

Community Conversations on Sacred Trust: Screening & Assessment

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Community Conversations Project Staff

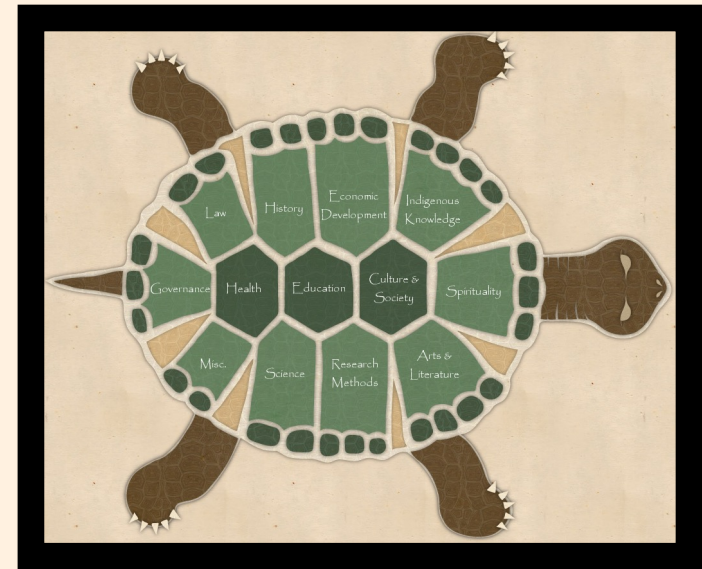
- **Danica Brown** – Behavioral Health Project Director, NPAIHB
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- **Evan Elkin** – Executive Director, Reclaiming Futures
- **Cortney Yarholar** – CEO, Evergreen Training & Development
- **Karin Dean** – Every Day is Ceremony Project Manager, NPAIHB
- **Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie** – Early Childhood Mental Health Project Coordinator, NPAIHB



Screening and assessment are not merely clinical items to check off on the way to diagnosis.

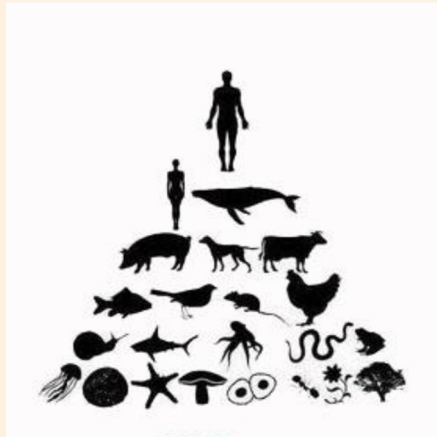
For Native people, the Indigenous world view perspective, history of colonization, and the erroneous assumption of superiority of Western thought in the field of psychology can create harm.

It is a special honor to serve Native people.



