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An Integrated Historical Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth Framework: a Cross-Cultural Exploration

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ABSTRACT

Trauma recovery for racial and ethnic groups experiencing ongoing systemic violence and discrimination requires a framework that simultaneously addresses harms and strengths. Historical trauma (HT) is a social determinant of health emanating from targeted mass group-level harm. Posttraumatic growth (PTG) focuses on positive shifts in individuals coping with trauma. This article highlights the unique contributions of these two distinct bodies of literature to inform trauma recovery. We explore areas of overlap, gaps, and tensions between the concepts to present an HT-PTG conceptual framework. The HT-PTG framework combines HT's focus on socio-structural-historical experiences in racial and ethnic groups targeted for oppression with PTG's descriptions of characteristics of growth. Specifically, five mass group-level domains of growth, centering healing, creativity, growth, and transformation are described. The ancestral legacies of the authors, including American Indian, Indigenous Mexican, African American, Puerto Rican, and Indigenous Taiwanese, inform the HT-PTG framework. This paper presents implications for trauma-recovery research and practice.

KEYWORDS

Trauma recovery; historical trauma; posttraumatic growth; healing; historical resistance; American Indian; Indigenous Mexican; African American; Puerto Rican; Indigenous Taiwanese

If we carry intergenerational trauma (and we do), then we also carry intergenerational wisdom. It's in our genes and in our DNA.

– Kazu Haga

The impact of acute and chronic traumatic stress and its negative effect on interpersonal relationships, emotional and physiological regulation, cognitive functioning, and development have informed how people understand trauma and has carved a pathway for more responsive therapeutic approaches to trauma treatment (Burke Harris et al., 2017; D'Andrea et al., 2012; Herman, 1992; Scaer, 2001; Van der Kolk, 2014; Van Derhoot Lipsky & Burk, 2009). However, the comprehensiveness of trauma prevention and intervention

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strategies are limited due to a primary focus on the individual, without integrating political, economic, social, or historical group traumas (Blanco et al., 2016; Comas-Díaz, 2000).

Over the last several decades, American Indian, African American, and other Indigenous scholars have posited that adverse health outcomes may be rooted in historically situated traumatic events in combination with persistent systemic oppression (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998; Evans-Campbell, 2008; Evans-Campbell & Walters, 2006; Williams-Washington & Mills, 2018). The impacts of these targeted historical assaults are inextricably connected to ideological, institutional, and systemic oppression in all domains of daily living, seen and felt in cellular/neurological, interpersonal, communal, and social outcomes (Sotero, 2006; Yehuda, 2011). Although negative health outcomes can be associated with historically traumatic events (Walters, Beltrán, Huh, & Evans-Campbell, 2011; Whitbeck et al., 2004), several factors demonstrate buffering effects between those stressors and health outcomes, notably those related to traditional cultural practices, enculturation, and social cohesion (Evans-Campbell, 2008; Walters & Simoni, 2002; Whitbeck et al., 2004).

Research on healing and recovery from historical trauma (HT) aligns with and expands findings in posttraumatic growth (PTG). HT and PTG widen the focus of trauma research beyond individual negative symptoms following traumatic events to understand how people not only survive but also thrive (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). PTG also has a growing international evidence base, including cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, suggesting it has relevance across multiple racial and ethnic groups (Taku et al., 2018). However, a lack of research integrates personal and mass group-level growth in the context of HT. Specifically, we conceptualize mass group-level and personal growth from the standpoint of racial and ethnic groups that experience historical oppression and persistent discrimination and systemic violence. Despite overlap with other frameworks that address collective pain, such as racist-incident based trauma (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005), race-based trauma (Johnson & Carter, 2019) and psychosocial therapy (Blanco et al., 2016), in this paper we focus on the interplay between mass group- and personal-level growth, within the HT and PTG frameworks.

Aligned with Indigenist liberatory scholarship principles (Rigney, 1999), we begin with our positionality statement to ground our roles as insiders and outsiders to the study of HT and PTG. Next, we present an overview of both frameworks along with the introduction of their conceptual integration in a HT-PTG framework. Although the implications could apply to diverse audiences in the study and treatment of trauma, in this paper we develop a framework for researchers and practitioners, focusing on trauma recovery, contextualized from a political and mass group-level standpoint.

