



Breaking the Cycle

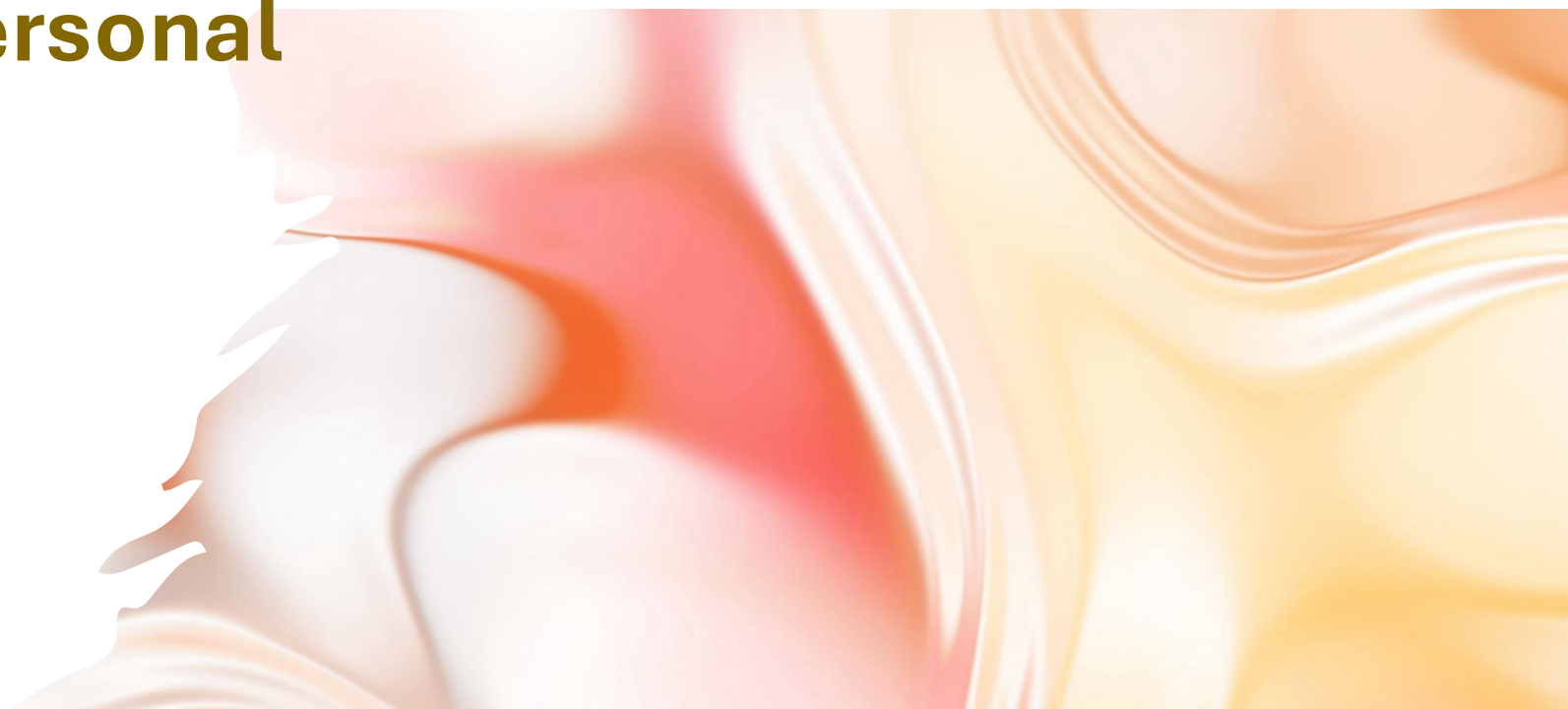


Mothercraft  
Shaping Children's Lives Through Learning



# Women's Processes of Change in an Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program

Connections for Breaking  
the Cycle of Violence (C-BTC)





