

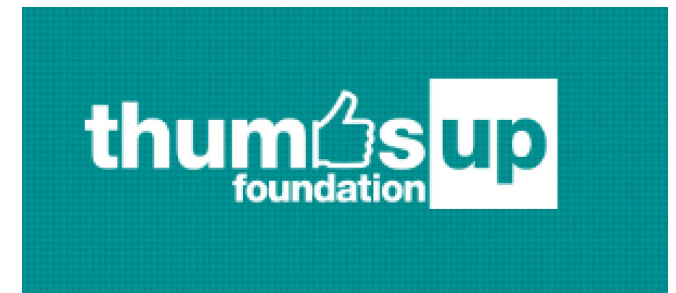
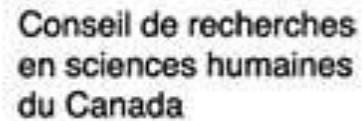
**CONCEPTUALIZING THE ROLE OF A RADICAL MENTAL  
HEALTH DOULA:  
A NEW APPROACH TO CARE**



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# PROJECT COLLABORATORS





## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?



- ❖ Mental health services exist within a fragmented institutional framework that does not adequately consider gendered dimensions of mental illness
- ❖ Canadian women consistently report low levels of mental health and a failure of the current mental health care system to address their needs (Moyser, 2020).
- ❖ Needs for mental health support skyrocketed during COVID-19

## AS A RESULT...

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Women are (still) twice as likely as men to suffer from a mental health disorder

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Women are nearly twice as likely as men to be diagnosed with depression

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47 % of women are considered at high risk of developing mental health disorders, compared to 36% of men

# A (RADICAL) SHIFT IS NEEDED

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- ❖ There is an urgent need for inclusive gender-informed mental health policies, services, and therapeutic options
- ❖ Traditional doula vs radical doula
- ❖ Our grassroots approach: focus on access, equity, participation, and social justice



RADICAL  
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
DOULAS

Support.  
Comfort. Educate.  
Advocate.



## A CRITICAL FEMINIST DISABILITY LENS

- ❖ Shift away from a medicalized and punitive approach of understanding mental health and ability
- ❖ Unpacking “gendered experiences” within an oppressive system
- ❖ Leveraging the power of lived experience.



*“There is no one to help you, there is no one.”*

*“They talk to you, but they don’t hear you. They don’t understand.”*

*“I want to see myself as a wounded healer. Just because I’m broken, doesn’t mean I can’t be good. It doesn’t mean I can’t help others.”*





## RMHD CORE VALUES

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- ❖ Support
- ❖ Comfort
- ❖ Educate
- ❖ Advocate

*"I need someone to ride the wave with me"*



## OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Individualized Support Based on Lived Experience
- ❖ Freeing up Limited Healthcare and Professional Resources
- ❖ Privileging Women's Voices





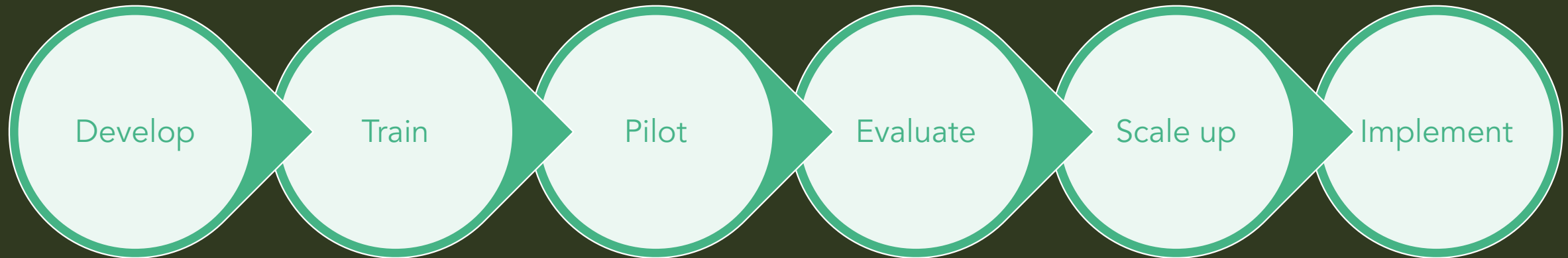


# PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

- Women with lived experiences as co-researchers
- Regarding lived experience as expertise
- Breaking down power dynamics
- Change-focused



## OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS



# THANK YOU

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- Dr. Joanna Rankin, Co-PI
- Dr. Tiffany Boulton, Co-PI
- Dr. Xiao Yang Fang, Project Manager
- Amanda Denis, Graduate Student Researcher
- Kali Hoogenboom, Undergraduate Student Researcher
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