WHY WE ADVOCATE

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

NOVA 51ST ANNUAL TRAINING EVENT

SAN FRANCISCO

July 22-25, 2025

Why We Advocate: Celebrating Community

A Power-Up & Thrive Community Collaboration for GBV Survivors to Embrace Post-Traumatic Growth

Susan Omilian and Anastasia Sadowski

July 22 – July 25, 2025

San Francisco, CA

Accessibility Statement
Declaración de Accesibilidad

At NOVA, we are passionate about creating language justice and accessibility. We appreciate all conference attendees for supporting our efforts toward creating an accessible and inclusive environment for everyone.

En NOVA nos apasiona promover la justicia del lenguaje y la accesibilidad. Apreciamos a todas las personas que asisten a la conferencia por apoyar nuestros esfuerzos por crear un entorno accesible e inclusivo para todas las personas.

Today's Presenters

Susan Omilian

- A domestic violence homicide survivor
- Attorney, author, originator/facilitator of My Avenging Angel Workshops™ based on "living well is best revenge."
- Creator of Thriver Zone Motivational Model™ and Power Up & Thrive Community Collaboration.™

Anastasia Sadowski

- Survivor of gender-based violence
- Attended 2023 My Avenging Angel Workshops™.
- Now part of monthly follow-up group mentoring sessions.
- Her thriver goals are going back to school and making a career change.

In Our Time Together

- Explore how encouraging "Post-Trauma Growth" (PTG) is What's Next? on continuum of care for victim/survivor services.
- Learn *Thriver Zone Motivational Model™* with *7 Steps to Thriving After Abuse*™ and *Road Map for Journey to Real You™*.
- See Model together with *Power Up & Thrive Community Collaboration™* can enhance your program's ability to help survivors reclaim their lives after abuse.

What is Gender-Based Violence (GBV)?

- Gender-Based Violence includes different types of violence such as physical, sexual, psychological abuse, threats, coercion, economic deprivation and even deprivation of liberty towards a person based on such factors . . . including biological sex, gender identity or expression and even expectations of what is socially expected of a man or woman. *(CDC, 2022)*

- It is estimated globally 736 million women -- one in three -- have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence or both at least once in their lifetime *(World Health Organization 2018).*

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Remembering Maggie

VIDEO is on HOME PAGE of www.ThriverZone.com
or on YouTube.com at https://bit.ly/ThriverVideo

My Avenging Angel Workshops™

Based on idea "Living Well is the Best Revenge"

- All-day Workshop in Two Sessions
  - Free! Have been in-person, now virtual
  - Positive focus, not asked to tell their story
  - Exercises include visioning and goal-setting exercises

- Follow-up Monthly Group Mentoring Sessions and Retreats
  - Free! In-person, virtual. Positive focus, not tell their story
  - Stabilize their lives emotionally, financially and socially
  - Role model for each other how to move on after abuse

Working Post-Trauma

Women Primarily, also Men with Trauma History

Working in Post-Trauma Period

- Referrals from Crisis Intervention Programs
  e.g. Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault
- Victims of Multiple Traumas / PTSD / CPTSD
- Low Self-Esteem, Lack of Confidence
- Deal with Physical Safety, also Fear of Rejection, Loss, Failure, Success in moving their lives forward