*presents:*

# Innovations in Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Trauma- and Violence-Informed Health Promotion

## *A NATIONAL CONFERENCE*

Oct 1–2, 2025

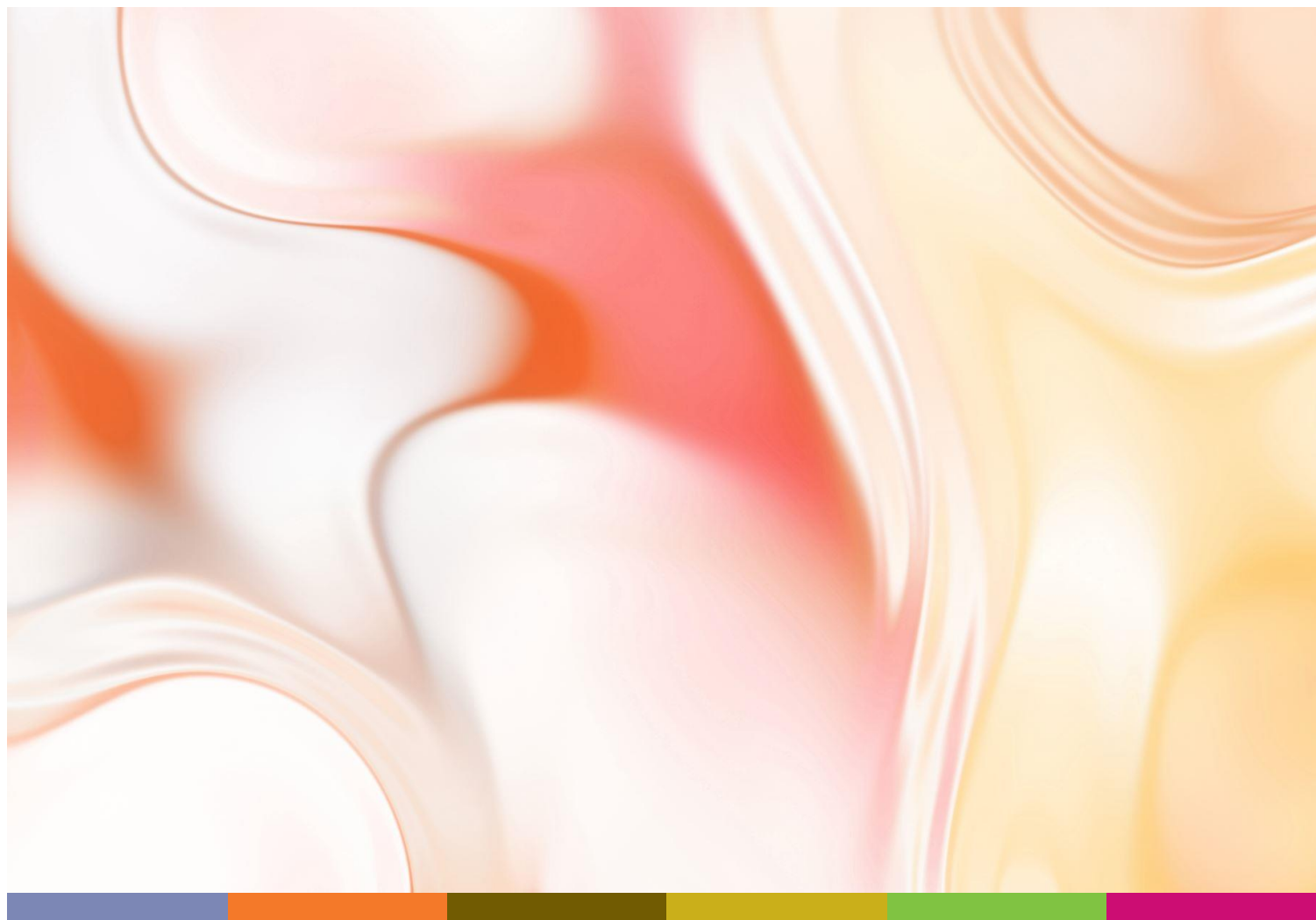
# Locating Myself

- Clinical Developmental Psychology student
- Mixed ancestry (Scottish, Irish, German, Lakota, Abenakis-Métis)
- Woman, Trauma Survivor



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**Discussed  
program  
