

Capoeira in motion

We are on the verge of becoming a trauma conscious society. Abuse devastates health and social functioning - early intervention in the lives of children, youth, gender specific individuals from poor to trouble families; more high school graduations, less criminality, increased employment and decrease family and community violence. Advances in neuroscience have given us a better understanding of how trauma changes brain development, self-regulation and the capacity to stay focused and in tune with others. Experiences change the structure and function of the brain. Understanding many of the fundamental processes that underline traumatic stress opens the door to an array of interventions that can bring the brain areas related with self-regulation, self-perception and whole self-development.

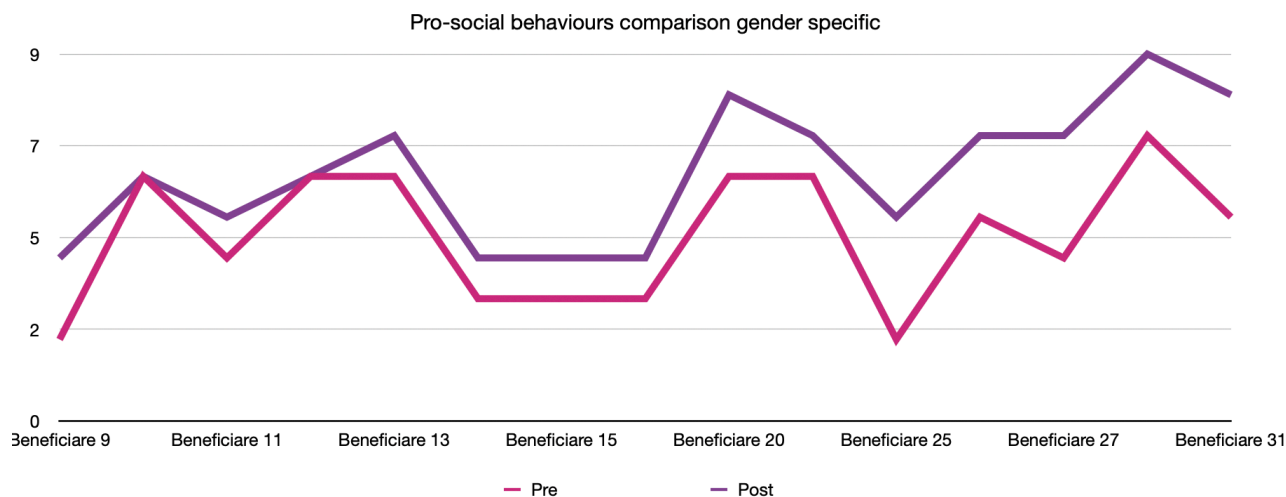
We are fundamentally social creatures. Trauma devastates the social-engagement system and interferes with cooperation nurturing and the ability to function as a productive member of the community. We have seen how many mental health problems from drug addiction to self-injurious behaviour, start off as attempts to cope with emotions that became unbearable because of a lack of human contact support. Institutions that deal with too often bypass the emotional- engagement system that is the foundation of who we are and instead focus narrowly on correcting "faulty thinking" and on suppressing unpleasant emotions and trouble- some behaviours.

Amongst the array of innovative possibilities for intervention and inside the mouvement therapy - we extracted data from capoeira practice where we emphasise on the concepts of resistance and empowerment that capoeira art embedded.

What is capoeira? The roots of the capoeira art are not really what you can watch on the Internet where mostly only the sport axe is represented. Capoeira was born from the struggle of an oppressed people in search of freedom. **The inclusion is in the essence of capoeira, since it was designed by excluded social groups.** In its history, it has always been associated with those who have lived on the margins of society, but who are still waiting to assert their identity, rights and cultural values. Therefore capoeira has a great vocation to include women and men of all origins, ages, religious beliefs, economic conditions and educational level that can participate in the "roda"(wheel) which is by elsewhere intangible heritage of Unesco.

