



Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.

**Cultural Resilience:
An Indigenous Framework applied to the
Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country**

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Objectives

By the end of this presentation you will be able to:

- Develop an understanding of how historical trauma influences the health status of tribal communities
- Develop an understanding of how Indigenous resilience can be used as a framework for addressing chronic diseases in tribal communities



Project Background

Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country program

- Five year grant from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Aims to prevent heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and associated risk factors in tribal communities by supporting efforts to implement ***community-chosen*** and ***culturally adapted*** policies, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes
- These PSE efforts will target one or more **seven prevention areas**



Prevention Areas

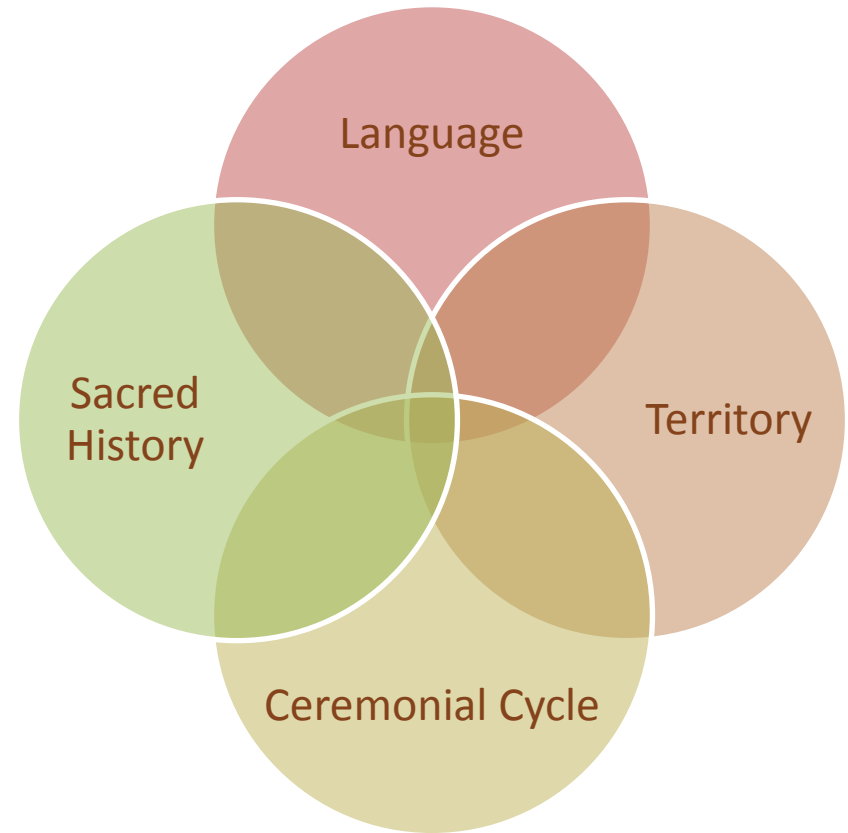
Seven Prevention Focus Areas

- Reduce the usage of commercial tobacco and decrease exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke;
- Increase access to and consumption of healthy food and beverages including fruits, vegetables, and water;
- Increase promotion of alternatives to less healthy foods and beverages that are in high sodium, sugars and solid fats;
- Increase support for breastfeeding;
- Increase opportunities for physical activity;
- Increase health literacy;
- Strengthen team-based care and community linkages to promote healthy communities



Peoplehood Matrix

- What is the Peoplehood matrix?
 - Four components that are interwoven and dependent on each other
 - Each component inform cultural protocols and practices, i.e. know the world around us and define reality.
- We are in balance when all working with each other





Process of Colonization

- Colonization is a process creating a relationship
 - Creates the Colonizer and Colonized
 - You can't have one without the other
 - Our peoplehood is diminished, left **unbalanced**
 - Creates a negative environment
- In order for colonization to take place
 - One **people** engages another **people**
 - This engagement can range from non-violent to violent
 - War
 - Education
- Colonization of knowledge
 - Creating knowledges
 - What is a American Indian in western institutions?
 - Deficient
 - Where does the idea of deficient come from?
 - Academic Institutions
 - Anthropology
 - Science
- Decolonization (Healing) requires both the colonizer and colonized to break the relationship



Process of Colonization

Denial and Withdraw

- Deny any merit & withdraw from cultural practices
- Our way of life, our Indigenous Knowledge, how we know and do things



