

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: SAFE SPACE:

ARCHITECTURAL SEQUENCE AS A

HEALING EXPERIENCE

Lonna Plathottathil Babu, Master of
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Preservation

Human trafficking is the second largest crime in the world with an estimated 4.5 million people trapped in forced sexual exploitation today. The goal of this thesis is to explore a new paradigm for the design a trauma rehabilitation shelter for victims of sex trafficking. It aims to further develop the relationship between the built environment and the healing process for trauma-specific victims, to design space as a part of the recovery and not just a place for it. As victims of a sexual crime, this thesis also explores a way to de-stigmatize girls from others and themselves by using site-specific advantages to foster interaction between girls and the public. From understanding the victim experience and how victims react to their surroundings this thesis aims to design for survivors by re-orienting their trauma experience into a “new normal.”

SAFE SPACE:
ARCHITECTURAL SEQUENCE AS A HEALING EXPERIENCE

by

Lonna P. Babu

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Dedication

To the women and girls whose suffering is hidden away in plain sight – this thesis is dedicated to you. In a small way, your pain will be heard through the voices of those that are there to help you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“[There is] a very specific type of hurt and shame that, deep down, will always be a part of me” -Rachel Lloyd, Girls Like Us

Slavery was abolished 150 years ago, yet, every day, all over the world, there are girls of all ages being sold as sexual slaves for the profit of their trafficker. A large majority of sex trafficking victims come from broken homes and childhood abuse that makes them easier for traffickers to prey on. In the captivity of their trafficker, girls are tortured; beaten, starved, raped, stripped of human contact and broken down until eventually, their torture becomes normalized. For those girls who are able to escape or are rescued, their weeks, months, or years in the trafficking life have changed and distorted the way they look at and experience the world. This type of trauma, a continuum of trauma, has an immense impact on the girls both physically and mentally, an impact that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

This thesis aims to use architecture as a medium in which to rewrite the narrative of these girl's lives. Through studying their experience and the way in which space can heal, this thesis aims to design a rehabilitation shelter in which girls can live together, affirm and understand each other's pain, and heal together. It is a place in which girls can learn skills that they have missed out on their whole lives: life skills, work skills, academic education, and discover a new sense of self.

The goal of this thesis is to create a space in which girls can break the continuum of trauma that has been their lives, create a new sense of community, and heal. While the memories of their past will remain with them forever, this shelter

hopes to be a safe space in which they can build a new normal and prepare them for a better, empowered future.

Chapter 2: Human Trafficking

Definition

Human trafficking is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to millions of people globally. The United Nations defines it as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.¹

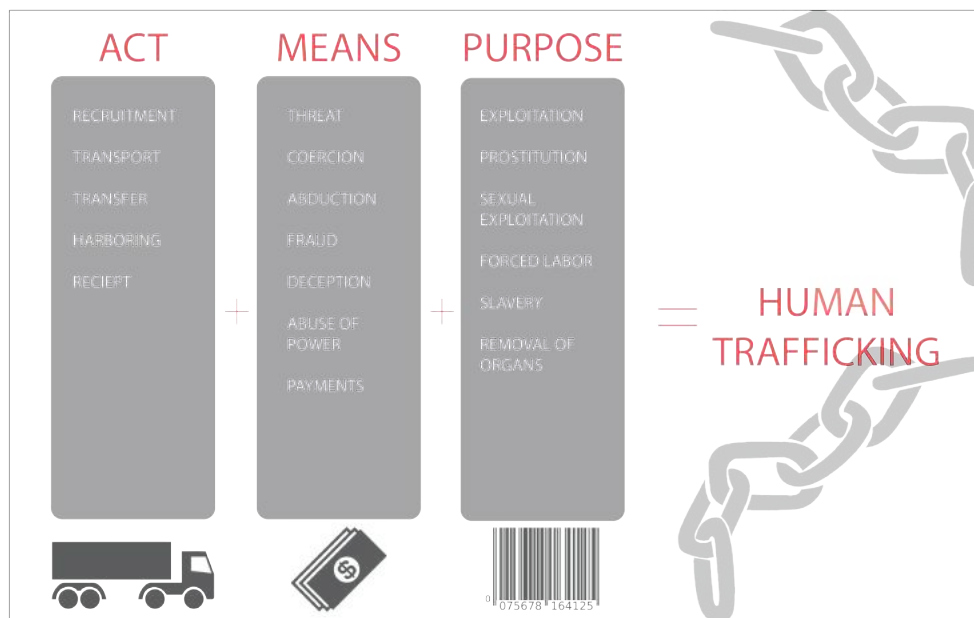


Figure 1, Definition of Human Trafficking
(Source: Author, United Nations)

¹ “Human Trafficking,” UNODC.ORG, accessed October 1, 2017,

An estimated 4.5 million people are trapped in sexual slavery today.² Defined as the “recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act”³, sex trafficking involves the **dehumanization, commodification, and fetishization of both children and adults in order to be used as sexualized puppets.**⁴ It has many faces and venues: including those of fake massage businesses, online ads and escort services, it occurs in residential brothels, on the street, at truck stops, at hotels and at motels.⁵ Sexual exploitation ranges from sexual harassment, rape, incest, battering, pornography and prostitution from the hands of sexual predators such as rapists, pedophiles, and other “social undesirables.”

Who

The Trafficker/Pimp: *A person who controls and financially benefits from the commercial sexual exploitation of another person. The relationship can be abusive and possessive, with the pimp using multiple techniques to shame the victims into submission.*

The “John”: *An individual who pays for or trades something of value for sexual acts.*

² “New ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour,” ilo.org, accessed October 7, 2017, http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_182109/lang-en/index.htm.

³ “Sex Trafficking,” polarisproject.org, accessed September 15, 2017, <https://polarisproject.org/sex-trafficking>

⁴ Ronald Weitzer, “Sex Trafficking and the Sex Industry: The Need for Evidence-Based Theory and Legislation,” *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 101, no. 4, (2011): 1337-1369, accessed September 30, 2017, www.jstor.org/stable/23150018.

⁵ “Sex Trafficking,” polarisproject.org, accessed September 15, 2017, <https://polarisproject.org/sex-trafficking>.

The Bottom: *A female appointed by the trafficker/pimp to supervise the others and report rule violations.*

The Madam: *An older woman who manages a brothel, escort service or other prostitution establishment. She may work alone or in collaboration with other traffickers.*

Definitions taken from: Mdhumantrafficking.org

The Victim Profile

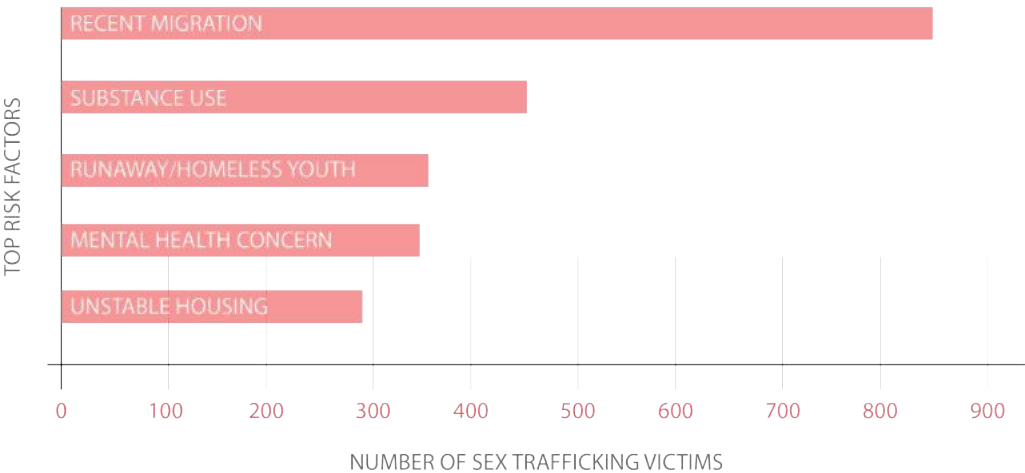


Figure 2, Risk Factors
(Source: Author, National Human Trafficking Hotline)

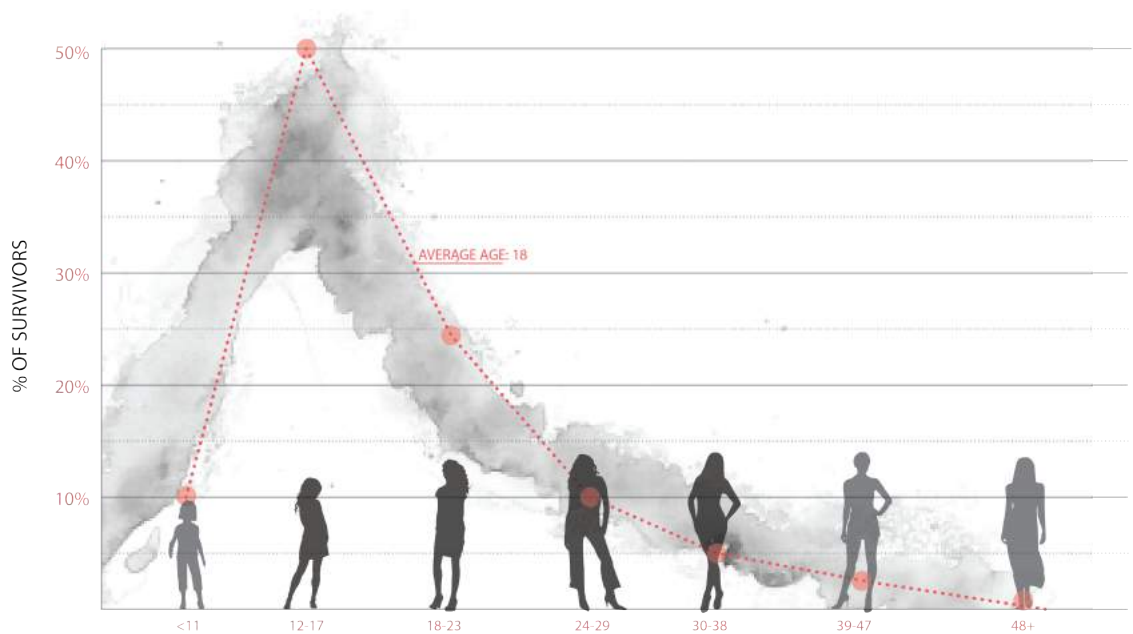


Figure 3, Age at Time Sex Trafficking Began
(Source: Author, National Human Trafficking Hotline 2016)

There is no one, clear definition of a sex trafficking victim; victims are as different as the situation that led them to trafficking. “Victims of sex trafficking can be U.S. citizens, foreign nationals, women, men, children, and LGBTQ individuals. Vulnerable populations are frequently targeted by traffickers, including runaway and homeless youth, as well as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, war, or social discrimination.” Last year, an estimated 1 out of 6 runaways reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children were likely child sex trafficking victims and of those, 86% were in the care of social services or the foster care system when they ran away. A 2016 study conducted in the U.S. showed that 86% of victims were girls and these girls ranged from under the age of 11 to nearly 50 years of age (Figure

2).⁶ While stereotypically many of the trafficked victims are girls from impoverished and economically depressed countries, 56% of victims were U.S. citizens with nearly every race and ethnicity represented.⁷



Figure 4, Adult/Minor Comparison
(Source: Author, National Human Trafficking Hotline 2016)

How

Every year 1.2 million children and youth are commercially sexually exploited.⁸

Trafficked children are often sold by their own families or abducted while younger

⁶ “Sex Trafficking,” polarisproject.org, accessed September 15, 2017, <https://polarisproject.org/sex-trafficking>.

⁷ Iris Yen, “Of Vice and Men: A New Approach to Eradicating Sex Trafficking by Reducing Male Demand through Educational Programs and Abolitionist Legislation,” *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 101, no. 98, (Winter 2008): 653-686, accessed October 5, 2017, <http://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7292&context=jclc>.

girls and women fall prey to false job advertisements like those of modeling, nannying, and waitressing ads. These ads are strategically placed to pull a girl in through a false sense of hope that then forces her to work in slave-like conditions. A victim may also become romantically involved with her trafficker prior to the realization of the situation that she is in, and is then forced or manipulated into prostitution. It is not until the situation becomes too toxic or when she finally accepts the reality that her boyfriend is actually a pimp that she may choose to leave. However, at that point it is no longer a matter of choice, but “a matter of escape.”⁹ The trafficker will consistently drug her or force her consent through psychological torture such as by threatening the safety of her family, as a means of obtaining, keeping, and mentally beating her into submission.¹⁰ Her trafficker will regularly beat, rape, starve, confine, torture and abuse her whether it be for days, weeks, or years.¹¹ The amount of time that she is kept in captivity will depend on her value to her traffickers:

“Depending on the demands of the local market and her individual characteristics, a trafficked woman can cost anywhere from \$14,000 to \$40,000. However the financial return for purchasing her body is unbelievably lucrative: she can earn \$75,000-\$250,000 or more each year for her pimp. One trafficker commented, “You can buy a woman

⁸ Rachel Lloyd, *Girls Like Us: Fighting for a World Where Girls are Not For Sale, an Activist Finds Her Calling and Heals Herself* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2011), 10

⁹ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 82.

¹⁰ Yen, “Of Vice and Men: A New Approach to Eradicating Sex Trafficking by Reducing Male Demand through Educational Programs and Abolitionist Legislation,” (658).

¹¹ Yen, “Of Vice and Men,” (659-660).

for \$10,000 and you can make back your money in a week if she is pretty and she is young. Then everything else is profit.”¹²

While traffickers reap the enormous profits, the victim must go through the unthinkable. She is forced to work ten to eighteen hours every day, sometimes all day, in different forms of degrading and abusive sexual acts, which can translate to getting raped dozens of times a day.¹³

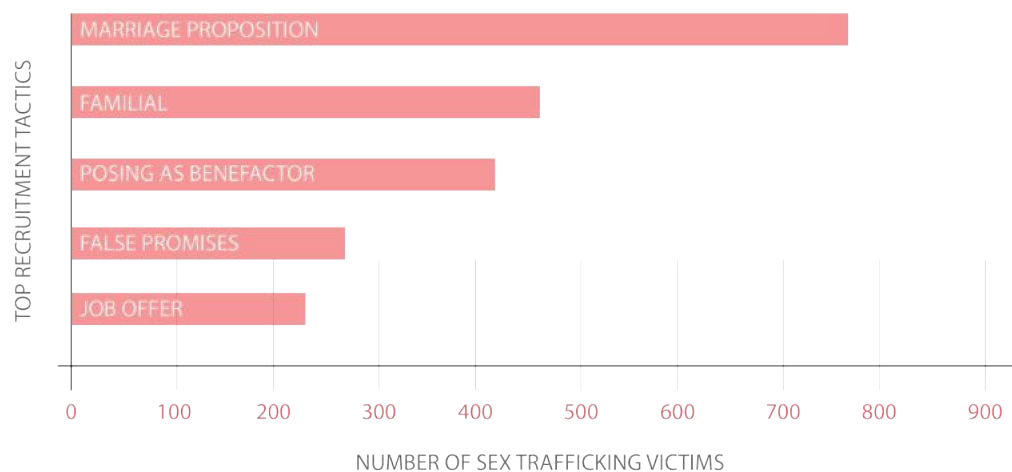


Figure 5, Recruitment Tactics
(Source: Author, National Human Trafficking Hotline 2016)

Where

Sex trafficking affects every country in the world. Globalization has played one role in the increased number of children and adults who are traded and trafficked internationally due to a growing business of sex tourists who journey to developing

¹² Donna M. Hughes, “The Demand for Victims of Sex Trafficking,” (June 2005), accessed October 9, 2017, <http://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7292&context=jclc>.

¹³ Yen, “Of Vice and Men,” (658).

countries for the sole purpose of purchasing sex. However, the majority of sexual exploitation occurs within a country's own borders and involves children, women, and men from that country.¹⁴

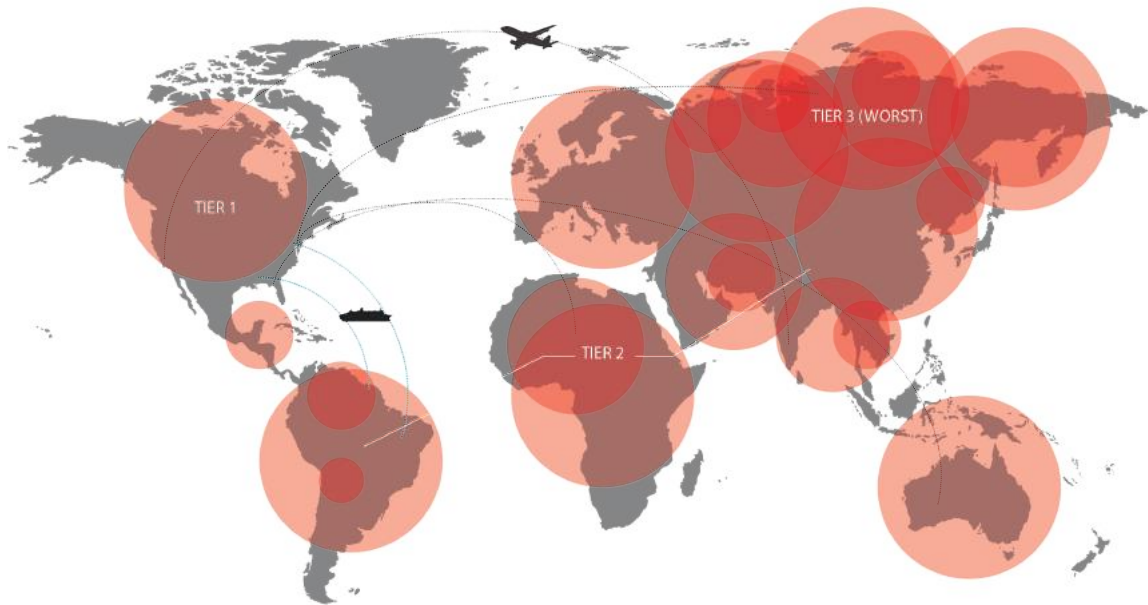


Figure 6, Global Hot Spots
(Source: Author, US State Department)

Sexual exploitation especially child sex trafficking is the most hidden form of child abuse in the United States today, “it is the nation’s least recognized epidemic.”¹⁵ Here in this country, people are being bought, sold, and smuggled like modern-day slaves. According to a 2001 University of Pennsylvania study, an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 adolescents are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation in the United States each year.¹⁶ As of June 2017, there have been 13,897 calls this year to the

¹⁴ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 10.

¹⁵ Richard J. Estes and Neil Alan Weiner, “The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children In the U.S., Canada and Mexico,” (September 2001), accessed October 12, 2017 <http://www.gems-girls.org/Estes%20Wiener%202001.pdf>.

¹⁶ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 11.

Human Trafficking Hotline, 4,460 cases reported, 3,186 of which were from sex trafficking, and 2,415 calls were from victims and survivors. The majority of these reports came from California, Texas, Florida, Ohio, and New York with Maryland having the 18th highest number of reports so far.¹⁷

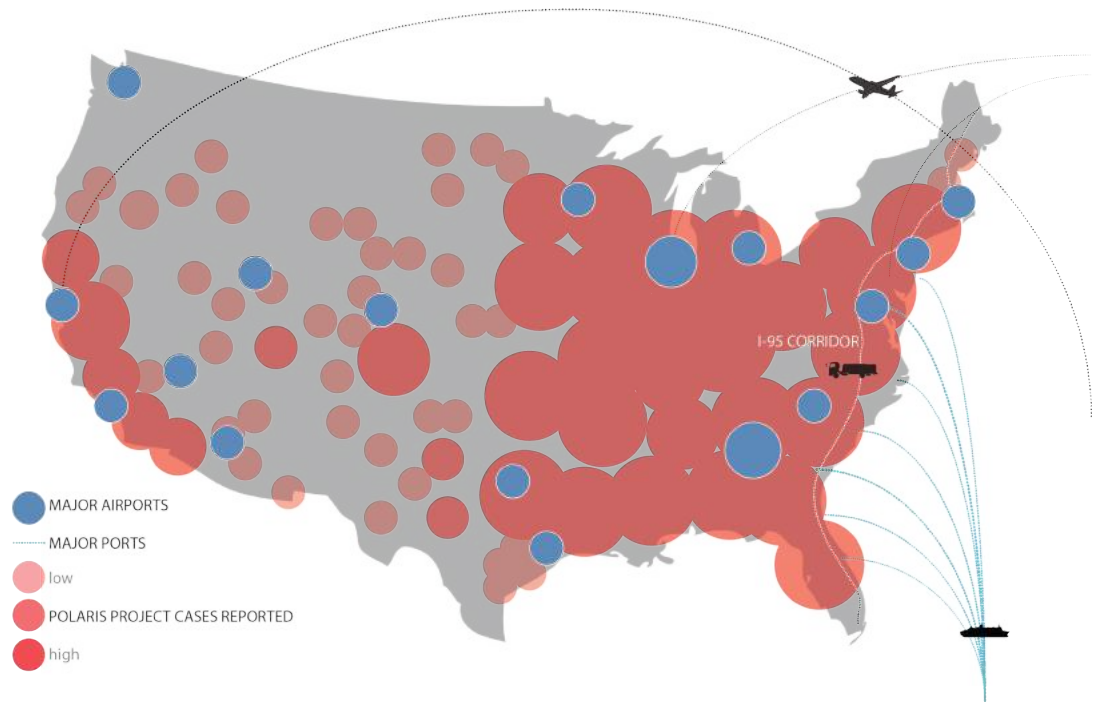


Figure 7, U.S Hot Spots
(Source: Author, National Human Trafficking Hotline 2016)

Maryland is a “goldmine” for both labor and sex trafficking. Due to its central location to all of the major east coast cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C, Maryland has become the perfect “pass-through” or “destination” state for human traffickers. Made convenient through the major highways, especially Interstate-95, traffickers are able to access and exchange victims along this heavily traveled corridor (Figure 9). This is because major highways require rest stops, truck

¹⁷ *National Human Trafficking Hotline*, accessed October 10, 2017, <https://humantraffickinghotline.org>.

stops, and bus stations which are primary locations for traffickers to exploit their victims- approximately 70% of human trafficking incidents in the U.S. occur in truck stops. Significant reports and contacts of human trafficking have been exposed along the three major bus terminals in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area. Also, with many victims arriving from across the world and country, airports like the Thurgood Marshall Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI) act as a breeding ground for trafficking. In this case, traffickers are aware that “Johns” who travel to Maryland for meetings or conferences are willing to engage in illicit sexual activity for the anonymous experience in a new place. Many cases have been reported especially near the hotels around BWI.¹⁸ For these reasons, Maryland is considered one of the many hot spot states for human trafficking in this nation.

