The co-dependent relationships stemmed from either being abused, neglected, and/or abandoned.

Nahe talked about feeling as though she “clinged to her boyfriend for dear life”, because he made her “feel like a person.” Her self-worth, like most of the women, was very low due to the abandonment she felt when her father passed away and the many things she did while addicted to substances. During her Naʻaupō phase, she allowed people to dictate what she did in her life. She did not feel strong in her self. Her Bowl of Light was full of rocks and she did not know how to get them out.

When I stopped nursing [my first son] is when [my boyfriend/dealer] turned me on to ice. He had been smoking it now for two years…and I got caught up in it. I just got caught up in it. It was like an addiction worse than cocaine. It just it destroyed my life. It made him become even more abusive and more abusive and I’m by then I didn’t know how to get out of this situation. I was so afraid of him. Well, he had beat me up so bad one day. By God’s grace, I didn't break my back, but I had bruises from the top of my shoulders to the back of my thighs.

Nahe was “caught up” in her addiction and was terrified of her boyfriend. She was too afraid to fight back and had numerous violent episodes with her ex-boyfriend that led to near
Nahe’s fear kept her from pressing charges and although she tried to leave him by telling her mother what happened and moved back in with her mother a few weeks after her return from the hospital, she slowly started sneaking away to see her boyfriend and secretly started using drugs again. This pattern or reverting back to old behaviors was common among the nine of the women.

Kehaulani shared that all of her life she was co-dependent. She relied on a man to bring meaning and value to her life.

Without the guy, I not going make it. A lot of women come out of jail and the first thing they do is they get into a relationship. I noticed a lot of my group that I came out with… all the girls I furlough wit… they’re either in an unhealthy relationship right now, back on drugs, or they’re back in prison. The relationships drag us women down, for some reason it does. I mean every single which way I look at it. Yeah, at first, “Oh yeah. No. Just friends. Just going out on one date.” Then, next thing you know it’s turning into, “Oh where you going? Who you was with?” My whole focus go on that relationship and I forgot all what I doing in life.

Toxic relationships “drag the women down” and they were unable to focus on themselves or see their worth and value. Nine of the 10 women noted that they have spent most of their lives in toxic relationships with lovers or husbands. Kehaulani further commented on the negative impact of unhealthy relationships:

Unhealthy relationships is a major issue on this island. If you go and find some studies they’ll show, statistics, high number. I think it’s like 90 something percent recidivism rate is due to women coming back from unhealthy relationships. That’s the core of them coming back to this prison. It was for many of the women that I seen. Yeah, they
going say, “Oh yeah. I came back in ‘cause I missed my check-in. I came back in ‘cause I relapsed.” But, what caused that? “Oh, I went back to my boyfriend. I met this guy and he ended up fooling around on me and then I went berserk and I went back to drugs.” So, it always has to do with a relationship. Either they went back to one same relationship that was still a drug dealer or something going on. Or they went back started a new relationship, da guy got jealous, got possessive, never work out and den boom relapse.

Kehaulani describes this pattern she observed and learned about through reading books and taking classes in prison on codependence. When the women were “being controlled by toxic relationships” in the Na‘aupō phase, they lost all focus on themselves and became overly reliant their significant other to give them a sense of self worth, because they did not know how to love themselves. When it did not work out, they defaulted to using drugs and alcohol to cope with life. For Lisa and Pōmaika‘i, their physical abuse occurred when they were adults and entered relationships with men. They stated they were just as abusive toward the men that were abusing them. In Pōmaika‘i’s words, they were “killing each odda.”

For the seven mothers, they “chose men and/or drugs over their children.” Pōmaika‘i, who noted that she was not co-dependent shared, “I chose drugs over my children, you know. I had the choice several times to get it together, do what was right, and I didn’t. I always chose drugs over my kids.” Thus, when the women huli ho‘i and returned to the Na‘aupō phase, they realized that they were choosing to allow “toxic relationships” to control their lives even though they knew “what was right”; what is pono or appropriate and not appropriate. But they still chose to remain in their addiction. Here is Pōmaika‘i’s example of how she returned back to the Na‘aupō phase after being in Huliau phase:

So, 2000 I went to prison, I gave birth to my daughter in prison. I had 3 days with her. My mom flew down from the Big Island, picked her up, and then I went back to prison. She was 18 months by the time I got home. My 2 older kids stayed with their dad. My second relationship, my mom had my son and my daughter. But, what happened was, um, okay, from 2001, I was at the furlough house. So, I was able see my kids on weekends. But I had to do one year in the furlough house. I was released in 2003 and I
got a job with Construction Engineering Labs. I was a secretary over there. My boss started taking me out on concrete pours, so I got ACI certified with American Concrete Institute. I was working my way into the construction industry. But I got all my kids back. I had my own apartment, my own house, I had a job, I had all my children back in my life again. [Pōmaikaʻi makes this statement with deep pride for her accomplishments.]

Pōmaikaʻi was getting her life on track. She was sober, working, had all of her children returned to her care with her own home. She was proud of what she accomplished, but a year later, she started to huli hoʻi or backslide.

And then a year later, I met a younger guy and started using again. Slowly, I lost the job, I lost my kids, I got arrested, and I was on the run from parole. I ended up getting in trouble for the identity theft charge. In 2005, I was arrested in August, and stayed in until April 2011. So money was a big thing; the cost of living. So, I knew if I picked up, I could do couple big sales and make a hefty profit. Trying to make up fo’ lost time, buying my children everything that they needed with designer brands.

Pōmaikaʻi knew what was pono to do, but at this point, she still struggled to make ends meet and carried the guilt of all the lost time with her children while she was incarcerated. She had also not yet healed from the pain of her early childhood abandonment issues.

It’s like through all my life, the one thing I always thought was, because my dad left us [Pomaikaʻi pausing for a moment to cry and then compose herself.] I never wanted to ever instill in my own children, and I did. I abandoned them, you know. So, I promised I wouldn’t do that, and I did. (January 9, 2017)

Pōmaikaʻi carried the hala and ‘eha and created hihia or entanglements with her own family, which echoes the moʻolelo of all the other mothers in this study. Despite her heartfelt desire to spare her children the pain of abandonment, she broke her promise to her children and that transgression resulted in a entanglement amongst herself and her children for many years.

Additionally, all of the women talked about focusing on materialistic and selfish goals during the Naʻaupō phase of their lives, particularly when they encounter new hala and ‘eha which function as “trauma triggers” or setbacks (e.g. financial stressors, weight gain, feeling insecure, breaking up with a boyfriend or lover, feeling frustrated by family not recognizing
the positive changes they have made). For example, Pōmaikaʻi maikaʻi stated: “I was selfish you know. Only what I wanted. I only thought of myself. I didn’t think of anybody else. It’s all about the look and what I drive and very materialistic. Gotta have the best of the best.” Similar to Pomaikaʻi, the other women were focused on themselves and having material wealth. Overall, nine of the 10 women were more concerned with “getting high” and being overly involved in unhealthy relationships with men than taking care of themselves and/or their children.

**Losing the Will to Live**

The women who were sexually violated at some point in their lives either during childhood and/or adulthood attempted suicide on more than one occasion beginning in early adolescence (e.g. high risk behavior, cutting their wrists) and continued through middle adulthood. For example, Amy, who is now a loving and protective grandmother, was sexually abused as a child. She described her early adult behavior in the following way, “The law didn’t phase me at all. It was uh, actually it was a suicidal mission. I lived my life like it was the last day.” Thus, the multi-layered hala and ʻeha led the women to feel like they no longer wanted to live in this world. They were emotionally bound to the trauma that occurred early in their lives and continued to increase as they transitioned into adulthood.

Jamie shared that she reached her limit with her ex-husband’s violence as well as his psychological abuse and did not want to live anymore. Her voice was silenced and she hid the violence for so many years that everyone thought it was her substance use that led her to provoke her husband with a gun. But, the truth was that his violent behavior and constant manipulation coupled with her tormented silence sent her to a breaking point and she didn’t want to live anymore:
Cause it got to the point to where, you know what, my ex-husband put the gun in my mouth. Fuck I tell him. It’s like, “Pull you fucka ‘cause I’d rather die ‘cause all the years I never said anything never helped either. I’m better off, at least I say what I want and you know, and it’s true. But, they like it when you don’t say nothing right? ‘Cause then it allows them to think everything’s okay you know. Actually, that’s what happened. It’s like, you know when I moved to the Big Island, it was like so abrupt. People were talking and saying, “Oh. Something’s wrong. She must be doing drugs.” Or, “It’s the drugs.” and stuff like that or whatever. But, basically, I did such a good job of hiding our problems that people didn’t know.

Fortunately, Jamie finally broke free of that relationship when her husband, at the time, went to prison for dealing drugs. However, she remained in a naʻaupō state of consciousness for another two decades before she was ready to truly heal and grow from the multiple traumas of her life.

Hoʻomauhala, Hoʻohalahala (Holding Grudges & Blaming Others) & Naʻau auwa

Figure 5.3  Naʻaupō – “Night” Mind – Three

As a result of the hala, ʻeha, and hihia or emotional bondage, pain, and entanglements, through being controlled in toxic relationships, the women became resentful (See Figure 5.3). Hoʻomauhala is the Hawaiian term for holding a grudge or resentment and carrying unforgiveness (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 242). Beginning in early adolescence, they held onto deep hoʻomauhala or resentments and carried their trauma deep within themselves from early
childhood to middle and later adulthood. As a result of being controlled by toxic relationships, the women often built resentments toward those that harmed them, particularly those who were sexually abused. For example, although Dionʻe had a very positive relationship with her mother and grandmother, she resented her stepfather as a result of being molested as a child by him and she still has not forgiven him for what happened in her childhood.

I resented him for so long. That is the truth. I havenʻt forgiven him. To be honest, I think, even though that I had a beautiful childhood, with my grandmother and with my mom, I think...(pause for thought)...I feel like heʻs taken my mom from me. You know what I mean, like I feel especially as an adult, because my mom and I are very close. Iʻve always felt like there were things that I could tell her that... she wouldnʻt share with anybody else. But then the only thing that I couldnʻt tell her to her face, until I was later on an adult, was that her husband was molesting me.

Additionally, many of the women experienced being criticized by their parents or put down by their lovers or husbands. Thus, the Hawaiian term for this is hoʻohalahala or to “criticize, find fault, critical” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 51). Margaretʻs example of being the “black sheep” echoed the experience of five of the 10 women in terms of being criticized:

I was also what they call you know the black sheep of the family. If anybody screwed up I was the one goinʻ get licken. My dad always called me names. He always told me he hate me. He always called me ugly. He always called me a nigga. He always told me, “You ugly like your fuckinʻ whore mudda.” You know it was constant. It just never fuckinʻ end like my dad was so abusive to me. (Margaret, August 26, 2017)

I tink went more affect me as, “Why da fuck this man cannot just love me? Why he cannot just fuckinʻ be satisfied with what I do?” I fuckinʻ hated him for that. I hated him for constantly looking at me like that. [crying] I neva believe that you know I was ugly or I was dumb. I knew I wasnʻt dumb. I knew I was smart you know. Even in that life of abuse, I knew I wasnʻt all he said I was. I was just angry ʻcause then you had to look at me like that that I was disgusting in your eyes you know.

However, unlike some of her peers who were criticized and viewed themselves negatively, Margaret did not believe that she was “ugly” or “dumb.” She did not succumb to the negative messages she was given by her family. Other the other hand, similar to seven of the women,
she talked about being angry as a way to protect herself from the deep hurt she felt as a result of being labelled the “black sheep” in her family.

In addition to being criticized, the women repeatedly talked about judging, criticizing and blaming others in the Na‘aupō phase of their lives. They blamed their addictions on others and made excuses for why their life is the way that it is. Kehaulani offered some clear examples of her excuses that was echoed by nine of the women:

I just pointed the finger to everybody. That’s why I was here ‘cause my family members turned their backs on me. I didn’t have a place to stay that’s why I keep doing drugs or my father passed away and that was another excuse that I gave that’s why I turned to drugs again, you know, to hide the pain.

Noelani who was violently abused by her father for most of her life made the following statement:

I just felt you know that I saw that I was blaming other people and not taking responsibility for my own behaviors my attitude you know um you can’t keep blaming your father and you know the way he spoke to you know and treat other people like how you would treat your father.

Finally, the women also talked about losing the will to live and not caring about themselves or their lives. The Hawaiian term for this is na‘au auwa.

Na‘au auwā (Intense Grief, Suicidal)

Na‘au auwā is the Hawaiian term for intense grief. It is translated in English as “anguish so great that it may lead to suicide; to mourn, to grieve.” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 257). This Hawaiian term was selected to highlight the deep emotional ‘eha that resulted from the multiple hala experienced by these women. The women did not experience one seismic event that prompted them to make sense of their experience through processing their trauma and eventually work toward PTG and healing. Rather, they lived through numerous critical, repeated traumatizing experiences and high violence including: near death experiences;
receiving and making broken promises; betrayal from family members, lovers, and husbands; losing several key family members and/or friends due to illness, violence, incarceration, drug overdoses; and wrongful incarceration. Their unresolved grief stemming from multiple losses, issues of abandonment in childhood and adolescence can lead to their feelings of being rejected, unloved, and unworthy (McMillen, Zirvan, and Rideou, 1995). As they become adult women, they can continue to feel abandoned or rejected and described themselves as “lost,” “broken,” “abandoned,” and “confused.” They expressed an unfulfilled need to be loved and accepted. When the women are in this emotional state, they acted in self-destructive ways that are reckless and have little regard for themselves.

**Hana Hūpō (Behaving Recklessly)**

The women’s response to being deeply hurt led to coping strategies that often involved turning inward on themselves and engaging in reckless behavioral reactions/patterns. Their deep unmet need to be loved and accepted resulted in self-destructive patterns and their resentments turned outwardly toward others. The women described themselves as “acting crazy” and “rebellious” during this phase. Eight of the 10 women “selfishly” (their words) chose to use drugs and alcohol without of full understanding of the negative consequences on themselves and their families. They were ua pau kū pono or no longer acting with integrity (Ibid, 1986). This led to feelings of guilt, anger, and shame toward themselves for their choices. Without support to process their pain and restore hope, they became very depressed, started losing the will to live, isolated themselves from healthy supports, and returned to using drugs and alcohol as their primary coping strategy in life.

They engaged in a cyclical pattern of experiencing trauma, using drugs and alcohol to cope, breaking the law, becoming incarcerated, exiting prison, struggling to survive, and then
repeating the pattern. It was there way to exhibit control in their lives in situations where they did not feel that they had control. Another way to conceptualize this is that the women were holo naʻaupo (moving in darkness) and naʻau ʻaua hele (wandering in grief) and were unaware of why they acted the way they did (Pukui & Elbert, 1986).

The overall Hawaiian term for this behavior is hana hūpō, which can be translated as behaving recklessly. There are many meanings for the term hana, including, “to work, labor, do, act, action, behave” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 55). Hūpō literally means “swelling darkness” and translates to, “foolish or foolishness” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 92). Hū also carries the meaning of “to rise or swell, as yeast or souring poi, to ferment; overflow, to surge or rise to the surface, as emotion; to gush forth, outburst, and to depart from the proper course; miss the way” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 83). All 10 women described times in their lives when they were drinking or using drugs excessively in this phase and “off track.”

Another related term is huhū which is the Hawaiian term for “angry, offended, mad, indignant, scolding” (Ibid, 1986, p. 86). Although discussed previously, pō can also be interpreted literally as “night, darkness, chaos, or hell.” Thus, when the kaona or deeper meaning of hana hūpō is considered, it reflects behaving in the swollen darkness and/or taking actions that stem from misguided anger gushing forth. They often view the world through a lens of hurt and anger.

As a result of all of the unresolved trauma stemming from abuse, chaos, living with shame, silence and secrecy, pain and suffering from grief, loss, and separation, and guilt over selfish and self-destructive choices, the women lived their lives without caring about themselves and those that they hurt along the way. Noelani was physically and verbally aggressive toward others as a way to “get respect” while she was out on the streets and with
other inmates and prison guards. Her pattern of being aggressive and reckless continued through late adulthood. Noelani shared that she would go until she was caught:

I didn’t give a shit. ‘Cause that’s me. I’m going ‘til the end gonna go… If I’m gonna get high and sell drugs, I’m gonna go til they catch me you know. I not goin’ stop.

This reckless pattern articulated by Noelani was a pattern described by nine of the 10 women. Pōmaikaʻi offers more depth to the reasons why she was a “runner.” She noted that she was an extremist. Because of her own abandonment issues, she would run away from people or situations to avoid getting hurt:

I’m a runner, you know what I mean. When things start getting heavy, I dig. I run. I leave. I ended up leaving. If you hurt me or something, I’m outta dea. What I see in my own pattern is… is that, whenever things get hard, I go to get stuff. Not only because I make money, but because every time I get clean, I pick up a lot of weight. So, I know if I smoke I can trim down, you know, I can make money, and I’m an extremist. I take it to the extremes. So, I’ll just run it until the wheels fall off. I just keep going girl, no more end.

Pōmaikaʻi describes what all of the women talked about when they were “on the run.” They were moving on a fast track of self-destruction and used drugs as a primary coping strategy to address challenges they faced ranging from physical or emotional pain to financial stressors due to poverty, and/or weight gain.

Dionʻe talked about her rebellion as her way of coping with her sexual abuse.

I was rebellious. I would do things. I would steal. I mean I would do everything against the morals and values that they raised me with. I think that’s how I dealt with it, because of that fact that I used to retaliate against my family. Yeah, I used to do mean things.

She received therapy in her “senior year still to this day” to address her own issues of abandonment and sexual trauma. When she first went to the men’s prison for her wrongful incarceration and was fighting for her life due to being sexually assaulted, she was pulled back to a state of “darkness”. When she was transferred to the women’s prison, she got into fights
and lashed out in anger. She went into a very dark and negative mindset, because she was dramatically triggered back to the time of her sexual abuse in childhood. All of the women described the Naʻaupō phase of their lives in terms of living recklessly and nine of the 10 women lived each day as if it were their last when they were “caught up” in their addiction.

**Huli Hoʻi (Backslide)**

Many of the women were able to transition into their first Huliau phase sometime between their early 30’s to 60’s. However, due to unresolved trauma stemming from violence, trauma, abandonment was unaddressed, they also reverted back to their old patterns of behavior sometime between their mid 30’s to early 60’s. The Hawaiian term for reverting back to their old patterns is huli hoʻi, which means to backslide. Huli translates to turn and hoʻi means to return. When hoʻi is paired with huli, in this context, it refers to doubt and uncertainty (Pukui & Elbert 1986). Thus, when the women started to feel fearful, insecure or unsure of themselves and/or lacked social and emotional supports from family and friends, they reverted back to old patterns of negative thinking, bad attitudes, and self-sabotaging and self-indulgent behavior. They returned to living unconsciously.

They may have learned about themselves and started to gain some insight into their lives while in treatment or in prison. However, because they did not truly heal from the hala and ʻeha of their own trauma during their upbringing and/or the trauma they inflicted on others, or trauma that was inflicted upon them (such as Dionʻe’s wrongful incarceration) and they did not have the desire, commitment, and adequate support to make and sustain positive changes initiated during their first entry into the Huliau phase. They would often “lose hope” again and return back to the “darkness”.

151
Noelani stated that it was a “trigger” for her to use drugs and huli hoʻi (backslide) to her criminal lifestyle if she went home to her family when she was released from prison.

Dat’s one trigga if I live home at my parent’s home” you know. Every time I went back there it triggered me you know. And uh every time I went back home I really was trying to, you know, hope that dat they would see that I was different you know but they didn’t believe me you know or they didn’t want to you know.

Similar to the other women in this sample, Noelani held onto the hope that her family would see that she had changed, but her family did not believe her or did not want to believe her for many years. Thus, she fell back into a Naʻaupō level of consciousness for her first three rotations in prison.

In sum, when the women huli hoʻi, their thoughts, feelings, and actions were controlled by toxic relationships with themselves, which led to losing the will to live. As a result, they were running wildly and not caring about whether they lived or died. They were “escaping” their problems rather than facing them. The women engaged in “selfish” and high risk behaviors and did not value their lives from adolescence through early to late adulthood.

**Naʻaupō Summary**

The Naʻaupō phase reflects the time period in the women’s lives in which their naʻau was in “darkness”; they were struggling to cope with their trauma. In this phase, they lived in a state of despair or haʻule manaʻolana (fallen thoughts/ diminished light) to varying degrees. Those with more protective factors (e.g. loving family members, sense of family loyalty, positive social interactions and/or group activities), experienced less despair. While they all started their early childhood with a sense of hope, they eventually reached a point of ua pau kūpono or lost hope in some area of their lives, because they continued to experience abuse and neglect and suffered abandonment, criticism, and neglect from their families.
The first set of overlapping themes included: (1) Yearning for love, acceptance, and support; (2) Living in shame, silence, and secrecy; (3) Suffering from grief, loss, and separation; 4) Escaping Pain and Poverty. All of the women yearned for love, acceptance, and support from their family, particularly their parents and caregivers. Nine of the 10 women came from “broken homes” due to divorce or death of a parent. Eight of the women were raised by single mothers and Kehaulani was raised by a single father. The remaining two women were raised in a violent, substance-addicted two-parent households. Six of the women were sexually abused by close family members, friends of the family, and/or ministers or members of their church. The other four women felt abandoned or severely rejected, such as Noelani who was rejected by her father for being a lesbian. From childhood through middle/late adulthood, they experienced hala (trauma and emotional bondage), ʻeha (physical and emotional pain), and hihia (entanglements) stemming from violence and abuse (e.g. witnessing domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse), rejection, and/or abandonment. Eight of the ten women experienced early exposure to alcohol, drugs, and/or violence and nine of the ten women began drinking and using drugs in early to mid-adolescence. To cope with pain and poverty, nine of the 10 women became substance-addicted and engaged in substance-related crimes to generate money to continue their increasing need for more drugs and/or to feed their families. As a result, they were eventually incarcerated.

Nine of the women did not receive treatment for their unresolved early childhood traumas (e.g. exposure to domestic violence, alcoholism, discrimination, child abuse and neglect, and sexual abuse), grief, loss, and separation, and/or addictions until they were incarcerated and/or transitioning back into the community upon release from prison. They
silently carried their trauma into adulthood and hid their abuse and addictions from their families and friends.

They were also not fully unaware of why they did what they did and continued to move in the darkness of their lives suffering with hala (interpersonal transgressions, trauma, and emotional bondage) and ‘eha (physical and emotional wounds). Their Bowls of Light were filled with pōhaku or rocks. Therefore, they struggled through most of their lives without the support needed to address their trauma. Like the ‘ano‘ano or seed of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree that is encased in the soil underground, they did understand why they experienced such intensive abuse and violence experienced at the hands of their family members, lovers, and husbands.

In addition to the first set of traumas, they were also being controlled by toxic relationships and losing the will to live. As a result, they ho‘omauhala or held grudges and resentments against those that hurt them and ua ‘imi hala or blamed others for their actions rather than taking responsibility for their behavioral choices. Because of the negative influence of being controlled by toxic relationships and losing the will to live, mental and emotional state was na‘au ‘auwa or grieving and suicidal which led to hana hūpō or behaving recklessly.

By the time they reached the age of 30 years or older, they may have entered a Huliau or time of transformation, gained some insight into their family dynamics and behavioral reactions, become sober, and made some positive changes. However, due to being “triggered” by additional trauma, severe substance addiction, and unresolved trauma, they did a huli hoʻi or returned to the Naʻaupo phase and started living unconsciously again. They returned to a negative mindset and engaged in extreme behavioral reactions such as excessive drinking and/or use of substances, behaving irresponsibly, and being rebellious. For a few of the
women, there was a part of them that realized they were not how their families and society viewed them, but they still struggled with anger and pain from their past.

An in-depth examination of the women’s stories shares a different aspect of why the women were caught up in irresponsible actions (e.g. substance addiction, violating the law, selling drugs, etc.). Their “self-sabotage” and focus on materialistic goals was a result of their unresolved, multi-layered experiences of hala and ‘eha (emotional bondage and pain stemming from trauma, abuse, neglect and abandonment) and hihia (resulting entanglements) between the age of 3 years through middle/late adulthood.

Overall, the Na’aupō phase is a difficult time for the women as they navigate their lives with many twists and turns feeling deeply hurt without a full understanding as to why they were treated harshly by those that were supposed to protect, love, accept, and support them, why they acted the way they did, and/or the fullness of their cultural identity. However, there were moments of light in their darkness in which they felt loved and hopeful about life. The next chapter will highlight the Ho‘omakaukau Huliau phase as they began to prepare to reawaken their spirits and awaken their minds in their transformative journey in Healing and Post-Traumatic Growth.
CHAPTER 6: HOʻOMĀKĀUKAU HULIAU: TIME TO PREPARE FOR CHANGE (PRE-REAWAKENING AND PRE-AWAKENING)

ʻAʻohe komo o ka haʻi puaʻa ke paʻa i ka pā. 
Other people’s pigs would not come in if the fence were kept in good repair. 
(Pukui, 1997, p. 21)

The Hoʻomākāukau Huliau is a critical aspect of the Huliau phase. It is the preparation involved to enter the Huliau phase in the three phase dynamic model toward overall reawakening and awakening. It occurred at different moments in their life pathway either before, during, or after being in prison at least once depending on their various circumstances. Although the women continued to cycle between all three phases, at some point, they took time to makaʻala or be observant and prepare themselves for true personal transformation.

The above ʻōlelo noʻeau highlights the importance of “being prepared” to fight off evil or trouble, which occurs from being spiritually, mentally, and emotionally strong within oneself. The wise words of Tūtū Pukui (1983) state, “Be prepared always, and you’ll find yourself free of trouble. Also, evil influence cannot enter when one keeps his own mental realm fortified from within” (Pukui, 1983, p. 21). Nine of the 10 women viewed substance addiction as “evil and all of the women recognized the importance of being prepared to avoid getting into trouble (e.g. returning to toxic relationships) and backsliding into the Naʻaupō phase. Being strong within oneself is another way to conceptualize this ʻōlelo noʻeau for a woman such as Dionʻe who was not substance addicted but needed to take time to rebuild her “pig fences” to ensure that she was not negatively impacted by her wrongful incarceration. Some key Hawaiian terminology is useful to more fully understand how this phase was conceptualized from a Kānaka Maoli worldview.
Hoʻomākaukau Huliau (Time to Prepare for Reawakening and Awakening)

Hoʻomākaukau Huliau were the Hawaiian terms chosen to identify the preparation period necessary to enter the Huliau phase within the Hoʻala Hou o Nā Wāhine Maoli (Reawakening of Native Hawaiian Women) model because it best reflected the women’s articulation of their nonlinear pathways to PTG and healing. Hoʻomākaukau is the Hawaiian term “to prepare or get ready” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 228). Huliau is defined as turning point or time of change and to think about or recall the past (Pukui & Elbert, 1986). It is comprised of two words: huli (to turn) and au (period of time). Huli also means to change an opinion or manner of living (Ibid, 1986). Au is more than a period of time. It also refers to a cycle. Finally, the term au references the pronoun “I” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 30). Therefore, the kaona or hidden meaning of the term huliau means “I turn” in a cyclical pattern.

PTG is identified as a personal transformation from overcoming adversity (Tadeschi and Calhoun, 2012). Based on the women’s descriptions of their growth and healing, PTG is considered a transformative reawakening and awakening healing and growth journey, respectively. More specifically, healing is considered a reawakening to the truth of who they are from a Kānaka Maoli perspective (Aluli-Meyer, 2017). Many of the women did not know fully who they were and/or had limiting beliefs and often negative viewpoints of themselves and their cultural identity. Because of the hala and ‘eha they experienced during the Naʻaupō phase, their spiritual essence or inner light was diminished and they were living in a state of being unenlightened. Eight of the ten women were unaware of their spiritual foundation, culture, practices, language, and ancestral lineage during their first entry into the Hoʻomākaukau Huliau phase. However, as they began to develop a strong spiritual foundation, they prepared themselves to heal.
Growth following trauma is considered a transformative awakening, because prior to this phase of their lives, the women didn’t understand why they did what they did and why they experienced such a high degree of trauma and/or violence. As they became makaʻala or able to see their path and started to pay attention to what was happening in their lives (Ibid, 1986), they were able to see their cognitive and behavioral patterns, and the impact they were having on others, especially family members and loved ones. The Hawaiian term hoʻomaka means “to begin, initiate, and bring forth buds” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 224). Therefore, as the women began to see the path before them, they started the process of bringing forth “buds” of heightened awareness and saw themselves and their situations in a new light. As a result, they began to strengthen their desire to grow beyond their trauma and move forward in life.

**Holomua (Move Forward; Progress)**

Holomua is the Hawaiian term for improvement or progress. It is comprised of two words: Holo which translates to “move” and imua which translates to “go forward” or “progress” (Ibid, 1986, p. 255). Repeatedly, the women talked about the importance of “letting go” and “moving forward.” Through listening to their naʻau and becoming aware of the power of personal choice, they made conscious decisions to huliau or “turn their lives around.” They made positive changes to move away from darkness and toward greater light: from despair to hope, from fear to faith.

Once the women became aware of and made sense of what happened in their lives, they were better prepared to navigate their next step in life. Pōmaikaʻi offered a clear example of listening to her naʻau to make a choice to huli hoʻi (return to dealing and using drugs) or holomua (move forward to live a sober, criminal free life). Because of her abandonment issues from growing up without a father, she realized that her pattern was to engage in self-sabotage
to seek attention. However, once she started to awaken her na’au or visceral mind, she was able to holomua and make healthier choices for her life.

When you start making connections and seeing the patterns that you used to do that led you to get in trouble, you’re na’au starts to scream like, “Whoa I seen this before. I not gonna go this way.” You need to listen to your na’au because its warning you, that something you just seen or heard is alerting you that, “Hey, this is not what we like do. Turn around go the opposite way and let’s think.” And now, if I gain weight, I gain weight, who cares. I not trying to impress nobody anymore. I can jump on one bike, I can go swimming, I can go hiking. I don’t have to pick up the pipe to lose weight.

Pōmaika’i’s visceral reaction of her “na’au screaming at her” was an instinctual warning to change her pattern coming from her Hawaiian epistemological and ontological view. However, now that she is living in the Na’auao phase of life and is enlightened, she has positive coping skills (jump on a bike, go hiking, go swimming). Through realizing that she had the power of choice, she was able to prepare herself to holomua or move forward.

I have a choice to use or not. The choice is mine. If I choose to do bad, bad will happen. If I continue to choose to do good, then the choice is mine, and good can happen. I have the power of choice. It’s not even an option.

Another example of this desire to move forward is offered by Kehaulani that occured after she started seeing patterns and reflecting on her repeated cycles of incarceration as a “revolving door”:

It wasn’t until my 3rd time in prison where I finally got it. Where I was like, you know what, I have to make a change here. This time I got six years ahead of me, you know, and I just wanted to break the cycle. I said, “Hey, there’s a pattern here.” I come in prison, I get released, I go back to the ex-boyfriend…one year later I’m back… you feel. I get reduced again, I go back to the ex-boyfriend…one year later I’m back in jail. So, this time, I was like. “There’s a pattern here. It’s like a revolving door.” And I myself could sit there and see the revolving door; the recidivism. I could see women coming back six, seven, eight times in my stay. (December 16, 2016)

Most of the women started using drugs and alcohol in early adolescence and spent anywhere between 20 – 35 years in their substance addiction. NoeNoe, as the eldest in this sample, spent 50 years struggling with her addiction to drugs and alcohol.
Kehaulani, like nine women in this study, spent several years being addicted to substances, struggled with not having a place to go and returned back to her relationship with her ex-boyfriend who was a drug dealer and eventually returned to prison. But, by her third time in prison, she started make positive changes. Her decision to “break the cycle” and make this choice was not immediate. It was only after seeing her own behavioral patterns, making an internal realization, and gaining insight, along with three internal turning points described below, that she was inspired/motivated to make positive changes.

**Three Internal Turning Points to Prepare for Personal Transformation**

For all of the women, three major internal turning points were essential to prepare themselves to be motivated to make a personal transformation: ‘I‘ini Hulihia - Desire to Heal and Transform, Ho‘ohiki Hulihia – Conscious Commitment ensures Accountability, and Ho‘omanā – Being Spirit-Led versus Ego-Driven (See Figure 6.1). These turning points worked in conjunction with one another like interlocking gears within their cognitive and visceral minds to prompt their personal healing and transformation. Ho‘omanā is the driving force that influences both holding themselves accountable to making positive changes (‘Ōlelo Ho‘ohiki) and their sincere desire to heal and transform and heal (‘I‘ini Hulihia).

**Figure 6.1** Three Internal Turning Points to Prepare for Personal Transformation
ʻIʻini Hulihia - Desire to Heal and Transform

ʻIʻini is the Hawaiian term for “desire, crave, yearn for, wish” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 96). The second term is hulihia which is comprised of two words: huli (to turn) + hia (desire/delight). When the root words are combined, the term hulihia translates to “overturned; a complete change; turned upside down” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 89). Thus, ʻIʻini Hulihia describes the first internal turning point to be ready to overturn their thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and behavior. Eventually, the women reached a point where they no longer wanted to keep losing out on life and had a sincere desire for the “craziness” and “chaos” to end.

Many pivotal life experiences and internal revelations prompted their ʻiʻini hulihia: Surviving near death experiences; Making Internal Realizations (possible death due to their addictions and violent relationships; negative impact of choices); and Exhaustion and Maturation. However, these pivotal experiences were not necessary mutually exclusive. Often times, they overlapped in the women’s desire to heal and transform from the hala and ʻeha they experienced and subsequent hoʻomauhala or grudges and resentments that they carried deep within themselves.

Surviving Near Death Experiences. Seven of the women, who repeatedly went to prison, lived through a critical, near death experience just prior to their final incarceration that prompted their desire to heal and transform (e.g. near fatal car accidents; brutal violence from their lovers or husbands, drug overdose, etc.). Kehaulani, who struggled with addiction for nearly 20 years, spent years going in and out of prison and just prior to her last experience, she was in a near fatal accident. She was evading the law with a no bail warrant for her arrest. One night on her way to “pick up drugs,” the driver fell asleep at the wheel and the truck went straight into a ravine, ripped in half, and caught on fire. Fortunately, she was sleeping
otherwise she may have died. Waking up in the hospital with her sisters crying over her and nearly dying made her realize that something needed to change or she would die.

So, from that incident, I woke up with all my sisters over me in the hospital and they were hand-cuffing me and taking me back to jail. So, from that moment on, I seen my sisters crying over me and everybody crying over me. “Sis, you gotta stop doing what you doing,” you know. I looked at them and we cried and we held hands and I went to prison for 6 yrs. I almost died. So, I guess that experience of almost dying... I dislocated my shoulder. I punctured my lungs. I had bruises through my whole body: face, jaw, knee everything... The next time I use drugs, I’m gonna die out there. That’s just the end of the... that’s just the end result of what’s gonna happen. I’m gonna die on the streets if I ever use drugs again.

Dion’e experienced sexual assault as a result of being wrongfully housed once she was incarcerated leaving her on life support and fighting for her life. This experience was a “trauma trigger” that took her back to the sexual abuse she experienced as a child and she became fearful, angry and resentful. As a result, she reverted back to the Na‘aupō phase of living unconsciously. Initially, she was ignorant or unaware about the lives and trauma that incarcerated women experience. But, as an intersex woman who had corrective surgery to became a biological female, she lived through her own private turmoil while incarcerated and was mistreated by the prison officials.

Now mind you I’m going through all this turmoil privately and what I mean by privately is that when all the lights are off and I’m in my own room, I’m going through all the feelings of abandonment, of being wronged, of ...and mind you, I had to deal with certain prison officials gender slashing me and discriminating against me. This is all going on while I’m trying to literally be the light in the facility.

She realized that in order to “survive” in prison, she needed to get out of the Na‘aupō phase of unconsciousness and work toward changing her hana hūpō (reckless behavior) of getting into fights while in prison and find healthy “outlets” to cope with her circumstances. Despite the trauma she experienced in prison, she found the strength to overcome her trauma and found her way to “be the light” in the facility through an in-depth spiritual connection to
God and her cultural practices of teaching music and dance. Although it was virtually unheard of to have an inmate teach classes in prison, she was granted permission both in Kentucky and in Hawai‘i, because an individual from the education department believed in her and honored her musical gifts and talents. Thus, despite her personal trauma, she had a sincere desire to heal and transform her thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Fortunately, she received supports while in prison to engage in her cultural practices and focus on service rather than her own struggles.

Making Internal Realizations. In addition to surviving near death experiences, all 10 women took notice of what was happening in their lives and the negative impact they were having on themselves and others, and realized that a dramatic change was necessary. Nine of the women instinctively knew that they would likely die if they kept going on the path that they were on through drugs and alcohol abuse, being involved in violent relationships, and living a criminal lifestyle. NoeNoe who spent most of her life in and out of juvenile facilities, getting arrested, and dealing drugs was granted a compassion release due to her health issues.

She was only out of prison for 14 days before she “turned herself in” for violating the conditions of her parole, because she realized she would likely die if she remained “on the streets.” After seeing her husband doing drugs and not waiting for her to exit prison although he said he would (another broken promise), she began “drinking and partying.” However, after realizing that she was going down a “dark path,” she chose to relinquish her freedom to save her life.

---

44 Dion’e was one of four women in this study from Windward Community Correctional Center (WCCC) that reported being sent to a prison facility in Kentucky, which made her long for her home in Hawai‘i.
I knew what was goin’ happen if I stood out there any longer. Either I would run, start running back drugs again or I would end up dying out there. I didn’t want both of ’em. So, I turned myself back in.

NoeNoe’s desire to stay alive and break free of the cycles of abuse, abandonment, addiction, and crime was worth giving up her freedom. It was a big sacrifice, but it was one that she was willing to make. She also stated, “Prison can either make you or break you. It made me. I grew up in prison.” She was able to become mature while she was in prison and stop focusing on self-destruction and materialistic goals. Similar to what nine of the women shared, Pōmaikaʻi stated, “If I never went to prison and didn’t traveled that road, I’d probably be dead now, you know. Guarantee.”

Pōmaikaʻi, a 51 year old mother and grandmother, worked very hard to turn her life around and has been sober for over 11 years. Similar to other six mothers in the study, Pōmaikaʻi realized the hala (transgression), ʻeha (pain), and hihia or negative impact her choices were having on her children. She talked about a powerful exercise that she did while in treatment, which contributed to her awakening and a sincere desire to transform her life and be reunited with her family.

I chose drugs over my children, you know. I had the choice several times to get it together, do what was right, and I didn’t. I always chose drugs over my kids. [Takes a deep breath]. So, when I went to Hina Mauka [substance use treatment facility] there was this assignment that we had to do and it was called the Ripple Effect. So, I was… the stone dropped into the pond, and for every ripple that the stone made, I had to put a name to it, starting with me. And it was the short-term effects of incarceration. But look at this -10 years down the line, my kids are still suffering for my choice.

When I started to do the ripple effect and see the destruction that my choices caused to every single person in my life, that’s when I got it, you know. That’s when I started to see the light. It was like everything just came at me at once and I was like, I get it! I get it! So, through all the years that I was incarcerated, I was able to find peace with each, you know, destruction or each ripple. I was able to work on me and what I was going to do to change that when I got home.
Amy, a single mother and grandmother, further exemplifies this gendered issue of all the mothers in this study of choosing drugs and men over their children. However, in addition to realizing the suffering she caused, she also missed her family and was fearful of losing her connection to her daughter as a result of her choice to use drugs for 26 years.

I’ve been going to MCCC for or in and out of MCCC like whoa. From 1980 to 2006. And finally 2006, I went to women’s prison in Honolulu. I stayed there ‘til 2011. I came back home and I um, when I was at prison I said, “This is it... I had grandkids. They was born when I was in prison. My daughter’s getting married.” I said, “I gotta change.” Yeah (Crying again) I said, “Oh my God. My only daughter got married when I was in prison.” She gave birth when I was in prison and um you know my mom was getting really sick when I was locked up. And my daughter said, “Mom, you eva come back to prison. I ain’t ever bringing my grandkids in hea and don’t even call.” You know I just kept telling myself, “This is the last time I’m going back to prison.” You know. If I don’t use, I not goin’ back to prison. Dat’s my solution. If I don’t pick up, I’m not goin’ back to prison. Until today, I haven’t touched noting. If losing my mother doesn’t take me out, then nothing will.”

In addition to choosing drugs over their children, the other six mothers made the realization that acknowledging and accepting the fact that they choose drugs and men over their children was part of their preparation to “getting well.” This level of honesty with themselves helped them be accountable for their actions and motivated them to get help to work toward positive change. Margaret provided a poignant statement about her internal realization of the hurtful impact she had on her children that came as a result of raising her awareness through education (while in prison) and through parenting and life coping classes as well as therapeutic programming after her exit from prison:

I was gone for 20 years, because my dope and my men was more important than you kids and that’s as honest and as clear cut as I can get. You cannot bottle that shit up. If you can sit down as a mudda and say, “I left you guys because my dope and my men

45 Three of the women lost their mothers and other family members either just prior to prison, while in prison, or after leaving prison. Thus, grief, loss, and separation was ongoing through all phases of the Reawakening/Awakening Process. However, beginning in the Hoʻomakaukau Huliau through the Naʻauao phases, they began to develop more support systems and coping skills to manage grief, loss, and separation without drugs and alcohol.
was more important.” If you can say that out of your mouth, believe that and take responsibility, then you ready for get well. Because if you cannot fuckin’ face the truth. That’s as clear as day. I was chasing my fuckin’ guys and fuckin’ smoking dope, getting high, partying. If I cannot admit that, then you get reservations for go back to where you was ‘cause you not completely honest and you not willing to take responsibility. And by Margaret taking responsibility, I gotta accept the fact that I fucked up. I’m sick. I’m not well. I get one disease and I need help.

Through being honest with herself, Margaret realized that she chose drugs and men over her children and needed to accept and acknowledge what she had done and that she needed help. With proper support, she became sober and prepared herself to be ready to face the truth of her situation. Her example is reflective of all of the mothers in this study.

