



Indigenous culture as prevention

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Main points: Indigenous Health



- Indigenous health and wellbeing is holistic and consists of physical, emotional, social, spiritual and cultural health.
- Colonization has degraded the health status and wellbeing of Indigenous people
- 3. Indigenous culture and the act of cultural revitalization and decolonization relate to positive health status
- **4. Traditional cultural practices** (e.g., Food, language, cultural activities) are **preventative measures** to physical health and mental health risks

Healthis Holistic



Colonization + Mental Health



- Historical Trauma
 - Participation in forced colonial assimilation programs is related to worsened physical and mental health status such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, and alcohol/drug abuse.
- Discrimination
 - Relationship between discrimination and mental health among IP in the US, New Zealand, and Australia
 - Each unit of increase in the discrimination measure predicting a two-fold increase in likelihood of depression
- Microaggressions
 - Microaggressions in daily life found a dose-response relationship between stress accumulation and depression among AI/AN adults

Decolonization



- "...to uncover the detrimental effects of European American colonialism and to assist historically colonized groups with preserving and reclaiming their distinctive cultural legacies, strengths, and institutions."-Wednt & Gone, 2012
- Decolonization' is a euphemism that only describes the formal handing over of the instruments of government, when in reality it must be a long-term process involving the cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial parameters. —Linda Tuhiwai Smith





Root of the Problem: **Colonization**

Colonialism (and racism) is a social determinant of health (Reading and Wien, 2013)

Solution to Colonization: Our Culture

Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their **health practices**, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.

(UNDRIP, Article 24)



MH/SU Pathways for IP

-Colonization
-Historical Trauma
-Interpersonal Trauma

-Disconnected from traditional cultural lifeways -Trauma Experience and Symptomology

-Racism, Discrimination

Distress and/or Mental Health Illness: PTSD Anxiety Depression SUD



Decolonizing MH/SUD

Culturally Tailored Interventions

Culture as Treatment Cultural and Societal Revitalization

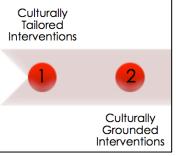
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Culturally Grounded Interventions Culture as Prevention



Cultural Tailoring



Culturally Tailored

- Created for non-Native people and tailored at a later date
- Use Western theory and techniques

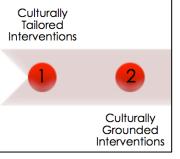
Improvements beyond nontailored alternatives

Culturally Grounded

Created for Native people

 May use a combination of western and Indigenous theories and techniques

Improvements beyond nontailored and only tailored alternatives





Tailoring SUD Treatment

- Native-serving clinic in the Upper Midwest
 - Prayers, Smudging
 - Talking Circle
 - Peer Models
 - Gifting
 - Meals
 - Spirit Plate
- White Bison- Wellbriety



- Indigenous Motivational Interviewing (Kamila Venner)
- Trauma Informed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (Delores Bigfoot)



Culture as Treatment

- Blackfeet culture camp: An alternative to residential treatment includes a seasonal cultural immersion camp designed to approximate the day-to-day experiences of pre-reservation ancestors
 - "A (post)colonial return to Indigenous cultural orientations and practices is sufficient for effecting abstinence and recovery from substance use disorders for American Indians"
- HULA: Sig reduced SBP compared to control
- Pima Pride: Culture reduced blood glucose more than exercise and diet group





- Cultural connectedness
 - is an important aspect in Native youth resiliency and is a vital protective factor
 - Youth indicating a strong bond among family, community members (e.g., teachers), and elders have shown greater resilience and increased protective factors compared to youth with less cultural identity
 - More effective than programs focusing on decreasing negative risk factors for AI youth



Cherokee Mental Health Concepts

- R→S O'LLOW (Esga Udanta); <u>Depression-</u> Thinking back toward yourself
- ОӨВАД (Unayehisdi); <u>Anxiety-</u> Fear, worry
- O'LOW DRO'L (Udanta Ayoutla); <u>Historical Trauma</u>-Heart (therefore thoughts) is Crippled





Culture as Prevention

- Prevention and/or wellness programs targeted to children, youth, pregnant mothers
- Example: Cherokee Nation RTR program

	T1-T2 Training Period	T1-T3 Return	T1-T4 6 mo f/u
Positive Mental Health	+4.29^	+8.67*	+4.58*
Stress	-0.31	-0.70*	-0.45^
Depression	-1.80^	-2.60*	-3.31*
Anxiety	-1.80*	-2.53*	-1.56
Anger	-0.11^	-0.16*	-0.20*
Microaggressions	-0.14*	-0.20*	-0.29*