¹⁸ “Sex Trafficking,” mdhumantrafficking.org, accessed October 14, 2017, <http://www.mdhumantrafficking.org/seextrafficking/>.

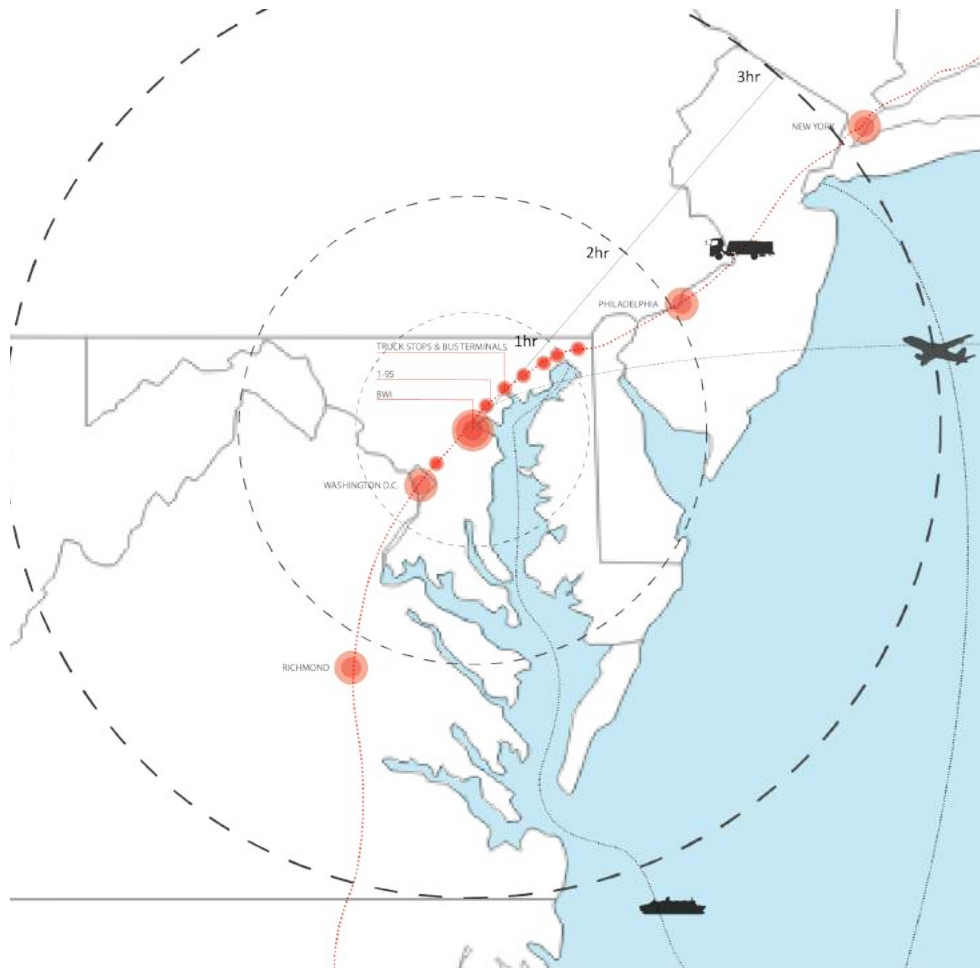


Figure 8, Maryland Hot Spots

(Source: Author)

Chapter 3: Capture and Captivity

Developmental Trauma

“I explained everything to him- that I don’t have anybody to take care of me anymore. He told me he was going to help me...he would treat me like a daughter.”¹⁹

Psychological trauma is caused by both human vulnerability in the natural world and the capacity for evil in human nature.²⁰ Human trafficking in children is often part of a larger constellation of childhood adversity. Nameless, faceless, ignored, and already damaged, many trafficked youth have been exposed to multiple layers of traumatic stress. This can include physical, sexual, and/or verbal abuse, which translates to violence suffered from parents, step-parents and other relatives. This includes sexual assault during childhood, incest, or statutory rape. It can also include witnessing violence, substance abuse or mental illness at home, emotional neglect, attachment disturbance, and family dysfunction. Early developmental traumas, such as these interpersonal ones, create an increased risk for revictimization.²¹

In a study of 204 trafficked girls and women from seven countries, survivors commonly reported pre-trafficking exposure to both physical (52%) and sexual (33%) violence. In this study, neglect was found as the most common form of maltreatment,

¹⁹ Elizabeth K. Hopper, "Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth," *Journal of Child Adolescent Trauma*, no. 10 (August 2016): 161-173.

²⁰ Judith L. Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence--From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, (Basic Books; 1R edition, 2015), 7.

²¹ Hopper, "Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth," 161.

along with family dysfunction such as mental illness, substance abuse, or criminal/prostitution activities. Other family stressors such as unemployment and financial trouble also disrupt a family caretaker's ability to meet the physical and emotional needs of growing children.²² As a result, young children are left to take on the responsibilities of adults while yearning for the care and support that is crucial to childhood development. Desperation and a lack of options make them prime targets for traffickers.

*Larger social forces have stripped most of these young people of any meaningful childhood...In fundamental ways, they have never gotten to be children and now they are being cast as non-children...These youths have not been afforded the protection presumed to be part of childhood, and yet the harshness of their lives frequently is disregarded or minimized, even while their presumed responsibility and guilt worthiness are used to justify punitive responses against them. - M.A. Bortner and Linda M. Williams, *Youth in Prison: We the People of Unit Four*²³*

Trafficking at this point becomes one additional layer of traumatic stress overlaid on a history of exposure to adversity. When a victim is already devalued, she will find that the traumatic events of her life take place outside the realm of socially validated reality. Her experience becomes unspeakable.²⁴

²² Hopper, "Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth," 164.

²³ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 133.

²⁴ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 8.

When abuse occurs, every part of the brain goes into overdrive as it is responding to a threat. Since this organ is still organizing and developing in the younger years, the trauma impacts the child more than it would an adult.²⁵ For example, “if a little girl was abused at age eight, she will [from then on] assess risk as an eight-year-old because her brain has developed templates that allow her abuse to completely form how she views the world.”²⁶

Repeated trauma, especially in childhood, forms and deforms a victim’s personality and contributes to a “broken radar,” in which a person has difficulty assessing the safety of people and situations. In normal situations, with healthy relationships, children learn to recognize and regulate their own “internal physiology and emotions, develop a well-defined sense of self, and learn how to negotiate intimate relationships with appropriate boundaries.”²⁷ However, with children who are exposed to multiple traumas, without a supportive environment, they may show trauma adaptations influencing their affect and impulse regulation, attention and consciousness, interpersonal relationships, and self-perception and meaning-making.²⁸ The victim becomes unable to care for or protect herself and she is forced to build an immature system of psychological defense, an abnormal state of consciousness. She must find trust in people who are untrustworthy, safety in situations that are unsafe, control and power in situations that are terrifyingly unpredictable.²⁹

²⁵ Mary Frances Bowley, *The White Umbrella: Walking with Survivors of Sex Trafficking*, (Moody Publishers, 2012), 65-66.

²⁶ Bowley, *The White Umbrella*, 70.

²⁷ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 163.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 163.

²⁹ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 96.

Capture

“I went along with him. As I say these words, I realize that I went along with too much in those days.... No one was twisting my arm, not yet. Everything was mild and gradual, one small step and then another...It started in such small ways that I didn’t see the pattern until much later.” -Linda Lovelace³⁰

While some traffickers use force to capture their victims, others can rely on psychological coercion to manipulate younger people into trafficking. They use deception, false promises, and the explicit or implicit promise to fulfill unmet physical or emotional needs. The trafficker will play the role of a caretaker that will help them and love them and because of this, most youths will not self-identify as victims early on. Once captured, the level of control will escalate strategically. It will include isolation, disorientation, exhaustion, monopolization of victim’s perceptions, demonstrations of the trafficker’s omnipotence, verbal abuse, enforcement of trivial demands, and forced repayment of debts.³¹

³⁰ Ibid., 80.

³¹ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 162.

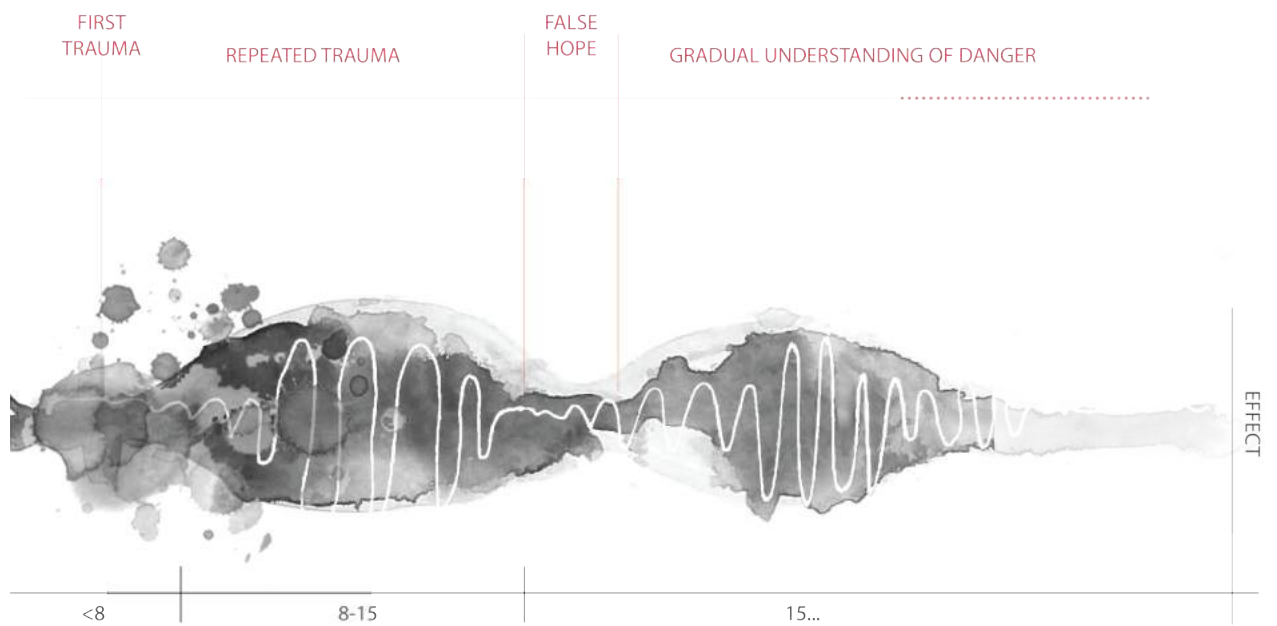


Figure 9, Experiential Timeline: Capture, Pre Developmental Trauma
(Source: Author)

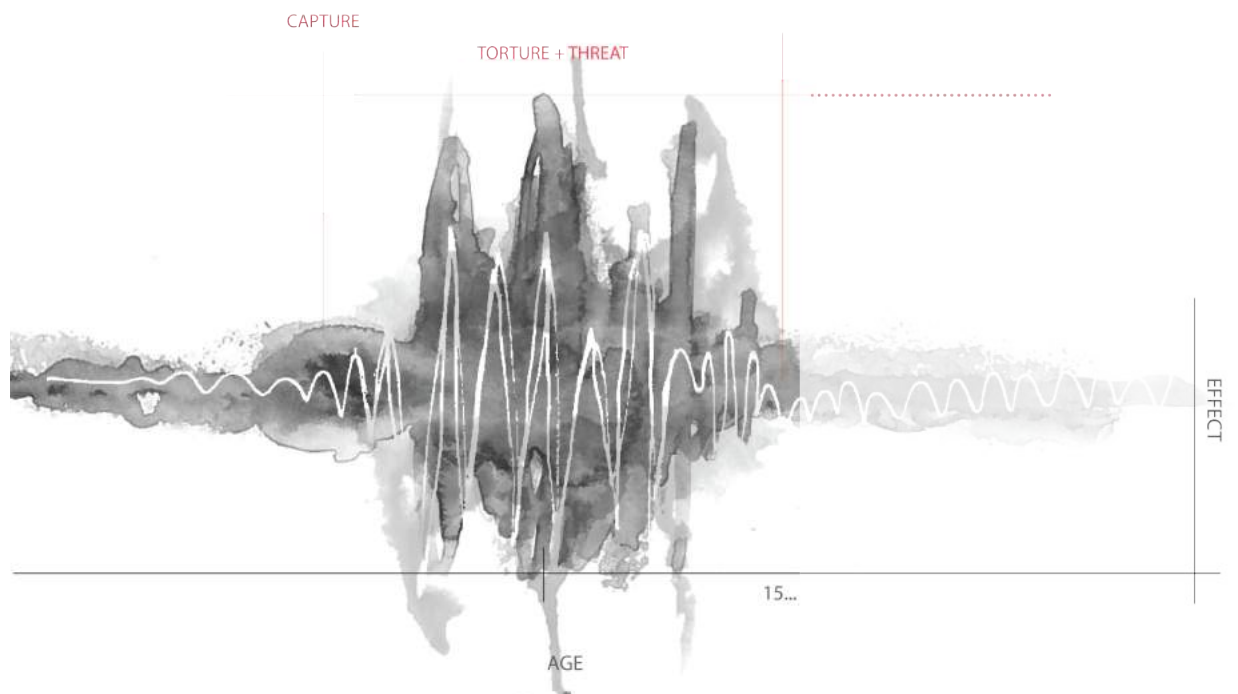


Figure 10, Experiential Timeline: Capture, Average Childhood
(Source: Author)

Captivity

*"It was an everyday thing to get beat, abused, raped. I spoke when I was spoken to. He took my innocence from me. I had to grow up in 2 months."*³²

*"I wanted to go home. He said I couldn't because I was making him good money...He said he'd shoot at my house with his gang...I said, "Sorry, I'll stay here. I don't want to go home no more."*³³

Captivity brings the victim into prolonged contact with her trafficker; it creates a special type of relationship, of coercive control. The trafficker becomes the most powerful person in her life and the psychology of the victim becomes shaped by the actions of her trafficker. The trafficker's first goal is the enslavement of the victim.

"He accomplishes this goal by exercising despotic control over every aspect of the victim's life. But simple compliance rarely satisfies him; he appears to have a psychological need to justify his crimes, and for this he needs the victim's affirmation. Thus he relentlessly demands from his victim professions of respect, gratitude, or even love. His ultimate goal appears to be the creation of a willing victim."³⁴

The trafficker will then create a "willing victim" through a series of terror, intermittent rewards, isolation, and enforced dependency (Figure 12). Terror is invoked through the use of torture, such as being burned, beatings with belts, hangers, and baseball bats etc. and for some victims, torture does not end even after they

³² Ibid., 166.

³³ Ibid., 167.

³⁴ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 75.

escape, their harassment may continue as the trafficker stalks his or her family. Along with torture, the trafficker will use gifts to enhance the illusion of the situation as a relationship and “season” the victim to destroy her sense of self in relation to others. The trafficker will control and scrutinize her body and bodily functions. The trafficker will have total control over what she eats, when she sleeps or goes to the toilet, and what she wears. When she is deprived of food, sleep, or exercise this results in physical debilitation and even when her basic physical needs are somewhat met, this attack on the body shames and demoralizes her. Through the chronic trauma she goes through, her baseline state of physical calm or comfort withers away and her body will slowly turn against her in the form of insomnia, agitation, and somatic symptoms.³⁵

Fear is constantly increased by inconsistent and unpredictable outbursts of violence and enforcements of petty rules. The ultimate goal is to convince the victim that the trafficker is omnipotent and that her resistance is futile. Her life now depends on winning the trafficker’s indulgence through absolute compliance.³⁶ Eventually, the trafficker becomes not just a source of fear but of solace as the hope of a meal, bath, kind word or some other basic human need compels her. Traffickers, “slaveholders”, also demand gratitude from their victims. They demand that their victims find sexual fulfillment in submission.³⁷

Through isolation and torture, she becomes bound to her trafficker. She becomes increasingly dependent on her trafficker for survival, emotional sustenance, and

³⁵ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 86.

³⁶ Ibid., 77.

³⁷ Ibid., 76.

information. The more frightened she is, the more she will cling to the only relationship that is permitted, the relationship with her trafficker. “ In the absence of any other human connection, she will try to find the humanity in her captor.”³⁸

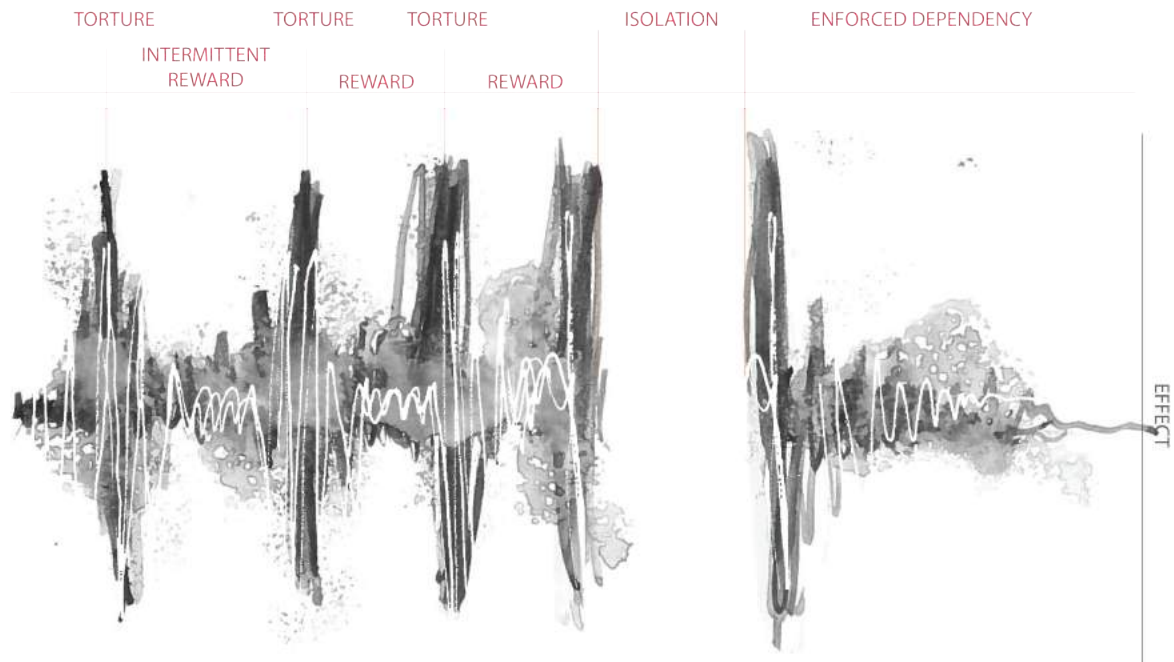


Figure 11, Experiential Timeline: Captivity
(Source: Author)

Trauma Bonding

*“I was worried. At first, I missed him. Then I was worried that he’d go shoot at our house. I was scared. And sad. I missed him...I liked him.”*³⁹

After continuous cycles of reprieve from certain death, along with the fear of death and gratitude for being allowed to live, she may come to see her trafficker as her

³⁸ Ibid., 81.

³⁹ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 169.

savior. Especially within the isolated context of a love relationship, the victim may develop a feeling of intense, “almost worshipful dependence upon an all-powerful, godlike authority”; this is the beginning of Trauma Bonding. It is an enforced regression to “psychological infantilism” which “compels the victim to cling to the very person who is endangering their life.”⁴⁰ Also known as Stockholm syndrome, this identification with her trafficker creates a mental barrier against exiting the trafficking situation.

Young people may feel love, indebtedness, or another strong connection to the traffickers and be grateful for any attention and affection that they receive, despite the abuse. They may become hypervigilant to the trafficker’s moods and desires in order to predict or avoid violence. As they attend to the trafficker’s cues, these young people may begin to view the world through the trafficker’s lens, perceiving the perpetrator as a protector or even as a victim of the system. Shame and self-blame can strengthen this bond, furthering the young person’s sense of isolation and alienation from larger society.⁴¹

A study of trafficking survivors found that almost a quarter of them exhibited Stockholm syndrome, and 11% actively protected their trafficker from accusations of exploitation.

These reactions occur when neither resistance nor escape is possible and the human self-defense system becomes too overwhelmed and therefore disorganized. “Each

⁴⁰ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 92.

⁴¹ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 162.

component of the ordinary response to danger, having lost its utility, tends to persist in an altered and exaggerated state long after the actual danger is over.”⁴² Many times even after the victim has escaped, she cannot reorient to “normal” relationships that existed before captivity because all relationships are now see through a lens of intensity. She may even choose to go back to her trafficker as he attempts to persuade her return, not by threats but by expressions of love and promises of reform. For a moment, it seems as though the balance of power has been reversed as he insists that his domineering behavior simply proves his desperate need and love for her.⁴³

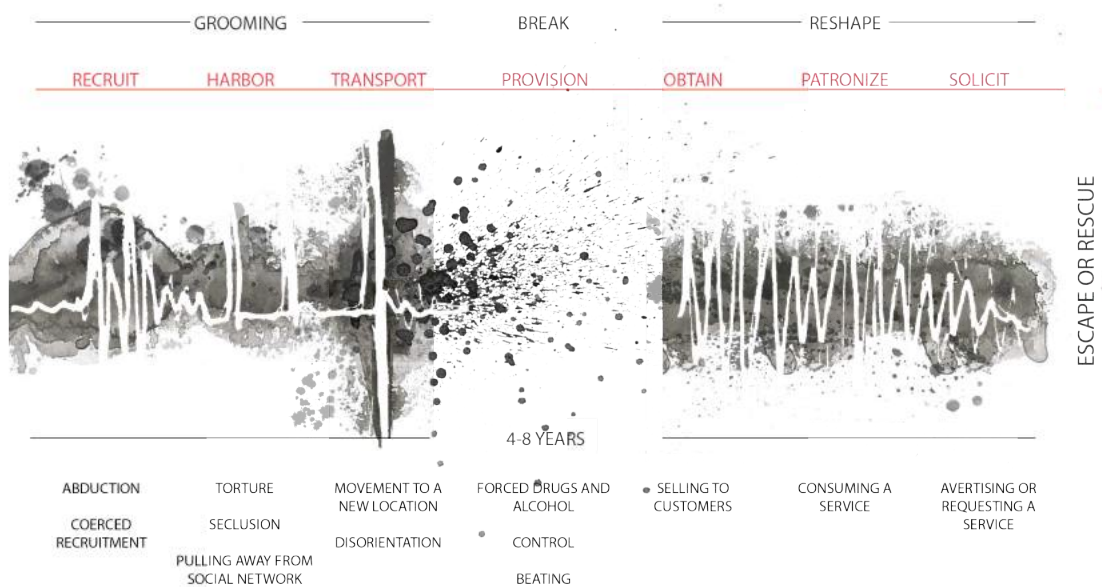


Figure 12, Experiential Timeline: Dehumanization Process
(Source: Author, The Samaritan Women)

⁴²Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 34.

