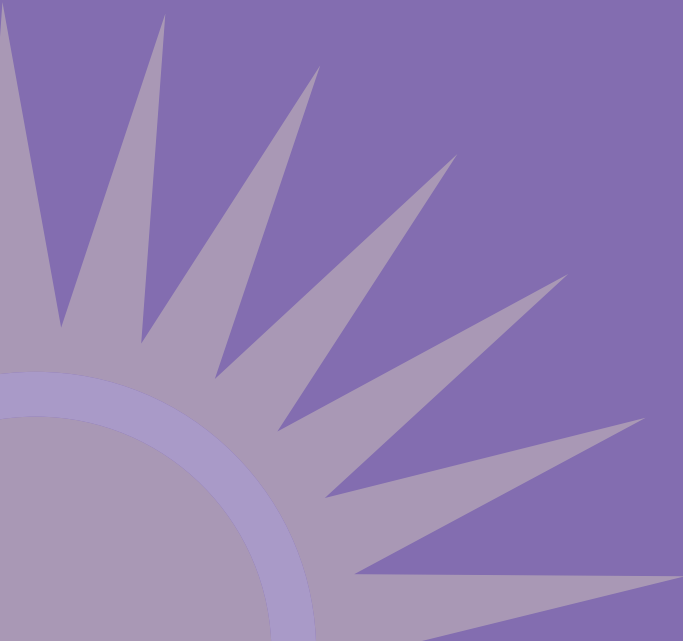




# WORKING WITH MEMORY

## IN THE SHADOW OF GENOCIDE

THE NARRATIVE PRACTICES OF IBUKA TRAUMA COUNSELLORS



Written by David Denborough  
On behalf of Ibuka & Dulwich Centre Foundation International

*'Ibuka' means remember. It is also the name of the national genocide survivors association in Rwanda. This publication describes how Ibuka trauma counsellors are responding to the survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. It documents and honours their work as well as acknowledging the experiences and responses of survivors. Significantly, Ibuka workers are survivors themselves. Their work is more than professional. It also involves the sharing of stories and memory, the linking of lives, social healing<sup>1</sup>, and action.*

*This publication is to be launched during the 16th commemoration of genocide in Rwanda which is emphasising the role of trauma counsellors in rebuilding the nation. We hope that this document will raise awareness of the work of Ibuka counsellors within Rwanda and make it more possible for survivors throughout the country to receive support. We also hope that this publication will be read widely across the globe. The Executive Secretary of Ibuka, Kaboyi Benoit, has described the work of Ibuka as 'like a small light to survivors, a small light as we walk this long road' (Kaboyi, 2007). As the trauma counsellors of Ibuka continue to develop their own ways of working with memory, their stories may also offer light to those responding to trauma in many other countries, in Africa, and beyond.*

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## *Part One*

# CONTINUING EFFECTS OF THE GENOCIDE

The effects of the genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994 are not over. Many people still live with the effects of the extreme violence, killings, and degradation that took place in Rwanda during those one hundred days:

The people with whom we meet are often dealing with many different effects of the genocide. They may be having nightmares and be unable to sleep. They may experience powerful feelings of despair and hopelessness. Often they have profound sorrow, fears, or anger. Some may not know whether they wish to live or to die which means they are negotiating with death. Some survivors experience severe headaches. Others have difficulty swallowing and may feel as if they are choking. Many survivors are very isolated, very alone. When you have lost so many people it is sometimes very difficult to have relationships with others again. Some women who were raped during the genocide are now HIV positive and are living with the consequences of this. And then there are the problems of memory. Some survivors have lost their memories and therefore have lost aspects of their past. Others have painful memories that return again and again. What is more, some survivors may feel guilty for being alive. The genocide has made them doubt that they have a right to live. These are all effects that the genocide is still having on survivors.

There are also circumstances in the present that are very difficult to deal with. Some survivors are living in the same villages as those who killed their relations and family members. These survivors are sometimes living with continuing threats and violence to

try to intimidate them not to speak of the past, not to seek justice. And when survivors do seek justice, when they do speak up, they must deal with other people's reactions. There is hostility and hatred that they have to deal with everyday. Many survivors are also living in severe poverty. These are continuing obstacles to dealing with the effects of the genocide. Children and young people are also living with the effects of the killings. Even if they were not born at the time of the genocide, they are living with the effects that these events had on their parents and relatives.

These are just some of the effects of the genocide that people are living with. These are the effects which we are responding to in our work. (Extract from Denborough, Freedman & White, 2008)

Significantly, the Ibuka counsellors are survivors themselves. They too live with the continuing effects of the genocide as they dedicate their time to responding to others. The ways in which they draw upon their own experiences, their own histories, and their own memories to assist others is therefore highly significant.



*Ibuka counsellors and assistant lawyers*

## *Part Two*

# HISTORY / CONTEXT / PARTNERSHIP

Over recent years, a partnership has developed between Ibuka and Dulwich Centre Foundation International. The work described in these pages has been shaped by regular visits and workshops that have been held in Rwanda with Ibuka trauma counsellors and assistant lawyers. These visits have had a number of components. On the one hand, they have consisted of experienced international narrative practitioners sharing ideas about narrative responses to traumatic experience<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, these visits have involved eliciting, richly describing, and documenting, the skills and knowledges of Ibuka workers, including:

- their understandings of the continuing effects of the genocide
- the forms and practices of social and psychological resistance that they and other survivors are engaged in
- the social histories of these diverse forms of social and psychological resistance (how these are linked to and formed from familial, cultural, community, personal histories).

During the first workshop with Ibuka workers, a collective narrative document was developed (see Denborough, Freedman & White, 2008). It was entitled: 'Living in the shadow of genocide: How we respond to hard times – Stories of sustenance from the workers of Ibuka'. In this document, Ibuka workers described the following forms of social and psychological resistance:

- Listening and learning from the lives of others
- Music and song
- Acts of prayer – talking with a strength beyond us
- New ways of carrying on traditions
- Sports

- Making family
- Keeping a distance
- Tears and then talking
- Recalling good memories
- Bringing emotions and opinions out into the world
- Realising I am not the only one to have that kind of pain
- Respecting ancestors
- Hard work for our selves and for our loved ones
- Finding ways to rest
- Turning to friends to seek company

Recently, a further group consultation took place with Ibuka trauma counsellors and assistant lawyers<sup>3</sup>. During this consultation, the counsellors articulated the narrative principles they are now using to respond to survivors who are seeking their help, and they told evocative stories of how this is taking place. This publication contains these stories and documents the unique forms of therapeutic practice that Ibuka workers are developing. These draw upon narrative therapy principles but also go beyond them. Their evolving practice represents a generative fusion of Indigenous knowledge and the broader field of narrative practice.