experiences in a  
follow-up  
interview with me.**

9 women aged 23-42  
completed  
Connections

Toronto  
Lanark  
Cape Breton  
York



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# The women's most frequently reported demographics (i.e., mode) included

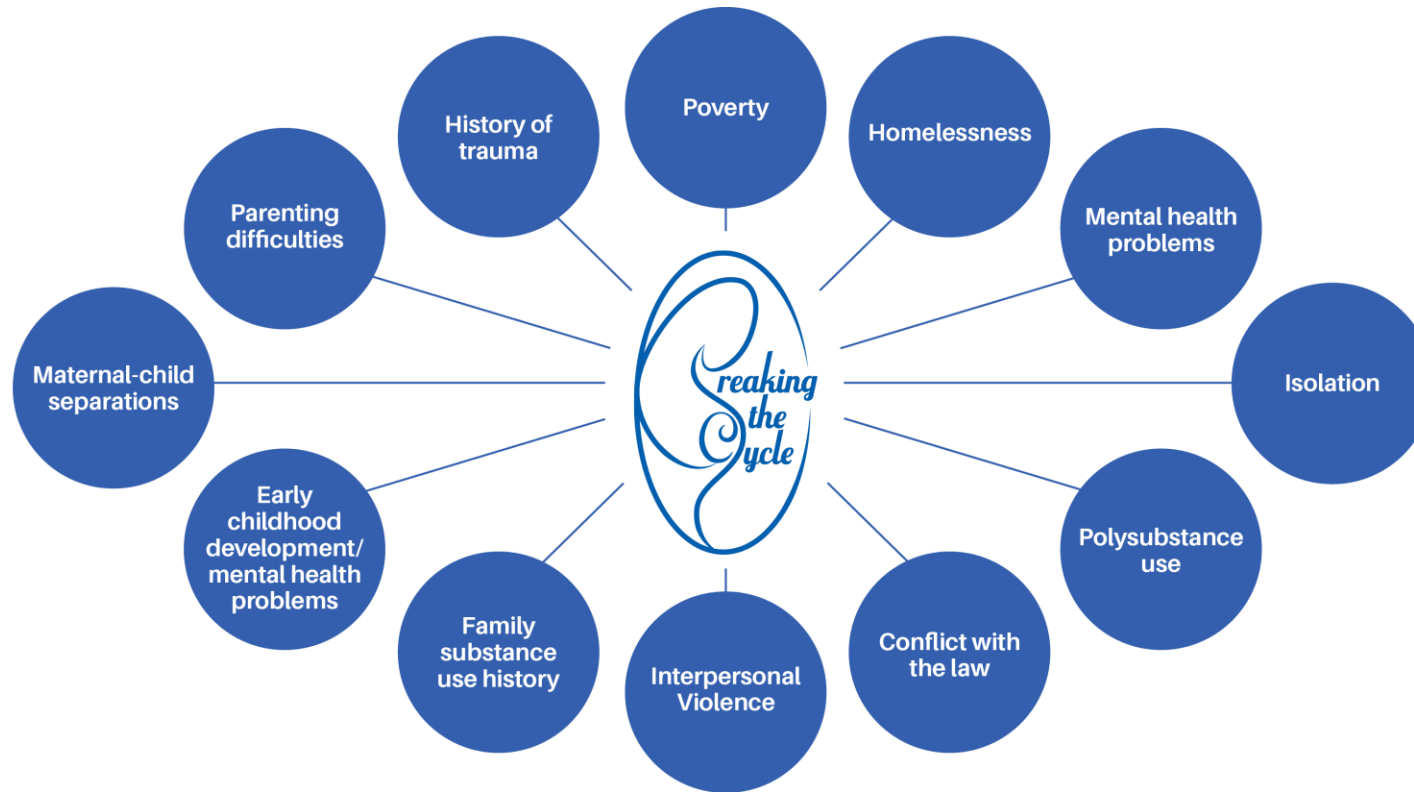
- a. being single,
- b. living in an apartment,
- c. having 2 children, and
- d. their children being under the age of 5 years.