⁴³ Ibid., 79.

Chapter 4: Escape and Complex PTSD

Escape

“I was looking for love and acceptance, but he ruined me...he brainwashed me, manipulated me, abused me...I’m a cold-hearted bitch now. I don’t have any sympathy for people...I stopped caring because people didn’t care about me.” ⁴⁴

Sex trafficking victims show an average of four to eight years of exploitation before rescue, escape, or death.⁴⁵ Victims may escape by running away, through the help of others i.e. hotline tips, or rescue by law enforcement through brothel raids or by being mistaken for prostitutes. However, in many of these cases victims escape only to be taken to jail. Some trafficking victims experience a cyclical pattern of exploitation in which they are able to leave the trafficking situation only to face psychosocial or environmental barriers, which leave them vulnerable to being re-trafficked or re-victimized in other ways.⁴⁶

The Cycle:

Precontemplation: She acknowledges problems in her life but resists change. She might say, *“He’s not my perpetrator, he’s my boyfriend”*

Contemplation: She realizes the need to escape but cannot see a realistic solution.

Preparation: She recognizes she must make a change and begins planning

⁴⁴ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 162.

⁴⁵ Jeanne Allert, The Samaritan Women, November 4, 2017.

⁴⁶ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 162.

alternatives to her current lifestyle.

Action: She begins taking steps to address the problem, sometimes on her own.

Maintenance: She moves forward in her recovery and starts to feel successful.

Relapse: Something triggers a crisis that causes her to return to her old lifestyle.⁴⁷

The cycle repeats because going back to her trafficker begins to make sense as it was the only space, for a long time, where she felt accepted. Especially because it is not as though she is taken immediately to a therapeutic center designed to address her “pre-developmental trauma, post traumatic stress disorders, Stockholm syndrome, or her warped sense of self, instead she is lined up against a wall in a jumpsuit, counting off”.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Bowley, *The White Umbrella*, 75.

⁴⁸ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 138.

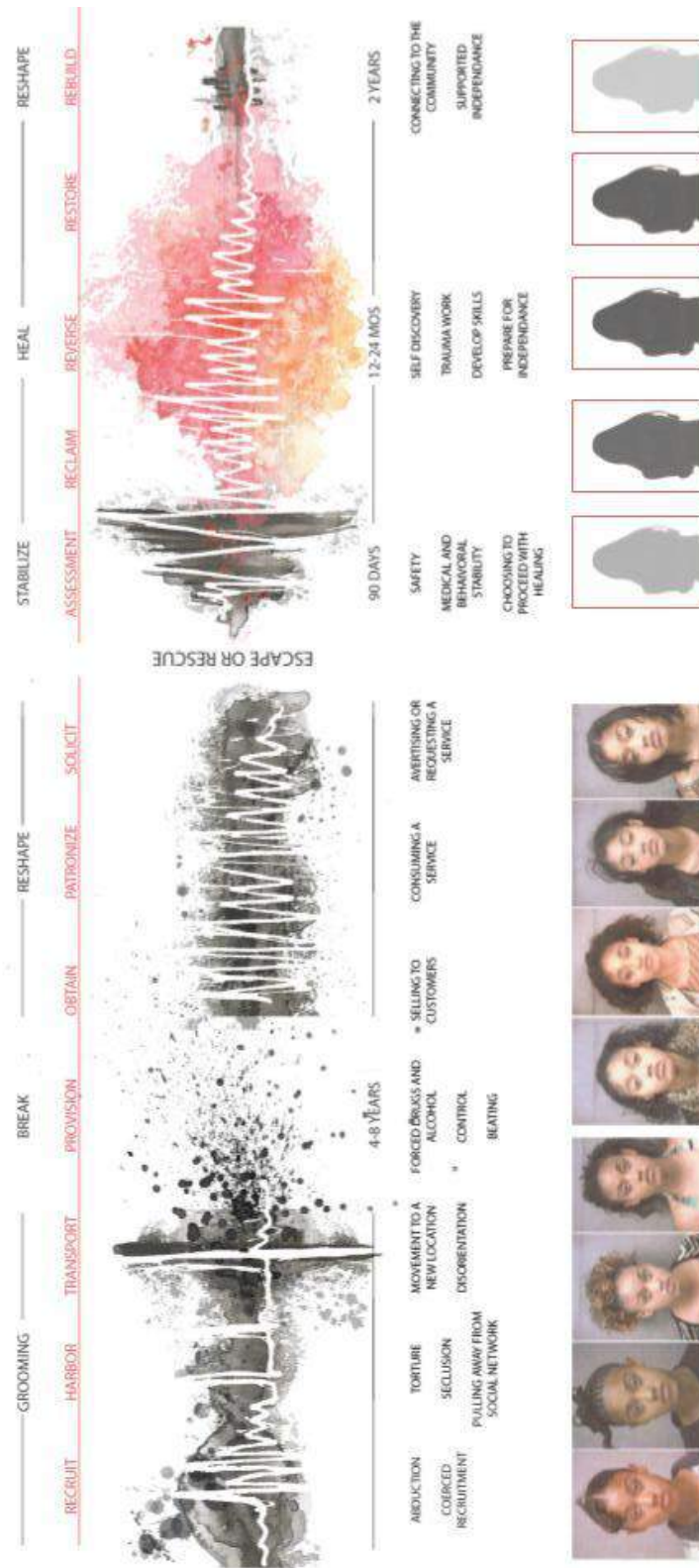


Figure 13, Experiential Timeline: Dehumanization Process with Intervention
(Source: Author, The Samaritan Women/The Faces of Prostitution)

Initial Recovery

“Sometimes I can’t feel my emotions. I have lost any ability to love another person. I don’t feel like I have the capacity to hate anyone. Sometimes, I feel empty inside. I can’t laugh or cry.”⁴⁹

In traumatic situations, physiologically, bodies are in a fight-or flight response. It is not until the immediate danger has passed that victims can begin to truly feel all the pain and trauma that their minds and bodies have suppressed in order to function and survive. For sex trafficking victims who have experienced a continuum of trauma their whole lives, their whole being has been in a continual high alert with little to no rest to process the experiences they have suppressed. It is not until things calm down that their feelings surface. It can be overwhelming, especially when they do not expect these feelings or do not understand what and why this is happening to them.

“Just as women who escape domestic violence may experience greater depression once the relationship has ended than they did during the relationship, almost everyone who leaves the life experiences a phase of depression ranging from mild to severe debilitation.”⁵⁰

The emotional aspects of the transition are just one portion of the recovery process. Unless a victim is fortunate enough to have all of her needs met, she is burdened with having to figure out shelter, financials, and any other basic survival need as she is trying to process all of her pain. Just as some domestic violence victims know that leaving the abuser will mean a drastic change in finances and lifestyle, sex trafficking

⁴⁹ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 168.

⁵⁰ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 180.

victims understand that leaving the life means having to leave everything they own behind and initially being “worse off.” While victims of sex trafficking are not profiting from their abuse, there may be some indirect “benefits.” They do not have to deal with issues of shelter and food, even though food may be withheld as a form of “punishment.”⁵¹

“Many girls will be allowed, if not required, to get their hair and nails done. Most pimps provide clothing that ranged from a fur coat (rare) to jeans and sneakers (common). But when girls decide to escape, they are not allowed to take anything with them. Starting from scratch is frightening, and struggling in the first few months to feed and clothe herself can exacerbate any existing depression.”⁵²

The girls are often labeled “resistant” and “difficult”. They will rarely rush gratefully into the arms of those who are trying to help her. They do not trust them. They are *too tired, unspeakably traumatized; hurting, lonely, depressed, terrified, and missing the very life that caused them the most harm*. Due to this, “girls will relapse because the pain is no longer tangible...[everyone] remembers feeling sad, or hurt, or in a physical pain, but they do not *feel* it anymore; it is a cerebral memory, not a physical one.”⁵³

⁵¹ Ibid, 182.

⁵² Ibid, 133.

⁵³ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 33.

Mental Health Consequences

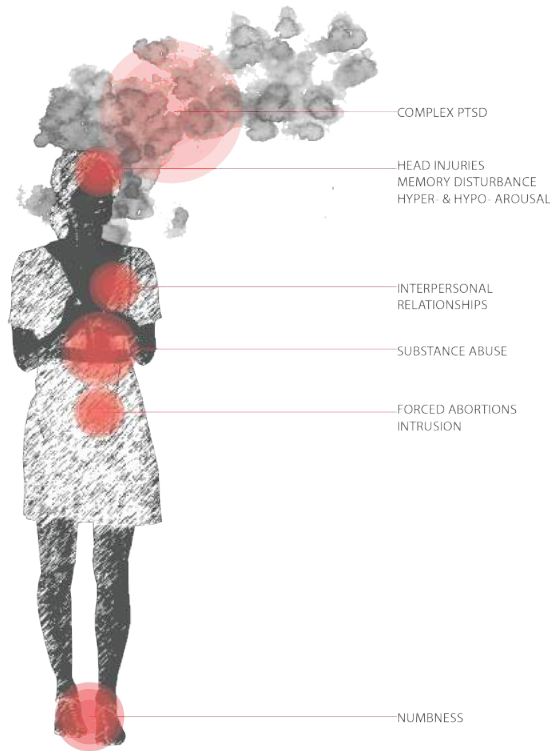


Figure 14, Health Consequences
(Source: Author, *Trauma and Recovery*)

Trafficking victims cannot be identified through isolated “disorders,” but “a trauma-informed approach conceptualizes these struggles as a set of psychological, biological, and behavioral responses that stem from efforts to cope with repeated or chronic trauma.”⁵⁴ Trauma events overwhelm the ordinary bodily systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning.

“The traumatized person may experience intense emotion but without clear memory of the event, or may remember everything in detail but without emotion. She may find herself in constant of state of vigilance and irritability

⁵⁴ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 163.

without knowing why. Traumatic symptoms have a tendency to become disconnected from their source and to take on a life of their own.”⁵⁵

Victims of sex trafficking also show a high prevalence of a variety of mental health conditions such as posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, mood disorders, dissociative disorders, and substance abuse. A study of trafficking victims who accessed secondary mental health institutions in the UK found that the most common diagnoses of post trauma events in both children and adults were PTSD, severe stress, adjustment disorder, and affective disorders. 57.3% of the study group showed a high incidence of depression, 32.3% anxiety, 26.5% PTSD and over 50% of the total group was diagnosed with multiple disorders.⁵⁶

Interpersonal Relationships

“I’m afraid at times- of everything, of people. I stay away from people. I think this person wants to use me.”⁵⁷

Her interactions in social situations are also affected by the traumas she has suffered. She will have difficulty establishing and understanding healthy relationships, which require “allowing trust and intimacy to slowly develop within the safety provided by clear boundaries.” Several survivors also reported being given false identities, different names and backstories, by their traffickers.

“It was too hard to try and remember the me that I had been.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 33.

⁵⁶ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 169.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 170.

Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

“I feel as if I’m in a fog most of the time. I’m easily startled and quick to react to anyone invading my personal space.”⁵⁹

A traumatized person lacks balance. She is caught between extremes of “amnesia of reliving the trauma, between floods of intense, overwhelming feeling and arid states of no feeling at all, between irritable, impulsive action and complete inhibition of action.”⁶⁰ This instability furthers her sense of unpredictability and helplessness.

“A study done by Dr. Melissa Farley, an American clinical psychologist, of 475 people in the commercial sex industry in five different countries found that 67% of them met the criteria for PTSD, a figure that rivals combat veterans. Traumatic responses can look different for different girls. Some girls are numb, so accustomed to pushing down feelings and ignoring their own needs that it is hard for them to feel anything at all. Others are consumed with anger that is built up over time, a rage that is directed at no one and everyone. Some girls struggle with trauma reenactment, a compulsion to recreate the same situations over and over, continually putting themselves in danger, trying to have a different outcome this time. Other girls crave some level of danger just to feel ‘alive.’ Girls whose nights were filled with fighting and violence, a level of danger every time they got into a car or went into a hotel room, who dodged and ran from the police, who never knew what to expect at

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 179.

⁶⁰ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 47.

any moment, now struggle with the relative safety and the danger-free,
'excitement'”⁶¹

Her body no longer knows how to get back the homeostatic state of calmness and peace. Her body's concept of “normal” is actually a state of hypervigilance, where anything could be seen as a threat. She can jump from a vague sense of apprehension to a state of crippling fear in seconds.⁶²

Alongside a series of mental health disorders, trauma manifests itself in physical health issues as well. Somatization, for example, is the tendency to experience psychological pain through physical stress that can include an impaired immune system or other undiagnosed medical issues. In addition, more than one in five sex trafficking victims also reported forced abortions, head injuries, and substance abuse from the hands of their traffickers.

Girls do not just show PTSD from their years of forced sexual exploitation but their disorders also stem from their years of pre-developmental trauma. From years of childhood abuse, girls show impulse control, hyper- and hypo-arousal, difficulty calming down, memory disturbance, and conflicting narratives. Many youth also describe multiple [suicide] attempts because [they] “did not want to live like [this] anymore.”⁶³

Trauma reconditions the human nervous system. The multiple symptoms of PTSD fall into three main categories: hyperarousal, intrusion, and constriction.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 180.

⁶² Bowley, *The White Umbrella*, 66-67.

⁶³ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 169.

⁶⁴ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 35-36.

Hyperarousal: The persistent expectation of danger.

Intrusion: The imprint of the traumatic moment.

Constriction: The numbing response of surrender.

With Hyperarousal, the human system of self-preservation goes into permanent alert as though the danger may return at any second. The victim startles easily, sleeps poorly, and cannot tune out certain stimuli that other people would find slightly annoying. She will respond to each repetitive stimulus as though it is new and dangerous every time. This increase in arousal will also persist in her sleep resulting in numerous types of sleep disturbance.

“Events even remotely connected with violence - sirens, thunder, a door slamming- elicits intense fear. Any symbolic or actual sign of potential danger results in increased activity, agitation, pacing, screaming, and crying. The women remain vigilant, unable to relax or to sleep. Nightmares are universal, with undisguised themes of violence and danger.”⁶⁵ Elaine Hilberman, American psychiatrist

Intrusion forces the victim to relive the events of her past as though they are occurring in the present. Because of this, she cannot resume the normal course of her life as the trauma continually interrupts and for that moment, life stops. The traumatic moment can be evoked by the smallest reminder that returns with all of the “vividness and emotional force of the original event”⁶⁶, thus even normally safe environments feel dangerous. Traumatized people relive the moments of their trauma not only in

⁶⁵ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 86.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 37.

their memories and dreams but also in their actions as they need to reenact them through imagery and bodily sensation in the absence of a verbal narrative and context.

Dissociation

“Did you ever see a rabbit stuck in the glare of your headlights when you were going down a road at night. Transfixed-like it knew it was going to get it-that’s what happened.”⁶⁷

“I left my body at that point. I was over next to the bed, watching this happen...I dissociated from the helplessness. I was standing next to me and there was just this shell on the bed...There was just a feeling of flatness. I was just there. When I re-picture the room, I don't picture it from the bed. I picture it from the side of the bed. That’s where I was watching from.” -Rape Victim⁶⁸

Boys generally respond to trauma by fighting or fleeing but girls respond by dissociating. Dissociation or constriction is when a victim finds herself completely powerless and is therefore forced into a state of surrender- her system of self-defense shuts down completely. When she cannot escape her situation physically, she alters her state of consciousness to survive.⁶⁹

“I couldn’t scream. I couldn’t move. I was paralyzed...like a rag doll.”⁷⁰

The situation of inescapable danger not only evokes terror and rage but also a state of detached calm in which every other feeling disappears. Trauma events continue to

⁶⁷ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 42.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Bowley, *The White Umbrella*, 47.

⁷⁰ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 42.

register in a subconscious awareness but through dissociation they disconnect from their ordinary meaning, her perceptions become numb, distorted, and alters her sense of time. For those girls who cannot spontaneously dissociate, they will attempt to produce a similar numbing effect through drugs and alcohol.⁷¹ People in captivity also become expert at altering their conscious as they have had to do so repeatedly in order to survive hunger, cold, and inescapable pain.

“The dissociative response occurs when the abuse victim tries to ‘go to another place’ in her mind in order to disengage from what is happening to her. There are many techniques of dissociating. Some children live in a fantasy world created in their head. Some begin daydreaming. Others take on a completely different persona. Many report feeling as if they are floating or watching a movie. Like a deer caught by a car’s headlights, children who are terrorized in abusive situations will actually freeze and become numb, compliant, and *unwilling to fight*.”⁷²

⁷¹ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 43-44.

⁷² Bowley, *The White Umbrella*, 68.

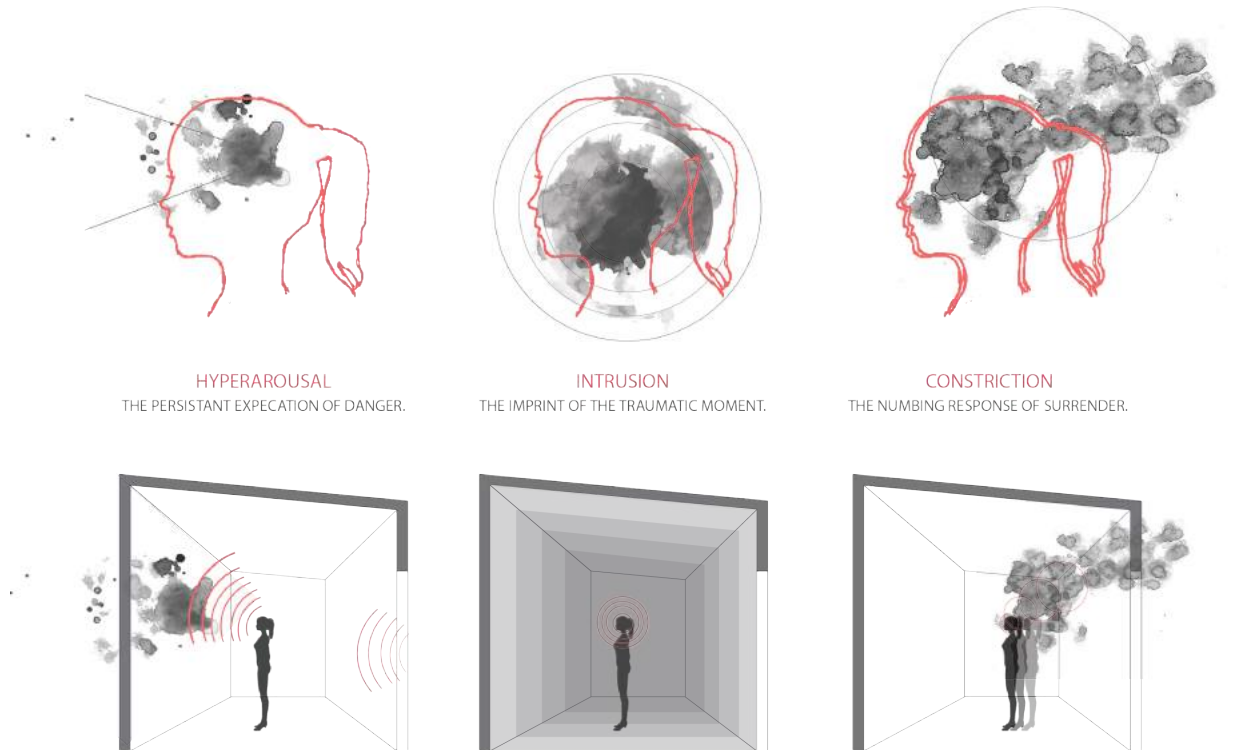


Figure 15, The Three Forms of Complex PTSD
(Source: Author)

Chapter 5: Redefining

“Sometimes I can’t bear people not understanding me. And sometimes I feel like it’s too much to live here in the [residential] home. They yell. They don’t understand me. Sometimes I want to go back to [my home country].”⁷³

What is out there right now

According to a 2012 survey conducted by the Polaris Project, there are an estimated fifty organizations in the nation that offer beds to human trafficking survivors. Currently, twenty-eight states have no residential programs for sex trafficking victims and no plans to open any in the nearby future.

