

# **Historical Trauma, Resiliency and Services**

## **Domestic Violence impact on**

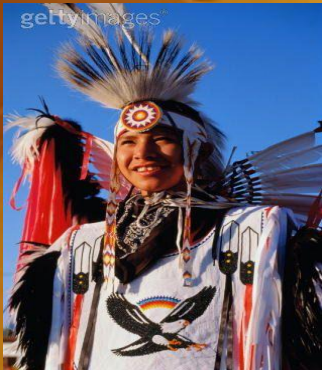
### **American Indians and Alaska Natives**



**Carrie L. Johnson, Ph.D.**  
**United American Indian Involvement, Inc.**  
**Seven Generations/Systems of Care**

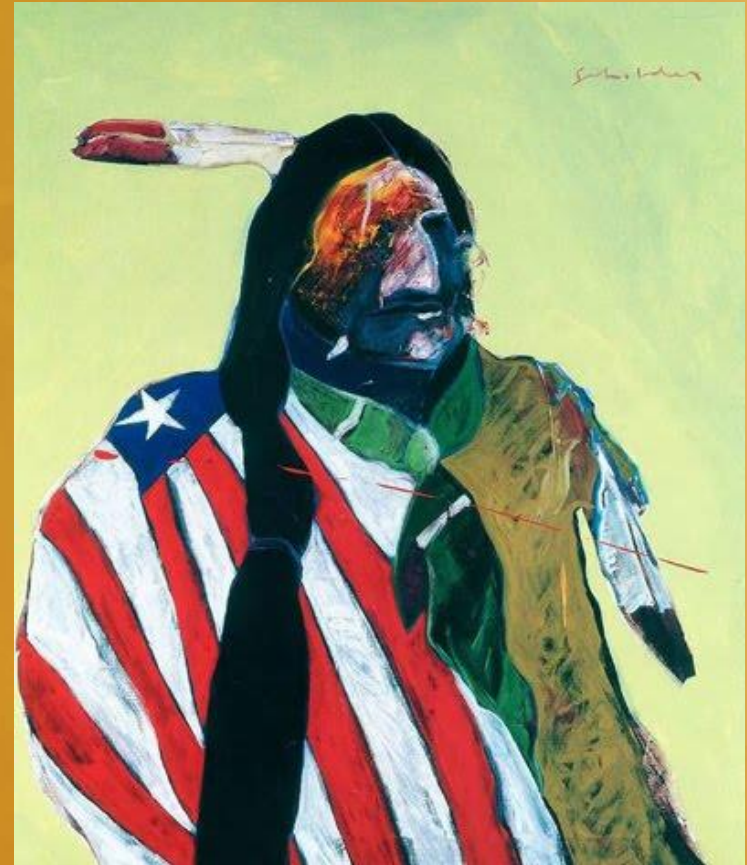
# AI/AN and cultural identity

- Many American Indians strongly believe that their problems with alcohol stem from their sudden disconnection with traditional American Indian culture
- American Indian traditions, customs, rituals, and values may assist in discovering positive coping strategies during recovery.
- Denying AI/ANs the opportunity to rely on those strategies may contribute to ongoing drug/alcohol use and mental health problems



# Demographics

- 561 Federally-recognized tribes, additional tribes and communities
- 1.7% of U.S. population: approx. 5.2 million people
- Approximately 1/3 of Native Americans live on reservations; half of Native Americans live in urban settings
- Approximately 2 million enrolled tribal members
- Culturally heterogeneous
- Likely under-reported



*An American Portrait by Fritz Scholder*

# National Demographics – cont'd

- AI/ANs are younger than the general population
  - 33% are younger than 18 years old, compared to 26% for general population
  - Median age 29 years, compared to 35 years for general population
- AI/ANs are more likely to live in female-headed households (27% vs. 17%)
- AI/ANs have larger families (3.4 vs. 3.2 members)
- AI/ANs are below the national average in graduation rates.
- AI/ANs are roughly twice as likely as whites to be unemployed in 1998 (Population Reference Bureau, 2000)
- AI/ANs are significantly poorer (26% live below poverty vs. 13%)