Positionality

We, the authors of this article, hail from the margins of many stories that require centering when exploring healing and trauma recovery across and beyond the lifespan. We are American Indian, Indigenous Mexican, African American, Puerto Rican, and Indigenous Taiwanese. Our ancestors are African, Choctaw, Yaqui, Mexico, Taino, Truku, European, and others who, due to our histories, we do not know, cannot know, and will not or do not name. We honor ancestors who rebelled, resisted, transcended, withstood enslavement, survived displacement, found power in the syncretic when the sacred was criminalized, and recreated home and restoration, over and over again (Ortega-Williams, 2020; Richards, 1992). We begin our work honoring our ancestors, who withstood subjugation and persistent State-sanctioned violence. We ask with our ancestors, as their descendants, what does healing, well-being, and trauma recovery look like as a people that have experienced HT and PTG? What are the collective and individual possibilities for healing? How can interventions include our ancestors' joy, power, and resistance?

As researchers related to historical processes described in this work, many of us carry the lived experiences of targeted identities. As social work researchers, we also hold professional and privileged identities, with experience in applied science, knowledge generation, cultural work, program development, and clinical practice. Through the lens of these embodied experiences and professional identities, we theoretically examine these approaches to trauma and recovery.

Historical Trauma

Overview

Trauma at the mass group-level can impact the life span for those who directly experienced the trauma, as well as subsequent generations (Brave Heart, 1998; DeGruy-Leary, 2005; Sotero, 2006; Walls & Whitbeck, 2012). Brave Heart, a Lakota scholar, conceptualized HT as collective and cumulative trauma, unresolved grief, and compounded losses of a people, a soul wound, who have experienced intentional genocide, exploitation, and cultural disruption (Brave Heart, 1998). Brave Heart drew upon Jewish Holocaust-survivor research, psychodynamic practice theory, and Indigenous cultural healing knowledge as foundational (Brave Heart, 1998; Duran et al., 1998). Brave Heart and other researchers have examined how historically traumatic events informed contemporary health inequities and examined HT responses as health outcomes (Brave Heart et al., 2011; Evans-Campbell, 2008; Walls & Whitbeck, 2012; Walters, Mohammed, et al., 2011). A key feature of HT is that people experience it collectively and accumulate it intergenerationally (Walters, et al., 2011; Chae & Walters, 2009). In this framework, HT has

been conceptualized as a social determinant of health that may be buffered by mass group-level reclaiming of cultural tools, values, traditions, and priorities to heal and stabilize wellness (Brave Heart, 1998; Myhra, 2011; Walters & Simoni, 2002). For example, Goodkind and colleagues (2012), in a qualitative study, conducted 74 in-depth interviews with 37 Diné community members living on a reservation in the Southwest United States. Although some study participants said they did not think historical events impacted them currently, others identified a loss of land, language, and traditions as painful and connected to self-harm and community violence (Goodkind et al., 2012).

Modes of intergenerational transmission of HT include physiological, epigenetic, environmental, psychosocial, social, economic, and political systems, as well as legal and social discrimination (Evans-Campbell, 2008; Sotero, 2006; Yehuda, 2011). Models of HT expand dominant narratives of health disparities and notions of polyvictimization among people who experience trauma and subjugation (Hamby, Schultz, & Elm, 2020). The focus moves beyond individual characteristics and group behaviors to encompass purposeful targeting by dominant groups that have resulted in disruptions to biological, psychological, social, and spiritual cohesion among targeted groups across space and time (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

