



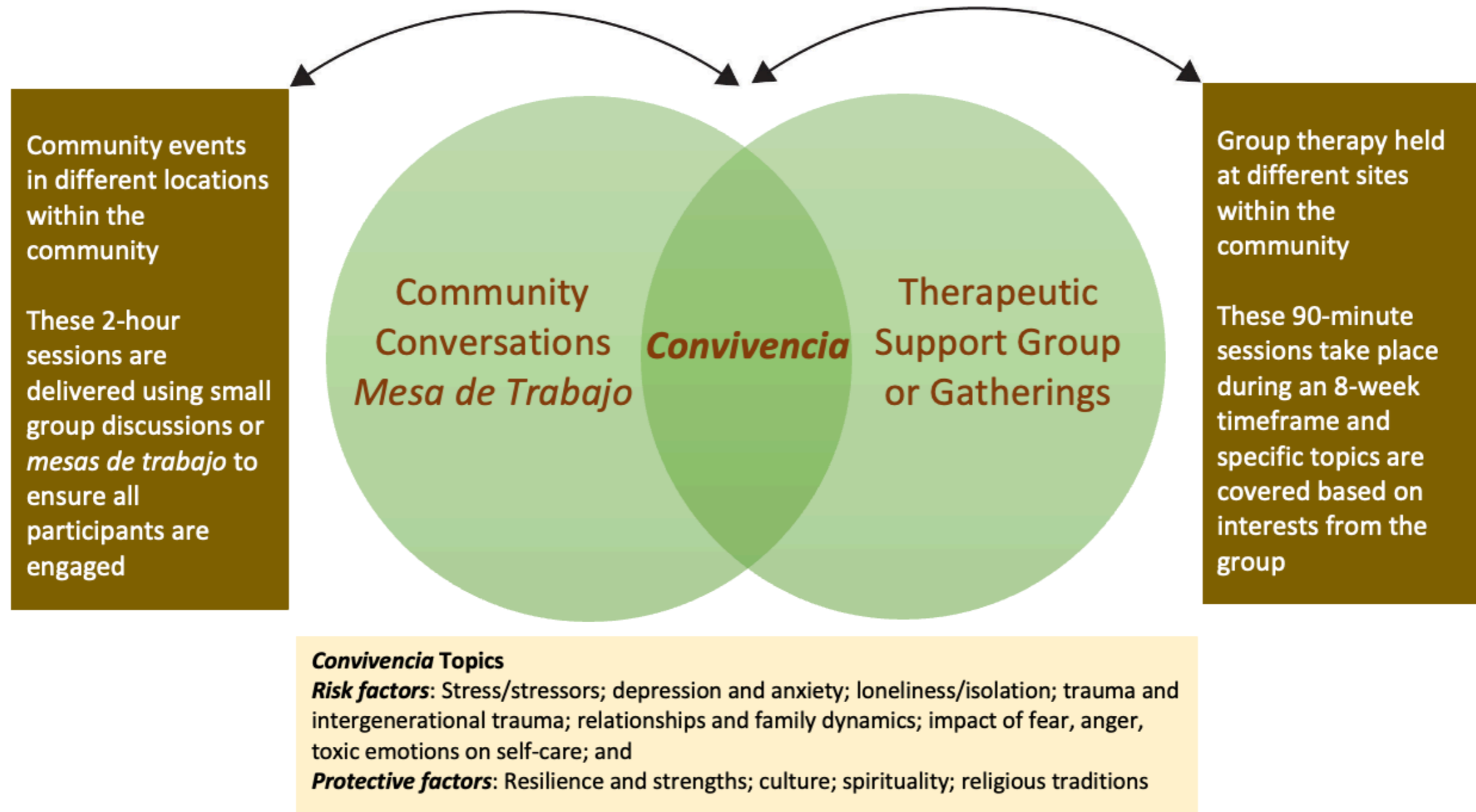
**Humanidad Therapy & Education Services**

**C***onvivencia* is a culturally known and valued practice that when adopted it can be a prevention and early intervention treatment approach for low-income Latinx populations living in Sonoma County, California. *Convivencia* is an open and inviting coming together of people to share their personal life experiences with mutual understanding and respect. *Convivencia* (1) encourages peer-to-peer support; (2) promotes safety, self awareness, personal and family growth, healing, and positive change; and (3) creates opportunity for quality interactions in a safe and supportive environment that increases learning and personal growth. *Convivencia* is guided by Relational-Cultural Theory, a person-centered approach rooted in the belief that through healthy relationships and sense of connectedness can individuals achieve readiness to transcend barriers and advance their well-being.