# Los Angeles County Demographics

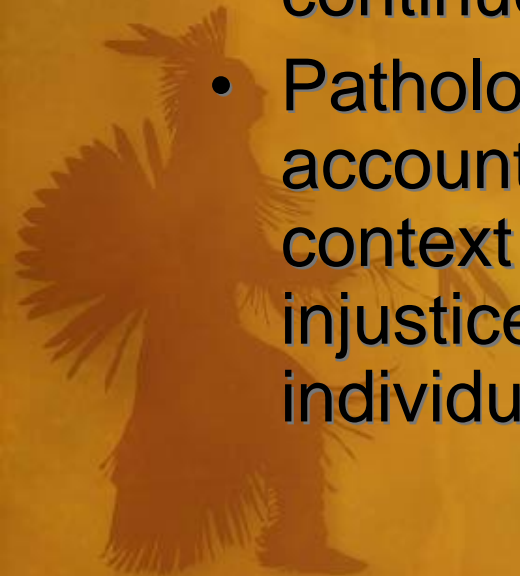
- Approximately 154,000 AI/ANs are dispersed over the entire county of Los Angeles, often rendering them invisible to the general public.
- Cities that tend to have the highest clusters of AI/ANs are Los Angeles, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, El Monte, Norwalk, Pomona, and Long Beach.
- The tribes with the greatest representation in Los Angeles are Cherokee, Navajo, Apache, Sioux, Choctaw, Pueblo, Blackfoot, Chippewa, Iroquois, and Creek
- Los Angeles County is also home to tribes indigenous to the area such as the Gabrieleno/Tongva and the Fernandino
- More than 125 different tribes are represented and greater than 200 distinct tribal languages are spoken
- Considerable diversity among the AI/AN community in terms of traditional practices, customs, acculturation levels, and socioeconomic levels.

# Suicide in Indian Country

- Suicide in Indian Country, is characterized by higher rates, for younger people, and affecting entire communities because suicide, like an infectious disease, quite often spreads rapidly among our families and peer groups in what are called suicide clusters.
- Using the latest information available, suicide rates for American Indians range from 1.5 to over 3 times the national average for other groups.
- It is the second leading cause of death (behind unintentional injuries and accidents) for Indian youth aged 15-24 and is 2.5 times higher than the national average.
- It is the 5th leading cause of death overall for males and ranks ahead of homicide.
- Young people aged 15-34 make up 64 percent of all suicides.

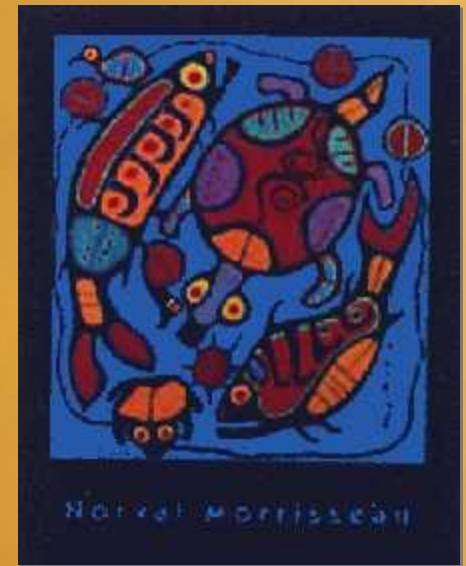
# Integration of Historical Factors

- The prevalent mental health issues in Native American populations cannot be fully understood or addressed without integrating historical events.
- Culturally biased, ethnocentric practices continue to pathologize Native Americans
- Pathologizing presenting behaviors without accounting for the historic and cultural context perpetuates trauma by ignoring injustice and locating the problem in the individual.



# Historical Context

- Policy of Genocide
- Policy of Assimilation





# Colonization

- American Indian Holocaust
- Historical trauma that is America's "family secret"
- The denial blocks the healing of American Indians
- Community Trauma
- Survivors may have higher level tolerance for trauma which may contribute to likelihood of being revictimized.



# History of Trauma

- The United Nations Convention on Genocide (1948) defined genocide as intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group through killing, or causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (*UNCG, 1948*).