# Profile of BTC Families

## Connections for Breaking the Cycle of Violence (C-BTC)



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Connections is a program for Indigenous and general population women, developed by Breaking the Cycle (BTC)

BTC = one-stop service for women:

- 1) who are substance-involved
- 2) who are pregnant or have young children

# BTC Programs and Services

## Connections for Breaking the Cycle of Violence (C-BTC)

### Addictions

- Relapse Prevention Group
- Recovery Group
- Life Skills Group
- Individual Counselling

### Developmental Clinic

- Screening and Assessment
- Developmental and Interactional Guidance
- Parent-Child Dyadic Interventions
- Home Visiting
- Early Intervention

### Connections Interpersonal Violence Intervention

### Mental Health Counselling

### Health/Medical Services

- FASD Assessment/Diagnostic Clinic
- Pre-Postnatal Counselling

### Basic Needs Support

- Food • Clothing • Transportation

### Probation Services

### Childminding

### Pregnancy Outreach Program

### Parenting

- New Mom's Support Group
- Circle of Security Parenting Program
- Cooking Healthy Together
- Parent-Child "Mother Goose" Program
- Make the Connection Program
- "Learning Through Play" Group



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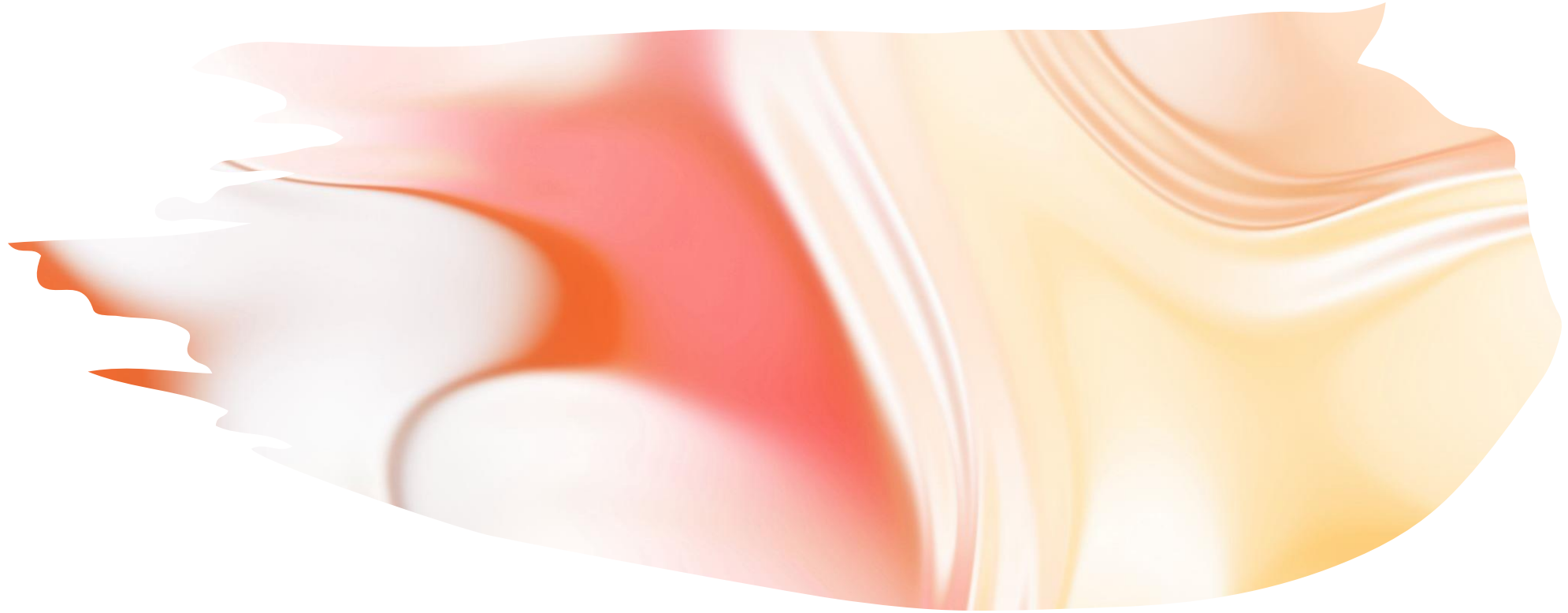
# BTC Partners

