American Indian Culture MFIP Presentation

*Blessing – Spirit Plate
*Intro – What are you hoping to learn
*String of Lives Teaching
*American Indian/ First Nations Cultural World View
*What is Historical Trauma, Historical Trauma Time Line (sterilization, adoption, out of home placement, human trafficking, burial mounds, forced marches, Concentration camps)
* Transmission of Historical/Intergenerational Trauma (epigenetics)
*Practices when working with American Indian Families
*Web of Healing – Planting Healing Seeds (what seeds are we planting) – values
*Closing – Drum Song
What is historical trauma? Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma. Native Americans have, for over 500 years, endured physical, emotional, social, and spiritual genocide from European and American colonialisrist policy. Contemporary Native American life has adapted, such that, many are healthy and economically self-sufficient. Yet a significant proportion of Native people are not faring as well.

The effects of historical trauma include: unsettled emotional trauma, depression, high mortality rates, high rates of alcohol abuse, significant problems of child abuse and domestic violence.

Our purpose is to heal from the historical unresolved grief that many indigenous individuals and communities are struggling with. Historical unresolved grief is the grief that accompanies the trauma. (Brave Heart, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2000)

From: http://historicaltrauma.com/
Stages Of Life

**GRANDPARENT - ELDER**
**CHARACTERISTICS:**
- Many things (food, wood, money) must be provided
- Some assistance needed in self care
- Lots of life experience

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- Teach the community
- Guide/help parents in their work
- Guide community decisions
- Remember/teach history, ceremony and traditions

**INFANT - CHILD**
**CHARACTERISTICS:**
- Everything provided
- Cared for completely

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- To live, observe, watch & learn
- To feel and respond to things
- To explore the world around them

**PARENT - ADULT**
**CHARACTERISTICS:**
- Hold a set role in society
- Make good decisions for the family, community and children seven generations into the future

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- Provide food for the family & community
- Care completely for self and children
- Teach children about the world around them
- Teach by example, be a good role model

**adoLEscENT - TEEN**
**CHARACTERISTICS:**
- Increasingly responsible for own food, clothing and self-care
- Exploring and experimenting in the world around them

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- To work for the community
- To make good decisions based on what is good for the family and the community
Bravery
Bravery is demonstrating strength of heart in difficult or challenging times. Brave people are healthy risk takers.

- How can you show bravery and courage today?

Generosity
Generosity is giving without expecting anything in return. Giving your time, belongings, wisdom, and money are all examples of generosity.

- How can you show your generosity?

Peace Making
Peace making is a process of guiding people through their difficulties, creating agreements, and restoring harmony. Patience, listening, willingness, and compassion are building blocks of peace making.

- What are ways that you can make peace?

Wisdom
Wisdom is knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense, and insight coupled with good judgment. Anyone can be wise, including children, teens, adults, and elders.

- How do you show your wisdom?

Humility
Humility is the spiritual quality of knowing one's place in the world. Humble people give others credit and point out the good in them. They are confident, content, have high self-esteem, and receive praise in a respectful manner.

- How do you show your humility?

Spirituality
Spirituality is being connected to the earth and to all creations. It is having purpose in life and knowing who you are. Spirituality involves the deepest values and meanings by which people live.

- How do you express your spirituality?

Family
At the center of Native life is the family, including extended family members. Members of a family may not always be related by blood, and do not always live in the same household. Nurturing a family is one of our greatest responsibilities and joys.

- What is your sense of duty to family?
Indian Policy Timeline

The Indian Experience

FEDERAL POLICIES TOWARD INDIANS

Pre-1800's
Extermination, Manipulation and Colonization of Indians

Early 1800's
The Civilization Act
Appropriate money to "civilize" and "educate" Indians in white schools with white teachers who were usually missionaries.

1830
Removal Act
Authorized President Jackson to remove Indians from the east to west of the Mississippi River. Forced Death March

1870-1890
Indian Wars
Wounded Knee 1890 -- famous Sioux massacre.

1870
Religious Persecution
Atempt to get rid of plains Indian societies by destroying their "savage" religions.

1887
The Dawes Allotment Act
Divided up Indian land and gave plots of land to the "head of household."
Much of original land allotted to Indians was later taken because they were unable to pay taxes. Government determined tribal roles and membership.

1924
The Snyder Act
Until this time Indians were not considered citizens of the United States.

1934
Wheeler-Howard Indian Reorganization Act
The "Indian New Deal" allowed tribes to establish elected tribal governments. Traditional chiefs, headmen and medicine men are not recognized by the government.

1953
Termination Policy
Attempted to abolish federal supervision of Indian tribes. Effect was disastrous on tribes that were terminated, most notably the Klamath Tribe in Oregon and Menominee Tribe in Wisconsin.

1968
Indian Civil Rights Act
Imposed regulations on tribes in order to guarantee individual Indians similar rights in tribal matters as the Bill of Rights gives others.

1970
Self-Determination Policy
Richard Nixon condemned the Termination Policy and extended more control of Indian affairs to Indians themselves.

1978
Indian Child Welfare Act
Assures the preservation of the Indian family by protecting the proper placement of Indian children into Indian adoptive and foster homes.

