

Integrating evidence based treatments and traditional practices for American Indians/ Alaska Natives receiving mental health services in Los Angeles County



AMERICAN INDIAN
COUNSELING CENTER
JUNE 18, 2019

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
MULTICULTURAL MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

- Angela Trenado, LCSW;
Tohono O'odham
- Dr. Daniel Dickerson; *Inupiaq*
- George Funmaker; *Dakota
and HoChunk*
- Stephanie Mushrush, LCSW;
Washoe and Pilipina



INTRODUCTION, LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

RESPECT THE ORIGINAL PEOPLE: LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ...

Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth. We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Tongva People. We pay respects to their elders' past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events.

- "Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement,"
U.S. Department of Arts and Culture (USDAC)



Listening Activity

Have you heard these statements before?



The Facts

- Few Tribal members receive payments from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for land held in trust, and most do not get significant “Indian money.” AI/ANs pay income tax and sales tax like any other citizen of their state, while ANs may get dividend payments from their Native Corporation or the State of Alaska, as State citizens.
- Most AI/AN students have to take out loans and apply for scholarships, as most other students do. There are some tribal governments who are able to assist with funds for college tuition.



More Facts

- While many tribes and AI/AN villages do experience the negative effects of alcohol abuse, what is less known is that AI/ANs also have the highest rate of complete abstinence. When socioeconomic level is accounted for in a comparison group, alcoholism rates are no different for AI/ANs than for other ethnic or racial groups. Most AI/AN-sponsored events ban the use of alcohol, and even “social” drinking is often frowned upon.