Researchers have explored related concepts, such as multigenerational, transgenerational, and collective trauma among multiple racial and ethnic groups that have experienced political, social, economic, and cultural subjugation (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005; Daud et al., 2005; DeGruy-Leary, 2005; Kellermann, 2001; Lopez-Levers & Hyatt-Burkhart, 2012; Mohatt et al., 2014; Ortega-Williams, Crutchfield, & Hall, 2019; Williams-Washington & Mills, 2018; Yehuda, 2011). Although these frameworks are beyond the scope of this paper, there is notable overlap. Similar to the HT framework, Blanco and colleagues (2016, p. 191) critiqued the “medical model” approach to mental health that omits the social context facilitating collective violence against a particular category of people. They highlight, in their psychosocial framework, that although only a minority of people develop posttraumatic stress disorder, societal-level suffering among those targeted, witnessing, and initiating violence, must also heal to achieve wellness (Blanco et al., 2016). Additionally, ethnopolitical psychologists recognize that, when working with people experiencing racialized terror and institutionalized White supremacy, it is crucial to confront social injustice and address the psychological impact (Comas-Díaz, 2000). What distinguishes HT from other theories of collective trauma is its rootedness in the cultural survival of a people at the mass group-level from colonization to present times.

Critiques of historical trauma

HT has drawn criticism for its limitations as a theoretical framework. Kirmayer et al. (2014) critiqued what they described as conceptual analogies to the Holocaust, when current outcomes in Jewish and American Indian and Alaska Native communities are disparate. For example, those who survived the Holocaust were able to relocate and begin new lives in far away places, often with support from established and prosperous diasporic communities; in contrast, Indigenous peoples of the Americas have been subject to the continuous dispossession of their land and relocated to marginal spaces often far from any centers of economic or political power (Kirmayer et al., 2014). Thus, this critique suggests that rather than past traumas as the primary influence on current suffering, ongoing exposure to structural violence creates contemporary outcomes (Kirmayer et al., 2014). Kirmayer and colleagues also critiqued HT for limited descriptions of typologies of intergenerational experiences that could impact health outcomes. Some scholars also believe a focus on negative outcomes could lead to pathologizing behaviors rather than contextualizing them (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005; Lucero, 2011; Maxwell, 2014). Additionally, although HT does account for buffers and protective factors (Sotero, 2006), it does not yet have a robust description of the mechanisms of protection that allow communities to not only survive, but also thrive, despite great hardships. Scholars have also noted that while describing the ways historical and contemporary systems of power perpetrate trauma, HT frameworks have lacked direction on how to interrupt systemic conditions that sustain oppression (Ortega-Williams, 2020; Maxwell, 2014). Last, researchers have critiqued the HT framework for not yet yielding many specific strengths-based mechanisms for measuring healing and growth (Goodkind et al., 2012). Measures of PTG can potentially contribute to measuring growth in the HT framework.

Posttraumatic Growth

Theoretical Overview

PTG reconceptualized trauma recovery by focusing on the beneficial cognitive and personality shifts resulting from grappling with traumatic events (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). PTG consists of five domains of individual-level functioning: (a) relating to others, (b) new possibilities, (c) personal strength, (d) spiritual change, and (e) appreciation for life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). PTG is distinguished from studies on resiliency where an individual rebounds from an adverse situation; rather, PTG defines a leap forward in functioning beyond the capabilities or inclinations observed in a person's personality prior to the traumatic event (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). For example, Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) found in a sample of 504

people ages 17–24, the more severe the traumatic event, the more likely they were to self-report posttraumatic growth. Scholars attribute positive changes in the lives of trauma survivors to multiple factors, such as shifts in internal beliefs about oneself, others, and society (Gizem & Nuray, 2012; Goodman, 2015; Joseph & Linley, 2005). According to the PTG framework, deliberative rumination, creating redemptive narratives, and discovering a deeper meaning in life are essential for developing PTG (Jayawickreme & Blackie, 2014; Joseph & Linley, 2005).

