

PLAYER 1 

HIGHSCORE 2500

 PLAYER 2

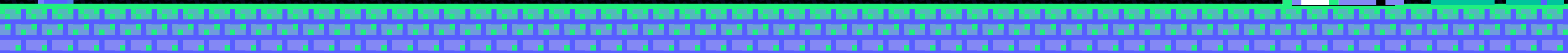
# Looking after our American Indian/Alaska Native TAY Youth

A UsCC capacity building project on caring for our  
AI/AN TAY's mental health

START

MENU

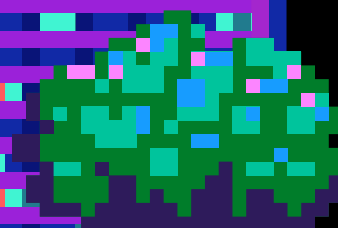
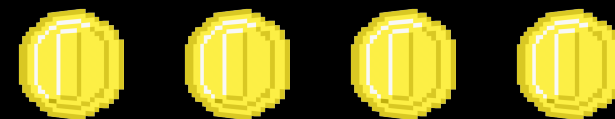
SIGN IN 



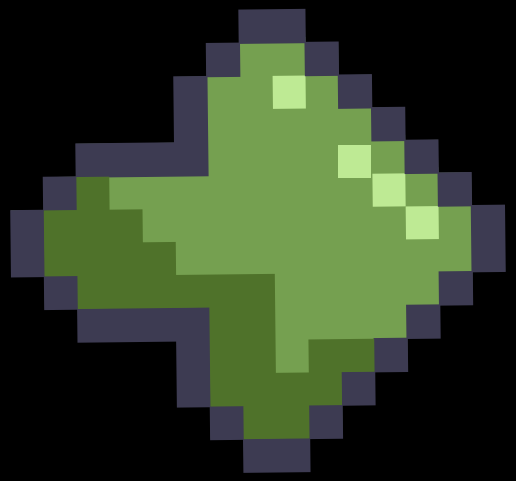
MENU

SOW

THE PURPOSE OF THE AI/AN YOUTH ACADEMY  
PROJECT WAS TO IDENTIFY MENTAL HEALTH  
ACCESS BARRIERS FOR AI/AN TRANSITION AGE  
YOUTH (TAY) (AGED 16-24) BY ENGAGING THIS  
POPULATION IN ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM  
AROUND MENTAL HEALTH ALL WHILE BUILDING  
CAPACITY USING TRADITIONAL FORMS OF  
HEALING.







# WHAT IS TAY?

## Transition Age Youth

Who are Transition Age Youth?

- Transition Age Youth (TAY) are individuals generally between the ages of 16 and 25, often with mental health challenges, that are transitioning from child-serving systems to adult serving systems.

Note: This age range represents a general developmental phase. The children's system redesign involves individuals up to age 21.

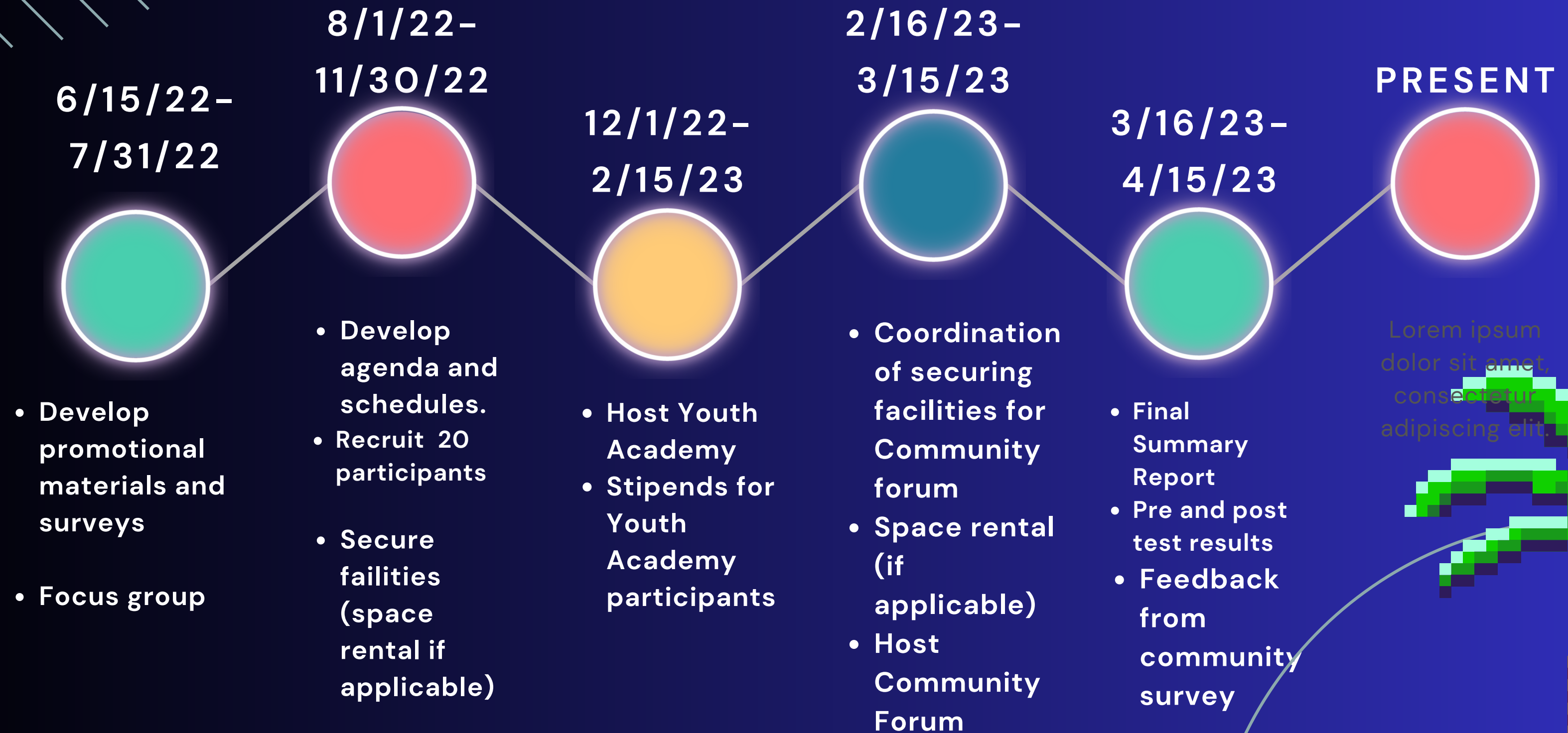




## THE TRANSITION YEARS

- A time when youth move from dependence on caregivers to independence or self-sufficiency
- Much psychological and social development occurs at this stage
- It is at this stage that youth start thinking about the future and their adult lives
- There may be new mental health challenges or ongoing ones that need continuous care
  - Half of all lifetime anxiety and mood disorders begin by age 14
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  of anxiety, mood and substance use begin by age 24
  - Highest rates of drug and alcohol abuse are between ages 18-25

# PROJECT TIMELINE





MENU

# FIND A TEAM

AMERICAN INDIAN/  
ALASKA NATIVE

AGES 16-24

LOS ANGELES COUNTY





# VIRTUAL FOCUS GROUP

10 TAY

AUGUST 31, 2022



It was extremely important to try to incorporate all suggested topics and activities suggested in the Focus Group and from its survey results into the Academy.

- Topics
- Activities
- Times

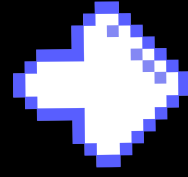


From the beginning, facilitators were intentional in letting the youth know that this was “their” Academy and their space, in order to keep with the project’s overall goal of promoting advocacy and activism among this population.





BACK TO AGENDA PAGE

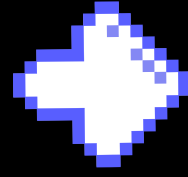


# PROMOTING



THIS  GENERATION DOESN'T USE FACEBOOK AND IS  
PERCEIVED  
AS AN OLD PERSON'S APP

BACK TO AGENDA PAGE

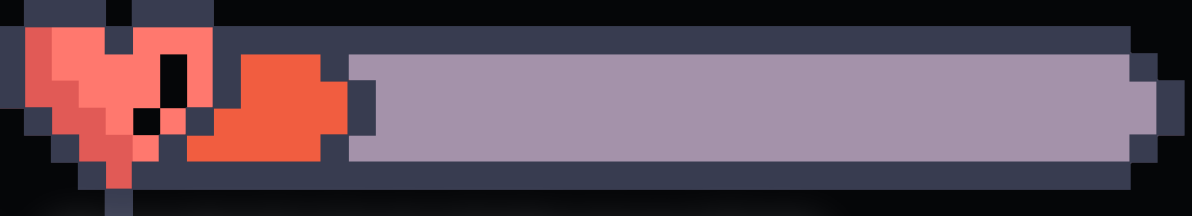


FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS THAT EXPRESSED  
INTEREST IN THE ACADEMY DID NOT INITIALLY  
RESPOND WHEN  
RECRUITMENT EMAILS WERE SENT.

DID NOT RESPOND IN GENERAL TO EMAILS AFTER  
REGISTERING FOR THE ACADEMY.  
SOME YOUTH IN THIS AGE RANGE STILL RELY ON  
PARENTS FOR EMAIL  
COMMUNICATIONS/REMINDERS AND MOST STATED  
LATER THAT  
THEY PREFER TEXT AND DO NOT CHECK THEIR  
EMAILS REGULARLY.