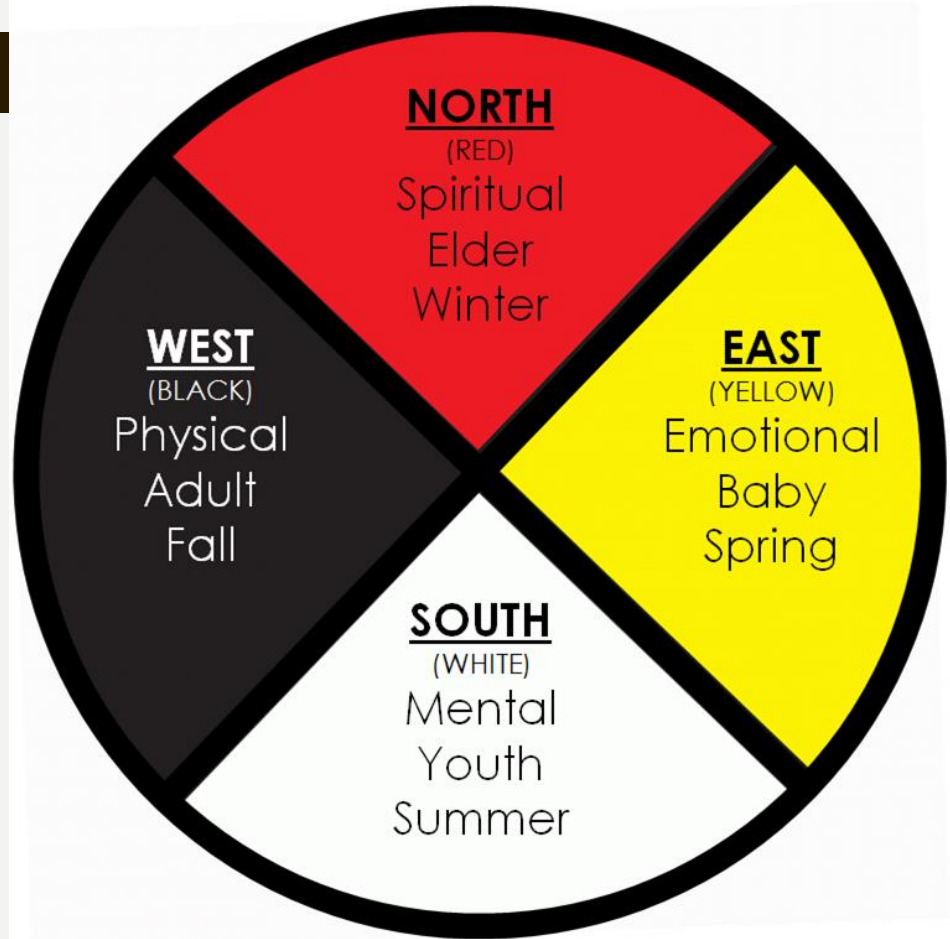
More Facts

- The idea of all AI/ANs having a mystical spirituality is a broad generalization. This stereotype can be just as damaging as other more negative stereotypes and impairs one's ability to provide services to AI/ANs as real people.
- Due to tribal diversity, as well as hundreds of years of inter-Tribal and inter-racial marriages, there is no single distinguishing “look” for AI/ANs.
- Out of more than 560 Federally recognized tribes, only 224 operate gaming facilities. About three-fourths of those tribes reinvest revenue in the community. In 2006, only 73 tribes distributed direct payments to individual Tribal members.



Medicine Wheel Teaching

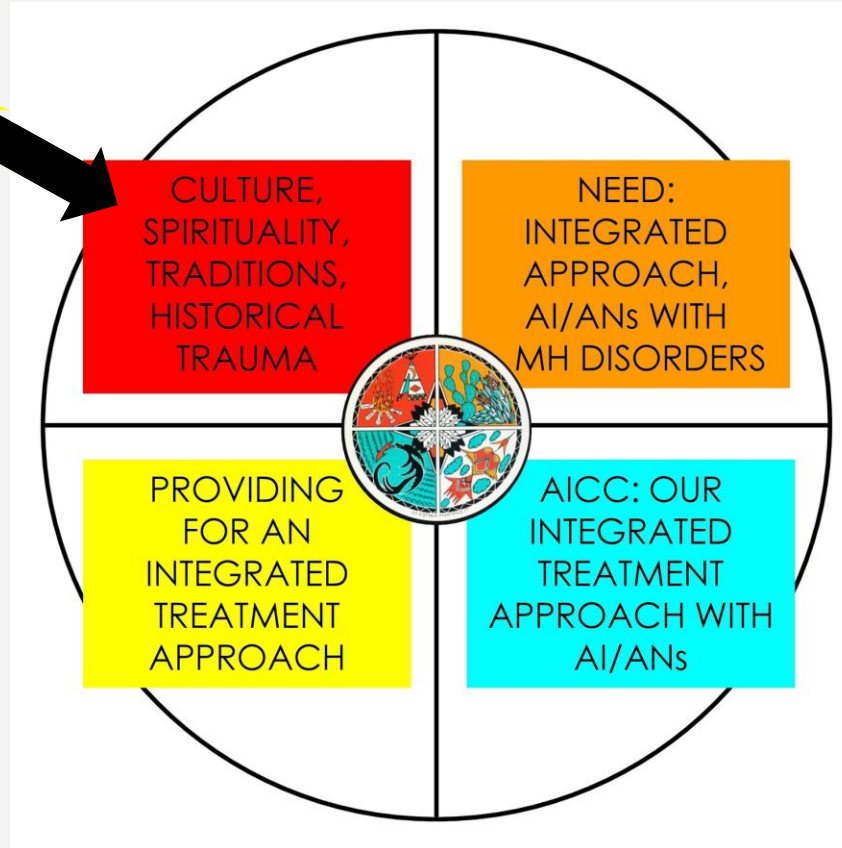
- Four quadrants to represent the parts of the self: Mind, Body, Spirit, and Heart
- Held by countless tribes; variations between beliefs and philosophies may occur
- Four: directions, elements, life stages, seasons, sacred colors; may represent colors of the people
- Balance
- Resilience



*Image reflects the color order of Dakota traditions.

Medicine Wheel Syllabus

**WE WILL
START
HERE!**



Learning Objectives:

- To discuss how the role of American Indian/Alaska Native **traditional practices can be used in the Recovery Model** for AI/ANs with mental health and substance use issues in Los Angeles County.
- To explain how **integrating traditional practices with evidence-based treatments** can help to address the mental health and substance use treatment needs of American Indians/Alaska Natives in Los Angeles County.
- To discuss the **potential benefits of providing culturally competent services** for American Indians/Alaska Natives with mental health and substance use disorders.



A dark brown, wavy vertical line runs along the left edge of the slide.A solid orange vertical bar runs along the right edge of the slide.