Posttraumatic Growth as Social Transformation

Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) described the influence of widespread traumatic events (e.g. genocide, war, economic hardship, and terrorism) on prevailing social schemas and narratives. These changes emerge as shifts in political philosophy, the introduction of new legislation, new outlooks on federal responsibility for social problems, and other changes in ideologies, values, and social systems (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). In this sense, researchers have applied PTG to societal levels, turning adversity into a growth opportunity for some larger defined group or community (Bloom, 1998; Tedeschi, 1999; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

Specific to violent trauma, Tedeschi (1999) highlighted mechanisms of social transformation that include the emergence and guidance of strong leaders and the telling, retelling, and sharing of stories of trauma. Bloom (1998), whom Tedeschi (1999) referenced, organized transformative actions into seven interrelated/intersecting categories: transformation through education and prevention; mutual self-help; rescuing; witnessing and seeking justice; political action; humor; and artistic creation. Understanding PTG as social change or transformation requires (a) an understanding of the political climate of the social context in question; (b) an examination of the relationships among individuals and groups, and of the interactions with those in roles of witnesses, victims, leaders, and perpetrators; and (c) identification of a moral commitment around which people organize change efforts (Bloom, 1998; Tedeschi, 1999). Understanding PTG also requires identifying pre- and post-trauma schemas and the activities that influence and facilitate change.

Critiques of Posttraumatic Growth

PTG, while resonating in the clinical field, has been critiqued on its features, definition, and longevity over time. Hobfoll et al. (2007) critiqued the dominant emphasis of PTG on cognitive and emotion-focused coping. PTG is difficult to sustain without facilitative action. In other words, having redemptive narratives without action-focused coping could make PTG hard to maintain if one's positive view deteriorated during distress (Hobfoll et al., 2007).

For example, Hobfoll et al. (2007) found a negative association with PTSD and PTG ($n = 1,466$). In a follow-up study with 190 phone interviews, participants who engaged in collective action had higher levels of decreased probable levels of PTSD compared to those who did not engage in collective action in response to collective violence (Hobfoll et al., 2007).

PTG has also been criticized for focusing on growth following a singular traumatic experience. For racial or ethnic groups that have experienced intentional subjugation based on identity, historically and contemporarily, traumatic experiences are not discrete aberrations. The experience of collective trauma – cumulative, complex, and persistent – has a different scope; for example, for some there is nothing “post” about trauma, it is ongoing (Ginwright, 2015). In the PTG framework, one’s worldview of a safe and predictable world gets shattered and recreated, which is often not the starting point for those facing an ongoing pattern of targeted violence (Brave Heart, 1998; Comas-Díaz, 2000).

Last, the theoretical assertion that transformation is growth *beyond* pre-trauma capabilities has measurement limitations. For example, in transgenerational trauma research, people acquire some attributes and characteristics through exposure to social and environmental stressors (Gilson & Ross, 2019). Stress exposure, including during traumatic events, influences gene expression (Gilson & Ross, 2019). Therefore, biological and behavioral changes in response to the environment can pass to subsequent generations through epigenetic mechanisms such as DNA methylation and histone modification (see Brand et al., 2010; Matthews & Phillips, 2010; Toyokawa, Uddin, Koenen, & Galea, 2012; Yehuda, 2011; Yehuda & Bierer, 2009). It suggests that groups experiencing historically traumatic events and persistent sociostructural oppression may be activating strengths present prior to subjugation, but suppressed. PTG measurement tools, such as the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory, captures individual retrospective data and is not calibrated to identify intergenerational patterns (PTGI; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996).

In summary, HT and PTG have conceptual strengths and weaknesses in promoting trauma recovery that in some ways are complimentary. In the HT-PTG framework, the strengths of each combine to conceptualize personal and mass group-level growth, in the context of HT and persistent racialized violence (see Table 1.), informed by Evans-Campbell’s (2008) conceptualization of HT.

The Historical Trauma-Posttraumatic Growth Framework

Trauma recovery, for those targeted for ongoing systemic violence and discrimination based on racial and ethnic identity, requires a framework that simultaneously addresses individual and mass group-level growth and healing. For example, in Bryant-Davis and Ocampo (2005) conceptualization of racist-incident based trauma, racially targeted assaults on one’s ethnic group has

emotional and cognitive impacts that are salient at the individual and racial-group level. In particular, in societies experiencing racialized subjugation, mass group-level trauma is justified to maintain a sense of innocence and stability of domination (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005). From this perspective, the presence of racially motivated violence inherent to a society's social organization generates pervasive hyperarousal and impacts wellness (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005). Further, Blanco et al. (2016) suggested, from a psychosocial therapeutic standpoint, that individual "disorder" is the wrong focal point for healing from socially situated collective violence. From this view, violence aimed at a targeted social group requires an altering of the "social (dis)order" that operates as a "pre-traumatic condition" permitting such violence (Blanco et al., 2016, p. 188).