*Cheryl White (Dulwich Centre Foundation International) and Kaboyi Benoit (Ibuka)*



## Part Three

# PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE

Ibuka counsellors are using ten key principles to respond to those who seek their assistance. Here they describe these principles, in their own voice:

### 1) Bridging the gap: Listening for what they have endured and the effects of this

When we meet with survivors we build trust by listening to them, by listening deeply and carefully. It is through our listening that we seek to know them and to bridge the gap between them and us. We listen for what they have survived, what they have endured. We listen to them as they speak about the suffering, the injustices, the losses, and the continuing difficulties they face. We listen for the effects the genocide has had on their lives. Because we are also survivors, we listen in ways that show we are not afraid of their stories. Sometimes we share our own experiences in ways that make it possible for other survivors to speak. We listen in ways that show we understand.

### 2) Bringing the current effects of the genocide out of the shadows

Sometimes, people come to us and they are dealing with very difficult problems of memory, or problems of the body. Fifteen years on, they may be living with the effects of the genocide but have never had the chance to speak about this. In these situations, we trace the social history of the problems they are living with so that it becomes clear *where* these problems come from, how these difficulties came into their lives. In this way, the continuing effects of the genocide are brought out of the shadows. Survivors can get clearer about how problems they are living with now are due to the genocide or are due to living in the shadow of genocide.

### 3) Listening for what has survived and how this has survived

And then there is another sort of story that we listen for. We listen for stories of resistance, of resilience. We listen for what has survived and how this has survived. We listen for and honour survivors' beliefs, their hopes, their dreams, their talents, their skills in survival. We listen carefully so that we can hear what is important to them. To do this, we use a special sort of listening, a double-listening (White, 2006). We listen for two different sorts of stories:

<i>Story of what they have endured</i>	<i>Story of resistance / resilience</i>
<i>- hardships</i>	<i>- beliefs</i>
<i>- losses</i>	<i>- values</i>
<i>- injustices</i>	<i>- hopes</i>
<i>- continuing obstacles</i>	<i>- dreams</i>
<i>- what effects these have had on their lives</i>	<i>- talents</i>
	<i>- interests</i>
	<i>- skills in survival</i>

#### 4) Tracing histories of what is important to survivors

When we hear about what is important to survivors, when they speak to us about certain beliefs or values, or when we learn about their dreams or talents, we also try to learn about the histories of these. Where do these beliefs, these dreams, these talents, come from? Often, we discover that these are linked to their families and to lost loved-ones. We ask survivors to tell us stories about this.

#### 5) Learning from lost loved-ones: Carrying on their best characteristics

For those who have lost their parents or their families, it can be significant when we discover that there are certain ways of living, certain legacies that they are carrying on from their lost loved-ones. We try to make it possible for survivors to acknowledge what they have learnt and are continually learning from their lost loved-ones. We also try to make it possible for survivors to see how they are carrying forth legacies from those who have died, how they are carrying on their best characteristics (see White & Epston, 1992).

#### 6) Acknowledging special skills of survival

Sometimes survivors have had to take unusual steps, unusual actions in order to continue with their lives. We understand that these special actions involve skills; they are special ways of dealing with the hardships that have befallen them. As counsellors, rather than dismissing or judging the ways that people have survived, we seek to acknowledge their special skills of survival. We honour these skills and respect them. We also try to hear about survivors' special talents or interests and to find ways that these can be further developed.



### 7) Healing and justice together

In the work of Ibuka, we never separate healing from justice. These go hand-in-hand. Much of our work involves making it possible for survivors to seek justice through Gacaca<sup>4</sup> hearings and to support them through this process. We see in our work how justice is a form of healing and how healing is a form of justice.

### 8) Mutual contributions

When we meet with survivors, no matter how difficult the circumstances of their lives, we try to find ways in which they can make contributions to the lives of other survivors. This might involve caring for younger survivors, or orphans. We have seen how ‘enabling contributions’ (Denborough, 2008) can provide a turning point in survivors’ lives.

### 9) Sharing memory: Collective conversations and actions

As survivors, we live with the ‘problem of memory’. Sometimes it can be hard for us to remember, and equally hard to forget. As counsellors, we are trying to find ways to assist people in relation to memory. Sometimes memory books and boxes are helpful. Other times, we have seen how it is important to share memories. We visit memorials together. We find ways of commemorating together. We find ways to ensure that survivors are not left alone with memories that are too hard to bear. This involves collective conversations, social healing, and actions.

### 10) Culturally-appropriate ways of speaking

As counsellors in Rwanda, we must take care to work in ways that fit with Rwandan culture. We must not pry into people’s lives by asking questions that are too personal or direct.

As counsellors we do other things too. We link survivors with medical services and legal services. We try to find ways that survivors can become engaged in income-generating activities. And sometimes we must also assist survivors in their relationships with others.





## *Part Four*

# STORIES

The following stories told by Ibuka counsellors convey both the anguish associated with living in the shadow of genocide and the ways in which survivors and counsellors are working together to respond to the problems of memory. As Hodali Irakoze Pierre Claver, from Ibuka, describes:

*We hope these stories demonstrate that those who meet with our counsellors do find ways to live despite what happened. They show how it is possible to be heard and to heal. We also hope that these stories convey the work of our counsellors and their caring and open hearts. Most importantly, we hope the experiences that are shared here can be a remedy to those still in the darkness of the past.*

## GENEROSITY

This is a story about a young woman, Uwimana Immaculée<sup>5</sup>, who I have been working with. Uwimana was seven years old during the genocide when she was raped. She was attacked by two men and they spent two days with her. During the genocide she also witnessed her mother being killed.

The person who provided some sort of refuge to Uwimana during the genocide would hide her in a deep pit during the days. At night he would take her to a huge warehouse where there had been many killings as this is where he thought she would be safe. She did survive. But one night while she was in this warehouse she saw her mother being killed with a very sharp object between her legs. She saw her mother bleed to death.

Uwimana is the only survivor out of six children. She came to see me after I had conducted a ‘sensitisation campaign’ – I had been letting people know that I am a counsellor and ready to provide support. When she came to see me, Uwimana told me about the nightmares and flashbacks she was experiencing. She spoke of her profound fear. She was seeing all the images and hearing all the screams. She also felt guilty that all of her siblings had died and that she’d ‘only been raped and spared’. These were her words. There were physical problems too. She was bleeding. Uwimana’s body had revolted against the memory so she would often bleed between her legs. Every time she had a crisis she would also lose her sight.

In seeking to hear from Uwimana how she had survived and what she had been able to hold onto throughout these experiences, she told me how the only thing that she’d been able to save from her family was a chicken. She described how she cared so much for this chicken. She ate with it, she slept with it, she spent her time with it. This chicken had been a source of comfort and companionship, until one day somebody stole this chicken and this was an absolutely devastating experience for her.