**CULTURE, SPIRITUALITY,
TRADITIONS,
HISTORICAL TRAUMA**

Knowledge of the Elders

White Bison, Elder's Meditation of the Day

**“Language is a vehicle for carrying spirit, life, and family.
Language, religion, and land base are three things that characterize culture.”
– Edmund Ladd, ZUNI PUEBLO**

The Elders say we need to know the answers to three questions in order for us to be connected; the Earth, the Sky, the East, the West, the South, and the North. The three questions are: 1. Why are we? 2. Who are we? 3. Where are we going? If we know the language, if we have our spirituality, and if we can pray on sacred spots, then we are able to seek the answer to the questions. We must protect the language, religion, and land so our future generations can stay connected.

**Great Spirit, help us maintain our language, spirit, family,
religion and our Mother Earth.**

Pre-Colonization Life, Old Ways

- Pre-colonized indigenous population is estimated to have exceeded 150 million (Brucker & Perry, 1988)
- “Old ways” vary by tribal families, groups, bands, tribes, nations: Language, songs, stories, food, medicine, land, water.



Ceremonies

- Blessing of new life ceremonies; umbilical cord and placenta traditions observed by some
- Naming ceremonies at birth, or later on
- Vary by tribe, but many celebrate some form of a girl and boy puberty/coming of age ceremony
- Many ceremonies are held according to seasons, may include dances around specific animals: Bear Dance, signifying seasons - “when the bears wake, and go to sleep.”



Ceremonies

- Drives and ceremonies to pray for blessings and abundance in hunting or harvesting. (Rabbit drives, elk drives, etc. Pine nut dance, etc).
- Vision quest/Hamblecya;
- Sun Dance (Lakota)
- Holy Ground Ceremony (Apache)
- Many ceremonies became outlawed for generations, until the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978)



Healing Rituals

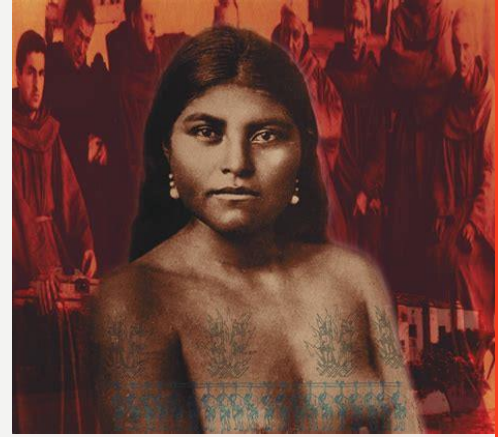
- Cornmeal in the morning (prayer).
- Running at sunrise to greet the day.
- Praying with and using water to renew, cleanse.
- Smudging with sage, cedar, tobacco, copal, sweetgrass, etc.
- Blessing oneself with yellow pollen/hadatin.
- Sweatlodge (Various) / Inipi (Lakota) / Temescal (Southern tradition).
- Bear Dance (California).
- Traditional dancing, songs, drumming.



POSTCOLONIAL PSYCHOLOGY

- First Contact: Way of life threatened and destroyed with spirituality at the core
- Economic Competition: Resources taken by European settlers; Consumption vs. Harmony
- Invasion War Period: Policy of Extermination; Displacement
- Subjugation and Reservation Period: Relocation to unfamiliar areas; Reservations

*E. Duran & B. Duran, 1995



POSTCOLONIAL PSYCHOLOGY

- Boarding School Period: Destroy the family unit
- Forced Relocation and Termination: 1950s, forced removal from tribal land to metropolitan areas, promised jobs and homes, limited to no support

*E. Duran & B. Duran, 1995



“Kill the Indian, Save the Man.”

- Boarding schools forcibly removed children as young as 3 or 4 years old from their homelands.
- Carlisle Indian School was founded by Richard Platt in 1879 and based on a prison for Als. Sherman Indian High School opened in Riverside, CA in 1892 and 1903, until present.
- Schools were designed to Christianize and tame AI youth.
- Many youth experienced multiple forms of abuse: physical, mental/emotional, sexual.
- Many youth experienced multiple forms of trauma resulting from being unable to practice traditions, speak their language, pray in their language, and having their hair cut.



Historical Trauma

...is cumulative and collective. The impact of this type of trauma manifests itself, emotionally and psychologically, in members of different cultural groups (Brave Heart, 2011).