References and Suggested Reading:

Native people experienced repeated harms over many generations resulting from historically traumatic events. This is called Historical Trauma. When historical trauma is unresolved, the trauma continues. This is called Current Day Trauma.

TYPES OF HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Extermination, Massacres, Disease

Systematic genocidal campaigns were waged against Native people from 1492 to today that had devastating consequences. Many tribes are gone today due to intentional extermination, massacre and disease.

U.S. Federal Treaties and Policies

Federal policies served to divide and conquer Native people. These policies included the Dawes Act (or land allotments), Citizenship, Relocation, and Termination. The United States broke every single treaty ever made with tribes. Reservations, blood quantum, and other strategies were created by the U.S. effort to deal with what they considered "the Indian problem."

Boarding Schools and Child Sexual Abuse 1879 Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Countless Native children were forcibly removed from their parents and families by being sent to federal and Christian boarding schools. Some children never saw their parents, families, or communities again. The introduction of child sexual abuse can be traced back through generations to these boarding schools.

Loss of Power and Self-determination

After European contact and with the establishment of the United States, foreign ways were introduced that undermined tribal control and leadership over their own people. A new era of tribal government, tribal membership requirements, economies, and dependence on the U.S. was created, resulting in negative consequences.

1973-1976 - Sterilization of Indian Women Without Their Permission

1862 - Sioux Uprising - Concentration Camp @ Fort Snelling
Mass Hanging @ Mankato

Native Wellness Institute
School Violence  
Meth  
Drugs  
Depression

Problem Gambling
Domestic Violence
Gang Violence

Historical Trauma
Loss of traditions  Loss of Land
Boarding School  Trail of tears
Massacres
Relocation
Loss of Traditional Foods and Plants
Loss of Ceremonies
Loss of Language  Loss of Rights
Termination
Introduction of Alcohol
Small Pox / Epidemics
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Practices When Working with American Indians

- Create a welcoming environment
- Treat families as you would a guest
- Listen with compassion
- Not looking directly at a person (eye contact)
- Non verbal language
- Softer spoken
- Pausing before speaking (words have a spirit/giving thought to a response first)
- Concept of We not I
- Ask families what they need to create a plan of where they would like to be
- Trust that there are many ways to solve a problem and have an outcome
- Be open to different ways of doing things...be open minded-What is your norm may not be another communities norm
- Families are their own expert – self governing
- Elders and children are revered
- Have something in your office that represents the community you are working with
Four Ways Of Connecting

Native Communication
Listen with heart and mind

(Feel) Emotional

"Check" your feelings
Use "I" message - not "You"
Extended pause time is okay
Be aware of how people receive information
Prepare statement before talking
Monitor voice volume, tone, and inflection
Use verbal prompts
Avoid big words

Spiritual (Connection)

Be respectful
Do not interrupt
Be quiet when listening
Be empathetic
See others as part of the circle

(Thinking) Mental

Be aware of how people receive information.
Prepare statement before talking
Monitor voice volume, tone, and inflection
Use verbal prompts
Avoid big words

Physical (Movement)

Relaxed
Eye contact/gaze
Keep arms unfolded
Smile
Keep open body position
Hand shake awareness

Native Wellness Institute
Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.

Chief Seattle

Elder's Meditation of the Day - November 5

"You could study the ancestors, but without a deep feeling of communication with them it would be surface learning and surface talking. Once you have gone into yourself and have learned very deeply, appreciate it, and relate to it very well, everything will come very easily."

— Ellen White, NANAIMO

Inside of every human being are our ancestors, and these ancestors still live. Today, the white man calls this DNA, but there is more than DNA. We have the ability to go inside of ourselves and learn from the ancestors. The ancestor teachings reside in the place of the center. The ancestors are waiting for us to come there so they can share the ancient teachings.

'Great Spirit, let me walk in the stillness.'
"Whether we have happiness or not depends on the seeds in our consciousness. If our seeds of compassion, understanding, and love are strong, those qualities will be able to manifest in us. If the seeds of anger, hostility, and sadness in us are strong, then we will experience much suffering.

To understand someone, we have to be aware of the quality of the seeds in their store consciousness. And we need to remember that they are not solely responsible for those seeds. Their ancestors, parents, and society are co-responsible for the quality of the seeds in their consciousness. When we understand this, we are able to feel compassion for that person. With understanding and love, we will know how to water our own beautiful seeds and those of others, and we will recognize seeds of suffering and find ways to transform them.”

~Thich Nhat Hanh
Richard Henry Pratt established Carlisle (Pennsylvania) in 1879. Between 1880 and 1902, 25 off-reservation boarding schools were built and 20,000 to 30,000 Native American children went through the system. That was roughly 10 percent of the total Indian population in 1900.
UNSPoken
America’s Native American Boarding Schools
Historical trauma is entirely different than consciously holding onto the past when it resides in your ancestral memory and DNA. It results in numerous defense mechanisms, developmental malfunctions, and behavioral issues. This is scientific and is supported in studies.

~Tony Ten Fingers/Wanbli Nata’u, Oglala Lakota
Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874.
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