It seemed important that I try to find a way to assist Uwimana to deal with both the physical and emotional experiences she was having. I took her to medical services, but after all the investigations were complete, there was no physical explanation for the bleeding and the blinding. It seemed that these were not related to physical trauma but rather to mental trauma.

While meeting with her, I listened for Uwimana’s talents, her skills, and her values, and I learnt that she used to like to sing. I asked about the history of this in her life and we also discussed some singing practices that she could do to develop this talent. We worked on this together. Here in Rwanda we know that ‘music has a power’ and gradually Uwimana started to experience this power through singing.

I also discovered that Uwimana’s family had been very generous. They always used to have many people in their house. They used to look after many relatives. These values of generosity and hospitality were treasured by her family. We spoke about this a lot. I heard many stories about the different acts of generosity and kindness of her family. In time, she also spoke about how she wanted to carry on this legacy of generosity and hospitality. She wanted to carry this on behalf of her family members who had died. Some time later, Uwimana began caring for a very young girl who was an orphan. She took this girl into her home to live with her. This was a contribution she was determined to make to carry on the tradition of her family.

When I was introduced to the Tree of Life approach (Ncube 2006; Denborough 2008), I thought about how I could perhaps use this in my work with Uwimana. As it turned out, I changed it to a 'River of Life' and I used this metaphor to trace the source of some of the problems she was facing.



Uwimana's 'River of Life'

In tracing the source of the bleeding, in tracing its history, we realised together that this bleeding was actually related to the imagery of her mother bleeding. We reconstructed the history of this. We associated the traumatic experience in the present with what she had seen in the past. By doing so, she was able to create a link between what she was going through now and what had happened during the genocide.

Similarly, by tracing the source of the blindness, we realised that the times when she would go blind in trauma moments was due to spending so many nights in a dark place without light. Everything was connected to those previous experiences. The 'River of Life' became a way in which she could place her life, her memories, her experiences, in some sort of flow. It made sense to her. It also came to show the steps that she has been taking in getting her life, her river, back on course.

What has been quite amazing is that Uwimana has now come a very, very long way. She's been able to be healed. She's found friendship and musical support, and now she's in the phase of being integrated back in the broader community. I was able to get some small funds to spark a project of financial integration. Uwimana now looks like any other normal girl. She has overcome the terrors, the nightmares, the bleeding, and the blindness.

Significantly, she has also seen justice. Out of the two people who raped her, one had fled the country but she was able to testify against the other man and he was given a life sentence. She achieved this measure of justice.

This process has taken real time and energy, especially initially. I had to work very hard to build a connection, to offer company and empathy, to bridge the gap. When someone has been through such experiences, there is often a lot of work required to bridge the gap and to come to a point of trust. But this can make all the difference. While many survivors continue to suffer terribly, to see Uwimana reclaim her life has been very significant to me.

## SHARING TRUST AND VISITING MEMORY TOGETHER

During the genocide, Rurangwa Jean Christophe escaped with his family but they all went to hide in different places. Rurangwa hid in a huge pit that was full of insects that were constantly biting him. It was a terrifying experience. When he came to see me, Rurangwa described all the hardships he went through in this deep pit and how all his other family members were killed. During his escape, he travelled hundreds of kilometres from one province to another. Finally, when his home province was liberated, he decided to go back there to see if there might be a remote relative who had survived. On the way, he met an elderly woman from his region. When he told her where he was going, she couldn't find words to describe what had happened in that place. Rurangwa looked in the pain in her eyes and realised that it told him that everyone back there had been killed. So he decided not to complete the journey. Instead, he returned to his place of sanctuary.

In 1996, Rurangwa found a donor who helped him to leave Rwanda and move to the USA where he lived for nine years. During that time he didn't listen to anything that had to do with the genocide or with Rwanda. But then, in 2005, he returned to this country. When he first came back, he maintained the kind of attitude that he had held abroad. He wanted to know nothing about the genocide. He didn't visit any memorials or listen to the radio. During the mourning period he didn't attend any commemorations.

During a local Gacaca hearing, however, a difficult experience took place. There was a particular person that he thought was somehow a friend, a Godfather to him, a person that he had trusted. This was the person who had picked Rurangwa up at the airport when he returned to Rwanda. And yet, during the Gacaca hearing, Rurangwa learnt that this person had killed his family during the genocide. This was a crisis for Rurangwa. He suddenly felt as if he could trust no-one and he started to have troubles with memory.

At this point, I started to speak with Rurangwa, not in the role of counsellor, but as an acquaintance, as a friend. I had known him for quite some time and I started to speak with him about maybe it would be a good idea for him to visit a memorial, to in some way come to terms with the memories and the events of the genocide. I told him that I would accompany him, that we could visit the memories together. Before we went, we talked about what it would be like to go, that it might be difficult, that there might be flashbacks and there might be heavy memories. We agreed that it could be a difficult thing to do. In time, Rurangwa agreed for us to go together.

It was a difficult experience. Rurangwa cried and it was very, very painful. But after visiting the memorial, Rurangwa recognised that being together with another survivor made it much easier. Somehow being together, visiting these memories together, made them easier to bear. Rurangwa has now made real progress in terms of dealing with memory. He can visit memorials now and he listens to music commemorating the genocide. He still has great difficulties trusting people, but then again, he trusted me enough to allow me to accompany him.

Somehow together, we managed to build a trust. This is a trust that was born from spending time together. It was a trust born from listening and respecting what he had to say. It was a trust born from a particular sort of listening. Many of us have memories that are too much to bear alone. Through the rebuilding of trust, we try to bear these memories together.



## DRAWING ON PAST SURVIVAL SKILLS, ENABLING CONTRIBUTION, AND FRIENDSHIP

Uwamaliya Claire lost both her parents during the genocide and many members of her family. After the killings, she then went to live with an older sister who was married and had children. But Uwamaliya had a problem fitting in with this new family. Whatever they did, good or bad, she felt sidelined. She had great difficulty appreciating their kindness and she struggled to fit in. Over time, Uwamaliya developed profound anxiety. She felt that no-one could care about her as her parents used to care and that she couldn't trust others. She lost a thirst for life – so much so that she attempted suicide on three separate occasions. The first attempt involved taking poison medicine, but she was stopped. The second time she locked herself in her home for a week without eating, but then people found her and saved her. And the third attempt involved joining the military; she hoped she would be shot in the battlefield.

When this did not occur, Uwamaliya managed to consult a counsellor at Ibuka. This was the first time she'd spoken with anybody about her experience. What touched her was to see that we were ready to listen and respond to her. She found that so significant that she cried throughout the first session.