Brave Heart's research (1998, 1999, 2000):

- The result of mass group trauma
- American Indian Holocaust
- Genocide, loss of land, loss of religion, loss of culture
- Forced relocation
- Other traumatic periods of time



Four Major Components of Historical Trauma Intervention:

- Confronting historical trauma and embracing our history
- Understanding the trauma
- Releasing our pain
- Transcending the trauma

*Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, PhD.



Implications of Historical Trauma

- Loss of culture, land, languages, spirituality, and general well being.
- Generations of children removed, fostering, adoption; Indian Adoption Project was another policy by the US Government to adopt AIs into white-only families, in order to further assimilation.
- Manifestations of intergenerational transmission of trauma: depression, substance dependence, diabetes, dysfunctional parenting, and unemployment.
- Genocide, loss of role in society, loss of cultural identity



**NEED: INTEGRATED TREATMENT
APPROACH for AI/ANS with
MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS**

U.S. Representation

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2017, there are 2,726,278 AI/ANs. [Pre-colonization, there were over 150 million (Brucker & Perry, 1988); 250,000 by the year 1900].
- 567 tribes are Federally Recognized.
- 245 tribes are non-recognized by their states and seeking recognition.
- Tribal Sovereignty allows a legal and political relationship between Federal government and tribal government which allows tribal government to hold elections to determine their own citizenship, and to create and enforce laws.

<http://www.ncai.org/about-tribes/demographics#R1>



Data

- Granted citizenship in 1924.
- 60% live in metropolitan areas; 34% live on American Indian areas including reservations or off-reservation trust lands (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).
- 4.9 million people identify as Native American (Office of Minority Health).
- Tribal sovereignty allows for tribes to define blood quantum; the U.S. Government defines those with $\frac{1}{4}$ or more blood quantum as American Indian.



Regional Data

- 71% of AI/AN now live in urban areas
- California has the greatest share of the population who identifies as AI/AN alone, or combination with other races (14%, or 723,000)
- Los Angeles County has the largest population of AI/AN in the country at 156,000
 - 3 tribal nations indigenous to Los Angeles County (Gabrieleño Tongva, Fernandeño Tataviam, Chumash)
 - More than 100 tribes are represented in Los Angeles

1. Norris T, Vines PL, Hoeffl EM. United States Census Bureau. The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2010. 2010 Census Briefs. <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/c2010br-10.pdf>. Issued January 2012. Accessed November 12, 2018.

2. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Single Year of Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Release Date: June 2017. Accessed September 8, 2018.



Health Disparities

Native people die at higher rates than other Americans:

- From tuberculosis: 600% higher
- Alcoholism: 510% higher
- Diabetes: 189% higher
- Vehicle crashes: 229% higher
- Injuries: 152% higher
- Suicide: 62% higher*

*Indian youth have the highest rate of suicide among all ethnic groups in the US, and is the second-leading cause of death for Native youth aged 15-24

*SAMHSA, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2003



**AMERICAN INDIAN
COUNSELING CENTER:
OUR INTEGRATED TREATMENT
APPROACH & CHALLENGES**

American Indian Counseling Center (AICC)

Established 1987 to serve
AI/AN throughout Los
Angeles County

Mental health & overall balance
by recognizing the importance of
culture in one's life

County wide, field based
mental health services for all
ages

Staff are familiar with the
Native community, either
through cultural heritage or
work and life experiences

Multidisciplinary Team:
psychiatrists, psychologists,
clinicians, psych tech,
substance abuse counselors,
community workers,
therapists, support staff,
and volunteers

Mental Health Services,
Targeted Case Management,
Rehab Services, Medication
Management

DMH – American Indian Counseling Center (AICC)

- All age groups served; County Wide
- Programs: Birth to Five; Specialized Foster Care; Children's Wellness; Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) - All Ages; Recovery, Resilience, and Reintegration (RRR) - Adults; Full Service Partnership (FSP) - All Ages
- Services: Individual therapy, Family therapy, Group therapy; Intensive case management; Substance Abuse Counseling/Testing, field based services, cultural activities, Medication Support/ Psychiatry (children and adult), Preventive medicine physician, EBPs, Crisis Response
- Collaboration and community outreach with Native focused agencies.



