

SeekHealing

2020 Impact Report



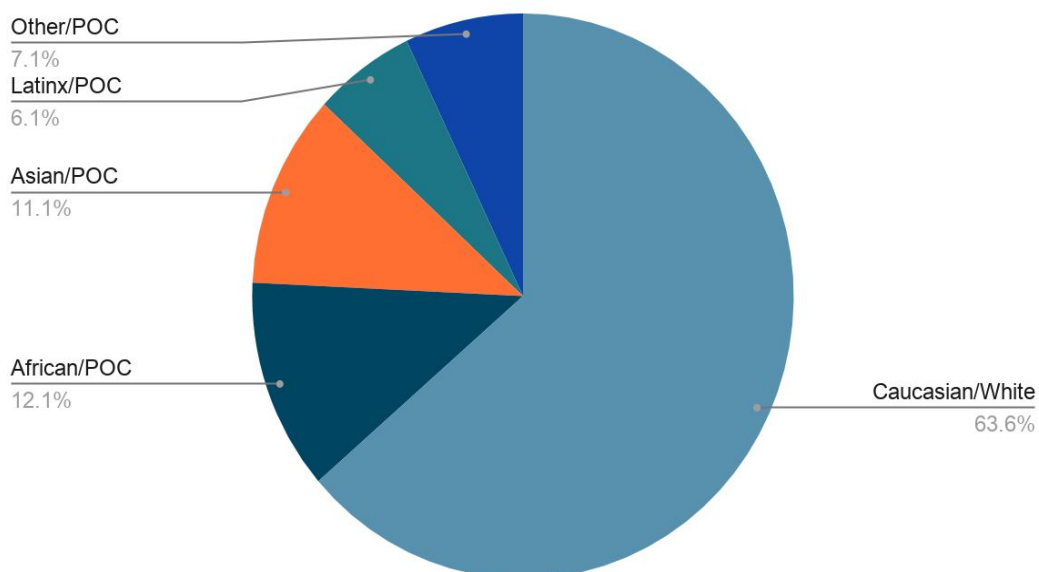
This document serves to impart the metrics, analytics, and highlights for SeekHealing, an Asheville, NC-based 501(c)3 working to reduce deaths of despair (drug overdoses and suicides) through social health initiatives and non-abstinence based recovery programming.

A challenging year for so many due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our organization pivoted to accommodate public health protocols, implemented strategic capacity building efforts, and hosted 2 online social health summits; all while continuing to offer our community engagement and holistic healing services free-of-charge to an ever expanding body of diverse participants.

By the numbers ...

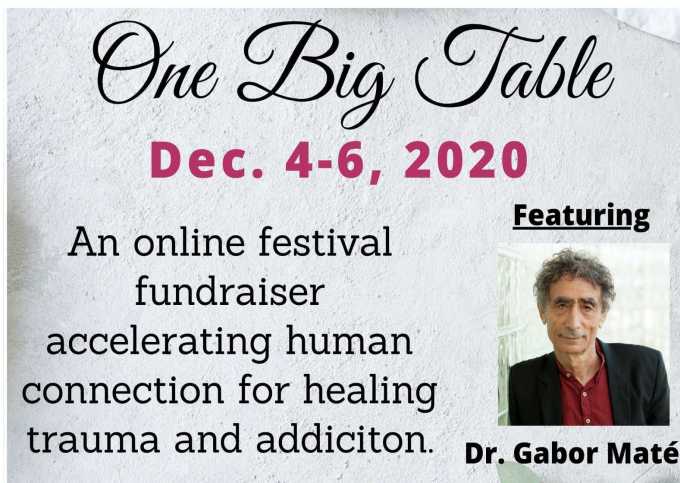
- Over 425 facilitated program offerings (Connection Practice meetings, Art Therapy sessions, Sound Meditation, Listening Training, Outreach Programming events, and “Emotional Socials” serving a free meal) in 2020.
- Created and distributed over 250 self-care Herbal First Aid Kits through community partners including WNCAP, Haywood St. Congregation, and AHOPE.
- Received and responded to over 700 calls and hundreds of text messages on the Listening Line.
- Provided over 300 meals to members in our community.
- Logged nearly 1500 hours of volunteer engagement.
- Since program inception in 2018, over 1100 individuals have received services, with nearly 500 active [received services in the last 12 months] during 2020.
- Annual growth (both financials and participants) since program inception has been at least 50% each year.
- Data show receptivity across all demographics with 36% of total participants identifying as POC: especially important given historical barriers to traditional recovery models among People of Color.

Participant Demographics (1124 individuals served since 2018)



In the spotlight ...

- Thanks to support from external agencies this year, we were able to launch responsive COVID programming including **herbal first aid** to people who use drugs as well as a no-contact Listening Line. As one of our guiding principles is harm reduction and provision of social & holistic health services to all people whether they use drugs or not, one of our program projects was offering much-needed herbal support to people who were experiencing extreme stress and anxiety related to housing instability and/or unexpected drug shortages during the pandemic.
- With the shift to online gatherings for safe, large audience capacity and extending outreach; we showcased our programming and partnerships with two social health



conferences: **We Are The Medicine** in June, and **One Big Table** in December, which featured SeekHealing's Advisory Council members including Dr. Gabor Maté and other renowned presenters. These 2 events helped us raise nearly \$20,000 and solidified our capabilities to disseminate high-quality content for shifting public perception and stigma around trauma, addiction & harm reduction.