And until I was able to accept that and acknowledge that and own that, then I was ready for face some shit... Because I was always fuckin’ high wheneva had to deal with the sex, wheneva had to deal with the abuse, wheneva had to deal with all this bullshit. But, now I gotta sit here raw and live, clean and sober and I gotta acknowledge the hurt, the pain, the shame, the anger, the disgust, the everything... I had to be able to be ready mentally and physically. “Margaret you gonna hear some stuff you not gonna like. You gonna feel some stuff that going make you wanna fuckin’ run to the liquor. You gonna process feelings that you neva did frickin’ process before without drugs. Are you ready to do it?” I was ready. (August 26, 2017)

Through surviving near death experiences and making internal realizations from direct real-world, educational and therapeutic experiences (including accepting what they have done and taking responsibility for their actions), the women had a strong desire to change and reconnect to their families. Additionally, for all of the mothers, the desire to change was also prompted by a sincere desire to reconnect and reunite with their children and “get their family back.” Countless examples of this desire to change existed in the interviews. The quotes listed here are just a few examples of what prompted their ‘i’ini hulihia or internal motivator for change.

**Exhaustion and Maturation.** Another pivotal experience came over time. After decades of living unconsciously, nine women were exhausted from living in a vicious,
repetitive cycle of trauma, violence, significant loss, and subsequent addiction and incarceration. They wanted a “better and more peaceful” life for themselves. As they were getting older and maturing, they became “sick and tired” of the lifestyle they were living and wanted to “live in peace.” Amy’s succinct summary of her life exemplifies the meaning of the phrase “sick and tired”:

So...you know today I can actually tell you guys [women at the treatment center where she works] that, you just gotta be had enough of it. Just sick and tired of getting arrested, going to jail, losing your family, losing your job, you know. Just a lose, lose, lose situation. I mean the next thing I was just about to lose my life. There were situations that... I was in a high speed chase. I was, you know, my boyfriend wanted to kill me. Um. I had guns point to my head, but you just gotta be sick and tired of that lifestyle you know. And just gotta stop.

Amy’s moʻolelo is reflective of all of the other women’s moʻolelo except for Dion’e. The women no longer wanted to keep living in a Na‘aupō phase of their lives with shame, silence, and secrecy of the pain of their past, subsequent addictions, and criminal lifestyles. They reached a point where they were exhausted from living a life of drugs and crime and were more mature and ready to transform themselves. They were ready to engage in deep inner work to heal from the hala and ʻeha of their past and find the strength from deep within themselves to shift from focusing on their own self-interests, self-sabotaging and self-destructive behaviors and work toward service to others.

The women also felt that they “grew up” either before and/or during their second, third, or fourth time in prison. For example, Noelani, who had a notorious reputation for fighting and not caring about the consequences, recalled her slow and gradual change process that resulted from the overlap of making internal realizations, being tired and becoming mature in how she interacted with others:

Well you know like I learned that it isn’t good you know to add fuel to the flame you know. Or um I saw that my past with my father had haunt came into my present while I
was there from the beginning. I saw as I came to the ending of this last 6 years that it’s not good you know the way I did time befo’. Don’t do it like that you know. And I didn’t. I was tired already. I reached that point, I was in my 50’s already. I don’t want to do this like no more anymore, you know.

I conduct more um mature now and um [pause to reflect]. I’m able to process as to way back befo’ there was no process gonna happen or I wasn’t open to listen that this is the way I should do things or try it out you know. Go to this class you know was like, “Fuck you. I ain’t going to the class.” And then I can see where my mind as I was becoming more mature and growing from the old me to this you know new me that wow...It took years for me to get to that point.

Similar to Noelani, Noenoe, who “grew up” in prison, noted that this didn’t occur for her until she was nearly 60 years old. By society’s measure, NoeNoe was considered an adult at 18 years old and a mother in her early 20’s, but she did not achieve maturity until three decades later. It was only then that she had an ‘i’ini hulihia or desire to heal and transform.
Pōmaikaʻi shared her desire to change which was partially influenced by her realization about her age and desire for something different.

“Ok, you know what, I too old fo’ be hanging out in prison.” For me, it was just like why I goin’ come home and keep doing the same things over and over? ...I was just done!”

Similar to the other women, Pōmaikaʻi was “done” with her criminal lifestyle and, through many more pivotal experiences in prison, she chose to “better” her life and do positive things for her family and her community when she exited prison. By contrast, Dion’e and Nahe entered prison already mature and transformed. They used their time in prison to find healthy outlets to focus on their goals and help others. In sum, the women’s ‘i’ini hulihia turning point was prompted by pivotal life experiences, such as surviving near death experiences, making internal realizations, exhaustion and maturation.
ʻŌlelo Hoʻohiki – Conscious Commitment Ensures Accountability

The second turning point to prepare for change involved making a commitment which ensures accountability based on the Kānaka Maoli worldview (Kanahele, 1986; Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a). ʻŌlelo is the Hawaiian term for “language, speech, word” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 284)  Hoʻohiki is the Hawaiian term for a “oath, vow, promise, or pledge” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 284). For kanaka maoli, the “ ʻōlelo (word, verbal statement) was a both mystic force and binding contract” (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 151). All of the women talked about the importance of being honest with themselves and others which is linked to the term kūpono or integrity. Kūpono is comprised of two words: kū “meaning in the state of, resembling” and pono “meaning rectitude, uprightness, or goodness” (Kanahele, 1986, p. 410). From a Kānaka Maoli worldview, kūpono refers to “being in a condition of pono”, because little difference exists between being “honest, upright, good, fair or worthy” (Kanahele, 1986, p. 410). A high value is placed on a particular dimension of honesty or integrity, which is hoʻohiki or “keeping one's word”. A spoken promise holds mana and involves the ‘aumakua or ancestral guardian. Therefore, in traditional Hawaiian society, to be kūpono, a Hawaiian would not give their word unless they knew that they could follow through on their word, because they lived in “fear of punishment” from their ‘aumakua if they didn’t keep their word (Kanahele, 1986, p. 410).

Four of the women talked directly about ‘aumakua, and there appeared to be a shared belief among the women that they will be held accountable to God or Jesus or Pele for any promises they make and that their actions are meant to be in alignment with their words. Thus, making a verbal commitment from a conscious mind ensures they will hold themselves accountable, because they do not want to displease their ‘aumakua and/or God or Jesus.
Following a series of “wake-up calls” in the form of pivotal life experiences and internal realizations, the women made a conscious decision to commit to transforming themselves and healing. This conscious decision was often paired with a promise to someone: God, Pele, the presiding judge, their families and/or their children. For example, following her near death experience and spiritual awakening, Kehaulani made a conscious decision to transform herself and promised God that she would never to drugs again.

From then on, I just said, “You know what”… and that’s what keeps me clean today too is like… I told God from in there, “God this is it. I’m never gonna use drugs again.” “I promise you God, you saved my life and I will never go back to drugs again.” And you know what, I never have. It’s been 10 years now.

Nahe, who also broke many promises in the past, was finally ready to make a conscious decision to “show up for her life.” After smoking “ice” for 10 years, she was finally ready to commit to getting sober and transform herself. She realized she was unable to get sober on her own and needed intense treatment. Therefore, she made a verbal and written commitment to the presiding judge to receive treatment to get sober. She also promised her mother and her children that she would get sober. Unfortunately, her mother died while she was in treatment, but she kept her word which aligns with the Hawaiian belief that the spoken word carries mana and a promise given is done so with the intent to keep one’s word (Kanahele, 1986).

Although her mother’s passing triggered another loss for Nahe, because her “security blanket was gone,” she followed through on her promise. Similar to the other women, she remained motivated to “get clean and sober” for her mother and her children.

I got clean and sober for my mom and my kids, because I wasn’t strong enough to get clean and sober for me. I couldn’t do it. I knew I made a promise to her and six months into the program my mom died. All the feelings that it brought to the surface was like now my security blanket is gone. But I knew like going into treatment, I knew like in my mind I was done getting high. I wasn’t going to do it anymore. And I stayed… I just kept that momentum and stayed clean and sober for her and my children until I was strong enough to do it on my own. I made a promise to my mom and my kids and I
couldn’t go back on it. My word is my bond. That’s all I have.

Finally, all of the women noted that part of their growth and healing was to stop lying to themselves about their addiction and/or trauma and made a conscious choice to become honest with others and themselves and work toward being in alignment with their words and actions. They reached deep within themselves to make a conscious commitment to be honest and confront their challenges in order to heal and grow. Nahe shared the importance of making a conscious commitment to herself and being honest:

I made a conscious decision to show up for my life. I just had to dig down deep to find that commitment to myself. I guess looking at it and facing it face forward. Really actually looking at it and talking about it and being honest with other people about it. Most of all being honest to myself. I mean I think that’s helped me to heal and grow. It’s really made me look at it.

**Hoʻomana - Being Spirit-Led versus Ego-Driven**

The third internal turning point that prepared the women for personal transformation involved the women shifting to being spirit-led versus ego-driven. Hoʻomana is the Hawaiian term for spirituality and empowerment. It is comprised of two words: hoʻo (to bring to causation) and mana (divine power). Thus, hoʻomana involves connecting with a higher power and strengthening one’s mana within. All of the women were motivated by having a spiritual awakening, surrendering to a higher power whether it was God or Jesus or Pele, and strengthening the power within them. As Lisa shared:

[Ice] was a motivator, yeah, to get me going all the time. My motivator today is God and my relationship with God. Not only I understand and I know that God is a delivering God and I feel like I am delivered. However, I have a part in that okay. I have a part to stay connected. There’s accountability um, yeah. I not dealing with physicals. A lot of it is spiritual principalities and everyting that I been through but

---

46 Pukui & Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, 1986, p. 236: Other meanings of Hoʻomana include: 1) supernatural or divine power; 2) to place in authority; empower; authorise; 3) to worship; religion.
looking at it in a different perspective. Not in a what I can GAIN perspective, but in a what I can GIVE perspective, what I can BRING perspective.

Similar to the other women, being spirit-led versus ego-driven assisted Lisa in strengthening her desire to serve others with humility and grace and empowered her to make healthy decisions. During her interview, Lisa shared a quote from her devotional book that highlighted the power of decision-making is based on an individual’s choice.

This is part of my reading today and it was just awesome ‘cause now it’s coming together. “The power of decision is my own. This day I will accept myself. It’s what my father’s will created me to be.” And how it just comes together with this interview. [laughs] Thank you Jesus for the gift of choice and that’s a lot. I mean that’s fear and faith, yeah. Being cautious, not necessarily cautious but, what is that word, being um …being pono. Not just pono, but kūpono, yeah. Living with integrity. Living with love and all that good stuff. I’m basically going where I’m led.

Becoming aware of the power of a higher power and connecting to the spirituality that surrounds and is within them gave them serenity, strength, and confidence to surrender to their higher power and become empowered to ho‘ohuli or reform themselves and activate their “power of choice” to shift out of the darkness and move toward light. They stopped being driven toward self-sabotage and selfish desires (ego-driven) and decided to follow the guidance of a Divine Source(s) (spirit-led). This is an example of how being spirit-led versus ego-driven inspires the women to be kūpono and commit to making positive changes as they prepare to take conscious actions in the Huliau phase.

**Having a Spiritual Awakening.** Nine of the women were severely addicted to drugs and alcohol for most of their lives and having a spiritual awakening and feeling loved forgiven, and accepted by God or their self-identified Higher Power despite the wrongs they have done, propelled the women to break free of the cycle of addiction. Seven of the women noted the importance of making a profound connection with God when they went to prison.

Kehaulani shared that her spiritual awakening with God occurred following a near
death experience just prior to her third time to prison. Prior to her awakening, she was getting into fights and defying authority during former incarcerations. But, she felt she was “saved by the grace of God” which, from her point of view, was instrumental in her healing. She trusted God to protect her, watch over her, and answer her prayers. She felt accepted for who she is, made a promise to God to change her life for the better, and held herself accountable to God/Jesus.

When I came closer to God, I’m like, okay God knows my every thought. He knows what I’m thinking. He knows my every mood. I wouldn’t even think bad about anyone….’cause once I would get that thought I would go, “Oh God please forgive me. I’m sorry.” I started coming real close with him and I had such a close spiritual connection with him. And um yeah, I just started making…just everything I did, I said, “Jesus is watching me.” That’s how I got through. Yeah. I just pictured him watching me and I said, “Oh he knows what I’m tinking. I cannot get nothing wrong. I cannot do anything wrong.” So, I started doing that you know. And everything that I prayed for in there would be like one answered prayer. Every single prayer.

Kehaulani shared many instances where God answered all of her prayers (e.g. to develop leadership skills while in prison, to reconnect with her children, etc.) and, like nine of the other women, she is incredibly grateful for God and Jesus.

Similar to Kehaulani, Noelani also nearly died by being stabbed by her father just prior to her fourth rotation to prison. But while she was homeless on the streets, selling and using drugs, she experienced people praying over her that made her feel grateful, which drew her toward a desire to become closer to God.

‘Cause there was this one night I was on the street you know down Kuhio Ave. And there was this place that people just lay down I guess against this clothes place, I was sitting over there with them and all of a sudden these church people came up and this girl or one guy wen pray over me you know.

Soon after this experience, she was caught for selling drugs and said, “Thank God it’s over.” She wanted to change. She did not want to live a life of crime anymore. She realized that “something changed [her] mind spiritually.”
Prior to this experience, she had accepted the fact that she was going to be a criminal and would most likely do drugs for the rest of her life. But, she “developed a conscience” and entered her fourth rotation in prison with a changed attitude and mindset. Being shown love by the man and woman that prayed over her made her feel that she had worth and value. Thus, developing a deep and meaningful spiritual connection with a higher power when she went to prison prompted a desire for Noelani to change her beliefs and behavior and begin to heal.

My belief ok to myself was dis -that I am destined to be a criminal all my life or sell drugs all my life or do drugs all my life you know yeah. So, I accepted what came with it yeah. So I didn’t care. That’s part of the game you know. I didn’t care if it hurt other people. I didn’t have a conscience. Ok. This is how it goes, then let’s do it.

Then, I wanted to be different. By then, you know, like I was, you know, very grateful. I reached that stage after that girl and that guy prayed over me being shown love and I got busted. Something happened you know inside of me you know and when I went to jail I had a desire for change. I wanted to be different. I wanted to try something different. I wanted to learn how to be good. I didn’t want to do drugs or sell drugs anymore. I wanted to be healed. I wanted to be delivered from it you know.

So, I listened to what was asked of me to do you know what I mean. Before I wouldn’t listen yeah. Something changed my mind spiritually you know jus... I really like being this person that you know praise God, sang to God. I love learning about the bible and the verses and how I can use them in prayer or speak them into my life or into other people’s life you know. It was the love and forgiveness from God that helped me heal.

Being loved and forgiven for all that Noelani has done helped prepare her to start healing and transforming. However, it was not easy to be accepted by the Christian groups that went into the prison. Although many of the women started bible studies in prison through the Total Life Recovery (TLR) program, Noelani was unable to join those groups because she was a lesbian. However, she persevered and learned about the love of God and the importance of withholding judgement and loving those who persecute you.

I came to TLR and I had an interview because I was thinking, “Well maybe I should go into TLR ‘cause it’s a biblical, you know, program and I can learn more about my spirituality, my growth, can enhance with God. Desire to be closer to God I can learn the bible more, um, but when I found out about the part where you know they wouldn’t
accept me in like this, as a butchie, that, you know, kinda of just turned me off. “Well
I’ll just learn from God on my own.” Yep, self-study. And I did that. Every day I would
read my bible. My daily word. I would pray. It helped me.

God’s LOVE helped me to keep myself calm in there majority of the time. His word
says to love one another. Like in the Martin Luther King - Love your enemy. Love those
that persecute you. That’s true. Love your persecutors. That has truth you know and so I
wanted to be like that and love people that even tho’ they were not changing and they
were in their old behaviors or had an attitude or would speak to me in an ugly way you
know. “Don’t react to them. You used to be like that. But, you’re growing and they’re
chose not to grow you know. They don’t want to and you was like that. So, don’t judge
them. Love them.” Yeah.

Much of the strength to walk away from a life of drugs and crime and heal for nine of
the women was anchored in a spiritual awakening which involved feeling the love and
forgiveness from God and reliance on the power of God. With this profound spiritual
connection that provided unconditional love and acceptance, the women opened their hearts,
listened to the guidance from their higher power, and developed empathy. Pōmai'aki shared, “I
just feel like, Jesus has always been a part of my life, it was just for me seek him.” She dealt
drugs since the age of 15 years to bring in income to her family and alleviate the financial
stress on her single mother. But, once she “found God” in prison, she was able to overcome her
addictions, break free of a life of crime, and transform and heal herself.

I dealt drugs since I was 15. I never grew up in a biblical home, but I found God while I
was in prison. So, things just started to transform me at that point, you know. I guess I
had to go through all of that, to get to prison, to find God and you know, because meth
is bad, you know. It has a hold on you. It’s the devil. It’s like God and the Devil
fighting to keep one soul, but in the end, God wins!

Pōmai'aki shared a powerful statement about her own realization in her life once she
became spirit-led, “Before I used to live to use and use to live....Now, I don’t need to get high
and use criminality to get by.” “Finding God” in prison was a way for seven of the women to
talk about the love, acceptance, forgiveness, serenity, comfort, protection and inner strength
the women found from a spiritual source that helped them to cope with trauma, begin to love
themselves and not use drugs to get through their day. Having the strength of God by their side as they navigated through life struggles empowered them to make pono (appropriate) choices and live in a kūpono manner.

Dion’e and Nahe entered prison already having a strong connection to God and neither one of them were struggling with addiction when they went to prison. Nahe was sober for at least 4 years before entering prison, because she agreed to serve her time after receiving treatment in which she successfully achieved and maintained sobriety.

In the four years of getting sober, I had already charted what I was going to do. I knew I was going to jail clean and sober. I’m going to go do my mandatory five years. I knew I was going to make my time work for me. It wasn’t my house. It was my unit, you know. I was there for a temporary stay. I wasn’t there to find God. I wasn’t there to find a girlfriend. I wasn’t there to find myself. I already knew who I was and failure, at that moment for me, was not an option. It was about getting the system off of my back.

Thus, unlike the other women, Nahe entered prison with a clear plan of what she was going to do while she was in prison for the second time for forging checks. She had a strong relationship with God and a clear mindset that, “Failure...was not an option.” Nahe’s ‘i‘ini hulihia (desire for change) was so strong and she was determined to “get the system off her back.” She entered prison with ho‘omana (strong spiritual foundation and empowered). Even though she knew that, “it’s never too late to change” and was forgiven by God, her strong connection to God also held her accountable for her actions:

Well God’s always been in my life through my drug days, through when I was a child. Even in my drug days though …I’ve never lost sight of him. I just wanted a better connection, because I’ve known that all the bad I’ve done in my life, I’m going to answer for that one day. I am. I’m going to stand in front of God and I’m going to answer for that one day. It’s never too late to change. I know he forgives us for all our sins. I know that, but I know that I will have to stand before him one day and answer.

**Surrendering to a Higher Power.** Most of the women talked about surrendering to a higher power and giving up control. Surrendering to a higher power gave the women the
Amy made the following statement: “I mean how crazy is that. You know outside of jail you’re just too busy doing drugs and running amuck and when you go jail, you end up on your knees yeah.” Although Amy went to a Catholic Church with her father as a child, it did not really have much meaning for her in childhood. During her last time in prison, she realized that she needed to give the control over to God so that she could have the strength to overcome her addictions. She continued on to say:

And so you know when I was in prison in I accepted my spiritual what you call, Jesus Christ. [crying] I went to church, you know I was all in, you know. I found Jesus in jail. I found um I started reading the bible from front to back. I read the bible a lot and then a lot of bible studies. I did a lot of faith-based tings in jail. Um... And from there, my whole life when change. I still don’t smoke cigarettes. I came out of prison, I neva even pick up drink, drugs, I neva.

As a result of forming a deep relationship with God, Kehaulani surrendered and released her desire to be in control and became spirit-led rather than ego-driven. Similar to what all the women have said, healing is ongoing and spiritually grounded:

For me healing became something spiritual. I’m still in the process. Like I believe that God has surely played a big role in my healing. Um like I said just laying it all out, asking for forgiveness and knowing that he truly forgave me and remembers my sins no more. I found God. I started working on myself, you know. Um. So earlier yeah when I say I started to heal, what actually happened was I just started talking to God. I just finally surrendered and gave it all to him and stopped trying to do things on my own. I just said, “You know what God, you take it from here. I’m just gonna give it all to you and you work it out Father God to my favor.” And you know that’s pretty much what happened. And I just gave it all to him and I went into one prayer.

And I would go on my hands and knees right in church and I got prayed over. We made a…we had a little prayer group going. Every night the prayer group would get together. Every morning we read our devotions together and I believe that’s what started the huge process. You know I find myself still trying to be in control at times and I’m like, “God you are in control” and I give it to him. I try to take things into my own hands when I know that if I just give it to him, it will all work out better.
Being spirit-led was also a strong stabilizing strategy for the women. For example, all of the women shared that feeling the support of their higher power made them feel grounded. Many of the women engage in daily devotionals and/or prayer as part of their daily routine to remain spiritually grounded and to have structure in their lives. Lisa added to this “grounding” by noting that faith and confidence from her mother provided her with a grounding to be sober and remain strong in herself. Although her father was Catholic, and her mother was Protestant, she was immersed in Hoʻomana Ka Wa Kahiko (Ancient Hawaiian Spirituality) (OHA, 2017) on Molokaʻi and learned the ways of her ancestors. Thus, Lisa’s deep connection to God as a Christian woman, her Hawaiian ancestral beliefs, and her mother built up her self-esteem and gave her the strength to overcome her addictions. She shared specifically that, “faith with confidence”\(^{47}\) is amazing:

Faith and confidence brings contentment and with confidence which for me stems from my ‘ohana, from my mom actually. Um. That and having faith behind it is so powerful. It talks about this in psalms. One is the tree planted by the river. It’s immovable. You’re rooted. You’re planted.

The battle isn’t mine. It’s too huge for me. It’s like addiction…addiction is too powerful for me so the only way that I can be clean and be is with God – that’s the only way yeah…I’m not in control.

Besides being Christian, Lisa was also fluid in her understanding and belief in Hawaiian gods, such as Ku (Hawaiian masculine god) and Hina (Hawaiian feminine goddess). Being strong in her both her Hawaiian beliefs and Christian faith allowed Lisa to build her confidence and self-esteem.

However, not all of the women surrendered to God or Jesus. Jamie, a mother of six children, was raised Catholic, but was repelled by the Catholic faith because of the way she

---

\(^{47}\) The Hawaiian term for faith is manaʻoʻio which means both faith and confidence (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 237).
perceived them as a young adult. This shift in her perspective was likely influenced by her grandfather and the Catholic faith’s firm views about sex outside of marriage and prostitution which were both activities she was involved in. She preferred to refer to herself as a “call girl” and was professional in her work in the sex industry.

Her grandmother was Protestant and her grandfather was Catholic although he had a negative viewpoint of Catholics in their neighborhood. As a young child, her grandfather saved her life by practicing Ho’omana Kahiko (Ancient beliefs). As an adult, she turned away from Catholicism and returned back to her “native religion,” followed Pele’s instructions to give birth, and called upon Pele to help her son as a way to work toward repairing her relationship with him.

My Pele connection was through my grandfather. He’s the one like, or my grandmother supported the stories, but they were Protestants you know. My grandfather was Catholic, but he would tell me things like, “Yeah those Catholics. They go to church. They go beauty shop during the week and then then turn around and they go over there for show off their Cadillacs and their new hairdos and turn around and talk shit about each other afterwards. Oh, tell Mary shove this up her ass” you know. And I’m like, “Grandpa don’t do that ‘cause you gonna die you know.” It’s not ‘til later that I really understand what he’s talking about. (Jamie, August 25, 2016)

As an adult, she moved away from Christianity because she felt that Christianity was out of alignment with her Hawaiian spiritual beliefs and her own perspectives about sexual openness.

While her involvement as a “call girl” is now over, at the time, it helped her financially and promoted her self-esteem. According to Jamie, “I did it ‘cause I needed to pay for rent…So, um, for me, I enjoyed it [sex], I made good money and I loved the connections I made. My

---

48 Pele is an akua or Hawaiian fire goddess for non-related humans, but she also has a dual role of ‘aumakua or ancestor goddess for her descendants through a union with a human (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 36). It is within this context that Jamie claims to be a member of the Pele clan.
clients all enjoyed my company. They treated me respectfully. They were all good to me.” Her clients treated her with more respect than her ex-husband, her lovers, and her family. Her grandfather also treated her with respect and “brought her back to life” when she was a young girl. Upon reflection as an adult, she realized that she experienced the mana from a supernatural source that came through her grandfather which further solidified her belief in and connection to her Hawaiian culture.

But, you know, he was a good man. I love him. I still miss him. He’s about the only person I ever cried for. He knew what he was talking about ‘cause he did things with rocks and um, engaging in cultural practices…From what I understand when I was little, I was supposed to be dead. I was already purple. I had convulsions and I was brought back to life. My grandfather sat in the back seat in the car with me. They drove to the hospital, but by the time they did get me to the hospital you know I was still alive. I don’t know what he did. But, I know he did something and usually when you have encounters with people who do things like that, um it’s not something that they advertise either. But, that makes, you know, that gives you some of that power transcends onto you, you know in some way or form. The mana [supernatural power] comes through.

Jamie explained that her reasons for being a Pele worshipper were based on the love, acceptance, mana, and blessings she felt from Pele that she did not receive from Christianity. For most of her life, she felt judged by her Christian parents and family members.

I’m a Pele worshipper. Basically, my whole summation of religion is you cannot teach anybody how to be good. Goodness comes naturally. I ended up worshipping Pele for lots of things that happened to me before when I was little when I was growing up. Things that I ignored or did not want to recognize... And when I started to recognize, you know what, you are doing the wrong thing. The thing I’m supposed to be doing, which is my native religion, that was there all the time. That’s when my, a whole lot of my life just falls into place all the time. I’m so blessed. When I start putting interest into the Pele thing and my, the things that da kine everything falls into place. More easy than Christianity. Christianity’s bullshit, you know. Because I worship Pele, that’s why I’m really blessed.

Jamie spent time in Halemaumau Crater on Hawaiʻi island praying to Pele on many occasions for guidance and support in her life. As she listened to Pele’s guidance, she would receive hōʻailona (spiritual signs, divine revelations from Pele) of triple rainbows. Those signs
helped to build her confidence, because it was her confirmation in nature that she was “on track” and that “everything would fall into place.”

Having faith in a higher power, whether it was God, Jesus, or Pele gave the women the grounding like the roots of the ʻōhiʻa lehua tree and the inner strength (through love, acceptance, and forgiveness) they needed to get through their daily living without drugs and alcohol and to heal from repeated wounds. Rather than being ego-driven, the women became spirit-led by surrendering to a higher power. Knowing that they were not alone and could call upon their higher power to protect and watch over them, bless them, and love them unconditionally empowered them to break free of fear and past mistakes and addictions. This desire to be spirit-led versus ego-driven occurred either before, during, or after prison. As the women felt loved, accepted, and forgiven by a higher power, they were prompted to focus on healing their spirits and growing into inspired alignment.

**Hoʻomākaukau Huliau Summary**

In sum, because the women yearned for love, acceptance, and support, lived in shame, silence, and secrecy, suffered from grief, loss, and separation and knew that they were hana hūpō (living recklessly), losing the will to live, and not living with integrity during their Naʻaupō phase, they made sincere efforts to prepare themselves to make positive changes during their Huliau phase of their lives to heal and transform. The preparation for change was anchored in becoming makaʻala or aware & observant and looking deeply into their lives and realizing what they have done and the impact they have had on others. The women opened their hearts like a liko lehua bud that begins to open when it receives water (love) and acceptance (light) to be ready and willing to listen to what is asked of them (particularly from a higher power) and made a firm commitment to truly change themselves. Although the women
weren’t always initially sure how to heal and transform, they raised their awareness through pivotal life experiences which led to internal revelations and acceptance of what they have done. By being spirit-led (ho‘omana), they developed a willingness and a sincere desire to take actions to heal and transform (i‘ini hulihia) and made commitments to keep their word (‘ōlelo ho‘ohiki) and be accountable for their words and actions. This type of preparation was a necessary preparatory aspect of the Huliau phase of healing and growth.
Aia no ka pono – o ka ho‘ohuli i ka lima i lalo, ‘a‘ole o ka ho‘ohuli i luna.
This is what it should be – to turn the hands palms down, not palms up.
(Pukui, 1983, p. 10)

Chapter Seven reviews the findings related to the Huliau phase (transformative time of
reawakening and awakening) for the women as they move between the Na‘aupō phase (“dark”
mind) and Na‘auao phase (“daylight” mind). Now that the women have truly prepared
themselves to change (Ho‘omākaukau Huliau), they were ready to more fully reawaken and
awaken in the second phase in the three phase dynamic model toward overall reawakening.
The Huliau phase is the second critical phase for the recovery of these women. Similar to the
Ho‘omākaukau Huliau, it occurred at different moments in their life pathway either before,
during, or after being in prison at least once depending on their various circumstances.

The kaona or deeper meaning of ‘ōlelo no‘eau illustrates the shift from behaving
recklessly to working toward being “pono.” Tūtū Pukui further explains, “No one can work
with the palms of the hands turned up. When a person is always busy, he is said to keep his
palms down” (Pukui, 1983, p. 10). In the Huliau phase, the women turn their palms down and
start working on making positive changes. This focus on keeping themselves “busy” for the
“good” rather than “bad” begins in the Huliau phase, but is maintained in the Na‘auao phase.

The Hawaiian term Ho‘ohuli described in the following paragraphs assists in
articulating how this phase was conceptualized from a Kānaka Maoli worldview. It highlights
how the women moved through this phase in their journey of reawakening and awakening.

**Ho‘ohuli (Activating the Power of Choice)**

Ho‘ohuli is the active process of choosing to turn, change, reform, covert, or overturn
(Pukui & Elbert, 1986). Activating the power of choice was a key element in the Huliau phase
of the women’s lives. In the Ho‘omākaukau Huliau phase, the women prepared themselves to make positive changes. They were just beginning to reawaken and awaken through the three turning points and developing a desire to move forward. They realized that they had the power to make decisions for themselves. In the Huliau phase, they were ready to do the hard work of turning their lives around. They activated their power of choice to either move forward toward living a forgiven and purposeful life in the Naʻauao phase or reverted back to the Naʻaupō phase. Personal transformation did not happen automatically. It came from being grounded by their meaningful spiritual belief system and a deep desire to heal and transform, which was prompted by deep contemplation to make sense of one’s traumatic experiences and then making commitments and conscious decisions to take responsible actions.

After spending most of the early part of their lives struggling to survive with hala and ʻeha and seeing themselves as a “failure”, they recognized that they are solely responsible for making the necessary changes to improve their lives. As they felt ready for change in the Huliau phase, they interacted with various supports and made conscious choices/decisions to “prosper” and be a success rather than backslide to their old patterns of thinking, feeling, and reacting. Noenoe offers a summary of what many of the women stated:

But, you going have to want it. It’s not a need, you know. It becomes a want. If this is what you want and this is what you are trying to accomplish, by all means, nobody’s stopping you, then do it. You going have to want to stop doing everything you do. It’s you. You going have to do everything and make your decisions. Only you going fail, you know. Only you by, you know, only you fail, only you going prosper whichever one you decide to do. I would rather prosper.

As Noenoe shared, through personal choices, the women can either “fail” or “prosper”. The Hawaiian terms for this in terms of the Hoʻala Hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli model are huli hoʻi (backslide) and holomua (move forward). Metaphorically, this phase is a time in which they can choose to remove the pōhaku from their their Bowls of Light through conscious actions to
restore mana’olana or hope (Na’auao Phase) or make choices that result in more pōhaku in their Bowl of Light.

The Huliau phase is when the women searched for meaning of their traumatic experiences and questioned who they truly are. They wanted to know why they thought, felt, and behaved the way they did. They also wanted to make sense of the abuse that happened in their lives. Through taking actions, becoming aware of their patterns, and engaging in deep reflection of their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and subsequent actions in their cognitive mind and their na‘au or visceral mind, they gained insight into their mental and emotional processes and subsequent actions. The insight gained is a perceptual wisdom that occurred through their senses (e.g. touch, smell, taste, hear, and sight)\(^49\) over a long period of time.

In this manner, they were no longer living unconsciously and taking actions that led to negative consequences (disrupted relationships with themselves and others, incarceration, near death experiences due to violence, car accidents, etc.). Through getting ready to change in the Ho‘omakaukau Huliau, they realized they had the power of choice. The women were shifting from being asleep in the Na‘auopō phase to reawakening and re-remembering who they truly are: wāhine maoli who come from a rich and abundant history who deserve to be loved, accepted and forgiven for their mistakes. Metaphorically, they began to strengthen their roots underground.

Following this initial reawakening, they began to awaken to a heightened understanding of their life experiences and their life purpose. With emotional, spiritual, educational, and stabilizing supports, they began to do the internal work of ongoing healing beneath the surface

\(^{49}\) Nahe, Dion’e, Lisa, and Jamie had the gift of ‘ike pāpālua or “second sight”, can commune with spirits, attain supernatural knowledge, and make predictions based on their extra sensory perceptions (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 97).
and eventually pushed through the soil like the ‘ōhi’a lehua seeding rising above ground to grow based on a solid foundation.

Two Stages of Transformative Reawakening & Awakening

Within the Huliau phase, there are two main ongoing stages: 1) Healing the Spirit and 2) Growing into Inspired Alignment. Within the first stage, there are three concurrent, cyclical processes of transformative reawakening that occurred for the women: 1) Ho‘opono (Cleanse and Make Amends); 2) Ho‘opili (Make Connections); and 3) Ho‘opili Hou (Make Reconnections).

Stage One: Healing the Spirit

3 Concurrent processes:
1. Hoʻopono - Cleansing and Making Amends
   3 concurrent strategies:
   a. “Getting the ‘Opala Out and No Take ‘Em Back” – repent and release
   b. “Breaking Free of Toxic Relationships” - detachment
   c. “Making Amends” – resolution through forgiveness of self and others

2. Hoʻopili - Making Connections
   2 concurrent strategies:
   a. “Filling the Spiritual/Emotional Void”
   b. “Building Multiple, Trustworthy, Healthy Support Networks”

3. Hoʻopili Hou - Making Reconnections
   2 concurrent strategies:
   a. “Rebuilding Trust with Family”
   b. “Getting Back to Your Roots” which is linked to “Knowing Who You Are”

Stage Two: Growing Into Inspired Alignment

Hoʻoulu Pono process (To Cause to Thrive)
4 Strategies:
1) Being Honest with Self & Others
2) Taking Responsibility
3) Developing an Attitude of Gratitude & Practicing Humility
4) Shifting the Hustle
The second stage, Growing Into Inspired Alignment, involved an ongoing cyclical process of Ho‘oulu pono (Starting to Thrive) that began in the Ho‘omakaukau Huliau and overlapped with the Na‘auao or enlightened phase. Four strategies were identified by the women to assist in the process of Ho‘oulu pono. The processes involved in both Stage One & Stage Two of the Huliau phase are cyclical and overlapping in the minds and hearts of the women. However, they have been subdivided in presenting them to more clearly delineate specific aspects of how they occurred in the Huliau phase.

Women’s Perspectives of PTG and Healing

From the women’s point of view, PTG is an overall transformative process of conscious reawakening which is linked to healing and being inspired to awaken and align oneself in mind, body, and spirit and accept everything that has happened in their lives. Additionally, the women repeatedly noted that both healing and PTG were spiritually grounded and healing was an integral part of their PTG journey. Thus, PTG also involves self-acceptance and knowing oneself and finding balance, which is an ongoing, ever evolving journey.

Because all of the women experienced the first 30 years of their lives or longer with multiple forms of trauma that led to feelings of low self-worth, healing continues to be an ongoing process of conscious reawakening and involves a total transformation from who they were in terms of their perceptions of themselves, others, and the world, their attitudes and behaviors to who they are now. All of the women shared that they are a “completely different person” from who they were before their first Huliau phase (approximately 35 years or older). As identified in the Na‘aupō phase, NoeNoe stated, “We’re considered total losers and I know we’re not.” However, it was not until the Huliau phase (following a Ho‘omākaukau Huliau)
that they began to truly change their perceptions of themselves and manifest positive changes in their lives.

Furthermore, the women also noted that it is essential to heal before they can fully grow and accomplish their goals. This healing was based on being willing to open up their hearts and minds like a liko lehua or leaf bud of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree that blossoms only after it opens up to receive water (love) and light which is symbolically represented by sunlight (acknowledgement and acceptance) and moonlight (spirituality). With the ‘ōhi‘a lehua metaphor in mind, it could be conceptualized that love and light restore hope, because when the women feel loved and accepted, they are able to open up, heal, and grow and feel hopeful about the present and future.

Well you know, before you can blossom and you can bloom, you have to heal and without you healing, there’s no way that bud going grow. That bud has to grow with having everything clear in your feelings. You have to heal. Without healing you cannot accomplish what you going accomplish. I no care how much you try ‘cause I tried it and it did not work.

Finally, the women talked about the importance of experiencing both healing and growth in order to be complete and whole. The women realized, through deep reflection, that in order to achieve the peace they wanted in life, they needed to work through their “issues”, release them, and then come into alignment and reconnect with themselves, others, and the world in which they live through the power of choice. Again, Noenoe shares her perspective about healing that echoes what the women shared.

You need the both of them. You need healing to heal yourself and you also need the growth. You have to grow and you have to heal. By you healing, that’s gonna start your growth that how I look at it. Healing is going start your growth. By doing that, that’s when you going grow and who knows what you going bloom into you know.

Initial healing prompts more healing and growth, because when the women are carrying resentments, unforgiveness, and other negative emotions about themselves and blaming,
criticizing, and judging others, they are blocked from deeper healing and the ability to grow into alignment and start to thrive. With love, acceptance, acknowledgement (for their accomplishments) and support, the women open their hearts to healing and subsequently grow past their trauma. Thus, part of their journey toward reawakening involves healing in terms of letting go of the past, staying in the present, and looking to a brighter future with clarity about their true identity. Thus, for the women, the reawakening process is a re-remembering of who they truly are and not from what they were told, how they were viewed, and/or how they were treated by their families, lovers/husbands, society, and prison staff.

**Huliau Stage One: Healing the Spirit**

Figure 7.1  Huliau Stage One: Healing the Spirit Processes & Strategies

---

**HEALING THE SPIRIT: “Making Things Right”**

Nā Maoli Wāhine (Naʻau)

P1: Hoʻoponopono
(Cleansing and Making Amends)
“Get the ‘opala out and no take ‘em back”

P2: Hoʻopili - Making Connections
“Gotta have a support network”

P3: Hoʻopili Hau – Making Reconnections
“Rebuild Trust with family”
“Getting back to your roots”

Hoʻomauhala (Holding a Grudge)
“Taking it Back”

---

Figure 7.1 was inspired by Amy, who used the Bowl of Light metaphor to describe her healing. Listed below is an excerpt from her interview:

**Amy:**  It’s like a bowl of light with all the rocks in it.

**Tammy:**  All the pōhaku [*rocks*].

**Amy:**  Yeah, it’s like another rock taken out. [*Amy starts crying*]

**Tammy:**  Oh, that’s such a beautiful metaphor.
Amy: Eventually the light starts shining through, you know.

Tammy: Yes. I love that. Yeah. Each of us is born as a perfect Bowl of Light. I know that story so well.

Amy: Yeah. ‘Cause you know, like I told you from da beginning, people just throwing the rocks in dea, eventually your light get dark. [Crying]

Tammy: Yeah, If you put enough rocks and dirt on something, you can’t really see the brightness of it.

Amy: Yeah. So, when always you hear something good, it’s like taking another rock out. Awesome.

In this excerpt from her transcript, Amy used the Bowl of Light to describe how rocks being thrown into her bowl (e.g. child sexual abuse, being involved with drug dealer boyfriends and selling drugs, getting arrested numerous times, struggling to survive the financial stressors of being a single mother, etc.) dimmed her light and took her to a dark place. But, receiving emotional support in the form of positive praise helped her to build her self-esteem and inner strength to “take another rock out” and begin to shine more of her light from within. The women shared many stories of what helped them take rocks out of the bowl or huli (turn) their bowl over and get rid of the rocks in their lives and heal their spirits.

Stage One is identified as Healing the Spirit and the terminology used by the women to highlight their overall healing Hulialu process within this stage is “Making Things Right.” Healing for the nā wāhine maoli trauma survivors in this study involved three co-occurring and interactive processes that are noted here in Hawaiian and English: 1) Hoʻopono (Cleanse and Make Amends) and 2) Hoʻopili (Make Connections); and 3) Hoʻopili Hou (Make Reconnections). The women identified three spiritually grounded strategies that helped them to hoʻopono or cleanse and make amends: 1) “Getting the ‘opala out and no take ‘em back”/“Letting Go;” 2) “Breaking free from toxic relationships”; and 3) “Making Amends.”
The women also described two strategies that helped them to Hoʻopili or Make connections: 1) Filling the Spiritual/Emotional Void and 2) Building Multiple Trustworthy Support Networks and two strategies to Hoʻopili Hou or Making reconnections: 1) “Rebuilding trust with family” and 2) “Getting back to your roots” which leads to “Knowing who you are.” These strategies often overlapped with the strategies for Hoʻopono, because the more they filled their spiritual/emotional void through love, acceptance, and support and reconnected to family and culture, the stronger they became in their motivation and ability to cleanse and make amends. With each strategy, the women continued to make internal realizations that are articulated through the descriptions of the Healing the Spirit stage and the Growing into Inspired Alignment.

