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Intergenerational Survivance & Healing from Trauma for AIAN Youth

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Dr. Yellowhair is currently a Research Assistant Professor at the University of New Mexico in the Division of Community Behavioral Health (CBH). She also serves as the Project Director for the T.R.I.B.E.S. Grant, a Category II grant funded by SAMHSA and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Dr. Yellowhair graduated from Western Michigan University with a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology and completed her pre-doctoral and post-doctoral training at the University of New Mexico. She also received her Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology from Western Michigan University and bachelor degrees in Psychology and English from Fort Lewis College.

A Diné/Navajo from Arizona, she has dedicated her research and studies to addressing historical trauma and multicultural, diversity, equity and racial issues; specifically, how systemic racism impacts mental health in American Indian (AI) communities.



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Learning Objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Define intergenerational trauma and survivance;
- Define Historical Resilience;
- Describe how Historical Trauma informs intergenerational trauma and survivance;
- Describe how intergenerational transmission of trauma and strength impact new generations;



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Question for Attendees

Please use chat to respond:

“How are ways you discuss survivance and trauma in the places you work?”



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Defining Intergenerational Survivance

- Active resistance against generations of colonial and racist acts:
 - Violence
 - Removal
 - Forced Assimilation
 - These acts have imposed cumulative and persistent emotional and psychological distress on Indigenous people.
- Despite these acts, Indigenous communities continue to thrive.



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Historical Trauma

- Historical Trauma (HT) –Cumulative emotional and psychological wounding from massive group trauma across generations, including the lifespan.
- Historical trauma response (HTR) –Is a constellation of features in reaction to massive group trauma, including historical unresolved grief.
 - Survivors & descendants of massive group trauma including:
 - Jewish Holocaust,
 - Japanese American internment camp,
 - Black/African American slavery/racism, &
 - American Indian trauma due to colonization.



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Historical & Ongoing Trauma Exposure

- Intergenerational parental trauma traced back to legacy of negative boarding school experiences
- Constant trauma exposure related to deaths from alcohol-related incidents, suicides, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, etc.
- Surviving family members include individuals who are descendants of massive tribal trauma (e.g. massacres, abusive and traumatic boarding school placement)
- Cumulative trauma exposure – current and lifespan trauma superimposed on collective massive group trauma.



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Historical Trauma Response Features

- ***Survivor guilt***
- **Depression**
- **PTSD symptoms**
- **Hypervigilance**
- ***Psychic numbing***
- ***Fixation to trauma***
- **Somatic symptoms**
- **Self-destructive behavior**
- **Suicidal ideation**
- ***Compensatory fantasies***
- **Death identity – fantasies of reunification with the deceased; cheated death**
- **Preoccupation with trauma, with death**
- ***Loyalty to the deceased and internalization of ancestral suffering***
- ***Vitality in own life seen as betrayal to ancestors who suffered so much***
- ***Trauma response is activated***





Youth Trauma Responses

- Youth who experience trauma are often unaware or disconnected from their emotional experience.
- Difficulty accurately discriminating among emotional states
- Physiological or behavioral expressions of emotional experience
- Lack of understanding of the connection between physiological states and experiences causing them
- Youth may be highly reactive to perceived danger, rejection, slights
- Insufficient attunement
 - e.g., missing other people's cues
- Inaccurate reading of cues
 - Over-perception of negative affect