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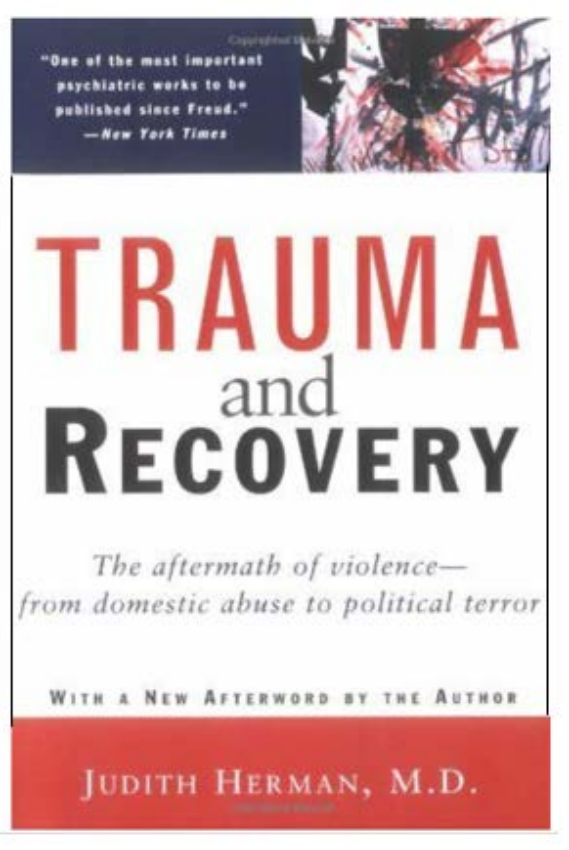
Recovery From Trauma



The core experiences of trauma are disempowerment and disconnection with others and recovery therefore is based on the empowerment of the survivor

and the creation of new connections.

— *DR. JUDITH HERMAN*

from Trauma and Recovery *(1992)*

What's Missing on Continuum of Care?

Safety and Stability → **Remembering and Mourning** → **Connection and Re-Integration**

- Hotline
- Crisis Counseling
- Victim Advocacy
- Court Advocacy

<u>Support Groups</u>

Provide support, info & resources for survivors to access so they can move beyond the crisis of their situation.

What's NEXT??

From Herman's Three Stages of Trauma Recovery (1992)

For Journey from Victim to Survivor

Goals:

- Leave the Abuse & Ensure Safety
- Prosecute Offender

Other Needs:

- Identify Impacts of Abuse on Victim
- Reclaim Life Goals/Desires
- Have Peace, Freedom & Safety in Home
- Break the Cycle of Violence