Destruction, Eradication

- Physically destroy & destroy physical representations
- Ceremonial grounds, tradition gardens, homes, communities, kinship ties,



Denigration, Belittlement, Insult

- Internal Colonial institutions denigrate
- Western education, Schools, Colleges, Anthropology, Science



Surface Accommodation

- What remains is given surface accommodation
- Oral histories, ceremonies, spirituality



Transformation, Exploitation

- What refuses to die is transformed
- Pharmaceuticals, New Agers, Ceremonial practices



Historical Trauma



Defining Historical Trauma

- What is Historical Trauma?
 - Is the **cumulative** emotional and psychological wounding, over the **lifespan** and across **generations**, emanating from massive **group** trauma experiences
 - Grounds current trauma responses in the **collective** traumatic past
 - Focuses on **groups** and not a single event
- Results from:
 - Indigenous peoples subjected to colonialism
 - Genocide
 - War Trauma
 - Internment camps
 - Residential schools
 - Boarding schools
 - Forced adoption programs
 - Bioterrorism (Smallpox)
 - Loss of traditional life-ways
 - Loss of culture
 - Loss of food subsistence
 - Forced Removal from territories



Defining Historical Trauma

- What is Historical Trauma Response?
 - Is a constellation of features perceived as related, or as a reaction, to the Historical Trauma
 - Historical unresolved grief, rapid succession of massive traumatic losses, Native grief became unresolved and impaired
 - Focuses on the **collective** and on the current and past events
- Examples of response:
 - Higher levels of **depression** on a community level
 - Various forms of **anxiety** within community
 - **Suicidal thoughts**
 - High rates of substance abuse
 - Chronic disease rates are high
 - Adoption of **victim identity**
 - **Hopelessness** in community
 - High rates of **internal violence** and external violence

The background features a repeating pattern of stylized human figures in a circle, rendered in a light beige color. The figures are arranged in a circular formation, with their arms raised, suggesting a sense of unity or community. The overall aesthetic is warm and textured, resembling aged paper or parchment.

Cultural Resilience



Process of Decolonization

- Decolonization is a process recreating the relationship
 - Recreates the Colonizer and Colonized to people
 - You can't have one without the other
 - Our peoplehood is nourished, **balance** is being restored
 - Creates a positive environment
 - Emphasizes the legitimacy of Indigenous knowledge
- Decolonization (Healing) requires both the colonizer and colonized to break the relationship





Process of Decolonization

Rediscovery and Recovery

- Rediscovery history and recover culture
- Understand why cultural knowledge was taken and the different ways it has been diminished



Mourning

- Lament what has been lost
- Mourn what was lost, ie. language, cultural/ceremonial sites, ceremonies, land, oral history, creation stories, knowledge



Dreaming

- Explore the whole panorama of what could be
- What would it feel like to speak the language fluently, sing songs, tell oral history...



Commitment

- Commit to a single direction in which to move society
- Learn cultural protocols, activities, kinship responsibilities



Action

- Proactive step based on consensus of community
- Practice cultural protocols, adhere to cultural ethics



Healing Historical Trauma

- Resilience
 - The **ability to overcome** stress and **regaining health and well being** after experiencing adversity
 - Outcome of coping skills, social support that promote positive adaptations to extreme circumstances of adversity
- **Survivance:** Native people's individual and collective abilities to persist despite the enormous adversity imposed by colonialism
 - Moves **beyond victimhood, powerlessness** to being empowered and having agency





Healing Historical Trauma

- Community Resilience
 - Emphasizes how people overcome adversity by drawing from the **social and cultural networks and practices of the community**
 - Moves beyond the individual to **emphasizing the systemic and structural issues** that may be causes of or solutions to personal and community suffering
 - Ongoing maintenance of **balance** for self and community
- Emphasizes:
 - Importance of **historical** context
 - Extended **family** roles and relationships
 - Oral **traditions**
 - The **connection to land** and the **environment**
 - **Traditional healing** practices
 - **Spirituality**
 - Political **activism**

The background features a repeating pattern of stylized human figures in a circle, rendered in a light brown color. Each figure has its arms raised, and they are arranged in a circular formation around the central text. The overall aesthetic is warm and traditional.