14 AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE PARTICIPANTS  
AGED 16-24,  
WITH A GENDER MIX OF 9 FEMALES AND 5 MALES:

VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM

5 THURSDAYS

DECEMBER 29, 2022 - JANUARY 26, 2023

5:00 PM -  
7:00/7:30 PM

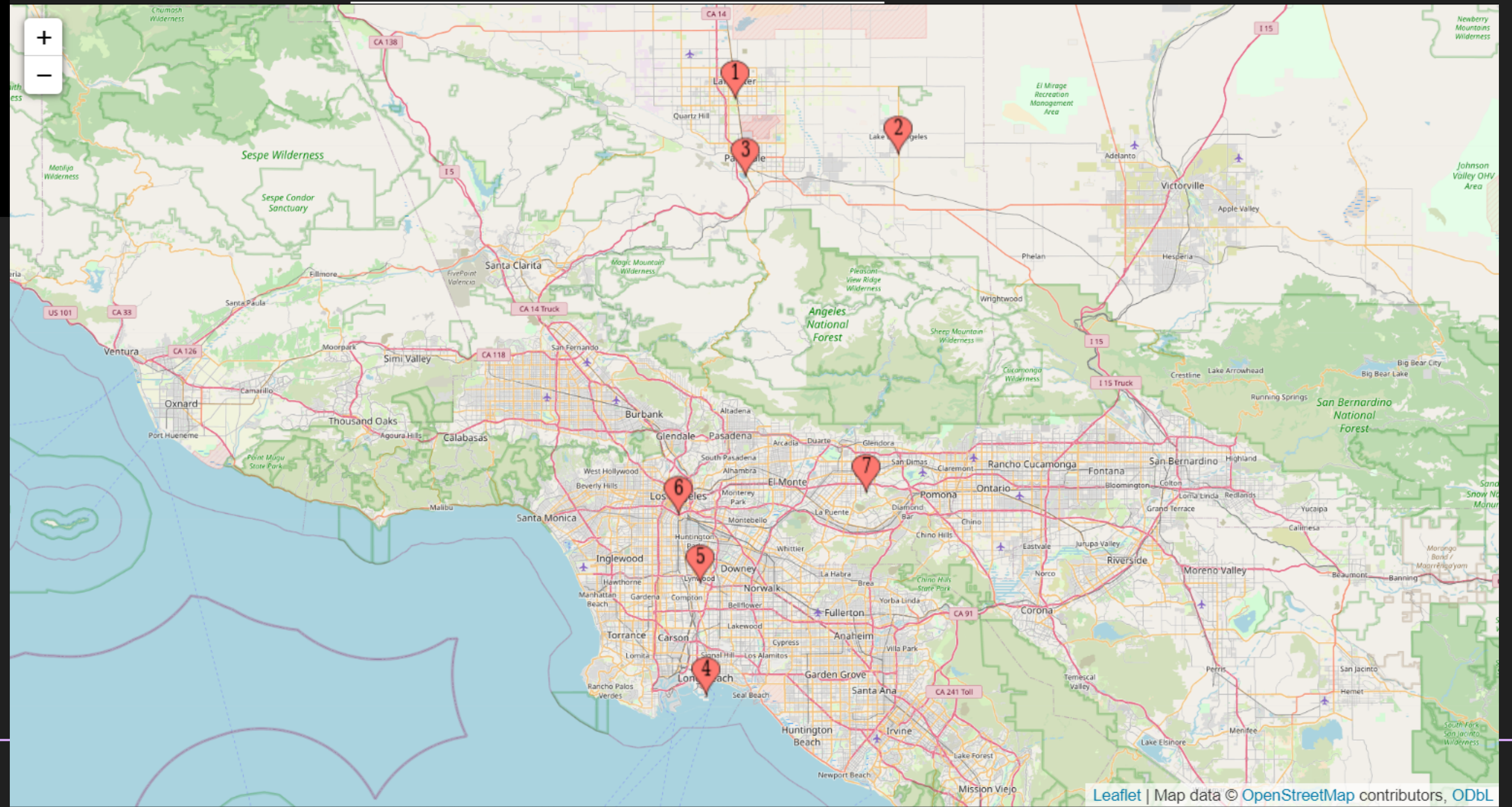
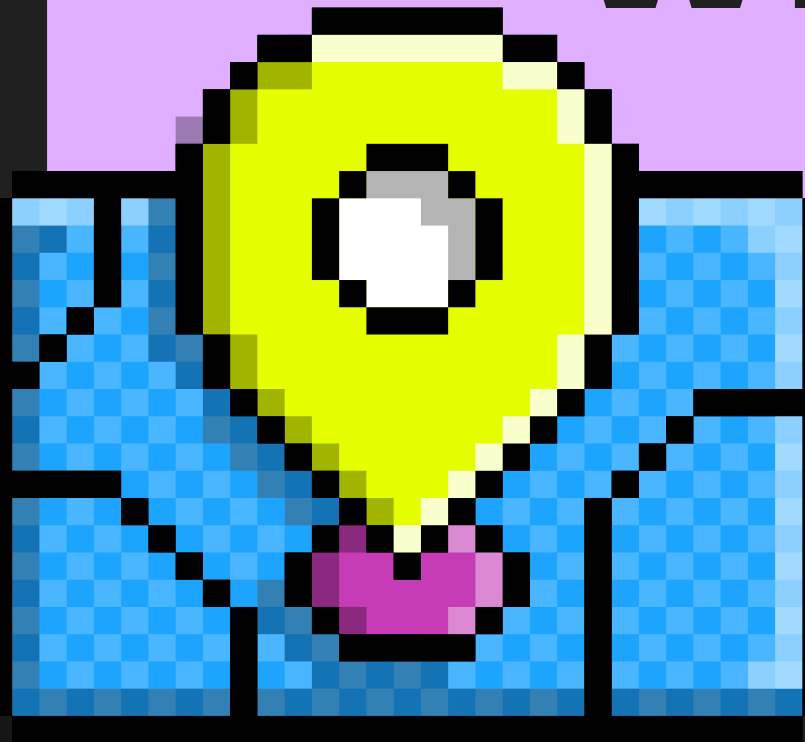


MAKEUP  
WORKSHOP  
FEBRUARY 2,  
2023





# WHERE DO WE LIVE?





# WHAT TRIBES DO WE REPRESENT?

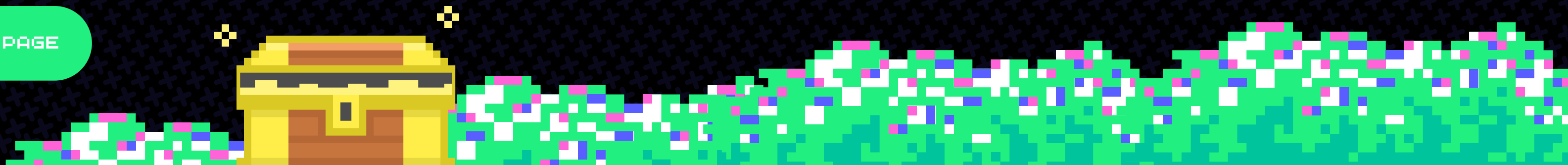
What tribe are you



# WHAT WE HOPED TO LEARN

1. WHAT BARRIERS/CHALLENGES DO OUR AI/AN TAY POPULATION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY FACE WHEN TRYING TO ACCESS RESOURCES/SERVICES?
2. DO OUR AI/AN TAY IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY FEEL THAT THEY HAVE A VOICE/ARE HEARD?
3. HOW CAN WE SUPPORT AND ENGAGE OUR AI/AN TAY IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY IN MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY WITHIN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

[BACK TO AGENDA PAGE](#)



PLAYER 1



HIGHSCORE 2500



PLAYER 2

# N.W.A.

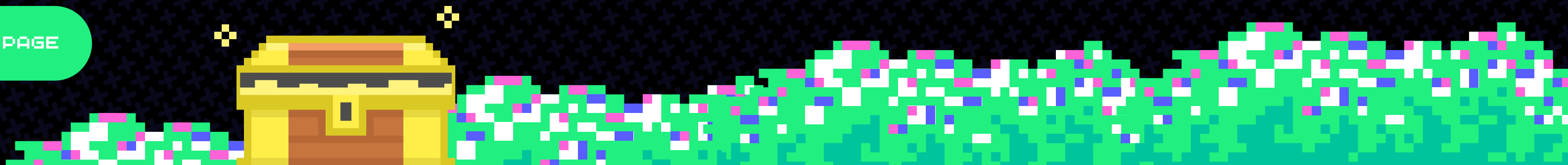
## NATIVE WELLNESS ACADEMY



# CHALLENGE

Creating a curriculum that would be engaging to all participants within the established age range (e.g. some may be parents, some may still be in high school)

[BACK TO AGENDA PAGE](#)