From the Beginning -- Anastasia

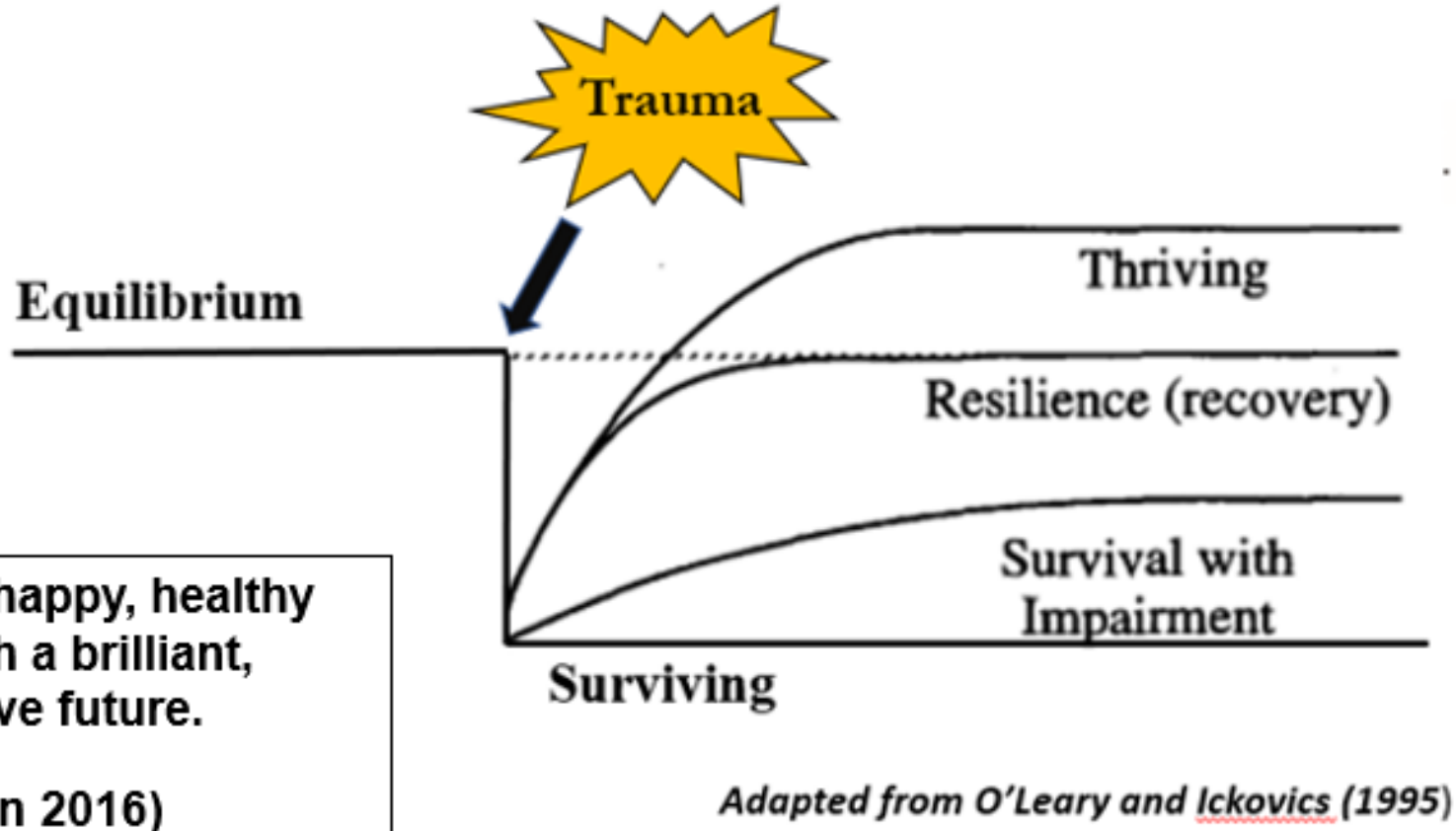
- I was skeptical anyone could help or there was a way forward.
- I felt crushed. The “snow globe” containing my future life had been shattered.
- I was convinced my life was over. I didn’t believe I deserved to be happy again.
- I was desperate and I didn’t want to stay stuck there. When I saw the workshop flyer, it gave me a glimmer of hope.

Post-Traumatic Growth Takes Many Forms

- Building Personal Strength
- Improved Relationship with Self
- More Appreciation of Life
- Seeing New Life Paths and Possibilities
- Finding Life's Meaning and Purpose
- Discovering a New Life Story

from *The PTG Workbook by Richard G. Tedeschi, Bret A. Moore (2016)*

Thriving = Post Trauma Growth



A thriver is a happy, healthy person with a brilliant, productive future.

(Omilian 2016)

Adapted from O'Leary and Ickovics (1995)

"Finding growth opportunities and function at levels above perhaps far above, where we were before."

Anastasia's Journey to Thriving

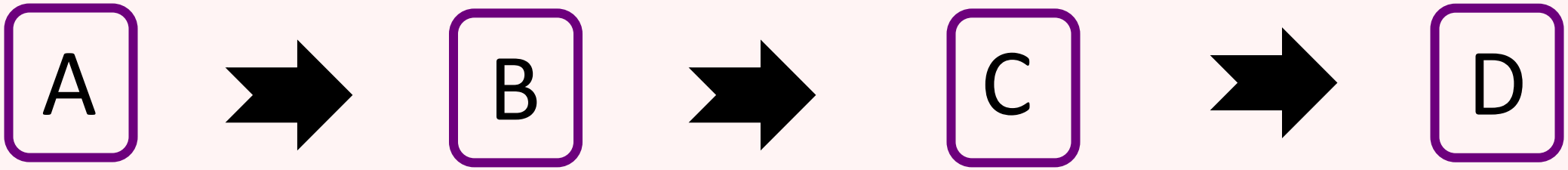
- Susan's idea of victim-to-survivor-to-thriver gave me so much hope.
- The vision of my Happy Person Inside motivated me to begin to take action.
- That my Inner Critic negative voice in my head had been convincing me I couldn't start my life over.
- The workshop created a bigger, larger vision of what I can achieve today with the support of the Thriver community.