Connections for Breaking the Cycle of Violence (C-BTC)



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## Connections for Breaking the Cycle of Violence (C-BTC)

- i. Evidence-based interpersonal intervention group
- ii. Pregnant women and mothers of children (0-6 years)
- iii. At-risk for/impacted by interpersonal violence or child maltreatment within the family

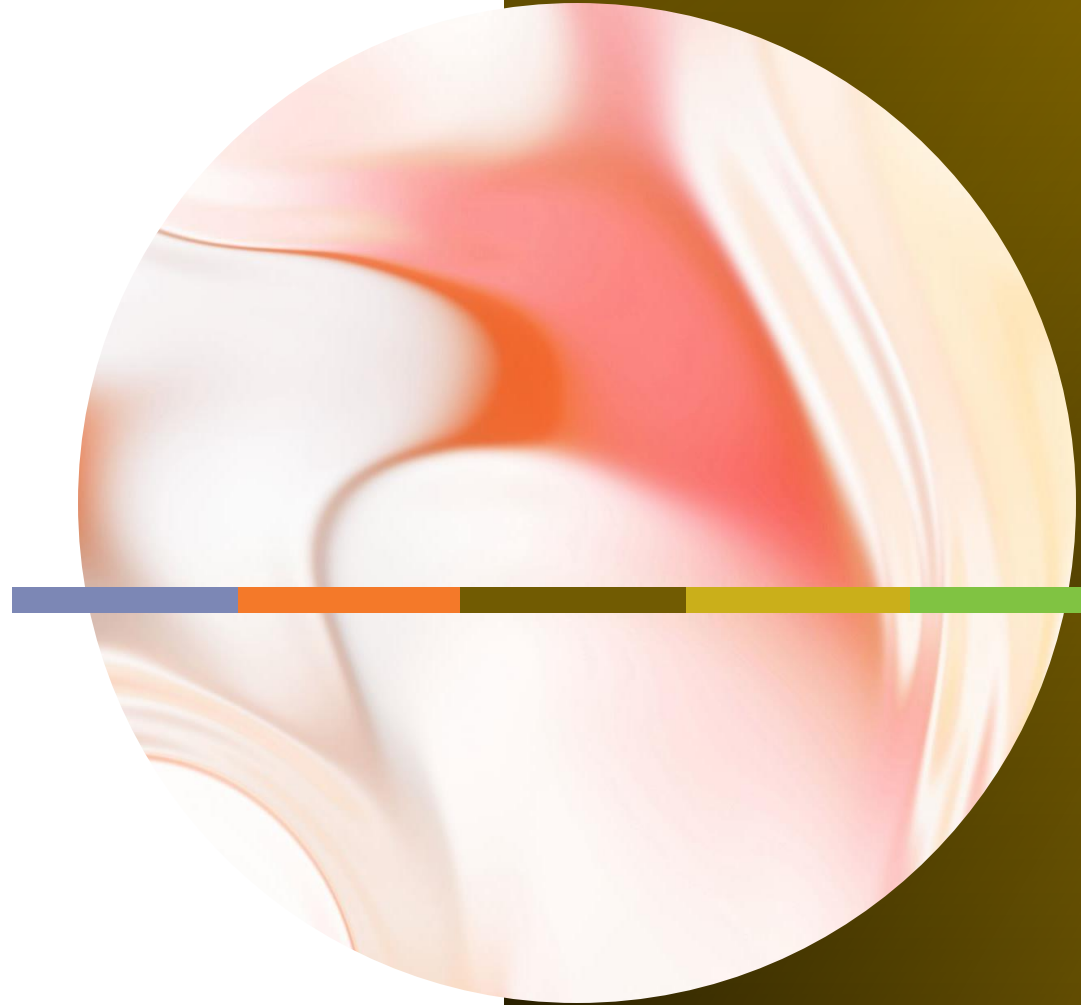


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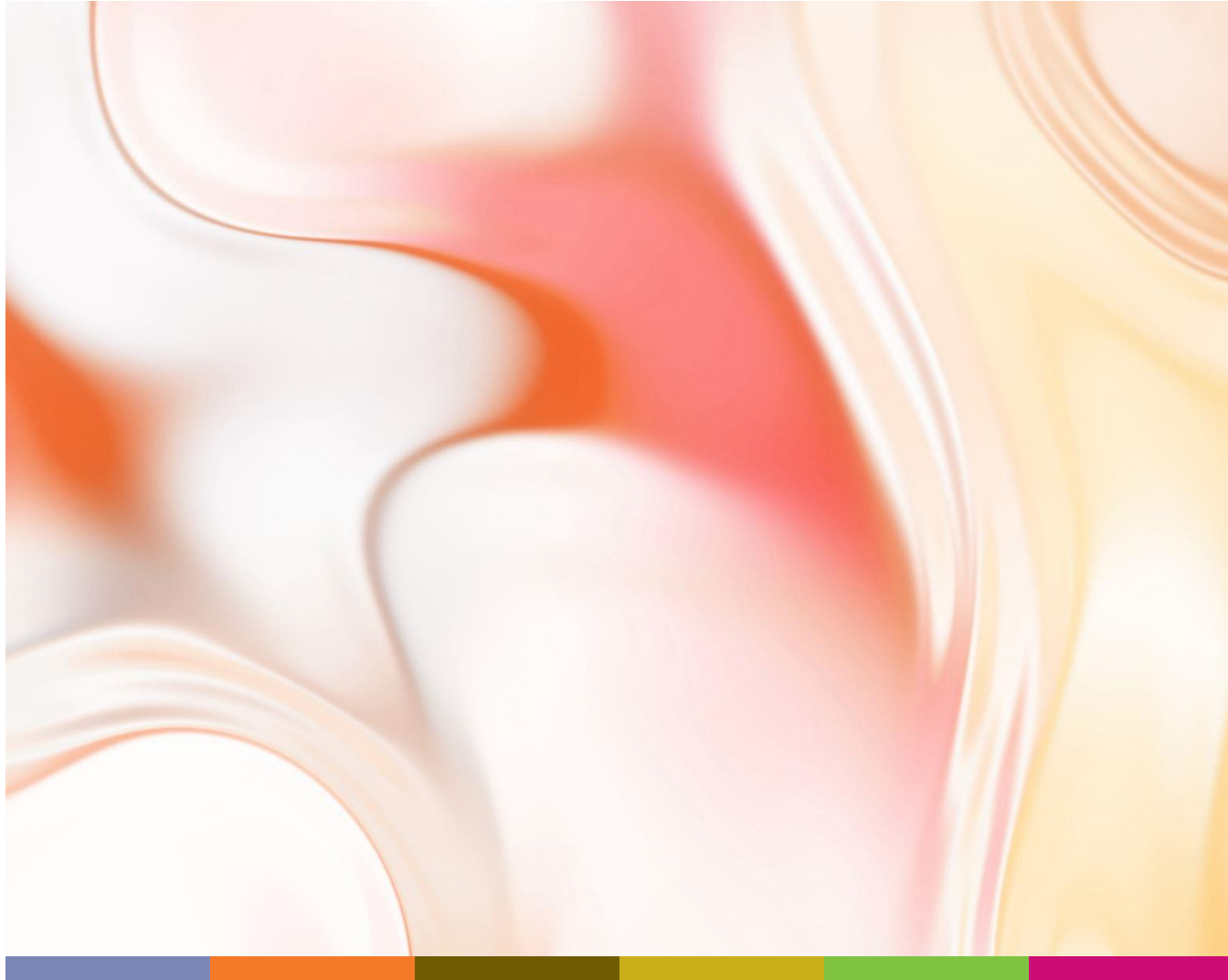
## **This work is informed by my previous research**

- i. Indigenous girls aged 12 to 18
- ii. Dilico Anishinabek Family Care (catchment area)
- iii. Some were also referred for family services at Dilico



