

# *Indigenous Trauma and Trickster Spirits*

Dolores Jimerson, LCSW, ADS, CPC

(Seneca, bear clan)

Behavioral Health Education Director

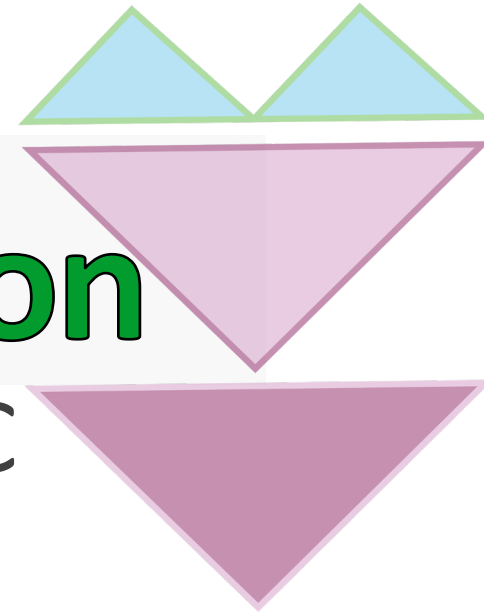
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# Dolores Jimerson

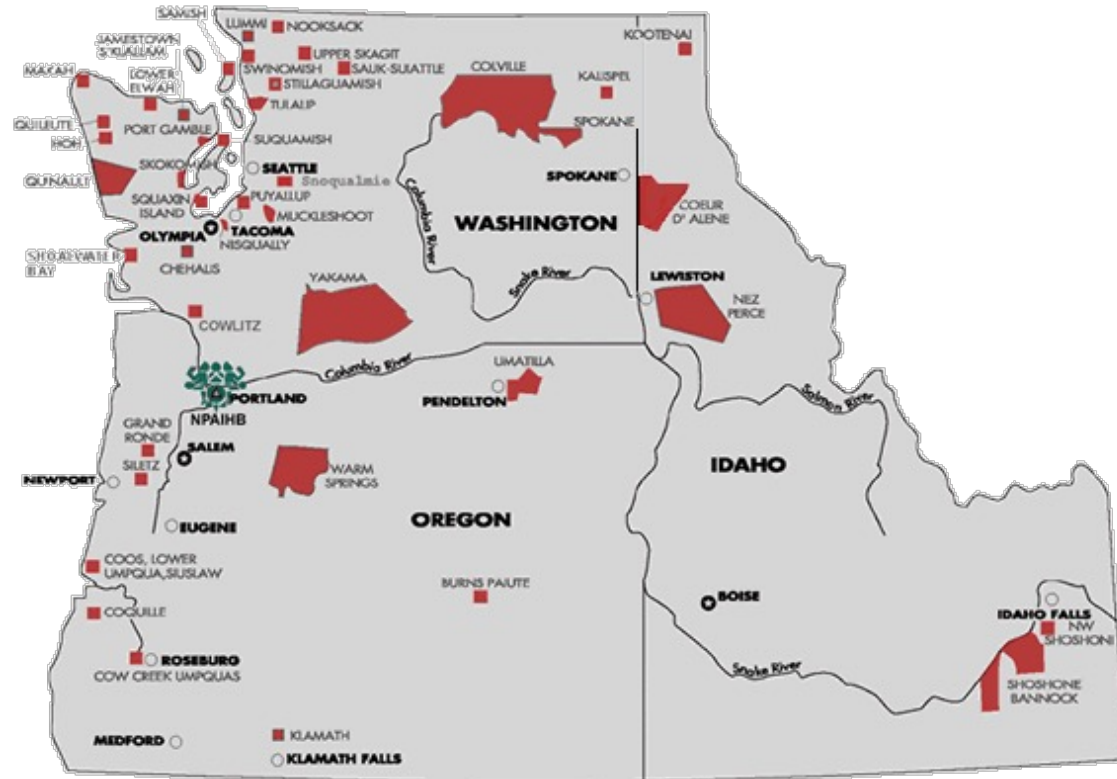
(Seneca) LCSW, ADS, CPC



BH Education Director (LCSW) in both WY and OR, certified acudetox specialist (ADS), certified peer counselor. She is an advocate of 'nothing about us without us' and the importance of growing our own to bring healing to tribal communities. Her passion for behavioral health comes from witnessing the impact of boarding schools and trauma on her own family. Dolores has over three decades of experience in behavioral health, twenty with tribes. Her career includes inpatient psych, community mental health, state level behavioral health administration, university instruction, tribal children's mental health, CEO of a FQHC in frontier Wyoming, Quileute Tribal Health Director, serving nationally when with NICWA as Director of Community Development, and is part of the Portland Area CHAP Certification Board. Some of her more rewarding experiences included indigenizing therapy with those she served, becoming an acudetox provider, creating integrated care programs and witnessing children grow into thriving adults thanks in part to culturally resonant prevention.

# Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board

*“Our mission is to eliminate health disparities and improve the quality of life of American Indians and Alaska Natives by supporting Northwest Tribes in their delivery of culturally appropriate, high quality healthcare.”*





Please Care for Yourself





Overview of the Trickster  
Stories

Connection of trauma  
and substance misuse

Overview of historical  
trauma and ancestral  
wisdom

Reframing as Soul  
Wound

Overview of Indigenous  
Wellness and healing  
through Making  
Relatives





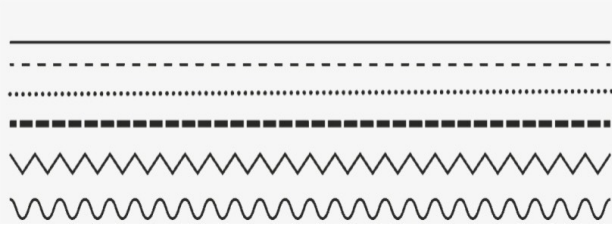
# Outcome

The goal of the session is to recognize how our traditional ways of being serve to heal individuals and communities from trauma, trauma that often presents in substance misuse.

# Primary Worldviews

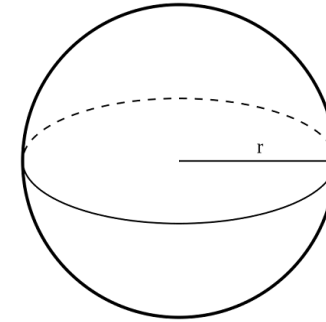
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## Linear



- Asks Why
- Cause and Effect
- Time/clock oriented
- Medical Model
- Values individual achievements
- Accumulation of wealth
- Mastery over nature, youthfulness
- Organized religion