AICC Services, continued

- Physician Consultation for medication management
- Case management and advocacy services to obtain resources for: housing, MediCal, Medicare, Supplemental Security Income; linkage to Department of Rehabilitation for education/employment training
- Crisis management
- Referrals provided to Native community resources and events
- Culturally relevant activities

Showing respect for culture

- Respectful questions about cultural customs are generally welcomed, with mindfulness, respect, and sensitivity.
- Many AI/AN people have learned to “walk in two worlds,” and will observe the cultural practices of their AI/AN traditions when in those settings, and may observe other cultural practices when in dominant culture settings.
- Sharing food is a way of welcoming visitors, similar to offering a handshake; food is usually offered at community meetings and other gatherings as a way to build relationships.
- Use of the traditional northern drum for clinic, community events
- Opening events with land acknowledgement and opening blessing by an elder/community member (prioritizing the Tongva).



AICC: Environment and Setting



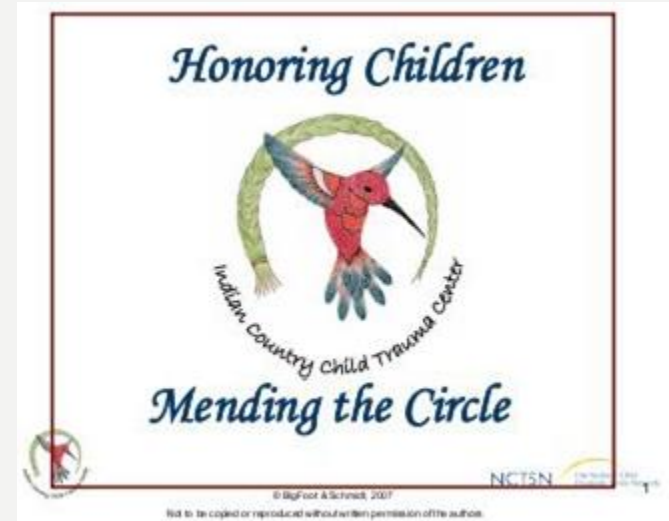
- Welcoming environment, creates a sense of community and belonging; Welcome packet
- Accepts self-identified Native/Indigenous clients (official/tribal enrollment is not required)
- Native and Culturally/trained aware providers, staff
- Inclusive artwork, photos on walls
- Collective artwork from May is Mental Health Month
- AICC has an annually updated agency t-shirt that reflects culture and healing
- Native community event flyers updated in the lobby

AICC: Client validation as a culturally-relevant healing intervention

- Importance of AICC's acceptance of self-identified Native clients; adds to client's ability to connect with a Native community base
- Validation of client's Native identity – meeting a client “where they're at”
- Being mindful of a client's degree of acculturation, identity, belonging

Evidence Based Practices

- Mending the Circle - Cultural adaptation of Trauma Focused CBT
- White Bison - Wellbriety and 12 step methods
- DBT - Cultural adaptation
- Native Wellness Institute - Cultural adaptation of interventions for depression and anxiety groups



AICC: Culturally-relevant Healing Groups

- Drumming Group
- White Bison Group
- Healing through Cultural Arts Group
- Storytelling Group
- Dreamcatcher Group
- Walking Group
- *Traditional Sewing Group: Shawls and Ribbon Skirts*
- *Traditional Beadwork Group*
- *Writing Group*





AICC Gardening

- Gardening for Healing Using Traditions (GHUTs); incorporates gardening with focus groups and diabetes education.
- Client-driven, by Client Advisory Board
- Traditional foods and plants
- Monthly gatherings involve the client and staff community
- Helps create a sense of community and belonging



AICC: May is Mental Health Month Event



May 2019, South Gate Park



AICC Challenges

- Geography: Services cover all of Los Angeles County
- The need for a culturally identifiable space
- Walking in two worlds; Linear vs. Non Linear
- The demands of community mental health
- How do we move toward acknowledging cultural and traditional interventions as Practice Based Evidence?