Over time, what was particularly helpful in coping with memories, were the conversations we had in which Uwamaliya talked about her parents and her family and some of the ways that they coped with difficult times in the past. Uwamaliya particularly spoke about her father who was a pastor who found strength and solace in prayer. I asked Uwamaliya more questions about this and learned that prayer was something that had been very significant in the history of their family in dealing with very difficult times. Slowly, slowly, Uwamaliya began to use prayer to heal. She drew this from her experience of her relationship with her father. In this way, prayer not only assisted her in the present, but it provided a link to the past. She was carrying on a tradition of her family.

Some of the practical issues were still difficult to address. I tried to talk about different options, whether she could go back to school or to other families. Finally, she decided that she would live in at a school in which there were other survivors who had more difficult problems than her. The school gave her responsibility to look after another child who was facing serious issues. In this process, Uwamaliya strongly experienced a feeling that she had something to contribute to this younger and more vulnerable child. Enabling Uwamaliya to make contributions to the lives of others was a turning point.

Another step was to find someone who was trustworthy for this girl: a close friend, someone to confide in, someone who could listen to her other than a counsellor. Together we explored ways in which this could occur. We explored contexts of friendship for Uwamaliya. She has made progress in this and is now in a much better position.

These three themes – drawing on the past survival skills of her family, enabling contribution, and friendship – have made a significant difference to this young woman. Now, as we work with other survivors, we are trying to find ways to draw on the past survival skills of their families.

## KEEPING LEGACY ALIVE

Hakizimana Valens was a young man during the genocide and all four of his brothers were killed during that time. He was the only survivor from his family and he is now twenty-four years old. When he came to see me, Hakizimana was having a lot of trouble with memory. Terrible memories were still with him. He had also started to lose memories of his family. What is more, he was often feeling weak and finding it difficult to get on with life. In our conversations, I tried to learn as much as I could about his family. I asked him, 'Who were they? What do you remember about them? What did they do? What were they like?'

I learnt that before the genocide, when he was just a young man, Hakizimana was a little bit shy. He found it very hard to express himself or to speak up. During the genocide, however, when the neighbours in the village started killing, Hakizimana was the first to notice. He warned his family that the killings were getting closer and they listened to him. Hakizimana's father gathered the family together and told Hakizimana's mother, Hakizimana, and all his siblings that they were going to run away. He looked Hakizimana in the eye and said, 'I am probably going to die. I'm going to look after the house to cover you so that you can run away. Hakizimana, I want you to be an honest man and a very hardworking man. I want you to face the challenges of this world. Always be a man of integrity.'

These were the last words that Hakizimana's father spoke. As he had predicted, a group of people soon broke into their house, killed his father and burned their home. Because of his father's actions, Hakizimana had enough time to run away. Even though he saw what happened from afar, he decided that he was going to survive. He kept running and remembered there was a family friend he could turn to. Over time, he became like a son to this other family.

Recalling this story and telling it to me was significant to Hakizimana. From our very first meeting, Hakizimana had spoken about how he thought it was very important that he 'be a man', that he 'be successful' and 'give back to the country'. When Hakizimana retold the story of his father's last words, he realised that these values had been passed onto him by his father. He realised that ever since the genocide, he had been taking steps to keep his father's legacy alive. When he realised this, we began to talk about further projects and steps he could take to carry on these legacies and pass them on to future generations.

Hakizimana used to feel very weak in the face of the attackers and all they did, but now, every time he remembers the words of his father, he feels he is strong enough to deal with them. This reassures him. He is linked with his father in this way. This assures him that he can handle life. It gives him strength.

For those of us who have lost so much, there are many steps we take to try to keep legacies alive.

## FINDING WORDS AND COLLECTIVE STRENGTH

Nyinawumuntu Odette was raped during the genocide but when it came to the Gacaca hearing which was open in the community, she couldn't speak. She couldn't find a way to describe the horror that she had been through. She couldn't come out and say 'rape'. Instead, she talked about how she was beaten up and those at the hearing couldn't tell that she was trying to say something else. As a result, the perpetrator was sentenced for only four years because they considered the charges that she spoke of, but not the ones that she could not speak.

After the hearing, Nyinawumuntu came to counselling to be heard in a more understanding way, in a setting that was more favourable to her. We had to assist her to find words, to make it possible for her to speak. How did we do this? First of all, we tried to show that we could relate to the experiences she had been through. We were very open to her and shared some of our own experiences. We created a connection. We also made sure that we scheduled a number of sessions. These were organised in advance, so Nyinawumuntu knew that she was going to be coming back and that there was no rush. We also made sure that towards the end of each session we did some relaxation exercises together so that she would never leave us feeling overwhelmed by the problem.

When she did start to speak about her experiences, we asked if we could take some notes. This was a way of honouring her words. After she had spoken, we would read back her words and this was very acknowledging. The notes that we took then encouraged her to start writing her story. And this written documentation will be helpful in future Gacaca meetings. Sometimes when Nyinawumuntu was finding it very difficult to use some words, we would make a number of suggestions of different words that she could then choose from. Finding the right words is important. It means that women are no longer alone in the experience.

Through finding words, we found a way of creating a sense of connection between this woman's experience and other women's experiences. Some of Ibuka's work also takes place in groups, making it possible for survivors to come together. This has been particularly significant for a group of women rape victims. In this group, some women had undergone testing and knew about their status, whether they were HIV positive or not. But others had refused to go for tests. They preferred not to know. They said, 'If we do find out, well, then we will die, so we prefer not to know'. But as part of these groups, other women described how they had been able to go for tests and face reality and then take medications. This created a collective strength; when people hear how others in the same condition can take action it provides a collective strength. Now other women have been able to get tested and take medications. Even though they may still be suffering, they are living in much better conditions.

Now that Nyinawumuntu is comfortable in telling her story, she has appealed and the case is going to be revised. A new date is set for the hearing. It is part of our work to assist women to find words and to create a collective strength, despite the memories they live with.

## HONOURING WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO SURVIVORS

Karigirwa Olive survived the genocide with four of her siblings but her parents died. They were slaughtered in front of her while she was hiding in a tree. When we first met Karigirwa, she was living alone and a sense of hopelessness was undermining her life. She was making no progress. Before asking Karigirwa about her stories, we first spoke of our own. This was how we bridged the gap.

After we had spoken, Karigirwa told us that after the genocide she had taken the remains of her parents, their bones, and kept them in a sack in a corner of her home. She shared with us how she finally wanted to bury her parents in dignity, to hold a proper burial ceremony. This was what was most important to Karigirwa. She was determined to be able to bury them and in this way treat them with dignity.

We gently requested that Karigirwa take us with her and show us the remains. We asked her to share this with us and then we assisted her to bury her parents in dignity. Honouring what was important to Karigirwa and assisting her to treat her lost parents with this respect, was a turning point for her. After the burial ceremony she felt relieved. She decided it was not good for her to live on her own and started living with others.