HIGHSCORE 2500



PLAYER 2

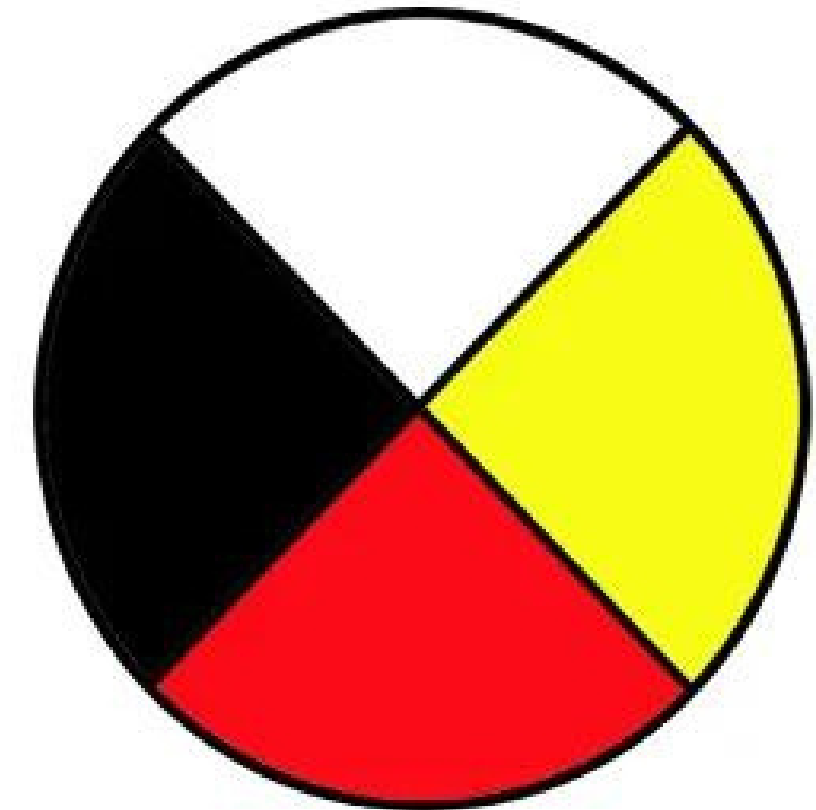
# USING THE MEDICINE WHEEL IN OUR DAILY LIVES

## The Medicine Wheel

The Medicine Wheel teachings provide guidance for wellness & balance in our lives, Spiritually, Emotionally, Mentally & Physically.

They teach us about:

- Culture
- Identity
- Pride
- Confidence
- Empowerment
- Success
- Relationships
- Responsibility
- Anger



# AGENDA

Each workshop  
corresponds to Medicine  
Wheel direction and its  
teachings

Ex. Spiritual Element: Self  
Care Discussion, Sage  
teaching

1

Social Engagement Exercise

2

Prayer/Land Acknowledgment –  
Virginia Carmelo

3

Topic/Discussion/Guest speaker

4

Art/Activity Breakout

5

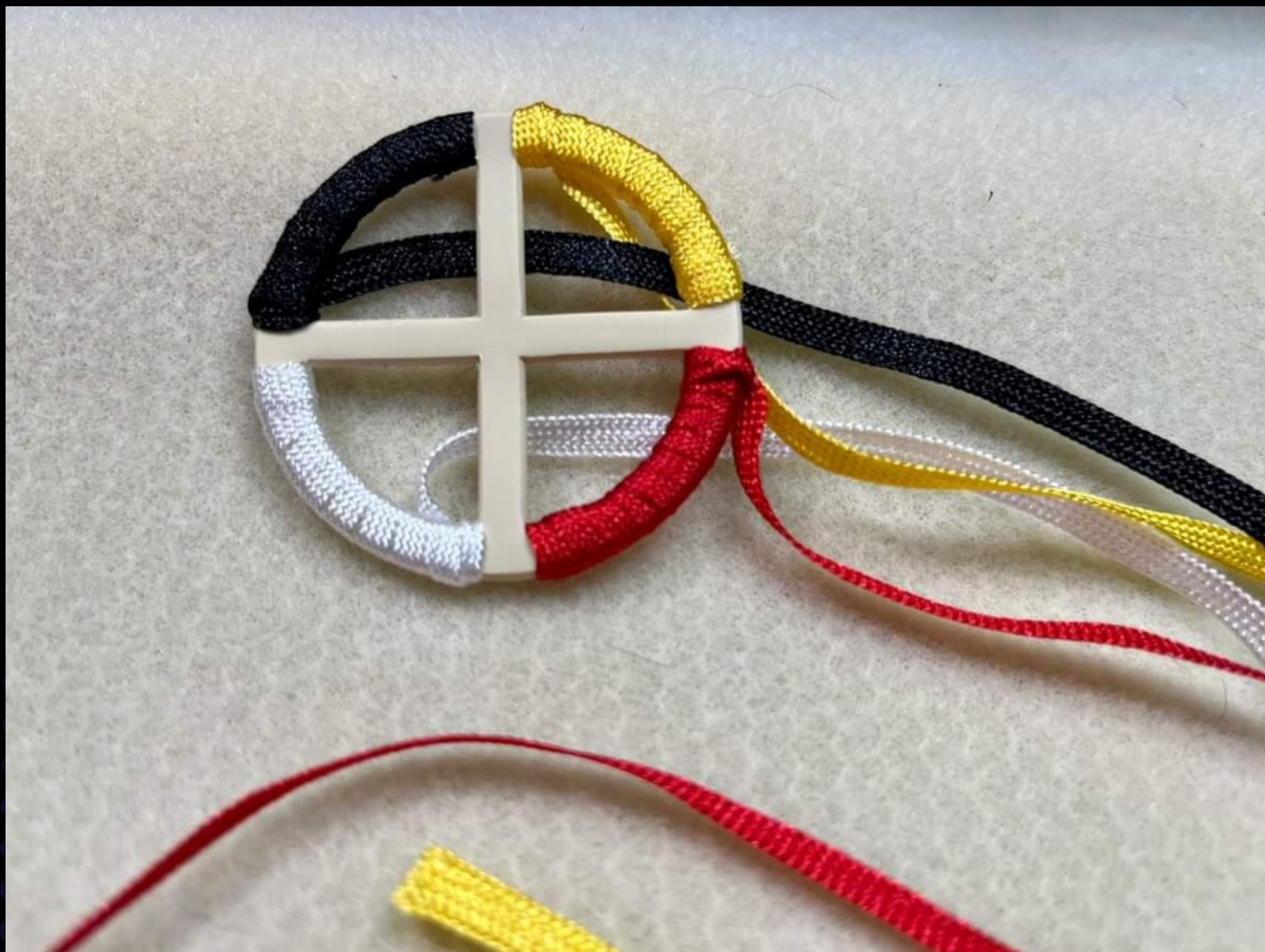
Natural/Traditional Medicine  
Teaching – Phil Hale

