

The Crossover Between Sex and Labor Trafficking: Elevation Without Segregation

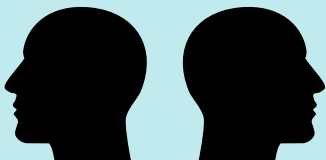
Hear the perspective and insights from lived experience experts as they discuss the importance of co-identification and reflect on experiences often overlooked by the anti-trafficking movement. This conversation will analyze how providers can better impact identification and direct service needs without segregating survivors by trafficking type.

Systemic intersectionality

Coined in 1989 by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw. It explains how there are positive and negative system interactions that people have to navigate through, depending on the various subcultures they may belong to.

The experiences between labor and sex trafficking may be different, but our approach in the healing process should be similar in terms of access to services

What are the various facets of trafficking?



What is intersectionality?

➤ Intersectionality & intergenerational trauma

Trafficking has been the story of people of color in America since its inception, especially of black and indigenous people of Turtle Island (North America). Trauma compounds through generations and becomes normalized, making it difficult to recognize something is wrong. Every person is at risk of being exploited, but some people have an increased risk, so when we talk about intersectionality, we have to tell the truth about our country's history too.



Moderator
Founder & CEO of Sisters of the Streets

The movement has decided that it will only talk about the sex trafficking of children. Which ignores the other forms of intersectionality that exists and increases chances of re-exploitation

➤ Intersectionality and implicit biases

Everyone has implicit biases, even if we don't realize them. We might normalize certain working conditions for certain demographics, even when they're exploitative. Service providers also have to check their own implicit biases when they screen for potential trafficking victims because trafficking can happen to any demographic.

➤ Intersectionality and cultural erasure

Intersectionality and compounding identities can also lead to the erasure of certain parts of one's identity and lead to imposter syndrome or other forms of vulnerability that traffickers can take advantage of.

➤ Trafficking can start in seemingly legal businesses

Trafficking can happen in 'legal storefronts', where the business has a physical brick-and-mortar place to conduct business, might even pay taxes, operate during normal business hours, etc... Because it doesn't fit the image of underground illegal businesses, many don't realize they are at risk of being exploited. Just like any legal job, people willingly give their address and social security number, which can get used against them.

➤ It can happen in any industry

The elements of labor trafficking are apparent in the sex industry whether it's paying to work or tipping-out security guards. Generally, you should never have to pay to make your money, and that's true in white-collar jobs as well. If you are an insurance broker and your company repossessed your car for not meeting their quota, that's exploitation that's been written into a contract. The face of trafficking is changing and can be found anywhere and can affect anyone.

➤ Elements of trafficking in consulting work

It's common for survivors to find themselves doing consulting work and face the very treatment they are speaking out against, whether is chasing after late payments or getting paid in gift cards. Other forms of exploitation can also include bringing in a survivor to share their story as a form of entertainment.

How do we remove these barriers to services and offer help without the segregation?

If you can help survivors reach a place of stability, they will make their own sustainability

Turning people away from services is a form of dehumanization. Partnering with survivors as peer support specialists to help humanize your service delivery

Including survivors as partners in your organization is also a form of empowerment for them as well. Self-sufficiency and empowerment should not be underestimated.

➤ Division that exists on a macro and policy level

Exploitation is exploitation, but our system is based on policies and procedures that lie around checking boxes. If survivors are not involved in the policy-building process, the image of the "perfect victim" will never go away and services will continue to turn people away. Survivors need to be part of those conversations at the top so that the correct services can be offered for a proper healing process. This involvement needs to be genuine as well and shouldn't just be another form of survivor tokenism.

➤ Removing barriers to access

If you are running an organization that is supposed to offer services to survivors, remove the red tape. And if you are funded federally, there are ways around that as well. You can even go so far as to refuse to apply for funding if it will only serve a specific demographic. The grant writing process needs to have survivors at the table.

➤ The role of the general public

In sex trafficking, it's easy to imagine who the buyers are and point fingers. For labor trafficking outside of the sex industry, however, the general public are the buyers. We need to break barriers within our own perception too, by understanding where our food comes from or that made in the U.S might come from prison labor.

➤ Funding cuts and legislation

We need funding to pay for all these things. Check at what funding is being cut, look into the bills being drafted, and legislation.

Q&A

Q. We only serve people who have experienced sex trafficking because of funding. What would be the next step to include both sex and labor trafficking?