Karigirwa also used her faith and prayers to stay strong and finally found a job in the church. Slowly, gradually, she regained hope. Now that she is employed she is able to continue to take care of her siblings. Finally she found a husband and now has two children. Together they contribute to raising the two children and her siblings. Honouring what was important to Karigirwa, and assisting her to respect her parents, started to turn things around for her.



## FINDING WAYS TO SHARE

Sometimes our work involves bridging the gap between mothers and children, especially when these children were born as a result of rape. Sometimes these children have difficulties because their mothers do not know how to tell them what happened, how they were born. Sometimes their mothers find it very hard to take care of them because they cannot love them as their own children. They experience these children as a constant reminder of the horror.

We have found these issues can be best dealt with in groups. After some mothers had attended group counselling, we explored together how the women could gradually, slowly, explain to their children what had happened. When the mothers shared this with the children, the children made a commitment to grow up into good men and women. They made this commitment to be decent men and women in opposition to what their fathers did.

While first the children were frustrated, caught in the middle and not fully loved by mothers, the children came to understand that they were a product of horror. This was not easy, but they turned this history into a determination to grow up to be good men and women. It made it easier for the mothers to share this experience with each other. These difficulties do not pass, but sharing them can make it more possible to bridge the divisions left by horror.

## UNIQUE SKILLS OF SURVIVAL

An elderly woman, Nyiratete Susanne, came to counselling after hearing about us from a friend. As she told her story, it was obvious that she had passed so many years without a person to turn to or talk to. She had been living in profound loneliness. She was so lonely with her problems and memories, that one day she had decided to dig a very small hole in the corner of her home. She would go to that little hole and talk to it as if it was someone, as if it was a person, a friend. She would tell the hole to keep her secrets. Whenever heavy memories would come, she would go to that corner and talk to it as if it was somebody.

After many years, she then learned that another survivor, who also had a very big problem of trauma, had found some kind of help through counselling. This is what brought Nyiratete to see us. When she spoke to us, we honoured her unique ways of dealing with such heavy emotions. In fact, we compared the way she would speak to the hole as a form of counselling. It was as if, over the years, she had created her own counsellor. This was creative. It was skilful. We also acknowledged how Nyiratete had learned from another woman's story. The reason she had come to counselling was that she had heard about this from someone else. These were two skills that we noticed in Nyiratete's story, two skills that we acknowledged. In our counselling work, we seek to acknowledge people's unique skills of survival.



## *Part Five*

# FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

*by David Denborough*

As Kaboyi Benoit (2007) describes, ‘This work of Ibuka trauma counsellors is life-saving’. These stories of their work, considered together, demonstrate the principles articulated earlier by the Ibuka counsellors:

- Bridging the gap: Listening for what they have endured and the effects of this
- Listening for *what* has survived and how this has survived
- Tracing histories of problems
- Tracing histories of what is important to survivors
- Learning from lost loved-ones: Carrying on best characteristics
- Acknowledging special skills of survival
- Healing and justice together
- Mutual contributions
- Sharing memory: Collective conversations and actions
- Culturally-appropriate ways of speaking.

I would now like to draw specific attention to a number of further considerations:

- Loss and legacy: Multiple storylines of memory
- Personal memory / social memory
- Sharing the ‘problem of memory’
- The national project of memory
- Ensuring the survival of ideals
- Resistance, survival, and the continuing effects of genocide.

### ***Loss and legacy: Multiple storylines of memory***

In the work of the Ibuka counsellors, a range of different forms of remembrance can be identified. Influenced by narrative concepts of listening for multiple storylines, it is clear that multi-storied remembrance is taking place. Ibuka counsellors are finding ways for memory to be performed that honour both loss and legacy:

<i>Loss</i>	<i>Legacy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering and acknowledging the deaths of loved-ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering the contributions lost loved-ones made during their lifetimes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering and acknowledging the injustice of these deaths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering the key legacies of lost loved-ones (including values, beliefs, and skills of dealing with hardship)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering and acknowledging the continuing effects of the genocide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembering and acknowledging how survivors are carrying these legacies into the present (how lost loved-ones are continuing to make contributions to the lives of others)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledging how these memories will be passed on to future generations</li> </ul>

By exploring these dual landscapes of loss and legacy, Ibuka counsellors are finding ways to trace storylines across time. Values, skills, and knowledges that were demonstrated by lost loved-ones prior to the genocide, become linked to initiatives taken by survivors post-genocide. These multiple storylines of memory seek to bridge what can otherwise be experienced as a chasm of memory.

### ***Personal memory / social memory***

On a number of occasions during workshops in Rwanda, Ibuka counsellors have spoken about the importance of ensuring that engagements with memory are not too intense, too personal, or too private. They have been describing what could be called an orientation to history that emphasises *social memory* as much as, if not more than, personal memory.

During the first narrative training workshop in Rwanda<sup>6</sup>, a ‘re-remembering’ conversation (White, 2007) was conducted with one of the Ibuka counsellors. Re-remembering conversations honour how our identities are formed through the relationships we share with others and the mutual contributions implicit in these relationships. The process of ‘re-remembering’ involves re-configuring the memberships of those who make up our identities. They can also involve inviting people to ‘say hullo again’ to loved-ones who have passed away, in addition to the more common metaphor of ‘saying goodbye’. When the Ibuka counsellor was interviewed, she was asked a series of questions about a lost loved-one (her father), about the contributions he had made to her life and, in turn, the contributions she had made to his life.



The counsellors of Ibuka showed considerable interest in this process and the ideas that inform it. The discussion afterwards was vitally interesting. While the Ibuka counsellors were clear that they were very interested in this concept of re-remembering, they said it would require some adaptation for the Rwandan context. They asked, ‘Couldn’t there be a more collective way to do this? How could we do this without asking these very personal, private questions?’

There are many different ways to understand this request. First, our colleagues have spoken to us about how Rwandan culture has historically been more a culture of ‘concealment’ than a culture of ‘confession’. We had heard on previous trips that, ‘It is a trait for many Rwandans not to talk openly about our problems’. This has implications for counselling. Second, Rwandan culture does not place the same focus or emphasis on relationships between individuals as do cultures in the West. In less individualistic cultures, a relationship between a daughter and father is always seen in context of a range of other relationships, so to focus questions only on this isolated relationship does not make sense. Third, while collective respect and honouring of ancestry is a central cultural practice, prior to the genocide Rwandans did not traditionally speak of individuals who had died. Perhaps those who had died were seen to have joined a collective of ancestry and were no longer related to as distinct individuals in quite the same way as the living. Of course, culture is always changing. Due to the effects of the genocide, Ibuka counsellors are now seeking new ways of sharing problems and addressing them. New ways of speaking about the dead are coming into being. This, however, involves complex cultural negotiations.