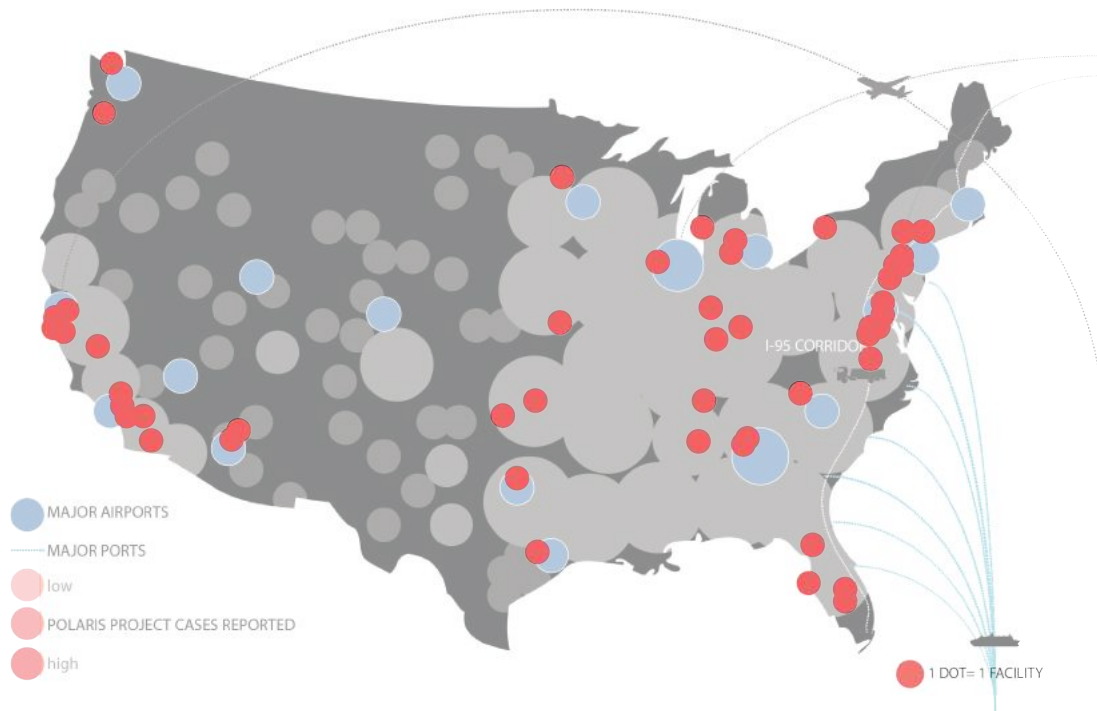
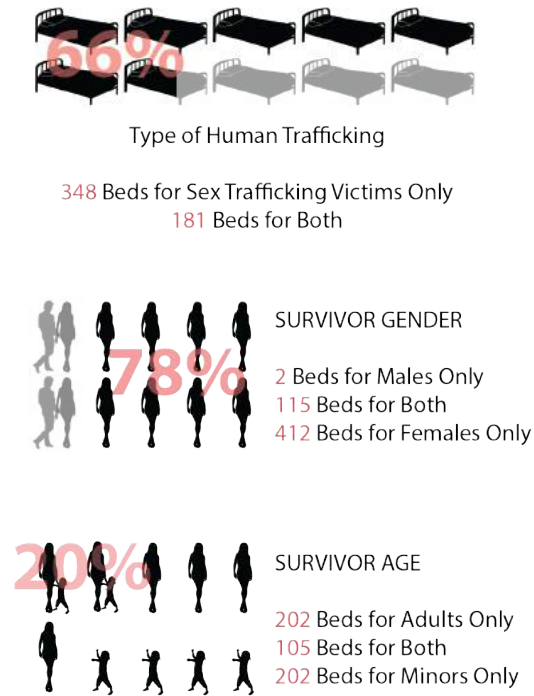


Figure 16, Current Facility Locations
(Source: Author, Polaris Project 2012 Shelter Survey)

⁷³ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 169.

Nationally there are 529 beds that are exclusively for human trafficking victims, with 348 out of 529 shelter beds being exclusively for sex trafficking victims. A detailed breakdown is listed below.



Source: Polaris Project 2012 Survey

Figure 17, Current Beds Breakdown
(Source: Author)

Based off of a 2007 study conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the department concluded, “across the board, it was clear that the services provided to this population were inadequate.” In 2010, the U.S. Department of Justice found that there were very few specialized recovery programs for trafficking victims and those that existed were mainly limited to minors.

Due to the lack of specialized programs, trafficking victims will often be placed into detention, homeless, and domestic violence shelters that do not cater to the specific care and support that they need in their recovery process. For example, compared to domestic violence victims and homeless people, trafficking victims often require longer stays and heightened security.

State	City	Organization	U.S. Citizen	Foreign National	Male	Female	Adult	Minor	Exclusive?	# of Beds
CA	Riverside	Operation Safehouse								59
	Sacramento	Courage House							★	0
	Sacramento	My Sister's House								0
	Sacramento	W.E.A.V.E., Inc.							★ (3)	41
	San Diego	Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition (BSCC)							★	0
	San Diego	Germans Hope							★	0
	San Diego	San Diego Youth and Community Services								20
	San Diego	SDS Hope House							★	5
	San Francisco	Asian Women's Shelter								15
	San Francisco	Freedom House							★	8
	San Jose	Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence								21
	San Jose	Community Service Programs, Inc. (CSP)							★	1
	Van Nuys	Mary Magdalene Project								0
	Washington	Plants Project							★	0
DC	Washington	Sasha House Network							★ (4)	41
	Washington	Sasha House Network								
FL	Clement	Dream Home Run for Freedom							★	10
	Estero	Wings of Shelter							★	4
FL	Fort Lauderdale	Calvary Chapel							★	0
	Miami	Kristi House							★	0
GA	Atlanta	Wellspring Living							★ (14)	51
	Atlanta	Out of Darkness								7
	Prichrome City	Living Water for Girls							★	10
Guam	Saipan	Gonsalves/Parsons - Kaitai								11
HI	Honolulu	Pacific Alliance to Stop Slavery (PASS)							★	8
IL	Chicago	Salvation Army Pioneer House (Women's House)							★	8
IN	Indianapolis	The Julian Center								85
KY	Louisville	The Center for Women and Families								76
	Louisville	Catholic Charities of Louisville							★	24
	Carlington	Women's Crisis Center								22
MA	Arlington	Germaine Lawrence							★ (8)	77
	Quincy	Josephine Bakshi House							★	3
MD	Baltimore	The Servant Women							★	10
	Baltimore	Turnaround							★ (4)	13
MI	Detroit	Alternatives for Girls								24
	Grand Rapids	Wedgewood Christian Services							★	12
MN	St. Paul	Breaking Free							★	30
MN	St. Paul	Catholic Charities of St. Paul & Minneapolis							★	12
MO & KS	Kansas City	Women's Voice							★	6
NC	Asheville	Hope House							★	4
NY	Buffalo	International Institute of Buffalo							★	12
	Fulton Hills	Lifeway Network							★	5
	New York	Girls Education & Mentoring Services (GEMS)							★	15
	New York	Jewish Children's Association, Gateways Program							★	14
	New York	New York Asian Women's Shelter								40
	New York	Safe Horizons Streetwork Project								24
	New York	Sanctuary for Families							★ (2)	46
OH	White Plains	My Sister's Place								33
	Cincinnati	YWCA of Greater Cincinnati								88
OR	Tuendo	Second Chance Tuendo								9
	Oklahoma City	All Things New							★	8
OK	Tulsa	Bay Spring Villa								23
OR	Portland	Janus Youth Programs							★ (7)	19
PA	Philadelphia	Covenant House - Philadelphia								52
PA	Philadelphia	Dawn's Place							★	0
PA	York	YWCA - YORK								45
TN	Nashville	Magdalene - Thistle Farms							★	22
TX	Dallas	Mosaic Family Services							★	24
	Houston	Hope House							★	12
VA	Fairfax	Artemis House								34
	Manassas	Youth for Tomorrow								20
	Richmond	Safe Harbor								8
WA	Seattle	Youthcare							★ (11)	38
Total Beds										1,684

Figure 18, Current Shelters Across the Nation
(Source: Polaris Project 2012 Shelter Survey)

“I left the program because I was having nightmares. I didn’t like it. Men and women were on the same floor.”⁷⁴

Even shelters that exclusively focus on human trafficking face many challenges in providing sufficient services to the victims.

- Services lack coordination with federal, state, and local agencies
- Service providers lack training
- Victim has language barriers
- Victims and staff have safety concerns, such as retaliation from traffickers
- Victims have a lack of knowledge of their rights
- Victims legal status
- Victim lack support and are isolated
- Services lack of formal rules, regulations, and procedures
- Services lack of adequate resources, funding and training

Depending on the program and location of the shelters, funding ranges from \$10,000-\$100,000 and due to this lack of or inconsistency in financial support the girls are not able to receive the comprehensive services required.

Services

Many shelters offer residential services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Other services include:

- Case management and counseling services
- Individual and group therapy, and few offer intensive trauma recovery
- Home schooling, tutoring, GED programs, college preparation assistance
- Job and vocational training
- Life skills training: hygiene, cleaning, cooking, nutrition, money and time management
- Recreational programs: sports, exercise, yoga, gardening

Some shelters also include survivor support groups, mentoring, music and art therapy, substance abuse and addictions treatments, medical and dental care, family

⁷⁴ Hopper, “Polyvictimization and Developmental Trauma Adaptations in Sex Trafficked Youth,” 170.

reintegration and family therapy, relationship and parenting skills, immigration and legal assistance, relapse prevention, youth development training, and diversion skills.

Security

With a constant fear of retaliation from traffickers, trafficking victims require a high level of security. Current facilities provide security through 24-hour staff on the premises with security cameras, armed windows, alarm systems, armed guards and dogs. Some shelters focus on security through the seclusion of the shelter in a highly rural site. Others gate or fence off their property with buzzer systems. Apart from physical security, some shelters also require background checks and screen social media access within the facility.

However, these security measures can make facilities seem more jail-like rather than comforting and warm. This thesis will explore security through spatial qualities, programming, and sequence that can imbue a sense of safety in conjunction with a healing atmosphere (fig. 21).

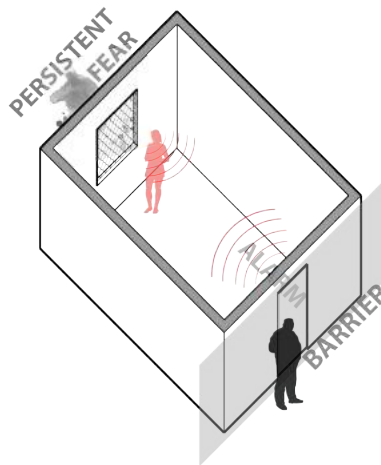


Figure 19, Current Typology: Security
(Source: Author)

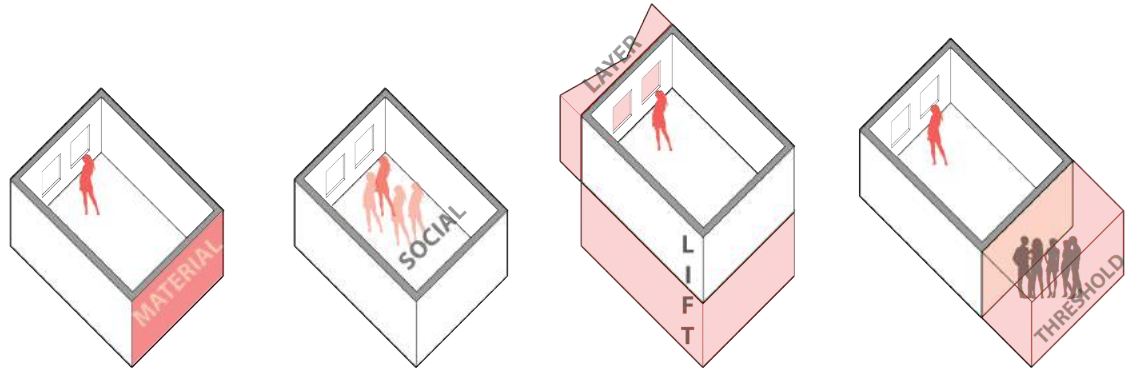


Figure 20, Redefining Exploration: Security

(Source: Author)

Staffing

Depending on the program and facility size, there can be anywhere from two to twenty-five full time staff with a 4:1 or 3:1 resident: staff ratio. Staff are also required to do between two hours to six weeks of initial training with continual monthly or yearly training check-ins. Training topics include: commercial sexual exploitation of children, human trafficking, stages of change, crisis intervention, de-escalation, youth development, conflict mediation, trauma, stress management, CPR, and first aid.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Polaris Project, “Shelter Beds for Human Trafficking Survivors in the United States,” (Washington D.C.: Polaris Project, 2012), accessed November 29, 2017, <http://www.ccasa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Shelter-Beds-For-Human-Trafficking-Survivors.pdf>.

Current Facilities

*“I’m struck as always by the **sterile, clinical atmosphere** of the agency...though it is clean, the **harsh fluorescent lights and pale green walls**, with the **long hallways** decorated with nothing more than a few child abuse hotline posters, don’t really add up to a warm feeling. I couldn’t imagine being a child who was brought here (actually, I could and that was worse). If you ended up here, it was likely after repeated abuse or neglect. You would probably just have been removed from your home, a terrifying experience even when you feel lucky to escape.”*

-Rachel Lloyd, Girls Like Us⁷⁶

Due to a lack of funding for these organizations, many shelters are privately and volunteer funded. In Baltimore specifically, the shelters exclusively for human trafficking victims are organized within adapted rowhomes and other existing housing typologies. While many of these programs are successful due to the services offered and the passionate people behind the operations, the architecture itself does not cater to the recovery needs of the girls. The lack of an architectural standard for these shelters and overall lack of spatial quality is an opportunity for this thesis to explore and expand upon.

⁷⁶ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 3.

The Samaritan Women, Baltimore, MD



Safe House of Hope, Baltimore, MD



Figure 21, Baltimore Shelters Images

(Source: The Samaritan Women)

(Source: Author, 2014)

Chapter 6: A New Normal

Therapeutic Foundations

An environment can change the course of a developing brain. Environmental experiences set up templates in the brain that determine how life is understood. “It is what makes a person laugh, cry, love, hate, remember events and create beliefs. It also controls what individuals see as “safe” and teaches children what they can trust or fear.”⁷⁷ An environment, or a physical site, can not only redefine “normal” and make people feel safe but it can also set up a therapeutic foundation for healing. It can permeate into a space and “invite powerful rays of hope, healing, and restoration into the dark, secret spaces of a woman’s past.”⁷⁸ The environment can be an agent of change in the lives of victims with spiritual, cultural, social, and physical qualities that set up the groundwork for holistic healing.

City as a Network

Each place in which this shelter is potentially employed has the ability to use its institutions as resources for the survivors allowing for the city as a whole to become a part of the recovery process. By looking at the city as a constellation of resources, specific sites for the rehabilitation shelter can be made clear through the physical proximities it has to the other institutions. These institutions include public green spaces, schools, social work institutions, healthcare, and police stations. Public green space acts as communal areas of gathering, of oasis, within a busy city. Schools ranging from universities and secondary schools become places of diverse education

⁷⁷ Bowley, *The White Umbrella*, 64.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 87.

for victims to look to for their futures or resources that the shelter can use as girls learn new skills. Social work and healthcare institutions allow for more experienced mental and physical care to be within close proximity at all times. Lastly, proximity to police stations act as an external layer of security at the city scale, surrounding the potential site.

This examination can be seen below.

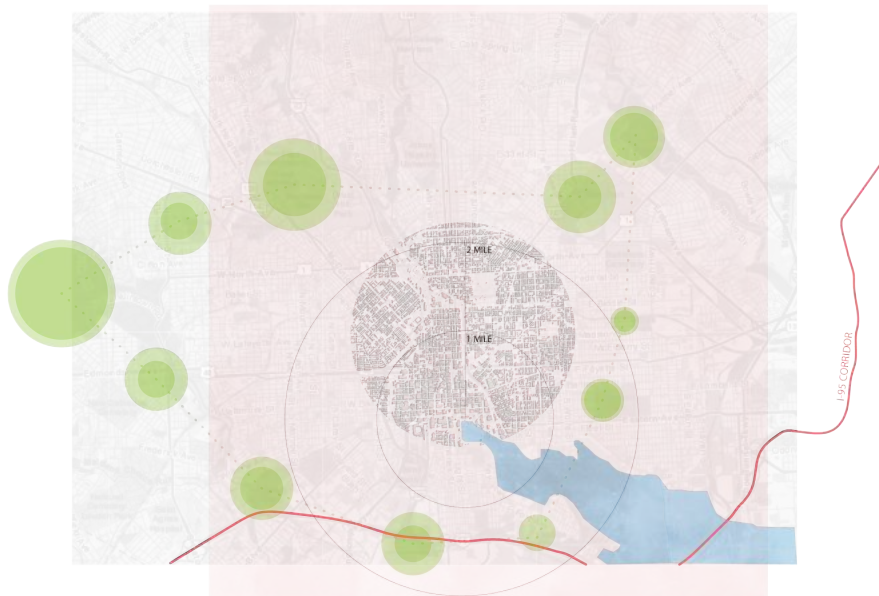
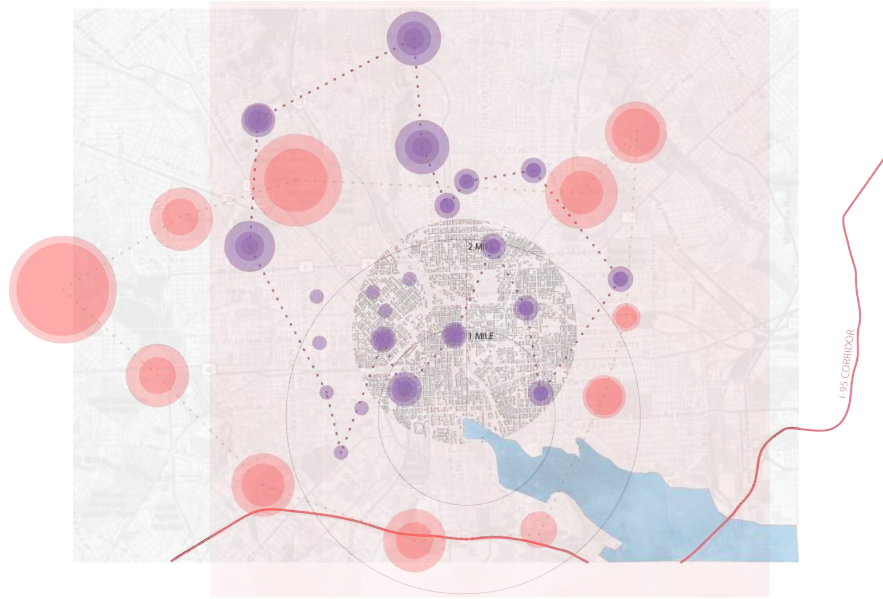


Figure 22, City as a Network: Public Green Space NTS

(Source: Author)



Figure

23, City as a Network: Educational Institutions NTS

(Source: Author)

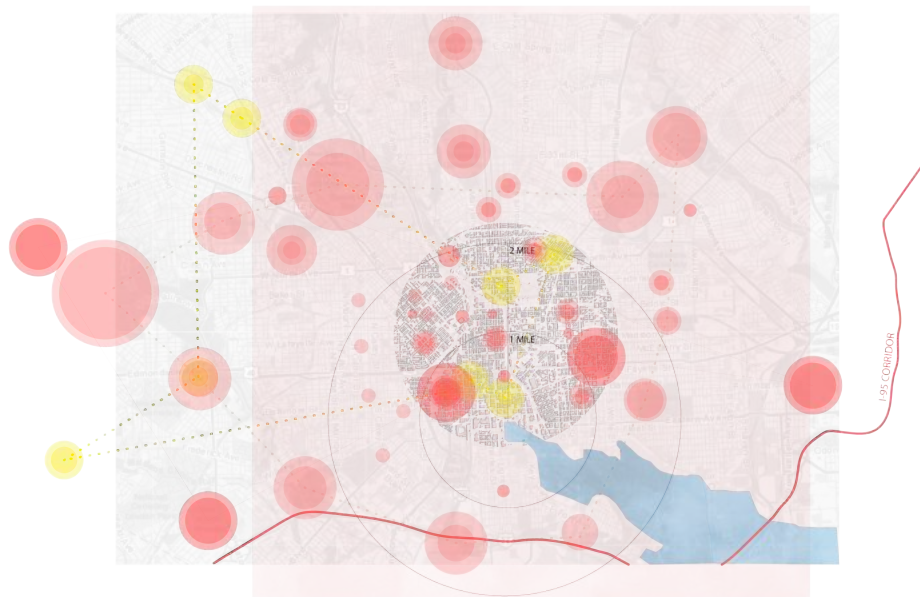


Figure 24, City as a Network: Social Work Institutions NTS

(Source: Author)

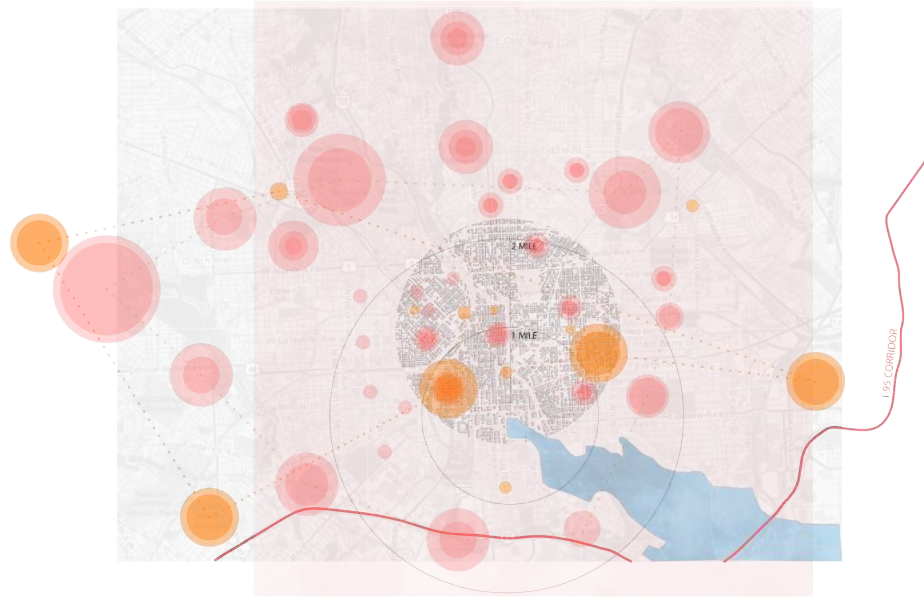


Figure 25, City as a Network: Healthcare Institutions NTS
(Source: Author)