Resources In and Near LA County

- United American Indian Involvement (UAI)
- Southern California Indian Center (SCIC)
- Torres Martinez Tribal TANF
- DCFS American Indian Unit
- LAUSD Title VII
- Changing Spirits
- Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission
- American Indian Community Council
- American Indian Resource Library
- Red Circle Project
- God Provides Food Bank
- NAVA



Culturally-based Resources

- White Bison - www.wellbriety.com
- Native Wellness Institute - www.nativewellness.com/
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration - Native American curriculum available at www.samhsa.gov/
- Indian Country Child Trauma Center - <http://www.icctc.org/>
- National Indian Health Board - https://www.nihb.org/behavioral_health/resources.php



PLANNING FOR AN INTEGRATED TREATMENT APPROACH FOR AI/ANS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

Dr. Daniel Dickerson, *Inupiaq*

Proposed plan to enhance cultural integration

- 1) Obtain community and clinical-based perspectives to aid in Strategic Plan
- 2) Build Infrastructure for integrated treatment approach
- 3) Utilize an Advisory Board addressing integrated treatment
- 4) Nuts & Bolts: Treatment planning, cultural assessments, staff training
- 5) Work with LACDMH to utilize traditional practitioners
- 6) Coordinating efforts with other racial/ethnic groups served by DMH



Obtain community and clinical-based perspectives

Focus Groups

- Clients
- Providers
- Cultural leaders
- Discussion centered on successes, challenges, and issues relating to integrated treatment



Assessments

- Client perspectives, thoughts, and suggestions
- Provider suggestions
- Community Advisory Board input



Building infrastructure for an integrated approach

- New building currently being sought that is culturally centered
- Establish décor to reflect AI/AN tribal diversity and community
- Obtain space for sweat lodge and other cultural events and practices
- Establishing protocol and practice parameters for traditional healers
- Identify and utilize funding mechanisms that can sustain an integrated approach
- Utilize evaluations and research to aid in continual development of an integrated approach.



AICC Community Advisory Board

- Comprised of elders, clinic leaders, and AICC staff
- Provide feedback and direction to integrated treatment program
- Assist in documentation of integrated treatment delivery
- Assist in addressing diversity of tribal traditions and affiliations among clients.



Cultural Assessment at Intake

- Individual's tribal background
- Family tribal history
- Cultural identity
- Traditional practice participation
- Interest in learning about culture
- Experiences as an urban AI/AN



Culturally-centered treatment planning

- Can facilitate healing for AI/AN clients.
- Helps to enhance cultural identity and to leverage strengths grounded in AI/AN culture.
- Created by client
- What are clients interested in learning about with regard to their culture?
- What cultural activities or traditional practices would clients like to participate in?
- How can we track and assess culturally-centered treatment goals?



Addressing culture in treatment sessions

- Helps to address culturally relevant experiences
- Helps to enhance rapport.
- Helps to better understand client.
- Can help to address intergenerational trauma and effects of historical trauma.
- Provides clients with an opportunity to share experiences meaningful to them in a comfortable environment.



Working in Partnership With LACDMH



- Documentation enhancements: clinical intakes, treatment plans, progress note templates
- Billing issues and service coding for traditional practices and cultural activities
- “Certification” of traditional healers
- Broader collaboration with other racial/ethnic groups served by LACDMH.

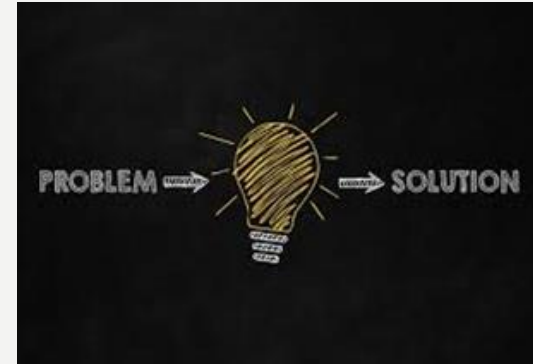
Challenges of providing Culturally-centered care in sessions

- Challenge in meeting all clinical demands:
e.g., notes, billing, address emergent needs of clients
- Training in AI/AN culture.
- Need for further collaboration with treatment team and traditional practitioners.
- Learning how to integrate culturally-themed issues into therapy and psychiatric sessions.