As we consider ways of speaking about those who have died, apart from considerations of culture, there are also specific implications in relation to genocide. To ask someone to speak individually about a lost loved-one risks evoking the specific circumstances of their death. It risks an ‘intense’ engagement with memory.

So how can Ibuka counsellors respond to survivors’ ‘problems of memory’ without risking these intense engagements with personal memory? How can the ‘problems of memory’ be addressed in ways that fit with Rwandan culture?

In partnership with the counsellors of Ibuka, we are now exploring how multiple storylines of loss and legacy can be acknowledged through both personal and social memory. Some of the stories of the counsellors’ work that were included above involve personal forms of re-remembering, while much of the work of Ibuka focuses more on *social memory*.



*Ibuka National Headquarters*

What do we mean by ‘social memory’? The work of Ibuka counsellors demonstrates how memory does not only reside in the minds of individuals. Memory can be conceived of as both interior and exterior<sup>7</sup>. Exterior memory resides, or is performed, in memorial sites, in rituals, in conversations, in photographs, in documents, in relationships, and so on. It is therefore possible to understand memory as not only something that is experienced by an individual, but something that people *do* together. We can consider the work of Ibuka counsellors as involving ‘commemorative practices’ of memory (Jedlowski, 2001, p. 34). The conversations they engage in with survivors involve certain *practices* of memory. When survivors share their stories, in particular ways, and when counsellors in turn share aspects of their past, together, they are involved in the performance of shared or social memory.

These commemorative practices occur in conversations with individuals, families, in groups, in villages, and in larger rituals during the 100 days of remembrance each year. In fact, Ibuka works with personal memory, social memory, and national memory.

During our first visit to Rwanda, Ibuka speculated about how the narrative therapy concept of double-stories (White, 2003) and stories of ‘resistance’ could be relevant to the national project of remembering the genocide. Kaboyi Benoit expressed his concern that, during the 100 days of memory each year, sometimes the spirit of the nation would sink. How could this commemorative period take place in ways that would honour the dead and also enliven and strengthen the spirit of the nation? We spoke together about how ‘multi-storied remembrance’ could be relevant to this challenge.

During the 100 days of memory that followed our first visit, the Ibuka counsellors encouraged other survivors to remember and honour those who had been lost, and *also* to remember positive memories of lost loved-ones, the legacies they have bequeathed, and stories of resistance and resilience<sup>8</sup>. The counsellors also had conversations with survivors, including young people, about what sustains them through difficult times. In doing so, they heard about various survival skills and survival knowledge, many of which had not been spoken about before. Some counsellors also shared with other survivors the document ‘Living in the shadow of genocide: How we respond to hard times – Stories of sustenance from the workers of Ibuka’. The Ibuka workers reported that these were very positive developments and that these new aspects of their work decreased the rate of crises during the 100 days<sup>9</sup>.



On our most recent visit, we heard about multi-storied rituals which Ibuka counsellors are now facilitating during the commemorative period:

*During commemorative ceremonies, we bring survivors together. Last year, we held a ritual for survivors at a particular university. We asked everyone who was there to remember a lost loved-one, or their family members, and something they used to do that was significant to them. We were not just remembering the person, but something they treasured, something they valued. One person remembered his father and how he used to care for cattle. Another person remembered how his parents would sing. We then wrote down what everyone was saying. We made a collective list of who and what was being remembered. Then we all performed the memory in some way. For instance, we would sing a song to remember the parents who used to sing. This is a special sort of commemorative ceremony that we have developed. It was very meaningful to people.*

This is a double-storied ritual. It is a ritual that creates a ‘usable past’, a past that can be the basis of action in the present and future<sup>10</sup>. These are forms of remembrance that are linked to action. They are rituals and ceremonies that acknowledge how legacies from those who have died are now being carried through the present and into the future.

Once survivors are considering and honouring legacies of those who have passed away, a further perspective is possible. Trauma counsellors are able to speculate about what the ancestors would say if they could witness the ways in which their legacies were being continued. The following exchange took place during the recent workshop:

*Facilitator: It sounds like many survivors are finding ways to carry on the values of their ancestors. What do you think the ancestors would say about this?*

*Ibuka Counsellors: If they can hear, if they can see, then this will be something that our ancestors are proud of. As survivors, we are continuing where the ancestors left off. We are proud of them. And they would be proud of us. This is a two-way pride. It is mutual encouragement.*



In this way, the re-remembering concept within narrative therapy has found a form that is relevant and resonant within a Rwandan context. This is an example of collective narrative practice (Denborough, 2008). These forms of practices do not require people to speak in an individual voice *for themselves*. They do not require intense, private, individual engagements with history. Instead, they involve the creation and performance of social memory in many different forms<sup>11</sup>. These forms of social memory acknowledge both loss and legacy.

### *Sharing the ‘problem of memory’*

There are two further aspects of the work of Ibuka counsellors that are significant to mention in relation to sharing memory. One of the aspects of the ‘problem of memory’ caused by the genocide is that some people are haunted by unwanted memories, while others have lost their memories and so have lost elements of their past. In response, Ibuka counsellors are deliberately exploring ways of sharing memory:

*Those survivors who are orphans, who were very young during the genocide, may not know the characteristics and values of their parents. We must share stories with them, so they know these values. Those with a few relatives can gather together and stories can be told of their family history. Survivors are very good at joining together in memory. Some survivors who do not have their own memories can listen to the memories of others. They can listen and then remember these stories. In this way, they can play a part in keeping memories alive.*

This is a highly skilful way of enabling people to contribute to shared memory, to social memory. It is a way of relieving the ‘problem of memory’.

On a broader scale, the counsellors of Ibuka have also been determined to link their experiences with the ‘problem of memory’ with those of other peoples who have experienced genocide. On our first trip to Rwanda we were constantly approached by the counsellors with questions about how other peoples, other communities, have dealt with the problem of memory:

*Today the Counsellors of Ibuka here in Rwanda explicitly requested to hear more about how Jewish people have dealt with the ‘problem of memory’ ... how Jewish people have remembered and honoured the horrors of the Holocaust and yet at the same time been able to honour the ‘resistance’ of Jewish people. By ‘resistance’, they don’t only mean resistance during the Holocaust but more so... about the resistance of the effects of the Holocaust. They are interested in the future and in life going forwards, and how do you do this at the same time as remembering what happened in the past?*

Because of this request, we have created forums in which the counsellors of Ibuka can hear from, and share experiences with, Jewish, Aboriginal Australian, African American, and Bosnian colleagues. In this way, ‘the problem of memory’ is being shared among peoples. The possibilities that are opened through these concepts of shared memory or social memory seem significant (see Denborough, Freedman, & White, 2008).