Indigenous Knowledge Preceded Western Thought and Science

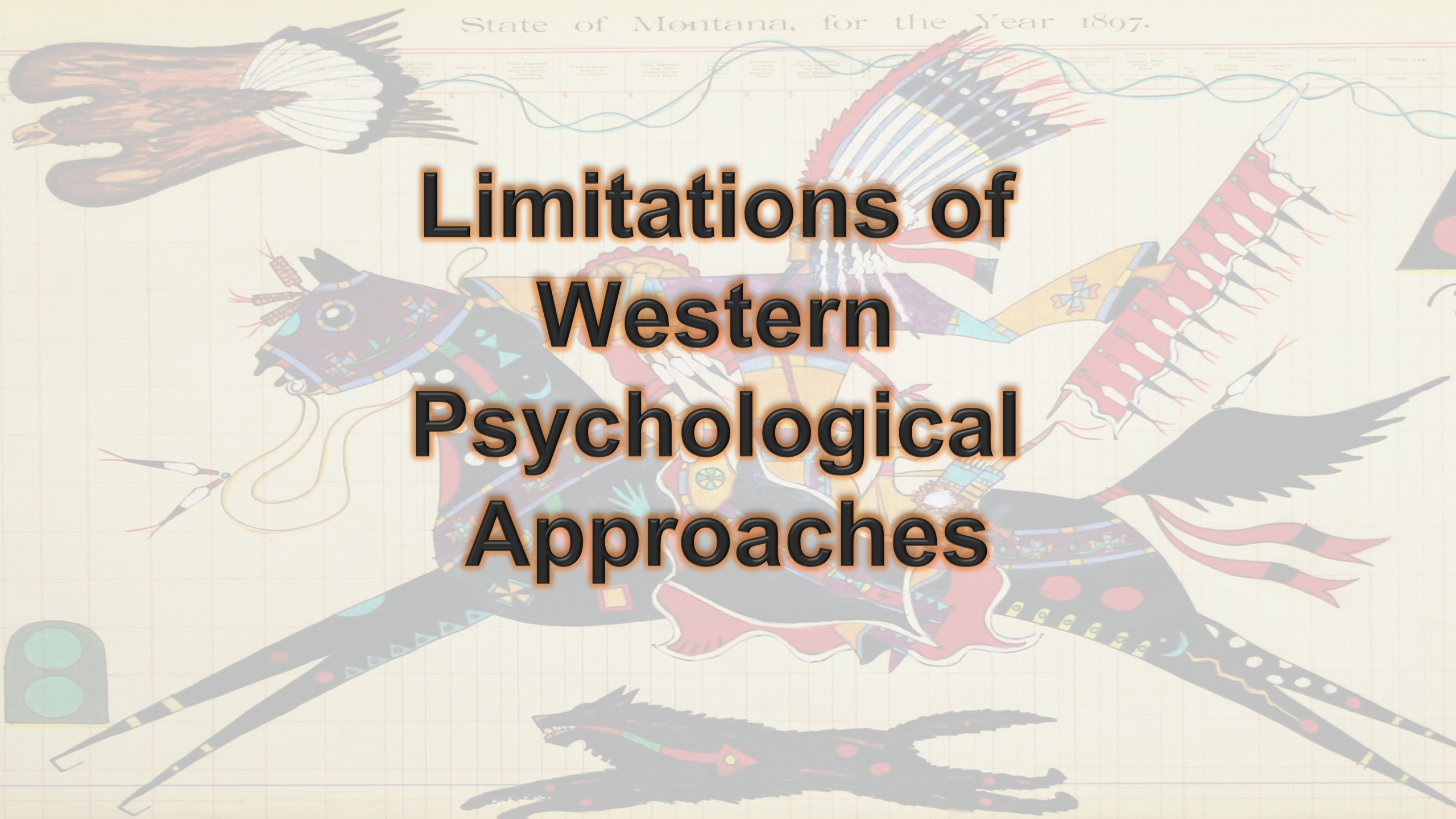
Western hierarchy of thought not sustainable



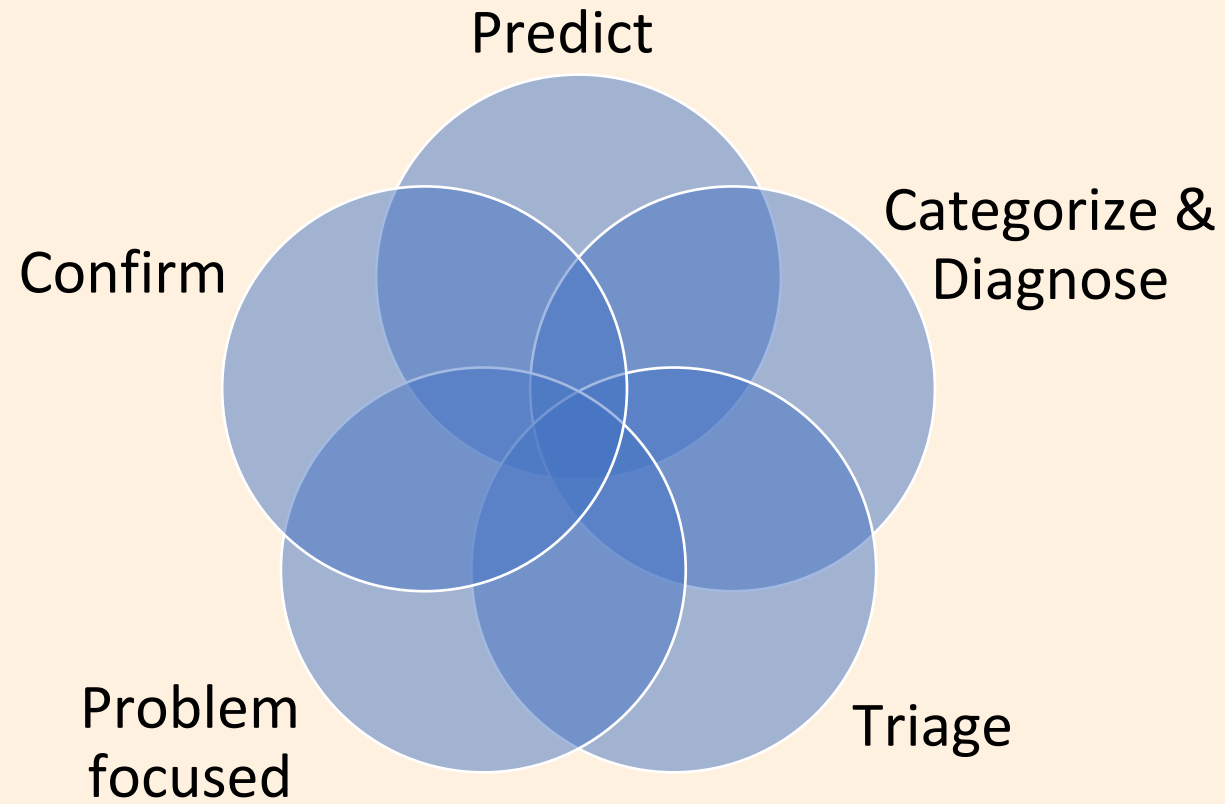
World continuing to turn to Indigenous thought