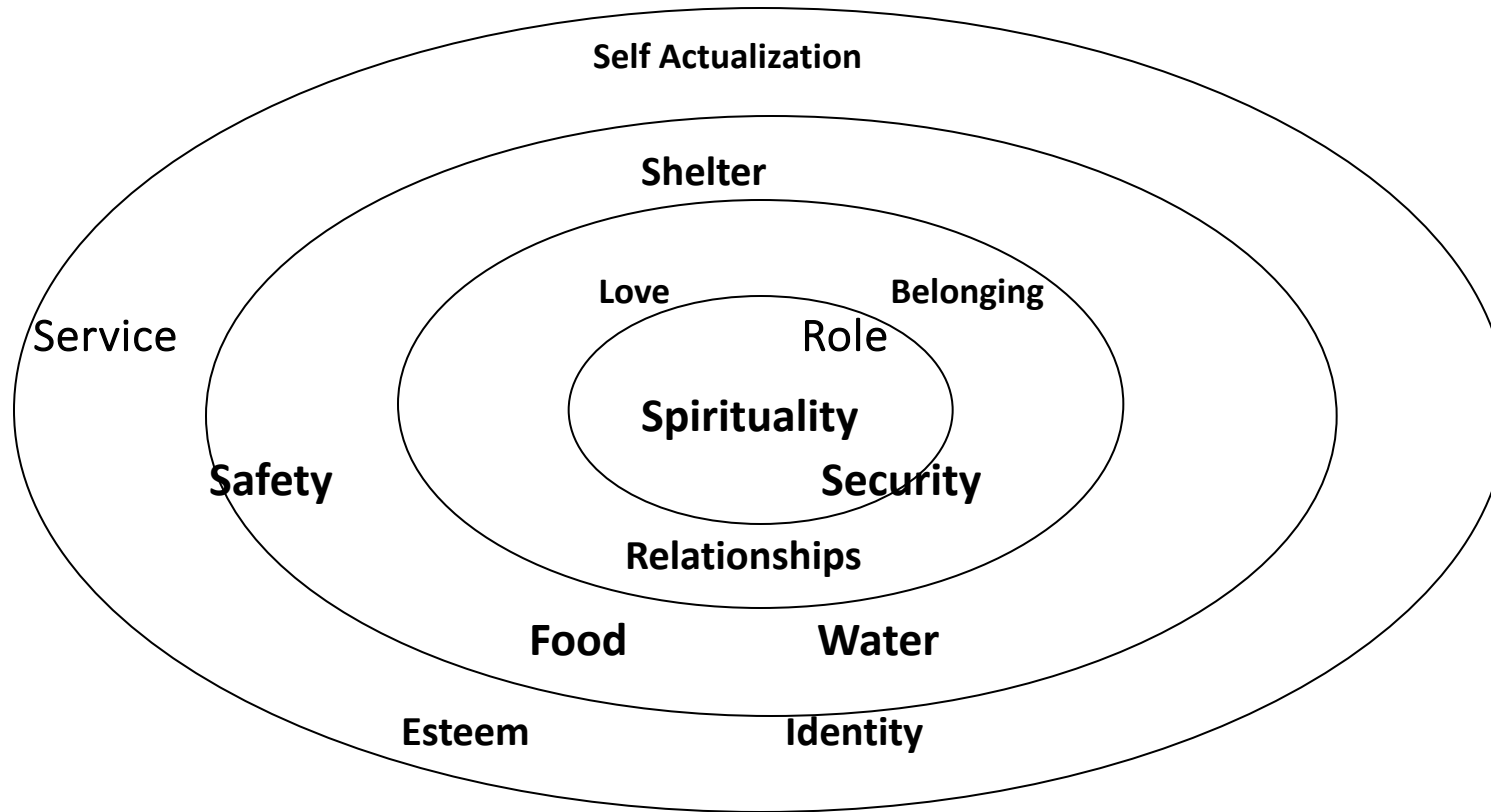
## Relational



- Asks How/What
- Focus on group
- Interconnected
- Sharing, redistribution of wealth
- 7 Generations
- Elders are respected/esteemed
- Spirituality
- Extended Family



# MASLOW THROUGH INDIGENOUS EYES



# Impact of Historical Trauma



Disruption in our ability to fulfill our original instructions

Disruption in our relational ways of being

Disruption in how we narrate/story our lives

Health Prevention/Promotion Interventions incorporate:

- Original Instructions

- Relational Restoration

- Narrative Transformation

# TRICKSTER

NATIVE AMERICAN TALES

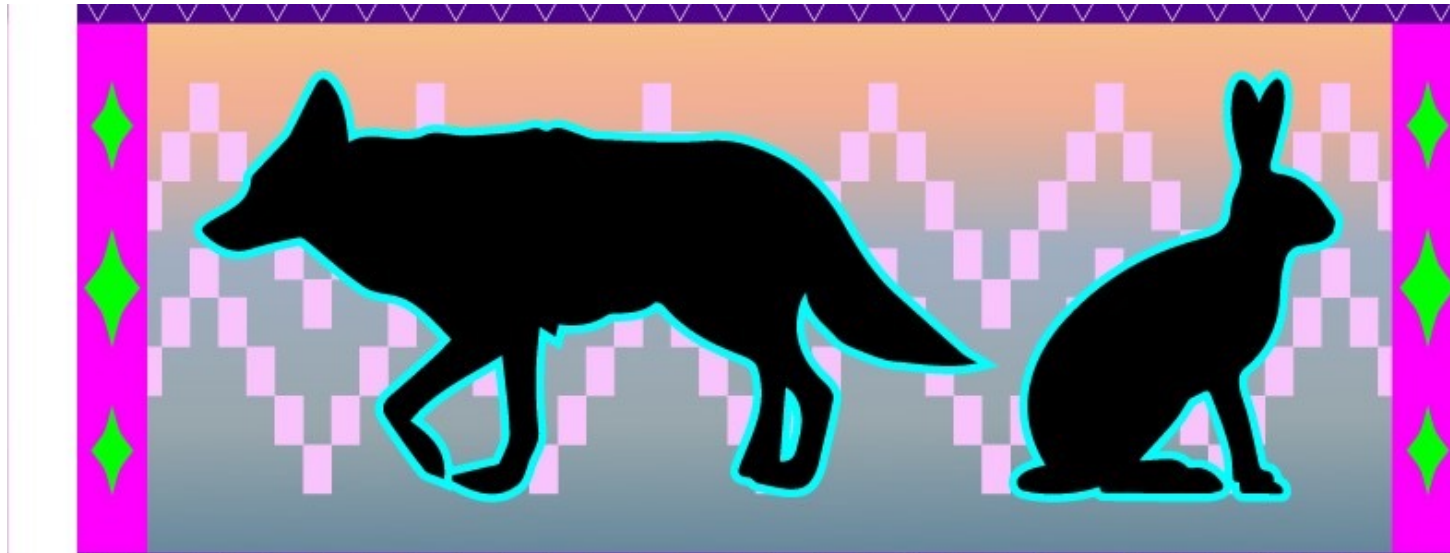
A GRAPHIC COLLECTION

“Meet the Trickster, a crafty creature or being who disrupts the order of things, often humiliating others and sometimes himself in the process. Whether a coyote or a rabbit, raccoon or raven, tricksters use cunning to get food, steal precious possessions, or simply cause mischief.”