### ***The national project of remembrance***

The rituals organised by Ibuka counsellors during the 100 days of memory each year are thoughtful performances of memory. In relation to the national Rwandan project of remembrance, alongside rituals of loss and legacy, Ibuka is currently involved in researching, documenting, and performing a particular social history. This is the social history of Hutus who during the genocide protected and sheltered Tutsis. Unearthing and richly acknowledging this particular history relates to a commitment to peace-building. It aims to contribute to a textual heritage of co-existence and partnership. This can be seen as acknowledging multiple story-lines in the realm of national history.

### ***Ensuring the survival of shared ideals***

Ibuka counsellors describe that they sometimes meet with survivors who express profound anguish that they have survived when others have not. Take, for example, the story of Uwimana Immaculée. This was the first story in the collection told by Ibuka counsellors (see page 12). Upon first meeting the Ibuka counsellor, Uwimana described her guilt and anguish at being the only member of her family who had survived. There was nothing that Uwimana could do to keep her family members alive. There was no act of care or protection that she could perform at that time.

In this circumstance, the Ibuka counsellor sought to ‘bridge the gap’ between herself and Uwimana. She did this by listening for, and acknowledging, what Uwimana had endured and the effects of this, and by linking Uwimana’s experience to the experience of other survivors. At the same time, the counsellor listened for *what* had survived in Uwimana’s testimony: it is not only *people* who are destroyed or survive genocide or other circumstances of devastation. Shared ways of living, shared values and ideals are also threatened. Ibuka counsellors listen for the values that are implicit in survivors’ expressions of anguish. They listen for the shared values that have survived, even when some of the people who shared these values may have died.



Ciarán Benson (2001) has described how implicit within survivors' experiences of guilt or self-blame are certain standards or values:

[Survivors'] subsequent struggles with themselves tell us something deeply important about the values that they are desperately trying to regain or reaffirm or perpetuate in the very act of punitively applying them to themselves. Even if they can be said to be unreasonable in their treatment of themselves – in their self-blame and guilt – one can discern a logic which is actually a defence of the very standards by which they harshly judge themselves to have failed... (p. 162)

Michael White (2003) has described similarly that 'ongoing psychological pain can be considered a testimony to the significance of what it was that the person held precious that was violated through the experience of trauma' (p. 41).

As Uwimana spoke, the Ibuka counsellor was 'double-listening' (White, 2003): she was listening so that she could acknowledge all that had been lost, but she was also listening so that she could acknowledge the shared values that were implicit in Uwimana's anguish or guilt. What is Uwimana's anguish or guilt a testimony to? What standards is this guilt or self-blame defending? What shared values have been violated to contribute to this anguish and this guilt? For Uwimana, it seems these values included the love and devotion her family shared, and their commitment to acts of protection and care for each other in times of hardship.

During the genocide, Uwimana was unable to protect and care for those she loved. Her profound guilt and anguish about this signals her continuing connection to these shared ideals. In the midst of anguish, it is possible to listen for the shared values that have survived devastation. Shared values are sometimes perpetuated in survivors' experiences of suffering, as Benson (2001) describes:

Something is perpetuated every time an individual or group of individuals experiences guilt, shame or blame. That something is a moral ideal, a valued belief about how one should behave together with an emotional commitment to that belief. These moral ideals are building blocks of social and personal identity... (p. 166)

After the genocide, Uwimana dedicated her life towards caring for and protecting the only link that she had with her loved-ones – this was a chicken that had belonged to her family. Her actions of care and protection towards this chicken were profoundly significant to her in the immediate aftermath of the killings. When this chicken was then stolen, this was devastating for her.

For Uwimana, what had been perpetuated in her experience of anguish and guilt was a shared family value of 'care and protection' that had been so violated during the genocide. Uwimana had found a way to perpetuate this ideal in her care for her family's chicken, but then this avenue was destroyed.

These ideals that are implicit within survivors' anguish are more than the building blocks of identity. They are ideals that 'beckon us further than the place in which we now find ourselves' (Benson, 2001, p. 173). According to Benson, they are 'self-transcending ideals which require that one should be for the well-being of others, especially those for whom you bear special responsibility such as your children, parents, family members, comrades' (p. 172). Implicit in Uwimana's anguish were 'self-transcending ideals' related to care and protection. These ideals had been profoundly violated by the genocide.

The Ibuka counsellor, however, found a way for Uwimana to recognise and name the ‘self-transcending ideal’ that was shaping her anguish. This was named as ‘generosity’. What is more, the counsellor made it possible for the history of this shared ideal to be traced and, as the counsellor describes, this history embraced her family:

*I discovered that Uwimana’s family had been very generous. They always used to have many people in their house. They used to look after many relatives. These values of generosity and hospitality were treasured by her family. We spoke about this a lot. I heard many stories about the different acts of generosity and kindness of her family. In time, she also spoke about how she wanted to carry on this legacy of generosity and hospitality. She wanted to carry this on behalf of her family members who had died.*

In circumstances where people have endured unspeakable horrors, counsellors can be on the lookout for the shared values, the shared ideals, that are implicit within their anguish. It becomes possible for the ‘self-transcending’ ideal to be named and for its social history to be traced. Then, crucially, a further step is involved. Our work becomes to make it possible for the perpetuation of the ideal. The Ibuka counsellor did just this: she created a context in which Uwimana could perpetuate generosity and, in this way, Uwimana became a conduit for the continuation of a legacy:

*Some time later, Uwimana began caring for a very young girl who was an orphan. She took this girl into her home to live with her. This was a contribution she was determined to make to carry on the tradition of her family.*



When what survivors give value to has been transgressed, when their ‘moral basis of identity’ has been dishonoured, they have been subject to ‘demoralization’ (Benson, 2001, p. 171). In these circumstances it can be significant to:

- Listen for the shared values, the self-transcending ideals, that are implicit within survivors’ expressions of anguish – *implicit within Uwimana’s guilt and anguish were shared ideals of ‘care and protection’ that had been so violated during the genocide*
- Notice and acknowledge ways in which survivors have carried on these ideals – *Uwimana’s acts of care towards the family’s chicken*
- Make it possible for survivors to name these shared ideals – *Uwimana named this as generosity*
- Ask survivors to tell *stories about the social histories* of these ideals, where they come from, and with whom they are shared – *Uwimana told stories relating to her family’s generosity, kindness, and hospitality*
- Create contexts in which survivors can contribute to the perpetuation of these shared ideals – *Uwimana taking in an orphan to live with her as a continuation of family legacy.*

Ibuka counsellors listen for the shared values that are implicit in survivors’ expressions of suffering. They listen for shared ways of living, shared values and ideals, that have survived the genocide. Uwimana’s family’s commitment to care and protection of others, and to generosity, did not die during the genocide. These shared values were profoundly violated, however, and in the process Uwimana experienced ‘demoralization’: the moral or ethical basis of her identity was shaken.