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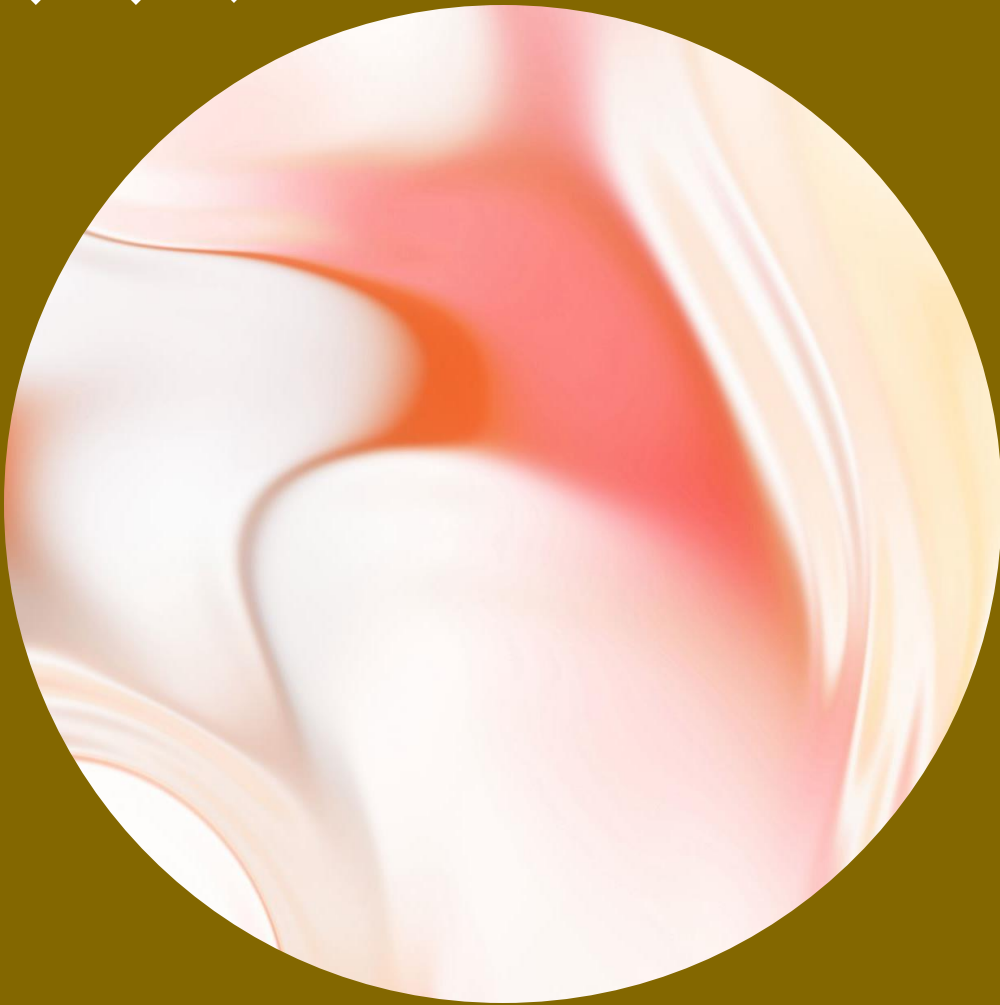
# **Dilico Anishinabek Family Care**

- Healthcare service network
- Promotes the healing and well-being of the Anishinabek people
- Integrated holistic approach
- Honours community values, culture, and traditions.

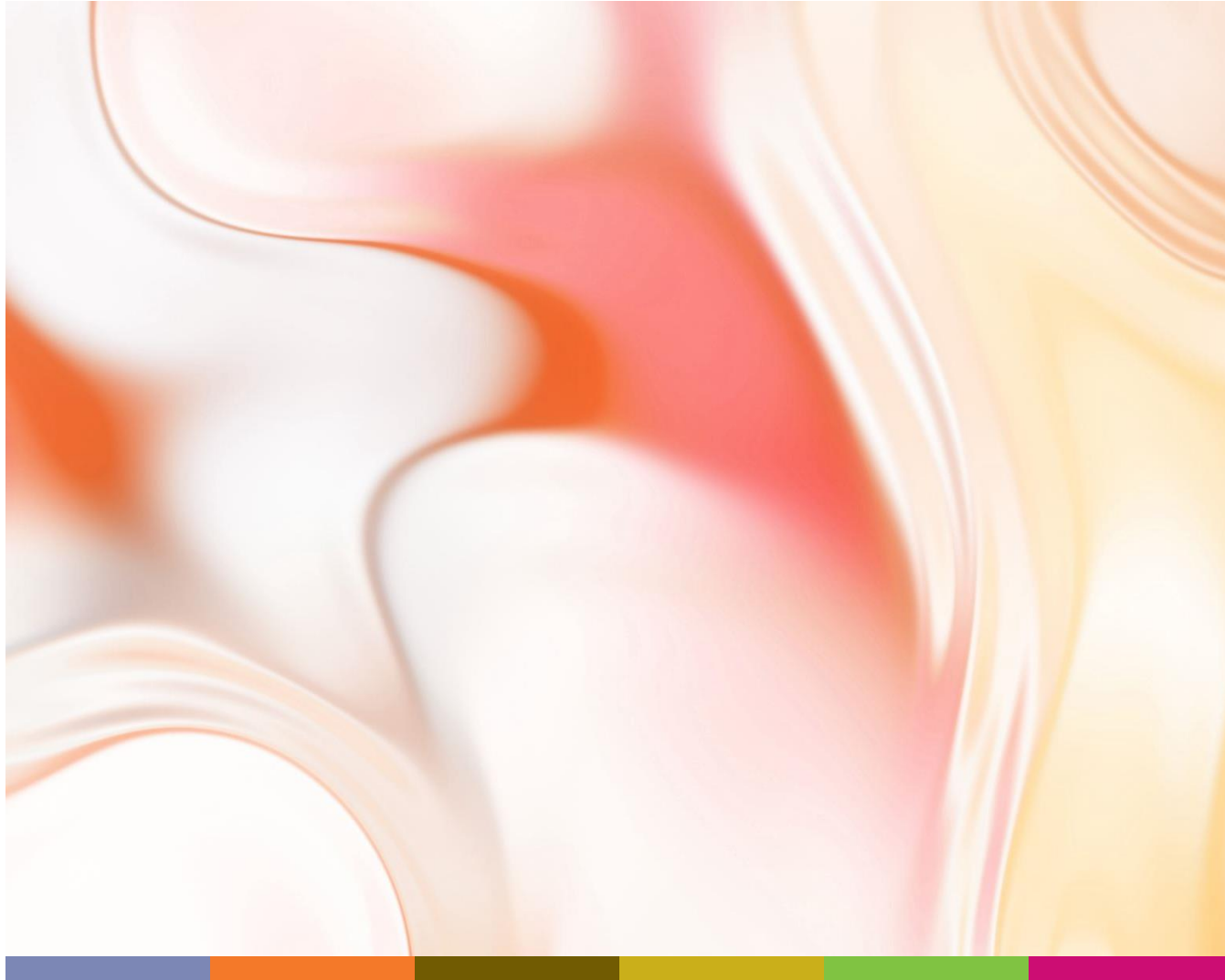


## Research at Dilico Anishinabek Family Care

- Concerned staff at Dilico requested research
  - Girls struggling with aggression problems
  - Strengths-Based research to improve prevention and intervention efforts at Dilico (Dion, 2013).
- 