**Hoʻopono Process (Cleansing and Making Amends)**

Hoʻopono is the Hawaiian term for “respectable, correct, upright” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 340). To understand the depth of this part of their healing requires a further deconstruction of the root parts of this word. Hoʻo is to bring to causation and pono is defined as, “correctness, uprightness, morality, in proper order” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 340). Conversely, ho'opono ‘ole refers to being unjust or dishonest, which is how all of the women described their behavior before their “reawakening” during their Huliau phase. Thus, hoʻopono or cleansing and making amends involves working toward becoming pono at the individual level before one is ready to engage in restoring harmony and balance in family relationships. Since the women clearly stated that they are still in the process of healing themselves and repairing relationships with their families, I have identified this aspect of their healing as Hoʻopono rather than Hoʻoponopono, because Hoʻopono in this context is individual rather than familial. Hoʻoponopono is a “family process to resolve family problems” (Martin,
Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014, p. 76). It is intended to restore harmony and balance among family members and supernatural powers with a facilitator such as a respected family member in traditional times or an individual trained to be a facilitator. It involves: prayer, discussion, confession, repentance, mutual restitution and forgiveness (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972, p. 60).

For the women who were addicted to substances, sobriety was linked to the three internal motivations for personal transformation as stated in the Hoʻomakaukau Huliau section of this dissertation. Although the women may have grown in learning more about their addictions and how to manage their day to day living without substances, it was not until they actually processed their trauma through therapeutic exercises done in treatment, such as the “Ripple effect” as shared by Pōmaikaʻi; writing down the feelings that they no longer wanted to carry and burning the papers as shared by Kehaulani; writing music or poetry such as done by Noelani and Dionʻe; or talking about their trauma amongst their peers or with a therapist or with God. The women no longer needed to “escape the pain” of abuse, neglect, abandonment, and/or betrayal with substances, because they were able to express their pain in “safe” spaces.

**Hoʻopono Strategy One - “Getting the ‘Opala Out No Take ‘Em Back”; “Letting Go”.**

All of the women experienced extreme trauma to varying degrees in their lives, which they talked about as “‘opala” and had a sincere desire to “get the ‘opala out and no take ‘em back. ‘Opala is the Hawaiian term for “rubbish, trash, refuse, litter, waste matter, junk, garbage” (Pukui, 1986, p. 290). Thus, the first strategy involved in healing is “getting the ‘opala out.” In this instance, they no longer wanted to carry the trauma and negative feelings of rejection, abandonment, betrayal, and deep hurt inside of themselves. As older adults (30 – 60 years), they became tired of being rebellious and living their lives recklessly and going through
cycles of incarceration. Rather than losing the will to live, they had a sincere desire to live a pono and purposeful life.

The women wanted to cleanse themselves and described their deeper healing as “letting go.” They wanted to set themselves free of the pain and shame of their lives. In other words, once they accepted and acknowledged all the hala or wrongful acts and ʻeha (physical and emotional pain) they caused, they felt remorseful and wanted to repent for their “sins.” As Margaret clearly stated what many of the women noted about their feelings of regret and remorse that she felt as she cried herself to sleep at night in prison:

So, all da tings I did to my kids. All the tings I did to the people in the community. And all the people I went hurt fo’ get what I wanted in life, for the families and the children I went affect for doing things to their parents in front of them. For all that reasons that I went to sleep crying because I no feel good inside what I did yeah.

The women expressed realization that keeping the ʻopala within them caused them to feel worthless, rejected, and deeply hurt. They reached a point in their lives where they want to shift how they saw themselves and started making efforts to reconcile their past and not let it dictate who they are in the present and who they will become in the future. Noelani talked about healing in terms of wanting the trauma to be “uprooted”:

I want to be healed from all that ugliness inside of me. I wanted it uprooted. The hate. The anger. The feeling abandoned you know. Feeling rejected you know. So many things, feeling inadequate. I felt inadequate.

This is a clear example of a huliau or turning point/time of change from the women’s perspective. Because Hawaiians were planters, the conceptualization of huliau is not to turn in a circle like a spinning top, but metaphorically to reach deep down into the soil with an ʻōʻō or digging stick, pull out the weeds, and clean out the ʻopala to clear the land for new seeds to be planted (Handy, Handy, & Pukui, 1951; Kuʻumealoha Gomes, personal communication, November 20, 2018). Noelani wanted her ʻopala to be “uprooted” so that she could be set free
from the negative feelings that existed deep inside of her naʻau and heal from the extreme abandonment and rejection she experienced most of her life from her family and society as a Native Hawaiian and a lesbian. She wanted to be seen for the good inside her and not the crimes and addictions that kept her from her true self; a woman with a big heart.

Similarly, the women in this study wanted to reach deep down into their naʻau and process their trauma, one layer at a time, and then come back up in terms of having a reawakened state of consciousness, behaviors, and attitudes, rather than allowing their negative thoughts to keep spinning around in their cognitive mind. All of the women had deep feelings of hurt and unresolved grief they were carrying within themselves that was unaddressed for many years. Once they “let go” of their ‘opala, it was essential for them to not take it back and be serious about their substance abuse recovery and healing journey. Excerpts from Margaret’s interview help to illustrate what the women meant by “getting the ‘opala out and no take ‘em back”:

I think what helped me overcome my trauma was being able to know that my secrets and my life and my shame and my you know, and everything that I went hold in what I went through [was expressed]...In Christ I know and in life I know, cannot change who I was. If I chose to hold on to my secrets, if I chose to hold onto my lies of the past, you know, that’s weapons against me that goin’ take me down. That’s the power that the Devil has that he get fuckin’ control still yet. So, in order for give him no control absolutely have no control over you, bring your shit to light because it says when you bring the dark to light everything will be exposed in the light.

And when it’s exposed and brought out to the light it can no longer harm you. It can no longer hurt you...Nobody can talk about you and use that against you. If you choose to just put the shit on the table and say, “Eh this is who I was. This is what I did.” Eh, whether it’s abuse, sex abuse, shame, steal, robbery, anything, whatever I did, whatever was that happened to me...Accept who I was. Dis is what I was. But, this is not what I want to be and this is not where I’m going.

That’s the hardest, most powerful decision right there. Are you willing to bring it on the table? Bring that frickin ‘opala, put it on the table and leave it in the Hawaiian cultural way...What is that saying they say for get out? They have that Hawaiian terminology for clean out. Bring all your ‘opala. Bring in on the table leave it there. And then in
Christ you learn, bring it on the altar and leave it there. Don’t take it back. It does no good for you. You know like da Hawaiians say, “Hemolele.” “Hemo” get it out.

Margaret, like all of the other women in this study, made a powerful argument that it is important to get the ‘opala (rubbish) out and become hemolele (pure in heart). The Hawaiian term hemolele is literally defined as, “perfect, faultless, flawless, holy, immaculate, saintly, pure in heart, complete, virtue, goodness, holiness, without restraint” (Pukui, 1986, p. 66). Hemolele is comprised of two words: hemo (loosen) + lele (to fly). When combined together and in the context of this dissertation, hemolele refers to flying freely out of the darkness of despair toward the light of hope. This metaphor of moving from darkness to light highlights the spiritual journey inward to become pono with themselves, others, and the world which they live in and then “let go” of what no longer serves them.

Similar to what other women shared, Margaret made a point of noting that it is important to stop being in “poor ting state” and having a victim mindset. She highlighted the importance of “letting go” of the darkness within yourself and “walk away” so you can “start fresh.”

But the most powerful thing is not so much in bringing it up, because a lot of people learn to bring it up, bring it up, bring it up, bring it up, then you kind of get carried away, kind of comfortable with bringing it up and they get responses like, you know, “Poor ting. Poor ting. Poor ting.” You gotta get out of the poor ting state too, you know. Always look for comfort. ‘Cause some people live in that comfort and they start using that as one weapon; as one tool for people to always feel sorry for them that pity party. And until you can absolutely walk away without taking it back, then you can go. Then, you can start new. Then you start fresh.

Lisa added another dimension to healing through “letting go” that was connected to self-acceptance and surrendering to God and realize that she is not “in control,” because God has a “plan for her.”

How do I define healing? – would be letting go. For me, it is giving it to God every day. Being able to vent, being able to be myself and what’s that saying, come as you
are. So, come as I am, it’s letting it all out. Um. Empty out self basically so that I can heal and be healed. The trick, not trick, I shouldn’t say trick, but the challenge for that is – is picking that back up. That trauma, that burden, that resentment for me is the challenge. Would be 7 am - “Ok God I surrender. Ok job I surrender. Ok school I surrender” and boom – 7:05 am I’m trying to pull it all back. So, um, healing for me is letting go ‘cause I’m not in control. I’m really not in control. (Lisa, October 6, 2017)

Margaret and Lisa, like all of the women, shared how important it is to shift out of the victim mindset and forgive: release attachment to the pain, burdens, and resentments. All of the women shared that the process of letting go is connected to their spirituality and/or faith. They stopped trying to be “in control” and surrendered to a higher power. The ugliness that Noelani mentioned that she wanted “uprooted” outside of herself occurred when she became spiritually and emotionally connected to God and decided to let go of her deep-seated pain and shame through therapy and programming in prison caused by her father’s intensive rejection and extreme violence as well as negative treatment by the guards in prison. All of the women were able to huli or turn over their bowl of pōhaku or rocks and emptied out all the resentments, hurt, pain, and shame they carried around for years. Finally, Amy, like many of the other women, was able to restore her light by receiving positive praise from others, which is linked to Healing the Spirit strategy three - “Filling the spiritual/emotional void”.

**Hoʻomauhala (Holding a Grudge)**

Many of the women worked hard to prepare themselves to heal and grow after holding on to grudges for many years that left them entangled with those that harmed them, particularly during their addiction. They often talked about forgiveness and working through their “issues” while in prison. Eventually, nine of the women were able to forgive most others and themselves. Yet, when a woman is not ready to forgive others and takes back the ʻopala, that is called a Hoʻomauhala, which is the Hawaiian term for holding a grudge or cherishing revenge (Pukui & Elbert, 1986) that originates in the Na’aupō phase of their lives. Thus, when a
woman is in a Huliau phase but continues to think about the offenses done to her or that she has done, carries resentments, and holds onto unforgiveness, she is drawn back to the Naʻaupō phase of life where the original hoʻomauhala began (See Figure 7.1).

For example, Jamie seemed to forgive herself for her wrongful acts, but still carries a grudge toward her ex-husband and her parents to some degree for all of the abuse she suffered. Currently, she has been sober for five years, reconciled her relationships with her children, and maintains employment as an in-home child care provider. But, unlike the other women, Jamie only spent six months in a federal prison and experienced a brief treatment program. So, it is likely that having time to reflect in prison, particularly at WCCC with a trauma-informed focus, was a significant factor for healing and growth for the women. Since Jamie did not have that reflection time, she was not able to release the hala (transgressions and emotional bondage) and ʻeha (pain) caused by the psychological, physical, and mental abuse she suffered from her husband. As a result, there is still hihia or an entanglement between Jamie and her husband as well as their children. So, that part of her mind is still in the Naʻaupo phase even though she has made progress in other areas of her life (e.g. forgiven herself for the impact her substance use had on her children, maintaining sobriety, rebuilding relationships with her children).

To summarize, “getting the ʻopala out and no take ‘em back” involves making a connection or reconnection with a higher power (e.g. God or Pele), surrendering to that higher power and expressing their pain in some form (in treatment, through talking to God or their peers, writing a letter, etc.). Taking opportunities to free themselves of the hoʻomauhala (emotional bondage) that began in the Naʻaupō phase and truly “letting go” helped them to leave their past in the past and holomua or move forward. Through speaking their absolute
truth and living their truth and acting in ways that demonstrated their sincerity, they were engaged in Hoʻopono which initiated and continues to support their healing journey. The Hawaiian term oiaiʻo refers to the “essence of truth” or the ability of a person to speak honestly and with a sincerity of feeling that is essential for true spiritual, emotional, and mental healing to take place (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, pp. 72-73).

**Ho'opono Strategy Two: “Breaking Free From Toxic Relationships”**

Another way that the women cleansed themselves, in their words, was through “breaking free from toxic relationships” with themselves, lovers/husbands, substances, and violent family members and established a new path for themselves. In the Huliau phase, they were no longer controlled by toxic relationships as they were in the Naʻaupō phase. Seven of the 10 women are currently “single by choice.” Kehaulani described the way many women are initially in relationships and how they eventually decide to be on their own, independent and free of a toxic relationship.

> My whole life I was codependent. I thought I needed one guy in my life. I going die without one guy. I gotta, gotta, gotta have one guy. And I always thought that way and it wasn’t until I did that 6 years, that stretch that I took so much classes. I took a class on relationships and that one wen help me big time. That relationship class surely helped me. It was under addiction. It was under ATS: Addiction Treatment Services.

Kehaulani initially felt that it was essential for her to have a guy in her life, but after taking a Total Life Recovery class on “Boundaries” which covered codependency to help her learn about herself and her patterns, she realized that she did not need a man in her life and chose to be single since her exit from prison 4 years ago. She knows now that she can stand on her own and be independent.

---

50 The term “single by choice” is a term that I developed to categorize the women that shared the perspective that they would prefer to be single than with someone who “wrecked havoc” in their lives through violent and/or controlling behavior, luring the women into substance addiction, jealousy, infidelity, and/or dependence on them financially.
I choose to be single today. I pray to God, “Please Lord no let no guy come.” [Laughing] Before I used to pray for the guy. Now I praying not to have the guy….til today, I’m single. I’ve never been in one relationship since I’ve been out 4 years ago…Best 4 years of my life! I’m so focused on my grandchildren, my children, my school that I don’t even have time for a guy. No time at all. Not even time for go out on one dinner date. [Chuckles] I don’t. I choose not to yeah… And to tink that’s why I’m pretty much one success story. I no mo’ da kine drama with guys... I no mo’ nobody fo answer to and I’m feel so good about dat. I have my own little 3-bedroom house. I can come and go as I please. I pay my own bills. So, I jus love life today.

Standing on her own and having financial independence from a man, like the other single women in this study, gives her pride and freedom to live her life on her own terms. Rather than focusing on her relationship with a man, she is focused on her own goals and dreams and her children and grandchildren.

Pōmaikaʻi adds another layer to the ability to “breaking free of toxic relationships” that results from having increased self-esteem and making a conscious decision to be single:

I choose to remain single, because right now this time is for me. I don’t have to check in with nobody. I no need ask for go anywhere. I go when I like. I come home when I like. I do what I like, you know. Nobody tell me what for do. The more you heal, the more you advance, the more you want, you know, for yourself, you no like get stuck with one brudda who just got out of prison, no mo’ one job, no mo’ teeth, no mo’ hope, no mo’ house, no mo’ car. [laughs again] I mean really.

Similar to all of the women, as she began to build up her self-worth, heal and move forward in her life, Pōmaikaʻi realized that she wanted more out of her life. Noelani also discussed changing the focus of all of her attention on her girlfriends to focusing on her own healing and recovery process. Anchored in hoʻomana or her meaningful spiritual belief system, she was spiritually grounded and empowered. Her “pig fences” were up and she was no longer “getting in trouble” with the prison guards because they were jealous of her relationships with very attractive women in prison or struggled to accept the fact that she was a lesbian. During Stage One of the Huliau phase: Healing the Spirit, the women worked through their issues, including recovery from their addictions and were no longer willing to sustain unhealthy
relationships with themselves and others, including lovers/husbands, and family members.

**Hoʻopono Strategy Three - “Making Amends”**

The desire to make amends with oneself and others is and continues to be a core aspect of becoming pono (at peace) with themselves and others. Part of their healing also involved taking sole responsibility for their actions and making amends with those that they have hurt. Thus, making amends was the third ongoing, cyclical process of Stage One: Healing the Spirit. The women realized their acts of commission (harmed they caused to their families and those in the community) and acts of omission (neglecting their responsibilities, including their parenting duties) and were ready to set themselves free of the hihia or entangled cords between themselves, the hala and ‘eha and sincerely reconcile with their families. They became very honest with themselves and stopped blaming others for their trauma or for why they did the things they did.

As they worked on becoming sober and being a law-abiding citizen to stay out of prison, they admitted to all of the ways that they hurt their family members and others. They made efforts to sincerely apologize for the wrongs that they did and listened to the pain they inflicted on their families. Pōmaikaʻi was not raised in an abusive home, but felt abandoned by her father, witnessed her father’s violence toward her mother, and engaged in violent relationships with her boyfriends. She offered a broad context of how varied the trauma situations are among the women but Healing the Spirit for all of the women is deeply linked to a connection to a higher power, taking responsibility for one’s actions and making amends with themselves and those that they have harmed.

You know, everybody’s situation is different. Like I never had sexual trauma. I was never raped or molested and I never grew up getting lickens and you know. There was abusive relationships, but I was just as abusive back. So, I think for some women, it’s different to get past some of the trauma. But, the first place is God. There’s no doubt
about it. You have to seek a power higher than yourself. You have to find a safe place in your mind and in your heart where you can go to that nobody can hurt you. Give all your worries to God. You leave it there and you don’t pick it up again. No go back, picking um up, picking um up. No.

You just leave your ‘opala, dump um out, and be done with it. Gotta move forward. So, the only advice I can give is to seek God, find yourself of belonging, you know, make amends. Amends will do wonders. Everybody’s different. Everybody’s stories are different. If there comes a time in your life where you gotta apologize for things that you did wrong in the past, then do it. And then, once the secret is out, once you apologize, your shoulders start getting lighter. You can move forward, yeah. You no carry all that heavy burden anymore.

Pōmaika‘i, provides a clear example of the strong link between healing by forgiving herself, taking responsibility for her actions and “making amends” with her children and those she has harmed that echoes what the other women shared:

I make amends to the people I harmed and for those I can’t make amends to anymore, I just make amends in my heart. And know that even if I couldn’t make amends personally, it’s there. I mostly have to forgive myself for the pain that I caused others. I’ve forgiven myself and that’s what helps me move forward. If I continue to just keep looking in the rear-view mirror, like, you know, looking in the past… A lot of things I made amends for and I move forward. I don’t pick ‘em up anymore. I don’t study ‘em. I just leave it where it stays and I move forward...I take full responsibility for my choices that helps me to heal.

Pōmaika‘i reflected on the fact that her children are grown now, so currently she focuses on living up to her word, taking responsibility for her choices, and moving forward. Like the other women in this study, she stated that she made amends in her heart for those that she could not make amends to personally. Through forgiveness, she has untangled the hihia that existed between herself and her children that was caused while she was in the Na‘aupō phase of her life.

In addition to self-forgiveness, eight of the 10 women forgave their perpetrators, particularly the women who experienced sexual trauma and violence at the hands of a close family member. Once the women cleanse themselves through becoming sober, forgiving
themselves and those that have harmed them, and making amends with themselves and those they have hurt, they are able to find a place within themselves where no one can hurt them and they begin to reclaim their worth and value and establish a new path for themselves. A path that does not involve a toxic relationship with themselves, an intimate partner as well as unhealthy relationships with friends and family. Amy describes her non-judgmental detachment from unhealthy relationships:

I don’t hang around any of my using friends. Anybody whose using, they’re not in my phone. They’re not on my facebook. If you using, I delete you. I forget your numba. I don’t put myself better than, it’s just where I don’t want to be. I can love them all from a distance. I tell them, call me when you ready...I choose my friends wisely. (October 26, 2017)

Breaking free of unhealthy family relationships was much more difficult for the women as there is a strong cultural value amongst Native Hawaiian women to maintain familial bonds even though and particularly when those family members, such as close siblings or their children, are involved in dealing or abusing substances. While some of the women were trapped in their addictive cycle, the “family member” or “lover” was often their drug dealer and/or using drugs alongside them. Therefore, some made a conscious decision to initially distance themselves from those toxic relationships and once they were strong enough in themselves, they began to fight for their family members to become sober, particularly their children.

In sum, most of the women were not readily welcomed back into their families during the early part of their Huliau phase. However, they eventually achieved the love, acceptance, and support of their families family (to varying degrees) which assisted in their healing process.
**Ho‘opili Process (Making Connections)**

The second co-occurring and interactive process involved in Stage One: Healing the Spirit for the women is Ho‘opili which is comprised of two words: Ho‘o (to bring to causation) and pilī is defined as, “to cling, stick, adhere, touch, join, adjoin, cleave to, associate with, close relationship, thing belonging to” (Pukui, 1986, p. 329). Thus, Ho‘opili can involve making connections. Other meanings of Ho‘opili include: “to bring together, united, as friends; to mimic [as in modeling observed behavior of a kumu or teacher, mentor, role model]; to put together, as in a puzzle” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 329).

**Ho‘opili Strategy One - “Filling the Spiritual/Emotional Void”**

The first strategy identified to Ho‘opili is termed by the women as “Filling the Void”. In close review of the data to identify what void they were referring to, I have expanded the phrase to be “Filling the Spiritual/Emotional Void.” As they continued to empty out their ‘opala, they sought opportunities to start their lives anew and find healthy ways to expand their spiritual development and emotional connectivity in their lives. For example, Noelani reflected on the importance of “filling the void” once she emptied herself of all the anger, resentment, and bitterness toward her father who was extremely violent and psychologically abusive toward her. Although it took many years, she eventually forgave him and made amends with herself and her family.

Because I already learned from God you know and for Aunty Vi was a lady in prison like a chaplain and she would tell me about my anger and tell me you know if you want to free yourself from all that anger you know and bitterness and hate and unforgiveness in you, you have to let it go and you give it to God and then you ask God to replace it. So, I listened to what was asked of me to do. Before I wouldn’t listen yeah. When you give something to him you ask him to replace it. You don’t just give it and not ask for notin’ back then the void is not filled or healed, or you not delivered. So, I asked you know please remove this from me because I don’t want to hate. I don’t want to be like this you know. And slowly, slowly, slowly years it took ok. Then, I asked for love and started to love myself.
Even my girlfriend Christina, she tell me, “You know when you smile honey. You melt my heart. I just love that smile.” And I say, “You know Christina.” She’s very observant, you know, of me. I says, “You know Christina, I have a mirror here, and a mirror here, and a mirror here. But I rarely ever look in da mirror. But I also learned the exercise to look in the mirror and tell yourself, “I love you. I’m gonna take care of you. That child in you. I’m going to take care of it. I’m going to be the adult. I’m going to be the parent to you.”

Noelani shared a valuable lesson she learned from God and Aunty Vi to embrace forgiveness and put the past behind her. She consciously chose to release her anger toward all of those that harmed her, particularly her father, and to ask God to “be delivered” from evil which, similar to eight other women, was in the physical form of substance use. Being shown love, acceptance, and forgiveness from God and practicing forgiveness inspired her desire to nurture her “inner child” with self-love and not be vain. She shared a powerful acronym that involved breaking free of SHAME: stop hating all of me every time. She has healed tremendously since her first rotation in prison as a result of being able to connect with God, herself, and others (family and other women she met in prison and in the community) in loving ways.

As the women continue to fill their spiritual and emotional void, they shift their feelings of self-hatred and anger toward the world to feelings of self-love and slowly rebuild their self-esteem, which is linked to their healing and growth. Knowing that they are loved and accepted exactly as they are regardless of anything that they have done in their lives helps the women to heal. Dion’e’s situation was unique due to her “status” of being wrongfully accused, wrongfully housed, and wrongfully incarcerated, but she learned a lot from the women and commented on the commonality of feelings associated with trauma:

Because trauma is trauma, no trauma is greater than the rest. What is different are the experiences, but the emotions that we go through and feel are still the same. And then of course, the wrongful incarceration had happened. Not only to be wrongfully
incarcerated, but I got put in the wrong facility. I was sexually assaulted. So, of course, it goes back to my childhood, revisiting that. Because again, I’m being violated sexually, of course it’s going to take me back to that.

Just by hearing these stories from these women, it allowed me to grow as an individual, allowed me to realize there is a frickin’ light at the end of the tunnel. That is when it taught me, and I’ve learned that even though our experiences of being abused or trauma is different, that the feelings are all common. That our commonalities are the feelings of betrayal, of abandonment, of anger.

In Dion’e’s scenario, drawing upon the love of God, her culture, finding commonalities between her own trauma and the trauma of the women, and helping the women through teaching Hawaiian culture, music, and dance has helped her to heal from the emotional void she felt through her wrongful incarceration. Dion’e also commented on another commonality about a desire to be loved which is closely linked to building strong support networks:

I think the commonality is that we all want to be loved. We all want to be held. We all want to be told that we are appreciated, you know that regardless of….I mean, I almost died, I was on life support. Thinking about that, about life support, about being sexually assaulted, about the wrongful arrest, and where I am now. Though it has been a difficult journey, I can truly say that I am doing damn well good for where I am today and a lot of that would not have been possible if I didn’t have the support.

Thus, regardless of the trauma circumstances, making connections is manifested by filling the spiritual/emotional void through finding commonalities and forming support systems.

Ho’opili Strategy Two – “Building Multiple, Trustworthy, Healthy Support Networks”

On their journey to rebuilding their lives, they connected to other incarcerated women, family members, teachers, sponsors, pastors, chaplains, compassionate ACOs, Sargeants, and the Warden, etc. that they met in prison and began to build their multiple support networks (peers, Familial, educational, spiritual, justice, and familial). Regardless of who comprised their support system, at the core of each support network was the love and empathy that the women felt from their various supporters.
Nine of the women talked about creating “everlasting” sisterhood bonds and connections while they were in prison and eight of the women have maintained those relationships since their exit from prison. Instead of being entangled in a hihia or fish net of negativity as they were in the Naʻaupō phase, the women now created a “safety net” in their support network that gives them a sanctuary to return to when they have difficulties in life. The healthy, spiritual connections women make with their “sisters” or other incarcerated women is a key component in assisting the women to feel a strong sense of belonging and safety. If their support networks that they formed in prison are not healthy, the women can return to the challenges faced in the Naʻaupō phase. Thus, it is essential to form multiple, healthy, trustworthy support networks. As Pōmaikaʻi shared:

We stay connected, ‘cause we live with ova 400 women at a time. Along the way, you meet 200-300 women and you have built relationships because you guys live in the same dorm for years together. Thank God for Facebook, because everybody, we stay all connected. From prison we support each other, home we support each other, and ‘til the day we die we probably support each other. There’s no words to describe, it’s just a spiritual connection that we have for the women and wanting them to succeed and not wanting them to fall. We’ve come too far to continue to see sisters go back, go back, go back. What can we do? How can we help? What worked for us? What didn’t work for us? We tried to instill those values in other women.

Many of the women reflected on the fact that “Prison was a Blessing in Disguise.” Because of the programming they received and relationships they made, they learned about themselves and were trusted to take on leadership and responsibility. For example, Kehaulani was the only woman that was trusted to work in Intake where the women are processed when they first come to prison and Dionʻe was allowed to teach the women Native Hawaiian history and culture such as Polynesian song and dance. These type of experiences allowed them to build their self-esteem and motivated them to do well in the community. They also made connections with other female trauma survivors which made them feel less alone and helped
them to open up and share what they have been through. For example, Kehaulani noted that she did not address any of her trauma until she went to prison.

Like I said, um for me prison was a big blessing in disguise. It had a real positive impact. I mean, um, prison has changed my way of thinking. It has given me a whole new outlook on life. It has helped me address many of the issues that I had while I was a child. It helped me to, um, make some connections with people where I could relate to and know that I wasn’t alone that they were going to the same thing as I was, so it helped me to be more open and share.

Each women talked about the importance of safety, structure, and support that was also at the core of what they gained from their multiple trustworthy support systems. Margaret reflected on her “trust circle” that she created when she exited prison between her father and her husband as well as other women that she connected with in prison:

My trust circle. I gotta trust that in my trust circle that my shit that I’m bringing out right now going be safe here. And that’s what I had to learn in my support system. My circle of trust. I had to learn...I went frickin’ eat shit for so long. I neva like the way I feel. I neva like the feeling. I neva. But, you know what, I thank God at the same time I was doing my religious walk. Because the word of God says that at the end of this tunnel, there is light. And dat’s what I kept telling myself.

This quote captures both Margaret’s peer, familial, and spiritual support systems. Margaret made a powerful statement about the importance of support networks in healing and becoming well and avoiding backsliding: “You gotta have one support system. If you tink you can do ‘em alone, you’re setting yourself up for failure. You cannot do ‘em alone.” Margaret’s quotes were echoed across all 10 interviews. All of the women identified the importance of not being alone and having multiple, trustworthy support networks were essential for their healing and growth.

Moreover, having role models and mentors that believed and continue to believe in them and “programming” in prison or other educational experiences when they exited prison were all part of building their support systems. Thus, someone believing in them motivates and
inspires them “make things right” and to “do what’s right.” Having someone to talk to that truly listens to them also supports their recovery journey toward reawakening to their worth and value as they heal.

For example, although Noelani was raised as the eldest child in a very violent home as an adolescent, she was initially raised by her great grandmother from the age of three to 14 years old who wrote a mele inoa (name chant) to honor her and taught it to Noelani nearly 40 years ago. Noelani was able to recite the entire chant during her second interview. She treasured her great grandmother, but, she despised her father for many years, because of his rejection of her as a lesbian or in her own words “butchie.” She described the contrast between her maternal great grandmother’s and her father’s child-rearing skills:

Well because you know my tūtū bought me t-shirt and jeans you know braid my hair, you know. I had one long ponytail kind braid you know and plus I used to play with the boys and you know box and football, baseball, neva noting girly. NEVA you know, and you know he was ashamed of me you know what I mean. He was ashamed of me. Yep. Especially when…I was one girl and maybe he wanted a boy first and he didn’t have da boy first, you know. Um Hmm. (October 12, 2016)

Thus, Noelani’s grandmother was her role model for how to accept and love others for who they are, because she felt loved and accepted by her great grandmother for who she was. As a result, she had a very big heart and often took care of those that were bullied in prison. Yet, she struggled with the rejection and abuse from her father and acted out of rebellion for many years.

Noelani did not realize that her angry reactions toward the male guards was transference toward the anger she had toward her father. After several anger management classes and intensive therapy she was finally able to understand why she behaved the way that she did toward male authority figures that reminded her of her father. She recounted the

208
multiple external supports that helped her to hoʻopili or put the pieces of the puzzle together in a uniquely Hawaiian way.

Prison brought out the ugly in me a lot you know. Then anger the bitterness the hate yeah. The rebelliousness. Not wanting to be told what to do. “Oh, you not goin’ tell me what fo’ do.” I don’t care... That’s the kinda attitude I had you know, and I didn’t know where it all was coming from all this stuff until I started learning about me through you know counseling, therapy, going to classes, you know, self-esteem, um changing your ways of thinking. Then, did I realize, “Wow. That’s the connection. It stems from the authority figure - my father at home. That’s why I spoke the way I spoke to these male guards, especially to the male guards. Then, I connected it and realized that’s where all this anger was coming from. Then I took anger management six, seven, eight times [chuckles] while I was incarcerated.

And maybe it might have helped a little bit, but I needed more intense work with somebody that’s professional that could help me you know dig into my deeper self of the anger and then find out ...I was really hurt you know ‘cause I felt rejected. And I was kind of liking these classes [in prison]. I was learning something about me that helped me to change. But, it was a LONG process. I mean going into prison four, five, six times maybe seven. I cannot even count ‘em no more. [After] repeatedly taking more classes and getting older and then out here you know going to NA/AA, having a sponsor and then um having counseling out here you know even going to Gregory House ‘cause you have to go to groups in there. And then you have to go groups outside and, you know, um by that time I really wanted just to live in peace already you know. And slowly it you know came together like that.

Noelani, who did not have a strong role model once her grandmother passed away, noted that having individuals believing in her (e.g. other incarcerated women, prison guards, program staff), strengthened her desire to “be good” and act in a pono manner. Someone believing in the women led them to feel loved and accepted and inspired them to huliau or turn their lives around.

The women who had loving parents or caregivers, typically their mothers, sisters, grandmothers, and in a few instances, fathers, felt nurtured and loved by them and viewed them as positive role models and mentors. These family members instilled values and taught them what was pono (appropriate and acceptable) versus pono ‘ole (inappropriate and
unacceptable). Listed below are some examples of how family and other role models and mentors were perceived and how their teachings influenced the women:

Oh, beautiful, unbelievable, this lady [her mom]. I swear, even though she’s pure German, she’s Hawaiian at heart, you know. I swear she’s the [pause for reflection] the strongest person in my life. So, growing up she always would work like two jobs to support us, you know. She was like my mom, my dad, my brother, my sister, my everybody. She always…If I was wrong, I was right. If I was right, I was right. She never, ever, ever did leave my side. She always pepped me up; she always stood strong. She didn’t care what anybody else said, because she knew different.

Pōmaika‘i’s mother was always there for her. From observing her mother’s steadfastness and commit to family, she learned the value of hard work and now works several jobs and is deeply committed to her family. She noted that when she came out of prison, she “persevered” and works multiple jobs to support her family as her mother did for Pōmaika‘i and her siblings.

Amy’s mother taught her to value herself and not allow a man to mistreat her and her father supported her to break free of her violent relationship. Finally, through forgiveness (which she learned from her biblical teachings while in prison), she forgave her daughter’s father and can now enjoy family outings without violence.

“Once a man hits you, he’ll always hit you.” And that always stuck in my head. So, once he started hitting me, I said, “Fuck this.” It just, a light switch went turn dark. So, I tried running away from him… I went Honolulu… came back home and he still was in my house. And then I called my dad and my dad said, “Where are you?” “Dad I told you, you gotta get him out of my house, I not coming home.” So he went told him, “You gotta leave.” And he did.

Lisa, who was never sexually abused, learned from the females in her family to value her body and to protect herself by “speaking up” and not to silence her voice like the other six women in this study. As a child, Lisa was taught to be fearless and protect her private parts and “speak up.” As an adult woman, Lisa, not only advocates for herself, but wants to advocate for incarcerated men and women.
Um, I recall, like, when the subject of sexual abuse comes up, um from an early age, my mom would always, my mom, my sisters, just instilled in me to about that…about [protecting] your private parts, about dis and dat. So, I recall I was on Molokai, my mom’s dad dat when raise her. So, my grandpa, he was like touching me, and I was like oh my gosh. I wen slap him. I was like five-six years old. I went straight to my mom’s, pretty much wake everybody up.

At 12 years old, my mother’s brother, I was sleeping, and I got up and he was trying to open my pants. And I wen kick him in his balls or whatever, and he went jump up and he was trying to like, smack me and I wen grab the phone and I wen call [laughing] up my aunty…everybody’s afraid of her..yah das my mudda’s sister, his sister, and was like… everything stopped…So from [a very young age] I was just taught to open up my mouth.

Pōmaika‘i, Amy, and Lisa all offered examples of female parents and caregivers that believed in them, supported them, instilled values about self-worth and taught them how to maintain or restore harmony and balance that guided their actions. Dion’e also felt very loved and supported by her grandmother and her mother who always taught her to value herself.

But, it was not only mothers or grandmothers that instilled values in the women. Nahe learned from her father, who was a strong provider and loving parent, to always strive for her dreams.

Like my dad always used to tell us when we were younger, “You can do whatever you wanna to do as long as you keep trying. You will get there. It’s the person who stops trying that you’ll never know if you could be.” And he’s told us that ever since we were this little [Nahe makes a gesture to show her height at a young age.]

When she went to prison for the second time, she lived by the motto “Failure is not an option” and completed all of her goals that she set for herself. She refused to get involved in the “drama” that goes on in prison and focused on helping others and herself.

While Margaret and Kehaulani did not have strong role models during their upbringing, they, along with Pōmaika‘i and Dion’e, were supported and guided by role models and mentors while they were in prison. Most of the role models and mentors they identified through prison were also Kānaka Maoli like themselves that instilled values in them that they carry out into
the community until today. Margaret shared how a particular ACO showed her empathy and recognized her need for human connection while she was in maximum security. Another Hawaiian ACO unconditionally supported her and taught her Hawaiian values and morals, which is what she longed for as a child, but did not receive from her parents. She also learned and engaged in cultural practices which contributed to her healing and PTG.

But she was an ACO and she was really into her Hawaiian culture, Hawaiian belief, and you know, how to work in the lo‘i [taro patch]. She taught me to build one imu [underground oven] from the ground up, you know. I mean from 1 pig to 13 pigs. She taught me about respect. She taught me about values and morals and how to be. I mean basically everything that should’ve been taught to me as a child, that should’ve have been taught to me throughout life, she ended up filling out and she spent years working with me.

I mean there were many times where I had to learn to bite my tongue ‘cause I, you know, I, sometimes we fought head to head and I’m fighting, you know that struggle in me was just real. I mean, I’m in prison and some things I wasn’t comfortable with, but she supported me no matter what. She let me go and then when I was ready to come back, I came back. Yep. And she’s.. she was amazing! I think the first Women Supporting Women [fundraising] event, when I spoke, I acknowledged her on that event.

Kehaulani shared her experiences of being supported and guided by a Sargent at WCCC, who has been promoted to a Lieutenant.

And I met some really awesome people there [in prison]. A lot of the staff there has become my lifetime coaches and mentors and I still in touch with ‘til today... when I think back to prison, there was this Sargent who is now a Lieutenant at Halawa...she would be like, “Kehau, you just have to be honest with yourself, do the right thing and um... don’t be so prideful. You know what - Be a team player. Include everybody. Just because you the boss of the, the leader of the work line, the alaka‘i, you don’t want to tell people what to do. You wanna ask them what you think?” So, she wen kinda help me really change my way of thinking, you know. She instilled good positive stuff in me that I believe that I carry on ‘til today.

Kehaulani’s mentor taught her to be honest, fair, and to include everyone’s input when making decisions. Therefore, she has taken what she has learned into her interactions with her co-workers and in the community.
And I remember that and I knew that I do that at work too. Um, I’m including everybody. “Ok what do you think we should do? We’re having a problem here. What do you think would be a good solution? Can everybody kinda give an input?” whereas before I would be, “We get one problem here and dis what I going do and I like all you guys do ‘em that way.” [Laughter]

You know today too, I walking down the street and I see somebody making trouble to someone and I’m like, “Hey you. That’s our brother in Christ.” I stop by and their “Fuck him” and I be like, “No man, c’mon.” I find myself just stopping anywhere and sharing with them what I’ve learned too.

The examples Kehaulani shared about her interactions with her mentor and role model emphasized the importance of her kuleana (privilege and responsibility) as an alakaʻi or leader to practice hana pono (fair and just behavior) in her interactions and to mālama (take care of herself and others).51

She always told me, “Be honest from the very beginning. No even tell one small lie...always tell the truth.” Everything is about doing it right. Everything is about pono. Everything is about mālama [take care]. Make things right. Oh, she just get so much good qualities... [Her impact was] HUGE. Huge, huge, huge, huge, huge. She’s one hard core Native Hawaiian from Ewa Beach [Says the words Native Hawaiian slowly with a look of pride on her face.] But, she was like...she went by the books. “Kehau, you not goin’ get away with dat.” [Laughter] She paddle canoe. That’s her life. That’s her outlet. Her whole life is paddling. Every picture she posts she stay paddling to her Molokai channel. They go Australia. They go all over the world. She’s so fit. She’s tall... The father is pure Hawaiian.

Several times in this example Kehaulani refers to “doing it right” or to “make things right” which is a reference to pono. To act in a pono manner is to be in alignment with the universe and integrated with oneself and to be mindful of how one relates to the environment and to people, such as family and community with the intention to maintain balance and harmony within oneself, others, and the environment.

51 Mālama is the Hawaiian term for “to take care of, tend, attend, protect, beware, save, maintain; to keep, or observe, as a taboo; to conduct, as a service; to honor, as God; care, preservation, support, fidelity, loyalty; custodian, caretaker, keeper.” The phrase, “E kuʻu Akua e mālama au ‘ia ‘oe, ma ka noʻonoʻoʻo” (O God, let me serve you in thought) highlights the idea that all the women aimed to serve God or a higher power through serving others (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 232). All of the women learned to mālama pono; take care of their pono.
By observing and receiving support from powerful Kānaka Maoli role models and mentors in her support network that not only talked about but lived their cultural values and practices inspired her to do the same. Through having a Sargent at WCCC and Warden Mark Patterson (both Kānaka Maoli) who believed in her and supported her to be a leader within the prison during her Huliau phase, Kehaulani was able to learn from them and subsequently hoʻopili or mimic what she learned from her role models and mentors. Through her connections to mentors both in prison and when she left prison, Kehaulani has continued to heal and grow over time. This is true for all of the women that had role models and mentors either prior to, within, and/or after exiting prison.

The examples noted above highlight how the women were able heal from the pain of their past through Hoʻopono (Cleansing and Making Amends) and Hoʻopili (Making Connections). However, reconnections to family and culture were also important for the women.

**Hoʻopili Hou Process (Making Reconnections)**

The third co-occurring and interactive process involved in Stage One: Healing the Spirit is Hoʻopili Hou which is comprised of three words: Hoʻo (to bring to causation) and pili is defined as, “to cling, stick, adhere, touch, join, adjoin, cleave to, associate with, close relationship, thing belonging to” (Pukui, 1986, p. 329). Hou is literally translated as, “new, fresh, recent” and “again.” Hana hou, do again, repeat, encore” (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1986, pp. 82 – 83). Thus, Hoʻopili Hou can be interpreted to making reconnections.

**Hoʻopili Hou Strategy One – “Rebuilding Trust with Family”**

Although the women felt forgiven by God and were able to forgive themselves, all of the women longed for a reconnection to their families and were able to accomplish that goal to
varying degrees through mihi (repentance) or asking for forgiveness in a sincere manner and kala (release) or receiving forgiveness from those they hurt. They were able to rebuild trust with their families by admitting their faults, taking responsibility for their actions genuinely, apologizing for their wrongdoing, willingly listening to all of the hurt and anger they caused their parents, children and other family members, and asking for forgiveness.

Simply asking for their families to embrace them back into their lives was not sufficient to rebuild trust. The women needed to prove to their family members that they could be trusted again through sincere, trustworthy actions. A few examples include keeping their word, showing up sober to important family events, and being responsible in caring for other family members.

In order for the seven mothers to rebuild trust with their children and families, they needed to demonstrate their commitments and promises through taking responsible actions. Because they broke many promises to their children and families over the years, their ‘ohana did not trust them. Pōmaikaʻi reflected on the importance of “making things right” and “making good on your word” to rebuild relationships with children.