Traditional & Cultural Activities



- Native people that identify strongly and positively with their identity and take part in traditional cultural activities are more likely to...
 - ✓ have improved academic performance
 - ✓ positive mental health
 - youth
 - adults
 - ✓ reduced substance use
 - youth
 - adults
 - ✓ improved physical health
 - smoking, obesity, diabetes
- Fosters a positive relationship among peers, decreases negative behaviors, and increases a positive bond to their family, community, and tribe



Cherokee Values of Wellbeing

- *VA, Tohi*: well-being, balanced state of the world
- *δb,* Osi: balanced state of the individual
- SSY, Gadugi: Interconnectedness, Relationships
- SSY, Diyukta: The right way





Cherokee Community Values



People coming together as one and working to help one another.

SGLChA.960V.JSF460.J detsadatlanigohisdodidegesdi

Strengthen one another with encouraging words in all that you do.

EGPC JGL6.960.J TVP60.J gywalitsv ditsadayohisdi itsehesdi

Live and never give up on what you start.

SGLFG4oOJ detsadageyusesdi Be stingy with one another's ex

Be stingy with one another's existence, like a mother with child. SGLAV'SoO. I detsadalyquodesdi
Like one another without conditions, admire one another.

SGICB460A detsadatliyvsesdi



Struggle to hold on to one another or cling to one another.

OPENIA SGLB14001 ulisgedi detsadayelvsesdi

Treat each other's existence as being sacred or important.

JGLOSPOV TVPOOA ditsadasdelisgi itsehesdi You all live, helping one another.

hscott ssy hcotol nigaya'iso gadugi nitsvnesdi In the mind and heart always have the thought of working together.

SGLV.AG460.1 detsadadohiyusesdi

You all have a strong conviction for and believe in one another. SGLFFO-JOFFO-J detsadaligenvdisgesdi

You all take responsibility for one another's wellbeing.

SGL&Aβολλ detsadagtiyesdi

Watch over and wait for one another.

JGLJoULN J TVPoDJ ditsadagusdanidohi itsehesdi Live and support each other in all that you do.



You all gang up on work whenever and wherever it arises.

JGPAA TVPoOA ditsaligohi itsehesdi Live united, work as a team with one another.

SGLGO AVPOL datsadawatvhidohesdi

Visit one another with love, locate and find one another.

SGLDOOJ TVPOOJ detsadasinasdi itsehesdi Live and be very skilled in all areas of life, be resourceful.

<mark>9LO-AC SGLO-OAのF</mark>லA nudantiyu detsadanvwidisgesdi Encourage and instruct one another in a gentle & thoughtful way.

New of a dadolisdodi detsadadanytadisgesdi

nvwoti adadolisdodi detsadadanvtadisgesdi
Think of one another in spiritual prayer and healing with medicine.
Ohi BO Sరిశిలించి మీరి సిల్మ్మ్ nani'y ywi detsatloyasdisgesdi
Include everyone, all human kind; however many.
SGAO'TLIP SGL4P60SOJ duyugtv iditly datsadasehesdesdi
Direct one another in the right way, without confining or pushing.









Cultural and Societal Revitalization

- Societal Rules = less fears
- Societal Roles = purpose
- Cultural/Linguistic Knowledge and Practice
- Connection
 - Family
 - Tribe
 - Land

Indigenized healthcare must include...

- Language
- Culture
 - > Foodways
- Community, Children & Elders



Traditional Language & Health



Mental:

■ Canada: Youth suicide rate for bands in which 50% of the community is conversationally fluent was 1/6th that of less fluent bands.

■ <u>Socio-Ecological:</u>

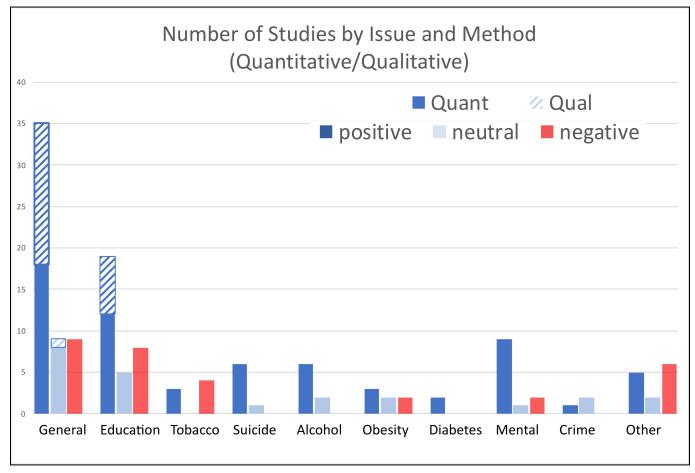
- **Australia** Speakers had reduced health risk factors such as excessive alcohol consumption (8% vs. 18% for English monolinguals), illicit drug use (16% vs. 26%), and violence victimization (25% vs. 37%)
- **Hawaii** Language immersion high school had 100% graduation rate compared to 70% for standard schools