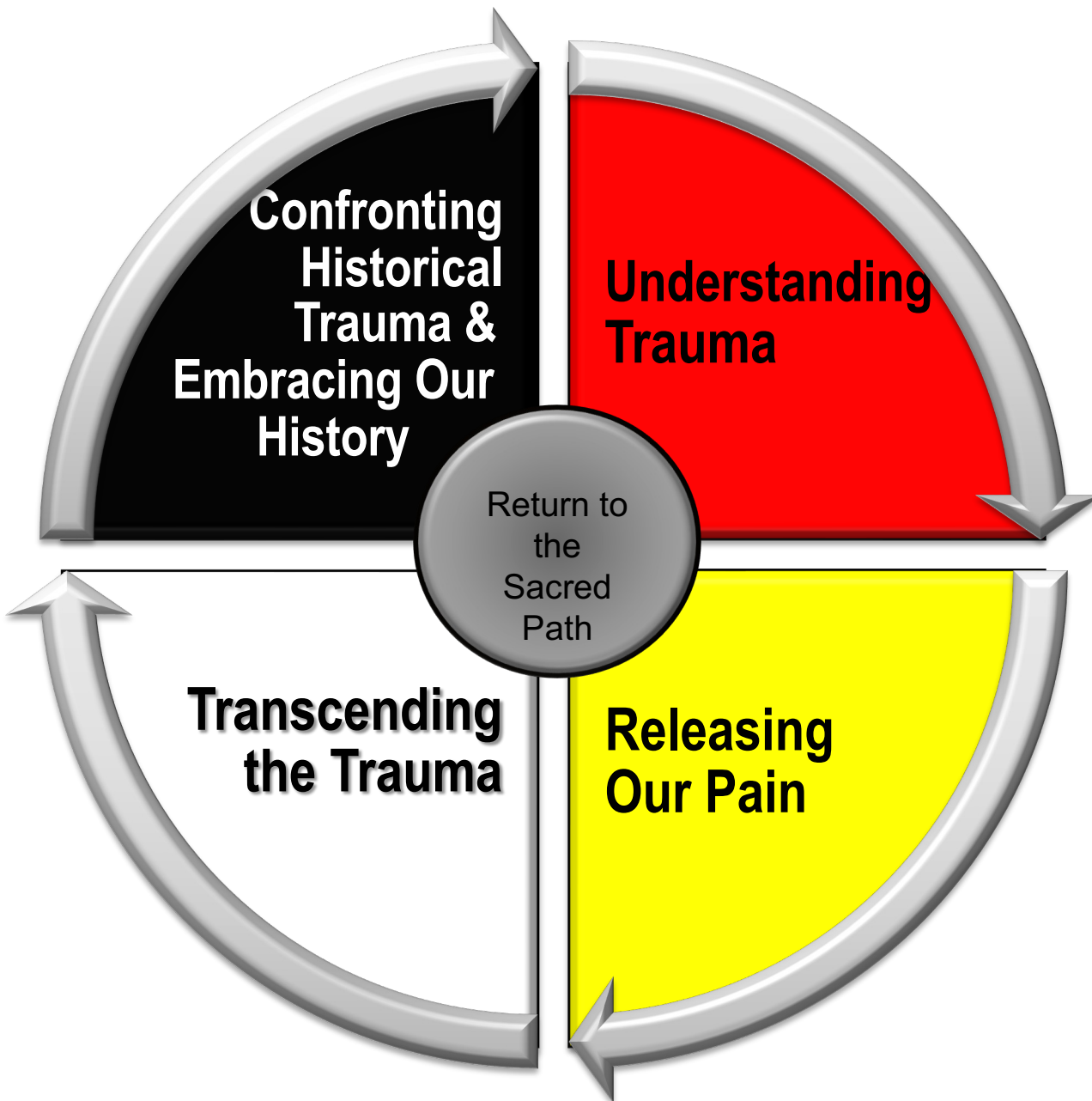


(Historical) Trauma Informed Care

- Understanding clients, families and communities through the HT lens;
- Does not pathologize but helps to understand HOW clients are impacted by historical and intergenerational trauma
- Creating Safety
 - Physical, Social, Emotional and Stability/Consistency



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Historical Resilience

- Cumulative emotional and psychological **STRENGTHS** across generations, including the lifespan.
 - Intergenerational knowledge sharing
 - Language
 - Cultural practices
 - Challenging existing social and political structures to benefit and protect individual, family and community.



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Working with Families

The **Trauma informed to build Resilient, Indigenous, Balanced communities Enhanced with Strength (T.R.I.B.E.S.)** initiative through the University of New Mexico Division of Community Behavioral Health (CBH) seeks to increase education, training and knowledge about Historical Trauma and its impact on parenting practices, child abuse and neglect, and suicide in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations.

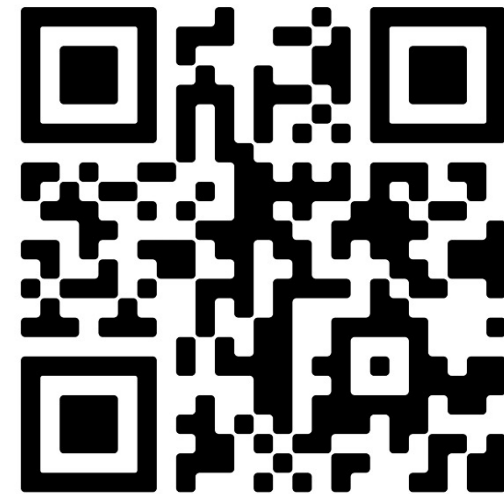
- T.R.I.B.E.S.: Transcending the Historical Trauma in Parenting Curriculum
 - Curriculum Training Workbook
 - Facilitator's Guide
 - Implementation Manual
 - Learning Communities for Implementation



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T.R.I.B.E.S: Transcending the Historical Trauma in Parenting Curriculum

Interested in learning more about the curriculum? Use the QR code ->



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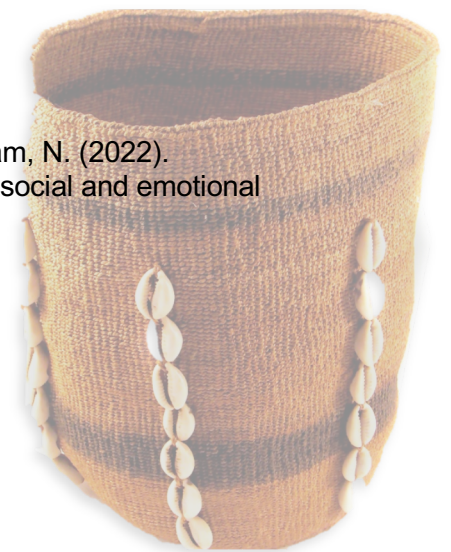
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