Indigenous Framework Approach



Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country

Community Based Action Plan

Conventional Framework

GHWIC

- CHA
- PSE Assessment

Outcomes

- Community gardens
- Clinical linkages
- Healthy food availability

Spectrum of activities depends on:

- Conventional Framework
- Indigenous Framework Approach

Indigenous Framework Approach

Hozho

- CHA – Health defined by Hozho
- PSE Assessment – Cultural and inherent sovereignty

Outcomes

- Traditional gardening
- Linkages via kinship
- Traditional food availability



Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country

Community Based Action Plan

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Defining **culturally adapted** and **community based** depends on:

- Community Health Assessment
- PSE Assessment

Indigenous Framework Approach

Hozho

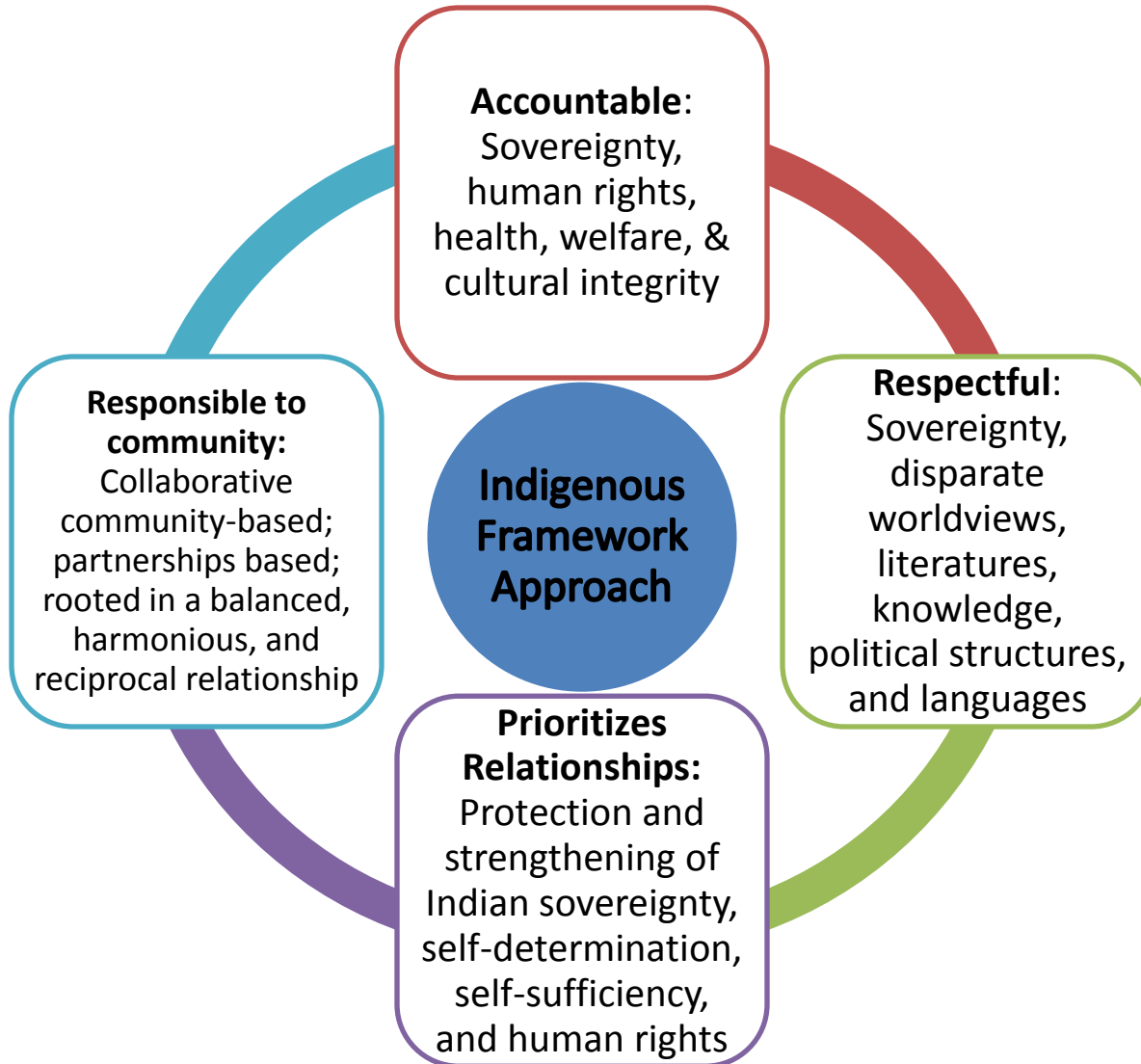
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Question and Answer



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