But, a lot of the mothers, you know, they make all kinda broken promises to their children while they’re in there. Then, they come back home and they do the same thing, right? So, It’s just building your relationships back with your children and making things right, you know, making good on your word. If you’re away and you telling your children, “Mommy going come home. Things going be different.” Keep your word. ‘Cause like I said, my son was angry when I left. When he needed me the most, I was in prison ‘cause I couldn’t stay clean. I couldn’t stop using dope. So, now he’s an angry kid and now he’s a grown adult. I can’t tell him, “Oh mommy going come home and…” Mommy’s time is pau [finished] already. He’s a grown man.

Since her exit from prison, Pōmaikaʻi has worked diligently and successfully to rebuild trust and reunite with her children that are living in Hawaiʻi and looks forward to reuniting with her
daughter once her daughter turns 18 years and can make the choice to leave her adopted family on the continent and return back to the islands.

Kehaulani also noted that rebuilding trust with her children involves being patient and realizing that even though God has forgiven her, it will take time to rebuild trust with her family, particularly her eldest daughter because of what she has witnessed and the parentified role she took on as a result of Kehaulani’s addiction:

The kids suffered they really did. I’m actually building my trust wit dem right now too. Dat’s why I said, I’m still going through the healing process ‘cause it was hurtful when she wouldn’t let me watch her kids and I’m like, “Oh I’m doing so good now, you know. God has forgiven me, but I don’t blame you, you know for not trusting me because of what I put you guys through and everything.”

And at one point, my oldest daughter, I had hard time reconnect with her ‘cause she was like the mother of all the kids. She wouldn’t trust me with her kids for a long time. She was the one who seen me running to drug houses, getting drugs, leaving them in the car. Leaving them at home with my dad while he was sick with cancer in the bed...So she’s seen everything. That’s why she has so hard time trusting me again. And lately she’s been going, “Mom I trust you with my kids. Mom I trust you again.” ...And now I’m gonna watch them two or three days, yeah. Yeah, I’m excited about that.

For the mothers, reconnecting with their children was a core part of their healing and was another way to fill the emotional void they felt in missing their children. Although they were building their support systems and working toward rebuilding trusting relationships with their children and other family members while they were in prison, they strengthened their commitment to demonstrate their trustworthiness through responsible actions when they exited prison. Another way that the women rebuilt trust with their families was through offering forgiveness to their parents and opened their hearts up to their family members that abused them in the past. Thus, both receiving and giving forgiveness was a key component to healing the relationships between family members.

Hoʻopili Hou Strategy Two – “Getting Back to Your Roots”; “Knowing Who You Are”
In addition to “Filling the spiritual/emotional void,” “Building multiple trustworthy support systems,” and “Rebuilding trust with family,” the women also expressed deep value in reconnecting to culture as part of their healing. The women described this as “getting back to your roots” which led to “knowing who you are.” Regardless of when it occurred, cultural reclamation was a strong contributing factor in their PTG and healing. Either the women were deeply immersed in their culture during their upbringing and called upon it as a “tool” to come out of the darkness in their lives or in their work or they have been in the process of learning their cultural history, genealogy, practices, and language. Dion’e and Lisa were raised knowing their culture and engaging in cultural practices and/or language and Jamie had some awareness of her cultural practices but it was strongly discouraged in her home as a child. However, she embraced her cultural practices as an adult which helped her to heal.

Unfortunately, because of the historical and cultural trauma due to the illegal takeover of the islands by the United States government that all Kānaka Maoli have experienced in the once thriving Kingdom of Hawaiʻi, seven of the women did not know about their history, language, or cultural practices during their upbringing. They may have known a few aspects and values of their culture (e.g. food preparation, dancing hula, being hospitable, and values such as “do not bring shame to the family”) but their knowledge was limited.

However, cultural reclamation, which I am defining as a spiritual/cultural healing process of reawakening to an understanding of the true identity of Kānaka Maoli is facilitated through reconnecting to one’s culture. Learning about one’s history and cultural heritage, genealogy, and cultural morals and values, making ancestral connections, engaging in cultural practices (e.g. working in the loʻi, dancing hula, etc.) and learning to speak one’s language
facilitates healing and cultivates cultural pride which assists in the development of a positive self-image and cultural identity.

Re-awakening of one’s naʻau occurred through reconnecting to their culture (e.g. learning about their heritage, genealogy, and cultural values, making ancestral connections, engaging in cultural practices such as working in the loʻi) and learning to speak their language. This process facilitated healing, because they cultivated cultural pride, raised their self-esteem and helped them to develop a positive self-image and cultural identity. As they learned and engaged in their cultural practices and began to understand their ancestral connections and genealogy, meaning of their names, they shifted their self-image about being Hawaiian from being ashamed of who they are to having a sense of pride about being Hawaiian. Rather than feeling ashamed of who they were, they became proud of who they are which strengthened their cultural identity as nā wāhine maoli.

Kehaulani, Pōmaikaʻi, NoeNoe, and Margaret talked about reconnecting to their culture for the first time while in prison. Kehaulani and Noenoe explained the importance of working on the ʻaina (land), particularly in the loʻi or taro field, in developing a positive self-image and cultural identity. In particular, Kehaulani recalled the past and her ancestors and re-awakened her ancestral memory and spiritual connection to the kalo. Through planting the huli or taro corm, she was able to see herself growing. Thus, the kalo plant, which for Hawaiians is our elder sibling (Handy, Handy, & Pukui, 1951; Kameʻeleihiwa, 1992;), was helping her to heal and grow.

I found that to be a place of healing. When I got connected and when I was touching the soil and when I was digging up and cleaning up all the ʻopala [rubbish], I felt like I was cleaning up the ʻopala from my own life...And um, jus wit my hands in the soil, I felt like I was reconnecting with my past, with my culture. ʻCause I know my mom was of Hawaiian ancestry. I know my grandfather used to, you know, have kalo farms and all dat kinda stuff. So, when I went there and I got to experience kalo, it brought me
back to, oh yeah wait, my grandfather’s pure Hawaiian and my mom’s Hawaiian and, you know, I … Wow. We can work in this kalo and that was he used to do. We actually planted the huli and watched it grow and watered it every day. I actually could see my own self growing. So, I felt one strong connection and um, yeah and then um, jus recently, now that you said Native Hawaiian I feel like um majority of the women in there were of Native Hawaiian background.

Most of the women talked about feeling shame due to being Hawaiian or having misperceptions of what it meant to be Hawaiian until their 30’s in prison. Reconnecting to culture or cultural reclamation facilitated healing and cultivated a sense of pride in the women’s Native Hawaiian cultural identity. Mālāma ‘āina or caring for the land created opportunities for the women to engage in a reciprocal relationship with the land. As they “took care” of the land, the land also “took care” of them and helped them to reconnect, heal, and grow.

Kehaulani and NoeNoe offer greater depth regarding the pride they developed from reconnecting with the lo‘i.

Sense of pride. That’s the exact words I used when they videotaped me. I felt such a strong sense of pride. [Big smile on her face and seemed to sit up a little straighter in her chair] It was different… [from growing up]. I remember I wanted to be Japanese in school, [laughs] because all the Japanese were all getting good grades and, you know, all of us wasn’t. I noticed that the few of us that were going… we weren’t getting good grades like the Japanese girls…My only friends that I had in school was all the Japanese, for some reason, or White girls. I never had any, you know, local friends. I chose to be really nice to the Japanese girls, because I seen the teachers being really nice to the Japanese and to the White girls. I didn’t feel they [teachers] were as nice to them [Hawaiian children].

Kehaulani noted that she experienced racial discrimination as a child and chose to interact with her Japanese friends to avoid being treated differently because of her ethnicity. However, once she had an opportunity to reconnect to her culture, she expressed feeling proud of the fact that she is Hawaiian. Similarly, Noenoe shared being proud of growing kalo and being Hawaiian.
Because it was something that was grown by their hands. Something that they could look forward of letting it grow and then seeing the stuff grow you know. And we, we as inmates there, we were proud of what we grew and even to know that it was by our hands. We were proud of what we grew. They dealt with a lot of stuff that had to do with Hawaiians. Knowing that I am Hawaiian that’s all I need to know. I am Hawaiian. I love my culture. There’s nothing I wouldn’t do for my culture. I’m Hawaiian true blue.

Pōmaika‘i offers a clear and succinct summary of her experience that reflects what many of the women shared:

So, you know, when we are doing Hawaiian culture stuff, when we making laulau, we pulling da taro, we planting da taro, we making the imu [underground oven], we skinning da pig, we putting all our love and hard work into it. Every year we did one imu, I mean it was so much spiritual signs, and we give ho‘okupu [offering] and just, [pause for thought], the way the food would come out would be perfect. The way we set the tent would be perfect, the way the heat rose, everything was even. It was always perfect, nothing ever burnt, nothing ever was uncooked. So, we knew that we was all interconnected in some way for the good.

After she left prison, she continued what she learned and took it into the community:

So, when after I came home, we started to work in the lo‘i which I never did... So, things just started to transform me at that point, you know. I was able to work in the lo‘i [taro patch] and touch the soil and become one with nature and ground myself. Although I hurt many people because of my choices, I was able to like become responsible again by planting the taro, planting the kalo. Watching it grow and taking on the responsibility of pulling the weeds and nurturing it again. [Pōmaika‘i seemed deeply moved by her experience in the lo‘i.] So inside I was healing.

Pōmaika‘i, as well as the other women, stated that working in the lo‘i “reconnects you”. The women shared that reclaiming their culture fostered their internal healing and stated, “Inside I was healing.” Seven of the 10 women did not know about their history, language, or cultural practices, knew very little, or had distorted views about their culture and cultural identity during their upbringing.

Conversely, Dion‘e and Lisa were deeply immersed in their culture and were able to draw upon their cultural knowledge to counteract their trauma in childhood and support their healing while in prison and when they exited prison through teaching about their culture to
other incarcerated women. Lisa offers her example of how culture was a positive influence in her life:

And growing up I, even in all of that that trauma, all of dat, not forgetting where I came from. I was always into the culture. Yes, culture [was] very strong, and I must say from Molokai, being raised over there it’s really cultural. Yah, cleaning the taro patch, mea ’ai, you know eating, eating together. I remember everything was about family, ‘ohana, and regardless of what my parent [pause] Somebody was always there to take that role, yah the mother role. Not necessarily the father role. But like my mom she would just take both. So, growing up culture was really strong.

Lisa shared the healing that she feels from being able to integrate her culture into her work at a treatment center for formerly incarcerated women:

We as a culture, we as a people, uh, we hold our history so high so that’s what I get to share that with these beautiful women, these people that I work with. [said with so much aloha – love]. So that’s how I am able to integrate my culture.

Dion’e also shared her perspective of healing occurring from teaching her culture in prison. By serving others, she was able to see the positive impact on the women’s transformation which helped her to starting her own healing and transformation:

I was given the position of teaching na loina ka po‘e Hawai‘i which is the laws and values and teaching of our people, of being Kānaka Maoli, of being native Hawaiian. To me, by doing that, that is when part of my healing started and the reason why I say that is where part of my healing started is because I chose to teach of service... I drew up this 75-page curriculum on my own with the help of Kamehameha Schools and with the help of my family and friends who actually sent me material from outside.

Dion’e also made an important observation during her incarceration that majority of the women “did not know who they really were,” because they were told most of their lives that they were “no good” and were never taught anything about their cultural heritage.

My very first lesson was on who am I? to allow the women to express and identify who they really are. I can tell you from that experience, I can truly say maybe 90% of the women did not know who they were... When I was given the opportunity to teach, and when I had taken it to prayer, I was able to write 25 songs on that journey.

Her first album entitled, “More Than a Woman” was submitted to the prestigious Nā Hōkū
music awards held in Hawai‘i as well as the 2018 Grammy Awards. By turning to her culture (music, song, and dance) and spiritual practices, sharing her knowledge of Polynesian dance and Hawaiian history with the women, and composing original songs to process her pain and express her feelings, Dion‘e began to heal.

In addition to engaging in cultural practices (Dion‘e, Lisa, Jamie, Pōmaika‘i, Kehaulani, Margaret) or performing (Lisa) or focusing on writing music and teaching Hawaiian culture and Polynesian dance (Dion‘e), eight of the women talked about the importance of their Hawaiian names and/or the names of their children. They have beautiful Hawaiian names including: Kehaulani (heavenly dew), NoeNoe & Noelani (mist/light rain; heavenly mist), Nahe (soft, sweet, gentle-mannered), Koalani (high chiefess), Ka‘ehukai (sea spray), Haleakalā (House of the Sun), Pōmaika‘i (Blessings) and Makaleka (Hawaiian meaning unknown; may be Hawaiian translation of Margaret). The other two women did not provide a Hawaiian name during their interviews. As the women reclaimed their names or the names of their children or took on a Hawaiian name based on a tree that one of the women planted, it cultivated pride in their ancestry and strengthened their cultural identity.

The women did not only heal from engaging in their cultural practices, teaching and learning about Hawaiian culture or history, and reclaiming their names, they also healed from learning about Hawaiian culture, genealogy and language through university classes or in the community, because it helped them to “know who they are.” For those that took university classes, they became appreciative of who they were as Hawaiians.

See Moʻolelo O Nā Wāhine for her song entitled, “Hawai‘i You’re My Home” and a poem she wrote entitled, “This Life is Not for Her” which describes her reflections about her wrongful incarceration experience.
They also started to build their self-esteem as Kehaulani shared: “Hey all dis time they was putting down the Hawaiians, but eh only the Hawaiians can get the grants. I really felt like…Whoa awesome! I’m a Native Hawaiian! Yeah. I love it! You know.” Kehaulani’s Native Hawaiian cultural identity strengthened as she learned more about the financial support that is only available for Kānaka Maoli. Instead of being ashamed of her cultural identity, she was developing pride within herself as an educated Native Hawaiian.

Margaret adds to this healing through knowing who you are that came from getting more cultural education:

I never know who I was until I went to school, until my education. Then I respected and I got curious and I appreciated the fact that I was a part-Hawaiian. I appreciated that who my ancestors was and I never knew noting about Hawaiian ‘til I went class. I went to a lot of Hawaiian study classes that actually really influenced and encouraged me to find out about my genealogy and who I am and you know about my Hawaiian ancestry.

Based on these excerpts, seeking higher education allowed both Kehaulani and Margaret to feel proud of who they are through knowing who they are and the rich cultural heritage they come from. Margaret also expressed a sadness about not knowing her cultural background during her upbringing despite the fact that she was raised in Hawaiʻi. By taking classes, Margaret was “influenced and encouraged” to reclaim her culture, language, and get clarity about her genealogy for her as well as her family members. However, cultural reclamation was not only achieved through education within a university setting. It was also achieved through interaction within the community as articulated by Nahe.

Nahe compared and contrasted the difference between what she experienced “growing up” and how that changed when she went to Key Project, a local community center, became makaʻala (alert and aware), and absorbed in her naʻau (visceral mind) how Hawaiian culture
was incorporated there. It inspired her to learn more about her culture and to see herself and the Hawaiian culture differently.

I really didn’t know much about Hawaiian culture growing up. Um, I mean we knew, you know, how to pule [pray] and stuff. But, what church? I mean we’re more Westernized. I didn’t know a lot about our Hawaiian culture. I just thought it [alcoholism and abuse] was part of the culture. I mean I just thought that that’s what most Hawaiian families do. Because all of us that hung around were all Hawaiian. It just made sense to me that that was part of the Hawaiian culture I guess.

I’m learning about my culture, who I am and my nationality, and where I feel like I’m fitting in. Understanding my culture and understanding that um that alcoholism is part of, you know, my family. Abuse. Seeing my aunts and uncles beat up on themselves it was a part of my life. Um, that had nothing to do with my culture...Knowing that the Hawaiian culture was something different, so different than what I’ve seen growing up made me kind of change. Because I feel like, in the Hawaiian culture, everything is so peaceful and so pono [in balance and harmony]. And I never knew that. I mean I never appreciated that or known that until I got older my life.

I’ve learned so much more about me. I think Western culture is very good, because education is very good. But, inside of me I feel more Hawaiian. [big smile] I feel more connected.

Nahe recalled her childhood as being exposed to some her cultural practices, but not feeling as though she “fit in.” She didn’t feel like she had a sense of belonging within her cultural group. What she understood about her culture was connected to alcohol and abuse, which she thought was “what most Hawaiian families do.” This perception was true for eight of the 10 women in this study. As Nahe learned more about her true cultural heritage, practices, and merged together her cultural identity and spirituality through a Hawaiian pastor’s teachings about Christian and Hawaiian values such as pono (to maintain harmony and balance through appropriate and cooperative behavior), she changed her viewpoint of herself. She now views herself as more than simply being a “drug addict in recovery.” Yet, she is still maopopo ana or reaching for understanding of what is means for her to be Hawaiian.

In sum, reconnecting to their culture and/or cultural programming in prison, teaching
classes, enrolling in cultural classes in higher education, and having new lived cultural experiences in the community, assisted the women to engage in cultural ways of healing.

“Cultural ways of healing can be defined as strategies derived from an individual’s or family’s cultural group that support the restoration of balance and harmony to the individual and overall family relationships” (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014, p. 75). As they gained more knowledge and understanding, the women increased their desire to engage in their practices and learn more about their heritage, the importance of their names and genealogy, and language. They came out of the darkness and saw themselves and their cultural identity in a new and more positive light and continue to cultivate cultural pride and heal their spirits.

Dionate noted that 90% of the women in prison did not know who they were. However, for the women of this study, “getting back to their roots” helped them to develop a “sense of pride” and strengthen their cultural identity. Through both academic and hands-on education, they were “healing on the inside,” connecting to their culture and had a deeper “knowing” of “who they are.” Metaphorically, as the women began to either strengthen existing roots and/or grow new roots underground to heal, they were also able to grow new branches as they reached for greater knowledge, not only of their culture, but also of other areas of their lives to grow into inspired alignment.

In this manner, the women are like the ‘ōhi‘a lehua seed that which is initially encased in the soil, germinates, moves through the dark soil, and continues to heal and grow new roots underground (Stage One: Healing the Spirit) (See Figure 7.1). Eventually, (when it is ready) the seedling begins to push its way through the earth and breaks through the surface of the soil and continues to grow in an upright manner in search of light (symbolically acknowledgement and acceptance) and water (symbolically love). Over time, the ‘ōhi‘a lehua plant, becomes a
For the women in this study, their PTG began in the Huliau phase after they completed some initial healing (reawakening their spirit) and were beginning to awaken their minds in a co-occurring, cyclical pattern with their healing Huliau processes. To conceptualize how healing and growth occurred in the Huliau phase, visualize that Stage One: Healing the Spirit occurred first, and it occurred internally and beneath the surface for the women. Following some initial healing work, they were ready to begin Stage Two: Growing into Inspired Alignment which can be visualized as the external display of new mindsets, behaviors and attitudes that can be seen above the surface. In addition, the women also grow internally as they build their cultural knowledge and identity and reconnect with their families which can
visualized as growing new rootlets and strengthening existing roots beneath the surface. However, being fully awake is more closely aligned with the Na’auao phase and will be expanded upon more fully in Chapter 8: Na’auao phase. In the Huliau phase, the women were being encouraged and inspired by multiple trustworthy support systems to think and act in a pono or kūpono manner. “Doing What’s Right” and “Getting On Track” is the terminology used by the women to highlight the process of growing into inspired alignment.

The reason why I am identifying this as an inspired alignment is because all of the women were spiritually inspired to be spirit-led versus ego-driven in their Ho’omakaukau Huliau part of the Huliau phase to get ready to make positive changes within the Huliau phase. Then, once the women began to reawaken their na’au in the Huliau phase, they were inspired by the people in their multiple trustworthy support networks, including their spiritual higher power.

All of the women were asked how they define PTG and Lisa’s definition of PTG encompasses the essence of what the women shared:

[Posttraumatic] Growth to me is aligning, alignment of my thoughts, my spirit, and my physical and aligning that together and moving forward. Um, so in other words, being, practicing acceptance or ‘apo\(^{53}\) and accepting who, what, when, where. Who I am and knowing who I am so that I can move forward. It means accepting everything that I’ve been through. My experiences, my Ku and Hina\(^{54}\) (masculine and feminine parts of the self), you know and balancing my past, present, and future. Not necessarily future ‘cause I don’t know what tomorrow, what will happen tomorrow. Only being able to let go of my past so that I can stay in the present and then keep focused on what’s to come. (November 30, 2016)

Ok. It’s um. How can I describe it. It’s ever growing, ever moving. It’s never ending. It ever progressing. It’s a total transformation where like dat new wine skin, yeah. New

\(^{53}\) Pukui & Elbert, Hawaiian Dictionary, 1986, p. 29: to grasp, retain, or acceptance; perceive or understand. Related term ‘apono is also acceptance or to approve.

\(^{54}\) Ku and Hina refer to a Hawaiian male god and female goddess, respectively. Since it is the belief that Hawaiians are descendants of the gods, it also refers to the masculine and feminine parts of the self. (Gutamanis, 1983; Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014)
wine. Cannot, everyting gotta change. Not just my inside, but my outside as well yeah...meaning my heart as well as my mind. So, being um being in a place where humility really matters. Where humility is everything pretty much ‘cause that’s part of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. That’s part of all of that.

For the women, PTG is focused on coming into alignment which is linked to letting go of the past and healing and transforming themselves from the inside out. They shift from being selfish and self-serving to being humble and wanting to serve others; from out of balance to in balance; and from surviving to starting to thrive through “making things right” (healing their spirits) and “doing what’s right” (growing into inspired alignment).

As the women were motivated and inspired to come into alignment with themselves (mind, body, and spirit), they began to awaken in the Huliau phase and make progress toward a “daylight mind”. NoeNoe succinctly describes how she recognized her own pattern and consciously chose to “do what’s right”:

If you do what’s right, you’ll see that you not going fall in that hard category. You know what I did when I did everything that God had asked me to do, put it all...look at my path from all the perspectives... and I put all my stuff all in perspective and I saw. And when I did everything and I followed that path, shoo, look where it got me today? ... If it was me before and I didn’t care, I’d be still in prison. But, no. I’m 64. I’ve been out of prison since 2013.

As the women stop and reflect, become makaʻala (alert), and open their eyes to truly see what they are doing and start making positive changes, the women not only survive, but they start to thrive.

**Hoʻoulu Pono Process (To Cause to Thrive)**

Hoʻoulu pono is the Hawaiian terminology selected to describe the cyclical process in Stage Two: Growing into Inspired Alignment. The literal translation is “to make grow well” or

---

55 The reference to total transformation of the heart and mind is linked to the lolo (cognitive mind) and naʻau (visceral mind which is also identified as the heart) (Pukui & Elbert, 1986).
“thrive” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 370). It encompasses the transformative conscious awakening process that occurred through raising their awareness (makaʻala), taking actions (hana), deeply reflecting on those actions through intellectual internalization in their cognitive and visceral minds⁵⁶ (digesting in the naʻau), and gaining eventual insight and perceptual wisdom over time. All of the women talked about the difficulty and value of being able to take time to reflect on their lives in the darkness of night while in prison.

As the women come to terms with what they have been through and caused, they make conscious decisions to shift from hana hūpō or behaving recklessly to hana pono or behaving correctly. The Hawaiian term ulu is translated as to grow, spread, or increase. A secondary meaning is to be “inspired by a spirit, god, ideal, or person, as for artistic expression” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 368). When the prefix hoʻo is added to ulu, the combined term Hoʻoulu involves a process of stirring up, inspiring, and sprouting and “to enter in and inspire” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 368).⁵⁷

Four strategies were described by the women to Hoʻoulu pono: 1) Being Honest with Self and Others; 2) Taking Responsibility; and 3) Developing an Attitude of Gratitude & Practicing Humility; and 4) Shifting the Hustle. The first two strategies are related to the Hoʻomākaukau Huliau in terms of making conscious decisions to prepare to change or pre-awakening. However, in Stage Two of the Huliau phase: Growing Into Inspired Alignment, the women start taking actions to transform themselves in mind, body, and spirit. All four strategies were interconnected with one another, because being honest helped the women to take responsibility for their lives and make choices to improve themselves and their lives.

⁵⁶ Pule Hoʻoulu is a prayer for inspiration, which is reflective of a primary coping strategy used by all of the women to inspire them work toward overcoming their trauma and healing their spirits (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 368).
Additionally, the more gratitude and humility they felt and expressed from their hearts, the more they wanted to “do the right thing” and be honest and responsible not only in their mind, but in tangible actions. Finally, shifting the hustle which involved changing the focus of their actions from self-serving actions to service to others was increased as they continued to face the truth and be grateful and humble. For clarification in how they occurred for the women in the Huliau phase of their pathway, they are introduced separately.

**Hoʻoulu Pono Strategy One: Being Honest with Self and Others**

Being honest was a main component of preparing to and taking actions to heal and grow. Once the women faced the absolute truth about what they have done and disclosed those truths to others, they started to grow into alignment. Without carrying the secret about their addiction and/or trauma deep within themselves they were able to heal from the pain deep within themselves which blocked them from growing into alignment of their mind, body, and spirit.

Kehaulani’s perspectives on concealing and then disclosing her truth was true for the nine women that were on their recovery journey in this study:

I had to come honest with myself for one ‘cause I lied to myself for years of course. I was in denial for many, many years. I don’t have a drug problem. That I can stop whenever I want. But my sister would say, “Sis, you know I think you get one drug problem.” And then, “Every day, first thing in the morning we see…” and I go, “No. I can stop. I can stop. I just like for use. I just like for party. But, I just going party this last time.” And the last time went on for eight yrs.

However, once she had a spiritual awakening with unconditional love and acceptance from God, she had the motivation and strength to face the truth. She no longer wanted to hide in her addiction and she admitted the truth of her addiction and stated: “If it wasn’t for God, I don’t know where I would be.” She finally admitted, “I do have a problem. I am addicted to drugs. I’m gonna work on myself and find solutions to make it better, you know.” Working on
herself, like all of the women in the study, involved taking responsibility for her life and her life choices.

**Hoʻoulu Pono Strategy Two: Taking Responsibility.**

All of the women talked about the importance of taking responsibility which helped them to heal and grow. Once they were prepared and motivated to make positive changes, the women stopped blaming others for why they are substance addicted and struggling in life. Pōmaikaʻi expressed her motivation for taking responsibility that included not wanting her mother to blame herself for the mistakes she made which was noted by the four other women that were raised by single mothers.

We have to, at some point, be responsible for our own doings. I know the core issue of probably why I was doing drugs and trying to seek attention and stuff like that, because of abandonment issues. But at some point, you have to take responsibility. You cannot always blame it on that. I don’t want my mom to blame herself for the choices I made. Because once I turned 18, I made my own choices. It wasn’t anything that my mom said or did that made me choose anything different. I was a grown adult. I knew better. I was taught the right way, but I chose differently. I don’t blame anybody else anymore besides my own choice.

However, at some point in their pathway of awakening, they reflected deeply on the harm they have caused and took responsibility for what they have done. With time to reflect and reliance on a higher power, such as God, the women realized what they had done and took sole responsibility for their actions and chose to make amends. As Pōmaikaʻi shared:

Well, most of my healing and growing was done in prison, you know. You just get plenty time fo’ think about the harm that you’ve caused, what you did, who you hurt, and then when you come home, you make amends, you make it right, and that’s the process of healing, you just give it to God. Let God, let go, and move forward.

Thus, the realizations Pōmaikaʻi made about what she had done occurred during her reflection time in prison. As she took responsibility, which was motivated by having a strong spiritual foundation, she was able to heal and make amends. Taking responsibility became an integral
part of healing and growing into inspired alignment. Thus, once the women purged themselves of all of the hurt (which is the initial aspect of healing the spirit), they engaged in simultaneous healing and growth during the Huliau phase.

Margaret talked about learning and relearning through many classes in prison and therapeutic programs outside of prison how to be an effective parent which led her to making conscious decisions to fight to have her family back and realized that she needed to take responsibility for the harm she caused.

When I came out of prison, I wasn’t welcome with open arms by my children immediately. I had to ask myself, “How bad Margaret are you willing to get your family back? Are you willing to work? How bad?” I had to go parenting classes to learn dis shit all ova again. I had to go life coping skills. I had to go treatment, therapy, programs ova and ova again and relearn how to become an effective parent. It was a process that led me to one decision to hold on to my seat and hang in there no matter fuckin’ hard this recovery reunion rehabilitation was. I had to make the decision to hang onto my seat and just fuckin’ ride ‘em or just go back to drugs. And let me tell you it was a process and every step of that way during that process I had to make numerous decisions to frickin’ hang in there and face this pain, because that’s what I went ‘cause you know.

However, it was not just the mothers who stopped blaming others and took responsibility for their actions. Noelani offers a summary of how she shifted from blaming others to taking responsibility.

I just felt you know that I saw that I was blaming other people and not taking responsibility for my own behaviors my attitude you know um you can’t keep blaming your father and you know the way he spoke to you, you know, and treat other people like how you would treat your father. I made that decision mentally and then I processed it and internalized it ova hea and brought it back out in the proper way that I should behave in there even if they was wrong.

Noelani’s description of her process is similar to what nine of the 10 women described in terms of how she made her decision to change her mind and attitude. What is important to note here is that her ability to “see” what she was doing was clearly linked to her feelings which involves both observing with her cognitive mind and listening to her na’au or visceral
mind. Subsequently, she intellectually internalized or digested in her naʻau what she was experiencing, made the connection or realization of why she was behaving the way she was toward the guards, and then made a conscious decision to change.

**Hoʻoulu Pono Strategy Three: Developing an Attitude of Gratitude & Practicing Humility**

Developing an attitude of gratitude and practicing humility helped the women to begin to thrive, because they stepped out of the victim mindset and shifted from bracing for the storms of life (survivor) to embracing life and seeing the blessings in their life (thriver). They stopped taking things for granted as Pōmaikaʻi shared:

> Well I think that after incarceration, you kind of grow up and you become real grateful for the things you have in life. You just don’t take tings for granted anymore, you know, family, children. You kinda, there’s just a change that occurs somewhere along the line where you just get it. And you just change. I don’t know. For me, it was just like why I goin’ come home and keep doing the same things over and over?

As the women matured and became grateful, they also started changing their outlook on life and started to be more positive and humble in the way they interacted with others. They no longer wanted to be selfish and only think of themselves. The women realized that by opening up their hearts and being grateful for all their blessings, they received more blessings in their lives and their prayers were answered (e.g. receiving mail from their children, family, and friends; getting to join a particular workline in prison).

**Hoʻoulu Pono Strategy Four: Shifting the Hustle.**

As the women grew into inspired alignment, the women took actions to shift from hana hūpō (behave recklessly) to hana pono (behave correctly). With determination to be independent of the legal/criminal system, they began to strive to be responsible, mature adult women. During their Naʻaupō phase, the women described themselves as “hustlers.” For example, NoeNoe stated that she was a “hustler” and sold cocaine as a money-making business
on the streets and became a well known, and well respected “runner” amongst attorneys, judges, and other high profile professionals. When she went to prison, she tried to continue “hustling” for money since her family was only sending her money for Christmas and her birthday. She worked in prison for $.25/hr and worked with some of the ACOs that were “crooked to da core.” But, she “grew up” in prison and changed her mindset and behavior.

My family wasn’t sending me noting. I got into mischief in prison. When I got into the laundry room, well I started running mail… fo’ build up my store. Dat’s why everybody was, the ACOs, none of ‘em used to talk bad with me because I hustle. I mean, we get some women in there that are daredevils and we get the ACOs, some of dem were crooked to da core. I mean, they had love making among prisoners and ACOs. They had drug running. They had cigarette pick up. Every month dey was picking up, one of the ACOs would come and bring me cartons and cartons of cigarettes and the rest of ‘em go into my account, into my books…Sometime not the right tings, but I hustle. I’m a hustler. I used to run mail, everyting in prison. Run mail, run cigarettes, run any kine in prison. I was naughty to the core in prison. I neva like give up, give up that type of life. I thought I could have that kind of, type of life in prison. But, it don’t work like that.

I learned the hard way. Prison made me grow up big time. It made me see dis not what I wanted. I took freedom for granted and when you do all dis, all the tings I did, being incarcerated... I wanted more for myself instead of being locked up behind bars. I wanted more for myself. If by me getting involved with a lot of tings and um, going the right track, by all means I goin’ do it. Then, I applied for going back to school, um, different types of um, programs they had. At that time, we had like about 2 – 3 programs and I got involved with that.

Similar to NoeNoe, all of the women reached a point in their lives where they no longer wanted to “hustle” to buy and sell drugs and evade law enforcement or “run their game” in prison. Like NoeNoe, they wanted their freedom and to live in peace. Instead, they made efforts to “better themselves” and “help others.” This shift in their focus is similar to being spirit-led versus ego-driven in the Ho‘omākaukau Huliau time period within the Huliau phase. However, what is emphasized in the Ho‘oulu Pono cycle of growth is that the women were not only being motivated by a higher power to serve others, but also they wanted “shift the hustle” to improve their own lives. They wanted to “be good” and “do good.”
To the best of their ability, all of the women worked while in prison. The women worked for $.25/hour to earn money rather than trying to manipulate the situation of running mail or engaging in the corruption that occurs in prison. They also steered clear of the drama. As Nahe said, she wanted the “monkey off her back” She entered prison with the mindset that “Failure is not an option”, and like all the other women, she started focusing on changing her ways and worked to support herself and help others while she was still in prison. She realized that financial independence was her ticket to freedom and starting a new life for herself.

I had already changed like before I went to prison with that mindset. And I didn’t get in any drama. I didn’t have any write ups. I didn’t hang out with the cliques. To be totally honest with you, I worked to support myself in prison and I took care of the less needy people in there. Some of the people that had mental disabilities and stuff and didn't have family behind them, you know, I would give them cigarettes. I would give them snacks and that became my focus.

The last year, they put me in the work furlough program, in the bridge program and I was able to reconnect with my family on weekends. I was able to get a job. I made $10/hour while I was working in prison on my outside job at the work furlough program, I managed to save like $28K. I left there with $13K. The rest of the money I had to pay in restitution before the parole board would, you know, parole me and they did.

Nahe’s example is reflective of many of the women in terms of their industrious nature. While in prison, the women searched for ways to improve themselves and prepare to be successful when they left prison. They worked on the workline, followed the rules, and lived responsibly. Eight of the women work at least two – three jobs and live very busy and active lives. The other two women are not able to work regular jobs due to physical disabilities. All of them are committed to not being a burden to their families or society.

In sum, all four Ho’oulu pono strategies helped the women to take actions as a result of becoming honest with themselves and others, leave their past in the past, learn from their mistakes, become responsible, grateful for the blessings they have in life, practice humility,
and move forward. They began to free themselves of the entrapment of addiction and a
criminal lifestyle that was the result of negative impact of multi-layered, chronic trauma. In
Stage Two of the Huliau phase, the women shifted from surviving to the early stage of
thriving, which continued in the Na‘auao phase.

**Huliau Summary**

In sum, the Huliau phase of the Healing and PTG pathway was a transformative time
for the women. Due to their extensive trauma, it was important for the women to heal before
they grew into alignment with their mind, body, and spirit. Thus, two ongoing, cyclical stages
occurred between middle to late adulthood (30 – 60+ years old). Stage One: Healing the Spirit
“Making Things Right” and Stage Two: Growing Into Inspired Alignment – “Doing What’s
Right”.

Within the Stage One: Healing the Spirit, there are 3 concurrent processes: 1) Hoʻopono (Cleansing and Making Amends); 2) Hoʻopili (Making Connections); and 3) Hoʻopili Hou (Making Re-Connections). Multiple strategies for each process were identified by the women. As the women made conscious efforts to release the pain of the past through forgiveness, detached from toxic relationships to substances and people, built multiple, healthy, trustworthy support networks, and reconnect to their families and culture, they were able to heal their spirits.

In Stage Two: Growing Into Inspired Alignment, the women worked toward living their lives in a kūpono manner or living with integrity. This stage occurred concurrently with Stage One once some initial healing has occurred. The more that they healed, the stronger they became in their ability to grow. The cyclical process for this process is termed Hoʻoulu Pono (To Cause to Thrive) and it involved four strategies
As the women became honest about their addictions and trauma they have suffered and caused, they began to align themselves in mind, body, and spirit and started “doing what’s right” and “getting on track.” They stopped making excuses for why they are using drugs and alcohol and started taking responsibility for the harm they caused. For the mothers, they began to fight to have their children and family members back in their lives. Finally, they developed an attitude of gratitude for all the blessings they have in their lives and started practicing humility in how they live their lives. With a strong and meaningful spiritual belief system, they were inspired to let their loving nature be expressed and began to shift from surviving to thriving. With love, acceptance, education, and stabilizing supports, they began to get their lives back on track. They became responsible and found jobs (unless they had a disability and were unable to work).

Overall, during the Huliau phase, they started to make sense of what happened in their lives learn why they behave the way that they do. Through receiving education and stabilizing resources, they started to transfer what they have learned either before, during, or after exiting prison into their daily living. With safety, structure, and support, they began to feel hopeful and were able to heal their spirits and grew into inspired alignment. As they healed and grew from overcoming trauma, they began their “awakening” and shifted from being metaphorically “asleep” like a seed underground that has not yet come through the surface to being more fully “awake” as they push through the soil and find their way to grow above ground. However, since these women experienced complex and multi-layered trauma, the Healing and PTG pathways were not linear.

With each subsequent trauma, including incarceration, it is possible that they can huli hoʻi (backslide) and return to a state of naʻaupō (darkness) and live their lives unconsciously.
Despite setbacks, they are always ascending upward in their consciousness. With greater understanding of their trauma experiences and knowing more about who they are in totality, the women no longer have a “dark mind.” However, even though they may truly want to make a positive change, they may not have the stabilizing resources needed to make the necessary changes (e.g. no housing, no family supports, no financial resources, etc.). Therefore, they may behave as if their mind is not enlightened. They may choose to hit the “manual override” button of their embodied knowledge system and ignore the warning signs from their naʻau to keep moving forward and not backslide to an unhealthy relationship or use drugs or get caught up in their anger. They start to lose hope and rather than developing an “I care” attitude, they develop an “I no care” attitude and huli hoʻi or backslide.

Conversely, once the women have access to support and stabilizing resources, they are able to Hoʻomāukaukau Huliau (Prepare for Change) and rebuild their “pig fences.” Armed with their inner strength from a meaningful spiritual belief system, they re-enter the Huliau (time of change) phase and reactivate their power of choice and holomua (move forward) toward the Naʻauao (enlightenment) phase. In this manner, they shift from darkness to light and are spiritually uplifted from despair to hope. They start to develop an “I care” attitude toward life. Through receiving love and acceptance, they develop empathy and practice humility in their interactions with others with a focus on self-love and service for others (e.g. living in a kūpono manner, remaining sober, seeking higher education, and helping other women). They begin to live their lives with “daylight” mind which is the focus of the following chapter.
CHAPTER 8: NAʻUAO – “DAYLIGHT” MIND

“Allow No One to Dim Your Leading Light” – Dion’e

The Naʻauao phase marks the third phase of the women’s healing (reawakening) and awakening (PTG) pathway in which they finally reach the point where they spend more of their lives living consciously rather than unconsciously. At this point in their lives, they have spent a substantial amount of time healing their spirits. Because they have found “safe” spaces to express and release their trauma and pain, they have moved away from shame, silence, and secrecy and no longer are escaping pain with drugs and alcohol. They have taken responsible actions to Hoʻopono (cleanse themselves of their hala, ʻeha, and hoʻomauhala, and made amends). They have a developed or deepened their spiritual foundation. The women have engaged in their Hoʻopili process and filled their spiritual/emotional void. They may still experience grief, loss, and separation, but they have built multiple support networks to help them address challenges when they arise. They have or are in process of Hoʻopili Hou (rebuilding trust with their families, reconnecting to their culture).

Although they started their reawakening and awakening during the Huliau phase, in the Naʻauao phase, they continue to heal their spirits and strengthen their Native Hawaiian cultural identity (to varying degrees). They are fully awakened in mind, body, and spirit. They have consistently made conscious decisions to live their lives as law abiding citizens. They have become educated about their trauma, their cultural history and practices, and formed everlasting bonds with their “sisters” and others in their support network. With clarity about who they are, they start living a forgiven and purposeful life.

58 The quote noted here is was shared with Dion’e by her grandmother who raised her for most of her childhood on Hawaiʻi island and recognized Dion’e as a “special one” from when she was a baby and throughout her life.
Because they know how difficult their journey has been, they have a sincere desire to strive for balance and harmony within themselves, their families, and their extended support network. Most especially, they want to pass on their blessings and make a positive difference in the world through bringing love, acceptance, and hope to their families, “sisters”, and the broader community. Figures 8.1 & 8.2 below provide summaries of the concepts presented in this chapter.

Figure 8.1  Naʻauao Phase Processes and Strategies within ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree Metaphor

Figure 8.2  Naʻauao Phase – Two Mutually Influential Processes
Some key Hawaiian terminology is helpful to better understand the conceptualization of the Naʻauao phase from a Kānaka Maoli worldview.

**Manaʻolana (Hope)**

By middle to late adulthood, the women have restored hope in their lives and have a more positive outlook about their present and future. They are no longer in a state of despair and have found a reason to live and deeply care about themselves. They have done a tremendous amount of work to heal their spirits and grown into inspired alignment and want to care for others. The Hawaiian term for hope is manaʻolana and it is comprised of two words: manaʻo (thoughts, ideas, beliefs, opinion, theory, feelings, desire, want, Pukui & Elbert, 1986); and lana (floating, Ibid, 1986). As noted in Chapter Five, the kaona or deeper meaning of the term manaʻo is one’s inner light.  

Thus, the quote at the beginning of this chapter by Dionʻe and the Bowl of Light metaphor is reflective of this belief that light exists in each individual. When one is hopeful, one’s inner light is amplified and more light from within is radiated outwardly. As one is awakened, consciousness ascends and one’s inner light floats upward rather than diminishing downward.