By listening for, and drawing out, the ‘self-transcending’ ideals that are implicit within survivors’ anguish, it then becomes possible for these to be named. It also becomes possible for survivors to tell stories about who shared these values, and to consider how these shared ideals can be perpetuated, how they can be carried on. In this way, these shared ideals can take us ‘further than the place in which we now find ourselves’ (Benson, 2001, p. 173). This can be considered a process of ‘re-valuation’ or ‘re-moralization’<sup>12</sup>.

As survivors carry on these self-transcending ideals, this process inevitably involves them making contributions to the lives of others (Denborough, 2008). Out of anguish, the work of Ibuka counsellors ensures that, despite the genocide, the ideals of those who have passed away will survive. (See box *Considering the ‘absent but implicit’* on page 31.)





### ***Considerations of the ‘absent but implicit’***

Those already familiar with narrative practice, may be interested in how these descriptions of the work of Ibuka fit with, and offer additional ideas, in relation to the concept of the ‘absent but implicit’ (White, 2000; 2003). Firstly, in these descriptions, ‘values’ or ‘ideals’ are constructed as shared and existing outside of the person (in contrast to descriptions of values as personal preferences which reside within the mind of individuals). Secondly, practitioners are invited to notice the ways in which ‘absent but implicit’ values are apparent through individual and social *actions*, as well as expressions. Thirdly, the purpose of these enquiries is to place these ‘absent but implicit’ values into storylines, and also to enable people to *perpetuate* or *carry on* these shared ideals. This provides forms of ‘healing’ and also forms of ‘justice’. Fourthly, putting these shared values into action is done on behalf of all those with whom the ideal was/is shared. This is a collective ethos. And finally, because the ideals of survivors are ‘self-transcending’ (Benson, 2001), when these ideals or shared values are enacted and carried forwards, this will inevitably result in people making contributions to the lives of others. This is linked with an ethic of enabling contribution which is a key principle of collective narrative practice (Denborough, 2008).

### ***Resistance, survival, and the continuing effects of genocide***

In this publication, we have deliberately included stories that honour the skills, knowledges, and values of survivors, and the ways in which they are reclaiming their lives. Ibuka counsellors have described these second storylines as storylines of ‘resistance’, as in resisting the *ongoing effects* of genocide. The stories we have included here highlight the significant ways in which survivors, in partnership with Ibuka counsellors, are reclaiming their lives and assisting one another.

For every story of ‘survival’ that we have shared, however, there are hundreds – indeed thousands – of stories of survivors who are still enduring profound hardships, in circumstances of desperate poverty, who may have never heard of the possibility of counselling, or who would not approach a counsellor. There are also many circumstances in which Ibuka workers are struggling, with few resources, to find ways to assist those who seek their help.

We hope this document conveys the skills, knowledges, and values of survivors, while simultaneously honouring the lives of all those who have been lost. We also hope that it does justice to the extraordinary work of Ibuka, and realistically conveys their struggle to respond to so many survivors throughout Rwanda who continue to endure profound suffering.

### ***For more information***

If you would like further information about the work of Ibuka or would like to support the work of their trauma counsellors, please contact Ibuka, Rwanda P.O. BOX 625, Kigali. Email: [info@ibuka.rw](mailto:info@ibuka.rw) Website: [www.ibuka.rw](http://www.ibuka.rw) Phone (direct contact): +250 788 35 08 57 (Communication officer)

If you would like further information about narrative approaches to therapy and community work, or you would like to support the work of Dulwich Centre Foundation International, please see webpage: [www.dulwichcentre.com.au](http://www.dulwichcentre.com.au), or send an email to: [dulwich@dulwichcentre.com.au](mailto:dulwich@dulwichcentre.com.au)

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> For more information about the concept of social healing, see Lederach & Lederach (2010) and Westoby (2009).
- <sup>2</sup> Narrative practice is a form of counselling and community work (see: [www.dulwichcentre.com.au](http://www.dulwichcentre.com.au)). In recent years, a range of narrative responses to trauma have been documented (see White, 2006; Denborough, 2006) including ways in which narrative practices can be used in working with genocide survivors (Denborough, Freedman & White, 2008). Training workshops in narrative approaches have been offered to the workers of Ibuka over the last three years by representatives of Dulwich Centre Foundation International (David Denborough and Cheryl White) and representatives from Evanston Family Therapy Center (Jill Freedman and Gene Combs).
- <sup>3</sup> This consultation occurred in October 2009. It was facilitated by David Denborough (Dulwich Centre Foundation International).
- <sup>4</sup> Gacaca is a traditional form of dispute resolution in Rwanda that is now being used to bring perpetrators of the genocide to some form of community justice. For more information see Omaar (2007).
- <sup>5</sup> The names appearing in each of these stories are pseudonyms.
- <sup>6</sup> This workshop was facilitated by David Denborough, Jill Freedman, and Cheryl White (see Denborough, Freedman & White, 2008).
- <sup>7</sup> For more about the exteriorisation of memory, see Jedlowski (2001).
- <sup>8</sup> The Ibuka counsellors related these developments to Jill Freedman and Gene Combs (Evanston Family Therapy Center) during a workshop they held in Rwanda.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibuka counsellors also relayed some of the ways in which they supported friends during the commemoration period. One person described how he sent 'strengthening messages' to friends and those he was working with through the internet. Another said that he sent text messages of compassion. And another described that they sent the following text message: '1994--2008, while we remember, think also of the progress made since the genocide'. Other survivors responded with messages of solidarity.
- <sup>10</sup> For more on the concept of a 'usable past', see Denborough, Wingard & White (2009).
- <sup>11</sup> The collective narrative document created during a 2008 trip to Rwanda is another example of a collective form of remembrance (see Denborough, Freedman, & White, 2008).
- <sup>12</sup> Michael White referred to processes of re-valuation. Arthur Frank (2004) prefers the term 're-moralization'.

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*In 1994, the genocide in Rwanda claimed over one million human lives. Today, Ibuka, the national survivors' association in Rwanda, is developing ways to respond.*

*They have found ways to heal memories in the shadow of genocide.*

*Together – and through their formal partnership with the Dulwich Centre Foundation International, based in Adelaide, Australia – they have developed local, innovative, culturally-appropriate methodologies, drawing on principles and practice of narrative therapy and community work.*

*This publication documents the unique forms of therapeutic and collective practice that Ibuka workers are developing. It contains the stories of this work and its outcomes; the principles they are employing; examples of the methodologies; and ideas for how workers and organisations in other contexts can develop their own effective practices.*

*'Working with memory in the shadow of genocide' is a document of thoughtful and effective practice, as well as hope and inspiration.*



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