The HT-PTG framework posited here expands this argument by situating mass group- and personal-level growth in a culturally relevant historical context. Akin to an anthropological view, illness, wellness, healing, and harm make sense through cultural interpretation (Kleinman & Benson, 2006). HT-PTG conceptualizes the mass group-level domains of growth, informed by HT and PTG frameworks. In this view, the individual-focus of PTG is reconceptualized as a dynamic interplay between the personal and collective, as well as the contemporary and historical, extending beyond the current lifespan (see Table 1.).

Table 1. HT, PTG, and HT-PTG comparison.

	HT	PTG	HT-PTG
Unit of analysis	Individual, family, community (mass group)	Individual level	Individual and community (mass group)
Trauma-impact	Individual, collective, intergenerational	Individual lifespan	Intergenerational
Recovery approach	Cultural, spiritual, psychological, social, historical	Psychological	Cultural, spiritual, psychological, social, historical
Intervention	Cultural, spiritual, psychological, social (Individual/small group)	Psychological (individual)	Growth and transformation (Collective/mass group-level)
Timespan of initial traumatic injury	Historical, persistent, cumulative	Contemporary	Historical, persistent, cumulative
Domains	Individual level harm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rumination 2. Survivor guilt 3. Depression 4. Anxiety Family level harm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disruptions to parenting practices 2. Silence, avoidance 3. Family violence Mass group-level harm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of language, cultural traditions 2. Unresolved grief, mourning 3. Social malaise 4. Weakened social structures 5. High rates of suicide 	Individual growth: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciation for life 2. Spiritual change 3. New possibilities for life 4. Relating to others 5. Personal strength 	Mass group-level growth: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciation for our lives 2. Collective spiritual change 3. New possibilities for our destiny 4. Relating to our ancestors and cultures 5. Collective strength

The HT-PTG framework combines HT's focus on historical collective trauma with PTG's mechanisms of growth to include group-level (collective) domains of growth and healing. These include (a) collective strength, (b) collective spiritual change, (c) relating to ancestors and culture, (d) new possibilities for collective destiny, and (e) appreciation for our lives. Inspired by Indigenous epistemologies that recognize the interconnectedness of all aspects of creation as necessary for balance and the dynamic relational processes that exist in the web of creation (see Pierotti & Wildcat, 2000; Sheridan & Longboat, 2006), we have developed a model reflecting how multiple domains (individual and collective) of relating, imagining possibilities, and change processes interact toward developing PTG. Similar to a solar system, these domains orbit around the central outcomes and processes of healing, growth, transformation, and creativity.

In Figure 1, we illustrate the five personal-level domains of PTG in a dynamic reciprocal relationship with expanded mass group-level domains. Theoretically, in the process of mass group-level growth, healing, transformation, and creativity are at the center, integral to all five mass group-level domains. Specifically, growth is central to the HT-PTG framework, as a mass group-level desire. In the process of personal and collective growth, healing is the function that allows growth to occur. Additionally, creativity describes how a people who have experienced subjugation approach growth in the context of HT. Creativity represents a resourcefulness that exists in the service of a people's imagination, asserting that growth is possible. Imagination, in this model, reflects a dimension of mass group-level growth



Figure 1. Conceptual model of the historical trauma-posttraumatic growth framework.

that is essential in a society that is hostile to a racial or ethnic group's survival and existence (French et al., 2020; Ginwright, 2018). Last, transformation forms the center as part of the mass group-level growth process because without it, conceptually, people cannot maintain the gains made personally and collectively.