**Naʻauao: “Daylight” Mind**

Naʻauao is comprised of two Hawaiian terms: naʻau (gut) and ao (light). Ao is defined as, “light, day, daylight, dawn, enlightened, regain consciousness” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 26). When put together, they translate to “learned, enlightened, intelligent, wise” or “daylight mind” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 257). Once the women have learned, they continue to heal and

---

59 Kumu Hula (Hula Master) John Lake learned this from his kumu, hula master, Aunty Maʻiki Aiu Lake (State Foundation on the Culture and the Arts, 1984).
60 Dionʻe was taught by her grandmother to always value herself and let her inner light shine out to to others. “My grandma always used to tell me to never allow anyone to dim your leading light.” (August 25, 2017)
grow into alignment with themselves, others, and the world around them. Rather than living life unconsciously as they did in the Na‘au pō phase, they activate the totality of themselves and not just compartmentalize who they are. With open hearts and minds, they respond empathetically to situations and without judgement.

Through lived experiences and intellectual internalization in their na‘au in connection with spiritual forces, they live their lives fully awake in the Na‘auao phase. They view themselves as complete individuals and not just “drug addicts” or “losers” that do not deserve respect or love. Over time, they developed a deeper knowing of who they truly are - kanaka maoli women that deserve love and respect. Nahe provides a great summary of what the women shared about knowing who she is on multiple levels that summarizes what the women have shared:

So, I kinda, you know, evolved from viewing myself as this way, this person, to view myself completely different. I know that I’m a mother. I know I’m a sister. I’m Hawaiian. I know I’m a good person. I know I’m a hard worker. I know I’m an Aunty. I know I’m a good cook. I know so many more things that I am rather than just responding that I am drug addict in recovery. I’ve learned so much more about me.

All of the women in this study were considered “success stories”, because they self-reported PTG and healing in their screening interviews and have evolved and matured. Thus, to measure successs from a Kānaka Maoli perspective is to see the women as kanaka makua (mature adults) and mākuahine (mothers). Additionally, the Na‘auao phase includes two na‘au related terms to describe the cognitive and emotional states of the women as well as their behavioral choices and state of being: 1) Na‘au Pono (striving to achieve intellectual and emotional maturity) and 2) Hana Pono (striving to live a purposeful life) & Ulu Pono (thriving). Descriptions of a kanaka makua, na‘au pono and hana pono with examples from the women’s mo‘olelo are offered in the subsequent sections.
**Kanaka Makua (Mature Adult)** and **Mākuahine (Mothers)**

A kanaka makua is a mature adult. It is someone who is level-headed, warm-hearted, courageous, industrious, achievement-oriented, loyal to family, mutually helpful, and makes efforts to “be hospitable” and serve others with grace and humility (Pukui, Haertig, and Lee, 1972b). Makua is a Hawaiian term that is defined as, “parent, any relative of the parent’s generation...main stalk of a plant; adult; full grown; mature” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 230). All of the women have matured and each of the seven mothers in this study had one to nine children. Given the varied experiences the women had with their children and/or their own mothers, all of the women realized the importance of the role of the makuahine or mother in terms of providing love, protection, and guidance.

Metaphorically, as an anchor of the rainforest, the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree holds the ecosystem together. It is the “mother” plant of the rain forests and provides protection and shelter for the plants and animals that live in the rainforest. The kumu or main stalk of the tree is responsible for transporting water and nutrients from the roots of the tree to the aerial parts of the tree. It also distributes nutrients from the leaves to all other parts of the tree, including the roots. Thus, like a mother in a family, the kumu is the main source of transporting sustenance throughout the tree.

---

61 In the context of this dissertation, kanaka makua refers to a mature adult. However, it can also refer to a mature child of either sex, who behaves like a kanaka makua (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 118).

62 The true kanaka makua also has the prized Hawaiian attribute – he must be hospitable...this hospitality connoted a warm and generous giving and sharing, whether food or companionship or concern and comfort, always in a person-to-person way. (He has outgrown the infantile grasping to get all one can and keep all one has – comments [Dr. Haertig] our psychiatrist.) (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 118 – 119)
One of the root syllables in the term makua or parent is kua which refers to backbone or previous generations (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 168). Six of the ten women referred to themselves as the “backbone” of the family and all of them talked about the importance of mothers in raising children and grandchildren. For example, Margaret who is a mother of eight children made the following statements about being the backbone and caretaker of her family, including her parents, husband, siblings, and her own children.

I’m the backbone and the caretaker of my family... At one point they finally said that, “Mom we now know we’re not gonna lose you to da drugs and now we trust you.” So, now we have good relationships. I’m here for dem. When my son, my grandson died I was able to bring my son home. I’m able to now be the mom and when they need help financially or just emotionally or talk about their girlfriend or boyfriend, I’m here. Family functions what we neva had before. It’s always mom’s house for family functions.

Now, I’m literally da head of my whole family. I’m the caretaker of my mom, my dad, and my mom’s husband ...All my brothers and sisters come to me for advice, for take care, for live and I’m like the head social worker for my own family now. Now the trust is like right here. I’m like the top of everybody’s, who to go to, who to get advice, who to consult on every decision. That’s where I am today. I’m literally at the top of the pyramid of this family.

Because of all of the hard work she did during the Huliau phase of her life, Margaret is mōhalahala (blossoming past failures). Rather than hurting those she loves, she is able to take care of her family and others in the community. She keeps in regular contact with her “sisters” and continues to maintain her “circle of trust.” She is fully committed to “staying on track” which is similar to what all of the women shared during their interviews.

Lisa, Dion’e, and Noelani were not biological mothers, but they recognized the importance of wāhine as the backbone of the family and had a strong desire to find a purpose in life, which often involved helping others. Lisa had many strong female role models during her upbringing that instilled key values within her. She made the following statements in describing women as the “backbone” and “home” of the family and as such needs to be stable
and “immovable”:

Den we were both clean. Den, I decided…I wen go, I wanted to smoke. One night I wanted to smoke in 2011. Then, um being a woman, being the backbone yeah. I believe all of us women are the backbone of our ʻohana. That we are the home. We are proverbs 31: virtuous wife, virtuous mother, virtuous woman and we have to be like the tree planted by the river that was immovable, because we have so much roles... that [using drugs] caused our whole foundation to just go back. So, he started soon after. I mean in a month he was back in jail. Jus, jus crazy both of us, just trying to kill each odda.

Lisa also described how her choice to return to using drugs after being sober for five years negatively affected her relationship with her boyfriend who later became her husband. As the interview progressed, it was evident that she did not “blame” herself for causing all of the difficulty in their lives. However, similar to the other women in this study, she held herself accountable to her role in what happened in her life and chose to become sober and stable by “shifting the hustle” from selfish desires and self-destruction to a desire to love herself and love and serve others as one of her main purposes in life.

**Naʻau Pono (Striving to Achieve Intellectual/Emotional Balance & Maturity)**

During the Naʻauao phase of the women’s healing and PTG pathway, the women are view themselves and the world from a positive perspective. Subsequently, they interact with others and the world in a more mature, positive and loving manner. However, it is difficult to be mature and in balance with yourself at all times. Repeatedly, the women noted that healing and PTG is an ongoing, ever-evolving journey. Dionʻe statements echoed the voices of the women: “Today I just live my life. I am a work in progress still. Like I said earlier, transformation is every single day for me.” The women have matured and grown but may not always be mentally and emotionally mature at all times. Naʻau pono is comprised of two root words: naʻau (seat of intellect; “heart” of the body) and pono (in balance, proper order). When
combined together, naʻau pono is defined as, “upright, just, right-minded, upright heart” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 257).

For the women in this study, naʻau pono means that they do their best to be in the “right frame of mind” as stated by Noelani and remain open to listening to others and interacting with others in a calm, respectful, and compassionate manner. They are no longer “stuck” in their old ways of thinking. They are sober, have broken free of toxic relationships, and continue to work toward being “free” mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Their minds, bodies, and spirits are coming into alignment. They have stepped out of their comfort zones and start living their lives in an upright and just manner, including following the rules while in prison and the rules of society. In the Naʻauao phase, the women are operating from a “daylight” mind. An ‘ōlelo noʻeau illustrates the Hawaiian conceptualization of the link between an awakened mind and loving behavior: “Ulu aʻe ke welina a ke aloha - Loving is the practice of an awake mind” (Aluli-Meyer, 2013, p. 253).

**Hana Pono (Striving to Live a Purposeful Life) & Ulu Pono (Thriving)**

The literal translation of hana pono is striving to behave correctly. The women describe this as “doing what’s right” which begins in Stage Two of the Huliau phase and continues in the Naʻauao phase. At this point in their lives, the women feel forgiven by God or their ʻaumakua (ancestral gods) and have a strong desire to be good and do good in their lives. In other words, the women are naʻau pono and act in ways that are pono (proper). They view themselves as worthy and valuable and want to do something that is productive with their lives. Thus, the broader understanding of hana pono is that the women seek ways to live a forgiven and purposeful life with maturity and an in-depth understanding about their trauma and trauma responses.
They have engaged in ma ka hana ka ‘ike or developed knowledge from direct experience. Another way to interpret this phrase is, “By our actions, we are known.” (M. Kaʻāpana, personal communication, Aug. 17, 2018). The women wanted to be known for the good that they were doing within their ‘ohana, their community and in the world. Pōmaikaʻi stated, “I want to be remembered as someone positive in the community that helps others and not a drug dealer who ruined many lives.”

In the Naʻauao phase, the women shifted from surviving to thriving. The Hawaiian term for thriving is ulu pono which is translated as, “to grow well, progressive, successful” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 370). For these women, thriving is linked to having a reason to live by living a purposeful life. Rather than living in the darkness, they now stand proudly in their light and shine their loving light upon others. Dionʻeʻe’s statement echoes the essence of what all of the women communicated during their interviews, “All I want is to live with a purpose and to continue to allow no one to dim my leading light regardless of the situation.” Additionally, Pōmaikaʻi highlighted having a “sense of purpose” was also found in caring for her grandchildren.

Coming home I’m a little bit more aware of my community, my culture and I’m trying to instill those same beliefs and values into my grandchildren. My children are already grown, you know. I missed out on that. But teaching my grandchildren what I should have been teaching my children at that time gives me a sense of purpose, you know for times that I lost out with my own children.

For the five women who have children and/or grandchildren living in Hawaiʻi caring for children/grandchildren supported their development of a “sense of purpose.” Finally, there are two co-occurring, interactive processes within the Naʻauao phase at both the individual and collective levels, respectively: 1) Mōhalahala - Blossoming Past Failures and 2) Hoʻolana –
Uplifting Others. Both processes influenced one another, because part of the women’s ability to blossom past failures was linked to uplifting others and vice versa.

**Mōhalahala Process - Blossoming Past Failures**

During early childhood and/or middle/late adulthood, all of the women lived in varying degrees of terrifying fear from family members, boyfriends, and lovers. However, as the women approach middle to late adulthood, they evolve and move beyond the entrapment of their fear-based thinking, negative thoughts, feelings, emotions, and subsequent behaviors. They are free from prison and toxic relationships. The Hawaiian term that best encompasses this complete transformation is mōhalahala, which is literally translated as being “freed from fear” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 251).

Mōhala is also defined with multiple meanings by Pukui and Elbert (1986) including:

- Unfolded, as flower petals; blossoming, opening up, spread, as a turkey’s tail; blooming, as a youth just past adolescence; shining forth, as a light; appearing clear, as a thought; evolved, developed; freed or recovered, as from fear, worry, illness. (p. 251)

With this broader definition, it is evident that the term mōhala can describe a person who has evolved and developed into a fuller blossom. Flowers are a poetic reference for women in the Hawaiian culture. When a flower is in full bloom it is considered mōhala. The kaona meaning of mōhala is to be fully awake. When the term mōhala is deconstructed into its root syllables, the first syllable is mō which can mean “to cut” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 248).

As mentioned earlier, the second syllable is hala which translates to “sin, vice, offense, fault, error” and “pass, as time” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 50). Halahala is translated as, “correction, criticism, or complaint” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 51). Based on these definitions, the Hawaiian understanding of freedom from fear is a process through which one gets rid of or cuts themselves off from negativity (sin, vices, faults, toxic relationships, etc.) and judgement
(correction, criticism, complaint) stemming from fear, worry or illness (e.g. substance addiction).

Viewing the pathway to PTG and healing through a Hawaiian epistemological and ontological worldview and using the Hawaiian language provides clarity in how the three phases are linked together with hala at the root of terms in both the Naʻaupō and Naʻauao phases. As noted in the graphic below, it is only when the women release the hala (trauma/emotional bondage) and hoʻomauhala (resentments they are carrying), and stop hoʻohalahala (blaming/criticizing others) in the Huliau phase, that they are able to holomua (move forward) and mōhalahala (blossom past failures).

Nine of the 10 women realized that their addictions to drugs and alcohol and codependent relationships are “illnesses” they need to break free from in order to start healing, turn their lives around, and desist from crime. For example, when Amy made this realization, she made a conscious decision to “break free” of her addiction to crystal methamphetamine. Amy stated, “I’m not gonna do ice anymore. I’m not gonna keep going back to prison. It’s time for me to start healing” (November 30, 2016). Thus, the noa huna (esoteric) meaning of this term is that when the women experience freedom from fear, they are mōhalahala or “blossoming past failures” in their lives. “Failures” is a common word used by the women to represent their own transgressions or systematic failures such as the wrongful incarceration of Dion’e.

Nine of the 10 women wanted to change their reputation from being a “failure” to being a “success”. As NoeNoe stated, “Throughout my life I been a failure. I refuse to be a failure. When you going know me, you goin’ know me as somebody who accomplished something, not a failure” (April 14, 2017). Within this first cyclical process, there were four strategies that

Mōhalahala Strategy One: Gaining Wisdom – “Making Sense of My Life”

As the women open-up and “blossom”, they engage in the first mōhalahala strategy and gain wisdom from all of their various life experiences, education, and various supports, they see their lives differently. With new, enlightened perspectives, all of the women were able to make sense of what happened in their lives and find peace with themselves, others, and the world around them. As Nahe stated:

All the question marks I’ve had in my mind, I’m putting periods at the end of them right now. It all makes sense to me now. A lot of the questions I had in my mind are making sense to me now. All the different struggles that I went through makes sense to me now.

I mean like when I went to prison, there were people there I was supposed to meet. I don’t know why, but they’ve had a message for me. Somewhere down the line, they had a message for me, and I was like, “Wow, that’s why I’m supposed to be here ‘cause I’m supposed to meet this person, who’s supposed to tell me this, and now it makes sense.”

Lisa added more layers to what gaining wisdom meant that were similar to what the other women shared. Gaining wisdom was not only about making sense of their life experiences and choices and realizing that things happen for a reason, but it was also about accepting their experiences as part of who they are and that those experiences make them the women that they have evolved into over time.

It makes more sense today, what certain things I’ve been through, the decisions that I made and what choices I made and where I’m at today. It’s more meaningful. All the experiences is what...is a part of me, and that is the building blocks of my life. For every single thing that I mentioned, plus more that I didn’t, is a part of my life and what makes me the woman who I am today.
In addition to accepting herself and everything she has been through in life, Lisa made a statement that was true for all of the women, “Just that understanding and wisdom is something that will never end. I don’t ever want that to end. There’s so much knowledge and so much wisdom out there to get.” Thus, all of the women realized that attaining knowledge, knowing, and understanding, which includes wisdom and enlightenment is a life-long process and all of them have a sincere desire to be life-long learners.

Finally, for nine of the women, gaining wisdom was also linked to support from role models, mentors, and guidance provided in Serenity Prayer they learned through their participation in AA/NA meetings. The women internalized its meaning and drew upon God to be at peace with their lives and accepted what they could not change (e.g. what they did in the past and how they were treated by their families and others that hurt them). They courageously stepped out of their comfort zones to change what they could change (e.g. their attitudes, thoughts, behaviors, and philosophy about life) and developed the wisdom to know what they could and could not change. Noelani, who would have reacted in an angry manner before her personal transformation into the Na‘auao phase of her life, made a clear statement that reflected what other women shared about their reaction to others that spoke harshly to them:

You gotta calm down. You gotta get into the right frame of mind and you gotta let go of that anger that you have towards that security. I had to think it, process it in my na‘au, and you gotta let it go that anger towards that incident. You cannot control the way they behave, the way they talk to you. God grant me the serenity. I would have to say that so many times you know.

Thus, from an enlightened state of mind, the women had the wisdom to process their feelings in their na‘au before reacting to situations in which others are behaving in negative manner.
Mōhalahala Strategy Two: Maintaining Inspired Alignment – “Staying On Track”

In addition to “making sense of their lives,” the women also realized the importance of mōhalahala strategy three - maintaining the inspired alignment that they achieved in their Huliau phase of healing and PTG. The women’s terminology for this strategy is “staying on track.” In order to ensure that they kept striving to be naʻau pono and hana pono, they took much of what they learned either before, during and/or after exiting prison into their daily living.

“Staying on track” involved continuing to be honest, take responsibility, and keep their lives very busy and structured with daily routines. To maintain sobriety, they continued habits they learned in prison that were linked to their spiritual practices, practice empathy, and some of them attend AA/NA meetings (ranging from frequently to occasionally). Most of women work two to three jobs to “make ends meet” and keep themselves very busy with work and/or school. They also strengthen family connections (which may involve family members struggling with addiction). However, they did not associate with their former network of “using friends” to avoid backsliding and losing all of the gains they made during their Huliau phase. Here are a few examples of how the women articulated these positive changes.

I never did ever go an appointment in my addiction. I was so caught up in my addiction. I was locked down in my house 24/7 couldn’t even leave to go anywhere. The only time I could leave was to go to the drugs, get to the drugs, and come back home. So, I think being honest, responsible and following a daily routine has definitely helped me, yeah.

One of the main things that has kept me on track with my recovery, with my sobriety is maintaining that same habits. So, in jail, I met with God on a daily basis...Had my bible study, did my SOAP which is scripture, observation, application, and prayer. Did a daily inventory which is a step 10 and I continued with that ‘til today. It’s like I have to, it’s part of me. It’s a habit to meet with God and have that one on one which has taught me to stay on track, yeah. So, that would be the main one.
In addition to maintaining her spiritual and AA practices, Lisa also articulated the value of helping others at the job in a residential treatment center for women exiting prison is reminder to avoid the pain and hurt associated with relapsing.

Second would be, where I work – would be, being able to empathize with these women to where I don’t have to relapse. I can hear it and see it on a daily basis and where I can see the hurt and the division yeah that it brings. So, that helps a lot. I also, every so often, go to meetings.

Similar to all of the other women, from an awakened state of consciousness, Amy made conscious decisions to keep her plate full with work, legal side jobs (e.g. selling mango bread, Christian-based t-shirts), and AA/NA meetings. Not all of the women attend church like Amy does, but all of the women pray on a daily basis and many of them read devotionals every morning as a way to start their day on a positive note.

I made a decision to work two jobs [giggles] to keep my plate full. I go to church twice a week. I go to meetings twice a week [AA/NA] and um, I stay close to family. I go work everyday. Sometime I bury myself in work a lot. I don’t get triggered or anything like that, but I don’t hang around any of my using friends. Anybody whose using, they’re not in my phone. They’re not on my facebook. If you using, I delete you. I forget your numba. I don’t put myself better than, it’s just where I don’t want to be. I can love them all from a distance. I tell them, call me when you ready. I just keep my distance. I not high makamaka or tink I’m better than. I just keep my distance. I just trying to stay afloat. I trying to stay up.

Amy highlighted the fact that all of her efforts are centered on “trying to stay afloat” and maintain the hope that she has gained from being sober and reconnecting with family. None of her family members that she associates with are currently using substances and she realized that she is not able to be around anyone who is in their addiction although she is willing to support her brother’s recovery when “he is ready.” Thus, in the Na‘auao phase, the women recognize that maintaining hope takes a consistent and diligent effort, because, as Margaret has stated, “We know that we are only one ‘hit off the pipe’ away from losing it all.”
Hence, they are very diligent in their efforts to “stay on track” and “stay connected” to their families and their “sisters” that are committed to their recovery and overall wellness.

**Mōhalahala Strategy Three: Overcoming Fears – “Stepping Out of My Comfort Zone”**

As the women “make sense of their lives” and make efforts to “stay on track”, they also embrace mōhalahala strategy three to overcome their fears and do things they have never done before. The women’s terminology for this strategy is, “stepping out of their comfort zone.”

For example, Pōmaika‘i, who dealt drugs since she was 16 years old, shared that all she knew was the drug community. But, through overcoming her fears, she became involved with “positive things” in the community that expanded beyond the drug community while in prison and continued after she exited from prison.

And doing positive things, and becoming one with, not only nature, but being part of a community. Because before my community was only dealing drugs. I never even knew there was a community out there. But, then when we started getting involved with the outdoor circle and the women’s conference group. We would go out and clean certain places like the zoo. Just being a part of the community outside of the drug world. Before I never even knew anything about that.

With encouragement and support while in prison, four of the women started taking on leadership roles for the first time such as being a leader or shining example/role model on the workline in prison as is the case with Pōmaika‘i and Margaret or working in the administrative office such as Kehaulani.

In addition to teaching Hawaiian culture and history and Polynesian song and dance which “broadened her horizons,” Dion‘e assembled the women together to form a gospel choir that was granted permission to perform outside of the prison to raise community awareness of the positive changes the women were making despite the mistakes they have made. As a result, she made positive changes to extend more grace and love toward the women. She was deeply inspired as she supported them in their transformative journey to “become somebody better”.

254
I would have never known that I would be given the opportunity to teach while I was incarcerated. But it allowed me to broaden my horizon to extend more grace, more gratitude, more kindness, more love. Not just to the women in prison. Today it allowed me to extend more gratitude and more love to people in general.

I was also given the opportunity to formulate a gospel choir and take the choir out to the NAACP conferences and events. I was not only given the opportunity not to just shed light, but to also bring the women outside the facility and bring awareness to the community and let society know that these are women who have made mistakes. Yes, these are women who have wronged our community. But these are women who have also changed their lifestyle, who are trying to change. I mean these are women who have been told majority of their lives that really, “They are no good. That they’re good for shit!” really. But to see them going through that transformation process of wanting to become somebody better. That alone is amazing!

Another example was shared by Pōmaikaʻi while she was in prison. She took advantage of an opportunity presented to her to plant trees as part of an Outdoor Circle from the University of Oregon. The trees she planted represented the growth and positive changes she has made in her life. In fact, many of the women made references to the ʻāina or land, particularly trees, that were metaphors for their healing and growth.

So, we were supposed to take care, you know we dug the hole and planted the trees. I was the first to put mine in the ground. So, I had 2 trees that I was able to name and take care of. I named one Poʻokela and [the other one] Pōmaikai. One was champion, you know, and I figure if I gave them strong Hawaiian names, it would be the metaphor of me growing and changing my ways. Usually, if you are not doing good, the tree might not do so good. If you are doing good, the tree will stay good.

About a year ago, we saw on one of the videos, I could see my 2 trees, they were the biggest trees and the most flourished trees out of everyone that had planted. It showed that I was doing good and I want those trees to keep representing the growth that I had in my life. Pōmaikai was for the good things in my life.

The motivation and strength to break out of their comfort zone was anchored in being firmly rooted in their meaningful spiritual belief system and a sincere desire to make the pathway easier for those that will follow behind them. Margaret, who has turned her life around completely, recently graduated with her MSW from UH Mānoa and is now a powerful motivational speaker and social worker in the field of child welfare. In her interview, she
described what it means to overcome fear and experience freedom from fear as well as her reasons for why it is so important:

In all the stages and meetings and talks that I do, my whole point is to allow my exposure to help all the rest of the women expose themselves. You know, to have the fearless, to not be shame of who you was, not be shame of who you are. That’s who I WAS, it’s done. It’s done! But you know, we lived for so many years in that lie, in that mindset that you’re always gonna be like dis and you’re never gonna amount to anything and you’re never gonna be able to …And it’s such a pattern for many of us women.

And you know what is the main reason why a lot of women say no? It’s because of the uncomfortability and the fear of stepping out of your box and not knowing. It’s the whole point of feeling uncomfortable. So, everybody just stays in the comfort zone - the zone that they know. So, in order for step out of your box and just live out of your comfort and just go. Being able to take risks. That is the only thing that’s stopping majority of ‘em...When someone says, you know, “Hey Margaret can I ask you to be the main speaker for the Women Supporting Women?” I feel like, “Oh no.” But I know I have to do it ‘cause it’s not about me. It’s about my sisters behind me. I have to show we have no fear, you know.

As Margaret role models fearlessness, she paves a pathway for her sisters behind her who are working toward their own recovery, healing, and PTG. Through saying “yes” to opportunities to share her mo’olelo and doing things she’s never done before, she demonstrates that she is no longer living in fear of who she was. She is no longer living in shame, silence, and secrecy. Margaret takes obstacles as opportunities for growth. She has truly embraced the essence of mōhalahala (freedom from fear) and blossomed past her failures.

Although the women may not want to step out of their comfort zone and do things they have never done before for themselves, they become more willing if is something that will benefit other women. Helping others that have gone through similar situations is not uniquely Hawaiian. But family loyalty is a strong Hawaiian cultural value that creates a stronger willingness to try new things that will benefit their extended ‘ohana, which, in this instance, are
the non-blood related sisterhood bonds the women create while in prison.

The Hawaiian term manamana means to branch out (Pukui & Elbert, 1986) like the ‘ōhi’a lehua tree that extends its branches and reaches upward toward to grow. In this manner the women expand their mana or life force energy to others as they step out of their comfort zone. Stepping “outside the box” was not done without mentorship and many forms of support, particularly stabilizing resources (e.g. food, shelter, clothing, transportation). Each of the women shared stories of doing tasks that they never considered until they went through their Huliau phase of life. Rather than gravitating toward the familiar, they opened themselves up to learning and doing new things (e.g. participating in community events such as planting trees, starting a women’s support group, doing domestic violence walks, going to college, engaging in public speaking in multiple environments - college classes, Prosecutor’s office, agencies in Hilo, public high schools, Mana Wāhine or Female Empowerment conferences, and/or living with healthy family members or on their own and being financially independent).

**Mōhalahala Strategy Four: Leading by Example – “Walking My Talk”**

As the women continue to build their courage and are no longer hiding in shame because of their addictions or abuse backgrounds and/or irresponsible behaviors, they engage in the fourth mōhalahala strategy and start leading by example and started to hana pono. Regardless of upbringing, socio-economic status, or type of crime (or wrongful incarceration), a character trait shared among the women is an action-oriented mindset which was succinctly stated by Dion’e, “I’m the type of person that’s all about action. I don’t like to just talk. I like to get the job done.”

For example, once Kehaulani was released from prison, she was motivated to continue her responsible behavior and stated, “I started walking my talk.” Rather than talking about
what she was going to do, she started to take actions that demonstrated her sincerity, maturity, and responsibility. She began proving to herself and her family, through actions rather than words, that she had truly changed.

I said if I can keep doing what I’m doing when I’m out there, I have one good chance of making it and that’s what I continue to do. From the day I stepped out, I started walking my talk. I didn’t tell anybody what I was gonna do. I just doing it and doing it and doing it. For 25 years, I drove without a license. The judge told me, “When you pick up your abstract, bring a wheel barrel.” I mean I had tickets like 147 charges. No license, no insurance, no weight tax, no registration, speeding. Every single ting wrong with the car I had tickets for.

So, when I came home this time I couldn’t get my license. So, what I did was somebody told me… and to this day I help and assist everybody to getting their restricted license. So, what I did was, um, I went down, found out how I could do it. I actually make payments of $25 every month and I’m almost done paying it. I had like $4K in payments and it’s down to like $700 right now.

Each of the women shared a moʻolelo (personal narrative) that was similar to Kehaulani. In the Naʻauao phase, the women, despite many obstacles that are often legal and financial, shifted from talking about the fact that they have changed and started to take actions to demonstrate their changes. In this manner, they started to become role models and mentors for other women exiting prison and family members, particularly those family members who are “caught up” in their addictions.

Many of the mothers shared that they have children struggling with addictions and substance-related criminal activity that results in incarceration. Therefore, similar to all the other mothers, since Margaret has became enlightened about her role and responsibility as a mother and social worker, she is actively supporting her children to become sober.

Eh, I get one son in prison on drugs. I get one daughter who’s just climbing the ladder. I get one son who just fell off, but eh we do what we gotta do. We continue to do what we doing, because when mommy do bad, the kids goin’ do bad. But if mommy stay on dis track and do the right ting eventually we have hope that our kids will follow too. So, I cannot fall, because I am da role model. I am da leader. I’m da backbone. So, even though you no see change and recovery happen as fast as we hope to you gotta know
you cannot stop because they goin’ follow mommy eventually yeah. So, dat’s where I’m at today.

My hope is to rehabilitate and reunite my whole family. It’s not going to be over until everybody is off of addiction. This vicious cycle is broken. The generational curse is done and I’m able to make such an impact and influence to bring all my family on board before I die. That is my goal.

Similar to all of the other women, Margaret has a deep desire to “rehabilitate” and “reunite” her family and break the generational curse that has afflicted, not only her family, but many other Hawaiians in the criminal/legal system in Hawai‘i. One of the ways that the women have learned to take their power back and break free of the “generational curse” is to seek more education. Margaret was the first woman who petitioned to be granted the opportunity to enroll in school during her work furlough program rather than only working a minimum wage job. Margaret’s academic success has both role-modelled and paved the pathway for other women to follow. If they choose to, they can enroll in school during their time in the work furlough program to “get ahead” in life.

Mōhalahala Strategy Five: Setting and Accomplishing Goals - “Getting Ahead in Life”

The fifth strategy to mōhalahala involved setting and accomplishing goals. At this point in their lives, the women have set and accomplished goals. In this phase, the women are “renewed” and “rejuvenated” and firmly believe that they matter in the world. They have accomplished their goals of living with a loving husband/boyfriend/girlfriend or on their own without oppressive partners or disruptive family members.

---

63 In the furlough program, women are required to have some income to support themselves either through employment or disability checks. However, Margaret was the first to petition to enroll in school and work during her furlough program and succeeded in her academic journey.
As the women increased their self-esteem, they no longer wanted to “settle” for a minimum wage job and all of them shared a desire to “get ahead in life” and have prosperity in their lives. As Pōmaikaʻi stated:

My biggest thing is, why we going come home and work $8 an hour, or work at McDonalds for the rest of our life when we can get educated and get a better paying job, and be able to live as normal citizens in a thriving community? There’s resources, there’s support, no matter where we go, no matter what we do, there’s somebody there to help us along the way. Just taking the opportunity and using it for the betterment of our own being.

Once she left prison, Pōmaikaʻi continued to rebuild her life and completed a BA in Sociology in May 2018. Similar to four of the other women in this study, Pōmaikaʻi felt a deep sense of accomplishment as the first in her family to ever get a college degree.

Well, first of all, I’m the first in my family to ever get a college degree. Nobody’s ever gone to college. So, that’s, you know, a plus. On top of that, making my mom very proud and then for myself, it’s a sense of accomplishment that if I can do it anybody can do it. Anybody can refrain from using mind-altering substances and um, you know, criminality to get by.

Through all of the positive changes Pōmaikaʻi has made, she has gained the insight that an individual does not need to “get high” and engage in criminal activity to “get by” in life.

Similarly, Kehaulani is also the first in her family to get a college degree and the first to graduate from the Second Chance mentoring program:

When I came out, I didn’t actually know what I was gonna do. I got connected with the Second Chance Mentorship Program. When I flew home and got off the plane, the Warden was already coming telling me, “Oh come I taking you to educational building. Get one Second Chance program.” I said, “Girl I did enough programming. I’m done with programming.” She said, “No dis one is one good one…You gotta meet with your mentor for 1 yr.” And I was like, “WHAT?”

Then I said, “You know, I’m just gonna do it. I completed all that stuff in there, let me complete something on the outside.” You know, that’ll be a start ‘cause like I said, “I do all this good stuff in prison, I come out and go right back.”... So, this time when I did all this good stuff I said, “You know what I’ll do it.” So, I met with one mentor every week for one whole year and I was the first woman on the island to ever graduate
from that program. There was a few more I tink three more girls that graduated after me. But, you know what, I was the first of men and women wen graduate the Second Chance Mentorship Program.

Receiving praise, validation, and encouragement from others, especially from their families, motivated the women to keep striving to accomplish more academically and in other areas of their lives. For example, Kehaulani expressed that her desire to enroll in and complete school was linked to people believing and positive feedback from her “sisters” and her family.

They’re so loving. All of ‘em, truly, truly… I mean when they see my accomplishments today they’re like, “Mom, I went to college and I didn’t make it. I’m so proud of you mom.” And then when the see me getting my Associate’s and now they see me getting my Bachelors [in both Sociology and Psychology], and den they see my grades. They’re like, “Mom you are so so awesome.”

Despite being told that her grades are not as important as her degree, Kehaulani’s desire to “strive for excellence” in academic achievement was a desire shared by the women:

And somebody told me, “I don’t know why you keep going for the 4.0 girl for da kine, because when you get your degree, they not goin’ look at your grades. They just going look at your degree.” And I’m like, “Oh ok. You shouldn’t have told me that, ‘cause now I’m just gonna work for the C.” But, you know, they gave me that feeling and I’m like…I still try for the A. I no care what they tell me, I still strive for the excellence for that A.

As the women build their confidence and support one another, they continue to make efforts to excel in multiple areas both personally and professionally. They have evolved into leaders in their families and communities to support other women who have exited prison. With respect to education, all but one of the women have attended college and 50% of the women are the first in their families to graduate with a college degree. Margaret, an MSW graduate from the University of Hawai‘i, achieved the highest level of education among the women in this study. Dion’e and Pōmaika‘i have BA degrees in Psychology and Sociology, respectively; Kehaulani has a double BA in Sociology and Psychology; and Amy and Nahe
have received culinary arts degrees. Lisa, Jamie and Noelani have attended some community college courses, and NoeNoe is working on completing her GED.

Seeking higher education was not the only goal that the women wanted to accomplish to be successful in life. Nahe, who received her culinary arts degree has also built a very successful catering business and enjoys caring for the elderly. After exiting prison, she noted that she worked two jobs to “get ahead” and “save money” to build her business.

I worked at his Diamond Head store. Well, to save money and get ahead, I found another job. So, I worked long stretches of the hours to gain two good paychecks to save a little and keep building.

Unfortunately, many of the women are still living paycheck to paycheck and three of the women have a desire to build their own businesses to be able to break free of poverty and financial burdens and stress. But like Nahe, they all realized that being financially independent supports their ability to ulu pono or thrive and not be in a toxic working environment or relationship.

Okay so for me, I’ve set myself up in a good financial situation…to where I don’t need to be in a toxic working environment where I hate my boss. For me, I love my boss. [smiles] I’m my own boss. So, I love my boss! I think finance is important, because um, I love a roof over my head. I love to be able to um, know that I’m okay. That I’m not living paycheck to paycheck, because I think that, you know, creates stress and um, I think it’s very hard to get out of a toxic situation when you’re um, not financially secure or not okay in your mind.

Additionally, the women did not only want to focus on their individual success. They also wanted to share their story to inspire others, particularly women exiting prison. Their message to other women is that “it’s never too late to change” and that women deserve to be accepted and successful in life. For example, in Dion’e’s video she noted that she is a miracle even though she nearly died from being assaulted during her wrongful incarceration. Margaret
and Nahe both have a desire to share their story by writing a book to inspire others. Nahe has set this goal and worked hard to have the means and time necessary to write her book.

I knew that I was okay with myself and I wanted to write a book. I’ve known about this from prison. It’s been back here [points to the back of her head]. I wanted to share my story, like in detail. So, I’ve planned and I’ve charted and saved and saved and saved and pinched my pennies and lived within my means...When my contract runs out, I’ll be able to self-sustain myself for a year if and still be able to pay my bills and still be able to actually like sit down and start something.

Finally, Lisa, who is currently working on her Associate’s Degree, wants to get her doctorate degree to advocate for men and women in prison, because she is aware that many of them do not know how to navigate the legal/criminal system. Thus, they remain incarcerated for longer than necessary. She also wants to incorporate culture in her advocacy efforts.

The next step that I plan to do is education. I plan to go back to school, and I want to go all the way. I want to get my doctorate. I do want to stay in this field that I’m in, but I want to tweak it a little bit and work with the people in prison, but more like an advocate. Not just for the incarcerated women but for the men, in terms of culture. I know that majority of everyone that is in the field, their foundation is love.

In her description of her academic goals, Lisa highlighted a key point that love is at the foundation of those who work in the helping professions. Thus, although the focus of mōhalahala or blossoming past failures is on their individual process of holomua or moving forward, much of their motivation to do so is intricately linked to uplifting others through love.

**Hoʻolana Process – Uplifting Others**

Hoʻolana is the second co-occurring and interactive process in the Naʻauao phase. As the women focus on their individual development, they simultaneously increase their motivation to serve others. All of the women noted that part of their purpose in life is to help others and, in doing so, they feel free from the controlled environment of prison and the imprisonment of their minds. During their incarceration, their lives are controlled and once the women exit prison, they are free to live their lives. Dion’e, who identified strongly with Queen
Liliʻuokalani due to the shared experience of a wrongful incarceration, shared a poem she wrote entitled, “This Life is Not for Her” (see Moʻolelo O Nā Wāhine). Similar to all of the women, Dionʻe noted that being incarcerated is very controlled and there is no freedom. Once she exited prison, she felt true freedom which she linked to the reciprocity of ʻike mai (receiving recognition) and ʻike aku (giving recognition) and aloha mai (being loved) and aloha aku (loving others) unconditionally.

Prison is controlled. You have nothing. You get a store order every two weeks. You donʻt have your freedom majority of the time, because you are being controlled. Youʻre being monitored 24/7 to, to being in the land of the free. Being free and living a normal life. I have the reciprocation of being able to survive that journey. It feels wonderful to have sisters call me and to know what I been through and where I was. Feeling down and out, feeling hateful, while they were going through their own situation. Then, to be called and be told, “Oh Sis, letʻs go have dinner tonight”. If I didnʻt have the net of girlfriends who transitioned out and made a better person of themselves who can call me and say, “Sis I love you”, or “Sis, how you doing?” or “Sis Iʻm so proud of you and I want you to recognize how many lives you touched on that journey”. And just to be appreciated. To me, it feels wonderful.

Just that alone allows me to recognize, you know, I love to sit back and know that I am loved and I am appreciated. Thatʻs something that we all search for and we all look for every single day. I mean, thatʻs what I look for. We all look forward to another blessed day… and thatʻs what keeps me going. To have the determination and wake up in the morning and say, “You know what, today Iʻm going to have a beautiful day today and Iʻm going to continue to share the love. Love unconditionally.” Whether itʻs through teaching, if itʻs having a simple conversation, if itʻs meeting up with friends, through prayer, through whatever the situation is. At least I can lay in my bed at night and know that I not only love others, but others love me and that makes me feel free. At least I can go to sleep and say like, “You know what, I did my deed today.”

Kehaulani added another layer to this strategy of uplifting the women which was anchored in healing through connecting with the women in prison. She created her own family of “sisters” that understood her more deeply than her own biological family because they have shared experiences.

And um just getting connected with some women in your own dorm that was going through the same thing and laying down two – three feet apart at night and just talking about our issues and you know… talking about it did a lot of healing. We cried
together, we laughed together. We got mad at each other. We hugged…I mean there were so many different things that we did with each other in there that I kinda feel like that some of my friends today I met along the way on my journey are like my true family, you know.”

Kehaulani valued the safe and non-judgmental interactions with her “family” of “sisters” that she could trust and know that what she shared with them will be kept confidential which is what all of the women valued about their “sisters” and she reciprocated.

I created a family that I have a special, super close bond with them. I can share deep sister kine stuff that I can’t even share with my sister dem. I have friends that I can just go and vent to and they will never repeat what I say. I feel real safe that they’re not gonna judge me. They’re not gonna tell anybody and I do the same for them too. It’s like they’re the ones who encourage me and support me and lift me up.

All of the women talked about their main purposes in life is to carry their kuleana or responsibility to get educated, love themselves, uplift their “sisters,” and serve others. For example, Lisa’s perspective about her kuleana in serving the women at the residential treatment center where she was once a client and those she serves as a volunteer at a homeless shelter summarizes the women’s perspective about sharing their mana or innate gifts given to them from their ancestors:

It boils down to getting educated, being able to practice awareness, love up on self, and let it flow out of me. Be overwhelmed by it too and let it overflow out of me. It’s important that this gift - so this blessings, all of my blessings all of my gifts that, it’s not for me. It’s not for me to keep. It’s my kuleana. It’s my responsibility to share it. To um pay it forward to give back and service is so important. Being a servant, serving others. Working in a field to embrace and uplift and love up on women and children.

In conclusion, the two strategies within to the Hoʻolana process are: 1) “Passing on the blessings” and 2) “Making a difference”.

**Hoʻolana Strategy One: Helping Others - “Passing on the Blessings”**

In the Naʻauao Phase, all of the women take actions to kokua or help others. They take what they have learned and share that knowledge with others through various activities. For
example, the women currently share their stories in the community to inform, educate, and encourage youth and other women to recognize their worth and value. In their presentations, they focus on education and share strategies on how to steer clear of addiction, prison, or relapse. They also speak to community service agencies on what is needed to help other women exiting prison, assist women with grant applications to pursue higher education, and continue to be support for their families, friends, and respective home communities. The terminology they use to describe these actions is “Passing on the Blessings” which is the first Ho’olana strategy. As Dion’e shared, “It’s just normal to me to just give and bless others and teach what I have been taught.”

Kehaulani offered examples of “passing on the blessings” she learned from being in the Second Chance Mentorship Program to help women pursue higher education in a step-by-step manner.

I pass on all the blessings, you know that I have gotten. I try to share it and tell everybody. It’s hard work, you know, the grants but it’s worth it, you know. I encourage everybody to go back to school today. I wen help a lot of women get all the grants. I went and sat down with them from the application stage, to the grant, ‘til they got it, to going back to school. I got one ready for give up. She’s like, “I can’t do it.” I said, “Yes you can.” She said, “No the math is too hard. It’s driving me crazy.” So, I go to her house and help her and I just encourage her …and she’s ready to graduate soon too. She’s not getting the straight A 4.0 like I did through my academic journey. But, she’s making it, you know.