A. It can be a difficult decision, but your organization can prioritize fighting legislation over receiving funding and having to work within the tight parameters of the grants. Do not underestimate the strength of numbers and networking. If enough organizations refuse to apply for limiting grants, then they will be forced to reevaluate. Your organization can explore other options outside of the non-profit space.

A. You can evaluate your client's situation and find ways around the grant. Get to know your client to make the grant work for them, but make sure you are being transparent with them to help them understand why you are asking such invasive questions.

A. You can also mobilize your community to address the gap for those who don't check the box of the grants.

A. Another avenue might be to work as a grant reviewer, you can catch these limiting parameters and fix them easily.

Q. What tools do you suggest for screening to be able to check for all different forms of labor trafficking?

A. Hire a survivor consultant to conduct a needs assessment. The consultant will assess what services your organization can provide and formulate questions to assess clients for those services in a trauma-informed way.

A. There's no blanket assessment because every individual is different, so it's important to listen and work with experts to try to find the various nuances of trafficking.

A. It's important to expand our perceptions of what trafficking looks like to be able to give a broad range of examples and help clients identify whether or not they've been trafficked.

Q. What can we look for in our daily lives to ensure we are not supporting any form of trafficking?

A. The unfortunate fact is that when we buy groceries, eat out at restaurants, rent an office building and shop at all, trafficked labor is involved along the way. In California, the law requires that certain business establishments post a public notice regarding human trafficking at their workplace in a conspicuous place that is visible to the public and workers. This is not a fail-safe, but it is one way to look for/raise awareness, information, and fairness

Q. Does grooming on the internet happen for labor trafficking as it does in sex trafficking?"

A. Yes, it can happen through job advertisements that offer quick cash without experience.

A. Social media is the current way to promote quick-fix solutions which can lead to exploitation. Grooming happens in labor trafficking as it does in sex trafficking and that enticement is a similar process. Social media can be used to groom for any form of exploitation.

A. Companies can use social media to screen for legitimate jobs as well as exploitative ones, especially to entice foreign nationals to come work in the States.

Q. How can we change the view that males are only labor trafficked and females are only sex trafficked? What are some of the best ways to educate that all people can be both labor and sex trafficking survivors?

A. When we look at the history of human trafficking dating back to the time of slavery, enslaved people are of both sexes, and not categorized in either/or types of work they were used for. They were forced into providing whatever the use the traffickers found the use for. There may be certain industries where human trafficking is more likely to be found and there may be a typical gender of persons involved, but the industry types/situations do not define the types of trafficking that occurs. Not segregating labor/sex trafficking and including survivors who identify themselves from both categories can be a start.

Q. What information is crucial for community presentations on human trafficking? I want my presentation to be informative and powerful.

A. It is most impactful to know about the community. The more relevant the issue is in one's community with the particular cultural competency, more impact you can deliver.

Q. How can someone with lived experience get into work where they feel respected and validated? I haven't had good experiences.

A. What I have found helpful for me to stay engaged in the fight for equalities of the survivors is 1.) that it is not personal, 2.) that it is for the greater good (in other words, find meaning in the values that are most important to you, not for personal recognition and validation) and 3.) to practice discernment; there are places where it is too toxic and no greater good can be bright on. I'd like to leave you with this poem titled "An Invitation to Brave Space" by Mickey Jones.

Q. Faith-based providers or allies: what's the most harmful practice you've observed? I want to bring this back to those I speak with.

A. Anything that is done out of less than the spirit of selfless service to the ones they are serving is harmful. Any projects with a hidden agenda to serve the needs/mission of the organization, and on an individual level, any engagements done out of conceit of "I can do some good to you" is a sign that one put oneself on a high moral ground, and it is not an action done based on true compassion to end the suffering of the survivors. Survivors must feel this conceit consciously or unconsciously, and this put them in an inferior position spiritually and socially instead of uplifting them

Ressources and links

Jaimee Johnson - Jaimeejanai88@gmail.com and on Instagram @sisters_of_the_streets.

To mitigate exploitation in the hospitality industry: <https://www.fairhotel.org/>

Eric Harris - HTFC eaharris1904@gmail.com

Ashley Maha'a - Ashley@mytruthisnow.com and social media IG: Mytruthisnow or website www.mytruthisnow.com

Hazel Fasthorse - hfasthorse@polarisproject.org www.FasthorseCreations.com

Framework's Screening and Interviewing event, queued up at 35:55 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dqynrio0NQE&t=2052s>

To learn more about Framework or to request training, technical assistance, or individualized support on labor trafficking, visit us on our website.

www.frameworkta.org

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