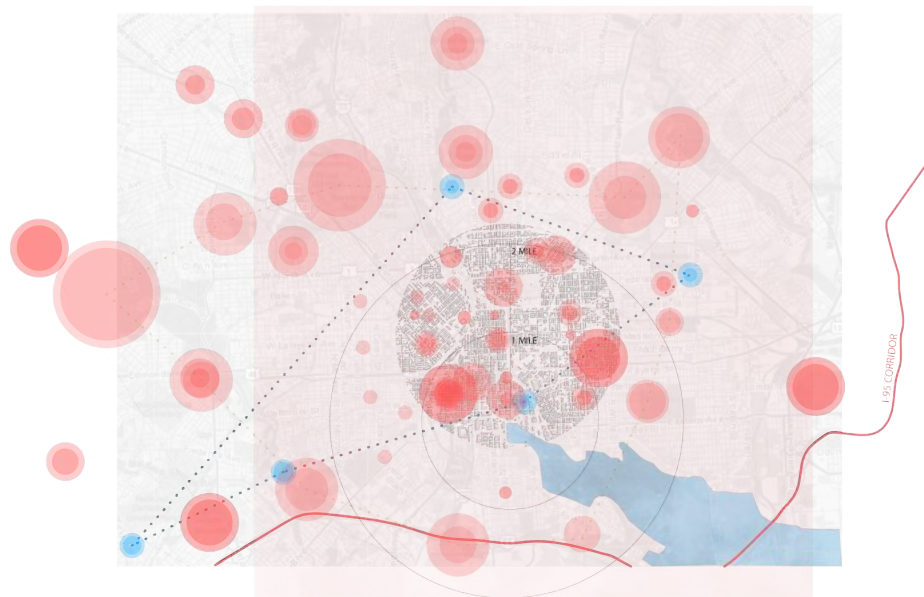


Figure 26, City as a Network: Police Stations NTS
(Source: Author)

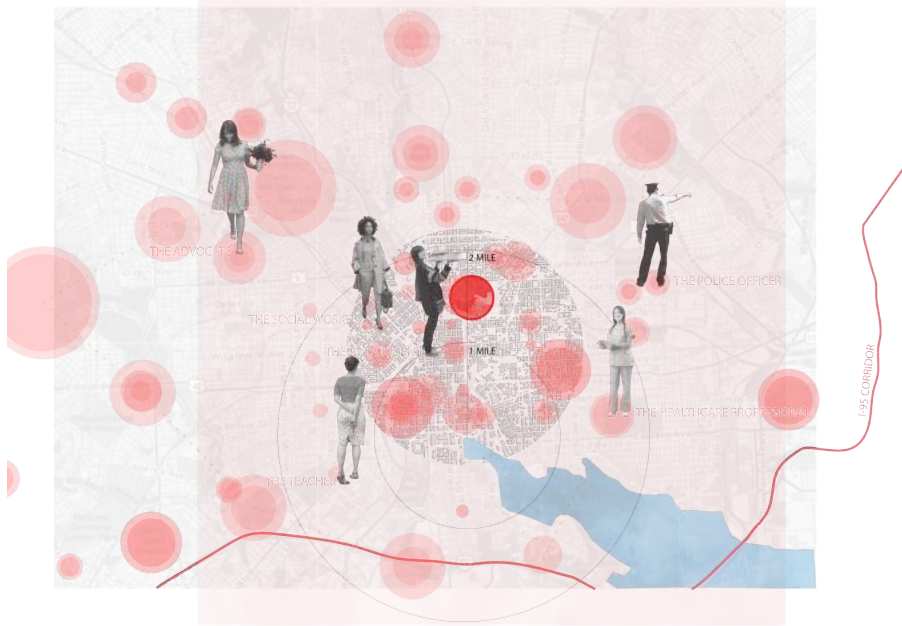


Figure 27, City as a Network: Institutions Compiled NTS
(Source: Author)

A Place to Hide and Heal

Trafficked and sexually exploited girls held in captivity have been isolated from any perspective other than that of their captors with the inability to escape and a perceptual shift in a normal understanding of space. Once her physical needs, resources, and safety of the environment are met, the cultural and social aspects must be addressed. “In psychologist Abraham Maslow’s *Hierarchy of Needs* theory, the need for social connection, for community and belonging, are a critical part of any individual’s well-being and development... There remains a deep human need for friendship and family, and beyond that, for competence, mastery, and respect for and by others.”⁷⁹ Girls need a place to hide and heal. They need a space where they can feel like they belong, where they feel strong, empowered, loved, and valued even

⁷⁹ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 228.

with the horrors of their past outside. What they need most is a place where they can “create a new sense of self.”⁸⁰ A space where they have the opportunity to escape, heal, and not allow the world to tell them that they are “tainted, irreparably damaged, that their voices didn’t matter, or that no one was listening.”⁸¹

De-Stigmatization through Community

*“Normal is a concept I’m still trying figuring out. I feel exposed, like there’s a huge neon sign flashing above my head alerting people to the fact that I am somehow deficient, tainted, not quite right.”*⁸²

When the trauma derives from a physical control of the body, the focus on safety starts with an effort to restore control in the environment. A traumatized person needs a safe space that can allow her to gradually move towards a larger sphere of engagement in the community.⁸³ Healing is a non-linear journey. Even after girls have broken away from the chains of their captor and escaped, they are still branded by stigma and shame as they walk into the larger community. However a community also has the power to restore social bonds. Traumatic events destroy bonds between the victim and others. Yet, survivors have learned that their sense of self, worth, humanity, depends on a connection to others. A community has the power to provide the strongest protection against the terrors of the trauma experience.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 229.

⁸¹ Ibid, 221.

⁸² Ibid, 179.

⁸³ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 162.

“Trauma isolates; the group re-creates a sense of belonging. Trauma shames and stigmatizes; the group bears witness and affirms. Trauma degrades the victim; the group exalts her. Trauma dehumanizes the victim; the group restores her humanity.”⁸⁴

A new community can show her that while people in the past have used and dehumanized her, one exists to serve and help her.



Figure 28, Site Matrix
(Source: Author)

Site Selection

Lying within a two-mile radius of the inner harbor and within each layer of institutions is the neighborhood of Greenmount West. A residential section of Baltimore’s Station North Arts and Entertainment District, this neighborhood is adjacent to Penn Station and Charles Street, a rapidly changing and diversifying

⁸⁴ Ibid, 214.

neighborhood welcoming a new group of young artists and commuters. Currently the site contains artist housing, renovated rowhomes, and community green spaces. It is home to many educational institutions such as the Baltimore Montessori Public Charter School, the Baltimore Design School, and a maker space tool library. As the first area in Baltimore city to receive a state designation as an arts and entertainment district, Station North contains a diverse group of artist live/work spaces, galleries, rowhomes, and businesses within a walking distance to Penn Station and the Mount Vernon neighborhood.



Figure 29, Surrounding Neighborhoods

(Source: Author)

Greenmount West has a vision to be a sustainable, diverse, and welcoming environment to working people, artists, and artisans. However, as it is important to the goal of this thesis; this neighborhood aims to be a family oriented and engaged community. Through strong neighborhood organizations such as the New Greenmount West Community Association and public neighborhood features such as the Hidden Harvest Farm, a community farm, the Greenmount West Community

Center, Wonderground Playground, and others this neighborhood becomes a place where individuals can build a better quality of life through the communal effort of the people and spaces within the neighborhood.⁸⁵ In addition to the many community-oriented features, four blocks to the west of two potential sites is Turnaround Inc., a social services institution that provides “counseling and support to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and sex trafficking.” Turnaround Inc. provides trauma therapy, victim advocacy, community education, emergency shelter, assessment consultation, transitional housing, legal programming, and self defense training.⁸⁶ This close proximity not only allows for shared resources but for a natural sequence of healing to occur from the assessment center to the shelter to finally, a supported independence all from within the neighborhood scale.

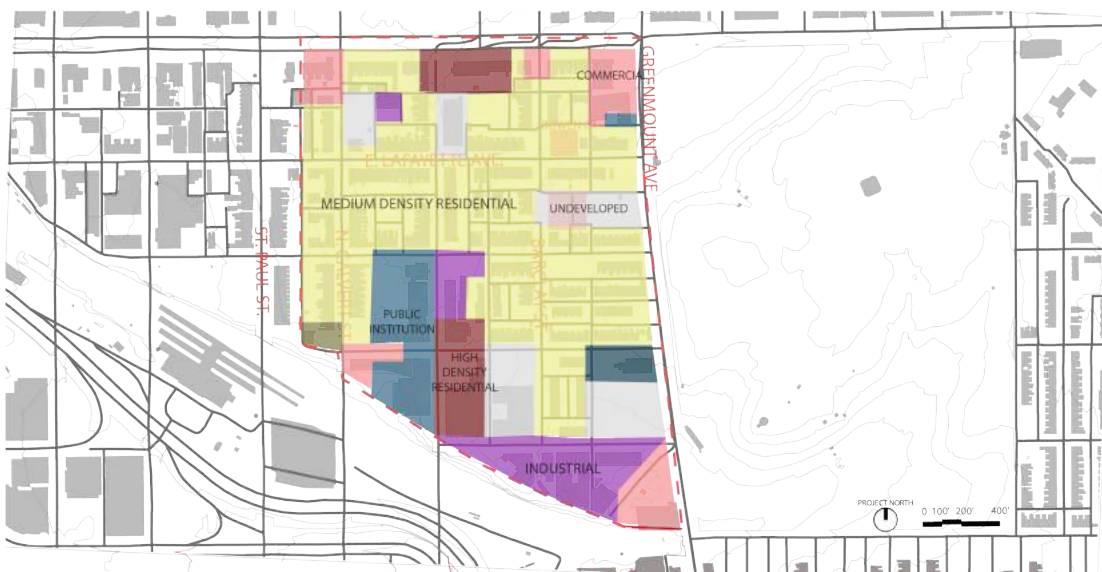


Figure 30, Greenmount West: Landuse
(Source: Author, Greenmount West Master Plan)

⁸⁵ “Greenmount West,” Live Baltimore, last modified 2017, accessed November 20, 2017, <https://livebaltimore.com/neighborhoods/greenmount-west/#.We-0V2JSz-n>.

⁸⁶ “Our Services,” Turnaround Inc. accessed November 27, 17, <https://turnaroundinc.org/about/our-services/>

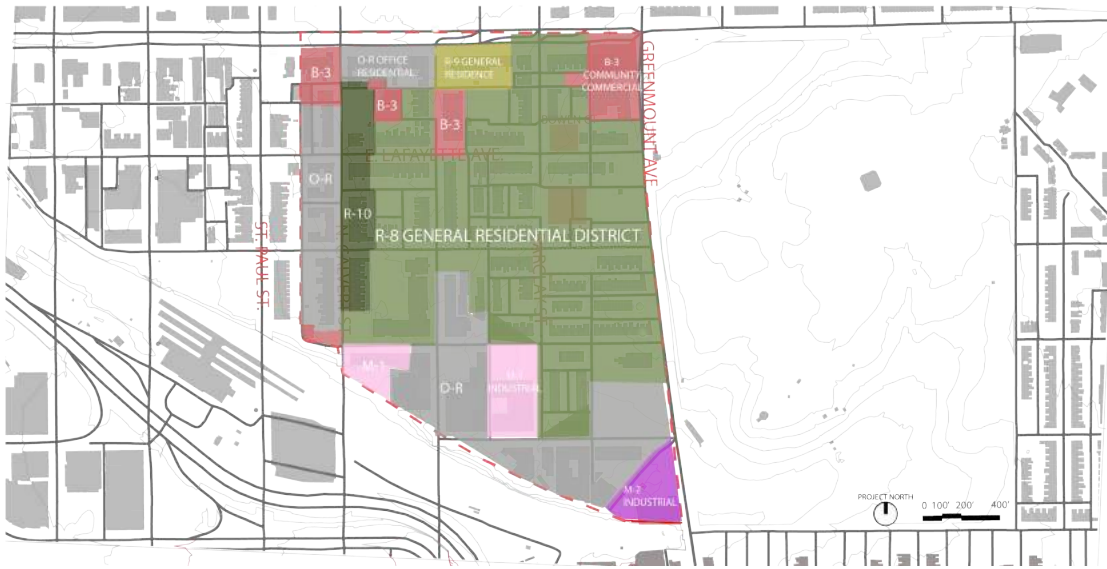


Figure 31, Greenmount West: Zoning
(Source: Author, Greenmount West Master Plan)

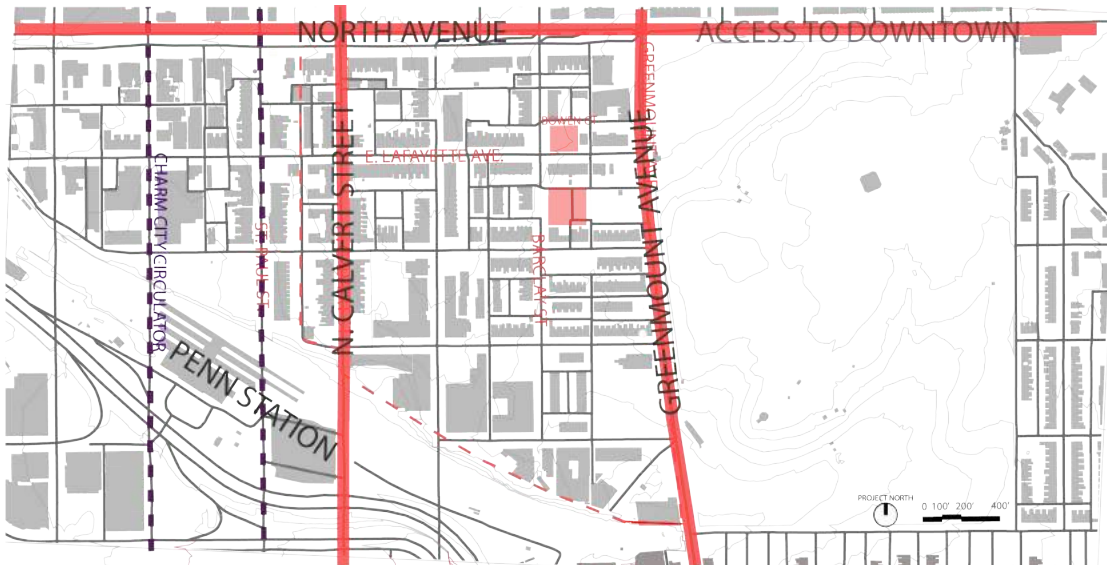


Figure 32, Greenmount West: Accessibility
(Source: Author)

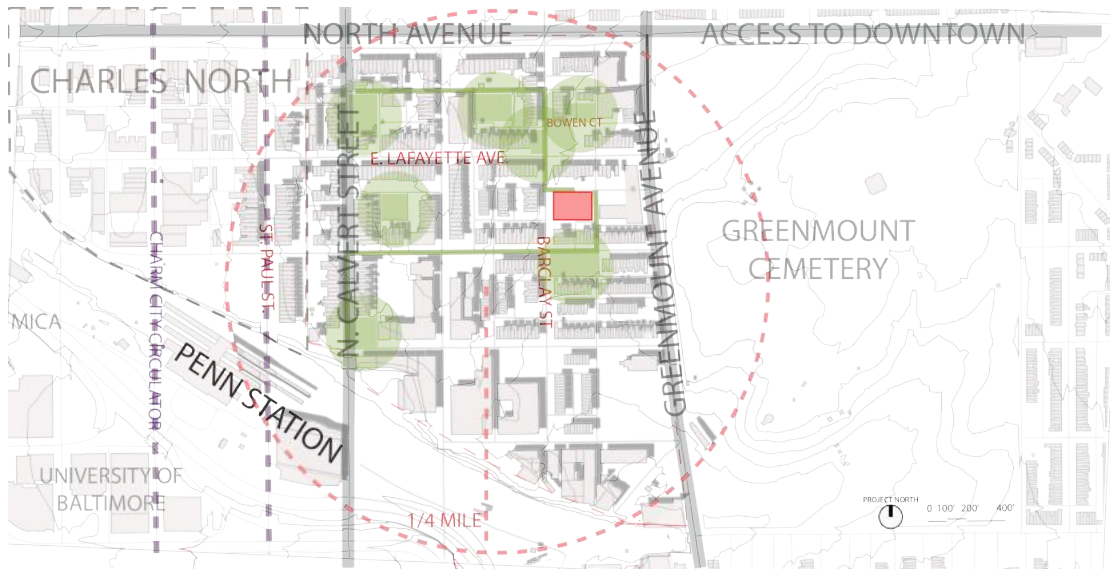


Figure 33, Greenmount West: Community Green Space
(Source: Author)

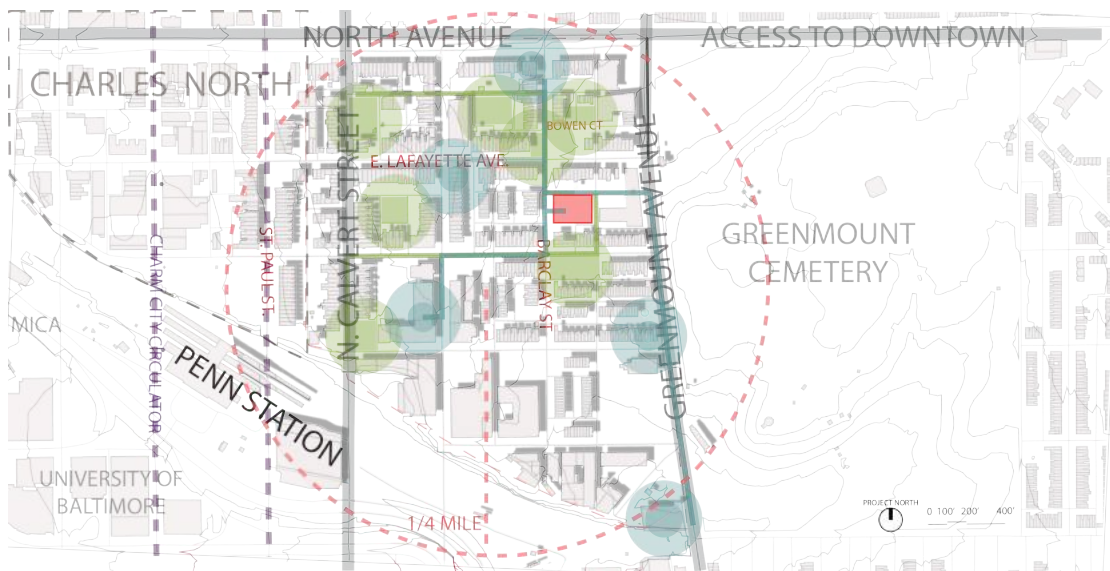


Figure 34, Greenmount West: Community Organizations
(Source: Author)

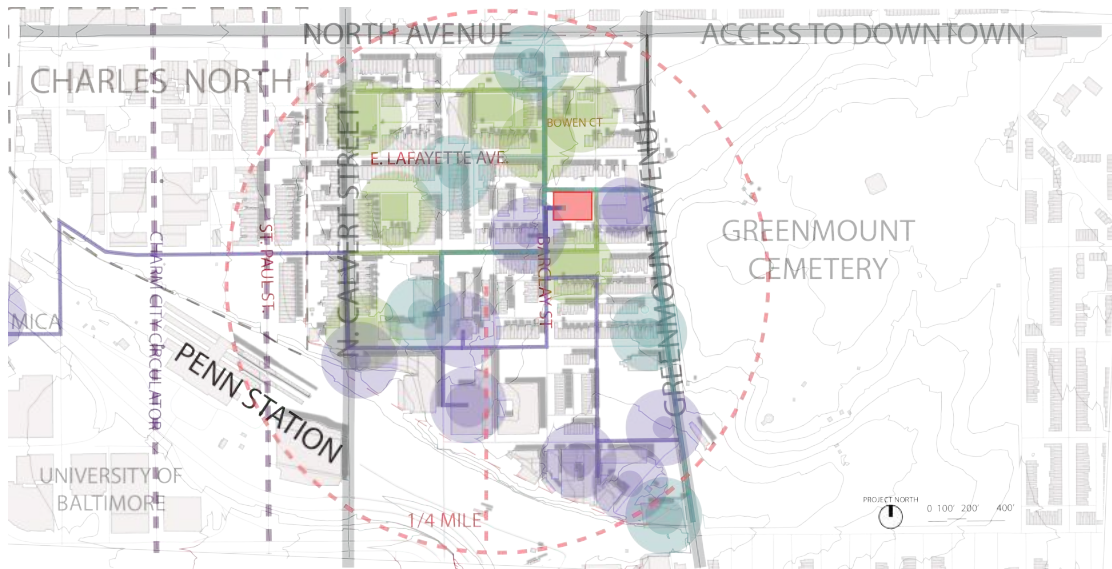


Figure 35, Greenmount West: Maker Spaces
(Source: Author)



Figure 36, Greenmount West: Murals
(Source: Author)

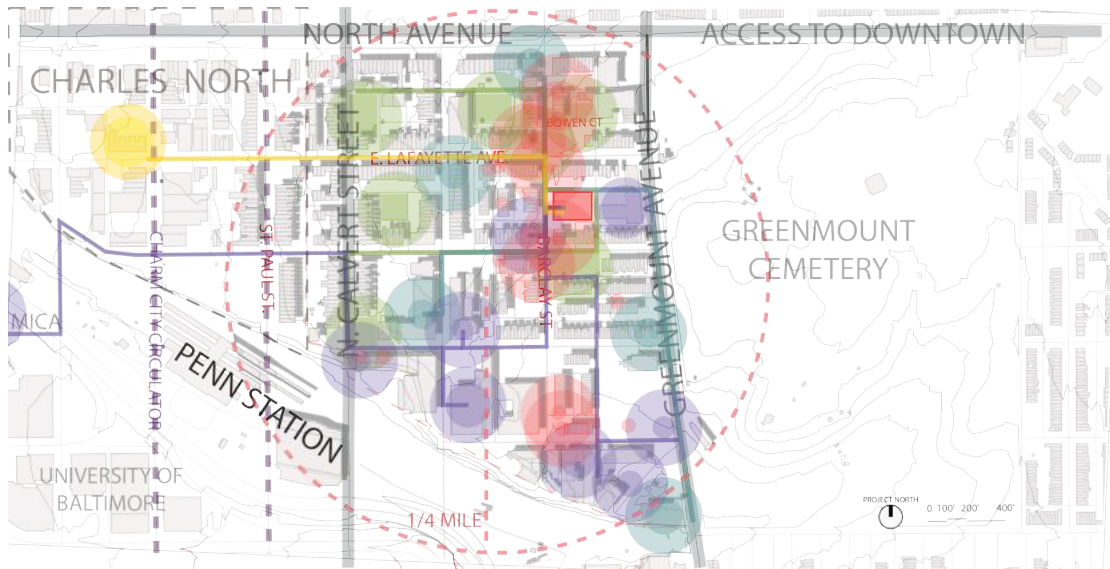


Figure 37, Greenmount West: Community Compiled and Assessment Center
(Source: Author)



Figure 38, Greenmount West: Potential Site 1
(Source: Author)



Figure 39, Greenmount West: **SELECTED** Site 2

(Source: Author)

Program

“I try to imagine how difficult it is for her to navigate a world surrounded by words that might as well be in Greek...It is hard to imagine a life of possibilities when she can not even read a book, fill out a job application, or decipher a street sign.”