Seven Step for Thriving After Abuse™

1. **See Your Journey**
2. **Quiet the Inner Critic**
3. **Connect with Happy Person Inside**
4. **Get Positive Energy**
5. **Vision a New Life**
6. **Overcome Fears**
7. **Set New Goals**

(Omilian 2016)

Road Map for Journey to Real You™



POSITIVE ENERGY

FOCUSED DESIRE

OVERCOME FEAR

FIND REAL YOU!

(Omilian 2018)

Sinko's Domains of Healing, Recovery

1. Trauma Processing and Reexamination
2. Managing Negative States
3. Rebuilding the Self
4. Connecting with Others
5. Regaining Hope and Power

(Sinko 2021)

Model's Curriculum Matches the Research

Susan's Seven Steps to Thriving	Domains of GBV Recovery, Healing
Step #1 ~ See Your Journey	Trauma Processing & Reexamination
Step #2 ~ Quiet the Inner Critic	Managing Negative States
Step #3 ~ Connect with Happy Person	Rebuilding the Self
Step #4 ~ Get Positive Energy	Connecting with Others
Step #5 ~ Vision A New Life	
Step #6 ~ Overcome Fears	Regaining Hope and Power
Step #7 ~ Set New Goals	

(Sinko 2021)

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS of Workshops 2002 -2020 *

Participants in the 38 in-person workshops conducted over an 18-year period from 2002 to 2020 reported an overall improvement of 15% across all statements asked in the survey.

Wide-Ranging Effectiveness even when

- Workshops conducted in various locations and
- Group size varied from 1 to 16 participants

. . . Demonstrating flexibility and adaptability of the program.

Consistency: Despite different settings and group sizes, workshops consistently resulted in significant positive changes.

*Data Coding/Analysis by Dr. Wagers, Dr. Horn, Department of Criminology, Univ. of So. Florida (USF)

Highest Effectiveness Data Matches Research

Pre- & Post-Workshop Survey Data

#3 - 37.2% -- Quiet critical voices in their heads.

#4 - 46.6% -- Fear never getting their life together.

#6 - 40.7% -- Figure out who they are, want to be.

#8 - 40.5% -- Can do something about abuse.

#9 - 42% -- Finding others with similar experiences who want to change their lives

Domains of GBV Recovery and Healing (Sinko 2021)

