

A Theory of Aftercare for Human Trafficking Survivors: A Grounded Theory Analysis of Survivors and Aftercare Providers in South Africa

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Abstract : Along with the increasing awareness of human trafficking, is the acknowledgement that it is no longer just a social problem but also a significant public health problem that requires both increased knowledge and the specialist equipping of aftercare providers such as nurses who care for human trafficking survivors. Current discourse regarding aftercare of human trafficking survivors, is that approaches do not clearly explain the function or content of aftercare and what aftercare entails. Although psychological and medical aftercare are emphasized as important components, little practical attention is devoted to what these components actually involve and the effectiveness of current practice in aftercare. Review of the literature on the processes that take place from aftercare to empowerment, revealed the need for emphasis to be placed on the voices of survivors concerning their liberation from oppression. The aim of the study was to develop a theory for aftercare of human trafficking survivors, through analyzing the experiences of survivors and aftercare providers in shelters in three provinces in South Africa. Through using a Straussian grounded theory approach, the researcher developed a theory to inform care of human trafficking survivors in low resource settings using the voice of the survivors and those experienced in direct care of human trafficking survivors. Four human trafficking survivors and three aftercare providers from three shelters in three provinces in South Africa were individually interviewed in order for the theory to emerge. The findings of the study elicited a theoretical model of the renewed self, and the conditions that facilitate this process in care of human trafficking survivors. The process that human trafficking survivors navigate to empowerment require mutual collaboration of the aftercare provider and survivor as the survivor awakens vision, confronts reality, re-salvages autonomy and liberates self. Psychological resilience of the survivor facilitates the transition to renewed self. The recommendations of this study may improve the nursing care provided to human trafficking survivors and equip professionals with knowledge and skills to promote the process of renewing self for survivors.

Keywords : aftercare, aftercare providers, grounded theory, human trafficking survivors

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