Physical:

- **Southwest & Plains Tribes** % of smokers in tribes where indigenous languages are widely spoken =14%; where language use is sparse =50%
- **Hopi**-More speakers classified into "good" wellness category (82.4%) than those who could not speak it (70.1%).
- Canadian -Groups who used language more had significantly lower rates of diabetes even after factoring out socioeconomic factors

Traditional Language & Health









- Neurotransmitters
 - Serotonin I feel happy!
 - 2. <u>Dopamine</u> I feel joyful and motivated!
 - 3. Norepinephrine I feel alert and focused!
- Micronutrients necessary for these neurotransmitters to function properly
 - 1. Vitamin D (95% deficient)
 - 2. Vitamin B complex (10% deficient)
 - Magnesium (52% deficient)
 - 4. Omega 3 (100% deficient)

Pre-contact Cherokee Foods + Mental Health



- Pre-colonial Indigenous diets were rich in these micronutrients:
 - Cherokee Foods:
 - Vitamin D Mushrooms, Wild Bird Eggs, Trout, **Sunshine**
 - Vitamin B Corn, Beans, Squash, Hickory Nuts, Ramps/Wild onions, Venison, Wild Boar, Bison, Mushroom, Trout, Sunflower and Pumpkin seeds
 - Magnesium Corn, Beans, Squash, Hickory Nuts, Sunflower and Pumpkins seeds, Wild Greens
 - Omega 3 Hickory Nuts, Trout, Sunflower and Pumpkin seeds, Wild Boar, Venison, and Buffalo

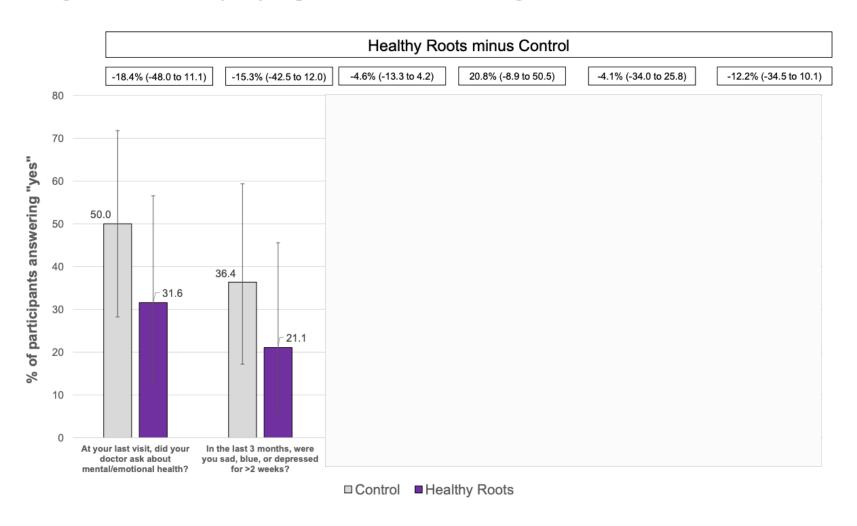
Omega 3 [EPA & DHA]

- Mental and Cognitive Health
 - Omega 3's can lessen depression and anxiety
 - Can reduce symptoms of ADHD in children
 - Can Improve Mental Disorders
 - Can fight Mental Decline and Alzheimer's Disease
- Cardiometabolic Health
 - Can decrease risks of heart disease
 - Can reduce symptoms of Metabolic Syndrome
- Other
 - Can fight inflammation
 - Can fight Auto-Immune Diseases
 - May Improve Sleep

Healthy Roots



Changes in Indicators of Self-Reported Mental Well-Being





Changes in Practice

- Consider decolonizing clinical practice
 - Indigenous Research Methods
 - Indigenous Healing Methods/Lifeways
 - Relationships/Gathering
 - Foodways
 - Language
 - Other clinical techniques...
 - Trauma informed care
 - Healing Centered Engagement
 - Somatic body work



Discussion: Thoughts, questions, feedback

Wado!