– Rachel Lloyd, *Girls Like Us* ⁸⁷

This thesis intervention lies 90 days after a girl has escaped or been rescued from captivity. After she has been assessed in both her medical and behavioral health in a

⁸⁷ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 81.

safe house or assessment center and has freely chosen to proceed with healing she will transition into this shelter. This thesis aims to design flexible spaces that can provide a holistic form of healing for twenty girls at one time. Within this space girls can begin to reclaim, reverse, and restore everything that not only the trafficker has distorted in her mind but also rewrite the narrative of their lives that has been one of a continuum of trauma. This shelter is defined as a live/learn/work center, a safe environment for self-discovery, trauma work, skill development, and a space that will help her prepare for independence. The program is outlined through major themes of safety, learning and healing which can be broken down further into functions influenced by the needs of the girls and existing women's shelters that aspire to a similar purpose.

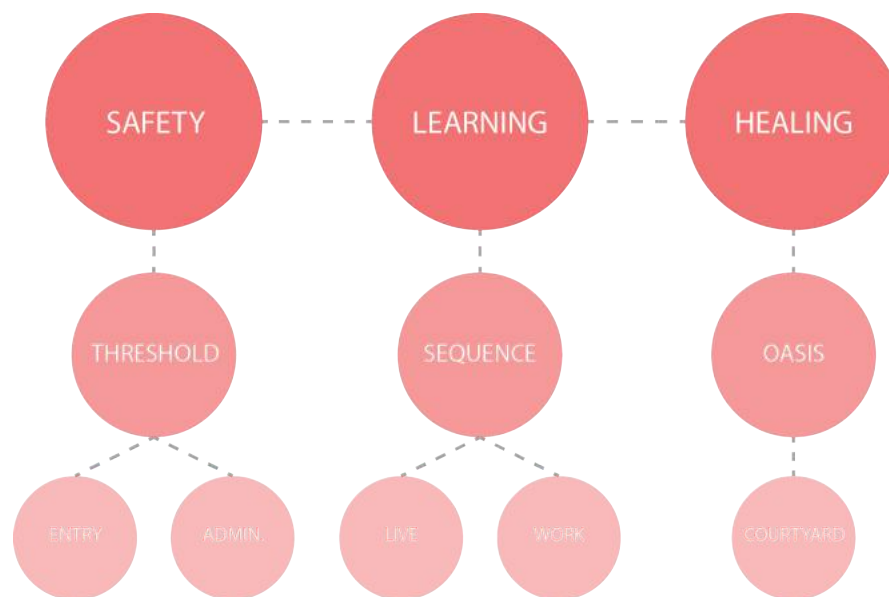


Figure 40, Program Aspirations

(Source: Author)

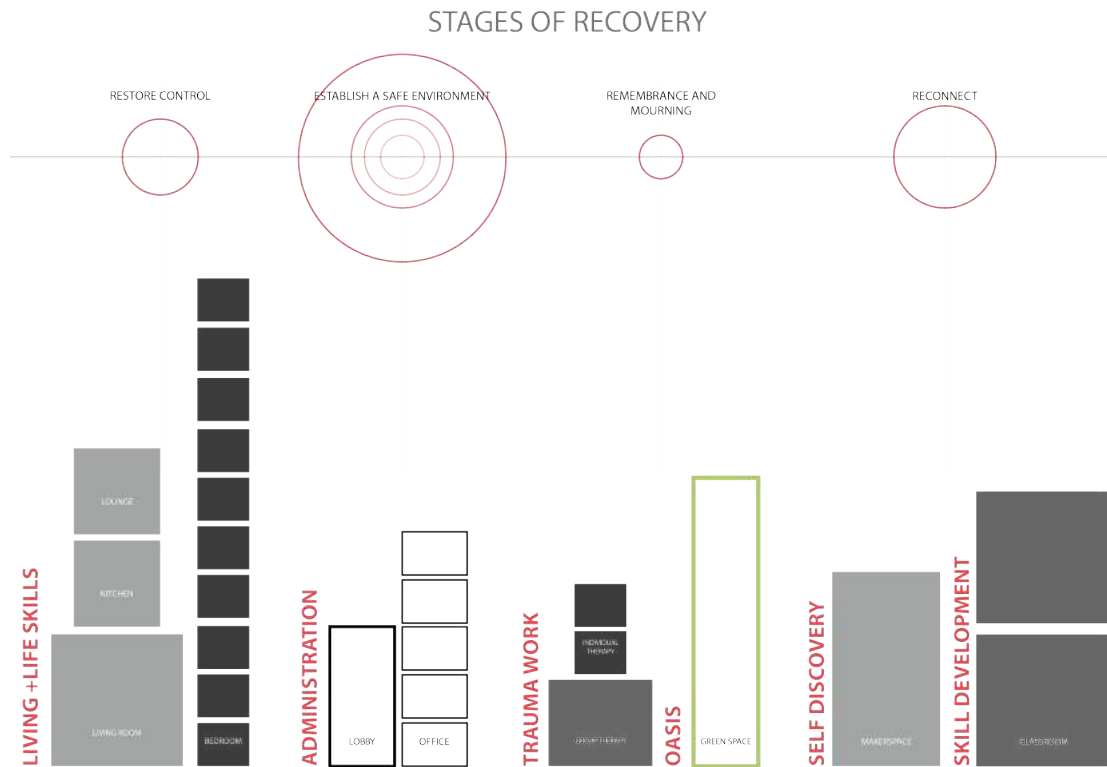


Figure 41, Proposed Program Breakdown
(Source: Author)

Safety

Safety at a programmatic level can be examined through the lens of a threshold that stands as a barrier between the public and the girls. This may encompass administrative units like those of offices for program directors and educators.

Learning

Learning spaces comprise of a variety of programmatic elements that educate girls in both traditional and non-traditional forms of teaching.

“If your entire sense of who you are has been shaped by the sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation that you’ve experienced, it’s tough to begin to learn to see yourself in a new way. For girls and young women who’ve felt “good” only at being in the life, the opportunity to learn new skills and develop hidden talents, whether it’s poetry or art or cooking or boxing or finding out that they’re a great listener, a good friend, or a supportive peer, can begin to reshape and redefine who they see themselves as.”⁸⁸

For traditional education, classrooms of varying sizes will allow for the collective education of girls to learn technical skills and other skills that they have been robbed of learning that others typically learn in high school or college. For non-traditional forms of education, spaces such as maker spaces or teaching kitchens will allow girls to learn and develop both new skills and a work ethic. This allows not only for a learning environment but a form of healing through the creative process and art therapy.

Living

For the residential component, bedrooms and bathrooms will be provided for twenty girls in configurations that foster individual escape and relaxation. While bedrooms become spaces for girls to define their own environment other group living spaces such as lounges and dining components allow for the balance between a domestic and institutional environment.

⁸⁸ Lloyd, *Girls Like Us*, 230.

Heal

As healing manifests itself in many forms, so do the programmatic elements of healing proposed by this thesis. Spaces include various counseling rooms for one-on-one therapy, group therapy, and family therapy. At the core of this intervention, as defined by various studies of global women's shelters is the courtyard or "oasis." For girls in captivity escape might mean running down the back alley of a brothel or a mental escape through dissociation in order to survive the torture they are enduring. This space aims to reorient that meaning into one of an open, natural space for a protected *escape* in which the other spaces can be organized around.

Chapter 7: Healing

“After the beating I lived in silence. It was like an open wound. The world closed on me. But telling the story, you can heal inside...In a strange way I feel grateful for all the pain I experienced. Without it I wouldn’t be the strong person I am today. Life isn’t only working, eating, and sleeping. We are put here to do something, to leave a mark.” –Bought & Sold: Voices of Human Trafficking, Art Exhibit, DC

Long Term Recovery

Long-term healing starts with girls understanding that everything that they been through in their lives is not their fault, that there were factors beyond her control that made her vulnerable to the unthinkable. By creating a space that exists solely to serve her, she can begin to heal in a protected environment where she can feel empowered and reclaim some of what has been taken from her in her life. She can start to breakaway from the cycle of continual trauma and into one of a restored narrative through a happy and healthy environment.

The healing process can be broken down into four overarching stages. These are to **Restore Control, Establish a Safe Environment, Remember, and Reconnect.**

These steps allow her to slowly work through the categories of PTSD with other girls who have been through similar traumas, girls that can not only affirm and understand her but also heal together.

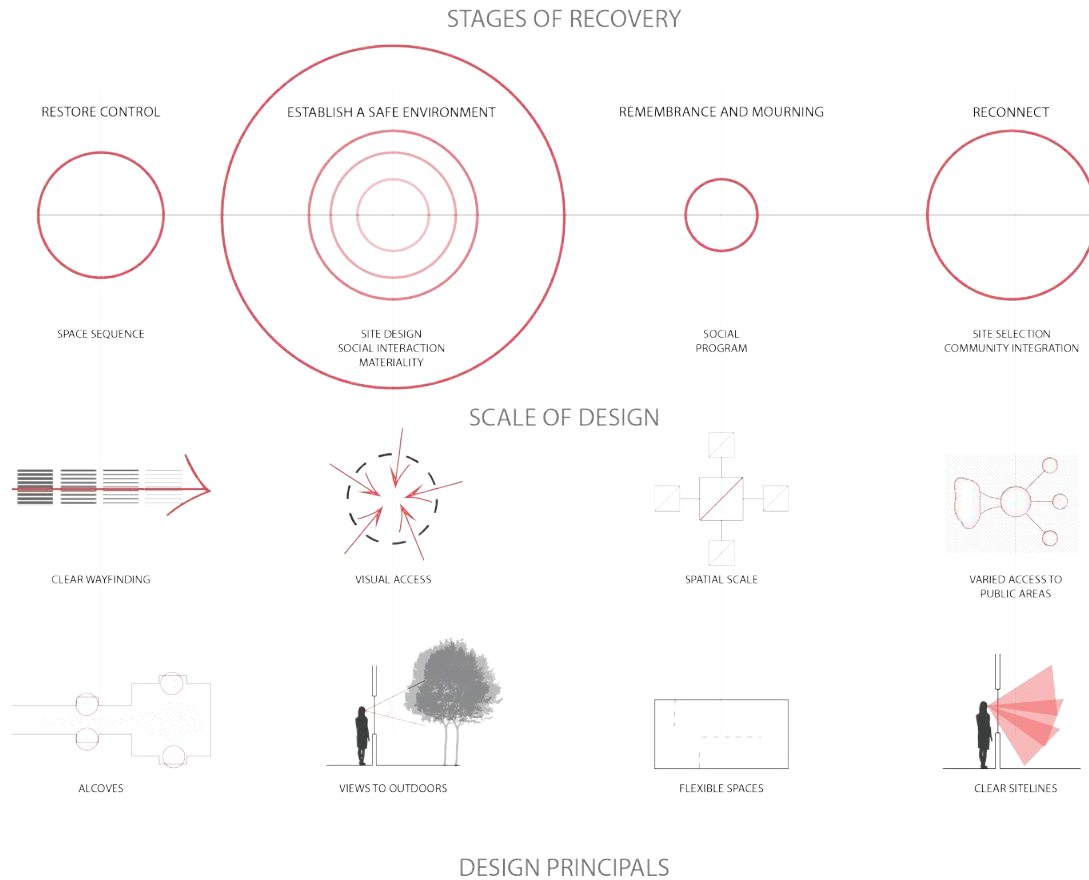


Figure 42, Stages of Recovery and Design Principles
(Source: Author)

Healing Principles

A 1984 study done by Roger Ulrich, PhD, found that hospitals with improved environments reduced treatment times by 21%.⁸⁹ The healing power of space can be manifested through four major spatial principals. These are the Psychobiology, Teleology, Salutogenesis, and Psychosophy of space.

⁸⁹ Christopher Day, *Places of the Soul, Architecture and environmental design as a healing art*, (Routledge, 2014), 1.

Psychobiology of Space

As related to body memory, this principle relates to looking at oneself in space and the neurophysical interactions it has on the psyche. If the boundaries of a space enable the possibility of distance, it can overcome a girl's sense of difference and it can begin to foster healing by through a space that both stimulates and accepts girls. Spatially, this principle is embodied through social spaces that are flexible enough to seemingly be expanded or contracted into infinity.⁹⁰

Teleology of Space

The purpose of this space is to foster a sense of being through the pure needs and achievability of the meanings and purposes of diverse spaces. It is a principle that allows for exploration and the possibility of discovery through different encounters in various types of interpersonal interactions. Spatially, this principle manifests through protected public spaces that allow interactions to take place without restriction or limitation.⁹¹

Salutogenesis of Space

Illustrating the potential health promoting aspects of space also means preserving health through spatial balance. It is a balance that is created through the management of inner and outer environments, a balance between freedom and restriction. Spatially, salutogenesis translates to demarcating the boundaries of private space by defining private space through other private

⁹⁰ Christine Nickl-Weller, Hans Nickl, *Healing Architecture*, (Braun Publishing, 2013), 238-240

⁹¹ Nickl-Weller, Hans Nickl, *Healing Architecture*, 243

spaces. As a result, the lines between institution and domestic can also be blurred, creating a more welcoming environment.⁹²

Psychosophy of Space

Psychosophy addresses healing spaces through a comprehensive psychological and philosophical context. Space becomes a condition that allows for the possibility and moments of contemplation and reflection.

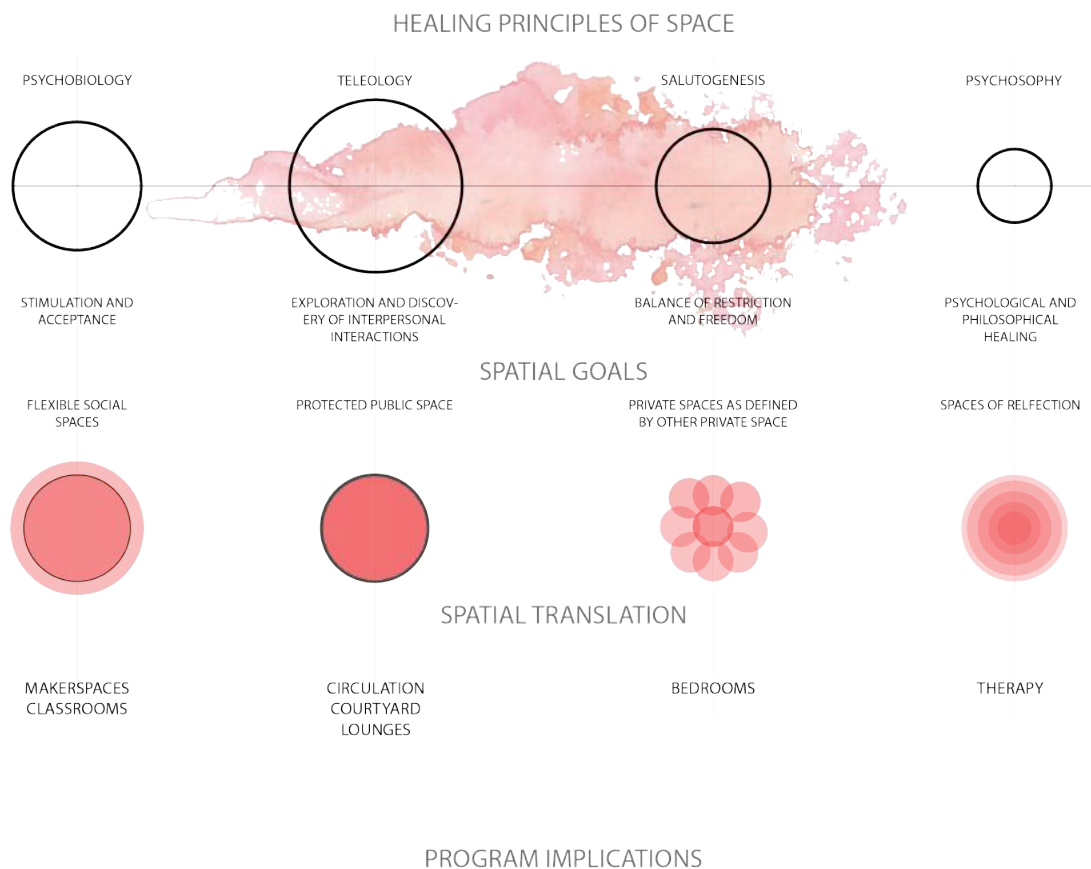


Figure 43, Healing Principles of Space

(Source: Author)

⁹² Nickl-Weller, Hans Nickl, *Healing Architecture*, 245

Spatial Perception

The goal of this thesis is to design the built environment as a part of the healing process and not just as a place for it. To further understand how spaces really effect people and conversely heal people, one needs to understand why and how people *experience and feel* spaces through the senses.

Sensory Experience

Healing is a non-linear journey. However, the environments in which healing occurs can be spaces that play upon the senses to create renewed and relaxed atmospheres that foster a sense of warmth and expansion beyond the physical boundaries of a space.

Sound

Healing sounds exist through a living silence that allows the soul to breathe.

Subtle sounds such as the rustling of leaves, rain drizzling, birds singing, street music, and children playing outside make spaces feel alive, gentle, and tranquil.

Pure silence can also be healing in certain programs. For those who want to meditate and be immersed in a holy or inner silence, visual silence can be explored through the creation of sacred spaces for individual reflection.

Architecturally, this can translate to unobstructed views to the outside, quieter facades that block out unwanted noise, materiality of interior spaces, and landscape design.

Smell

Aromas such as those wafting from baking, coffee, or flowers encourages social gathering, breeds life into a space, and gives a purpose for gathering in specific areas. Trees filter dust, renew air and provide clean, fresh air that soothes people.

Spatially, this can be embodied through the integration of green space such as green walls, trees, and gardens both on the outside and interior of the design. The wafting of different, pleasant aromas can also lend itself to spatial sequence and program adjacencies.

Sight

Looking out of a window reduces stress and clarifies thinking. In hospitals, window views have been calculated to save \$500,000 per bed space.⁹³ Views to the outside and light filtering into a space not only energizes people but physically nourishes and is necessary for one's organs such as the pituitary gland to function. Daylight is one of the most central aspects to a person's wellbeing. The interactions between light and shadow for different skies makes the light and space come to life and gives people a sense of time and place.

Similarly, views to vegetation soften architectural boundaries and provide leaf shade that matches both the thermal seasons and seasonal mood-needs. Leaf shade and light filtered through foliage can be both life giving and restful.

⁹³ Day, *Places of the Soul*, 74.

Views to dancing leaf-shade patterns, moving water, endless clouds, stimulate the senses and calms people without dulling the senses.

Color also has a similar universal effect and can be used therapeutically.

Colored light is often used in therapy for the conscious and unconscious ways in which it affects the body. Different colors stimulate different parts of the body.

The physiological effects are also coupled with associative qualities. Blue makes things feel colder and slows the pulse and lowers blood pressure. It can also make people feel calm and peaceful. Red can bring warmth, stimulation, passion, and sometimes aggression. Yellow can cheer a room with no sunlight and bring vitality. Green brings balance is therefore de-stressing. However, there lies a gentle balance between color overtaking a room and dominating the mood and a symbiotic cohabitation.

When light and color work together, they can breath a delicate life into a space.

Touch

Vegetation can soften hard corners and make rough textures seem approachable. The way in which shapes, textures, and spaces come together can unconsciously impact how people experience them, and ease or deter movement of the eye and hand around forms. Touch that heals is derived from harmony and as harmony can reduce stress, it can open people up to transformation.

Architecturally, this can be embodied through material sequence and massing.