Challenges of implementing culturally-centered care at AlCC

- Training needs for staff
- Hiring traditional practitioner:
 - Malpractice
 - Qualifications
- Billing for traditional practices/cultural activities
- Establishing an enhanced team approach
- Inherent resistance “to change” institutionally
- Tracking cultural based measures clinically



Integrated clinic example: Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC)

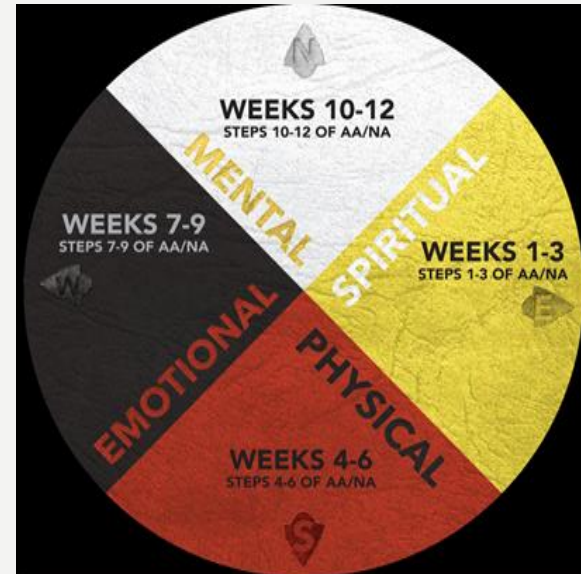
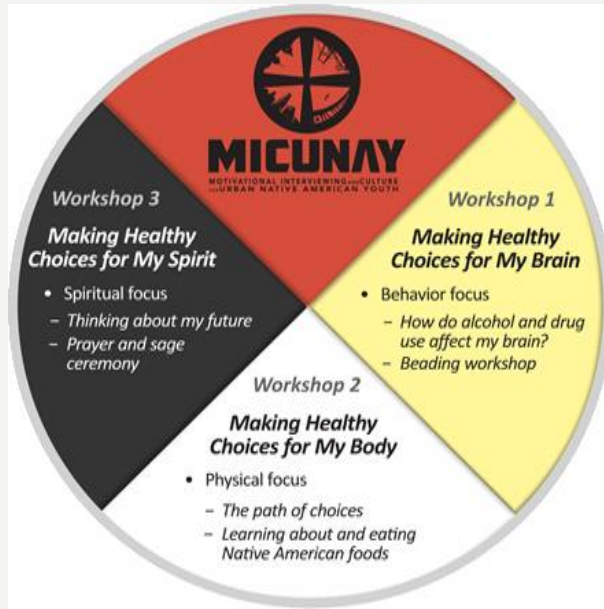


- Tribal doctors assist clients of all ages with traditional physical, traditional counseling, and women's talking circle.
- Use of a an Alaska Native traditional healing garden.
- Traditional Counseling
- Traditional Physical:
 - Healing Hands
 - Healing Touch



Two Interventions developed by Dr. Daniel Dickerson with Elizabeth D'Amico, Ph.D. and the RAND Corporation that **integrate traditional healing** in National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded studies:

- *Motivational Interviewing and Culture for Urban Native American Youth (MICUNAY)*
- *Drum-Assisted Recovery Therapy for Native Americans (DARTNA)*



Conclusion

- AI/ANs have experienced numerous historically based traumas that impact their mental well-being.
Traditional-based and culturally-centered approaches can help to relieve the burden of mental health issues among AI/ANs.
- American Indian Counseling is in a unique position to address the needs of AI/ANs residing in L.A. County
- Incorporating a strategy that can help to ensure that AI/ANs receive culturally appropriate care can help to enhance treatment outcomes among this population.

Resilience + Hope, Across NDN Country



- Seventh Generation Prophecy - the youth rising to heal the people
- Growing Awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (#MMIW)
- Spiritual Movements - To protect sacred sites, homelands, water, graves (*Oak Flat, Mauna Kea, Black Mesa/Big Mountain, Grand Canyon Uranium Mining, Standing Rock + more*)
- Indigenous People's Day spreading across the country (68 cities and growing, including the City and County of LA!)
- Columbus Statue in DTLA was removed Nov. 2019



Questions/Comments?

Integrating evidence based treatments and traditional practices for American Indians/ Alaska Natives receiving mental health services in Los Angeles County



- mcain@dmh.lacounty.gov
- ddickerson@dmh.lacounty.gov
- gfunmaker@dmh.lacounty.gov
- stephanie.mushrush@washoetribe.us