At Humanidad, we believe that with compassion, culture, integrity, and heart-driven commitment as core values, people can find balance and fulfillment in their human relationships and lives.

One participant said this about *convivencia*, “*me ayudo a no sentirme sola... yo ahí [convivencia] estoy apoyada... a pesar de estar en un país diferente... no me siento sola, me siento apoyada y que bonito que lo hagan con la comunidad hispana*” [“It helped me to not feel alone... I feel supported there [*convivencia*]... despite the fact that I am in a different country... I don’t feel alone, I feel supported and it’s beautiful that they’re doing this for the Hispanic community.”] Another participant summarized *convivencia* this way, “[... *me hizo sentirme como en mi casa... con confianza de poder hablar de mis problemas*” [“... made me feel like I was at home... with trust that I could talk about my problems.”]

FIGURE. 1 Community and Group *Convivencias*



As a proven effective approach, *Convivencia*: (1) helps manage prevention and/or reduce barriers to access and utilization of mental health services; (2) engages Latinx people prior to more serious mental illness or emotional disturbances; (3) increases personal, family, and community relationships and social support; (4) improves the well-being of Latinx individuals; and (5) reduces stigmas that participants bring as a topic impacting them seeking help. Figure 1 shows a conceptual model of *Convivencia*.

In general, people who participated in *convivencia* experienced an increase in their sense of belonging, their self-esteem, and in their quality of life. Through storytelling, participants reported a reduction in stigma associated with mental health and more likely to seek help.

## SHARING STORIES AND EXPERIENCES

95%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED AGREE TO STRONGLY AGREE IN FEELING COMFORTABLE SHARING THEIR STORIES AND EXPERIENCES IN *CONVIVENCIAS*. THIS MEANS *CONVIVENICA* BEING A SAFE AND TRUSTWORTHY SPACE.

97%

OF PARTICIPANTS AGREE TO STRONGLY AGREE WITH HAVING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEMSELVES AFTER HEARING AND SHARING STORIES. PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTANDING THE SELF BASED ON HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS IS CONSISTENT WITH RELATIONAL-CULTURAL THEORY.

## MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY

90%

OF PARTICIPANTS INDICATED AGREE TO STRONGLY AGREE WITH LEARNING SOMETHING NEW ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AFTER PARTICIPATING IN A *CONVIVENCIA*. THIS FINDING IS CONSISTENT WITH HUMANIDAD'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING CULTURALLY-RELEVANT RESOURCES.

98%

OF PARTICIPANTS AGREED TO STRONGLY AGREED TO THE INFORMATION FROM A *CONVIVENCIA* BEING PROVIDED IN THEIR PREFERRED LANGUAGE. THIS FINDING ALIGNS WITH HUMANIDAD'S MISSION IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND BILINGUAL THERAPEUTIC SERVICES.

**92%** AGREED TO STRONGLY AGREED THAT SERVICES WERE AVAILABLE AT TIMES THAT WERE GOOD FOR THEM. THE INTERVENTION SEEMS TO HAVE HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT WHEN PROVIDED INSIDE COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE LIVE.

**90%** AGREED TO STRONGLY AGREED WITH THE LOCATION OF TREATMENT BEING CONVENIENT IN REGARDS TO DISTANCE/TRANSPORTATION. THIS COMMUNITY-INTEGRATED APPROACH MEANS REDUCTION IN MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY.

**89%** AGREED TO STRONGLY AGREED THAT THEY ARE DOING BETTER IN SCHOOL AND/OR WORK BECAUSE OF *CONVIVENCIA*. THIS FINDING HAS INFORMED COMMUNITY *CONVIVENCIA* PRACTICES AROUND YOUTH AND RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT.

**77%** AGREED TO STRONGLY AGREED THAT AFTER PARTICIPATING IN *CONVIVENCIA*, THEY WERE ABLE TO BETTER MANAGE THIER SYMPTOMS. THIS FINDING COULD BE LINKED WITH THE HEALTH LITERACY COMPONENT OF *CONVIVENCIA*.

OVERALL, *CONVIVENCIA* WAS SUCCESSFUL IN:

1. REDUCING BARRIERS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BY INCREASING MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND RESOURCES;
2. ENGAGING LATINX COMMUNITY EARLY IN *CONVIVENCIA* MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THEM NOT BEING DISABLED FROM A MORE SEVERE MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER LATER IN LIFE; AND
3. INCREASING PERSONAL, FAMILY, COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS THAT INCORPORATE THE STORIES OF THE LATINX COMMUNITIES.