6

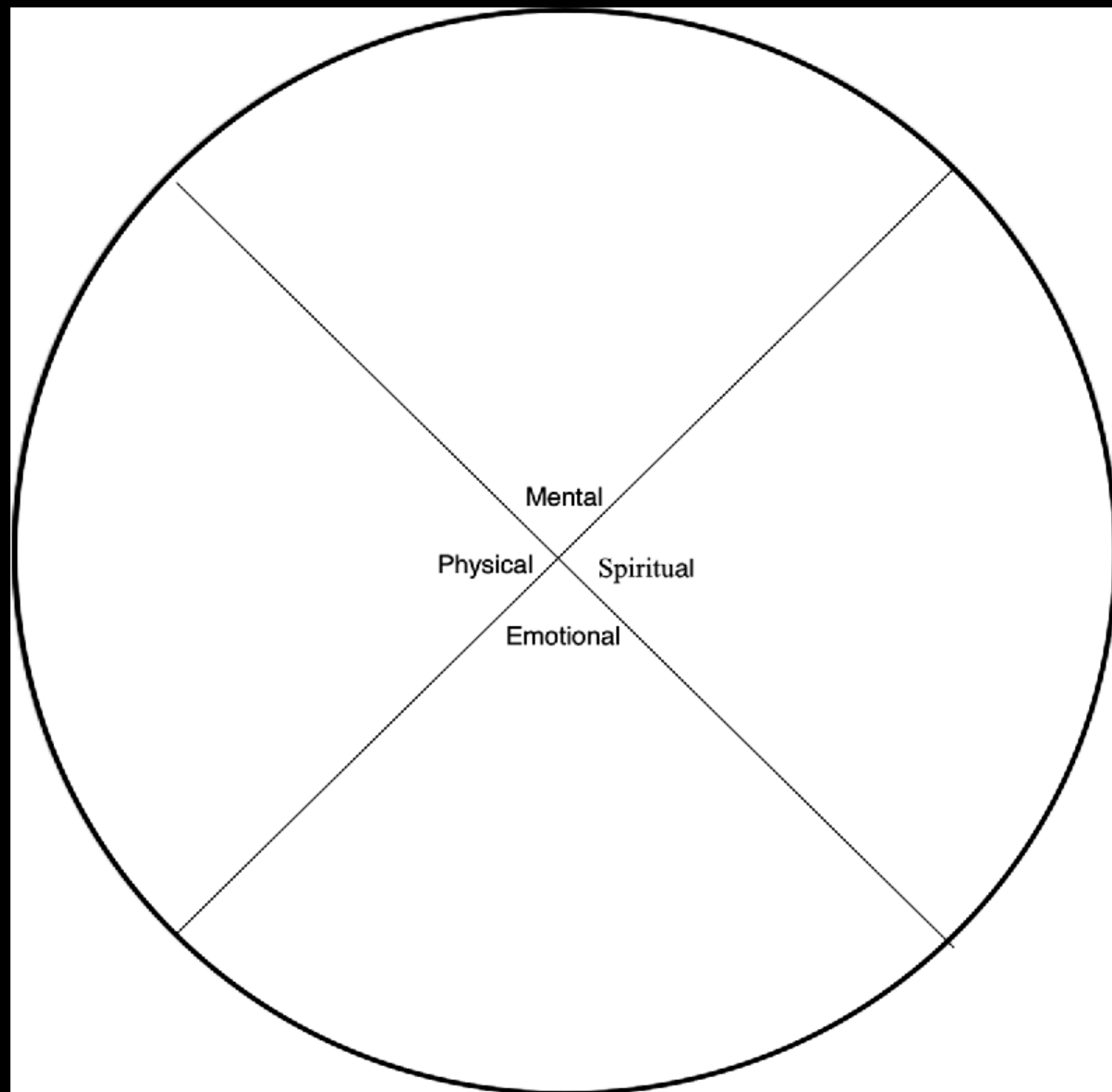
Closing



MENU





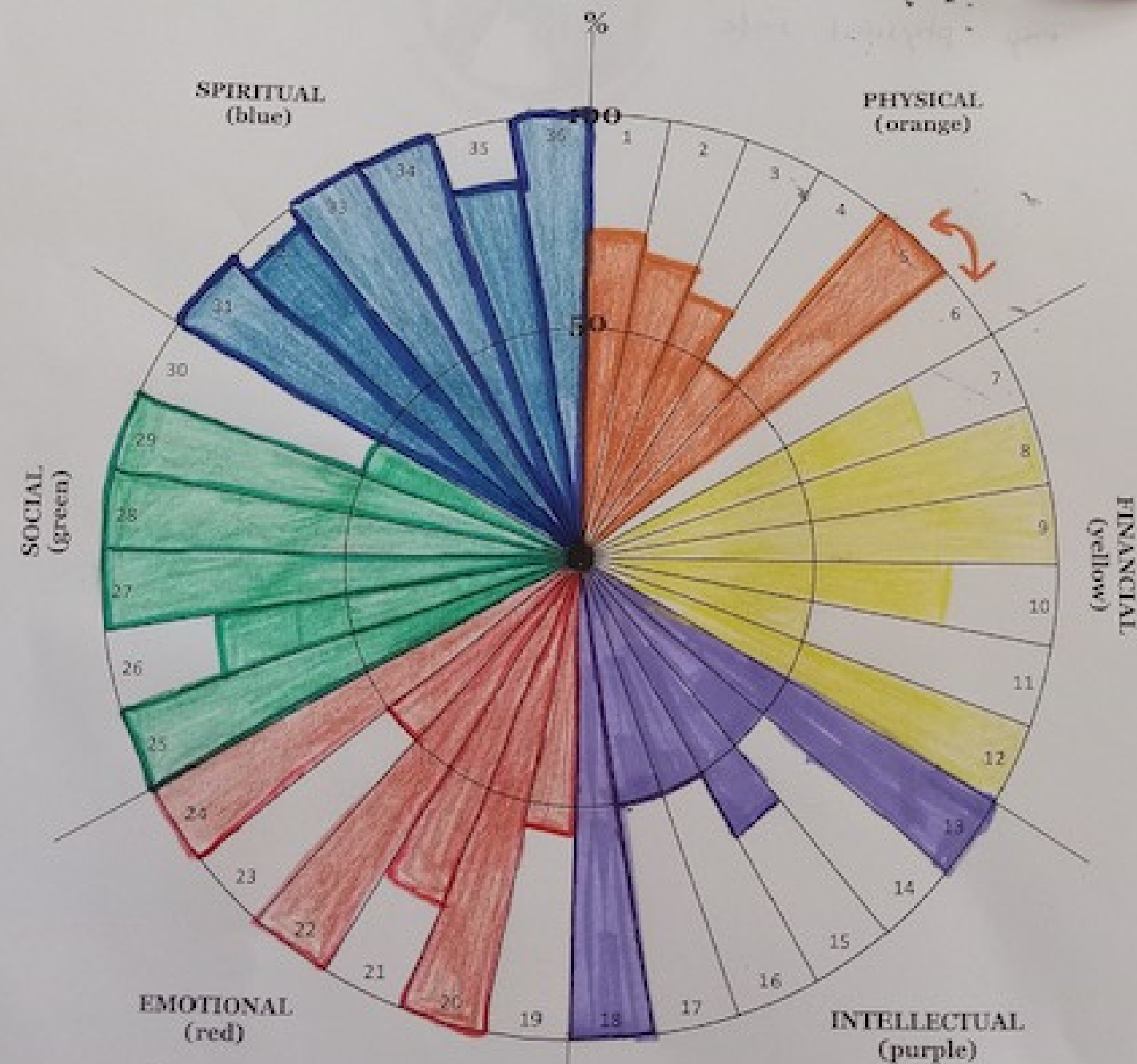


# Assessing Your Life Balance

"A wheel runs most smoothly when well balanced."

## Instructions:

Read each statement and fill in the corresponding pie shaped section of the wheel to the degree you are achieving this. For example, question one is: "I eat a balanced nutritional diet"; if you feel you are doing this 100% of the time, color in all of section one. If you feel you do this, 60% of the time, color 60% of the section. Repeat for all 36 sections of the wheel.



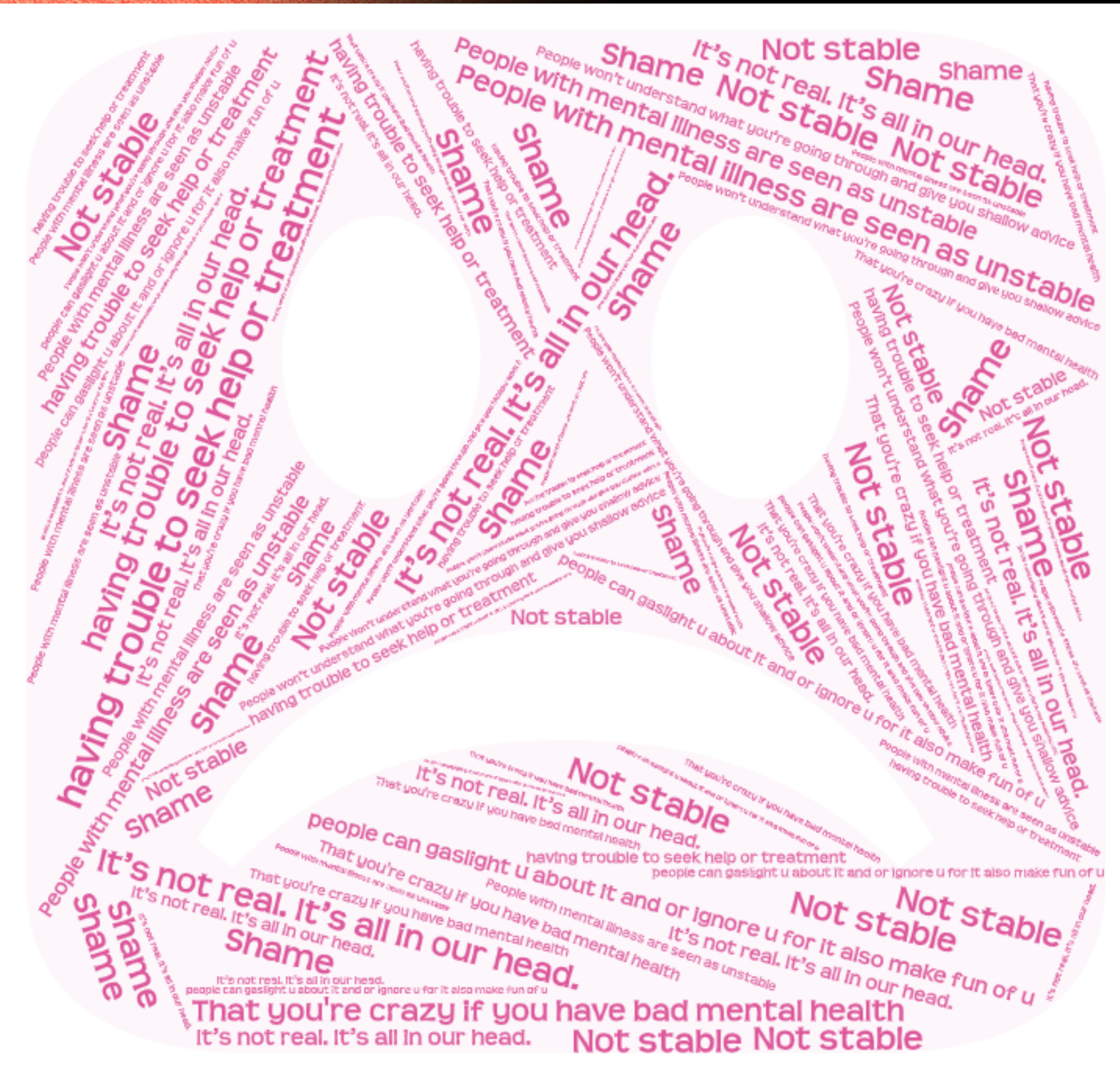


Not Stable

Shame

**It's not real. It's in our  
heads**

**That you're crazy if you have bad mental health**





MENU



# WHAT ARE YOUR CURRENT STRESSORS?



What is or has been a stressor for you?



# ADDITIONAL STRESSORS

- CAREER  
PATH

- TOXIC  
FRIENDS

- EVERYTHING

- KIDS

- APPOINTMENTS

- COWORKERS

- FINALS WEEK

- HEALTH

MENU



# WHAT DO YOU DO FOR SELF CARE

What do you do for self care?