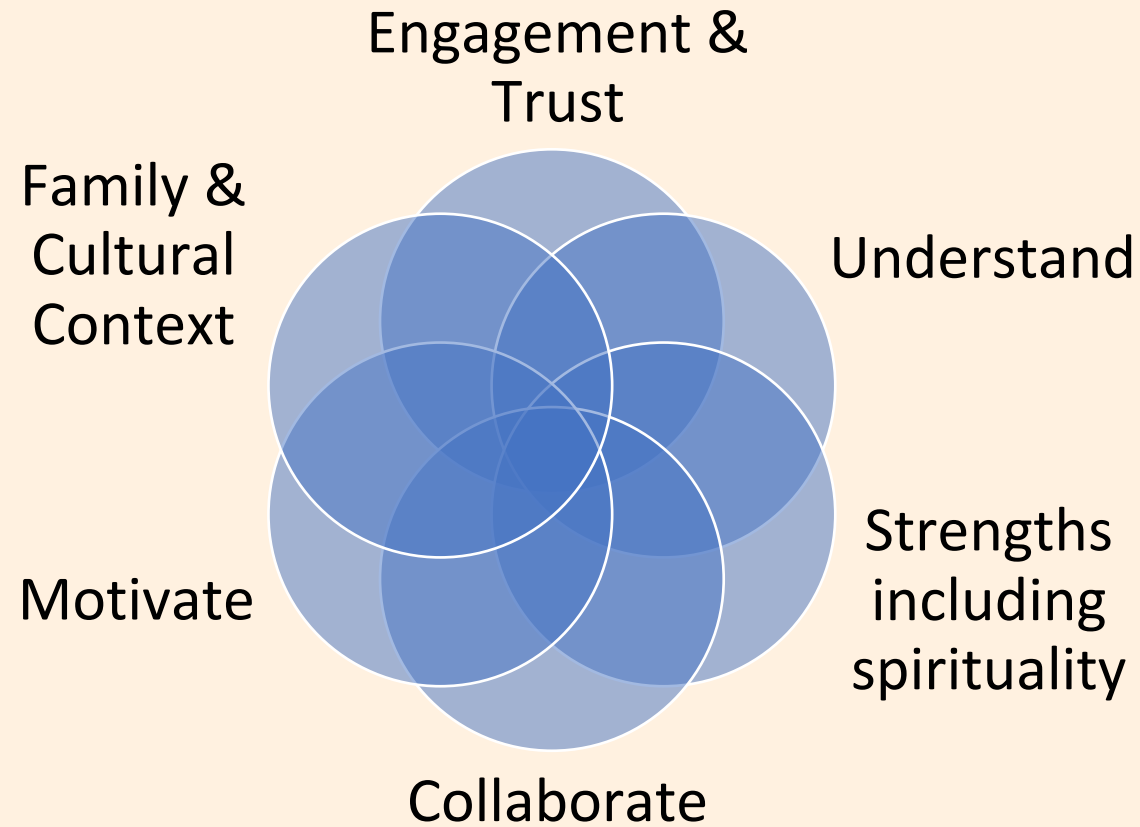
Limitations of Western Psychological Approaches