- We successfully re-started the **Extra Care Program** which is designed to create an immersive experience of healthy relationship and human connection after detox and/or treatment, as well as provide free access to holistic health services. Since the launch in September, we have onboarded 7 participants into this 6-month long IOP of non-prescriptive harm reduction, intentional self-discovery, recovery, and healing. Results from our Extra Care pilot program in 2018-19 showed an astounding 86% success rate (where participants followed their self-directed recovery intentions [60% abstinence/40% abstain from drug of choice] for at least 6-12 months, even with 33% experiencing lapse of use during enrollment).
- We activated the **Listening Line**: a non-crisis emotional support phone service (call or text 828-547-0222) for anyone in the community at-large to reach out to for human connection. Staffed by our dedicated volunteers, all of whom have

completed the Listening Training series, this community resource has fielded over 1000 responses (calls/texts) since starting in August.



- The creation of our core staff positions this year (Community Engagement Lead, Outreach Coordinator, Extra Care Program Manager, and Fundraising Coordinator) has significantly **increased our capacity for programming** and allowed the Executive Director to focus on content creation and strategic development for sustainable expansion.

Gratitude from the community ...

- *"SeekHealing came into my life when I desperately needed connection and a sense of family. I have been involved with SeekHealing ever since and couldn't imagine my life without it now. I've never felt more supported, more connected, and more importantly - NOT JUDGED. It truly SAVED my life as a former heroin IV user and I am forever grateful."* -Shawn S.
- *"Seek Healing is a place where I can let my guard down, be totally raw and vulnerable and feel safe at the same time. I am encouraged to come as I am, meaning if I am angry, lonely, heartbroken, gitty or any other emotion I am welcomed. I have never felt judged or pitied. I continually discover new things about myself by the curious questions the other Seekers ask."* -Mike E.



- *"I stumbled upon SeekHealing by happenstance one fateful day a couple years ago and I had no idea what I had found. Although I didn't have any addictions, I did have depression. It was during a weekend long Listening Training that I found the missing piece to my life: Authentic Connection Practice- a practice that comes from a non-judgement, guilt/shame-free perspective that allows individuals to talk about ANYTHING in a safe container without the fear of it all. They are a flagship of transformative recovery!" -William M.*
- *"SeekHealing has expanded not only my sober community but my mind & heart. It is refreshing to find a workable program outside of the same old, tired 12-step programs which, while I'm glad exist, are too limiting for my [recovery] style." - Paul B.*
- *"Calling SeekHealing a nonprofit or a charity prevents one from knowing the joy, the movement, the revolution that is SeekHealing. The culture of care and compassion is not limited to a mantra or a mission statement. The leadership team at SeekHealing mean what they say, say what they mean, and live their lives authentically and open-heartedly. They promote accountability but not at the cost of autonomy. They promote encouragement and growth, even if it might be uncomfortable and awkward at first. They're an organization worth interacting with on all levels: as a volunteer, as a participant, as a donor, and as a curious member of the public." -Sri K.*
- *"I have attended rehab nine times. All the months I spent in rehab, everything I learned, does not compare with how valuable one weekend with SeekHealing was for me." - Farrell G.*



A bright and connected future awaits ...

Although the fear and uncertainty of a modern plague has shaken and sheared the very fabric of society this year, our community continues to grow and lean in to each other for exactly the kind of physical and emotional support needed to overcome the challenges of isolation. We are committed to providing the social foundations that catalyze meaningful relationships and create resiliency within individuals and communities alike. Looking ahead we are determined to continue paving the path for all humans to experience healing through the ineffable power of human connection in the following ways:

- **Listening Training 2.0** will be coming online early 2021. This new course has been developed in partnership with Sara Ness of Authentic Revolution, and will be the deepest dive yet into the frameworks and techniques of relational understanding and practical social engagement. The training is designed to empower individuals in local communities to become facilitators for connection and belonging in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and networks at-large.
- **Racial equity and inclusion** are paramount to reducing the disparities experienced by People of Color in access to recovery and support services. SeekHealing has launched a strategic effort for racial equity in our programming as well as our staff demographics. Most Americans, and disproportionately People of Color, do not have adequate access to quality mental health support services. We openly acknowledge that we are an active part of an unacceptable situation, and we are committed to the fight against systemic racism in this community and

with our neighbors. To this end, we are shifting some of our funding and programming priorities to 1) actively engage more People of Color in SeekHealing programs, as well as 2) build relationships with individuals in local Communities of Color who may benefit from funded training to become certified facilitators.

- **Program expansion into Haywood County** beginning with outreach meetings and Listening Training in the local detention center. Lack of effective prosocial skills has been proven to be one of the primary reasons for unsuccessful re-entry following release. Our Listening Training series is an interactive course to learn the foundations of social connection: how to better listen to yourself, and others. Partnering with Realness Project out of Boulder, CO we will also be offering relational skills workbooks as a tool for rehabilitation to those who remain incarcerated.
- **Continued and evolving collaborations** between individuals and community partners are the backbone of what makes our program work. We invite and encourage anyone wanting to participate in our vision of nonhierarchical engagement and alternative healing modalities, to reach out and join us as we heal ourselves and each other. *Together, we will!*



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