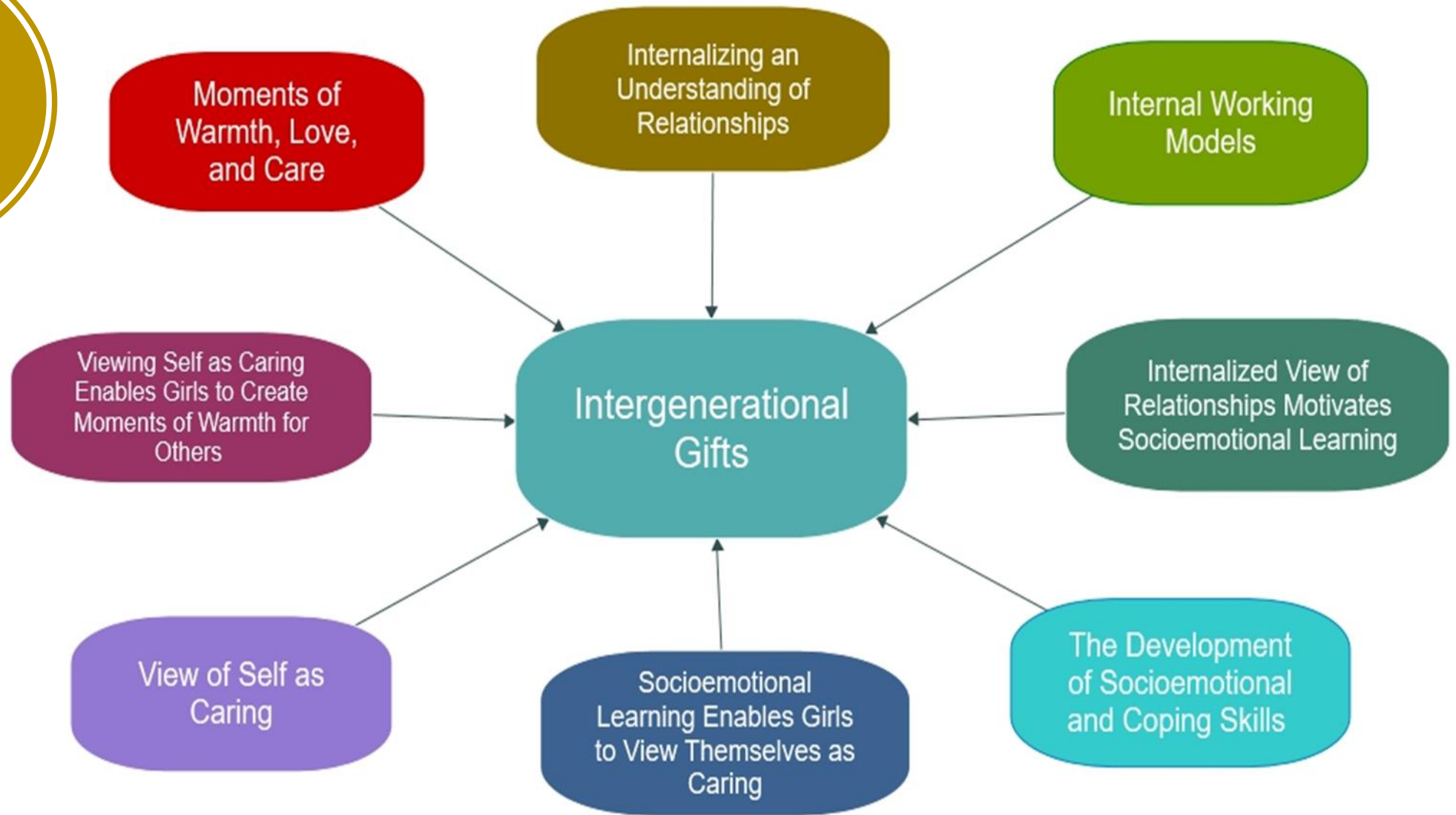
# Girls Development



- Received moments of warmth and care
- Shifted their relationship expectations
- Engaged in social emotional learning in relationships
- Built a view of themselves as a caring person



**Continuity from Research with Dilico**



# Expand this Understanding Over Generations

1. Exploring mothers' processes of breaking cycles of violence
2. Giving moments of warmth and care to their children



# BTC Relationships

Connections for Breaking the Cycle of Violence (C-BTC)