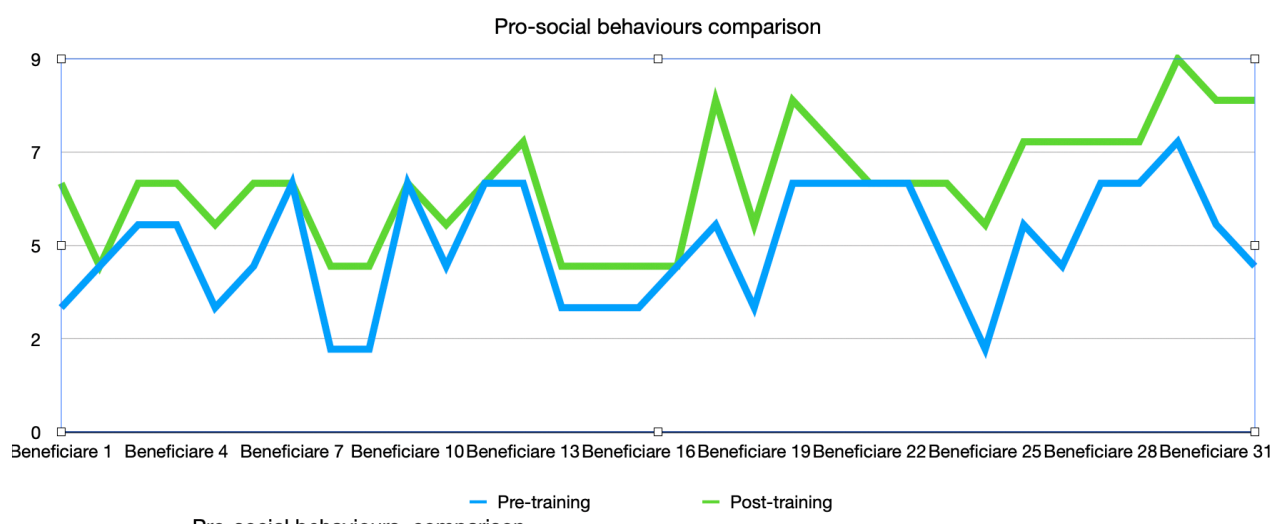
All are citizens to the world in search of quality of life and social justice.

The absence of judgment or criticism in movement therapy, where Capoeira is more complete than dance, is important for beneficiaries because it puts them at peace with themselves. A key interdisciplinary concept in the practice is "kinesthetic empathy" that facilitates compassion and kinship by observing the movements of others. Kinesthetic empathy allows for self-development, introspection within the beneficiary when the process is blocked or interrupted by trauma, interrelated with the emotional and the intellect. And this kinesthetic empathy is also applied outside capoeira.



The therapeutic use of a capoeira of values (capoeira angola) - keeping capoeira as close to its roots as possible characterized by being strategic, with smooth movements near the floor depending on the situation to face, it values the traditions of ancestry, memory, orality, life energy, playfulness, circularity, spirituality, respect and musicality.

The use of capoeira angola has been used to achieve therapeutic changes and greater emotional, cognitive, physical and social integration of the individual based on the empirically supported premise that the body, mind and spirit are interconnected. The results below show a general decrease in behavior problems, anger, indicating improvement in interpersonal relationships, trust, respect for oneself and others, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility, which can be extended to future relationships such as colleagues, family members and authority figures.



Using individual skills, beneficiaries find meaning in a collective commitment, contributing to their own lives and a greater sense of belonging and camaraderie, necessary to achieve a mutual goal. Despite the adversities, personal strength and resistance has been developed across the group, thus, the road to recovery will be more plausible to achieve.

Rehabilitation programs tailored to the needs of beneficiaries enable their resilience and empowerment, restore their dignity and have long-lasting effects felt in the individual's community and society as a whole. Also, the successful provision of redress to beneficiaries can have a preventive effect towards the non-recurrence of further violations and the anchoring of societies in the rule of law.

References:

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