Listen to show tunes

Make healthy foods

Shiatsu Massage

Thai Massage

Roller Skating

art

taking naps

Watch anime

Draw

Hang with friends

talk to friends

Spa day

music

Yoga

face masks

Gym

listen to elivs

Listen to music

looking at the sky

Create

exercise

Read fa

READING

Tiktock

video games

read

SLEEP

Push ups

Relax

crying

watch criminal minds

Watch

Mani/Pedi

Documentaries

Serialkiller

listening to music

Ride Bike

Read \*fiction/fantasy

Go in nature



BACK TO AGENDA PAGE

🗡️ 01

💎 07

★ 12



➦ ELABORATE ON THE FEATURED STATISTIC.

➦ ELABORATE ON THE FEATURED STATISTIC.

➦ ELABORATE ON THE FEATURED STATISTIC.

[https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5obRTD7bhMUCIn8c1w6pTh?  
si=lG0Rb\\_F8T5mAK02uJA7faw&app\\_destination=copy-link](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5obRTD7bhMUCIn8c1w6pTh?si=lG0Rb_F8T5mAK02uJA7faw&app_destination=copy-link)



Actor



Wassana as *Martin Kills Many* in the *Yellowstone* episode *Tall Drink of Water*

HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH FEELINGS  
OF STRESS AND NOT FORGETTING  
TRADITIONAL WAYS (ESPECIALLY IN  
SUCH AN INSTITUTIONALIZED  
ENVIRONMENT?)

"Keep talking. Keep talking  
about it until someone listens.  
You hold the strength within  
you. It's in your culture. From  
your ancestors.

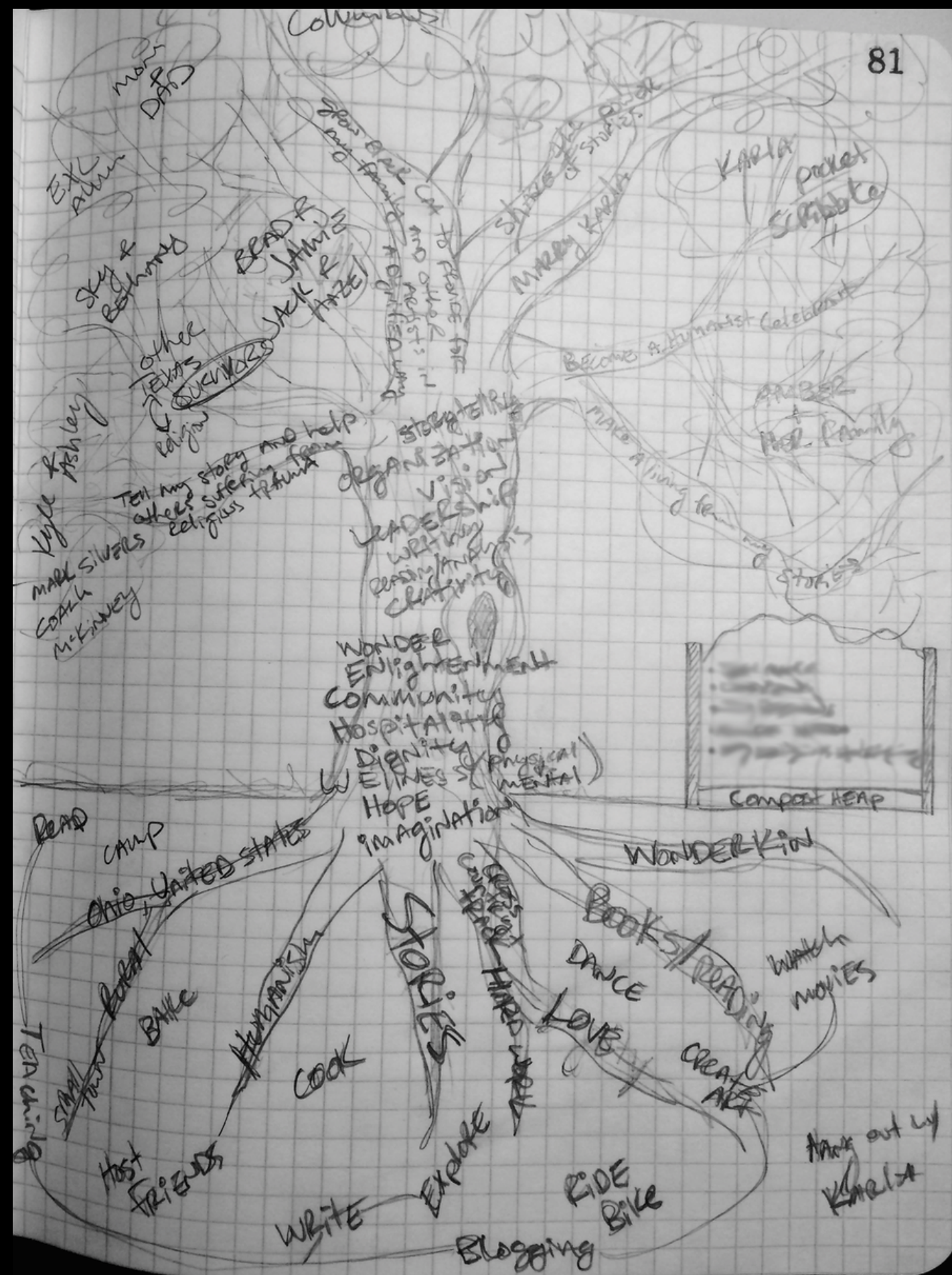
**Christian Wassana**  
**(Cheyenne-Arapaho) - @cwrelentless**



# TOUCHSTONES



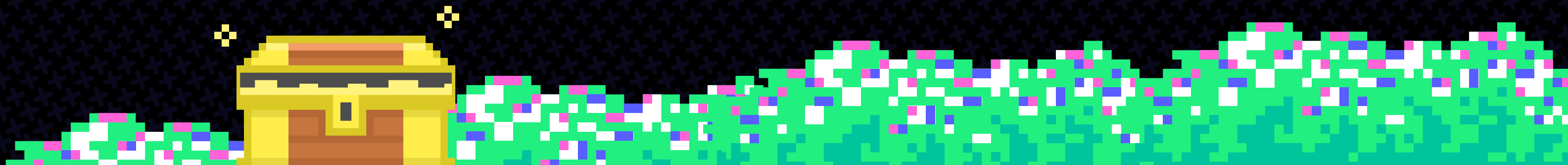




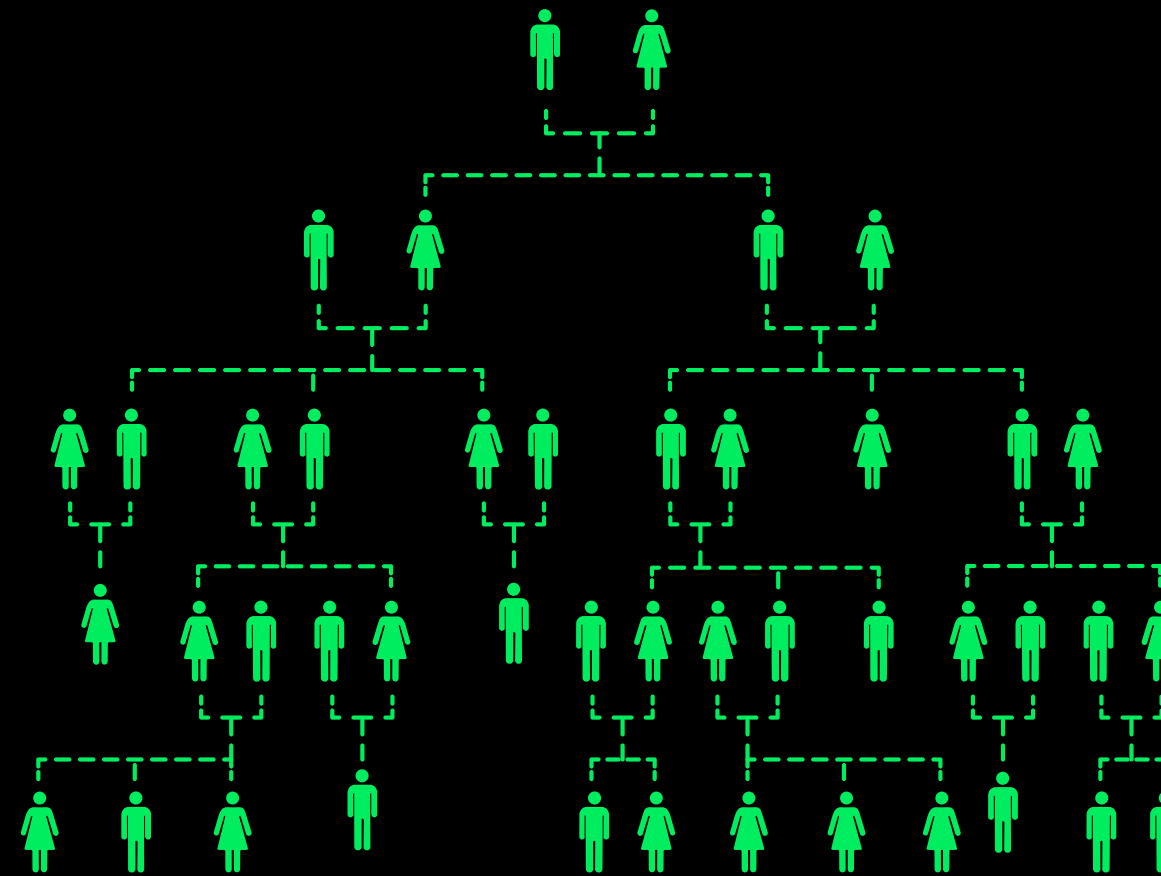


# WHAT WE LEARNED

THE STIGMA THAT OUR YOUTH ARE  
FACING  
IS NOT FROM PEERS BUT FROM  
OLDER GENERATIONS  
(INCLUDING PARENT/CAREGIVERS)