Child Functioning

Relationship Between Mother and Child

Relationship Between Staff and Families

Relationships Among Staff

Relationships Among Community Agencies

Relationship-Based Theoretical Frameworks



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# The Women Supported Through Connections Were



- Powerful and courageous in their actions to access freedom from violence
- Proud of the awareness and skills they built to form lives filled with warmth and care

# One Process

## Finding to Highlight

- Process whereby the women entered the work of cycle breaking for their children
- Encountered the truth that they were not excluded from the hope of a warm and caring life that is free from violence.
- The only way they were able to engage in the selfless behaviors that brought them to group =
  - By working in and through themselves.
- This is the process I am here to present today, the **Inner Process of an Intergenerational Cycle Breaker.**



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# Inner Process of an Intergenerational Cycle Breaker

1. The impact of reparative relational experiences in Connections on women's understanding of relationships
  - a) physiological,
  - b) perceptual, and
  - c) intuitive (i.e., "gut feelings")
2. A felt sense of care in Connections group
3. Internalization of that care
4. Positive internal working models of relationships
5. Changes in behavior that is warm and caring towards
  - a) Herself
  - b) Child
  - c) Others

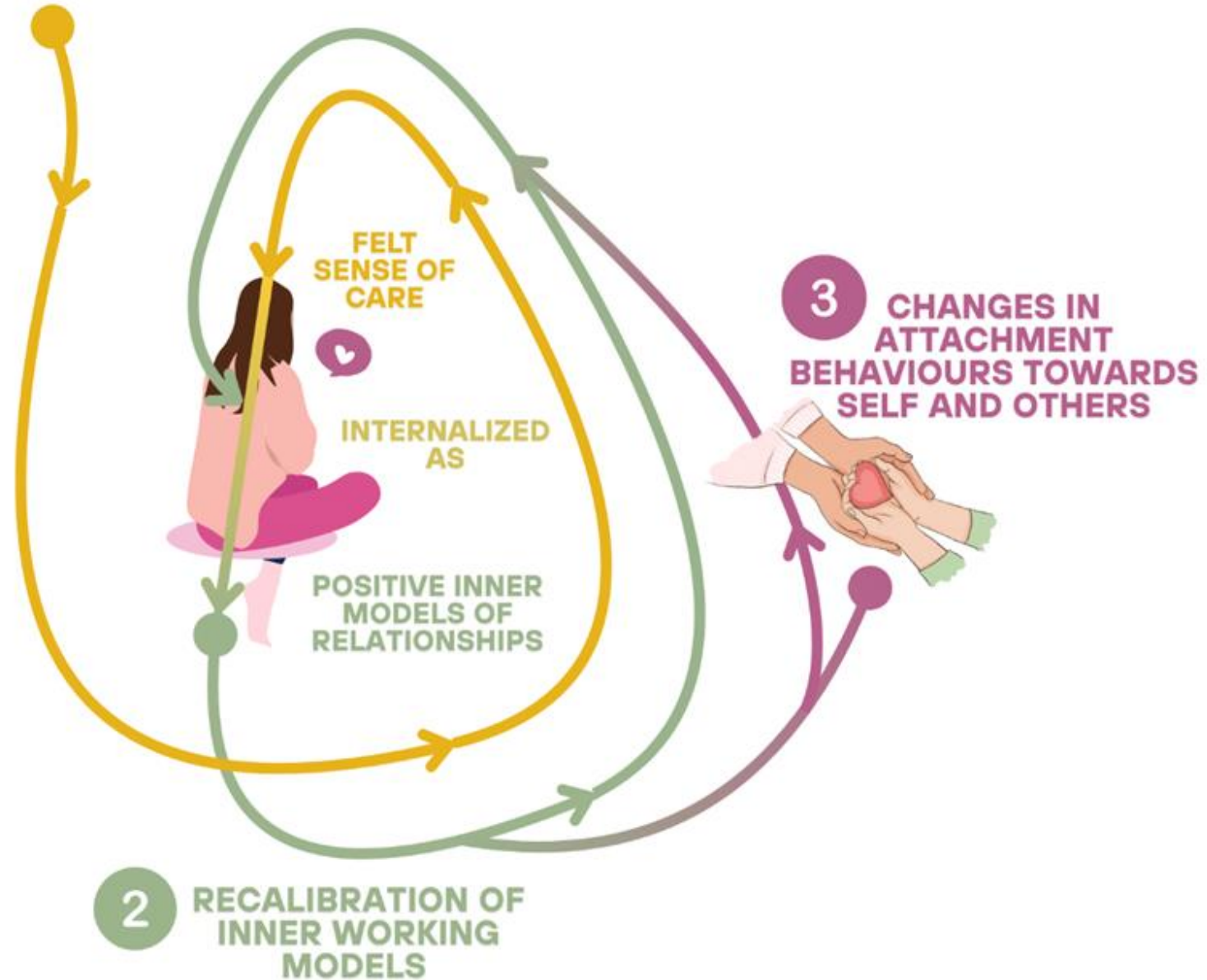


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# 1 WARMTH AND CARE IN CONNECTIONS



# Inner Process of an Intergenerational Cycle Breaker

I am still investigating the mechanism of this connection with inner models

A development,

A remembering,

A deepening,

A bit of all of them



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# What do you think?

