

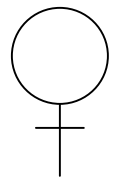
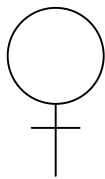
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Present

**Frameworks
for
Life**



Frameworks for Life

A program for women offenders

“As the number of female offenders in all areas of correctional supervision increases at a dramatic rate, it is important for practitioners and policy makers to develop an understanding of the specific issues and concerns related to female offenders.”¹

Frameworks for Life uses the empowerment model of skill building to develop competencies to enable the women offenders to achieve independence. This program works with offenders to broaden their range of responses to various types of behaviour and needs, enhancing their coping and decision making skills. It incorporates fun and play and provides strategies and skills rather than a clinical model of correctional treatment.

Historically, correctional programs, either in prison or in the community, have been unable to meet the unique needs of female offenders. Designed to serve the predominately male offender population, correctional agencies have not addressed the multidimensional problems that form the context for women’s criminal behavior. Similarly, co-correctional programs, serving male and female offenders together, tend to focus on their predominately male participants, with treatment strategies aimed at men.¹

The most effective strategies for working with women combine innovative program design and life skills training with a focus on the multidimensional problems of women offenders. Using games, role-plays and relaxation and meditation women will learn and practice interpersonal and practical skills including problem solving.

Goals of Treatment:

Growth

More fulfilling interaction patterns

Clearer communications

Expanded awareness

Authenticity

Changes in behavioural consequences between persons in order to eliminate maladaptive or problematic behaviour²

Outline of Program:

Module 1

Skills and Strategies through play including the creation of *The Castle- special space*

Module 2

Acting Out

Module 3

Keeping it together

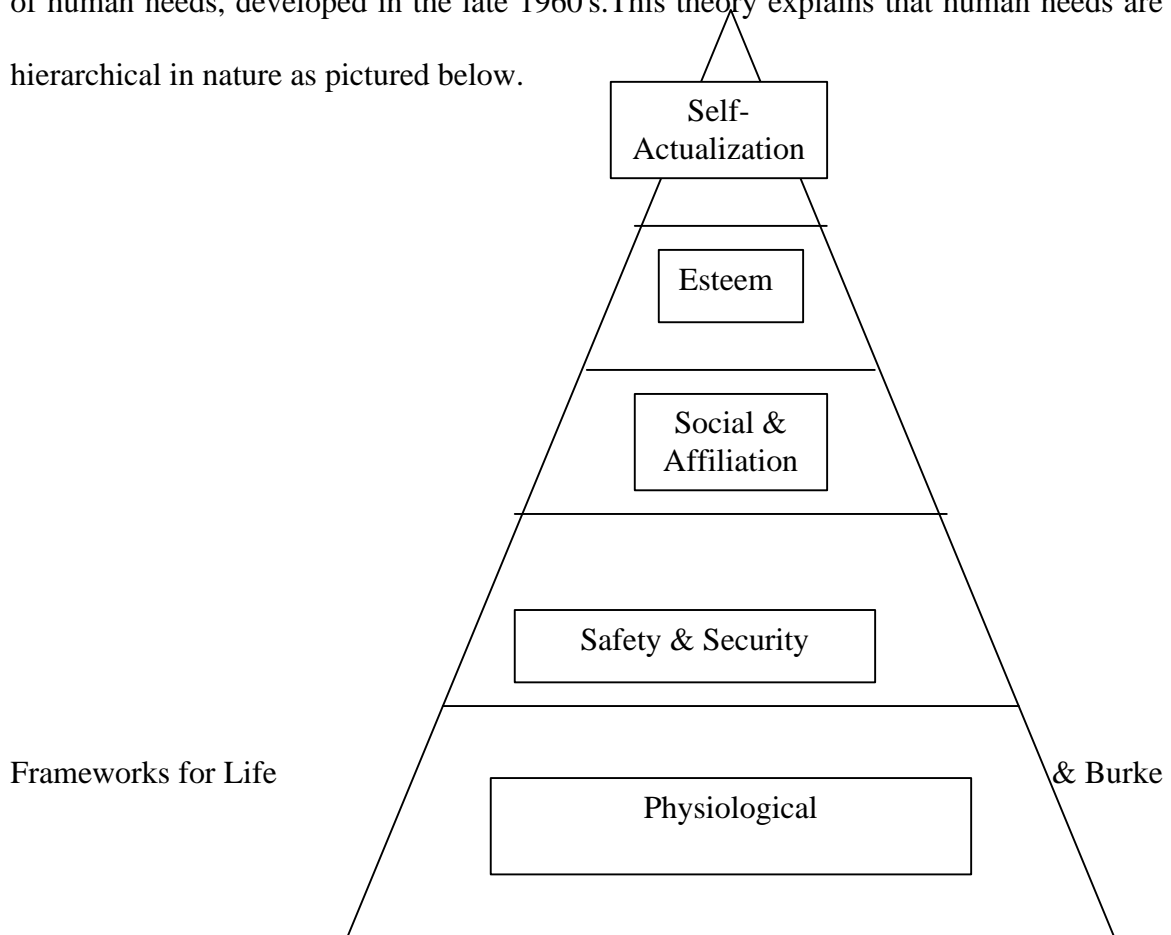
Each session includes activities from each of the Modules outlined and begins and concludes with meditation processes. Programming remains flexible to ensure a proactive approach rather than a reactive one.