Traditional Approaches to Screening



A Broader Lens on Screening



Indigenous World View and Behavioral Health



“For the present, the indigenous way of seeing things like traditional Indians is...incongruent with the linear world [of science]. The linear mind looks for cause and effect, and the Indian mind seeks to comprehend relationships.”
(Fixico, 2003, p. 8) -Seminole-Creek tribes.

Community Conversations 2022

- Partnership with Reclaiming Futures (Portland State University)
 - Evan Elkin & colleague Cortney Yarholar
- Sacred Trust: Screening and Assessment
 - 5 group discussions; N = 23 (May 2022 – September 2022)
- Tribal and Clinical Staff
- Tribal Youth Delegates
- Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)
 - Parents and Families
- Contracted with Buffalo Nickle Creative to produce PSAs



An illustration of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a green long-sleeved shirt, hugging a child with long dark hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt. They are in a garden with green plants and a blue sky with white clouds. The scene is framed by a large, light pink, stylized shape that resembles a heart or a pair of hands.

What does sacred trust mean to you?

What does this look like in your life?

How can you incorporate this into your practice?

**Does this change the way you view
screening and assessment?**

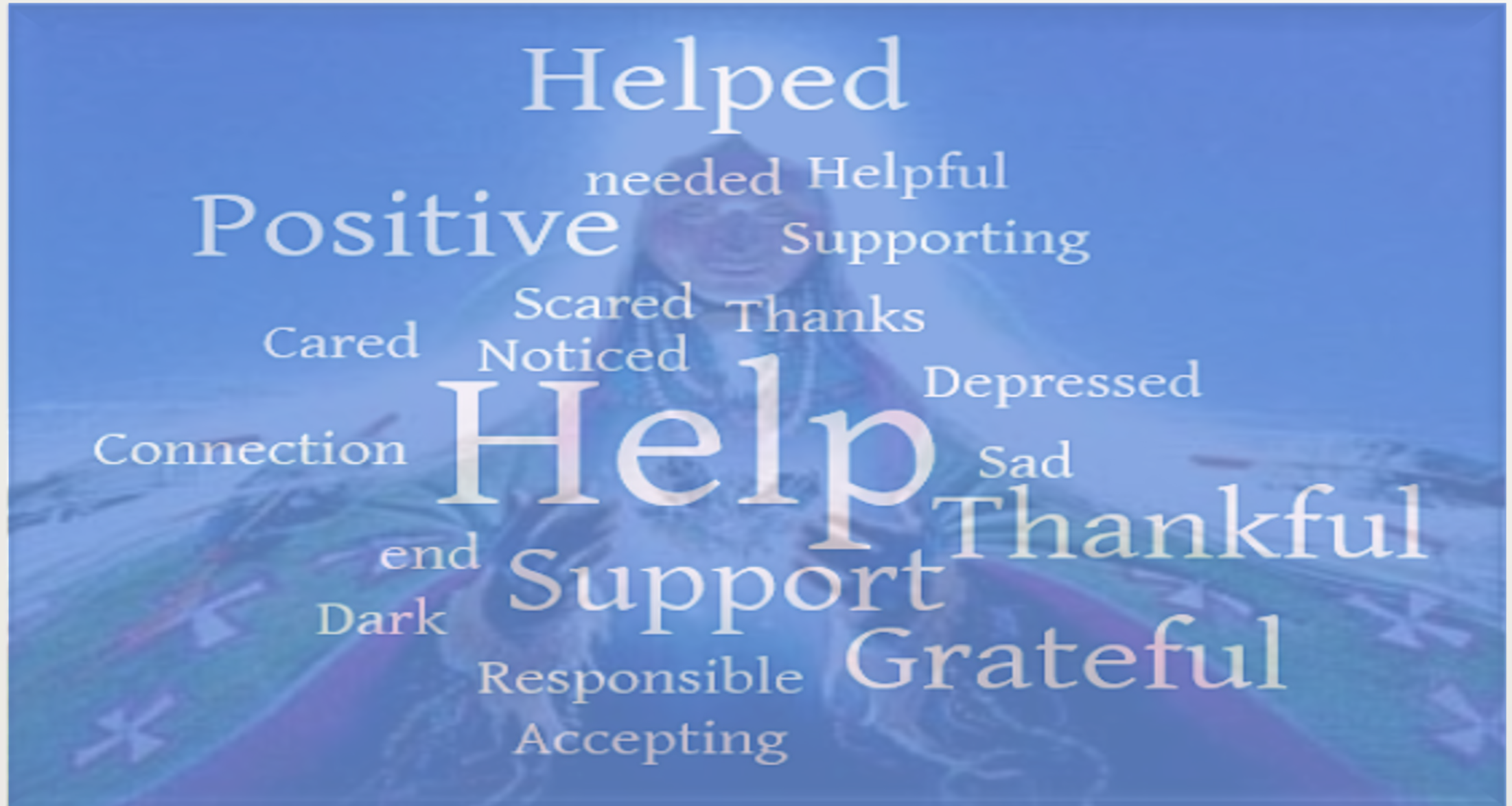
Community Conversations with Clinicians, Staff, & Youth Delegates