A related aspect to “Passing on the Blessings” is the empathy developed by the women as they encourage other women. With an awakened mind, they are able to withhold judgement and truly support others in improving their lives. For example, when Kehaulani and Pōmaika‘i exited prison, they were encouraged by a warden who told them, “You know what, why you guys no go start this group, women supporting women, and go out and help these women instead of being one of da women?” So, they started a Women Supporting Women group
which allows the women to connect with one another twice a month.\(^{64}\)

We built our own group when I came out. It’s called, “Women Supporting Women.” My sister Pōmaikaʻi and I were the first ones to start it on the Big Island. And that group keeps me going too because I see women fall short and I caught myself maybe about 6 months ago, I’m like, “What. They’re all getting into relationships. What are they thinking? They’re not getting connected that’s why. They should go back to school.” And I tell myself, “Here I am going and judging them.” I took so long. In and out and not getting ‘em, you know and now I see these girls and I’m like, “Awe that’s just where they’re at. That’s just what they’re going through.” I cannot force anybody to come to our da kine and tell ‘em – “Look if you come to our group. We’re all staying clean.” I cannot force anybody. I can just encourage them.

Finally, the “open door” policy of the groups creates opportunities for the women to reconnect with other women even after they relapse.

At one point we’re like, “Well a bunch of the girls relapsed. Their back on drugs. Do we invite them back?” And the answer’s always gonna be yes…Let them come and they’re gonna see that all of the women still doing good and maybe that’ll get [them to realize], “Whoa the women still doing good and you know what, I relapsed and I don’t wanna stay in that relapse mode. I wanna get back connected with these women.” And it does bring some of them back. (Kehaulani, December 16, 2016)

The women in this study self-identified themselves as “extremists” during their addictions and once they became clean and sober, they always tried to “strive for excellence” and whatever they have learned they passed along to others. As Pōmaikaʻi shared:

I was like the best at weed whacking, the best on the chainsaw, the chosen one, you know, the imu [underground oven] master [in prison]. I just was striving for excellence, you know, trying to be on my game. Like I said I’m an extremist. I like to be the best that I can be and nobody can take that away. But I was able to share. What I learned, I was able to pass down.

Finally, Margaret, who learned about the overrepresentation of indigenous women in incarceration, often for non-violent substance-related crimes, expressed desires to expand her learning beyond the Hawaiʻi shoreline and stated, “I wanna travel the world. I wanna work in micro, mezzo, and macro settings. I wanna be able to take what I’ve learned and take it

---

\(^{64}\) This type of women’s group is known by slightly different names, but also exists on Maui and Oʻahu. However, there is variability on the level of activity within the groups.
everywhere. Not just fix Hawai‘i.” Thus, in the Na‘auao phase, the women focused on being part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

In sum, although there were many examples of “Passing on the Blessings” as the first Ho‘omana strategy, the few key examples highlighted in this section demonstrate the interconnectedness between individual excellence and collective transformation and vice versa. Yet, uplifting others involved more than kokua or helping others. A deeper level of impact occurred through offering aloha or loving others and ‘ike or recognizing others.

**Ho‘olana Strategy Two: Loving and Recognizing Others - “Making a Difference”**

Every women in this study shared a desire to positively impact and uplift the lives of others, particularly formerly incarcerated women, through aloha aku or giving love freely and aloha mai or receiving love in return. The women’s terminology for this second Ho‘olana strategy is “making a difference.” Loving someone else who was struggling and feeling unloved assisted the women to come to terms with the turbulent lives they lived and “stay on track.” Even though Dion‘e’s pathway to prison was different from the other women, she shared similar experiences of trauma with the other women as the result of her own sexual trauma during childhood and her trauma while in prison.

Similar to all of the women, Dion‘e identifies as a survivor who has evolved into a thriver. Having the “right people” such as mentors in her life to guide, love, and support her, a strong spiritual and cultural foundation, and blessed with many musical talents, gave her the strength to “give back” to her community and uplift others through love. The following excerpt offers her perspectives on “making a difference”:

Even though the experience is different, the feelings and emotions are still the same. Uh....[pause] so what took me from then, you know, I’m going to be honest, is fellowship, having the right people in my life, prayer, music, chanting, dance, being able to give back to my community. Making a difference in people’s lives who have
suffered or who have experienced similar situations as me. And even if the situation is different, being able to have compassion and to extend that love and hope and give people hope. My hope and dream is to give hope. To give hope to people who are broken. To give love to people who don’t feel love. You know who aren’t told that they are loved. To love the unlovable. To let them know that there is light. And today, what I truly know is that I am a walking miracle.

Through extending love and hope to others, Dion’e, like all the other women, shifted from despair to hope for herself. Thus, “making a difference” involved a spiritually grounded reciprocal relationship factor of aloha aku (sending love) and aloha mai (receiving love) which strengthened their ability to cope with life in healthy and loving ways.

Noelani shared a collection of original songs and poems that she had written. One of her poems was entitled, Before I Go Home (see Moʻolelo O Nā Wāhine) that was deeply touching and heartfelt. Noelani’s reason for writing the poem was linked to her sincere desire to “make a positive impact” in someone’s life and know that her life mattered, particularly since she is currently facing a life threatening illness.

If it [Before I Go Home] can make a difference in someone else’s life whether it be a woman in prison or whose out in transition or whose out just in life living you know that is in their addiction or not in their addiction and this gets heard or read by somebody that needed to hear that and it made a positive impact on their own life or their way of thinking. “Oh wow if this person can do it, I can do it too or I can change. Or maybe I can be like that too.” Because of my physical status and before I die and go home, I wanna know that, I want it heard and want it to be shared so that before I die and go home, I know I did say something and made a difference in somebody’s life.

In addition, Noelani also donated clothes for women. She also posted daily devotions and what she learned through the word of God on Facebook, which is a communication tool used by all of the women to remain connected with one another after they exit prison.

I haven’t gone on facebook many times because of what I’m going through. [But] in the beginning, I would share, you know, like I would read my daily devotions and my word of God, you know, and I would say what’s happening with me in that. What I read, you know, and I would get comments and people that I do know have responded and said, “You know [Noelani], I needed to hear that today. It helped me.”
Receiving positive feedback from other women through Facebook made a positive difference for all of the women, because the aloha or love they send out freely without expecting anything in return is returned to them.

Another way that Noelani communicated her message of love and hope was through presenting to women at the YWCA transitional housing program. Noelani genuinely wanted to encourage the women to “change their beliefs” and work on their self-esteem. She wanted them to know that they are not what they may have been programmed to believe from their parents and to reclaim their worthiness.

I was invited to go and talk with the women there and you know tell them about my incarceration, my life style, whateva, my change, and wanting to make a difference. That’s why I’m here. I’m sharing my stuff in hope that it will touch you or you will get something from it and you can use it to help you in your own life in transitioning out of here to independent living and to live successful lives you know. As to um your belief that, “Oh nobody’s gonna hire me because I’m an ex con.” And that’s not true you know. That’s in here [Noelani points to her head] you know and in your belief that you need to change your beliefs you know.

You gotta work on your self-esteem and you gotta say, “I am worthy of having a job.” Or “I can make it. I can go to school and become you know a substance abuse counselor. I can make a difference in somebody else’s life. I am not who I used to be or who my father said I was or my mother said I was you know.” Yeah. And use that to motivate you to motivate your own self to go forward to press on you know. There’s gonna be obstacles, I’ve had so many obstacles through these transitions you know to independent living. It was not easy you know…I have that heart that I want to make a difference in other people’s lives.

Similar to Noelani, all the women expressed having so much love to share. Now that they were reawakened and awakened, they wanted to share their love. The women wanted to send the message that no matter what they have done in life, they are still worthy of love. Nahe statement, “I just wanted to make a difference, in my life, in other’s lives” also highlights the reciprocal nature of “making a difference”. Moreover, Pōmaika'i notes the positive impact on her when the Women Supporting Women can “save” a woman from backsliding into their
addiction. Her excerpt is a good example of interconnectedness of the fourth Mōhalahala strategy of Leading by Example and the second Hoʻolana strategy of “Making a Difference.” Through sharing with the women how much she has changed from who she was before, she also gives other women hope that they can change their lives too.

Cause even if we can save or help one woman, then that makes all the difference you know. If we can save just that one person. We might not be able to save them all, but there’s women who used to see me how I used to be before and then they see me today and if I can do it, they can do it too.

Finally, Lisa’s example of sharing the Hawaiian translation of the word intimacy as aloha or love with the women at her job added greater depth to what it means to truly share aloha with someone. From her Kānaka Maoli perspective, to allow for “intimacy” to occur between oneself and/or two or more individuals is to be open to being vulnerable and to give aloha if you want to receive aloha. Furthermore, it is important to trust and have faith that when the aloha is given freely it will be received and hopefully returned to the person who sent the aloha with the same openness. In this manner, vulnerability is a strength rather than a weakness that the women realize when the women enter an enlightened state of consciousness.

Our Hawaiian word for the day was, "Aloha - Love", and that was to do with intimacy. What I shared with the girls this morning was that after pulling up intimacy, there is no meaning but what came closest was love and aloha. Basically, intimacy, break that down into-me-see, and what I want from you, I gotta give you what I want first. I gotta give love and open myself up to be vulnerable to lay everything down and be ok with it. Just because it’s gonna be okay.

In sum, all of the women’s moʻolelo or stories emphasize the fact that sharing love and light restores hope to both the giver and receiver of love, help/support, and recognition. As Lisa shared, “Whenever it’s to make a difference, [long pause] it’s a beautiful thing.”
Naʻauao Summary

During the Naʻauao (enlightened) phase of the women’s lives, the women are working toward being a kanaka mākua (mature adults), naʻau pono (striving to achieve mental and emotional balance and maturity), and hana pono (striving to live a purposeful life). The women indicated that they were level-headed, even-tempered, and kind-hearted and extended their graciousness and hospitality to others. Even though transformation is an ongoing journey, they have grown and healed to a large extent from their hala (transgressions) and ʻeha (physical and emotional pain). The women expanded their understanding of themselves and know who they are.

Within the Naʻauao phase, the women engage in two co-occurring and interactive processes that influence each other: Mōhalahala (Blossoming Past Failures) and Hoʻolana (Uplifting Others). Each processes included overlapping strategies at the individual and collective level, respectively.

Mōhalahala Process - Blossoming Past Failures (Individual)

5 strategies:
1. Gaining Wisdom “Making Sense of My Life”
2. Maintaining Inspired Alignment “Staying on Track”
3. Overcoming Fears “Stepping Out of My Comfort Zone”
4. Leading By Example “Walking My Talk”
5. Setting and Accomplishing Goals “Getting Ahead in Life”

Hoʻolana Process – Uplifting Others (Collective)

2 strategies:
1. Helping Others “Passing on the Blessings”
2. Loving and Recognizing Others “Making a Difference”

The Mōhalahala process is the first of the two Naʻauao processes in which the women practice self-love and self-care and focus on furthering their individual development and transformation. Five strategies overlap with one another that are enacted during this process.
First, although the women gained some wisdom, they continue gaining wisdom or “making sense of their lives.” Second, they are committed to maintaining their inspired alignment or “staying on track” which involves connection to a higher power, structure and routines to ensure their sobriety (for nine of the 10 women) and overall well-being. With sufficient support and stabilizing resources, they begin to take risks and broaden their horizons. Thus, the third strategy involves women overcoming their fears or “stepping out of their comfort zones” and starting to break through the darkness of their lives. Being grounded, the women willingly open themselves up to new experiences and established a new pathway for themselves; a pathway where they feel loved and can stand fearlessly in the light and bring love to others.

Fourth, for eight of the 10 women who are role models, the women are leading by example or “walking their talk.” They are no longer ashamed of who they are. The women believe that they matter and can cope with the challenges of life. Fifth, the women begin setting and accomplishing goals for themselves that may involve: reuniting with family (if they have not done so yet); seeking higher education; working multiple jobs; building thriving businesses; and possibly writing books, music, and/or filming videos to share their moʻolelo. Overall, they have individually evolved and “blossomed past failures”. Metaphorically, the women manamana or branch out and mōhala or open up like a flower bud that is blossoming into a fully bloomed flower.

The Hoʻolana (Uplifting Others) process is the second co-occuring and interactive process in which the women practice caring for others and focus on collective development and transformation. There are two strategies that are enacted during this process. First, the women “pass on the blessings” by using what they have learned from multiple sources to help teach, guide, and role model for others, namely their “sisters” and family members. Second,
they focus on “making a difference” in the lives of others, with a specific focus on loving and recognizing others. As women mōhalahala (blossom past failures) and strive for individual excellence, the collective is transformed. As women hoʻolana (uplift others) and strive for collective excellence, they are individually transformed.
CHAPTER 9: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PTG AND HEALING

“Early Hawaiians believed that the [Hapuʻu] fern was its [ʻohiʻa lehua] parent.”
(Degener, 1946, p. 232)

This chapter focuses on the second research question for this dissertation which asks the question: What factors influence the PTG and healing process for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors? In order to articulate what I have discovered through this dissertation, I return to the ʻōhiʻa lehua tree as a metaphor. In addition to growing from a seedling underground into a mature tree, the ʻōhiʻa lehua seedling can also grow is a hapuʻu fern in a well established mature Hawaiian rainforest.65 I have chosen the hapuʻu fern to highlight in describing the factors that influence PTG and healing, because one of the most significant factors that stood out throughout the findings regardless of what phase the women were in was whether or not they felt loved and accepted for who they are by someone in their lives who functioned as an empathetic support.

For example, Dionʻe, Pomaikaʻi and Lisa had strong, loving, supportive mothers during their childhood who stood by them throughout their lives which gave them the strength to overcome many obstacles in life. Nahe, Amy, and Kehaulani had loving fathers who cared for them during their upbringing. Noelani had a loving grandmother until the age of 14 years old who loving raised and protected her until she passed away when Noelani was 14 years old.

The term hāpuʻu means “budding” and figuratively, child or baby. It is comprised of two words: hā (breath of life) and puʻu (any kind of pertuberance, as in a hill or heap). It can also mean “pregnant” and the tree ferns in a more mature wetland forest “frequently have

65 Known as the Hawaiian tree fern. It is an endemic plant that is commonly found in many rainforests in Hawaiʻi. It is a slow growing plant 10 – 20 ft tall and has a 15-foot trunk. (CTHR, 2003).
ʻōhiʻa lehua seedlings growing in their trunks, even at a height of twenty or more feet” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 368; Degener, 1946, p. 232).

The fruit of the ʻōhiʻa lehua tree is a capsule filled with tiny seeds that fall on the hapuʻu fern. As the seedlings grow in size, the roots partially enwrap the tree fern as they seek to reach the ground. The fern eventually decays and the ʻōhiʻa lehua tree remains on stilt roots in its place (epiphytic growth). Because of this growth pattern, the hapuʻu fern functions as a “nursery” for the ʻōhiʻa lehua seedlings (Krauss, 2001, p. 105). With this metaphor in mind, one of the primary facilitative factors for an ʻōhiʻa lehua tree to grow include having strong foundation to grow upon such as the hapuʻu fern.

In this study, the hapuʻu fern represents the role models and mentors that help the women to grow and heal from trauma. For eight of the women, the hapuʻu ferns include parents or grandparents in the family. However, Margeret’s hapuʻu fern came much later in life from compassionate Adult Correction Officers (ACOs) and Warden Patterson while she was in prison. For Noelani, NoeNoe, and Jamie who did not have strong role models during their childhood, they all found models through their spiritual foundation of having God to turn to for Noelani and NoeNoe or Pele for Jamie. Additionally, the women were also supported by their peers or role models in the community such as Kehaulani being mentored in the Second Chance mentoring program or Dionʻe being supported by the Women’s Board of Commissions.

Thus, the women who had loving parents or caregivers, typically their mothers, sisters, grandmothers, and in a few instances, fathers, felt nurtured and loved by them and viewed them as positive role models and mentors. These family members and caregivers instilled values and taught them what was pono (appropriate and acceptable) vs. pono ʻole
(inappropriate and unacceptable). Furthermore, having role models and mentors outside of their families, such as compassionate ACOs, wardens, and teachers that believed in them and provided nurturing education, instilled values, and supported them with stabilizing resources, further increased their motivation to transform their lives. Knowing that someone truly cares for them helps them heal their spirits and inspires them to grow into inspired alignment and empower themselves.

However, the term puʻu also has many figurative meanings, including: “obstacle, burden, discomfort, trouble, sorrow” (Pukui et. al., 1986, p. 358). A related phrase is “puʻu ka nuku or protruding the lips, as in anger” and hoʻopuʻu means to “heap up or build resentments” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 368). Thus, for the women who had parents that were critical such as Margaret, Jamie, and Noelani, or one parent who was not loving and supportive and/or neglectful such as Margaret, Amy, and Pomaikaʻi or ACOs that treated them harshly such as Dionʻe when she was wrongfully incarcerated or Margaret and Noelani during their incarceration, they acted out of anger, rage and rebellion to mask their hurt, pain, and fear. In these instances, some of their metaphorical hapuʻu ferns caused an obstacle, burden, discomfort, trouble, and often deep sorrow during the Naʻaupō phase of their lives and they were not able to heal or grow. Like an ʻōhiʻa lehua plant in a plant that becomes root bound, they were emotionally entangled and were unable to set themselves free from the repeated traumas they experienced.

However, at some point in their lives, all of the women were able to feel loved and forgiven by a higher power, and developed a desire to love and forgive themselves as well as love and forgive others. As they received praise and recognition, they strengthened their desire to praise and recognize others. Finally, the love they receive and send to others restores and
revitalizes the women and gives them hope and a will to live. Over time and with proper nourishment, the plant reaches for light and gradually develops into a strong tree.

During the Huliau phase of their lives, they began to work on themselves (e.g. participated in programs, became sober, received treatment, sought higher education). As the women reconnected to their families and culture, and drew strength, safety, and power from a meaningful spiritual belief system, they forgave, released, and freed themselves from emotional bondage and negative entanglements. This is similar to removing tangled roots from an ʻōhiʻa plant that has become root bound. All of the women broadened their social support network developed multiple, loving support networks that may have started in prison and has continued since their exit from prison.

During the Naʻauao phase of their lives, they found a safe, structured, and supportive environment where they could thrive. They rid themselves of the disease of addiction and trauma, moved out of despair and started living their lives in a kūpono manner or with integrity and continue to work toward being kanaka makua (mature adults). They restore hope to themselves and others through a spiritually grounded commitment to improving their lives and making a positive difference in other people’s lives such as Pomaikaʻi and Kehaulani who are part of a Women Supporting Women group to help other women exiting prison. Eight of the 10 women have found their metaphorical hapuʻu ferms to grow and thrive in and fully empowered themselves and spend most of their time in the Naʻauao phase. The remaining two women experienced ongoing challenges with few supports or protective factors in place to help them overcome them.
In close review of the women’s pathways to PTG and healing, I have compiled a chart that summarize the various facilitative factors and inhibitive factors that either supported or hindered their growth and healing (see Figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1  Factors that Influence PTG and healing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inhibiting Factors</th>
<th>Facilitative Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being criticized and judged by others*</td>
<td>Receiving praise and validation*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Entanglements from unresolved trauma*</td>
<td>Emotional freedom through resolving trauma*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection time &amp; treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying grudges and resentments*</td>
<td>Practicing Forgiveness &amp; Acceptance*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being &quot;controlled&quot; by toxic relationships*</td>
<td>Breaking free of toxic relationships*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(self, others, and substances)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited and unhealthy support networks*</td>
<td>Multiple, trustworthy support network*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having a clear life purpose</td>
<td>Living a forgiven and purposeful life*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having a meaningful spiritual belief system</td>
<td>Meaningful spiritual belief system*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disconnection from culture</td>
<td>Cultural Reclamation and Identity*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Experienced by all women

Given that this dissertation was an exploratory study, this is not an exhaustive list of influential factors and not all of the factors were experienced by all of the women. For example, Dion‘e had a clear purpose throughout her life and Nahe, Dion‘e and Lisa had a strong spiritual belief system throughout their lives. Finally, Dion‘e, Lisa, and Jamie were strongly aligned with their cultural identity. However, the factors listed here shed some light on what inhibits and what facilitates PTG and healing for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have experienced incarceration.
CHAPTER 10: PANINA MANAʻO: CONCLUSION

Lawe i ka maʻalea a kuʻonoʻono.
Take wisdom and make it deep.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 211)

The aim of this dissertation was to identify the pathways and processes to achieve Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) and Healing for 10 formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian women in Hawaiʻi and to identify factors that positively contributed to the growth and healing of these women. This conclusion briefly summarizes the methodology used to conduct this study, PTG as a field of study and reflections on a Hawaiian conceptualization of PTG and healing. It also articulates main insights of this study including the ways in which the findings align with the literature and what may be unique contributions to the literature on PTG and Healing for this understudied population. Finally, study limitations, implications for practice, future research considerations, and final reflections are included.

The above ʻōlelo noʻeau emphasizes the importance of studying hard to acquire skills and knowledge and then practicing what one has learned to deepen one’s knowledge. As a Kānaka Maoli scholar/researcher and a trauma survivor/thriving, this Hawaiian proverb reminds me that in order to become “good” at something requires a direct and personal connection to the knowledge learned. Equally important is to apply what one has learned until it becomes second nature or a part of oneself. Thus, throughout this dissertation I have intellectually internalized the learning and applied this knowledge and understanding of healing and PTG to the women’s moʻolelo as well as my own life. In studying their pathways and processes to personal transformation on this doctoral journey, I have also experienced a personal transformation. Thus, as I reflect back on this process, I conclude that research for an insider
researcher, who shares at least three social identities with the women (Kānaka Maoli, female, trauma survivor/thriver), is a journey toward personal transformation.

Methodologically, constructivist grounded theory and Nohona Hawaiʻi, a complimentary indigenous methodology that emphasized Hawaiian epistemology and ontology were employed to identify the pathways and factors related to the pathways of PTG and healing for these women. The Nohona Hawaiʻi methodology involved inclusion of the Hawaiian epistemology, ontology, and language to best understand the depth of the women’s moʻolelo or stories and to bring forth Kānaka Maoli perspectives and language in academic research. Furthermore, a guiding principle of this research endeavor was to honor the women’s voices. This was done through the use of their terminology alongside the themes to describe the various processes that emerged from their moʻolelo to explain what occurred within their pathways to healing and PTG in their own words.

Finally, two key points contextualize the conclusion of this study. First, although all the women in this study have been incarcerated anywhere between six months to 18 years and successfully exited prison between two and 12 years, I chose to move beyond viewing them as “prisoners” and “ex-offenders”, because those labels provide a very limited and stigmatizing viewpoint of these amazing women. Despite the extensive and chronic trauma they experienced throughout their lives, they are much more than “victims” from the traumas they have experienced or “villains” for the crimes they have committed. Instead, they are identified as “female trauma survivors” as a result of the intense hardships and repeated, chronic trauma they have experienced over the course of their lives. Additionally, they are identified as “thrivers” (from middle to late adulthood) to recognize their evolution from experiencing life as “victims” to “survivors” to “thrivers” over the course of their lives (Omilian, 2016).
Second, recommendations for practice were developed from the data collected, the women’s wisdom (conceptualized as lessons learned from lived experiences), and literature on gender-responsive treatment for incarcerated women. Observations made through my work on behalf of and alongside the incarcerated women who have successfully re-entered the community were also considered in forming recommendations.

**PTG Overview**

Emergent literature on pathways to PTG among prisoners identify pathways that begin once an individual is incarcerated and ends when they exit prison (van Ginneken, 2016; Vanhooren, Leijssen, Dezutter, & Leuven, 2017). For example, a recent study conducted by Vanhooren et al. (2017) on PTG for incarcerated individuals involved 5 sequential themes that align with this study: 1) *Feelings of dehumanization and disconnection* when they entered prison; 2) *Guilt, despair and loss of meaning* while in prison due to a loss of identity and self-worth; 3) *Coping with despair and loss of meaning* which was linked to accessing social and emotional supports and taking responsibility for their choices; 4) *Positive Change* which included gaining insight into their personal story, higher levels of self-worth, new strengths such as hardiness, a desire to “make a difference” in the lives of others, and greater openness to experience and subsequently meaning in life; and 5) *Remaining pains and anxiety about the future* due to shame of being imprisoned, being disconnected from their families, and anxiety about how to rebuild their lives once they are released. Interestingly, although not all studies on PTG include participants who are currently receiving mental health services, the female inmates were also receiving treatment while incarcerated in a Belgium prison which helped them to address their feelings of dehumanization, disconnection, guilt, despair, and loss of meaning.
Thus, it is possible that as a result of processing their feelings during their therapy sessions while in prison, they also developed positive coping strategies and made other positive changes, including relational changes along their pathway to PTG. This would imply that the pathway to PTG was not solely reliant upon deep contemplation independent of the influence of therapy. However, very little is known about the pathways to posttraumatic growth and healing across the life span, including before, during, and after incarceration for Native Hawaiian women. Therefore, an exploratory study on PTG and healing with Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors has yielded some valuable information on how the 10 women who were interviewed expressed their growth and healing pathways across the life span.

**Reflections on a Hawaiian Conceptualization of Pathways to PTG and Healing**

The findings were conceptualized and framed from a Hawaiian ontological and epistemological worldview. Initially, I conceptualized the women’s pathway to PTG and Healing as a pathway from disempowerment to empowerment, based on what I knew from the Western literature on helping abused women to heal and empower themselves and a pilot study I conducted on PTG prior to my dissertation. However, in consultation with other Kānaka Maoli, including Hi‘ilani Shibata (fluent Hawaiian language speaker) on what Hawaiian terms best captured what I was describing that was emerging from the women’s mo‘olelo, we discovered that for Hawaiians the term for empowerment was ho‘omana which is also the term for spirituality. But there was no term for disempowerment in the Hawaiian language, because Hawaiians believe that all things have mana or divine power. Therefore, I chose to examine their pathway from a perspective of shifts in consciousness. Hō‘ala Hou O Nā Wāhine Maoli - a Hawaiian Framework for understanding the Reawakening of Women is a conceptual
framework that emerged from this grounded theory study and has been articulated in this dissertation.

Wisdom or enlightenment is the “summit” or ultimate outcome of PTG. Therefore, I organized the women’s stories into three phases of conscious reawakening and awakening based on the concept of na‘au (Hawaiian seat of intellect): Na‘aupō (“night” mind), Huliau (time of transformative reawakening and awakening), and Na‘auao (“daylight” mind). Although the women were resilient and engaged in various strategies to cope with their trauma, most of them did not process their trauma for most of their early childhood through early to late adulthood. Repeatedly, the women articulated being in the “dark” and not being able to make sense of what was happening in their lives. From a Hawaiian perspective, this can be viewed as the visceral mind or the na‘au has not “awakened” to its full potential. The transformative process of reawakening and awakening was considered a Huliau or time of change and a recollection of the past from a Hawaiian worldview. Eventually, they gained wisdom and enlightenment, which is na‘auao or a “daylight” mind.

Subsequently, I re-analyzed the data to see if there were certain timeframes that aligned with the three phases and there were some general patterns, but the timelines overlapped. For example, most of the women moved between the Na‘aupō phase and Huliau phase in their 20s to 30s. But, the shift was not sustainable until they were prepared to make the changes in the Huliau around 30+ years. The Hawaiian terms to prepare for those positive changes is Ho‘omakaukau Huliau which involved three interactive turning points or motivations for change (i‘ini hulihia – desire for change, ‘ōlelo ho‘ohiki – conscious commitment ensures accountability, and ho‘omana -being spirit-led versus ego-driven).
Spiritual development has been highlighted as both a process and an outcome in the PTG literature for both the general population (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004) and among incarcerated individuals (van Ginneken, 2014/2016; Vanhooren et al., 2017;) and a desire for change or to live a meaningful life has been noted in the PTG literature for incarcerated individuals (Feritto et al., 2012; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; and Vanhooren et al., 2017).

Losing identity and meaning in life followed by a subsequent search for meaning, that includes a search for new purposes in life, a deeper comprehension of their crime, and their life story, is identified by several scholars as a central role in prisoners making changes (Maruna et al., 2006; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012; Feritto et al., 2012). Moreover, reconstructing a person’s understanding of “who one is and what or who to live for” (Vanhooren et al., 2017, p. 3) marks a major turning point in their lives that is triggered by committing a crime and subsequent incarceration. Within the general population, PTG is marked as growth in a change in perception of self, deeper appreciation of relationships, and a changed philosophy in life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). However, with offenders, there is an added layer of PTG in which they take responsibility toward their victims and the consequences of their crime (Elisha et al., 2013; Ferrito et al., 2012; Mapham & Hefferon, 2012).

What is unique among the women in this study is the concept of ‘ōlelo ho‘ohiki or making commitments. Taking responsibility for their actions and the subsequent consequences was linked to making commitments that ensured that the women held themselves accountable for the harm that they have caused. Although taking responsibility for one’s actions is found in the PTG literature, identifying that commitment ensures accountability is an addition to the literature on PTG for Native Hawaiian incarcerated women. This notion is grounded in a deeply imbedded Hawaiian belief that was reawakened in these women whereby they were
compelled to “keep their word” lest the women displease their ‘aumakua (spiritual guardian) or feel the “hand of God” coming down upon them (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 86).66

Additionally, because of the chronic nature of trauma that occurs over the course of these women’s lives that often leads to substance addiction and engagement in toxic relationships, PTG and healing is not based on a singular seismic trauma as most of the PTG literature has researched as well as the pathways to PTG for incarcerated individuals is linear. The findings in this study suggest that the pathways to PTG and healing across the life span are non-linear and involve three distinct, yet overlapping phases in a cyclical growth pattern and gradual ascension in consciousness for the women which is a new addition to the PTG literature.

This cyclical pattern of growth is supported in both the addiction literature and literature on female offenders which asserts that female offenders often relapse, struggle with posttraumatic stress, addiction problems, and poor self-esteem (Kessler, Sonnega, Broment, Hughes, & Nelson, 1995; Zlotnick, Najavits, Rohsenow, & Johnson, 2003). For example, nine of the 10 women were addicted to substances and in unhealthy relationships and, as a result, they often huli ho‘i or backslided and “relapsed” or returned to using substances and toxic relationships even after they entered the Huliau phase. Steven Brown’s (2013) work on addiction recovery highlights an upward/downward spiral of addiction that closely aligned with the themes in the Na’aupō phase.

The study also revealed that in these women’s lives, the descending spiral they experienced was inclusive of the four stages identified by Brown (2013): feelings of isolation,  

---

66 A hua ‘ōlelo is the Hawaiian term for both a broken promise or a vindictive, malicious statement that results in negative consequences, namely mental agony and unhappiness. Thus, for Hawaiians, fear of punishment in some form and a desire to honor their ‘aumakua keeps them from making a hua ‘ōlelo. (Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972a, p. 86)
acts of self-indulgence, feelings of shame, self-hatred, and acts of concealment. The women in this study grew up yearning for love, acceptance and support and often felt isolated which led to attention-seeking and reckless behaviors. Because of their abuse histories and addictions to drugs and alcohol, the women lived in shame, silence and secrecy which aligns with Brown’s (2013) work as well as Alder’s (2014) model of how women manage their drug networks, particularly with respect to concealing their addictions and pregnancies (for the mothers).

On the path to recovery, this study also illustrated an ascending spiral that is inclusive of the four stages articulated by Brown (2013): feelings of connection (with others and self); acts of service and growth; feelings of love and self-worth, and acts of self-disclosure. A large component of their healing during the Huliau phase involved acts of self-disclosure in expressing the women’s trauma and releasing the feelings associated with their pain and connecting to others. Through feeling loved and reclaiming their culture, they strengthened their cultural identity and self-worth. Within the Huliau and Naʻauao phases they engaged in acts of service and continued to grow. Thus, Brown’s (2013) ascending spiral aligns with the findings in this study as the women make shifts in the Huliau and Naʻauao phases.

The three phases were not necessarily aligned with before, during, or after incarceration, but rather each phase was marked by time frames within the women’s individual lives. Within each phase along the pathway, there were stages and/or processes that the women experienced. Finally, the women articulated strategies they used within the processes identified Huliau and Naʻauao phases that helped them to heal and grow. From the women’s moʻolelo or stories, many insights were gained.

Main Insights of This Study

This study examined both pathways and processes of PTG and healing for Native
Hawaiian female trauma survivors within three phases. The following section summarizes the main insights within each phase and how the findings within each phase aligned, differed, and/or added to the available literature on pathways to crime, addiction, PTG and healing among Native Hawaiian incarcerated individuals, particularly women.

Naʻaupō Phase (“Night” mind)

Given the extensive work that has been completed by feminist criminologists on the women’s pathways to crime, most of the findings for this phase were aligned with this body of literature. The basic premise founded in research and literature on women’s pathways to crime is that gender matters (Chesney-Lind, 2000; Covington & Bloom, 2003; Daly, 1998) and that was found to be true in this study. The struggle to survive during the Naʻaupō phase of their lives because of structural oppression and gender-based victimization placed the women in this study at greater risk to engage in criminal behavior. This is well supported in the literature on female offenders at the national level (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Daly, 2002; Pasko & Chesney-Lind, 2013; Davis, 2009). In addition to national data, findings from this study further confirmed other studies conducted in Hawaiʻi that highlight that women were more likely to become incarcerated due to dysfunctional families, child maltreatment, interpersonal violence, and substance abuse, (Alder, 2014; Brown 2003, 2006; Chesney-Lind, 2000; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Patterson, Bissen & Uchigachiuchi, 2013; Yuen, Hu, & Engel, 2005,).

Perhaps, even more importantly and relevant for the women in this study were the concerns of issues related to race, class, and gender. Coupled with child maltreatment and abandonment, women in this study were more likely to become offenders. A phenomenon that is well supported in the literature on incarcerated women both in Hawaiʻi and among other incarcerated women (Chesney-Lind, 2000; Covington & Bloom, 2003; Maeve, 2000; Windom,
2000). For example, many of the women grew up in poverty and were undereducated. As a result, they dealt drugs to help reduce the financial burdens on their single mothers and during times of their own single motherhood to take care of their children after leaving a violent relationship. Covington and Bloom (2003) and others (Chesney-Lind, 2003; Adler; 2014; Windom, 2000) note that the lives of women are negatively shaped by economic disadvantages, histories with substance abuse and trauma, and disrupted relationships with partners, children, and family.

Furthermore, the theme of “escaping pain and poverty” from the Na’aupō phase aligns with Covington and Bloom’s (2006) work on the development of gender-responsive treatment that emphasizes the importance of knowing what the unique needs are for women coming into treatment, including knowledge of their demographics and history of offending. Specifically, female offenders are typically poor, undereducated, and have few employable skills and there is a disproportionate number of them that are women of color (Covington & Bloom, 2006). They are often from impoverished urban environments, raised by single mothers and are more likely than men to have committed crimes in order fund their addiction such as prostitution and/or engage in property crimes (Covington & Bloom, 2006).

From a Hawaiian perspective, all of these experiences are conceptualized as hala, ‘eha, and hihi (trauma/emotional bondage, pain, and entanglements) which occurred from approximately three to 60+ years among the women. Because of the trauma the women experienced, they also experienced physical and emotional pain, including emotional bondage and subsequent entanglements in relationships with family and their relational networks. As a result of their extensive lifetime of abuse histories, nine of the 10 women in this study suffered from unaddressed mental health problems which led to substance use and dependency. Mental
health problems such as major depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and substance use/dependence is well documented in the literature on incarcerated women (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2004; Kessler et al., 1995; Lewis, 2006; Zlotnick et al., 2003). Thus, most of the findings in this section were aligned with the pathways to crime literature generated by feminist criminologists.

**Carrying Resentments from Unresolved Trauma Hinders Healing and PTG**

A more nuanced finding in this study are the multiple resentments that developed and remained within the minds and hearts of the women as they experienced repeated and chronic trauma, loss, and violence. This provided insight into the cyclical nature of the PTG growth pattern found in this study and adds to the pathways to crime and existing PTG literature. By the time the women reached early adolescence until middle/late adulthood, they were already entering the second stage of the Naʻaupō phase which is described as a state of consciousness that is characterized by hoʻomauhala (carrying resentments, anger, and holding grudges) and hoʻohalahala (blaming/ criticizing others). Thus, to varying degrees they were living in a state of despair.

Viewing PTG through a Hawaiian epistemological and ontological worldview and using the Hawaiian language provided clarity in how the three phases linked together in representing the overall collective moʻolelo or story of the women. The Hawaiian term hala or trauma/ emotional bondage was at the core of key terms used to describe the main aspects of the Naʻaupō and Naʻauao phases. As their trauma was unaddressed until their 30’s or later, there was a cumulative effect of the resentments and entanglements in the Naʻaupō phase that escalated both the women’s substance addictions and criminal activity for nine of the 10 women which led to an interactive influence of being controlled by “toxic” relationships and
losing the will to live for all of the women at multiple points on their pathway to enlightenment. In reflecting on their moʻolelo, it seemed that the more they felt controlled by toxic relationships, they less they valued their lives. As a result, they engaged more reckless behavior in their attempt to regain some control in their lives and cope with the stressors in their lives.

Through various internal realizations and “interventions” (e.g. development of a meaningful spiritual belief system and multiple, trustworthy, healthy support networks, therapy, personal development classes, and cultural reclamation), the women were able to begin their transformation during the Huliau phase. During the Naʻauao phase of their lives, they stepped out of their comfort zones and were no longer living in fear. They had freed themselves of the various hala that they carried deep within them. However, if they had an additional trauma trigger and old resentments surfaced, they were pulled back into the Naʻaupō phase.

Ultimately, the timeframe of how long the women remained in the Naʻaupō phase was linked to whether or not the women had an additional trauma trigger (e.g. wrongful incarceration, returning to an unhealthy relationships, or getting “caught up” in her addiction again after short or long periods of being sober), whether or not they were able to process their early childhood or current trauma in a safe and trusting environment, and whether or not they had supportive and structural resources available to them. Therefore, it is also possible, with adequate support and a “safe space” to process their trauma, incarcerated women could transform their lives sooner than their early 30’s and sustain the positive changes made in the Huliau phase or time of transformative change.
**Huliau Phase (Time of Transformation)**

The Huliau phase was a significant transformative time of reawakening and awakening for the women in this study. Many of the women described making some “positive changes” in or out of prison (e.g. stopping their addictions, leaving abusive relationships, getting their children back from Child Welfare Services). However, it was not until they engaged in a Hoʻomākaukau Huliau or time to prepare for change sometime in their 30’s in which they were “ready” to face the truth and speak their truth regarding all that happened to them that they began to truly heal from the pain of their upbringing and early/middle adulthood. Once they were “ready” to heal and grow, they engaged in two distinct, yet overlapping stages of Healing the Spirit and Growing into Inspired Alignment after some initial healing occurred. At this point in their journey, they shift from being in a state of despair to feeling hopeful about their present and future. In their words, they are able to see “light at the end of the tunnel” of darkness.

Three key insights were found in this phase: 1) Importance of Meaningful Spiritual Belief System; 2) Healing prompts Posttraumatic Growth; 3) Healing Impact of Cultural Reclamation on Cultural Identity and Overall Well-Being.

**Importance of a Meaningful Spiritual Belief System**

Developing a strong spiritual foundation and connection or reconnection to God or other indigenous beliefs helped the women to “open up their hearts” and be ready to make changes, a theme found in the current PTG literature. In particular, being “willing to listen” to their spiritual guidance subsequently prompted a sincere desire to make positive changes, including healing and growing from trauma. Their spiritual development and religious/spiritual
coping, conceptualized as “being spirit-led versus ego-driven”, involved turning to a “higher power” rather than “drugs and alcohol” as a key element in their healing and PTG.

Additionally, two other specific scenarios articulated during the interviews provide a context for the benefit of creating more opportunities for spiritual development that are inclusive of Native Hawaiian women (regardless of gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientations that are not heterosexual) and of Native Hawaiian belief systems while in prison or in treatment outside of prison that adds to the PTG literature for Native Hawaiian women. First, Noelani loves God and loves to praise God, but because she identifies as a “female” and as a “lesbian” who dresses and acts like a “butchie” (in her words), she was unable to participate in the Christian-based Total Life Recovery (TLR) Program. Second, Jamie, who identified herself as a Pele Worshipper, sees herself as a member of the Pele clan and derives her spiritual strength from Pele that is rooted in the Hawaiian worldview. She also engages in cultural protocols and traditions at Halemaumau Crater to connect with Pele and ask for guidance in the form of hōʻailona or spiritual signs.

Despite the unique identities of these two women and the exclusion from the dominant group in their respective environments, they were both able to receive the love, acceptance, and support provided by their spiritual belief system. They were able to derive strength, reclaim their worth and value, and learn to forgive themselves and others through an individual chaplain’s support (Noelani) or through receiving hōʻailona or signs that she was “on track” (Jamie).

Drawing upon an indigenous belief system from their cultural heritage, such as ka wa kahiko or ancient Hawaiian beliefs and traditions as part of their meaningful spiritual belief system, was and continues to be a great source of support for some of the women and helped
them to heal and experience PTG. A few of the women, such as Dion’e and Lisa utilized their Hawaiian beliefs and Christian God to help them to overcome their trauma and experience PTG. Thus, the inclusion of both Hawaiian spiritual beliefs and Christianity in the women’s meaningful spiritual belief systems were instrumental in supporting the experience of PTG among Native Hawaiian women and builds upon original perspectives of “spirituality” within the PTG literature.

Spirituality, including spiritual change, as a domain of growth in the PTG literature originally focused on religious concepts within Christianity (e.g. Mormon faith, Catholicism). Within recent PTG literature, the positive impact of spirituality and spiritual change with incarcerated individuals and how to measure spiritual change in PTG in general is emerging and expanding (Tedeschi, R. G., Shakespeare-Finch, J., Taku, K., & Calhoun, L.G., 2018; Vanhooren et al., 2012).