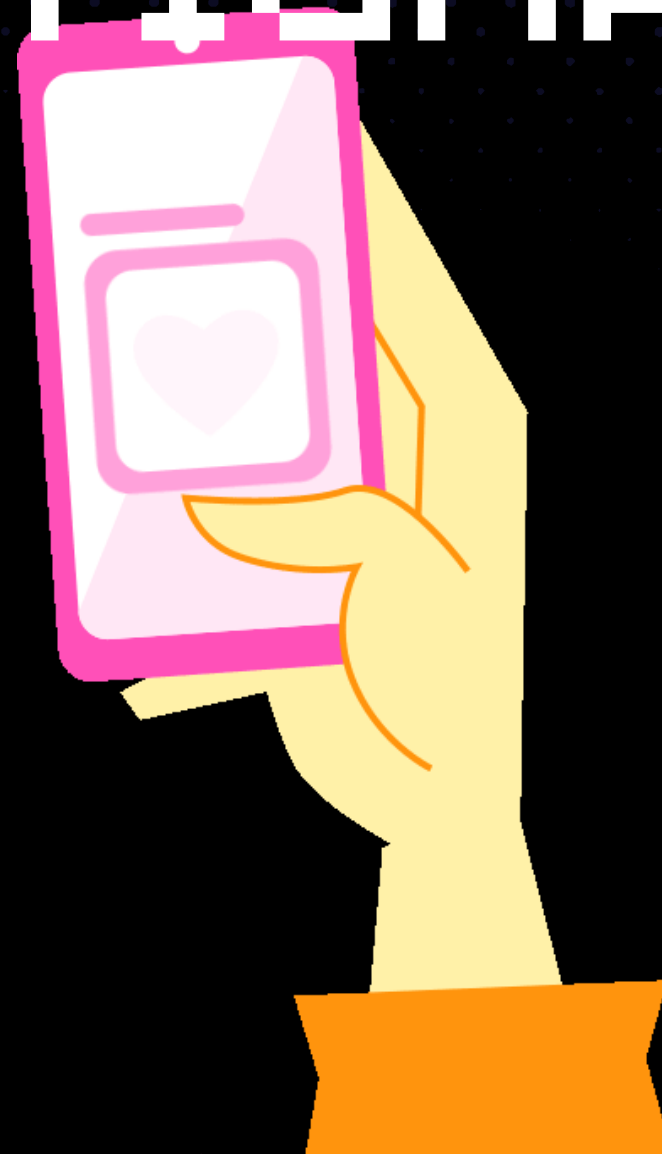
Unlike Millennials and Gen X'ers, who still belonged to a generation in which talking about mental health problems or asking for help was viewed as unusual or wrong, Gen Z are part of a cohort who doesn't feel that same stigma.



This begs the question: why is there less stigma for this generation?

Why has the stigma lessened in the era of Gen Z?

# SOCIAL MEDIA TO DESTIGMATIZE



**Social media has helped to normalize mental health problems and reduce stigma among this generation through interconnectedness and shared understanding. Gen Z has a feeling of social support through their connections online that previous generations did not have.**



# SCREEN TIME IS CONNECTION



Although some from the older generations might equate screen time with isolation and loneliness, Gen Z utilizes screen time to make connections and feel less alone.

Other generations could learn from this in terms of broadening their perspective of what constitutes friendship or connection. Did you have a pen pal growing up? In the digital era, pen pals have moved online. Don't discount the importance of online connections in an increasingly digital world.

# CALL OUT CULTURE



Gen Z has grown up in a world where it is the norm for stigma to be called out as unacceptable. This is especially evident in how language has changed (i.e., certain terms referring to mental health have become unacceptable to use because of their negative connotation).



# SOCIAL MEDIA ISN'T ALL BAD

Other generations could learn from our youth that interconnectedness online allows for a broadening of perspectives, greater tolerance for differences, and more acceptance of mental health issues in general.





Generations prior to Gen Z were often more limited in what they knew about mental health to what their parents told them, what they learned in school, and what was generally whispered or gossiped about in their personal lives and in popular culture.



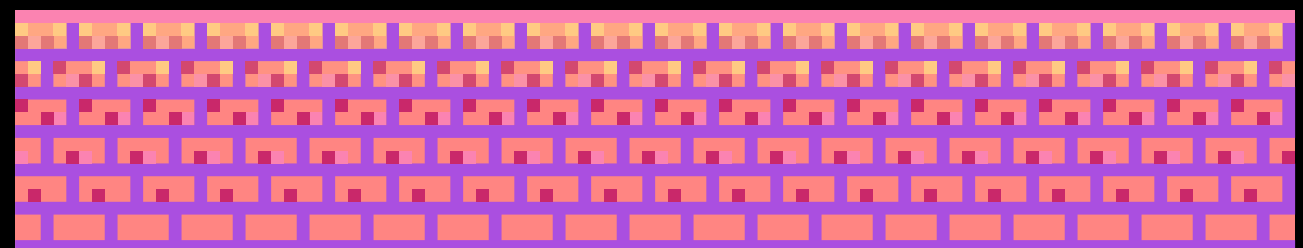
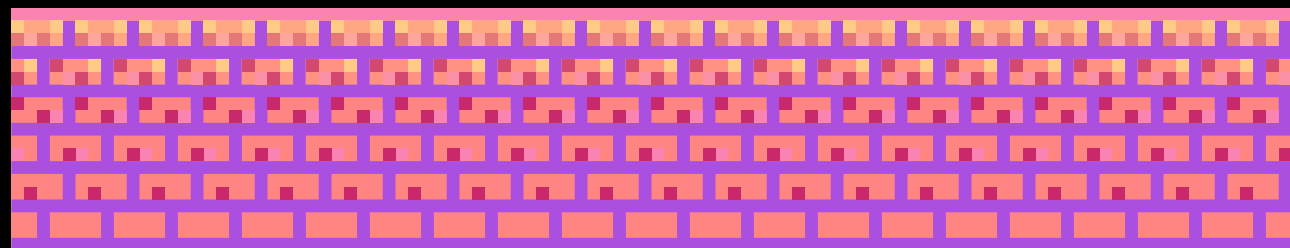
WHAT OTHER GENERATIONS  
CAN LEARN FROM OUR  
TAY/YOUTH



# GENERATIONAL LEARNING

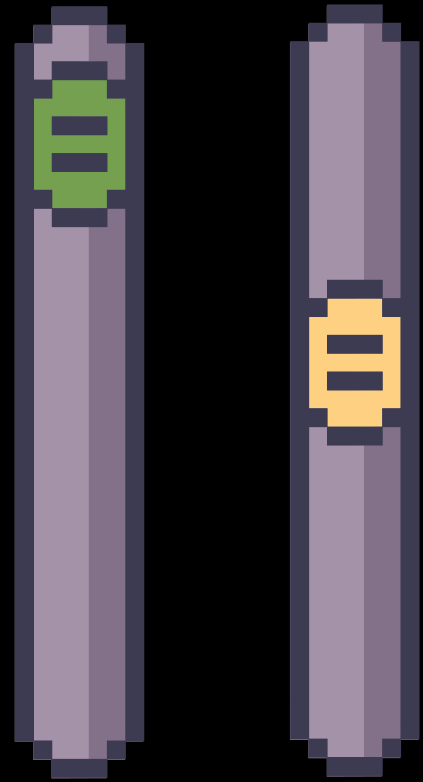


For those who are parents of Gen Z children, the lesson to be learned is that your children are already likely more open and authentic than you when it comes to mental health.





**For this reason, it's important to listen to them when they talk to you about their mental health concerns rather than to brush these off or change the subject. Our youth is used to talking openly about their mental health, and they need their parents to follow suit.**



# NO LIMITATIONS

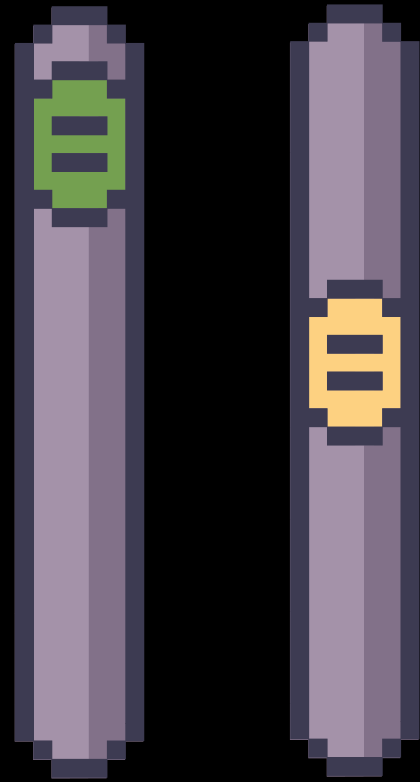
Previous generations may have used their mental health or mental illness as a reason for being limited in life.

However, our youth is aware that mental health is just one aspect of their lives, and one that can be improved with help.