Trauma Processing and Reexamination

Managing Negative States

Rebuilding the Self

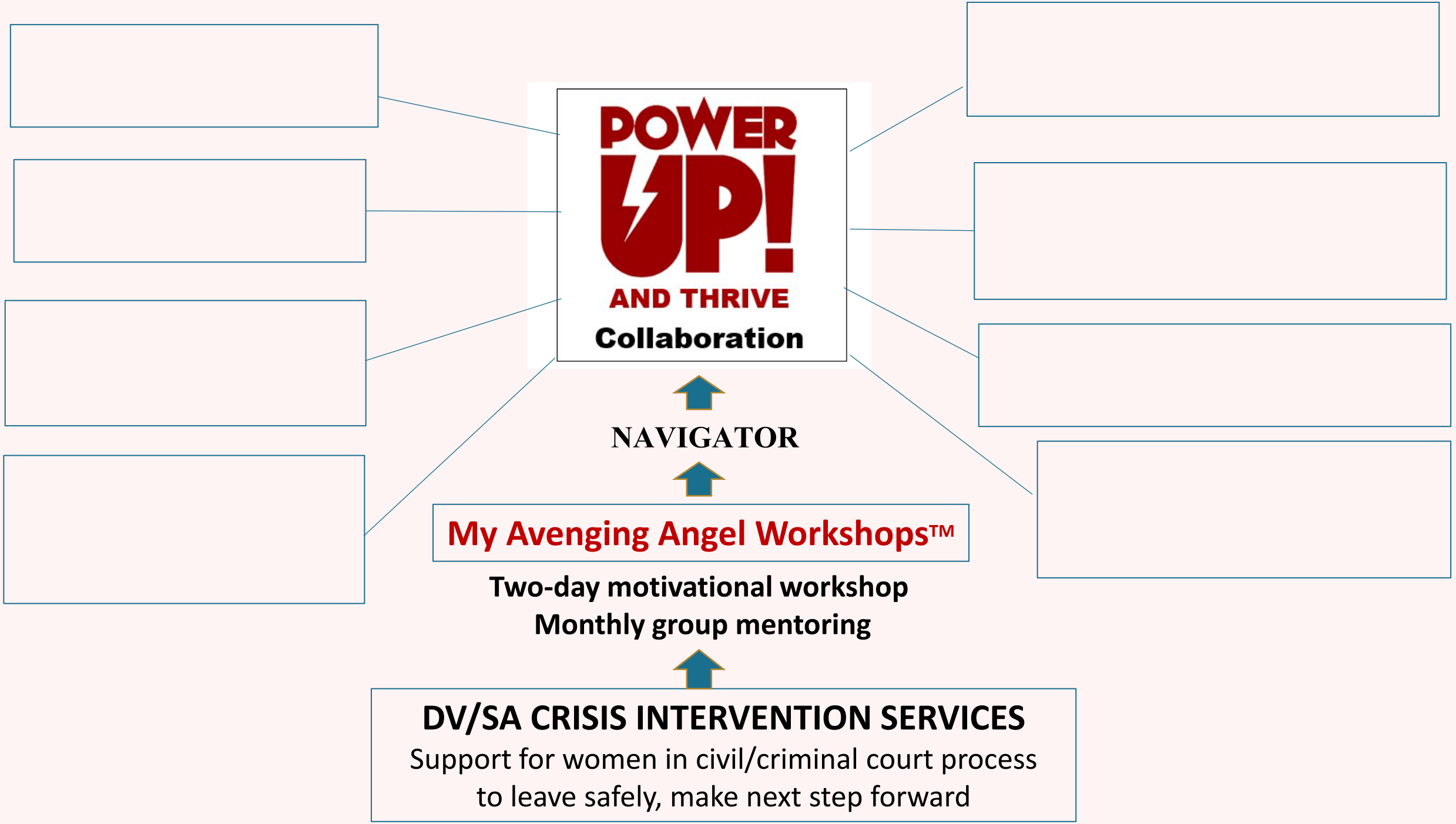
Connecting with Others

Regaining Hope and Power

For Journey from Survivor to Thriver . . .

We Need a *Post-Trauma Growth* Motivational Model Tied to Community Resources

- Seven Steps to Thriving™
- Road Map to the Real You™
- Power UP and Thrive Community Collaboration™


POWER UP!
AND THRIVE
Collaboration
NAVIGATOR
My Avenging Angel Workshops™
Two-day motivational workshop
Monthly group mentoring
DV/SA CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES
Support for women in civil/criminal court process
to leave safely, make next step forward

Recovery Services
Supportive Housing

Legal Services
Legal Info

Financial Literacy
Budgeting, Savings
Financial Wellness

Child Care
Medical Care
Health Insurance

WOMEN'S SERVICES
e.g. YWCA Programs
Women/Girls

JOB COACHING
- Resume Writing
- Employment Readiness

Business Start-Up/ Development

Education
- Career-Focused
- Financial Aid

POWER UP! AND THRIVE
Collaboration

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Let us know if you are interested….

Free Introductory Webinar for you and your staff.

Go to www.ThriverZone.com/Training

Susan Thriver Zone workbooks at www.ThriverZone.com/Shop

Entering the Thriver Zone: A Seven Step Guide . . .

Staying in the Thriver Zone: A Road Map . . .

Living in the Thriver Zone: A Celebration of Living Well . . .

THRIVER ZONE™

Susan M. Omilian - Author, Facilitator, Speaker, Trainer

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Facilitator's Training, Certification & Licensing

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CITATIONS for THIS PRESENTATION

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And please complete your survey!

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