The Post Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) measurement tool developed by Tedeschi & Calhoun (2004) has been used to measure PTG among various cultural groups. Five factors measured are: relating to others, new possibilities, personal strength, appreciation of others, and spiritual change for the general population and incarcerated individuals (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2013; Vanhooren et al., 2012). Newer qualitative PTG studies have noted that religious, spiritual, and existential concerns and connectedness are common in the PTG process (Tedeschi et al., 2018). Findings from these studies highlight that existential concerns and connectedness can vary among different cultural groups depending on their specific, religious, and spiritual traditions.

In 2017, a new expanded scale, entitled the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory-Expanded (PIGI-X) has changed the Spiritual Change (SC) factor to Spiritual-Existential Change (SEC).
Instead of only the two original items for SC (“I have a better understanding of spiritual matters” and “I have a stronger religious faith”) which focuses specifically on spirituality and religion, the expanded tool includes the following four items (Tedeschi, Cann, Taku, Senol-Durak, and Cahoun, 2017).

- “I have greater clarity about life’s meaning”,
- “I feel better able to face questions about life and death”,
- “I feel more connected with all of existence”,
- “I have a greater sense of harmony with the world.”

The new PTGI-X, which has been tested in sample populations in the United States, Turkey, and Japan, offers the potential to capture PTG with a broader range of cultural groups, particularly those with non-Western, and/or nonreligious spiritual perspectives. Although the women in this study did not complete this survey, the expansion of this tool implies a recognition that broader notions of spiritual-existential changes exist and may provide greater insight into how PTG is experienced in different cultures. Inclusion of these newer items have relevancy for PTG among incarcerated Native Hawaiian women, because the Hawaiian worldview is inclusive of interdependent relationships with the spiritual realm, human realm, and the environment.

The Hawaiian cultural value of pono or being in balance and harmony with oneself and lōkahi or unity with all that exists was identified by all of the women as a core element of healing and PTG. As the women overcame their trauma by healing their spirits and growing into inspired alignment, they developed a greater ability to relate to others (e.g. appreciation and acceptance) and put more effort into their relationships with others, enhanced their personal strengths, engaged in spiritual-existential change, formed a greater appreciation of life in general, and were able to see new possibilities and pathways for their lives. All of these areas are included on the PTGI inventory (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). However, because of
their cultural context of pono and lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian women in this study cultivated relationships with the human realm, spiritual realm, and the environmental realm which is a unique aspect of PTG for Native Hawaiian incarcerated women.

**Healing Prompts Posttraumatic Growth**

The second insight in the Huliau phase is that initial healing prompts PTG. Although healing is not a specific area examined within the PTG literature, strong evidence exists for extensive historical and cultural trauma as well as present day trauma among Hawaiians and Hawaiian women in particular (Keahiolalo-Karasuda, 2010; NHJTF, 2012; Patterson, Bissen, & Uchigachiuchi, 2013; Sai, 2011). This level of trauma is often intergenerational resulting from familial histories of abuse, neglect, educational disadvantages stemming from poverty, and multiple losses and separations due to death and incarceration. This type of trauma is also often unresolved and leads to many negative social determinants of health and well-being (Keahiolalo-Karasuda, 2010; Kaholokula, 2010). Therefore, I included healing in the pathways to PTG for nā wāhine maoli women to account for the processes and strategies they employed on their pathways to overcoming the extensive and cumulative trauma that is noted in both research and literature on incarcerated Native Hawaiian women and incarcerated women in general (Brown, 2003; Chesney-Lind, 2000; Patterson, Bissen, and Uchigachiuchi, 2013; Saxena, Messina, & Grella, 2014).

Some of the women went to a form of structured therapy to do their healing work. However, others they talked about the importance of spiritual and cultural healing as essential to their ability to process their trauma, reclaim their cultural worth and value, and experience PTG. As NoeNoe shared, “Before you can blossom, and you can bloom, you have to heal.” Some of the women began to process their unresolved hala (trauma) and hoʻomauhala around
the age of 30+ years, because they had a safe and structured environment to process and/or understand their trauma either in treatment or classes (e.g. parenting classes, group sessions) outside of prison or while in prison with their “sisters” or compassionate ACO’s or other individuals they met in prison (e.g. prison chaplain, AA sponsor), or within some of the programming within the prison (e.g. self-development classes, relationship classes focusing on boundaries and co-dependency). At least two of the women did not feel they had a “safe” or “trusting” environment to process their trauma other than having intense conversations with God and carried their unresolved trauma until their late 50’s and early 60’s.

Regardless of when the women “processed” their trauma and worked on maintaining their sobriety, all of them engaged in a process of Ho’opono (cleansing and making amends) “getting the ‘opala out,” “breaking free of toxic relationships,” and truly “letting go” to set themselves free from the limitations in their thinking and perceptions of others and the world around them. Additionally, the women focused on Ho’opili or making connections, a concept that is similar to the social supports that are noted in the PTG literature. In PTG studies, it has been noted that relationships with others play a significant role in how individuals cope and respond to trauma (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006; Vanhooren et al., 2013).

Some of the reasons identified by leading researchers in PTG were also cited by the women in this study. For example, other people may positively support a reconstruction of one’s worldview following a trauma as well as how one interprets and perceives an event. Social supports may also help individuals in learning new coping strategies and relationships that feel “safe” are also valuable in assisting with emotional disclosures and in developing positive cognitive reappraisals in relation to trauma (Calhoun & Tedeshi, 2006; Cordova, Cunningham, Carlson, & Andrykowski, 2011; Leopore & Revensen, 2006) which was
definitely true for the women who created “sisterhood bonds” in which they felt safe to share their trauma without concern about being judged for their actions and/or true feelings about situations.

Healing Impact of Cultural Reclamation on Native Hawaiian Cultural Identity & Overall Well-Being

In addition to the importance of developing a meaningful spiritual belief system that is inclusive of Native Hawaiian beliefs and healing prompting PTG, the final and perhaps the most significant insight to this phase of the study that adds to the existing PTG literature is the healing process of Hoʻopili Hou or reconnection specifically to family and culture. Rebuilding trust with their families was a key element to healing the women’s spirits in the Hulilau phase which took a tremendous amount of commitment, dedication, and willingness to make amends. By sincerely apologizing for the hala or transgressions they created, receiving and giving forgiveness, and following through on their words in tangible actions, the women proved to their families that they were sincere in their recovery and desire to live a “forgiven and purposeful life.”

All of the women in this study suffered from cultural trauma, which can be defined as, “the loss of identity which affects group consciousness. It marks and changes them in fundamental and irreversible ways often resulting in the loss of language, lifestyles and values” (Paglinawan, Paglinawan, Kaulukukui, Krief, & Kim, 2014). This definition is strongly aligned with the fact that eight of the 10 women were unaware of their cultural identity including morals, values, language, culture, and history and often had negative associations with their cultural heritage during their upbringing and early adulthood (e.g. “I just thought it [alcoholism and abuse] was part of the culture. I mean I just thought that that’s what most Hawaiian families do” – Nahe. However, as they reconnected to their culture, which was cited as the
primary solution to addressing the disproportionality of Native Hawaiians in Hawai‘i’s criminal justice system (NHJTF, 2012), they started healing.

The loss of identity and meaning in life cited by PTG researchers studying incarcerated populations is compounded for Native Hawaiian women, because they entered prison not knowing who they were culturally as well as struggling to find their general identity as a result of being incarcerated. Through “getting back to their roots” as the women shared, included engaging in their cultural practices, learning their genealogy, language, and history, or teaching about their culture (Dion‘e), they were able to heal and “know who they are.” which led to strengthened confidence and pride of their cultural heritage.

Cultural ways of healing can be defined as, “strategies derived from an individual’s and family cultural group that support the restoration of balance and harmony to the individual and overall family relationships” (Martin, Paglinawan, & Paglinawan, 2014, p. 75). Engaging in cultural ways of healing provided a pathway for the wāhine maoli in this study to heal through reconnecting to themselves, each other, their culture, and land-based spirituality. As the women worked in the lo‘i and cleaned out the ‘opala or rubbish in the ‘āina or land to clear the pathway for new growth, they described experiencing feelings of healing on the inside. Thus the “remedy for [healing from] cultural trauma is cultural reclamation” (L. Paglinawan, personal communication, Oct. 3, 2017).

In this dissertation, I have found Lynette Paglinawan’s statement and core belief to be very true. Cultural reclamation assists the women in shifting their cultural identity that was lost and/or distorted by negative stereotypes of Hawaiians and/or lived experiences in disenfranchised families. Cultural reclamation is being defined in this dissertation as a spiritual/cultural healing process of reawakening to an understanding of the true identity of
Kānaka Maoli which is facilitated through reconnecting to one’s culture. Learning about one’s history and cultural heritage, genealogy, and cultural morals and values, making ancestral connections, engaging in cultural practices (e.g. working in the lo‘i, dancing hula) and learning to speak one’s language facilitates healing and cultivates cultural pride which assists in the development of a positive self-image and cultural identity.

Despite cumulative effects of multi-layered and chronic trauma, the women in this study reclaimed their self-worth and cultural identity through cultural reclamation, a unique and profound healing process for these women. Either through the work of the TICI implemented at WCCC, which is where 90% of the women in this study were housed during their incarceration, or learning in the community through university classes, community centers, or direct involvement with cultural practices once they reintegrated into the community, the women healed from their disconnection from culture. Rather than being ashamed of who they are and their cultural heritage, they developed a deep sense of pride of the rich culture and ancestry that they come from. Thus, healing through cultural reclamation adds to the literature on PTG for incarcerated Native Hawaiian women.

Further support for the healing impact of cultural reclamation as defined in this dissertation was found in the doctoral work of Dr. Manulani Aluli-Meyer (2003) on Hawaiian epistemology in which one of her core themes was “Culture Restores Culture.” From the interviews she conducted with 20 Hawaiian mentors, she concluded that “Hawaiian culture strengthens Hawaiian identity” and further stated, “cultural practices, values, and beliefs are fundamental to restoring, maintaining, and advancing a Hawaiian sense of health, identity, and efficacy” (p. 144).
Although Dr. Manulani Aluli-Meyer’s (2003) research was conducted in the late 1990s, the idea that strengthening Hawaiian cultural identity is at the “spiritual and logical core of Hawaiian epistemology” (p. 145) is directly aligned with the findings in this study. Through using Hawaiian epistemology and ontology to develop the Hawaiian conceptual framework in this dissertation in articulating the pathways to healing and PTG for wahine maoli, I have humbly reiterated what our wise kupuna or elders have shared about cultural reclamation, which comes from a deep na‘au level of understanding. Although my findings may shed “new” light on how nā wahine maoli experience PTG, the timeless wisdom of our ancestors emerged through voices of the women and myself and is being re-articulated in this dissertation for the benefit of uplifting our beloved nā wahine maoli who are finally beginning to thrive in our homeland. The wisdom that was lying dormant within the DNA or genetic ancestral memories of all of us as Native Hawaiians (Kanahele, 2012) is reawakening and being brought forward into multiple arenas such as academic research, legislation, and policy development.

Other nā wahine maoli scholars, such as Kealoha Fox and her team at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) has introduced Senate bill 193 “Addressing the Mental Health Needs through Culturally Informed Services and Practices” in 2019. This bill acknowledges the proven beneficial impact of culturally relevant mental health services on Native Hawaiian well-being. If this bill is adopted into law, it will require, for the first time, the Hawai‘i State Council on Mental Health to have three members that “have demonstrated expertise in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices” (S. 193, 2019). Having this requirement marks the first step in efforts toward addressing the disproportionality of Native Hawaiians in mental health which is linked to many traumatic experiences and stressors that were overcome by the women in this study (e.g. suicide attempts, substance use, partner violence, homelessness, and
incarceration) during their Huliau phase. As the women worked on healing their spirits (“making things right”) and growing into inspired alignment (“doing what’s right”), they transitioned into the Naʻauao phase.

**Naʻauao Phase**

The Naʻauao phase or time of enlightenment for the women was a powerful time for the women in which they were able to truly holomua and move forward in their lives and hope and optimism is restored in their lives. Despite the fact that the Hawaiian women in this study have struggled due to the long-standing effects of historical trauma caused by the illegal takeover of the islands by the United States, and continue to suffer with intergenerational trauma and other ongoing traumas and losses, they have found a way to spend most of their time in the Naʻauao phase of their lives. They are kanaka makua or mature adults and mākuahine or mature mothers mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The women are the “backbones” for their families. They are role models for their community and are armed with the skills and tools to let their inner light radiate outwardly. However, none of them were able to achieve an enlightened state of consciousness and living alone. Thus, two main insights emerged from the Naʻauao phase: 1) Safety, Structure, and Support Promotes Success; and 2) Reciprocity of Individual and Collective Transformation that align and add to the PTG literature.

**Safety, Structure, and Support Promotes Success**

Repeatedly, the women talked about the importance of having a safe and trusting environment to express their trauma and vent about life stressors without being judged or having their confidentiality being violated. Having someone safe to talk to was a major component of being able to process their feelings and maintain balance in their lives. Structure
was another area that was key in the women’s ability to be successful in the Naʻauao phase (e.g. following daily routines – daily devotionals, keeping themselves busy and active). Maintaining the positive changes they made in the Huliau phase was strengthened by having schedules, developing life skills, and being held accountable for their life choices.

Support was the most important area among safety, structure, and support for the women. Because of the relational nature of women, social supports is a consistent theme in the PTG literature (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2006; Ferrito, Vetere, Adshead, & Moore, 2012; Guse & Hudson, 2014; Mapham & Heffron, 2012; van Ginneken, 2014; Vanhooren et al., 2015) as well as literature on gender-responsive services for incarcerated women (Chesney-Lind & Brady, Covington & Bloom, 2003/2015). Although other PTG literature has stressed the need for safety, structure, and support (Anderson, Havig, & Davis, 2012; Borja, Callahan, & Long, 2006; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006; Joseph & Linley, 2006; Prati & Pietrantoni, 2009), this study illustrates how cultural codes of conduct aligned with Kānaka Maoli values were important to these women and guided their healing and transformation (“being pono in all that you do”).

The women also developed positive life skills by following the word of God on how to conduct themselves (e.g. bible, Serenity prayer), adhering to the AA principles for some of the women, and following rules and experiencing consequences when rules were not followed while living in transitional housing programs. Although most of their structure was initially externally driven, the women eventually internalized this structure for themselves and are successfully remaining sober, desisting from crime, and living productive lives.

Eight of the 10 women in this study have strong safety, structure, and support to draw upon to “get on track” and “stay on track” in their lives. For example, these women have many positive relational networks to rely upon (e.g. family, friends, “sisters,” and work colleagues),
stabilizing resources such as employment and housing, and/or many role models and mentors to support them in achieving their goals such as seeking higher education. For the two women who did not have family support, minimal or no housing support, their pathways to PTG and healing were considerably more challenging.

**Reciprocity of Individual and Collective Excellence and Transformation**

Perhaps one of the most intriguing insights is the reciprocity of individual and collective transformation found in this study. The PTG literature on incarcerated individuals emphasizes the importance of finding meaning in life (Vanhooren et al. 2017; van Ginneken, 2014/2016) and “making a difference” as important aspects of reclaiming one’s self-worth following a trauma and in the addiction literature (Anderson, Danis, & Havig, 2012; Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003). This study illustrates how the reciprocal interaction and influence of striving for individual excellence (e.g. finding meaning in life) leads to collective transformation and how supporting collective excellence leads to individual transformation. As the women mōhalahala (blossom past failures through gaining wisdom, growing into inspired alignment, overcoming fears, leading by example, and setting and accomplishing goals) and strive for individual excellence, the collective is transformed. Additionally, as the women hoʻolana (uplift others through “making a difference” and “passing on the blessings”) to strive for collective excellence, they are individually transformed.

Although these reciprocal processes are not explicitly stated in the literature on PTG and gender-responsive services and supports, support for this conceptualization was found in Dr. Aluli-Meyer’s (n.d.) document on a collaborative research project entitled, ‘Imi Naʻauao (search for wisdom) which explores: 1) the impact of cultural restoration on Hawaiian well-being; 2) the relationship between culturally-centered economic development and Native
Hawaiian well-being; and 3) the role of cultural revitalization in social change for Native Hawaiians (p. 1).

The concept of ‘auamo kuleana, has many meanings but is being interpreted by the ‘Imi Na‘auao researchers as a mutual emergence process of collective evolution. A noa huna or esoteric meaning of ‘auamo kuleana is collective transformation through individual excellence and through trusting and affirming one another’s skills and strengths, the term also came to mean individual transformation through collective excellence. Thus, as the researchers worked simultaneously to identify “Who am I?” the collective process and “What can I do to help our ‘āina/lāhui (land and people)?”, they were challenged and supported to engage in the expansive work of this collaborative research endeavor. Therefore, this process parallels and supports the findings in this dissertation that highlights the uniqueness of a Hawaiian epistemological viewpoint that is not only emerging within the academic and research arenas in academic settings, but also within this particular aspect of PTG and healing once the women have entered the Na‘auao phase.

Limitations

Three limitations exist in this study: transferability, potential for researcher bias, and impact of prior contact with the researcher. The findings in this research may not be transferable to non-Hawaiians, men, other incarcerated women, or non-incarcerated women. Furthermore, since I only interviewed 10 women, the findings may not represent all women and there may be other pathways that could have been discovered if it were a larger sample.

As a Native Hawaiian trauma survivor of interpersonal violence, there is a potential for bias to exist as well as preconceived notions of pathways to healing from trauma. Additionally, awareness of Native Hawaiian culture, values, language and historical and cultural trauma
could also influence me as a researcher. Participant responses may have been influenced by contact that may occur with the women at the Pu‘a Foundation and YWCA via volunteer activities performed by me (e.g. what participants choose to disclose or not disclose). The women may also have been influenced by the way in which I, as the researcher, reacted to their stories and/or specific statements.

To safeguard against the possible misrepresentation of data whereby I may have been overly influenced by the data and/or overly influencing the data, I engaged in memo-writing, reviewed field notes, and took breaks when I felt emotionally saturated from the intensity of the women’s traumatic experiences. I also solicited feedback from Native Hawaiian experts, research colleagues, and participants when necessary (Reinharz, 2014). Advice from the doctoral committee was also requested to validate coding and conclusions. These strategies ensured that I shared the women’s mo‘olelo and meanings as they have been shared by the participants and not from my personal stance on the topic studied. Thus, although the findings may not transfer to other populations as noted earlier, I made sincere attempts to mitigate possible limitations through reflexivity and have identified implications for practice based on the findings.

**Implications for Practice**

The findings and insights gained from this study indicate that a systems approach that builds on the Hawaiian concept of pu‘uhonua or place of healing and sanctuary and recognizes the unique needs of women (e.g. women are relational) is what will best support incarcerated Native Hawaiian women on their pathways to PTG and healing.

1. Develop a trauma-informed, gender-specific, and culturally responsive system of care with training and supervision for staff that provides safety, structure, and support for women to heal and grow and opportunities to engage in cultural reclamation to
strengthen incarcerated women’s cultural identity both while in prison and when they reintegrate into the community.

2. Provide more inclusive opportunities for spiritual development that creates space for women of different gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations to express various spiritual belief systems, including an indigenous spiritual belief system to be accepted and included at WCCC and in agencies that serve the women as they reintegrate to the community.

3. Strengthen systemwide mental health and behavioral health services that address trauma, substance use, and mental health issues with specific acknowledgement of the need for women to be shown dignity and respect to improve their self-esteem, functionality, and overall well-being. Within this recommendation, strong consideration needs to be given to ensure that those services are comprehensive, integrated, coordinated, and culturally responsive.

4. Identify natural “role models” and “mentors” within WCCC and other agencies serving women and within the community (e.g. churches, AA/NA groups, academic institutions, etc.) either among other female offenders as peer mentors or among staff to offer women support and guidance that is cognizant of the importance of building trust and safety among women.

5. Offer opportunities for women to improve their socio-economic status including access to higher education, vocational training, and financial literacy so that they can develop financial independence and avoid the pitfalls of entering toxic relationships to fulfil their basic needs.

6. Develop partnerships, programs, and policies that are relational and support women in their ability to reconnect with their families, children, and the broader community. Strong consideration could be given to services that include ho’opono (to assist women in becoming pono or in balance) and ho’oponopono (to assist in resolving the hala, ‘eha, and hihia that often exists within families).

**Future Research Considerations**

Future research on incarcerated women can shed more light on their unique needs and possible solutions to assist them on their pathways to PTG and healing. Specifically, the following five considerations may expand the current understanding of what helps incarcerated women to heal and experience PTG.
Conduct additional research on PTG and with formerly incarcerated women, including those from other "local" and various Pacific Island communities.

The conceptual frameworks/models presented in this dissertation are preliminary and further research on how women who have exited prison grow and heal from trauma could assist in deepening our understanding of what is involved in the process for incarcerated women, including Pacific Islander women to reclaim their worth and value in the world. With a broader sample, greater conclusions and comparisons can be reached about how PTG and Healing occurs for various ethnic groups of women. In particular, conducting in-depth interviews and employing both constructivist grounded theory and Nohona Hawaiʻi methodologies can inform and expand upon the current models presented in this dissertation.

**Explore Spirituality in Multiple Forms and Its Impact on PTG and Healing and Cultural Identity**

For the women in this study, spirituality functioned as a key turning point in the healing and PTG processes. Spirituality was identified as a meaningful spiritual belief system that extended beyond Christian beliefs of God and included other Hawaiian deities such as Pele, Ku, and Hina. Gaining a greater understanding of how spirituality influences healing and PTG processes for women exiting prison who have survived extensive trauma will contribute to the limited literature on this topic for this unique population.

**Examine the Overall Physical Health and Behavioral Mental Health of Incarcerated Women**

Other areas that warrant further examination are the physical health and behavioral mental health of incarcerated women and what may help them to become physically healthier
and improve their behavioral mental health as many of them struggled with various and often significant health concerns such as: health risks related to smoking and/or being overweight, seizures (1), diabetes (3), heart conditions (3), and terminal illness (1). All of the women had various behavioral mental health concerns. Thus, more research in these areas and what barriers exist that limit access to healthcare, including behavioral mental health, as well as recommendations from the women directly regarding what can assist them in restoring their overall health and wellness could shed light on this important but understudied topic.

**Explore the Impact of Pseudo-Families formed in Prison on PTG and Healing**

The importance of building and maintaining, multiple, trustworthy, and healthy support networks was a KEY factor in the healing and PTG for the women in this study. However, an area that has not yet been explored and/or well articulated in the current literature for incarcerated women is the concept of “pseudo families” that are formed in prison. It is a common coping mechanism developed among female inmates while they are incarcerated for a variety of reasons which may include emotional support, economic support, or protection (Bedard, 2009). If a woman’s pseudo family is not on a pathway to PTG and healing, they can present risks to the overall well-being of the women. Thus, a more in-depth understanding of how pseudo-families function once exited from prison would inform program development as women reintegrate to into the community.

**Analyze the Impact of Multiple Identities held by Native Hawaiian women on PTG and healing and subsequent transformation**

This study explored the impact of a few identities such as being Native Hawaiian, female, and female offenders on PTG and healing. National or cultural identity, such as Native
Hawaiian identity, for example, is a salient and central identity and intersects with other identities which may or may not be equally salient to PTG and healing. However, future studies that explore other identities held by these women such as, one’s sexual identity, gender, religious beliefs, economic class background, political membership, and other associations could yield a greater understanding of how those identities could affect the processes and pathways of healing and transformation of Native Hawaiian incarcerated women.
Final Reflections

In closing, two ʻōlelo noʻeau highlight two Kānaka Maoli cultural values of aloha (love) and pono (everything and all relations in balance and harmony) that have been central to this dissertation in supporting pathways toward healing and PTG for female trauma survivors so that they can truly mōhalahala or blossom past failures.

Mōhala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua.
Unfolded by the water are the faces of flowers.

Flowers thrive where there is water, as thriving people are found where living conditions are good.
(Pukui, 1997, p. 237)

In this dissertation, the women have been poetically referenced as ʻōhiʻa lehua trees and blossoms and the water has been referenced as the love needed for them to heal and grow. The Hawaiian term for water is wai. Water continues to be so essential to the ecosystems in the islands as it gives life to all living things (Pukui & Elbert, 1983, p. 277). It is the symbol for love in the ʻōhiʻa lehua tree metaphor. Without love, a sense of belonging, and connection to others and one’s culture for the nā wāhine maoli in this study, it was very difficult, if not impossible, to heal and grow. The term waiwai is the term for abundance and wealth as well as the worth of a person (Lynette Paglinawan, personal communication, October 3, 2017). Thus, when women receive wai or “life-giving waters” they can begin to love themselves and reclaim their self-worth, heal, and grow and share their aloha or love with others.

In order for the “system” and our women to holomua or move forward and progress, it is essential to to remember to give aloha and allow our Kānaka Maoli women opportunities to reclaim their self-worth and value as wāhine maoli and shift from being victimized and surviving

__________________________
in the Na’aupō phase, to becoming survivors in the Huliau phase and thrivers in the Na’auao phase.

Mai ho’ohalahala ia kakou. E a’o ia kakou ka mea kūpono e ho’ohuhu ‘ole ai makou. Do not criticize us. Teach us what is proper so that we may not offend. (Gutmanis, 1983, p. xi)

For Native Hawaiian incarcerated women to heal and experience PTG, it is also essential that those who serve, support, and interact with them avoid criticism and teach them how to live a pono life with love, kindness and respect so that they can learn to love and respect themselves. In return, the women can “pass on the blessings” of what they have learned and “make a positive difference” in society by treating others with love, kindness, and respect. Then, and only then, can our beloved women truly heal and grow into mature ʻōhiʻa lehua trees which provide protection and sustenance for the ecosystem of the metaphorical Hawaiian rain forest here in our native homeland.


**MO‘OLELO O NA WAHINE – MO‘OLELO OF THE WOMEN**

The talents of the women I interviewed expand far beyond the scope of this dissertation. All of them are creative with many gifts to share with the world. This collection of mo‘olelo of the women includes poems and songs composed by two of the women in this study: Noelani and Dion‘e.

Noelani is a compassionate soul, talented poet, rapper, composer, and enjoys singing and playing ukulele. During Noelani’s second interview with me, she shared a book of poems that were very powerful. While all of the pages impacted me, a few of the poems have resonated with me ever since my initial reading. My empathy and compassion for not only incarcerated women but for humanity as a whole has deepened and she has made a profound difference in my life.

To honor Noelani’s voice through her poetry, three of her poems are included. The first poem entitled, *Until I Met the Savior* details her journey from childhood to late adulthood and the profound impact that God and Jesus has had on her life. The second poem entitled, Pono, articulates the various factors that assisted Noelani in her journey of striving to become Pono which was written during her participation in a women’s retreat. Her third poem entitled, *Before I Go Home* presents a series of self-reflective questions on how individuals can “make a difference” by sharing love with those who have been marginalized in society and feel unworthy of love.

Dion‘e is also a composer and musician who has published her own CD entitled, “More Than a Woman.” She was born as an intersexed women and had corrective surgery to become a biological female as an adult. Her album received recognition as a finalist for the Nā Hōkū
music awards and she submitted her CD to the 2018 Grammy Awards. Two of her songs are included in this dissertation to highlight her connection to the Hawaiian islands and her connection to Queen Liliʻuokalani’s wrongful incarceration and her own. The first song entitled, *Hawaiʻi You’re My Home*, was written while she was wrongfully incarcerated in Kentucky and missing her island home. The second song entitled, *This Life is Not for Her*, was written during her imprisonment in Hawaii to express her deep seated anger and commonalities that she shared with Queen Liliʻuokalani.
Until I met the Savior

It ain’t no mystery, my past has a history
Cursed by the ancestors affictions.
Doz wuz the work of Satan in his mission, 24/7 multiple addictions.
Trash’n Da gifts of my passion
And Death showed me no discrimination.
2 young to understand da permanent meaning of separation.
Left me in a whirlwind of confusion.

Comin’ from a family of dysfunction,
Full-blown livin’ a life of corruption.
Headed straight to juvenile detention.
Didn’t give a damn about restitution.
My parents thought I was a humiliation.
Da Judge sent me to rehabilitation, only to end up in another institution.

18 wuz my freedom to adulthood.
Now I wuz back in the neighborhood.
Pimpin’ wuz the hustle.
In the game I had my own hired muscle.
Seductive beautiful women – strips ‘n tricks of all da money.
Bring’n it home to Noelani.

Da Peruvian Pink had me slamin’
Obsessed by the rich man’s high.
Da only way to satisfy wuz to rob, steal, & lie.
Breaki’n da law wuz my constitution.
Paid my dues 4xs in Women’s Corrections.
Fight’n power & control with a mean retaliation.
Anger, bitterness, & hate wuz my self-defense ammunition.
2 bury the pains of my emotions.

Scared with a notorious reputation.
My AO No. Wuz my identification.
Max custody became my classification.
Isolated from general population.

Represent my individuality,
Never duplicate, stand 4 originality.
Stereo-typed & addressed for criminality.
You & I possess our own separate reality.

Honor da O.G.’s code.
Respect, give it like it’s told.
Rigidity gave no room 4 discussion.
Just da heated wrath of my repercussion.
You and I had no relation.
It was a one-way communication.
Da streets wuz my education, shove rehabilitation.

What I needed wuz salvation.
Da beginning of a spiritual transition.
It took my father to stab me – da last & final tragedy.
To see God work His miracle strategy.
Now my entire life flashed before me.
Breaking me with conviction.
40 years living in da wilderness of my pain.
I was spiritually slain.
Bringin’ me to my knees – callin’ on the Big G.
To heal & deliver me – 4 da truth will set me free.

So if I weighed my life with serious deliberation,
It wuz time to face a life chang’n decision.
As a sinner I bowed in confession.
Forgiveness – mercy & His grace are just a fraction He gave me to embrace.
As I released my flesh to die, my heart rejoiced as I cried.
Da Big G poured His perfect love into me and now we are family.

Registered – purified & Holy.
From darkness to light.
Saturated by His powerful might.
Shalom is my inspiration.
I am a new creation.

Can I get a witness to diz revelation.
Hallelujah – I claim my transformation.

Re mem ba
Women wuz my pleasure.
Money was my treasure.
Drugs wuz my flavor.
Until I met the Savior.

Inspired by my Abba father Da Big G.

Written by Noelani (2010)
PONO

Healing by the power of unity, love, forgiveness.
Together we embrace the spirit of strength,
Sharing the issues of the heart
Followed by the tears – filling the well of yesterday
As Hope bridges our way to our Tomorrow.
Bringing illuminating light to the abyss tunnel of our darkness.
Tenacity reigns from within, claiming our true innate being
The MANA of our Ancestors entwines as one with us.
Solidifying “Love heals the wounds of our past.”
“Our ‘Ohana”, “Women of Strength.”
Together we honor ourselves to overcome.
As we look at each other and smile.
Embracing the gifts of our present.
We strive to be Pono.
To all the sisters of Namele Wāhine.
By Noelani (8/6/11)
Before I Go Home

Did I touch one broken and hardened heart with the selfless gift of God’s healing love?

Did I say a kind word of encouragement to lift one soul out of disappointment and despair?

Did I turn a frown rightside up on a child’s face who was rejected, abandoned and lost?

Did I stop and bend down to a poor homeless soul to offer a warm blanket and a meal?

Did I give to a man sleeping on a cardboard box to keep his cold feet warm in a brand new pair of socks?

Did I take the time to extend a hand at a homeless shelter?

Did I choose to give instead of take for the Love of Christ’s sake?

Did I forgive my mother & father with the love of God’s love?

Before I go home, did I make a hopeful difference?

Did I bless someone in secret that only God’s eyes saw?

Did I spend some quality time with the unlovely, just so that they would feel and know the true promise of God’s love?

Did I hug and comfort a lonely grandma sitting in a rocking chair and offer to braid her hair?

Did I care to understand a ghetto child who has a life filled with struggles?

Did I show empathy and compassion to someone who’s been ridiculed, belittled, and shamed?

Did I let them know they are valued and worthy of Christ’s love?

Before I go home did I forgive the unforgivable that they may be forgiven for the sake of my Father God who forgave me?

Did I turn the other cheek in humility when others cruelly persecuted me?

Did I pray for God’s goodness to rain down on them?

Did I grow to love my God through all of this and love my neighbors as thyself?

Before you go home did you love as Jesus loved?

Now welcome home beloved.

Inspired by God’s Love
Written by Noealani, Nov 20th, 2010
**Hawaii You’re My Home**

**VERSE 1**
In this life I have been given with many changes in every season.  
All my hope in this life is to live a better life with a purpose and a reason.  
Beautiful face full of sunshine, starry nights looking divine.  
As the fragrance fills the air, from the flowers in my hair as I swish and sway to the moonlight.

**CHORUS**
Hawai‘i you’re my home, it doesn’t matter where I go.  
Even when I’m far away, I will remember each day that my heart is in Hawai‘i.  
Hawai‘i you’re my home, it doesn’t matter where I go.  
Through we’re far apart, you’re always in my heart.  
My home is in Hawai‘i.

**VERSE 2**
As the rains begins to fall, na kupuna leo I hear them call.  
Enchanting melodies and song of my people been treated wrong.  
Imua na ‘oiwi o Hawai‘i.

**BRIDGE**
As we walk hand in hand, Kānaka Maoli this is your land.  
Now the time for us is here.  
Stand together have no fear as we give honor to na ali‘i.

**CHORUS**
Hawai‘i you’re my home, it doesn’t matter where I go.  
Even when I’m far away, I will remember each day that my heart is in Hawai‘i.  
Hawai‘i you’re my home, it doesn’t matter where I go.  
Through we’re far apart, you’re always in my heart.  
My home is in Hawai‘i.

**TAG**
Through we’re far apart, you’re always in my heart.  
My home is in Hawai‘i.

I love you.
This Life is Not for Her

Walking her service companion under beautiful and scintillating starry night
Taken by force by people of power
A lifetime of opportunity given to prove her innocence
Unfamiliar faces decide the fate of her destiny
Her life comes to a halt with anticipation to escape the wrong of mistaken identity

This life is not for her

A native woman, Kānaka Maoli
Being held captive against her will
The laughter and cries of rage and desires
Being chained at the waist and ankles
Emotions of anxiety, anger, hate, and fear
Closes in on the light of day

This life is not for her

Fighting off deprived men like a pack of wolves that are in search for their primate
Womanhood, dignity, integrity, and sanity taken in violation
To sooth the desperation and wants of mankind
The wrongful placement in a hidden underworld
Unknown to commoners in society
Stagnant in an uncontrolled world of its own

This life is not for her

In a woman’s world of oppression and fear
Subjected to ridicule, suspicion, and treatment in an unfamiliar place
that many would not experience
Authority figures’ negative example of hate crime to manipulate the
Minds of the forsaken and oppressed
Surrounded by women of no self-worth
Struggling to find true self and identity

This life is not for her

Overcoming death by angelic practitioners
The fight to live is a journey to be won
Significant insight and understanding gained
To make a difference in the lives of many
Difficulties with the inconsistency
Lies that adapt to conspire anger and violence
This life is not for her

Women struggling to live a better life
Losing faith praying that the storm will pass
Sadness fills the air with the essence of death
The aroma awakens her spirit to bring light into darkness

This life is not for her

Forbidden truth transpires the voices of her ancestors
that resonates through the harmonies of music
The strumming of her guitar and ukulele
The pounding of her pahu drum and ipu
The plucking of her bass guitar strings and running her fingers over the piano keys
Breathes life into all that is dead in spirit

Swishing and swaying to the melodies of hula
Frees the spirit of all doubt and allows the body, soul, mind, and spirit to be one
A native woman with commonalities of similar treatment that was done to Hawaiʻi’s last reigning queen when Hawaiʻi became a state
Because of the illegal annexation by the United States
Transfigurations of hope decides her future

To heal in freedom is the life for her.
Appendix A: Glossary of “Types of Trauma” Terms

**Sexual Abuse or Assault:** “Sexual abuse or assault includes unwanted or coercive sexual contact, exposure to age-inappropriate sexual material or environments and sexual exploitation” (SAMHSA, 2015, “Types of Trauma”, para. 1). The U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (2015) further defines sexual assault as,

any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs by force or without the explicit consent of the recipient of the unwanted sexual activity… such as forced intercourse, sodomy, child molestation, incest, fondling, attempted rape. It includes sexual acts against people who are unable to consent either due to age or lack of capacity. (p. 2)

**Physical Abuse or Assault:**
Physical abuse or assault is defined as the actual or attempted infliction of physical pain (with or without the use of an object or weapon), including the use of severe corporal punishment. Federal law defines child abuse as any act, or failure to act, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child. (SAMHSA, 2015, “Types of Trauma”, para. 2)

**Emotional Abuse or Psychological Maltreatment:**
Emotional abuse and psychological maltreatment are, considered acts of commission (other than physical or sexual abuse) against an individual. These kinds of acts, which include verbal abuse, emotional abuse, and excessive demands or expectations, may cause an individual to experience conduct, cognitive, affective, or other mental disturbances. These acts also include acts of omission against a minor such as emotional neglect or intentional social deprivation, which cause, or could cause, a child to experience conduct, cognitive, affective, or other mental disturbances. (SAMHSA, 2015, “Types of Trauma”, para. 3)

**Neglect:**
Neglect is the most common form of abuse reported to child welfare authorities. However, it does not occur only with children. It can also happen when a primary caregiver fails to give an adult the care they need, even though the caregiver can afford to, or has the help to do so. Neglect also includes the failure to provide an individual with basic needs such as food, clothing, or shelter. It can also mean not providing medical or mental health treatment or prescribed medicines. Neglect also includes exposing someone to dangerous environments, abandoning a person, or expelling them from home. (SAMHSA, 2015, “Types of Trauma”, para. 4)

**Victim or Witness of Domestic Violence:**
According to the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, domestic violence is defined as: a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.” Domestic violence includes violence and abuse by current or former intimate partners, parents, children, siblings, and other relatives.” (SAMHA, 2015, “Types of Trauma”, para. 6)
MEMORANDUM

January 13, 2016

TO: Tammy K. Martin, MSW
    Principal Investigator
    School of Social Work

FROM: Denise A. Lin-DeShetler, MPH, MA
    Director

SUBJECT: CHS # 23631, "Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors"

This is to acknowledge receipt of your response dated January 8, 2016 to the stipulations issued by the Human Studies Program during its review of the project identified above at its meeting on December 18, 2015. The information you provided satisfactorily addressed the Human Studies Program stipulations, and the project is approved for one year, effective January 12, 2016.

This memorandum is your record of the Human Studies Program approval of this study. Please maintain it with your study records.

The Human Studies Program approval for this project will expire on January 11, 2017. If you expect your project to continue beyond this date, you must submit an application for renewal of this Human Studies Program approval. The Human Studies Program approval must be maintained for the entire term of your project.

If, during the course of your project, you intend to make changes to this study, you must obtain approval from the Human Studies Program prior to implementing any changes. If an Unanticipated Problem occurs during the course of the study, you must notify the Human Studies Program within 24 hours of knowledge of the problem. A formal report must be submitted to the Human Studies Program within 10 days. The definition of "Unanticipated Problem" may be found at: http://hawaii.edu/irb/download/documents/SOPP_101_UP_Reporting.pdf, and the report form may be downloaded here: http://hawaii.edu/irb/download/forms/App_UP_Report.doc.

You are required to maintain complete records pertaining to the use of humans as participants in your research. This includes all information or materials conveyed to and received from participants as well as signed consent forms, data, analyses, and results. These records must be maintained for at least three years following project completion or termination, and they are subject to inspection and review by the Human Studies Program and other authorized agencies.
Appendix C: Request for IRB Approval for Parolees
Appendix D: IRB Approval for Use of Actual Names

12.07.2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tammy Martin
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

FROM: Kristin Bacon, C.I.P., Social and Behavioral Sciences IRB Coordinator

SUBJECT: 23631 “Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors”

With this memorandum, the UH Human Studies Program acknowledges receipt of your December 07, 2017 email response to the stipulations issued by the Human Studies Program during review of this project on November 17, 2017.

The Human Studies Program has accepted your response and approved your request to modify this study by providing participants with a consent form where they can choose to be identified in the results, extend the end date of the study to May 2018, and replace the focus group with individual interviews. This approval is effective on December 07, 2017. Note that this approval date is for the proposed revision, and does not reset the annual study expiration date. Please refer back to your most recent IRB approval letter (initial application or continuing review) for the study’s expiration date. Regulations require that continuing review be conducted on or before the one-year anniversary date of IRB approval.

Please contact the Human Studies Program office at 956-5007 if you have any questions or require assistance.
Appendix E: Letter to Professional Contacts

Dear (Insert Professional Contact Name and title),

My name is Tammy Kahoʻolemana Martin and I am a PhD candidate at the University of Hawaiʻi, Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work. As a Native Hawaiian female trauma survivor who has worked as a social worker for the past 17 years, I am particularly interested in learning more about how formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian adult female trauma survivors overcome trauma. In particular, my study entitled, Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors focuses on exploring posttraumatic growth (PTG), which is defined as “positive psychological change experienced as the result of struggling with highly challenging circumstances” (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004, p. 1). Proponents of PTG suggest that contrary to the prevailing literature, aspects of trauma and trauma response may also have positive transformative effects on individual survivors. However, there is limited literature on explanatory models of PTG among adult female trauma survivors.

In the Hawaiʻi context, there are currently no studies that examine PTG among Native Hawaiians as a population group. Given that females disproportionately experience different forms of trauma, very little is known about Native Hawaiian women who have experienced trauma. Because a disproportionately large number of Hawaiian women who are incarcerated in Hawaiʻi’s criminal/legal system have been exposed to some degree and type of trauma over their lives, this exploratory study aims to use intensive interviewing and an optional focus group to better understand the pathways of PTG and healing for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. Thus, this study aims to: 1) honor the voices of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors through intensive, life history interviews; 2) identify factors that contribute to growth, healing, and transformation for these women; and 3) examine how Native Hawaiian identity, gender, social class, trauma caused by interpersonal violence, and incarceration impact the PTG and healing pathways for formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors.