Collective Strength

The HT-PTG framework extends the PTGI domain of personal strength to include collective strength and power at a mass group-level. Features of collective strength include social cohesion and mutual aid among populations that have a history of being targeted, based on racial or ethnic identity. In the PTGI, increased self-reliance indicates positive changes in personal strength (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). In the context of HT and contemporary systemic violence, individual efforts are not sufficient to counter systemic issues. Collective strength could be expressed as long-term collective reliance in the face of active deprivation of resources. Colonization, enslavement, exploited labor, and extraction of natural resources were means to hoard and accumulate wealth. People who experienced colonization were not meant to survive the traumatic conditions to which they are subjected. Collective strength, in the context of HT, resists annihilation.

Collective strength of an oppressed people becomes a cultural legacy from which that targeted group can draw as a guide for survival. A historical example are mutual aid societies set up by African Americans during segregation, when they were explicitly rejected based on skin color and race from general “Whites only” services (Carlton-LaNey, 1999; Ortega-Williams, et al., 2019; Smith Brice & McLane-Davison, 2020). Contemporarily, it is how the Black community in Georgia rallied against the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year old young Black man assassinated by two White male assailants while he was jogging. The suspects, captured on video, were not arrested until there was national pressure for the Georgia Bureau of Investigations to intervene (Faussett, 2020). The domain of collective strength removes the onus of healing and trauma recovery from the individual alone to capabilities existing in the group for ongoing protection and survival.

Collective Spiritual Change

In racial and ethnic groups that have communal cultural practices, collective spiritual change is part of the process of healing and well-being (Brave Heart, 1998; Richards, 1992). The embodiment of collective spiritual change through the use of ceremony, ritual, and song demonstrates how the group can restore a sense of purpose and collective hope (Ginwright, 2015). Fleming and Ledogar (2008) described participation in traditional cultural activities,

spiritual practices, language, and healing as community-level resources. For example, Native communities in the Northwestern United States address health disparities by adapting traditional cultural ceremonies to revitalize cultural relationships of tribal members with food, land, health (Beltrán, et al., 2018), and substances (Johansen, 2012). Religious/spiritual syncretism has also played a role in maintaining connections to cultural beliefs and spiritual practices that are healing, such as *espiritismo* and *santería* in Puerto Rico (Loue & Sajatovic, 2006; Rodríguez-Galán & Falcón, 2018). Syncretic spiritual traditions were ways to protect Indigenous and African practices and sources of power, even if outlawed and demonized (Richards, 1992). Likewise, Indigenous Nahua peoples of Mexico maintained their traditional belief systems by appropriating Euro-Christian symbols and practices of the colonizers and infusing them with their own meanings, enabling descendants to build a thriving cross-border cultural community, united by Aztec dance (Luna, 2013).

New Possibilities for Our Destiny

In the context of mass group-level oppression, such as colonization and enslavement, the dominant group writes history to solidify their rights and privileges (Tuck & Yang, 2012). In this version of history, oppressors are innocent while distorting or erasing the contributions, assets, and historical presence of those who are subjugated based on racial and ethnic identity (Richards, 1992). In the HT-PTG framework, people can renew collective destiny through storytelling and action. Counternarratives could emerge as demands for alternative treatments grounded in the “original instructions” of one’s own elders and ancestors (Walters et al., 2020, p. 557). Counternarratives could occur in the decolonization of ways of knowing and intervening in social problems by and for people who have experienced colonization and enslavement (Richards, 1992; Smith, 1999). People can reject assimilationist models of wellness that are too narrow to hold the mass group-level historical context and contemporary experiences of discrimination and harm (Schultz, Walters, Beltrán, Stroud, & Johnson-Jennings, 2016).

New possibilities for destiny at the mass group-level could entail decolonizing efforts to fulfill a vision of land restoration and “living in right relationship” with the environment, in a 21st-century context (Walters et al., 2020, p. 558). For example, Indigenous people organizing to restore sovereignty over stolen lands and protect its use for future generations (e.g., Idle No More, Standing Rock, Wet’suwet’en Protest social movements; see Rivas, 2017) demonstrates generative collective action for a new future.