Objectives:

- ❖ Personal accountability
- ❖ Deeper awareness & understanding of their experiences
- ❖ Focusing on strengths & exploring options
- ❖ Developing an awareness of self determined actions
- ❖ Establishing a planning process
- ❖ Developing an understanding of unequal distribution of power
- ❖ Calculating risk factors & restrictions

Background:

One of Abraham Maslow's ³ most important contributions to psychology was his theory of human needs, developed in the late 1960's. This theory explains that human needs are hierarchical in nature as pictured below.



Maslow Hierarchy of Needs (explained):

1. Physiological Needs. These needs are the strongest because if deprived, the person could or would die. These include needs such as oxygen, food, water, warmth/coolness, and protection from storms.

2. Safety Needs. Felt by adults during emergencies, periods of disorganization in the social structure.

3. Love, Affection and Belongingness Needs. The needs to escape loneliness and alienation and give (and receive) love, affection and the sense of belonging.

4. Esteem Needs. Need for a stable, firmly based, high level of self-respect, and respect from others in order to feel satisfied, self confident and valuable.

5. Self-actualization Needs. Maslow describes self-actualization as an ongoing process. Self-actualizing people are devoted, work at something, something very precious to them—some calling or vocation.

**If these needs are not met, the person feels inferior, weak, helpless and worthless
restlessness, on edge and tense.**

Maslow believed that the only reason that people would not move through the needs to self-actualization is because of the hindrances placed in their way by society.

Maslow indicated that educational process could take some of the steps listed below to promote personal growth:

1. We should teach people that life is precious, that there is joy to be experienced in life, and if people are open to seeing the good and joyous in all kinds of situations, it makes life worth living.

2. We must accept the person and help him or her learn their inner nature. From real knowledge of aptitudes and limitations we can know what to build upon.

3. We must see that the person's basic needs are satisfied. That includes safety, belongingness and esteem needs.

4. We should teach people that controls are good, and complete abandon is bad. It takes control to improve the quality of life in all areas.

5. We must teach people to be decision makers. They must be given practice in making choices.

Frameworks for Life – is concentrated at meeting level three and four of the hierarchy of needs, that of Social & Affiliation and Esteem. This program is designed to empower the women to make responsible life decisions. It stresses skill building for independent living.

Module 1:

Skills and Strategies through play

Edward de Bono⁴ is regarded by many as the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill. He is the originator of lateral thinking that treats creativity as the behaviour of information in a self-organising information system.

Edward de Bono's theories on thinking strategies have been developed into a series of games that cover the complex themes such as negotiation, planning and co-operation. By working through structured games, skills and strategies in negotiation, identification of needs and values, risk taking, communication and co-operation are developed.

Resource:

edward de bono's *super mind pack* - Expand your thinking powers with strategic games and mental exercises

Publisher: Dorling Kindersley Limited Great Britain 1998

ISBN: 0 7513 0458 1

Module 2:

Acting Out

This module further develops the strategies and skills being examined through Module 1 by incorporating culturally and gender specific role-plays. Topics selected to explore were chosen because of their relevance to the women involved in this program. Some of situations explored include those around issues of;

Anger

Domestic violence

Dependency – relationship co-dependency, Drug & Alcohol issues

Communication

Risk taking

Decision-making

Unequal distribution of power

Module 3

Keeping it together

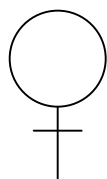
The Castle- Creating a special place to be used during the meditation process. It also gives participants the opportunity to create something special and gain a great sense of achievement.

Meditation, relaxation and positive self talk were used in this module to ensure that the skills and strategies being developed were able to be successfully incorporated some practical support for when the stress levels were at their highest.

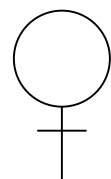
Meditation is used to clear and defuse negative feelings. It opens and clears the mind. The process of releasing any remaining tension and to stimulate the mind and body will include self-massage. It will enable participants to focus on the tasks ahead.

Acknowledgements

1. J Austin, B Bloom, T Donahue, Female Offenders in the Community: An Analysis of Innovative Strategies and Programs, National Institute on Crime and Delinquency, San Francisco CA, 1992
2. V. Peterson, B Nisenholz, Orientation to Counselling-Third Edition, Allyn & Bacon Asimon & Schuster Co. USA 1995
3. Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, D. Van Nostrand Company, 1968
4. Edward de Bono, Teaching Thinking, Penguin Books, 1991 ISBN 0140137858



Frameworks for Life



Usher & Burke