Since little is known about how formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian women grow and heal from multiple traumas, particularly those stemming from interpersonal violence, this exploratory study using qualitative methodology will add to the knowledge in PTG literature. The timeframe for this study is from January 2016 to May 2017. As a qualitative study, the emphasis is not placed on generalizability. Rather, the focus is to gain an in-depth understanding of how a historically oppressed population of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors, who have been incarcerated, overcome their trauma and begin to thrive in society. This research is a critical step toward a more in-depth understanding of how formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors heal and grow from trauma in their homeland. Emphasis is placed on being able to gather thick, content rich descriptions of the ongoing process of growth, healing, and transformation following traumatic events, particularly those stemming from interpersonal violence. Results from this study will provide social work practice and policy implications, including recommendations for future research on this topic.

329
The ultimate goal of this study is to learn about the pathways to PTG and healing and identify gender-specific, trauma-informed strategies and circumstances that will empower formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian women to rebuild their lives and successfully transition back into their home communities. It is hoped that this research will also expand upon existing models of PTG and will result in a model of the growth and healing pathways for Native Hawaiian women who have experienced trauma and incarceration. This study is being conducted as part of the Principal Investigator’s dissertation research.

Thus, I am seeking assistance from you to pass along information about this study via a recruitment flyer to the women formerly served by your agency (Please see the attached recruitment flyer). In addition, I would appreciate any consultations and referrals you may have of women who may be appropriate for this study.

Specifically, I am looking for women who meet the following eligibility criteria:
1) Self-identify as Native Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian
2) Female
3) 18 yrs. or older at the time of the study
4) Have experienced one or more acts of interpersonal violence as defined by SAMSHA (witnessed or experienced domestic violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or child abuse and neglect) at any point prior to the study
5) Have been incarcerated at any time prior to the study
6) Have experienced positive changes as a result of struggling with trauma

For women interested, a brief 10 – 15 min screening will be conducted to determine their interest and appropriateness for the study. Once participants are identified as appropriate for the study and informed consent has been obtained, 1 – 2 hour in-depth interviews will be conducted. Interviews will take place on a date and time and in a location that is convenient for participants and ensures the privacy of the interview. Given the sensitive nature of the questions posed, a participant can skip any question that she does not choose to answer or take a break. For any woman who becomes stressed or uncomfortable during the interview, she may stop and leave the interview. She can also leave the study at any time with no penalty.

Finally, participants will be given an opportunity to participate in an optional focus group to review the preliminary findings, verify the findings, and provide their recommendations about how to use the study and their stories to develop pilot interventions, strategies, or programs for other Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors, who have been incarcerated. (Please review the consent forms and interview guides for both the intensive interview and optional focus group to gain more clarity on what potential study participants will be asked to do as well as what type of questions will be asked.)

Once the results are finalized, a presentation will be scheduled with relevant stakeholders to increase their understanding of ways to facilitate growth and transformation for Native Hawaiian adult trauma survivors who have been incarcerated.
Feel free to contact me via email at tammymar@hawaii.edu or via phone at (808) 218 – 2795 if you have any questions or comments about this study and whether or not you are willing to support this study.

Sincerely,

Tammy K. Martin, MSW
PhD Candidate
Appendix F: Recruitment Flyer

This study will be conducted from January 2016 – May 2018:

*Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors*

Volunteers needed for interview research

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian adult female trauma survivors grow, heal, and transform from struggling with trauma.

Study volunteers will be compensated for their time.

A summary of the results will be available to volunteers.

Results from this study could lead to pilot interventions that may help Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors overcome their trauma and successfully transition back into the community.

Eligibility Criteria:

Female
Over 18 years old
Self-identify as Native Hawaiian/part-Hawaiian
Incarcerated at any time prior to the study
Witnessed or experienced one or more of the following: (domestic violence, sexual abuse, physical abuse, child abuse and neglect)
Self-perceived growth and healing from trauma

If you think that you may meet the requirements for this study and are interested in participating in this project, please contact Tammy Martin at tammymar@hawaii.edu.
Appendix G: Screening Eligibility Script

Aloha. Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. My name is Tammy Kahoʻolemana Martin and I am a PhD student at the University of Hawaiʻi, Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work. As a Native Hawaiian female trauma survivor and social worker for 17 years, I am particularly interested in better understanding the posttraumatic growth (positive changes experienced from struggling to overcome trauma) and healing pathways for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. The purpose of my research is to closely examine the life histories of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated to identify strategies, interventions, and programs that have helped Native Hawaiian women heal from trauma, rebuild their lives, and successfully transition back into their home communities.

The goals of this study are honor Native Hawaiian women’s voices and to learn more about their pathways to growth and healing. Information from this study will be used to learn more about how Native Hawaiian women rebuild their lives to possibly inform interventions and strategies that will help other female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. Therefore, I would like to ask you some questions to see if you meet the eligibility criteria for this study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question (Checkmark yes or no)</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you female?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you over 40 yrs. old?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you self-identify as Native Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been incarcerated?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever witnessed or experienced one or more of the following?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Physical abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Sexual abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Child abuse and neglect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will read the following statements and if it applies to you, just say yes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have changed my priorities about what is important in my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a greater appreciation for my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of spiritual matters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a greater sense of closeness with others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I established new paths for my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

333
I discovered that I was stronger than I thought I was.
Thank you for your willingness to answer the screening questions for this study.

Selection Decision: (Checkmark yes, not sure, or no and provide the following response)

_____ Yes

Thank you for participating in this screening process. Based on your responses to these questions, you meet the eligibility criteria for this study. This study will run from January 2016 through May 2017. If you would like to participate in this study, I will be in touch with you to schedule a 1 – 2 hour interview on a date, time, and location that is convenient for you within the next week. The interview will ask you to recall various events, including significant life challenges and how you have overcome them. You will also be asked to participate in an optional focus group to hear the findings and verify the findings as well as offer recommendations for how to use the study and the women’s stories to develop pilot interventions, strategies, or programs for women trauma survivors, who have been incarcerated. Whether you choose not to participate in the focus group or not, a finalized summary of the results from this study will be made available to you. You will receive a $25 gift card to appreciate you for your time and willingness to participate in this study.

_____ Not sure

Thank you for participating in the screening process. I will get back to you in a few days after I review your responses and examine the group of potential women to interview.

_____ No

Thank you for participating in the screening process. Based on your responses to these questions, you do not meet the eligibility criteria for this study. But, I wish you well as you continue forward in your life.
Appendix H: PTG Study Screening Eligibility Form

Name: __________________________ Date of Screen: _______________  __X__ phone

in-person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question (Checkmark yes or no)</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you female?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you over 40 yrs. old?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you self-identify as Native Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been incarcerated? How long ago?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever witnessed or experienced one or more of the following?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Physical abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Sexual abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Child abuse and neglect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will read the following statements and if it applies to you, just say yes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have changed my priorities about what is important in my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a greater appreciation for my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of spiritual matters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a greater sense of closeness with others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I established new paths for my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I discovered that I was stronger than I thought I was.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selection Decision: (Checkmark yes or no and provide response)

_____ Yes

_____ Not sure

_____ No

Appendix I: Demographic Information Form
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is your age? Date of birth?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Which ethnic groups do you belong to? (Check all that apply)</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samoan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filipino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marshallese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Micronesian (specify): _________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latino/Hispanic/Chicano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (specify):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Which ethnic group do you most identify with? (Select one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. Were you born and raised in Hawaii? (Circle yes or no)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, then which community are you from?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If not, then what community did you grow up in?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a. What is the highest level of education you have completed?</td>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a. How would you describe your marital/relationship status?</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Currently in a relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b. If you are married or in a committed relationship, how long have you been with your partner?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a. Do you live with anyone?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b. If yes, what is the relationship of the person(s) living with you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a. Do you have children?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b. If yes, how many?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c. Are your children living with you now?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a. What is your employment status?</td>
<td>Employed full time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employed part time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Now I will read you a list of ranges of family income. Please tell me when I get to the amount that comes closest to your family income last year before you paid taxes and from all sources.</td>
<td>Under $2,000/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $2000 - $4,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $5000 - $9,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $10,000 - $14,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $15,000 - $19,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $20,000 - $24,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $25,000 - $29,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $30,000 - $34,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $40,000 - $44,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $45,000 - $49,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $50,000 - $54,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $55,000 - $59,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $60,000 - $64,999/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between $65,000 - $69,999/yr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Consent Form – Original

University of Hawai‘i

Consent to Participate in Research Project:
Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Adult Female Trauma Survivors

Tammy Kaho‘olemana Martin, MSW, Principal Investigator
University of Hawaii, Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work
Gartley Hall, 2430 Campus Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Phone: (808) 218 – 2795

Informed Consent
You are being asked to take part in this research study because you are a Native Hawaiian female over the age of 40yrs old, have witnessed or experienced one or more of the following types of trauma (e.g. domestic violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse and neglect), been incarcerated, and have experienced growth and healing from your struggles to overcome trauma. Approximately 12 – 15 women will be in the study. Before you decide whether or not to take part in this study, you must understand the purpose, benefits, risks, and what you will be asked to do. This process is called informed consent.

The researcher will explain the study and the consent form to you. If you do not understand any part of this form or if you do not understand the words used, please ask the researcher at any time. Once you understand the study, and if you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign this consent form. You will be given a signed copy to keep if you do decide to be in the study.

Before you learn about the study, it is important that you know the following:

- Taking part in this study is voluntary.
- You may decide not to take part in the study or stop being in the study at any time.

A. Description and Purpose of Study

Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors is a research project that seeks to better understand the pathways to PTG (positive changes experienced from struggling to overcome trauma) and healing for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. In particular, strategies that have helped Native Hawaiian women heal from trauma, rebuild their lives, and successfully transition back into their home communities will be identified.
Thus, this study aims to: 1) honor the voices of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors through intensive, life history interviews; 2) identify factors that contribute to growth, healing, and transformation for these women; and 3) examine how the intersections of Native Hawaiian identity, gender, social class, trauma, and incarceration impact the PTG and healing pathways of formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors. It is hoped that this research will expand upon existing models of PTG to will result in a model of the growth and healing process for Native Hawaiian women who have experienced trauma and incarceration.

B. Procedures and Expected Length of Involvement in Study

You will be asked to take part in an intensive life history interview. A life history interview is an interview that focuses on an individual’s life experiences that are shared from the individual’s perspective.

If you participate in this project, you will meet with the Principal Investigator for an interview on a date and time and in a location that is convenient for you.

The interview will consist of approximately 16 open ended questions and will take about one to two hours to complete. Interview questions will include questions like, “Can you describe what growing up was like for you?” “What or who helped you heal and grow from trauma in your life?” “In what ways, if any, did your incarceration as a Native Hawaiian woman impact your growth and healing process?”

Only the Principal Investigator and you will be present during the interview. The interview will be audio recorded during the entire interview. You will be one of up to 15 women who will be interviewed for this study.

You will be asked to complete a short form about yourself, such as your age, ethnicity, where you grew up, educational background, marital status, parental status, employment status, and income level. It will take about 3 minutes to complete the survey.

C. Benefits and Risks

There will be no direct benefit to your participation in this project. Participants may experience some benefit from an opportunity to confidentially share their life stories as permitted by law, reflect on their own understandings and meanings about trauma, and the growth and healing from trauma that they have experienced. Research has shown that sharing personal stories can support participants in acknowledging how much they have grown and accomplished. An indirect benefit may occur as a result of the findings being shared. It is my hope that the results of this project will provide insight as to how Native Hawaiian women who have been incarcerated experience growth and positive transformation through overcoming trauma. Knowledge gained from this study may help other Native Hawaiian trauma survivors in the future if the information learned from this study can help design better gender-specific, trauma-informed interventions that support the growth, healing, and transformation of these women.

There may be a potential risk to you in participating in this research project. You may become stressed or uncomfortable answering some of the interview questions or discussing topics with me during the interview. If you do become stressed or uncomfortable, you can skip any question or take a break. You can also stop the interview or you can withdraw from the project at any time with no penalty. By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you
understand that if you are injured in the course of this research procedure, you may responsible for the cost of treating your injuries.

D. Cost

There will be no cost to me as a result of taking part in this study.

E. Compensation

You will receive a $25 store gift card to show appreciation for your time and willingness to participate in this project and share your life story. Completion of the interview is not required to receive the $25 gift card.

F. Privacy and Confidentiality

The confidentiality of all study-related records will be kept secure according to all applicable laws. Information gained during this study and information known about you will be confidential (private) to the extent permitted by state and federal law. The Committee on Human Studies may review research records to ensure the protection of subjects in this study, which may or may not include your records. When you are enrolled, you will be given a study number. After the interview has been written out from the audio recording, the audio recording will be destroyed. The results of this research may be presented at meetings or in publications; however, the information will be presented in summary form and will not identify you personally. A summary of the final findings will be made available to you.

G. Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your ability to receive services now or in the future.

H. Consent

I have read the above information. My questions about taking part in this study have been answered. My permission is freely given. Giving my consent does not take away any of my legal rights in case of negligence of anyone working on this project. A copy of this consent form has been given to me. If I have further questions about the study and my involvement, I may contact Ms. Tammy Martin at 218-2795 or tammymar@hawaii.edu to ask questions about the study at any time.

(If you cannot obtain satisfactory answers to your questions or comments or complaints about your treatment in this study, contact: Human Studies Program, University of Hawai‘i, 1960 East West Road, Biomed B104, Honolulu, HI 96822, Email: uhirb@hawaii.edu, Phone: 808-956-5007).

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign and date this signature page.

Signature(s) for Consent:

I give my permission to join the research project entitled:

Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing amongst Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Adult Female Trauma Survivors

Please initial next to either “Yes” or “No” to the following:
____ Yes  _____ No  I consent to be interviewed.
____ Yes  _____ No  I consent to be audio-recorded during the interview.
________________________
________________________

Participant’s Name (Print)  Participant’s Signature  Date/ Time

I have explained this research to the above participant. In my assessment the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent, and appears to be competent to give informed consent to take part in this research study.

________________________
________________________

Investigator’s Name (Print)  Investigator’s Signature  Date/ Time

(Individual obtaining Participant’s consent)
Appendix J: Consent Form – Modification #1

University of Hawai‘i
Consent to Participate in Research Project:
Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of
Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Adult Female Trauma Survivors

Tammy Kaho‘olemana Martin, MSW, Principal Investigator
University of Hawaii, Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work
Gartley Hall, 2430 Campus Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Phone: (808) 218 – 2795

Informed Consent
You are being asked to take part in this research study because you are a Native Hawaiian female over the age of 18yrs old, have witnessed or experienced one or more of the following types of trauma (e.g. domestic violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse and neglect), been incarcerated, and have experienced growth and healing from your struggles to overcome trauma. Approximately 12 – 15 women will be in the study.

Before you decide whether or not to take part in this study, you must understand the purpose, benefits, risks, and what you will be asked to do. This process is called informed consent.

The researcher will explain the study and the consent form to you. If you do not understand any part of this form or if you do not understand the words used, please ask the researcher at any time. Once you understand the study, and if you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign this consent form. You will be given a signed copy to keep if you do decide to be in the study.

Before you learn about the study, it is important that you know the following:
- Taking part in this study is voluntary.
- You may decide not to take part in the study or stop being in the study at any time.

I. Description and Purpose of Study
Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors is a research project that seeks to better understand the pathways to PTG (positive changes experienced from struggling to overcome trauma) and healing for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. In particular, strategies that have helped Native Hawaiian women heal from trauma, rebuild their lives, and successfully transition back into their home communities will be identified.

Thus, this study aims to: 1) honor the voices of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors through intensive, life history interviews; 2) identify factors that contribute to growth, healing, and transformation for these women; and 3) examine how Native Hawaiian identity, gender, social class, trauma, and incarceration impact the PTG and healing pathways of formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors. It is hoped that this research will expand upon existing models of PTG to will result in a model of the growth and healing process for Native Hawaiian women who have experienced trauma and incarceration. This study is being conducted as part of the Principle Investigator’s dissertation (school) research.

J. Procedures and Expected Length of Involvement in Study
You will be asked to take part in an intensive life history interview. A life history interview is an interview that focuses on an individual’s life experiences that are shared from the individual’s
perspective. If you participate in this project, you will meet with the Principal Investigator for an interview on a date and time and in a location that is convenient for you.

The interview will consist of approximately 16 open-ended questions and will take about one to two hours to complete. Interview questions will include questions like, “Can you describe what growing up was like for you?” “What or who helped you heal and grow from trauma in your life?” “In what ways, if any, did your incarceration as a Native Hawaiian woman impact your growth and healing process?”

Only the Principal Investigator and you will be present during the interview. The interview will be audio recorded during the entire interview. You will be one of up to 15 women who will be interviewed for this study.

You will be asked to complete a short form about yourself, such as your age, ethnicity, where you grew up, educational background, marital status, parental status, employment status, and income level. It will take about 3 minutes to complete the survey.

K. Benefits and Risks
There will be no direct benefit to your participation in this project. For participants on parole but not currently incarcerated, your decision to participate in this study will have no effect on your parole status. The parole board will not take into account your participation in this study in making decisions about your parole. Participants may experience some benefit from an opportunity to confidentially share their life stories as permitted by law, reflect on their own understandings and meanings about trauma, and the growth and healing from trauma that they have experienced. Research has shown that sharing personal stories can support participants in acknowledging how much they have grown and accomplished. An indirect benefit may occur as a result of the findings being shared. It is my hope that the results of this project will provide insight as to how Native Hawaiian women who have been incarcerated experience growth and positive transformation through overcoming trauma. Knowledge gained from this study may help other Native Hawaiian trauma survivors in the future if the information learned from this study can help design better gender-specific, trauma-informed interventions that support the growth, healing, and transformation of these women.

There may be a potential risk to you in participating in this research project. You may become stressed or uncomfortable answering some of the interview questions or discussing topics with me during the interview. If you do become stressed or uncomfortable, you can skip any question or take a break. You can also stop the interview or you can withdraw from the project at any time with no penalty. By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you understand that if you are injured in the course of this research procedure, you may responsible for the cost of treating your injuries.

L. Cost
There will be no cost to me as a result of taking part in this study.

M. Compensation
You will receive a $25 store gift card to show appreciation for your time and willingness to participate in this project and share your life story. Completion of the interview is not required to receive the $25 gift card.

N. Privacy and Confidentiality
The confidentiality of all study-related records will be kept secure according to all applicable laws. Information gained during this study and information known about you will be confidential (private) to the extent permitted by state and federal law. The Committee on Human Studies may review research records to ensure the protection of subjects in this study, which may or may not include your records. When you are enrolled, you will be given a study number. After the interview has been written out from
the audio recording, the audio recording will be destroyed. The results of this research may be presented at meetings or in publications; however, the information will be presented in summary form and will not identify you personally. A summary of the final findings will be made available to you.

O. Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your ability to receive services now or in the future.

P. Consent
I have read the above information. My questions about taking part in this study have been answered. My permission is freely given. Giving my consent does not take away any of my legal rights in case of negligence of anyone working on this project. A copy of this consent form has been given to me. If I have further questions about the study and my involvement, I may contact Ms. Tammy Martin at 218-2795 or tammymar@hawaii.edu to ask questions about the study at any time. You may contact the UH Human Studies Program at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu to discuss problems, concerns, and questions; obtain information; or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol. Please visit https://www.hawaii.edu/researchcompliance/information-research-participants for more information on your rights as a research participant.

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign and date this signature page.

Signature(s) for Consent:
I give my permission to join the research project entitled:
Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of
Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Adult Female Trauma Survivors

Please initial next to either “Yes” or “No” to the following:

_____ Yes  _____ No  I consent to be interviewed.

_____ Yes  _____ No  I consent to be audio-recorded during the interview.

Participant’s Name (Print)  Participant’s Signature  Date/ Time

I have explained this research to the above participant. In my assessment, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent, and appears to be competent to give informed consent to take part in this research study.

Investigator’s Name (Print)  Investigator’s Signature  Date/ Time

(Individual obtaining Participant’s consent)
Appendix L: Consent Form – Modification #2

University of Hawai‘i

Consent to Participate in Research Project:
Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Adult Female Trauma Survivors

Tammy Kaho‘olemana Martin, MSW, Principal Investigator
University of Hawai‘i, Myron B. Thompson, School of Social Work
Gartley Hall, 2430 Campus Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Phone: (808) 218 – 2795

Informed Consent
You are being asked to take part in this research study because you are a Native Hawaiian female over the age of 18 yrs old, have experienced one or more of the following types of trauma (e.g. domestic violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse and neglect), been incarcerated, and have experienced growth and healing from your struggles to overcome trauma. Approximately 12 – 15 women will be in the study.

Before you decide whether or not to take part in this study, you must understand the purpose, benefits, risks, and what you will be asked to do. This process is called informed consent. The researcher will explain the study and the consent form to you. If you do not understand any part of this form or if you do not understand the words used, please ask the researcher at any time. Once you understand the study, and if you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign this consent form. You will be given a signed copy to keep if you do decide to be in the study.

Before you learn about the study, it is important that you know the following:

● Taking part in this study is voluntary.
● You may decide not to take part in the study or stop being in the study at any time.

A. Description and Purpose of Study
Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Female Trauma Survivors is a research project that seeks to better understand the pathways to PTG (positive changes experienced from struggling to overcome trauma) and healing for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. In particular, strategies that have helped Native Hawaiian women heal from trauma, rebuild their lives, and successfully transition back into their home communities will be identified.

Thus, this study aims to: 1) honor the voices of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors through intensive, life history interviews; 2) identify factors that contribute to growth, healing, and transformation for these women; and 3) examine how Native Hawaiian identity, gender, social class, trauma, and incarceration impact the PTG and healing pathways of formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors. It is hoped that this research will expand upon existing models of PTG to result in a model of the growth and healing process for Native Hawaiian women who have experienced trauma and incarceration. This study is being conducted as part of the Principle Investigator’s dissertation (school) research.

B. Procedures and Expected Length of Involvement in Study
You will be asked to take part in an intensive life history interview. A life history interview is an interview that focuses on an individual’s life experiences that are shared from the individual’s perspective. If you participate in this project, you will meet with the Principal Investigator for an
interview on a date and time and in a location that is convenient for you.

The interview will consist of approximately 16 open ended questions and will take about one to two hours to complete. Interview questions will include questions like, “Can you describe what growing up was like for you?” “What or who helped you heal and grow from trauma in your life?” “In what ways, if any, did your incarceration as a Native Hawaiian woman impact your growth and healing process?”

Only the Principal Investigator and you will be present during the interview. The interview will be audio recorded during the entire interview. You will be one of up to 15 women who will be interviewed for this study.

You will be asked to complete a short form about yourself, such as your age, ethnicity, where you grew up, educational background, marital status, parental status, employment status, and income level. It will take about 3 minutes to complete the survey.

C. Benefits and Risks

There will be no direct benefit to your participation in this project. For participants on parole but not currently incarcerated, your decision to participate in this study will have no effect on your parole status. The parole board will not take into account your participation in this study in making decisions about your parole. Participants may experience some benefit from an opportunity to confidentially share their life stories as permitted by law, reflect on their own understandings and meanings about trauma, and the growth and healing from trauma that they have experienced. Research has shown that sharing personal stories can support participants in acknowledging how much they have grown and accomplished. An indirect benefit may occur as a result of the findings being shared. It is my hope that the results of this project will provide insight as to how Native Hawaiian women who have been incarcerated experience growth and positive transformation through overcoming trauma. Knowledge gained from this study may help other Native Hawaiian trauma survivors in the future if the information learned from this study can help design better gender-specific, trauma-informed interventions that support the growth, healing, and transformation of these women.

There may be a potential risk to you in participating in this research project. You may become stressed or uncomfortable answering some of the interview questions or discussing topics with me during the interview. If you do become stressed or uncomfortable, you can skip any question or take a break. You can also stop the interview or you can withdraw from the project at any time with no penalty. By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you understand that if you are injured in the course of this research procedure, you may responsible for the cost of treating your injuries.

D. Cost

There will be no cost to me as a result of taking part in this study.

E. Compensation

You will receive a $25 store gift card to show appreciation for your time and willingness to participate in this project and share your life story. Completion of the interview is not required to receive the $25 gift card.

F. Privacy and Confidentiality

The confidentiality of all study-related records will be kept secure according to all applicable laws. Information gained during this study and information known about you will be confidential (private) to the extent permitted by state and federal law. The Committee on Human Studies may review research records to ensure the protection of subjects in this study, which may or may not include your records. When you are enrolled, you will be given a study number. After the interview has been written out from the audio recording, the audio recording will be destroyed. The results of this research may be
presented at meetings or in publications; however, the information will be presented in summary form using a pseudonym that you select and will not identify you personally unless you consent to the use of your actual name. A summary of the final findings will be made available to you.

G. Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your ability to receive services now or in the future.

H. Consent
I have read the above information. My questions about taking part in this study have been answered. My permission is freely given. Giving my consent does not take away any of my legal rights in case of negligence of anyone working on this project. A copy of this consent form has been given to me. If I have further questions about the study and my involvement, I may contact Ms. Tammy Martin at 218-2795 or tammymar@hawaii.edu to ask questions about the study at any time.
You may contact the UH Human Studies Program at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu to discuss problems, concerns, and questions; obtain information; or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol. Please visit https://www.hawaii.edu/researchcompliance/information-research-participants for more information on your rights as a research participant.

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign and date this signature page.

Signature(s) for Consent:
I give my permission to join the research project entitled: Exploring the Pathways to Posttraumatic Growth and Healing of Formerly Incarcerated Native Hawaiian Adult Female Trauma Survivors

Please initial next to either “Yes” or “No” to the following:

_____ Yes _____ No   I consent to be interviewed.

_____ Yes _____ No   I consent to be audio-recorded during the interview.

_____ Yes _____ No   I consent to use my actual name as printed below.

Participant’s Name (Print)        Participant’s Signature        Date/ Time

I have explained this research to the above participant. In my judgement the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent, and appears to be competent to give informed consent to take part in this research study.

Investigator’s Name (Print)       Investigator’s Signature       Date/ Time

(Individual obtaining Participant’s consent)
Appendix M: PTG Interview Guide

Aloha and mahalo for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is Tammy Kaho’olemana Martin and I am seeking to better understand the pathways of PTG (positive changes experienced from struggling to overcome trauma) and healing for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated. The purpose of my research is to closely examine the life histories of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated to identify strategies, interventions, and programs that have helped Native Hawaiian women heal from trauma, rebuild their lives, and successfully transition back into their home communities will be identified.

Thus, this study aims to: 1) honor the voices of Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors; 2) identify factors that contribute to growth, healing, and transformation for these women; and 3) examine how Native Hawaiian identity, gender, social class, trauma, and incarceration impact the PTG and healing pathways for formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors. It is hoped that this research will also expand upon existing models of PTG and will result in a model of the growth and healing pathways for Native Hawaiian women who have experienced trauma and incarceration. This study is being conducted as part of the Principal Investigator’s dissertation (school) research.

Before we begin, I just want to say that I really value your time and willingness to talk to me about your life experiences. If there is anything I ask you that you would rather not talk about, please let me know and we will skip to the next question. If you need a break at any time, just let me know. Also, please feel free to ask me any questions as we go along. Ok? If at any time, you want to stop the interview, we will do so or you can withdraw from the project at any time with no penalty.

This interview is about your life story. In particular, I am interested in those aspects of your life story that in some way shed light upon how you were able to grow and heal from the trauma you’ve experienced. I am also interested in learning about psychological, behavioral, and physical changes that have occurred for you before, during, and after the traumas you have experienced. I want to remind you that everything you share with me today is confidential (private) as allowed by law – which means I will not share with anyone that “you said this or that” or link your name or anything about you to our interview. However, if you disclose that you will harm yourself or someone else, I have a mandatory duty to report this safety risk. I hope that you will feel free to be as honest as possible. If there is anything that you do not understand or feel uncomfortable about during the interview, let me know, OK?

This interview is organized into different sections, including a general overview of various time periods in your life, details about traumas you’ve experienced, and the negative and positive impacts those traumas have had on your life. In particular, I am interested in finding out what strategies were effective in helping you to grow, heal, and transform from trauma. We will probably talk for about 1 - 2 hours. To help me remember our interview, it will be recorded. Do you have any questions? Do you give your consent to participate in the interview, and for it to be recorded only for my use? If so, can you please check the boxes marked “yes”, sign, and date the consent form?
Before we start, I’d like to ask you some questions: (see Appendix E: Demographics Information Form)

**Interview Questions:**

1. **Background:** Can you describe what growing up was like for you?
   - What was family life like for you? What was it like going to school for you?
   - What major life events were significant in shaping who you are today?
   - Can you describe who were the most important people in your life while you were growing up?

2. **Traumatic Experiences:** In your own words, what were some of the traumas you experienced growing up? *I am aware that these memories can be tough to talk about, but I appreciate your willingness to share them with me.*
   - What happened? When did that event take place? Who was involved? Do you think that your traumatic experiences were particularly difficult because you are a woman? How did you react? What ran through your mind? What type of feelings came up for you? How were you impacted physically and emotionally? How would you describe your bodily changes before, during, and after the traumatic experiences in your life?

3. **Impact of Native Hawaiian Ethnic Identity:** In what ways, if any, did your Native Hawaiian ethnic identity impact your ability to heal from trauma? *(It could support or hinder ability to heal from trauma.)*

4. **Impact of social class:** In what ways, if any, do you feel your social class have impacted your ability to overcome the trauma you have experienced in life? *(It could support or hinder ability to heal from trauma.)*
   - Was there something about your social status in your community that has had a particular impact on you? In what ways, if any, has that impact changed before, during, and after the trauma you experienced?

5. **Impact of Incarceration:** What was it like to be incarcerated in Hawaii’s criminal/legal system?
   - What happened? What thoughts ran through your mind? What type of feelings came up for you when you were arrested? sentenced? in prison? How long has it been since you were released from Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC) or any other correctional facility? What, if anything, did you learn from this experience? In what ways, if any, did incarceration as a Native Hawaiian woman impact your growth and healing process? In what ways do you feel that your Native Hawaiian ethnic identity has helped or hindered your growth?

6. **Coping Strategies/ Social Supports:** How did you cope or deal with your trauma experiences? Did your coping strategies change over time (days, weeks, months, years later)?
Have you talked with anyone else about these experiences? (self-disclosure) Have others helped you in coping with these experiences? If so, in what ways were they helpful?

7. **Posttraumatic growth definition:** How do you define Posttraumatic Growth?

8. **Posttraumatic Growth:** Thinking back to the trauma you have experienced, what are some highlights of the positive personal changes that have come out of your trauma experience(s)?
   
   What or who helped you grow from trauma in your life? Friends, family, professionals, etc.?

9. **Healing:** How do you define healing:
   
   What or who helped you to heal from the trauma in your life? Friends, family, professionals, etc.?

10. **Changes in perspectives (appreciation of life, new possibilities):** How would you describe the person you are now, compared to who you were before or during the traumatic experiences of your life?

    In what ways, if any, have your views about yourself, your family and the world changed over time? Are you able to see different possibilities in your life now? Has the trauma you experienced led to a change in your appreciation of life? What do you think caused this change in your perspectives?

11. **Changes in ability to relate to others:** How would you describe how your ability to relate to others has changed before, during, and after traumatic times in your life?

12. **Changes in personal strength:** In what ways have you changed your perspectives about your personal strength before, during, and after traumatic experiences in your life?

13. **Changes in spiritual development:** In what ways has your spiritual development changed before, during, or after traumatic experiences in your life?

14. **Meaning-Making:** After people experience trauma, some people say that they were able to find meaning in the experience or that they have made sense out of it. Have you found some sort of meaning from the trauma you experienced? If so, what meaning have you given to the trauma you have experienced?

15. **Future Hopes and Dreams:** Thinking about your future, what do you envision for yourself? In other words, what would you like to do with your life?

    What are some of the goals and dreams that you would like to accomplish?

**Wrap-Up:**

16. Is there anything I haven’t asked you that you would like to talk about or that you think is important for me to know to understand your growth experiences and/or life choices you’ve made since your earlier trauma, including involvement with Hawaii’s criminal/legal system?
17. Is there another woman that you think I should interview to learn more about the posttraumatic growth and healing process for Native Hawaiian female trauma survivors who have been incarcerated?

18. Can you share with me what was it like for you to participate in this study?

**Closing Interview:**
Mahalo for volunteering your time and valuable insights. You will also be invited to an optional focus group meeting to hear the findings and verify the findings. You will also be asked if anything is missing from the preliminary findings. Finally, you will be asked to provide recommendations you may have about how to use the study and what emerges from women’s stories in the development of pilot interventions, strategies or programs for other Native Hawaiian women survivors of family violence and related trauma, who have been incarcerated. Your individual information will remain confidential as allowed by law. A summary of the findings will be made available to you whether or not you participate in the optional focus group.
# Appendix N: Sample Referral Resources Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinic and Address</th>
<th>Contact Name and phone #</th>
<th>Accepts</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Fees</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HONOLULU</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Kalihi-Palama Health Center  
KPHC Behavioral Health  
952 N. King St.  
Honolulu, HI 96817 | Michelle Lee  
(808) 841 – 7981 | Uninsured, Underinsured, & Insured | All income levels accepted | Sliding Scale Available | Medical Services, Mental health services |
| Kalihi-Palama Health Center  
KPHC Downtown  
89 S. King St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813 | Bernadette Jardin  
(BJ) Medical Supervisor  
(808) 792-5582 | Uninsured, Underinsured, & Insured | All income levels accepted | Sliding Scale Available | Women’s Health  
(3rd floor), Counseling/Mental Health Services  
5th floor) |
| Ke Ola Hou Clinic  
1475 Linapuni St., Bldg. A  
115  
Honolulu, HI 96819 | Main Line  
(808) 791 - 9400 | Call for details | Call for details | Call for details | Behavioral Health |
| Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive  
1846 Gulick Ave.  
Honolulu, HI 96819  
http://www.kkv.net | (808) 848 - 0977 | No insurance guidelines | All income levels accepted | Call clinic for details | Women’s Health, Counseling/Mental Health Services |
| Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services  
2239 N. School St. | (808) 791 - 9400 | Uninsured, Underinsured, Insured, Medicare, & Medicaid | All income levels accepted | Call clinic for details | Counseling, Behavioral Health Rehab |
Appendix O: Mercy House Core Values

Mercy House Core Values
MH Motto: “Harmony in the Hale!”

M - Mindful
We are mindful of ourselves and each other.

E - Edify
We edify one another with love and compassion.

R - Respect
We respect ourselves and each other at all times.

C - Commit
We commit to ourselves and each other.

Y - Yes
We say “YES” to embrace change!

H - Harmony
We work toward harmony in the hale!

O - Openness
We are open to feedback.

U - Understanding
We work toward understanding ourselves and one another.

S - Supportive
We are supportive & solution-focused in our thoughts & actions.

E - Elevate
We elevate and uplift each other!!

Created by Mercy House Team 2017
Mercy House Core Values
MH Motto: “Harmony in the Hale!”

Mindful – conscious or aware and appreciative of something; alert; attentive; careful; paying attention; watchful; observant

Edify – instruct, teach, inform, guide, educate, nurture; make understand; to instruct especially to encourage intellectual, moral & spiritual development

Respect – a feeling of appreciation, being regarded with honor or esteem, consideration or appreciation; show admiration for, avoid interfering or intruding upon; treat courteously and kindly

Commit – to promise to do something; make a pledge; devote oneself to a particular cause, action, or attitude.

Yes – to agree; used to express affirmation, agreement, positive confirmation, or consent. Can also be used to express great satisfaction, approval, or happiness

Harmony – agreement in action, opinion, or feeling; peace, unity, friendship, compatibility; a relationship in which various components exist together without conflict

Openness – willing to consider or deal with something; accessible to all; free of prejudice; receptive to new ideas; free of secrecy; honesty; truthfulness; candidness

Understanding – the ability to learn, evaluate, and make decisions; tolerant and accepting toward others; comprehension; a state of cooperation with others; personal interpretation; appreciate or share the feelings of others

Supportive – giving or able to give help; providing moral or emotional support; caring; encouraging; understanding; reassuring

Solution-Focused – future-focused, goal-directed approach that highlights the importance of searching for solutions rather than focusing on problems; strengths-based approach that emphasizes people’s resiliency, strengths, and resources and explores how these can be used to pursue goals and work toward purposeful, positive change. Allows people to adopt different perspectives to look at a specific situation to deepen their understanding of triggers and consequences

Elevate – to raise up, move someone or something to a higher place; promote; lift the spirits; put in a cheerful mood; to raise to a higher intellectual, cultural, or spiritual level (Roman Catholic Church - to lift up the Host at Mass for adoration)
Mercy House Core Values

MH Motto: “Harmony in the Hale!”


Definitions for Mercy House Core Values were adapted from the above listed sources.
Appendix P: E Ho Mai Chant and Translation

E Ho Mai
Na Puaatui Kauahelo

E hō mai ka ike mai lunā mai e
O nā mea huna no eau o nā
Mele e
E hō mai, e hō mai, e hō mai e
(oli 3 times)

Translations:
Grant us the knowledge from above.
Concerning the hidden wisdom of songs.
Grant.
Grant.
Grant us these things
Appendix Q: Oli Mahalo (Gratitude Chant) and Translation

ʻŪhola ʻia ka makaloa lā
The makaloa mat has been unfolded

Pūʻai i ke aloha lā
Food is shared in love

Kukaʻi ia ka ha loa lā
The great breath is exchanged

Pāwehi mai na lehua
The lehua honors and adores

Mai ka hoʻokuʻi a ka hālāwai lā
From zenith to horizon

Mahalo e nā akua
Gratitude to God

Mahalo e nā kupuna la ʻeā
Gratitude to our ancestors

Mahalo me ke aloha lā
Gratitude with love

Mahalo me ke aloha lā
Gratitude with love
Appendix R: Kūkaniloko Protocol

Hawaiian Civic Club of Wahiawa

WELCOMING CEREMONY PROTOCOL
The Hawaiian Civic Club of Wahiawa (HCCW)
Nā Pōhaku Hānā o Kūkaniloko
by HCCW Kaha Peter Lenoe’s

1. **ENTRANCE** by visitors guided by an HCCW member from the road – from Hikina (East), go to Akau (North), go to Komohana (West), go to Hema (South).

2. **CONCH SHELL** blower uses “Lua Protocol” blowing at least 4 times, once in each direction – Akau, Hema, Hikina, Komohana – recognizing the winds that blow into the Hawai‘i archipelago, as the visitors enter from the Hikina (East) entrance and then again at the Hema (South) entrance announcing their arrival.

3. **VISITORS: Mele Kāhea** – Song/Chant asking permission to enter by group or individual

4. **HCCW: Mele Komo** – Song/Chant granting permission to enter by a member of HCCW

5. **VISITORS: Ho‘okupu** if any, presented at this time.

6. **HCCW: Mele Aloha** – Song/Chant of Welcome to all both the seen and unseen. Tag with a: **Mele Pāke**: Song/Chant asking Peaceful Beings in the heavens to clear a path from any negative or unwelcomed presence. (HCCW)

7. **HCCW: Pīhai** or Cleansing Ritual by Kaha Lenoe’s using salt water and lawa for tī leaf done for each individual who wants to - this is by choice and not mandatory. The Hona or traditional greeting...exchange “Ha” the essence of breath of life.

8. **HCCW: Pule** from Lua Protocol:

   *Ma ka pi‘io o ke po‘o... may this Pīhai cleanse you from the top of your head
   *o ka po‘o o ha wai‘ane... to the bottom of your feet
   *a loa ma na kūhe‘a o ke kī... and the four corners of your body
   *Amama ma no ke lele wale... the prayers are finished, free from kepu, let them fly

9. **HCCW may now present Ho‘okupu at this time.

10. The on-site learning of Ke Ao O Kūkaniloko (Enlightenment of Kūkaniloko) by kū‘i Tom Lenoe’s

11. **VISITORS: O‘i Mahalo** by visiting group or an individual

12. **HCCW:** will respond in kind by an individual or a group.

13. **We are Complete...Mahalo**

   * “e kaua‘oe na kau o Kūkaniloko no ha mea aloha no ho‘iakou i lākou i nā kau a kau...”
   “to guard the kapu of Kūkaniloko because we love them for all time...”
REFERENCES


Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Prisoners under State or Federal jurisdiction sentenced to more than one year, Federal and State-by- State, 1977-2004: Statistical Tables,” December 360


Chesney-Lind, M., & Brady, K. (2010). Ending Hawai‘i’s imprisonment boom: Let’s be smart
on crime, not simply tough. In C. Howes & J. K. K. Osorio (Eds.), The value of Hawai‘i: Knowing the past, shaping the future (pp. 109–115). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai‘i Press.


Hawai‘i State Department of Health, Office of Health Status Monitoring, special tabulation from the Hawai‘i Health Survey, Retrieved from: http://hawaii.gov/dbedt/info/economic/databook/2008-individual/01/


Keahiolalo-Karasuda, R. (2010, September 20). Testimony to the Hawai‘i Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights regarding the overrepresentation of Hawaiians in prison. Testimony, Liliha Public Library, Honolulu, HI.


Lipe, Kawaiikauikawuki K. (2014). *Aloha as fearlessness: Lessons from the moʻolelo of* 368
eight Native Hawaiian female educational leaders on transforming the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa into a Hawaiian place of learning. (Order No. 3648569). Available from Dissertations & Theses @ University of Hawai‘i at Manoa; Dissertations & Theses @ University of Hawaii; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1651930243). Retrieved from http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/docview/1651930243?accountid=27140


McElheran, M., Briscoe-Smith, A., Khaylis, A., Westrup, D., Hayward, C. & Gore-Felton, C.


Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Justice Policy Institute, University of Hawai‘i, & Georgetown University. (2010). The disparate treatment of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system. Honolulu, HI: Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Retrieved from


Van Voorhis, P. (2008). Technical assistance provided to review the system for classifying incarcerated and re-entering women offenders (National Institute of Corrections, 2008).