Other generations could learn that treating mental health isn't showing your weakness; rather, it's building your strength.







# OPEN COMMUNICATION

Gen Z is used to talking openly about their mental health, and other generations could learn from this. Open communication among families, between parents and kids, and among generations will mean less adults with emotional baggage.



All of these factors may have made it easier for Gen Z to talk openly about their mental health struggles compared to previous generations such as Millennials and Gen X (many of their parents' generation).

Normalizing conversations about mental health mean that Gen Z has the ability to deal with their issues and move on rather than staying stuck—and that's the choice many of them are making.



Older adults' attitudes toward depression and other mental health issues shed light on the lack of conversations and awareness of their time.

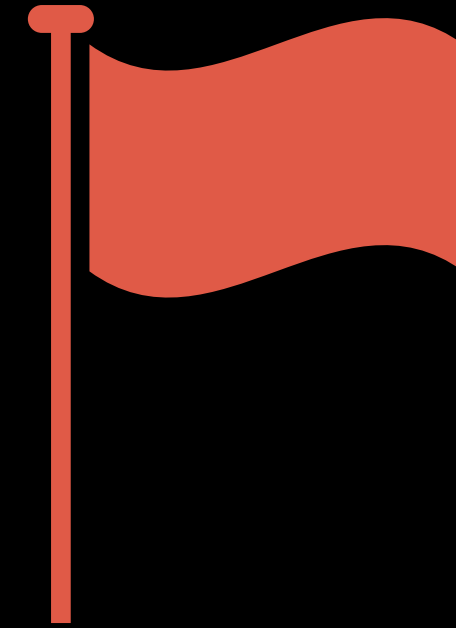


# ♦ WORDS MATTER

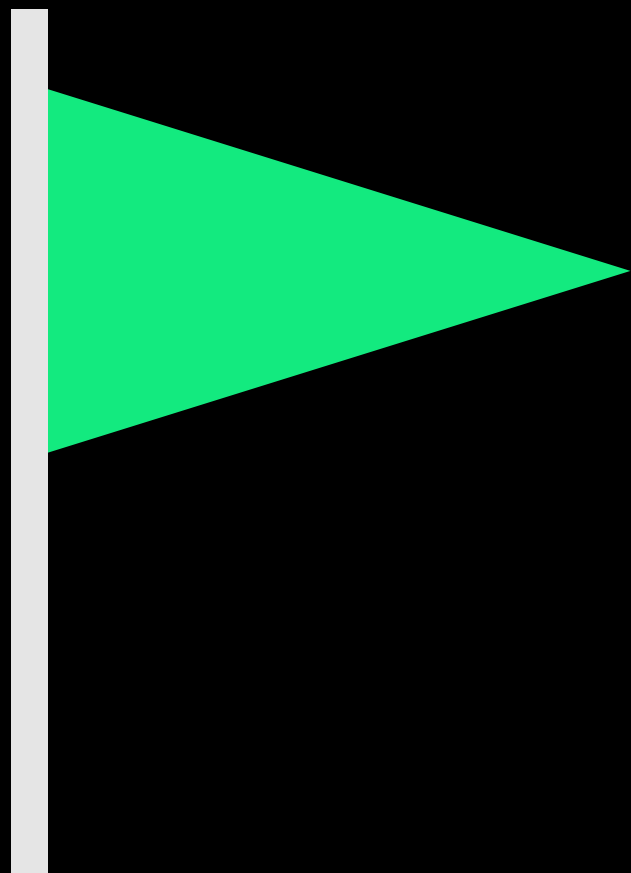
It's not real. It's all in your  
head

Why are you crying?  
You're not hurt  
(physically)

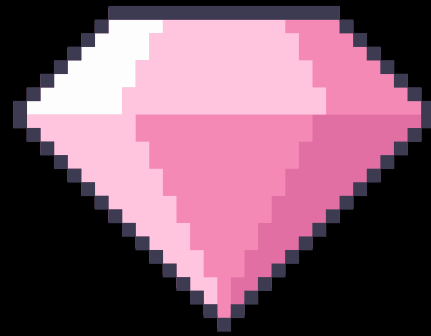
If you just work hard enough,  
you will be fine



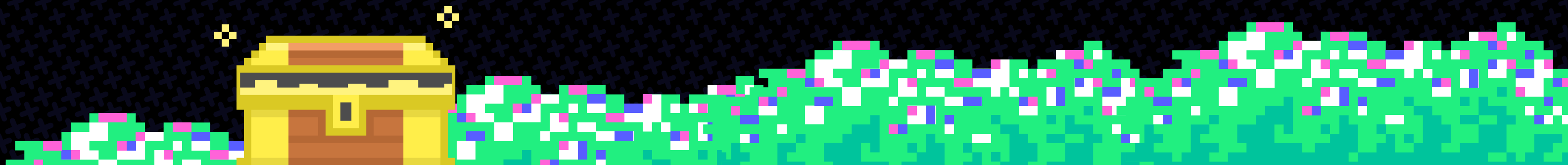
**Our AI/AN youth feel the burden of having to educate older generations about their mental health issues when seeking out help or within conversations.**



Shared responsibility in destigmatizing mental health among community members and generations.



STRENGTHS





→ OUT OF THE 20 PARTICIPANTS RECRUITED, 14 MADE A COMMITMENT TO ATTEND ALL 5 CONSECUTIVE WORKSHOPS, WITH MANY HAVING TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THEIR WORK, SCHOOL, OR HOME SCHEDULES IN ORDER TO DO SO.



THE AI/AN TAY POPULATION IS KNOWLEDGEABLE OF AND  
MORE OPEN TO DISCUSSING THE MENTAL HEALTH  
STRUGGLES THAT THEY AND THEIR PEERS FACE.  
THEY ALSO PRIORITIZE IT AND RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE  
OF  
MENTAL WELLNESS.

“I also think of it as  
our mind’s feelings”

“Mental health is related to  
the mind, and thinking”

“Mental well  
being, positive mindset”

“It affects our moods, our days, etc.”

[BACK TO AGENDA PAGE](#)

🗡️ 01

💎 07

★ 12



THE AI/AN TAY POPULATION IS AWARE OF AND  
ALREADY CHANGING THE STIGMA SURROUNDING  
MENTAL HEALTH.





AI/AN TAY Population are  
eager to learn more about  
their culture and community  
and  
expressed they would like  
these activities in their  
community

TRADITIONAL  
MEDICINES  
TEACHINGS

CULTURAL  
EXCHANGE

WORKSHOPS/GROUPS FOR JUST  
TAY COMMUNITY (COOKING,  
BEADING, GAMES, ART)

PEER MEETUPS (SAFE  
SPACE TO CONNECT  
WITH OTHER AI/AN  
TAY)

TALKING CIRCLES (NON-  
HIERARCHICAL SPACE TO  
SHARE/HAVE REGULAR  
DISCUSSION)

ORGANIZED NATURE  
OUTINGS (HIKES,  
PARKS, ETC.)

FACILITATORS WERE ABLE TO CONNECT TO TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS WHO ARE NOT TRADITIONALLY OPEN OR COMFORTABLE SHARING WITH ADULTS.



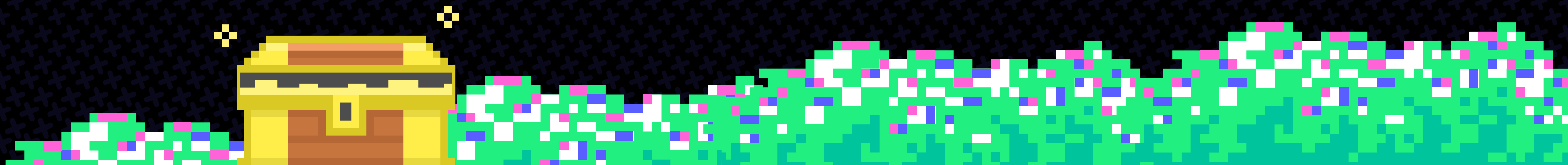
THE YOUTH SPOKE VERY CANDIDLY AND WERE TRANSPARENT IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS.

AI/AN ARE COMFORTABLE SEEKING HELP AND REACHING OUT TO PEERS. ASKING FOR HELP FOR MENTAL HEALTH IS VIEWED AS A STRENGTH RATHER THAN A WEAKNESS.





# BARRIERS



[BACK TO AGENDA PAGE](#)

🗡️ 01

💎 07

★ 12



✦ SUPPLIES NEEDED TO BE DELIVERED TO PARTICIPANTS  
ACROSS LOS ANGELES COUNTY AS NOT ALL YOUTH HAD  
TRANSPORTATION TO PICK UP IF DISTRIBUTED FROM ONE  
CENTRAL LOCATION.



BACK TO AGENDA PAGE



01



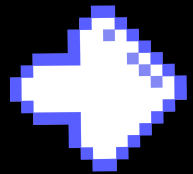
07



12



50% OF PARTICIPANTS MISSED THE FIRST WORKSHOP ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29TH STATING THEY GOT THE DATES CONFUSED.



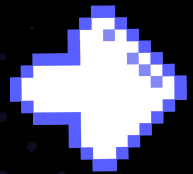


BACK TO AGENDA PAGE

🗡️ 01

💎 07

★ 12



TIME LIMITATIONS. FACILITATOR FELT THERE  
WAS NOT ENOUGH TIME TO COVER EVERYTHING IN  
THE SCHEDULED  
WORKSHOP TIME.