# Trickster Spirits and the Opioid Response

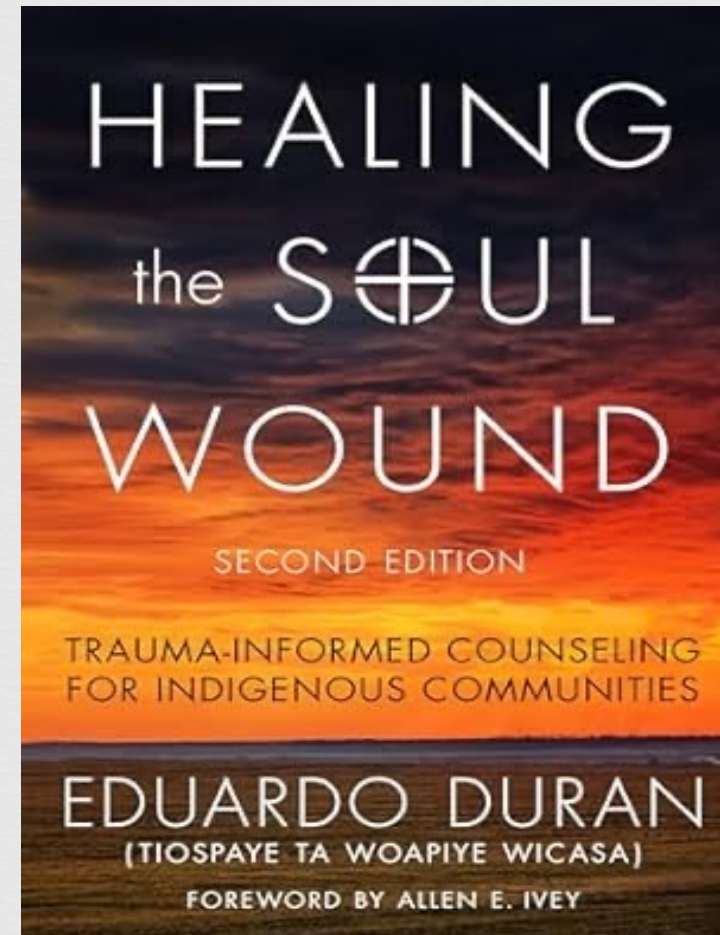


Coyote wanders into your life...he'll lend you a pair of eyes ...he'll burn a hole in the darkness.... He is the smoking mirror, night and sorcery, ancestral memory, the enemy on both sides, the crossroads, the compass, the silent wind and thunderous war inside you. ... He holds up the mirror relentlessly until you staring back at yourself....that seems alright to him - Diary of a Dog

To heal trauma it is necessary to make sense of what happened ~Dr. Bruce Perry; Dr. Eduardo Duran

The diagnosis serves spiritually as a "naming ceremony". People identify with the diagnosis, and then it is hard to get out of it.

Everything has spirit and consciousness. Everything is alive. So, healing the land is essential in addition to healing the individual.





# Boarding School Family Story

[https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-ephemera/NARA\\_1327\\_b060\\_f3034.pdf](https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/sites/all/files/docs-ephemera/NARA_1327_b060_f3034.pdf)