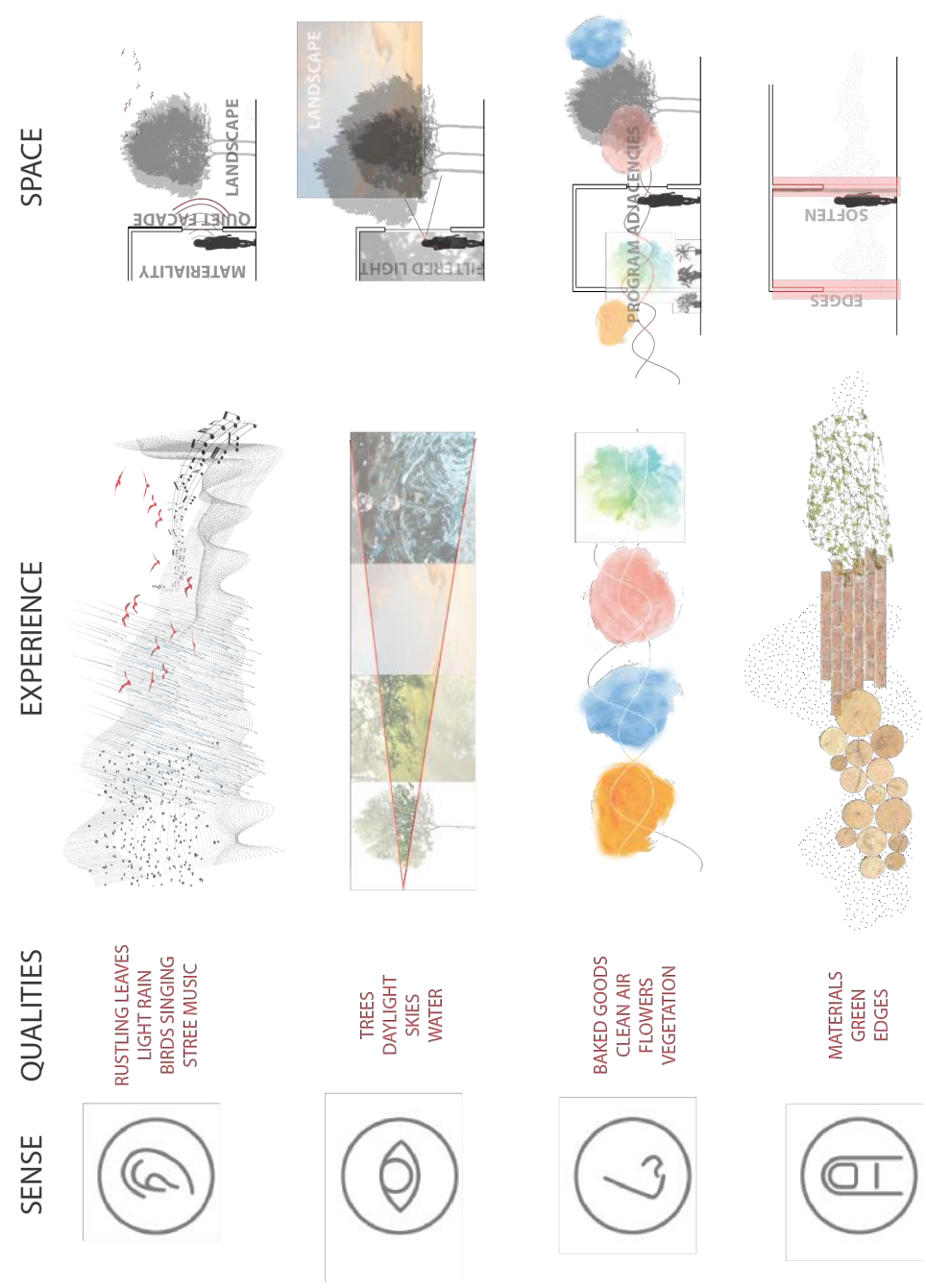


Figure 44, Healing Sensory Experiences
(Source: Author)

Precedent Analysis

To redefine how current shelters function spatially in order to develop the relationship between space and the recovery process, many precedents of different thematic value were analyzed.

Studies of women's shelters around the world were completed in regards to an experiential sequence through spaces that exist to serve women who have been traumatized through domestic violence, sexual violence, poverty effects, etc. In analyzing this sequence, a similar parti was found in which all of the spaces organize themselves around open courtyards of different value.

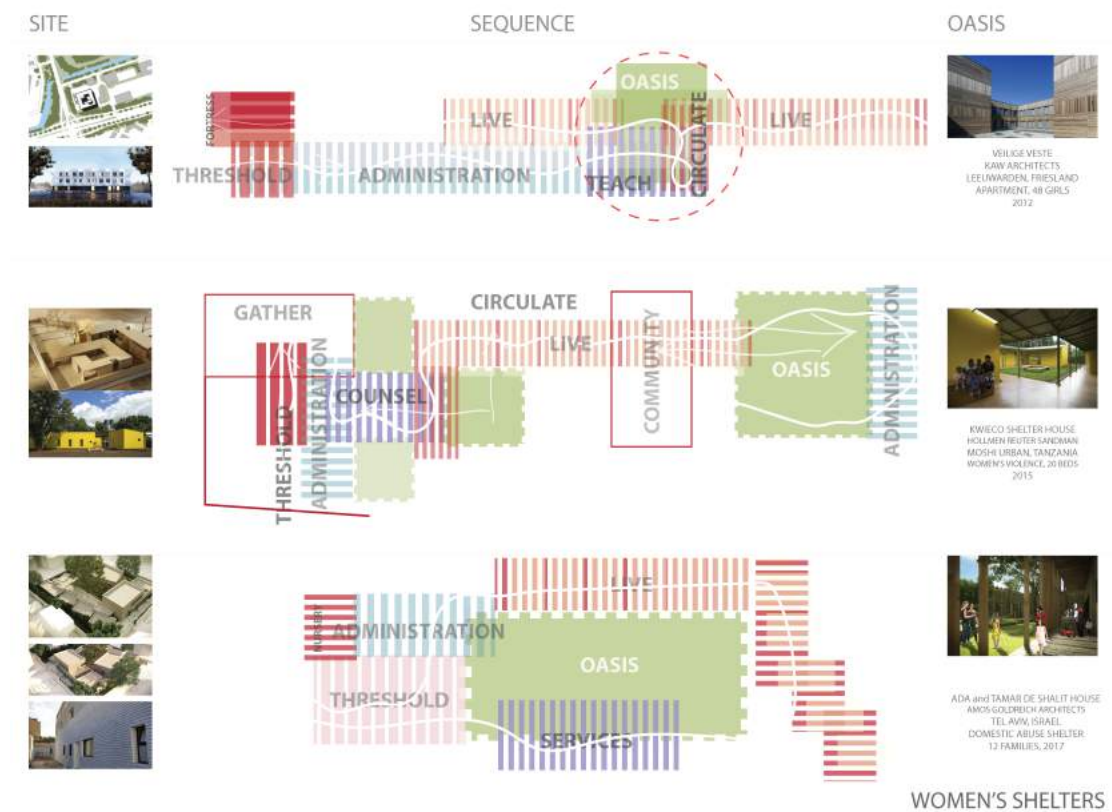


Figure 45, Precedent Analysis: Women's Shelters, Sequence
(Source: Author)

The studies on women's shelters not only revealed similar parts but also ways in which corridors and circulation can become more than just a place of movement but places of respite and variety.

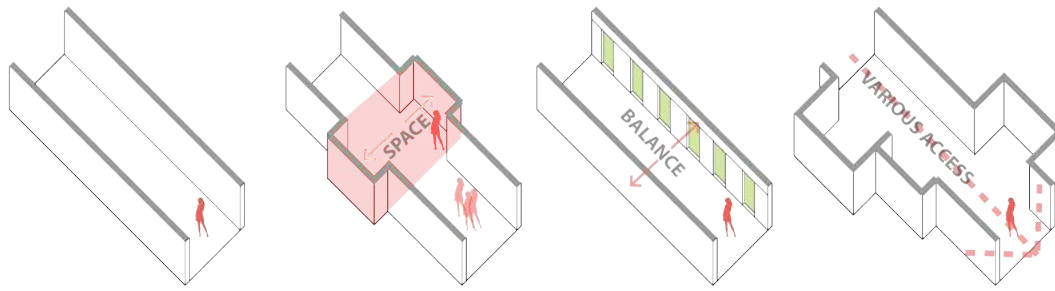


Figure 46, Redefining Exploration: Movement
(Source: Author)

Next, a precedent study on student housing was completed in order to study how an individual comes to meet the collective in spaces that foster collective learning and exemplify the idea of the betterment of an individual through a collective effort.

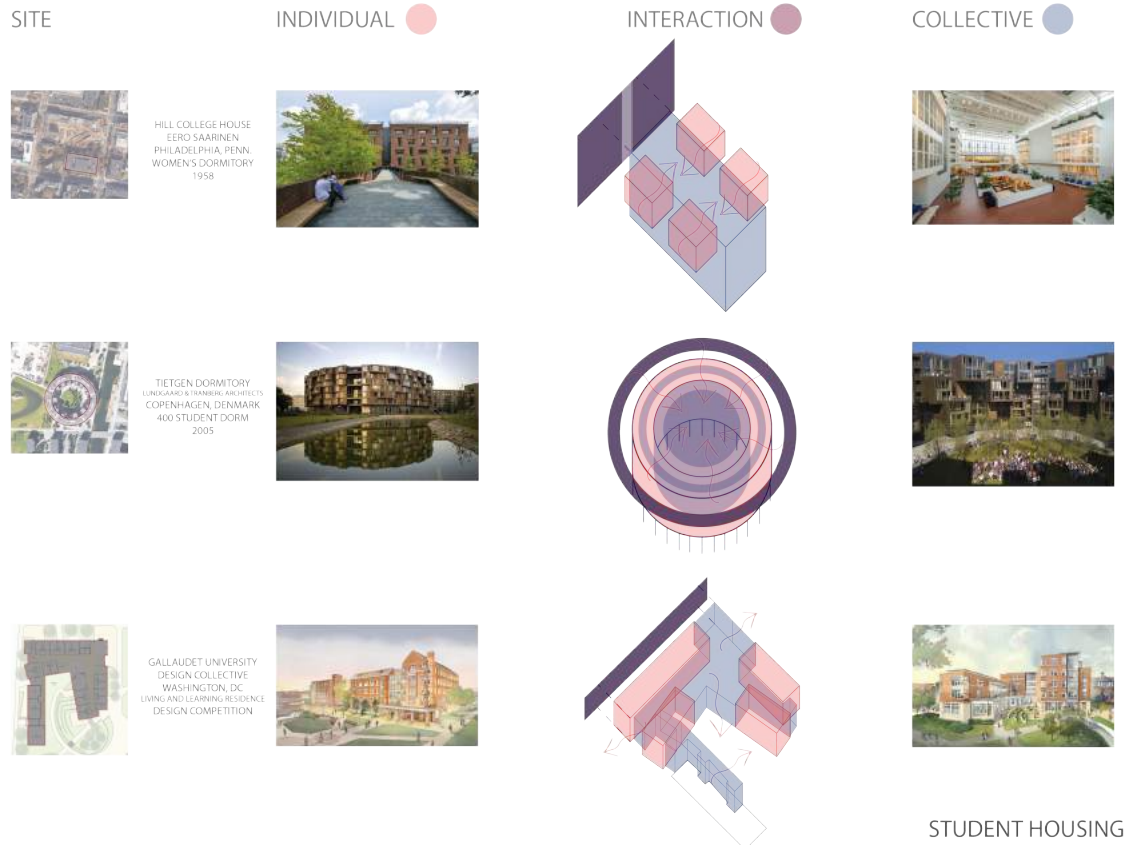


Figure 47, Precedent Analysis: Student Housing
(Source: Author)

This study on student housing aided in the exploration of how living spaces can feel more secure through the quality and quantity of social interactions and threshold as well as ways in which space can blur the boundaries between the individual and the collective.

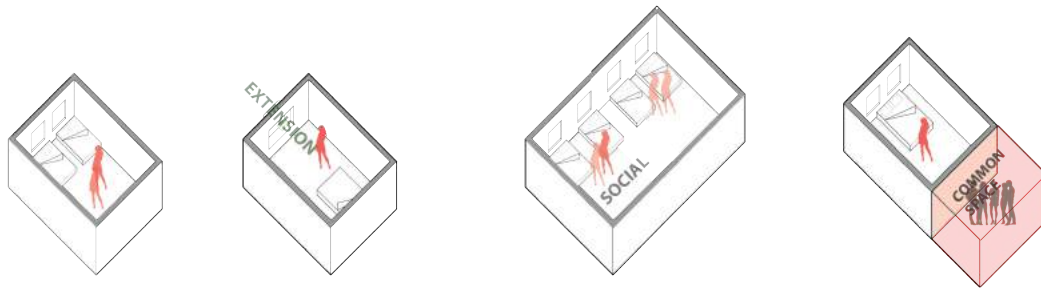







Figure 48, Redefining Exploration: Living
(Source: Author)

Lastly, precedents on courtyard typologies throughout history and studies on spatial quality were completed. The studies on courtyard typologies were vital in the understanding of how a hard edge disintegrates in order to protect a sacred space or “oasis.” The studies on spatial quality were done in order to understand what makes a space a “home” and how architectural qualities of materiality, natural lighting, and innate healing qualities can make spaces more welcoming and blur the boundary between a domestic space and an institutional one.

SITE	FACADE	INTERACTION	SEQUENCE
 <p>PALAZZO MEDICI RICCARDI MICHELOZZO FLORENCE, ITALY RENAISSANCE PALACE 1444</p>			
 <p>SAYNATSALO TOWN HALL ALVARO ALTO SAYNATSALO, FINLAND TOWN HALL 1949</p>			
 <p>CONVENT OF LA TOURETTE LE CORBUSIER EVEUX, FRANCE CONVENT 1960</p>			
 <p>8 HOUSE BLARK JINGLES GROUP COPENHAGEN, DENMARK MIXED USE APARTMENT 2010</p>			
 <p>SERPENTINE PAVILION PETER ZUMTHOR KENSINGTON, LONDON INSTALLATION 2011</p>			

COURTYARD TYPOLOGIES

Figure 49, Precedent Analysis: Courtyard Typologies
(Source: Author)













QUALITIES	INTERIORS	NATURAL LIGHT	PALETTE + MATERIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>PSYCHOBIOLOGY TELEOLOGY</p> <p>variety of lighting flexible social space stimulation</p>	 <p>FIRODIYA CENTER FOR INSPIRATION STUDIO A DVAITA MAHARASHTRA, INDIA WOMEN'S SHELTER 2015</p>	 <p>VARIETY</p>	  <p>STONE STUCCO BRICK BLACK Limestone</p>
<p>SALUTOGENESIS</p> <p>indoor extension out private spaces defined by other private spaces</p>	 <p>FALLING WATER FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT MILL RUN, PA HOME 1935</p>	 <p>DIFFUSE</p>	  <p>CONCRETE COLORED STEEL NATURE STONE WOOD</p>
<p>PSYCHOSOPHY</p> <p>spaces of reflection philosophical light</p>	 <p>WOMAN IN BLUE JOHANNES VERMEER RIJKSUSEUM AMSTERDAM PAINTING 1663</p>	 <p>FOCUS</p>	  <p>NATURAL LIGHT STONE STUCCO WOOD</p>
			SPATIAL QUALITY

Figure 50, Precedent Analysis: Spatial Quality

(Source: Author)

Chapter 8: Schematic Design

Scheme Exploration

In each of the schemes explored below, the administrative spaces are at the forefront of the main residential street, creating a barrier between the public and the girls. Also, every scheme follows the same parti of lifting the bedrooms above the ground floor to lift the girls away from the public way as a form of physical and psychological security.



Figure 51, Scheme 1: Protected Village
(Source: Author)

This scheme, located on potential site 1, explores the idea of a protected village in which the spaces slowly dissipate in order to open up into an expansive, “infinite” landscape.



Figure 52, Scheme 2: Cloister
(Source: Author)

This scheme follows a cloister typology in which each space has an immediate connection with an oasis, creating a protected transparency from within the shelter, yet a hard edge against the public.



Figure 53, Scheme 3: Lift
(Source: Author)

This scheme, located on potential site 2, is heavily inspired by a precedent study on Veilige Veste by KAW architects, in which the ground floor is completely solid with program and the oasis is lifted to the first and second floor surrounded by the girl's bedrooms. This creates a completely private and protected oasis away from the public way.



Figure 54, Scheme 4: Wrap
(Source: Author)

Lastly, this scheme explores a wrapping idea in which program wraps itself around open spaces of a different program. The self discovery and maker space type programs would surround a hardscape courtyard that allow program to bleed out into the exterior. The spaces of healing would surround itself around a green courtyard acting as a healing garden.

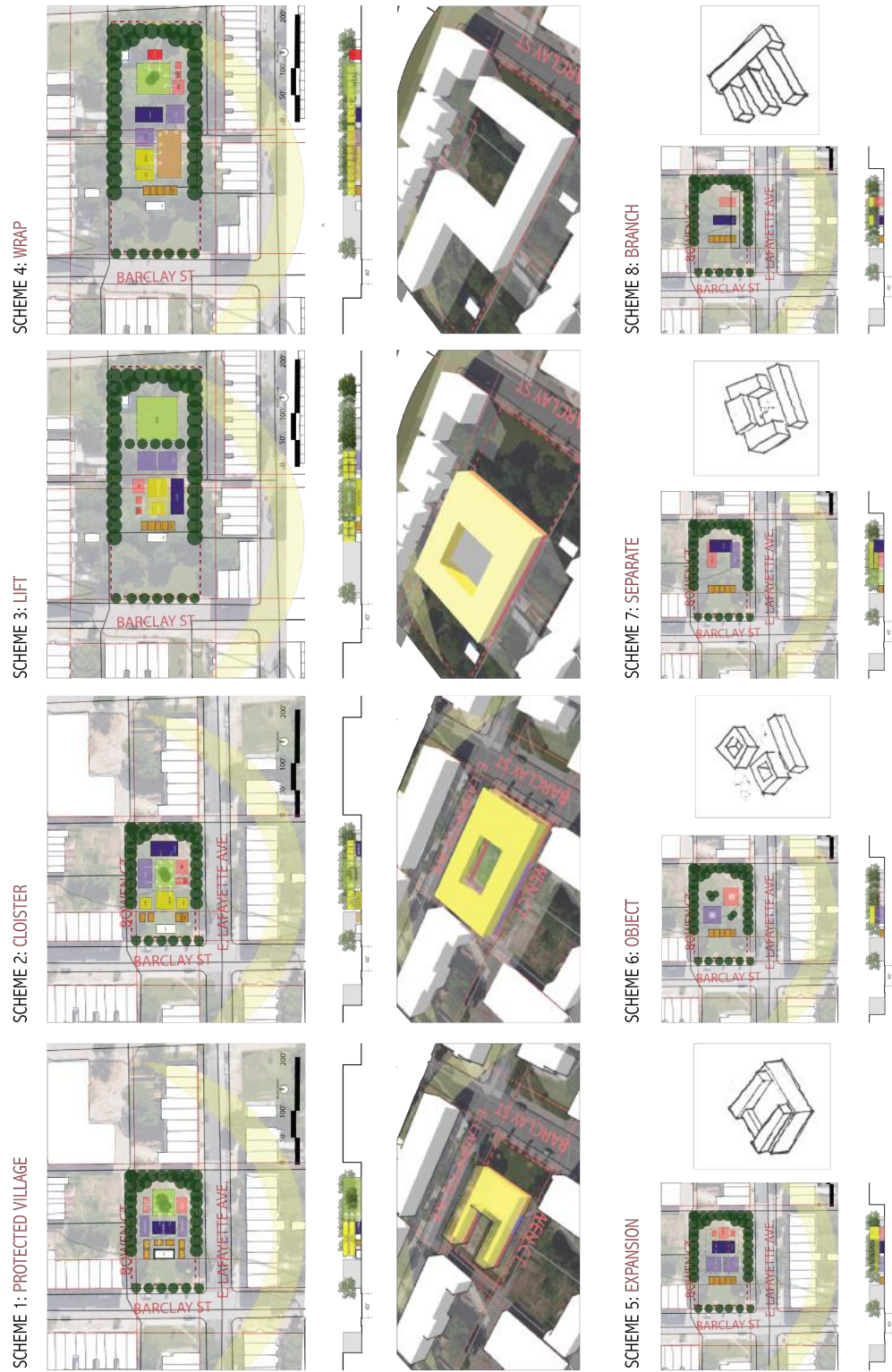


Figure 55, Schemes Consolidated
(Source: Author)

Chapter 9: Design

Process

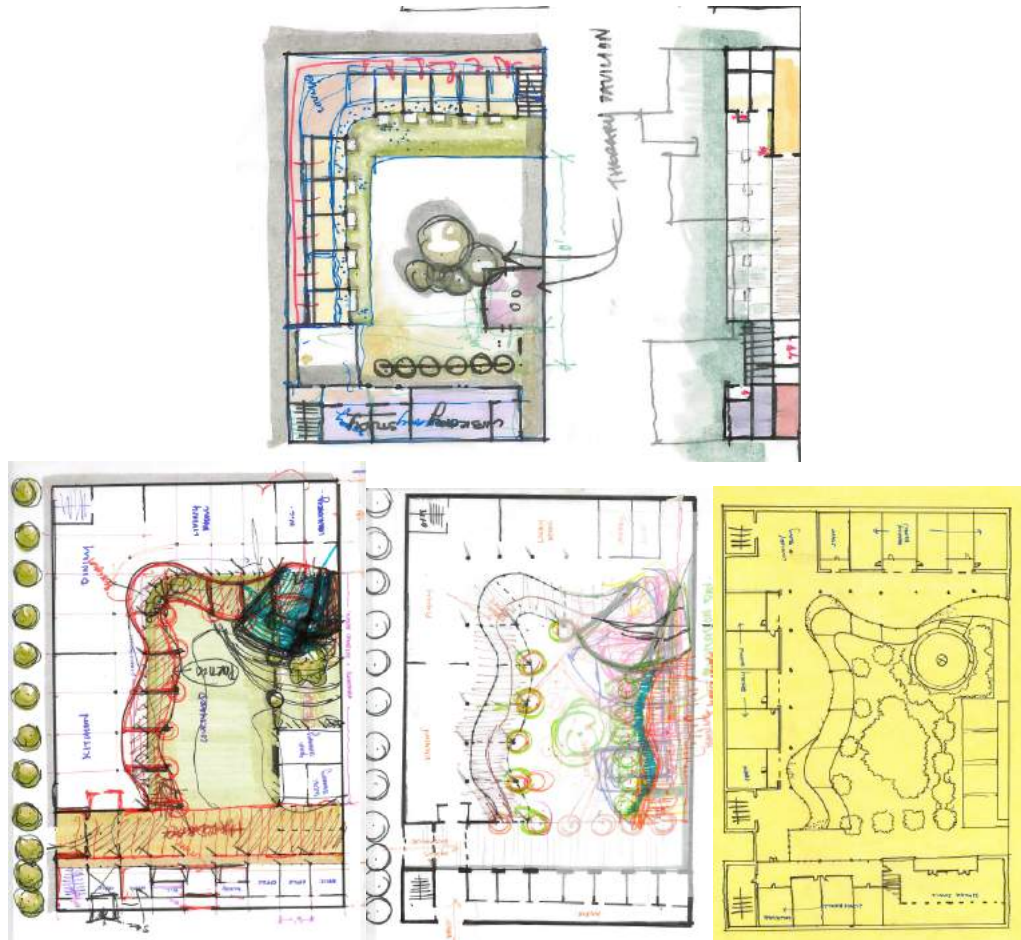


Figure 56, Process Sketches

(Source: Author)

Throughout the schematic design process, many iterations based on the courtyard typology were explored based on precedent studies, site analysis, critiques, and conversations with social workers. The scheme that carried on to the final product was created based on breaking up program and solar orientation in order to open up the courtyard. A portion of this design process of the final scheme is illustrated above.