BACK TO AGENDA PAGE



01



07



12



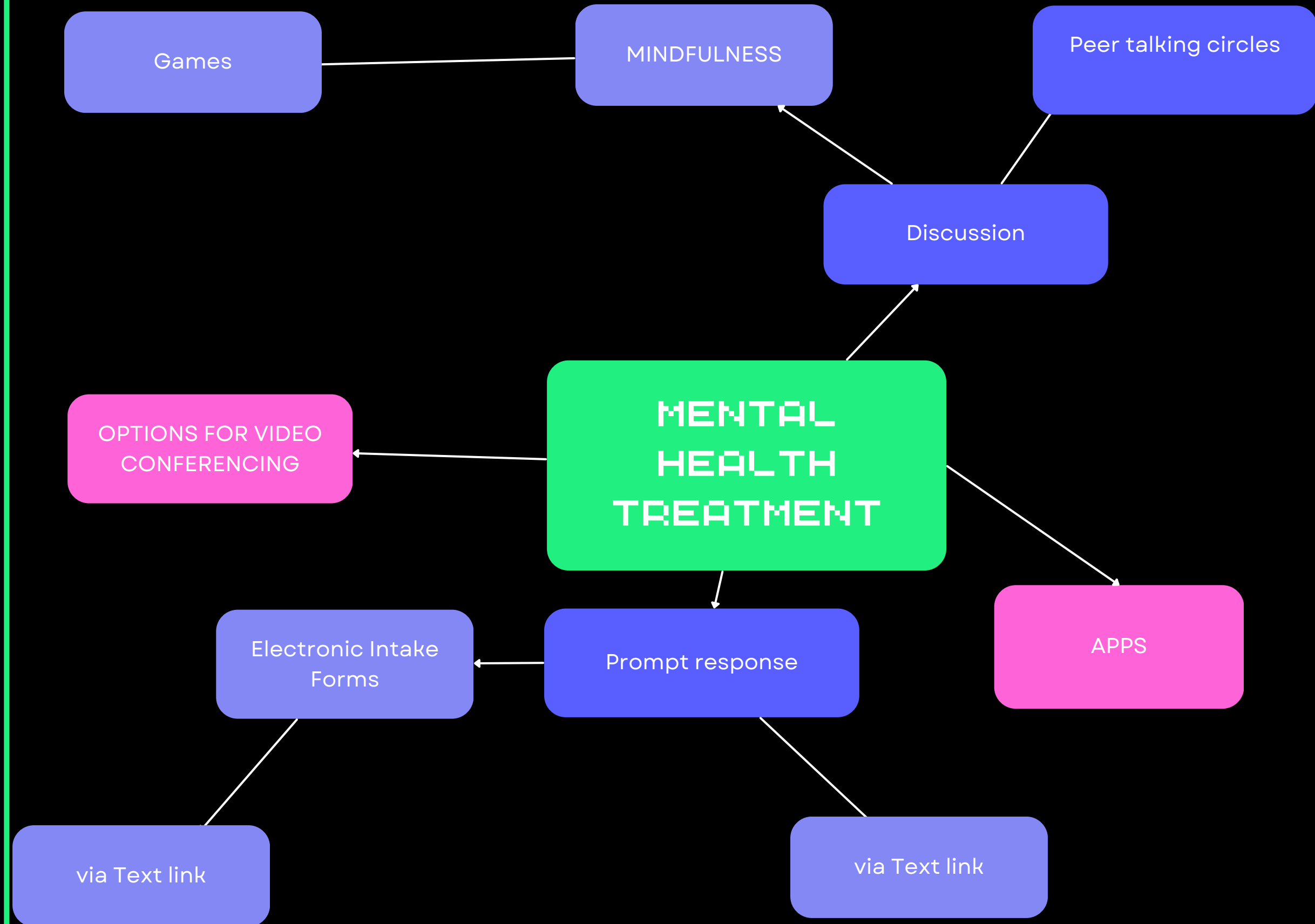
CREATING A CURRICULUM THAT WOULD BE  
ENGAGING TO ALL PARTICIPANTS WITHIN THE  
ESTABLISHED AGE RANGE  
(E.G. SOME MAY BE PARENTS, SOME MAY STILL BE  
IN HIGH SCHOOL)

ALL 14 PARTICIPANTS EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE  
TO CONTINUE ATTENDING  
FUTURE ACADEMIES  
AND TO REFER OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE AS WELL.



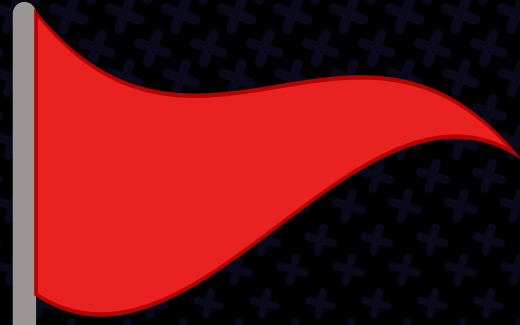


## FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS:



Gen Z prefers digital-first technologies, like texting to confirm appointments, options for video conferencing, electronic intake forms, and other online tools. In addition to processes, Gen Z also demands different counseling modalities than older generations. Younger clients enjoy mindfulness exercises, apps, mini-games, and art allowing them to be present in the moment. “They’re so stimulated in every area of their life the counseling/therapy session has to be something that engages them in multiple, different levels.”

# Don't be a



Each generation's perspective is rooted in the environment in which they were raised. Regardless of how much stress our TAY youth continually seems to endure, it's true that every generation has had their own type of stress and dealt with it in their own way. Change is necessary to evolve to a better way of living, and this change is inevitable.



Regardless of what generation you belong to, keep your eyes and ears open so that you can keep current. What might feel wrong to you today, could be the norm tomorrow. As they say, the only thing constant is that there will be change.

MENU

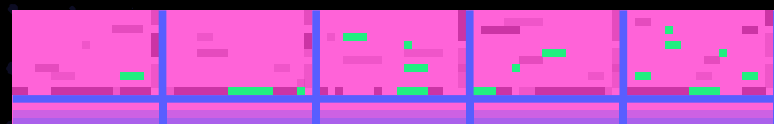
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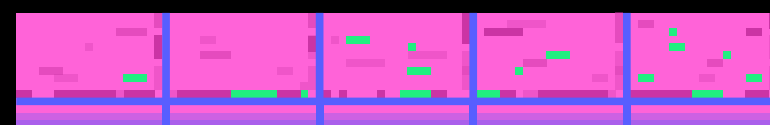
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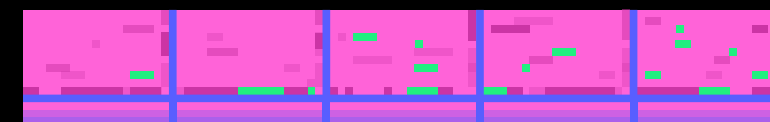
➡️ WHAT BARRIERS/CHALLENGES DO OUR AI/AN TAY POPULATION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY FACE WHEN TRYING TO ACCESS RESOURCES/SERVICES?



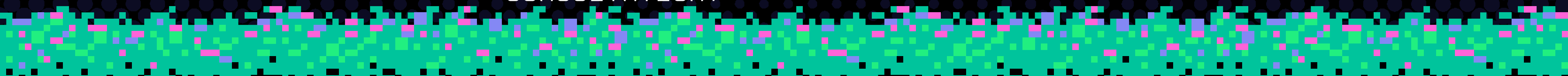
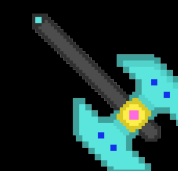
CULTURALLY TARGETED FACILITIES IN PROXIMITY TO THEM, SUCH AS THOSE LOCATED IN UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES.



EXPERIENCING PROLONGED WAITING PERIODS AFTER SEEKING HELP, STARTING FROM THE INITIAL POINT OF CONTACT UNTIL ACTUAL CONSULTATION.



WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE REQUIRED ASSISTANCE FROM SERVICES WITH THE INVOLVEMENT OF THEIR PARENTS, THEIR APPEALS WERE FREQUENTLY IGNORED DUE TO A DEFICIENCY IN PARENTAL OR CAREGIVER UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH, AS WELL AS ASSOCIATED STIGMAS





PLAYER 1  

DO OUR AI/AN TAY  
IN LOS ANGELES  
COUNTY FEEL  
THAT THEY HAVE A  
VOICE/ARE  
HEARD?



WHILE SOME OF THE YOUTH HAVE TRIED TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD, MANY EXPRESSED THAT THEY HAVE "GIVEN UP" TRYING TO EXPLAIN THEIR CONCERNS BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD TO "GET OVER IT". THE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS TOWARDS MENTAL HEALTH THAT THE OLDER GENERATIONS STILL AI/AN TAY TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES.

BACK TO AGENDA PAGE

MENU



# MOVING FORWARD



- HOW CAN ADULTS/ ELDERS COME ALONGSIDE THE YOUTH TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?



- WHY DOES THE YOUTH HAVE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THEMSELVES, FUTURE GENERATIONS, ETC.



- HOW DO WE GO TO PEOPLE (ADULTS/ ELDERS) WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND?



MENU



[BACK TO AGENDA PAGE](#)

# MOVING FORWARD



HOW CAN OUR YOUTH TAKE CARE OF  
THEMSELVES WHEN THEY HAVE TO  
EDUCATE  
ADULTS/PARENTS/ELDERS/CAREGIVERS  
AT THE SAME TIME?







