

## Glossary

**Credible Messengers:** Credible Messengers are mentors who have passed through the justice system and sustainably transformed their lives. Often, Returned Citizens (previously incarcerated) and others with similarly relevant experiences want to give back to help others. Their life experience gives them a unique ability to connect with younger, justice-involved people. From the same background and speaking the same language, Credible Messengers are able to break through to these individuals and form powerful, transformative, personal relationships. With the development of trust over time, they provide these young people a living example of hope and opportunity and can equip them with new tools to manage their emotions and behavior and thus change their lives (Credible Messenger Justice Center).

**Grassroots:** A characteristic of a process that includes education, participation, and decision making of members across a community. It serves to both shift traditional notions of power through building and expressing agency on a community level, while uplifting the voices of those traditionally non-or-under-represented across traditional decision making bodies.

**Healing justice:** The concept of healing justice, introduced by the Kindred Southern Healing Justice Collective (also known as the Kindred Collective), was created in the lineage of Black Southern radical liberation traditions. Healing justice is a political strategy of collective care carried forth from “mechanisms for wellness and safety that respond, intervene and transform conditions of generational trauma from oppression/colonization and violence within our communities.” (Kindred Collective, 2020).

**Participatory action research:** Participatory action research (PAR) is intended to study and change a particular community, neighborhood, school, organization, group, or team. Participatory action research might be used to shape the design of a new initiative, inform the execution of an organizing campaign, provide evidence supporting a particular political position, or increase understanding of a local issue or problem. Participatory action research initiatives are typically designed and led by local practitioners and community members, though they may collaborate with professional researchers and evaluators on both the design and execution of the process (Organizing Engagement).

**Peacemaking:** Inspired by a traditional Native American approach to justice, peacemaking focuses on resolving disputes, restoring balance, and healing relationships among those affected by conflict and crime. (Center for Court Innovation, 2016)

**Restorative justice circles (Circles):** Restorative justice circles are born out of indigenous (pre-colonized) societies around the world. Circles tap into our communal nature, and our desire to be in positive relationships with one another. In circles, no one is seen as dispensable and everyone is valued for their knowledge and unique gifts. In this way, communities remain whole and reciprocal. Circles build accountability between individuals and the larger community. (XQ Super School, 2020)

**Transformative justice:** Transformative Justice (TJ) is a political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm and abuse. At its most basic, it seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and/or engaging in harm reduction to lessen the violence. TJ can be

thought of as a way of “making things right,” getting in “right relation,” or creating justice together. Transformative justice responses and interventions 1) do not rely on the state (e.g. police, prisons, the criminal legal system, I.C.E., foster care system (though some TJ responses do rely on or incorporate social services like counseling); 2) do not reinforce or perpetuate violence such as oppressive norms or vigilantism; and most importantly, 3) actively cultivate the things we know prevent violence such as healing, accountability, resilience, and safety for all involved (Transform Harm, 2018).

**Cultural Responsiveness:** Cultural responsiveness refers to work that understands cultural differences, recognizes potential biases, and looks beyond differences to work productively with individuals and communities whose cultural background is different from one’s own (Child Welfare Gateway, 2020).