

Abstract: Doctoral Dissertation of Suchinta Abhayaratna, Th.D.

Effects of the Creative Holistic Integration (CHI)<sup>™</sup> (a.k.a Wholeness Exercise<sup>™</sup>) on Physiological Coherence and Perceptions of Wellbeing in Trauma-exposed Sri Lankan Youth.

This study examined the effects of the Creative Holistic Integration (CHI)<sup>™</sup> process on physiological coherence and perceptions of wellbeing in trauma-exposed Sri Lankan youth.

The five-minute intervention had two components: 1) A scripted guided visualization using the Wholeness Mandala and, 2) heart-centered deep breathing combined with a breath mantra. The intervention was intended to facilitate centering in the heart and breath, and to create an awareness of connection and interaction between the individual and the whole universal energy system, in order to observe effects on the individual.

A randomized experimental design with repeated measures was utilized with male (n = 23) and female (n = 35) volunteers between the ages of 12 and 24, randomly assigned to an intervention group (n = 29) and a control group (n = 29).

The protocol was carried out individually with each participant, and included one, thirty-minute session divided into three, ten-minute segments of activity and data collection. During each segment, Coherence Ratio (CR) data were recorded for five minutes on the emWavePC computer program. After each segment, participants recorded perceptions of their own physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing on the Subjective Units of Distress (SUD) scale, and verbally answered two qualitative questions on physical sensations and thoughts.

The intervention group showed statistically significant improvements in physiological coherence (P = .001), and perceptions of wellbeing, SUD scale (P = .003) while the control group showed little or no change in the repeated measures. Qualitative data provided information on participants' inner experience related to the quantitative data.

The findings of this study support the hypothesis that the Creative Holistic Integration (CHI)<sup>™</sup> process can significantly improve physiological coherence, and perceptions of wellbeing in a population of trauma-exposed Sri Lankan youth.