Josephine in 1933. Leaching hominy corn. Photo





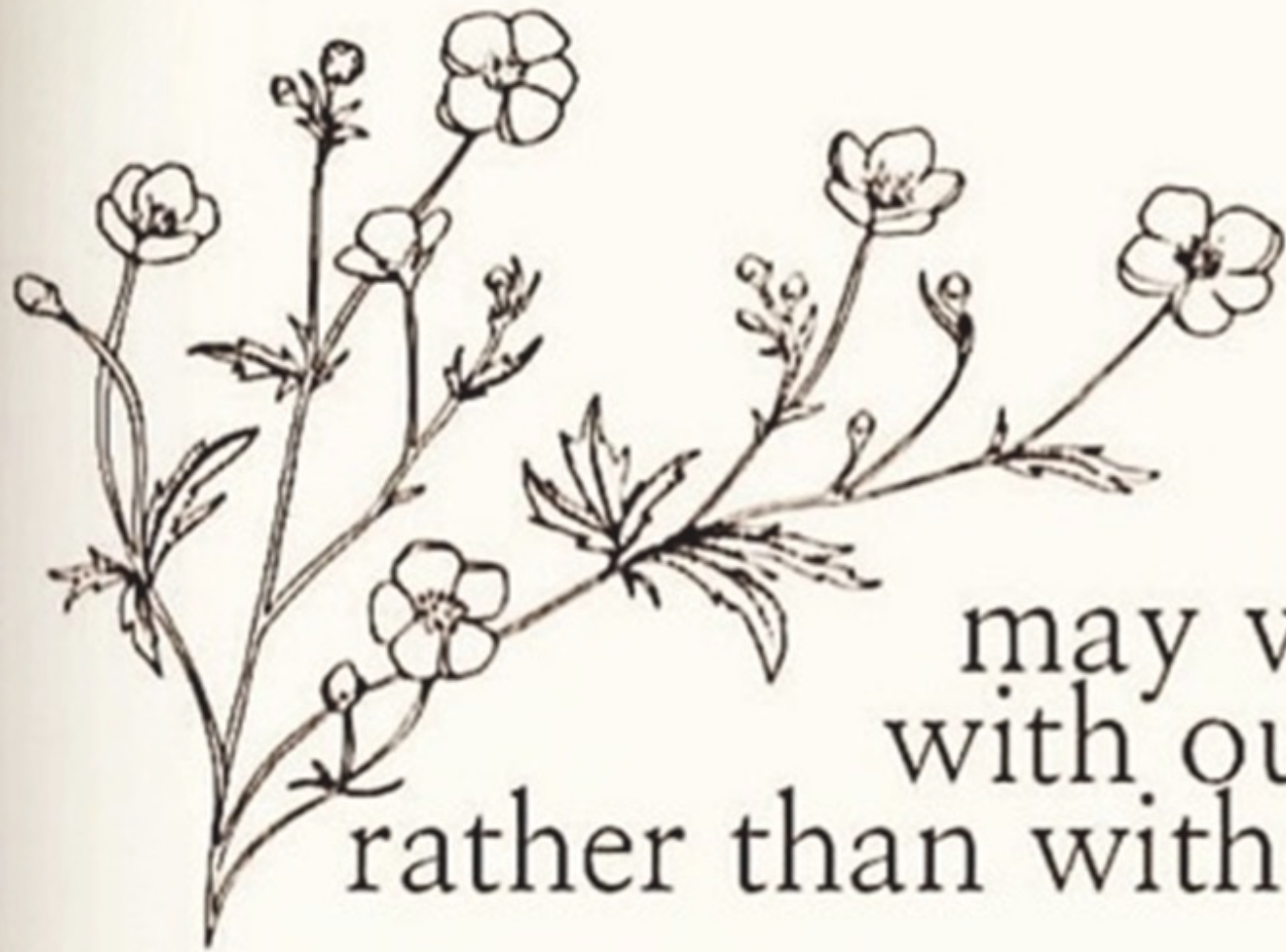
# Stories for the Generations



Message – not the mess

What do you want to pass on?

Stories Re-Member Us into our Greatness, into our Connections.



## Indigenous Connectedness

may we raise our babies  
with our indigenous love,  
rather than with our colonial pain.

@indigenousmotherhood



# CONNECTION & BELONGING

## WE ARE LONELY

There is a loneliness epidemic. Loneliness & social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Especially true among youth and elders. Made worse by COVID pandemic and the rise of social media.

## COMMUNITY = SURVIVANCE

Humans are social creatures and Native people often experience our sense of self, connection to the sacred, and sense of meaning through communal activity. Community is about possibility.

## BELONGING IS HEALING

A sense of belonging is essential to our well-being. It helps with depression, anxiety, and creating a strong sense of self. Belonging restore





# Story telling, Story listening, Co-Storying





# Story as Medicine



- ★ The wrong stories can make us sick
- ★ Story is also the antidote



# Oral Tradition

The background of the slide is a night sky with a dark blue gradient and scattered white stars. Several constellations are depicted with white lines connecting the stars. In the foreground, there is a stylized illustration of a forest scene with the heads and antlers of several animals, including a bear, a moose, and a bison, looking upwards towards the sky.

In Native cultures - listening is tied to oral tradition and storytelling.  
Storytelling requires story listening.



# Good Relations



- ❖ Everyone was meant to have family
- ❖ Connection strengthens us – connections serve as an anchor
- ❖ Fosters sense of belonging
- ❖ Strengthens cultural ties and promotes cultural reproduction
- ❖ Feel understood
- ❖ Reciprocal compassion, care, kindness
- ❖ **Consider when we feel safe, supported, truly feel like we belong...brave, courageous, have purpose, life is meaningful, we let love in.**

# COMMUNITY CARE IN INDIAN COUNTRY

- Ceremony
- Talking Circle
- Mutual Aid / Indigenous Economies
- Justice Movements (ICWA, Standing Rock, Mauna Kea, MMIWG2S)
- Healing – Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS)
- Cultural Gatherings/Events
- Intergenerational Connection- Practice Learning traditional arts, dance, music
- First Foods – Shared Meals
- Wellbriety/Families of Tradition



# “Embody medicine through our humanity & spirituality”

Dra. Rocio Rosales Meza

Decolonization of therapy to birth a New Paradigm that recognizes providers were indoctrinated to collude and colonize without consent.