Parti

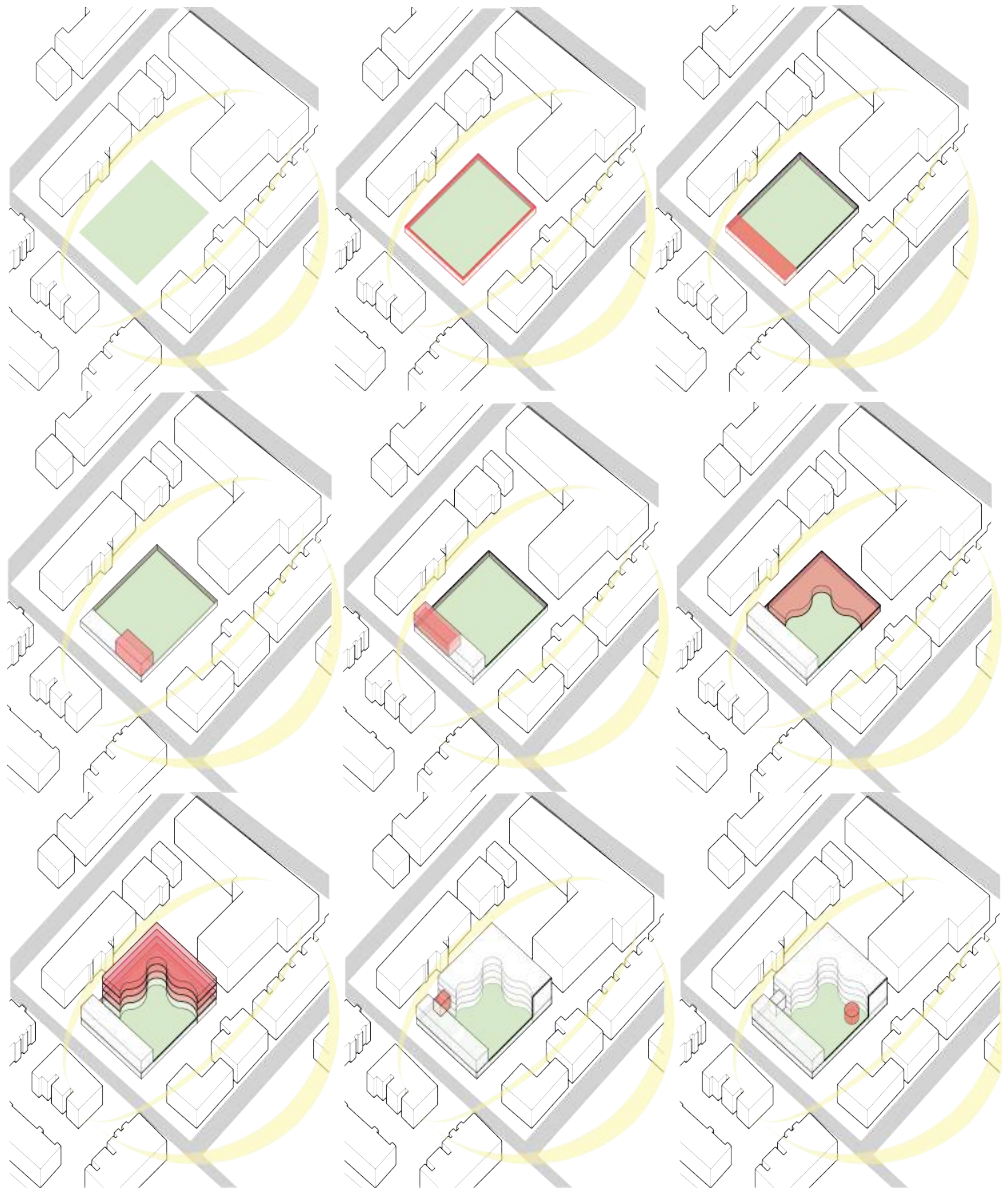


Figure 57, Parti Sequence

(Source: Author)

From top left to bottom right: the design begins by looking at the whole site as an oasis for its residents in the larger city network established earlier. From there, it is protected through a wall and then program is added to it by spaces for security and social workers. Then, the neighborhood comes in to the design through the addition

of a maker space along with classrooms that are flexible enough to learn academic, technical, and life skills.

The second massing is introduced: the home, detached from the bar building so that the home remains just a space for the girls. On top of the ground floor is three floors of housing, allowing for at any one time twenty-four girls to live within the shelter with six full-time, live in mentors.

The two massings are then linked together through a bridge that brings together the domestic and institutional program in order to create a relationship between the people that are coming to the shelter to help and learn and those that are there to heal. Lastly, the manifestation of healings itself- the group therapy space that stands as a lantern in the garden as to celebrate the healing process as a natural extension of the home.

Design

This shelter takes its cues from Baltimore materials, the rowhouse rhythm, and the artistry found around the site to design its public faces, but creates its own world, just for the girls, on the inside. On the ground floor, office spaces look out into the garden as to monitor activity without having to physically impede on the girl's space. All of the communal activity on the ground floor is also extremely open and flexible so that girls can gather in any scale of group they are comfortable in, while remaining visually connected to all of their surroundings. The second floor contains the family units linked back to the learning environments. The third and

fourth floor of the home contain single units, connected back to a library and meeting room on the third floor of the bar building.

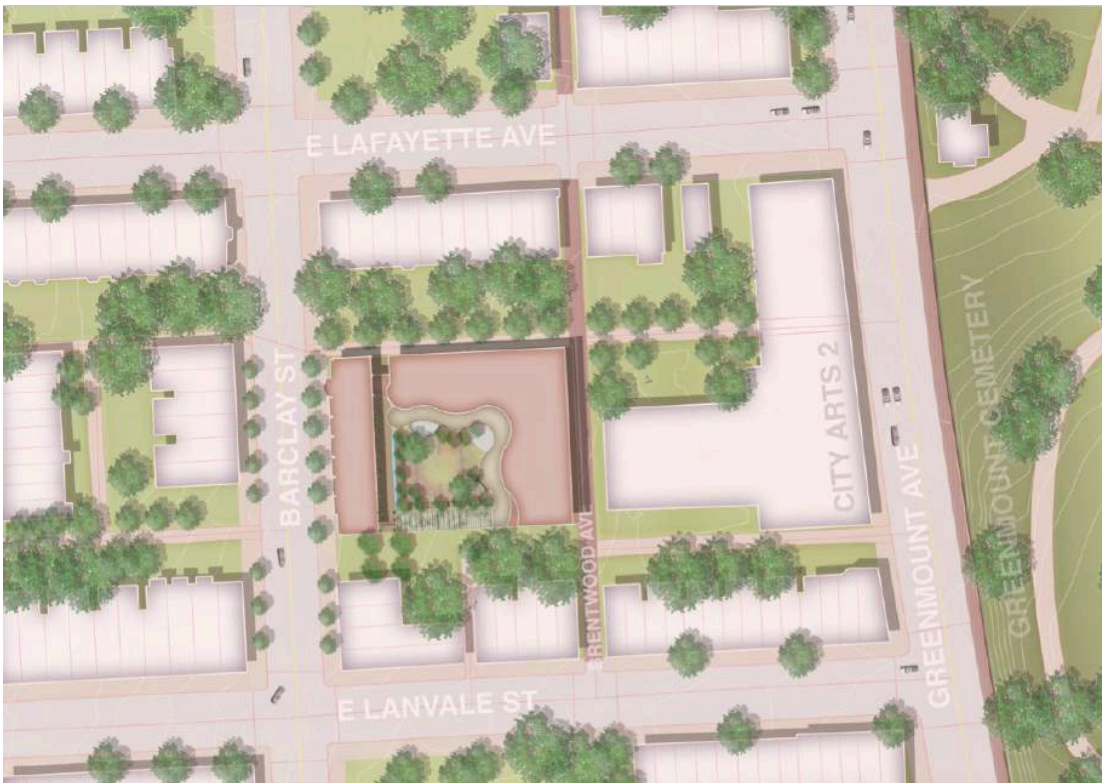


Figure 58, Roof Plan NTS

(Source: Author)

- PROGRAM
1. OFFICES
 2. MEETING ROOM
 3. KITCHEN
 4. DINING
 5. LIVING ROOM
 6. LAUNDRY
 7. GROUP THERAPY
 8. ENTRY

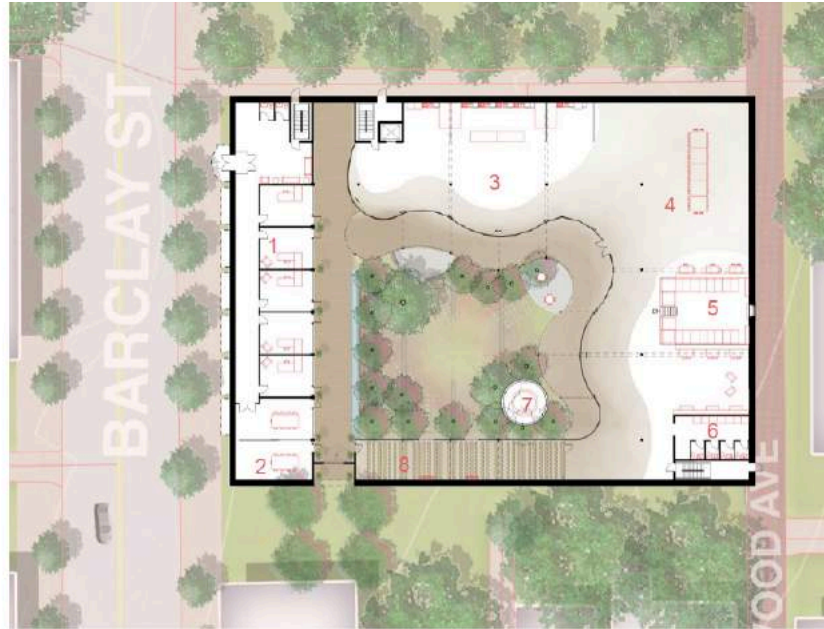


Figure 59, First Floor Plan NTS

(Source: Author)

- PROGRAM
1. MAKERSPACE
 2. CLASSROOM
 3. LARGE CLASSROOM
 4. BRIDGE
 5. LOUNGE
 6. STAFF ROOM
 7. FAMILY UNITS

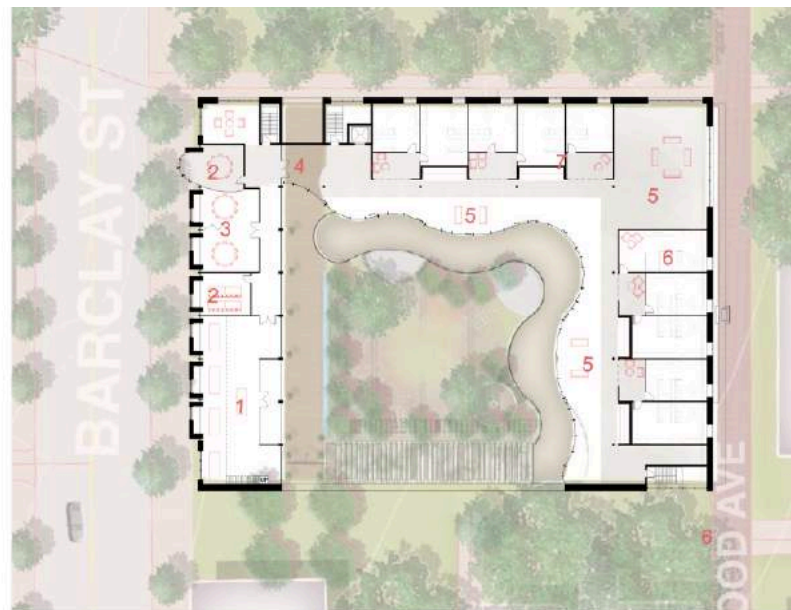


Figure 60, Second Floor Plan NTS

(Source: Author)

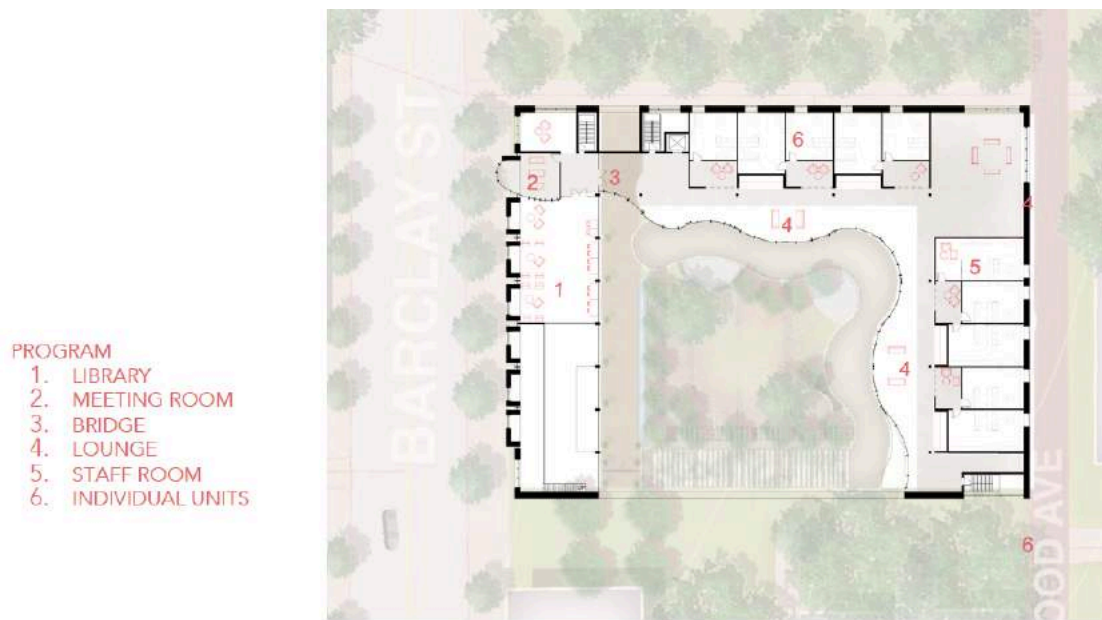


Figure 61, Third Floor Plan NTS
(Source: Author)



Figure 62, Aerial
(Source: Author)

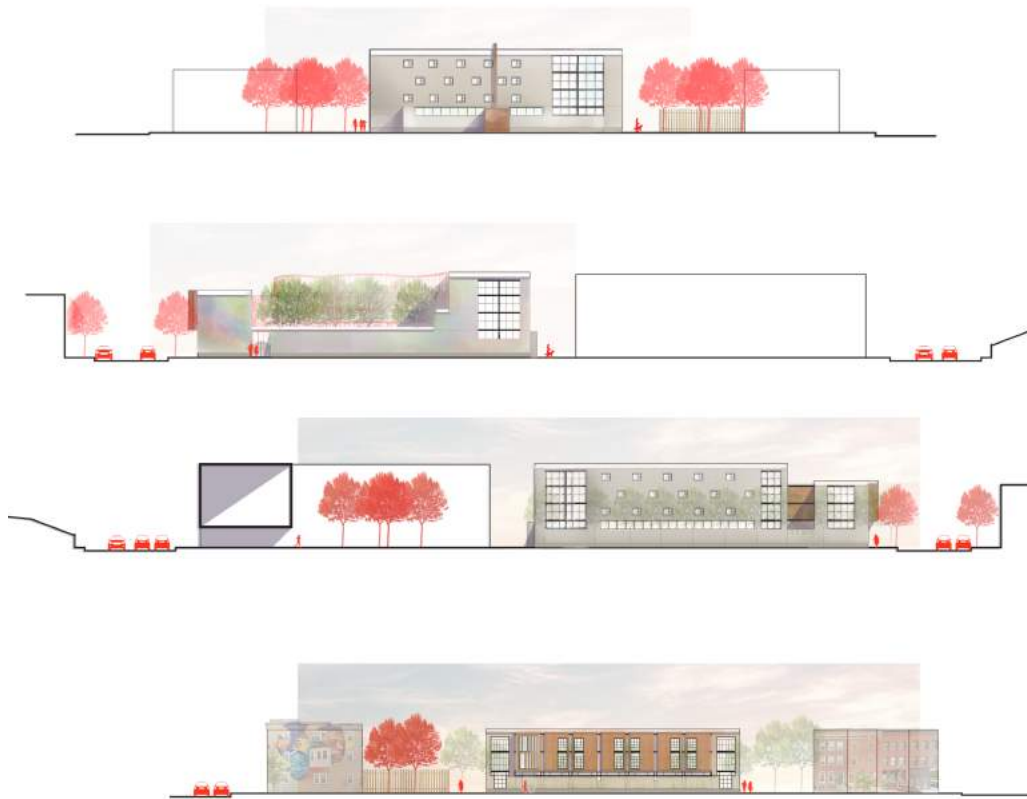


Figure 63, Elevations NTS
(Source: Author)

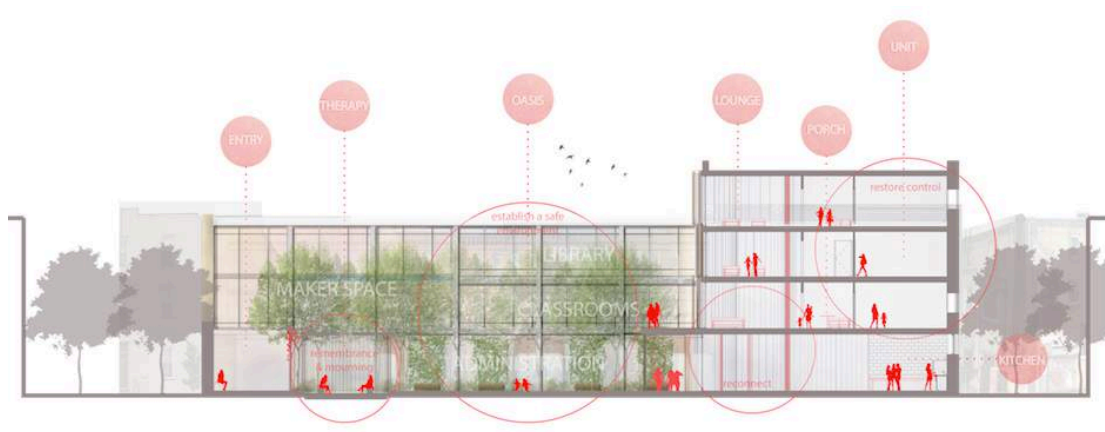


Figure 64, Cross Section Elevation NTS
(Source: Author)



Figure 65, Section Perspective
(Source: Author)

Sequence

Entry

When a girl arrives at the shelter for the first time, she enters through the same entrance that social workers and teachers enter through, off of Barclay Street. At the entrance she is met with the social worker that will act as her full-time mentor during her time in this shelter and beyond. From there, she is able to begin the journey of healing, of walking into the home for the first time with her mentor through the everyday entrance for the girls. This entrance allows for girls to interact with the wall that is there to protect them and the garden and home that is there to heal them as she transitions from one place to the next.



Figure 66, Barclay Street Approach

(Source: Author)



Figure 67, Girls Entrance

(Source: Author)

Communal

Upon entering the home, she is able to see how all of the communal spaces interact with one another. While she may not partake in any of the communal activity until she is fully comfortable, she is able to see

the future that lies ahead of her here in this shelter. She is also able to see how the garden and the home interact with one another and how it creates a larger learning environment. Girls will be able to grow things out in the garden and then bring them back into the kitchen so they can have a communal meal together and learn to nourish their bodies in a healthy way.



Figure 68, Living Room/Lounge Pit

(Source: Author)



Figure 69, Garden/Kitchen

(Source: Author)

Resident Floor

As she moves vertically throughout the shelter, the design continuously breaks down the scale of engagement and community. This allows girls to have the constant opportunity and choice to become a part of a group and get to know the other girls on her floor, in the home, at her own time.



Figure 70, Resident Lounge
(Source: Author)



Figure 71, Rooftop Access

(Source: Author)

Unit

Each unit is designed as a micro-unit so that they are both extremely efficient and flexible. This allows each girl to design the space, as she

wants to, in a way she feels comfortable. In doing this, this design is able to restore some control back into her life.



Figure 72, Unit Section Perspective
(Source: Author)



Figure 73, Single Units
(Source: Author)



Figure 74, Family Units
(Source: Author)

Learning Environments

Coming from a world where these girls were continuously told that their only value in life come from the value put on their bodies by their traffickers- these spaces open up a world of possibility to her. They show her what the world really has to offer her and they help her discover a new sense of self by discovering new skills.



Figure 75, Library
(Source: Author)



Figure 76, Maker Space

(Source: Author)

Oasis

Within the garden, the therapy space acts as a lantern of hope designed to bring girls together. From within this space, which is immersed in the garden, girls can reaffirm and understand each other's pain as a way of healing from it, together.



Figure 77, Therapy Space
(Source: Author)



Figure 78, Oasis

(Source: Author)

Conclusion

The jury overall had very positive feedback and mainly had comments on security regarding courtyard façade and entrance. They suggested that the upper floors of the home might want to be a bit more opaque in contrast to the openness of the floors closer to the garden. They also questioned the everyday arrival for girls and how it can be made more secure from people watching from the streets. This could be

made more secure by moving security offices closer to the entrance itself, and further design consideration starting along the street edge. Lastly, they commented on how the curved curtain wall can also speak more to the journey of healing, the sequence more, by having a celebratory moment where both parts of the building come together. Overall, the feedback from the presentation was very helpful and productive in helping to further this project into the future.

No place in the world will ever make these girls forget the things that they have been through. But, by creating a place that exists solely to serve them and their needs; we can help them understand their true worth, make them feel human again, and in doing that- we can design a new normal.



Figure 79, Presentation Boards
(Source: Author)



Figure 80, Public Presentation
(Source: Author)

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