- Held multiple group discussions to get feedback from a cross section of patients, care providers, and their families
- Initial discussions with clinicians lead to follow-up conversations with other types of community members
- Goal to develop holistic and comprehensive understanding of the use, impact, and ways to improve screenings and assessments used in Tribal settings



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Screening and Assessment as a Sacred Trust



Helped

Positive

needed Helpful

Supporting

Scared Thanks

Cared

Noticed

Depressed

Connection

Help

Sad

Thankful

end

Support

Dark

Grateful

Responsible

Accepting

Conversations with Native Parents

- Two Group Discussions with Native Parents
 - Site visit to NAYA to introduce project, meet, and recruit parents
 - August & September 2022
- Feature story for Public Service Announcement



Themes

1. System of Care

- Need coordinated & integrated culturally competent care with a navigator to partner, as well as policies and practice that support child youth and family driven care

2. Trauma Informed

- Providers need to give warning and consent when they are working with a patient
- Explain to provide a sense of safety and choice for the patient

3. Strength Based

- Provide comfort, strength and encouragement by being there and being consistent and respectful
- Healing ceremonies in time of need
- Develop programs and services from the community before seeking funding to ensure programs and services are meeting the community strengths and needs



Buffalo Nickel Creative PSA Filming

- BNC → PDX 5.21.23
- Filming at Wapato Island
- Interviews of story
 - Sharing of Canoe family
 - 7 Waters Canoe Family
- PSA draft in next few weeks
- Final cut by August 2023



Buffalo Nickel Creative PSA Filming



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What kind of energy do we exhibit in the space we inhabit and in our relationships?

We need to examine our relationship to power, and examine whether we truly listen to the voices of our people.

In screening, assessment and diagnosis, we must be reversing the effects of colonization.

Lessons Learned

- **Culturally-congruent behavioral health is first and foremost an attitude**
- To be truly culturally-congruent, we must first become familiar with Indigenous ways of knowing and being
- We must disentangle ourselves from the existing Dominant narratives and seek to understand from an Indigenous perspective
- We need to examine our own relationship to space and time
- **Not everyone shares the same experiences**
 - Screening and Assessment tools used impact people in a wide range of ways, both positive and negative
- **Not everyone is treated the same**
 - Screening and assessment tools are not always applied consistently or handled with sensitivity
- **Youth are the FUTURE**



Resources

- www.npaihb.org
- www.indiancountryecho.org
- The work of Dr. Jessica Sanigaq Ullrich - Indigenous Connectedness Framework: Environmental, Familial, Community, Intergenerational



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Recommendations

- Provide training on sacred trust for screening and assessments to Tribal communities, non-Tribal communities, Tribal health clinics, etc.
- Provide short PSA to all Tribes and Tribal communities
- Provide training, brochures, guidance, practical tips, on sacred trust screening and assessment



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