- Nothing about us without us
- Grow your own – Lived Experience; BHAP, CPC/THW, SUDP/CADC
- Valuing Knowledge Keepers
- Indigenizing curriculum and clinical approaches (horse medicine, lacrosse, talking circles, gathering, canoe journey, fishing, First Foods, plant medicine, coyote stories/trickster to explain PTSD)
- Restorative Justice
- Truth & Reconciliation
- Hulu – Reservation Dogs
- Peacock – Rutherford Falls
- Resident Alien
- Killers of the Flower Moon





# sacred medicines

I am grateful to Creation for giving us Tobacco. She is the gift of spiritual health and the first plant that Creation gave us. Her smoke is a portal to Ancestors and the Sky World; it's through her that we can communicate. Her smoke wraps around us like a comforting blanket and carries our good intentions, worries and messages to the Spirits. Beautiful Tobacco sits in the East and is the beginning of every ceremony, every song, every story told and every promise made. Offer her in her purest form whenever you seek knowledge, forgiveness or help from an Elder or Knowledge Keeper. When taking an animal or plant for food, ask permission by giving Tobacco. Offer Tobacco back to Mother Earth by placing on the ground, in her waters or a fire - the smoke is your pathway to all things as they relate to spiritual health.



Tobacco



Sweetgrass

I am grateful to Creation for giving us Sweetgrass. She is Mother Earth's hair - her soft fragrance reminding us that we are to be gentle, loving and kind to each other. Sweetgrass bends but does not break; she teaches us that lessons should be taught with kindness and flexibility. Like women, a strand alone is not as strong as when we are braided together - a value to be relearned by our people. Sweetgrass sits in the south, she defines emotional health. 21 strands will make a braid. The first 7 strands for the 7 generations before us. The second 7 for the current generations, the 7 Grandfather teachings and the values of living with Good Mind. The last 7 strands are for the generations to come; our children, grandchildren and those who have yet to arrive.



I am grateful to Creation for giving us medicines. You may know medicine as Sage, Cedar, Sweetgrass and Tobacco and it is also nettles, birch, chaga, bear root and yarrow. It is fire and also the ashes. Medicine is people, animals dirt and air. It's the water; the lakes, creeks, rivers, oceans, fog, clouds, rain, ice and snow. Medicine is moonlight and sunlight, the thunder beings and winds. It is the trees, the fruit, the roots and the flowers. Medicine is honesty, respect and humility. It is both tears and laughter, friends, family, food and warmth. You can inhale it, drink it, eat it, bathe in it and watch it fly or run through the woods. Medicine is knowledge, patience, compassion and comfort. Never mistake medicine for one thing; one thing doesn't bring you health. Medicines are the gifts of healing and in all forms they contribute to mental, physical, spiritual and emotional health.

I am grateful to Creation for giving us Cedar. Beautiful Cedar is plentiful and reminds us that sometimes the things we need the most are right in front of us. She represents strength, comfort and safety and is shelter to many during harsh winters; under her lay the deer and on her branches, the birds gather. She crackles and sparkles when a flame touches her - she uses her voice to call for the attention of our Ancestors and sparkles to catch the interest of the Spirit World and Creation. Her restorative medicines are always used when fasting or sweating. She is consumed and bathed in. She is a warm, comfortable bed beneath our humble bodies and her branches are a protective roof above us. Take her to ceremony where there is fire, place her on the rocks to sparkle. She is connected and will help us to be heard.



Cedar



Sage

I am grateful to Creation for giving us Sage. She is a women's medicine and is always safe. She sits at the Western door with our physical energy, introspection and insight. We are grateful to our cousins in the south for trading white Sage to us. She will cleanse our environment, our thoughts and help us to focus. She is aromatic and strong. Her soft, sweet smoke will rise to Spirit World and with it will go our worries, our gratitude and good intentions. Call for her when you're feeling anxious, have a decision to make or have shared a space with someone who made you feel unsafe or uneasy. Sage will wash away the outside world before you step closer to the Spirit World. Always call for Sage when you are entering any ceremony, including lodges. Burn just a little, you don't need to shout.





Nya:Weh





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