New Relating to Our Ancestors and Culture

In the PTGI, the *Relating to Others* domain identifies growth in connectedness to people after a crisis (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). The PTGI does not capture relating to ancestors, although across some racial and ethnic groups, ancestors are considered accessible relatives (Brave Heart, 1998; Richards, 1992). In some cultural traditions, connecting to ancestors is considered essential to healing as a people at the mass group-level (Brave Heart, 1998; Fett, 2002; Richards, 1992; Schultz, Walters, Beltrán, Stroud, & Johnson-Jennings, 2016; Teyra, 2017; Walters et al., 2020).

Reliance on cultural practices, traditional and remixed, to overcome persistent discrimination and reminders of unresolved historical losses are embedded at the mass group-level (Brave Heart, 1998). For instance, for Taiwanese Indigenous individuals in the Truku Nation, hunting practice is understood as a way to (re) connect with their family members, spirits of ancestors, and mountain lands; hunting practice supports indigenous individuals to gradually heal from HT and lifetime trauma (e.g., discrimination; Teyra, 2017). Although hunting is illegal in Taiwan's National Park areas, which are many Indigenous peoples' traditional lands, Indigenous individuals still practice a hunting culture and further mobilize collective hunting-rights movements. Actions at the mass group-level indicating growth in this area could also include transforming relationships to ancestors. Redefining ancestors as survivors could support a racial or ethnic group to reclaim their legacy. Another action in this domain could be revisiting historically traumatic events and accurately naming massacres previously reported as uprisings or battles (Denis, 2015; Kelman, 2013).

Appreciation for Our Lives

In the PTGI domain of Appreciation for *Life*, the focus is on one's individual existence and value (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004), reflecting a worldview that centers individual worth. However, under subjugation, "otherizing," and racial discrimination, racial and ethnic groups are systematically devalued socially, politically, and economically (Blanco et al., 2016; Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005; Comas-Díaz, 2000). Contemporary collective violence threatens people physiologically and psychologically but can be moderated with networks of support (Blanco et al., 2016).

Recognizing and appreciating ties at the mass group-level shifts priorities to what will benefit the whole. For example, the Black Lives Matter movement, along with other networks, coordinated efforts nationally to shift policies on bail and raise funds to release Black mothers on Mother's Day (Black Lives Matter, 2019). Similarly, the movement to bring awareness and action to the epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) fights for collective well-being. It demands that law enforcement, justice systems, and

media more accurately track incidents of violence targeting Indigenous women and girls as an important step in creating policies for prevention and justice (Lucchesi & Echo-Hawk, 2018). Therefore, when appreciating life at the mass group-level domain, asserting that one's people matter and deserve to thrive could be a core expression.

Discussion

Systematic subjugation of a social group based on ethnic or racial identity requires more than individual coping mechanisms to maintain wellness (Comas-Díaz, 2000). The dominant discourse in professional trauma recovery centers treating individuals (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). However, clinical perspectives embracing trauma recovery at the mass group-level are developing.

The HT-PTG framework extends the perspectives on collective harm through the conceptualization of mass group-level domains of growth specific to historical trauma across racial and ethnic groups. Currently, resolving harm at the mass group-level is centered on building collective resilience (Breslow, Brewster, Velez, Wong, Geiger, & Soderstrom, 2015; Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009; Scorgie, Vasey, Harper, Richter, Nare, Maseko, & Chesich, 2013). While there is overlap between mass group-level growth and collective resilience, there are important distinctions.

Collective resilience and mass group-level growth both emphasize self-help and leveraging aggregate power to respond to social conditions (Drury et al., 2009). Additionally, both perspectives emphasize mutuality, solidarity, and loyalty beyond the boundaries of one's own immediate survival (Drury et al., 2009; Hernandez, 2002; Scourgie et al., 2013). Across each perspective, a larger sense of "we" emerges especially when there is a perceived collective threat (Brave Heart, 1998; Drury et al., 2009). Lastly, similar to findings on collective harm and resilience, HT-PTG incorporates social change as essential to mass group-level healing (Blanco et al., 2016; Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005; Comas-Díaz, 2000; Johnson & Carter, 2019).

