

Body Mapping as A Way to Introduce Feminist-Informed Yoga as a Tool for Marginalized Mothers with Addictions in a Mid-Sized Canadian City

Prof. Dr. Punam Mehta

University of Manitoba, Canada

Abstract

A marginalized mother is a broad term used to identify populations impacted uniquely by race, gender, sexuality, class, and/or abilities within a present-day culture (Bloch & Taylor, 2014; Taylor & Bloch, 2018). This paper explores a body mapping project conducted with marginalized mothers over the course of four years of teaching feminist-informed yoga in a mid-sized Canadian city. Body mapping is a visual way of storytelling "...much like totems that contain symbols with different meanings, but whose significance can only be understood about the creator's overall story and experience" (Gastaldo et al., 5). Marginalized mothers revealed the impact of learning about their cultural teachings such as smudging, drumming, and the Seven Sacred Teachings that played a significant role in reducing trauma in their healing journeys with addictions. Feminist-informed yoga and shamanism have the potential to contribute significantly to the health and wellness for marginalized mothers who have experienced trauma; especially if integrated into a community-based healing program.

Keywords: mothers, body mapping, yoga, and social justice