However, there are important distinctions between collective resilience and mass group-level growth. Scholarship on collective resilience and collective harm primarily focus on coping with contemporary patterns of violence directed against particular social groups or random strangers in a particular location (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005; Drury, et al., 2009; Scourgie, et al., 2013). The HT-PTG framework differs by contextualizing mass group-level growth in relationship to current encounters with systemic violence, historically traumatic events, and historical resistance.

Importantly, HT-PTG also offers a lens to notice how personal and mass group-level growth supports the future of a racial or ethnic group that has survived persistent oppression, beyond resilience. HT-PTG expands the temporal focus of

healing and growth to include the past, present, and future. The domains of mass group-level growth in HT-PTG bring into view how a racial or cultural group draws from ancestors for present-day collective strength. It also indicates what a current generation is doing in preparation to be ancestors that will support the next generation; this view aligns with current HT research that focuses on Indigenous knowledge (Walters et al., 2020). HT-PTG responds to the values a people holds at the mass group-level from their racial and cultural groups that guides their understanding of themselves and others (Walters et al., 2020).

HT-PTG has implications for clinicians and researchers committed to supporting racial and ethnic groups targeted, contemporarily and historically, for collective violence. Interventions designed to be culturally-inclusive must inquire into a person's relationship with their mass group-level identity (Yancy, 2020). The expansion of assessment from a client's experience of trauma or multigenerational trauma existing within their particular families, to collective harm could open a space for deeper healing. The omission of mass group-level strengths and connectedness may lead to ineffective interventions or even the disruption of community strength and healing (Schultz, Cattaneo, Sabina, Brunner, Jackson, & Serrata, 2016). The HT-PTG framework supports previous work of Indigenous scholars who have defined multi-level practice approaches for working with communities who have experienced HT (Evans-Campbell, 2008). The HT-PTG framework could support researchers committed to centering mass group-level epistemologies and worldviews of racial and ethnic groups (Fast & Collin-Vézina, 2010). It could inform study designs, including how to operationalize and measure an HT-PTG community-level intervention, targeting and measuring collective growth and transformation. Research studies using HT-PTG could align more closely with the lived experiences of groups experiencing the impact of historical trauma and mass group-level growth. Lastly, research using the HT-PTG framework could further understanding of the dynamic interplay between personal and mass group-level growth supporting the direction of collective healing models (French et al., 2020; Ginwright, 2018).

Conclusion

This paper presents the beginning of a conceptual framework that highlights the mass group-level growth occurring in the context of contemporary and historical trauma. Incorporating the five domains of mass group-level growth: 1) collective strength, 2) new possibilities for our destiny, 3) collective spiritual change, 4) appreciation for our lives, and 5) relating to our ancestors and culture expands culturally-responsive practice. Individualistic, ahistorical, and damage-oriented approaches to trauma recovery are insufficient, especially when attempting to support the healing of racial and ethnic groups targeted by collective violence. While empirical research is necessary to operationalize

and validate the theoretical constructs of the HT-PTG framework, it is a start to a necessary paradigm shift in trauma-recovery practice and research.

The strength of the HT-PTG framework is its focus on impacts of socio-structural-historical targeting and persistent inequities, without sacrificing engaging personal and mass group-level growth. It also supports the cultural interpretation of collective violence through disrupting the binary of personal or mass group-level approaches to wellness; the divide is artificial in racial and ethnic groups that share an ethos of collectivity and resistance to oppression.

Appreciating and fighting for one's collective existence fulfills relational responsibilities for racial and ethnic groups that have a sense of shared roots and collective destiny (Walters et al., 2020). It is apparent in the uprisings and mourning across the country and globe regarding the racist murders of George Floyd (Bogel-Burroughs, 2020) in Minnesota and Breonna Taylor in Kentucky (Oppel & Taylor, 2020) by law enforcement. Healing from systemic violence and HT simultaneously requires care for the individual and collective. The mass group-level domains of growth captured in the HT-PTG framework widen the scope of what resources are visible for groups healing from past injustice and trauma to recreate thriving futures.

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