# “Historical Trauma”

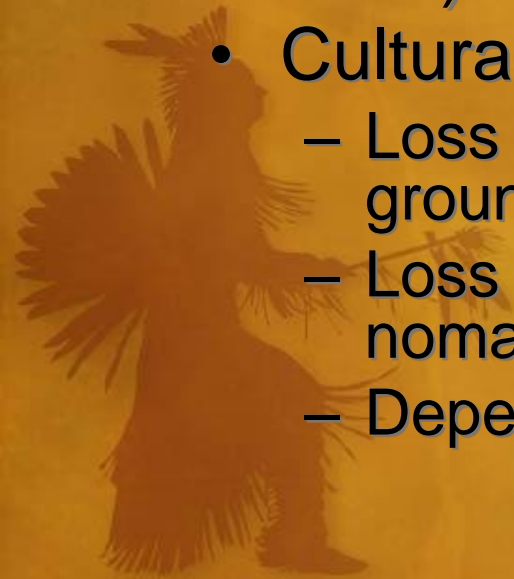
- Struthers and Lowe (2003) define historical trauma as the “cumulative and collective emotional and psychological injury over the life span and across generations, resulting from a cataclysmic history of genocide.”
- Also conceptualized as “intergenerational trauma,” “historical unresolved grief,” “Boarding School Syndrome” and “soul wounding.”

# 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century: “The only good Indian is a dead Indian”

- Bureau of Indian Affairs (1824)
- Indian Removal Act (1830) relocated Native American tribes living east of the Mississippi
- Supreme Court ruled that Cherokee were “domestic dependent nations”
- Trail of Tears (1838/9) : 4,000 out of 15,000 Cherokee die during 1,200 mile march

# Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century

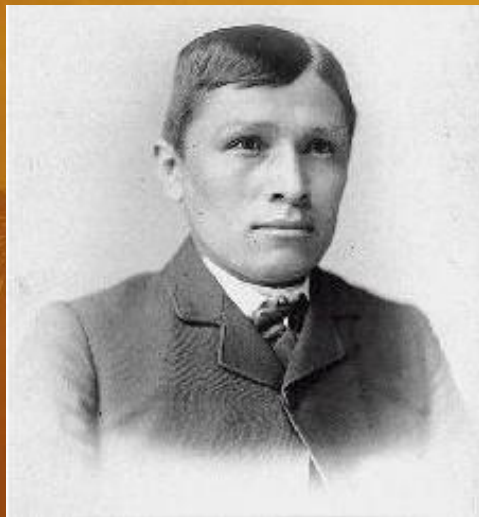
- Broken Treaties
- Reservations
- Resistance
- Massacre (including Wounded Knee in 1890)
- Cultural implications:
  - Loss of sacred spaces, including burial grounds
  - Loss of traditional hunting practices, buffalo, nomadic life-style
  - Dependence on the U.S. Government



# Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century: “Kill the Indian, Save the Man”

- Native religious and cultural practices are outlawed – not protected by First Amendment
- Missionaries travel to reservations
- Off-reservation boarding schools:
  - Mandatory attendance beginning age 6
  - Far from reservations
  - Children stayed with white families during the summer
  - Pathologized Native culture: language, religion, customs, dress forbidden
  - Rampant physical and sexual abuse
- “Boarding School Syndrome”: apathy, internalized racism, distrust, inability to form healthy relationships

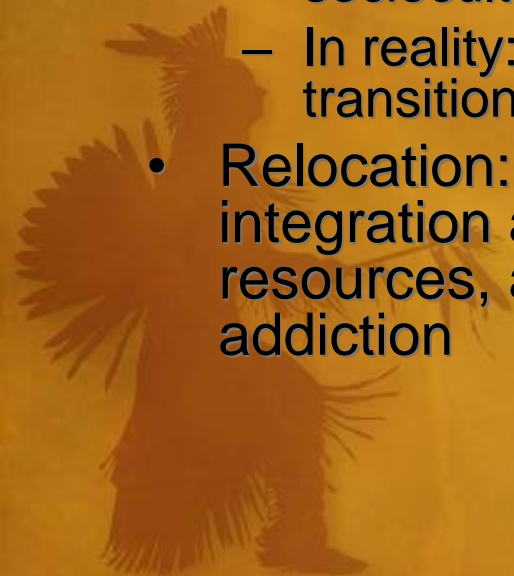




Tom Torlino (Navajo), 3 years later

# 20<sup>th</sup> Century

- June 2, 1924: American Indians recognized as American citizens (recognition for WWI service)
- 1950's: Termination – federal government withdraws support, abolishes tribal government, abrogates all federal responsibilities, treaty agreements
  - In theory: increased tribal autonomy, self-sufficiency, freedom from federal bureau limitations. and sociocultural integration of Native Americans
  - In reality: loss of reservation land; inadequate support for transition; increased poverty.
- Relocation: Effort to increase socio-economic integration and stability. But urban Indians had few resources, and many wound up in poverty and addiction





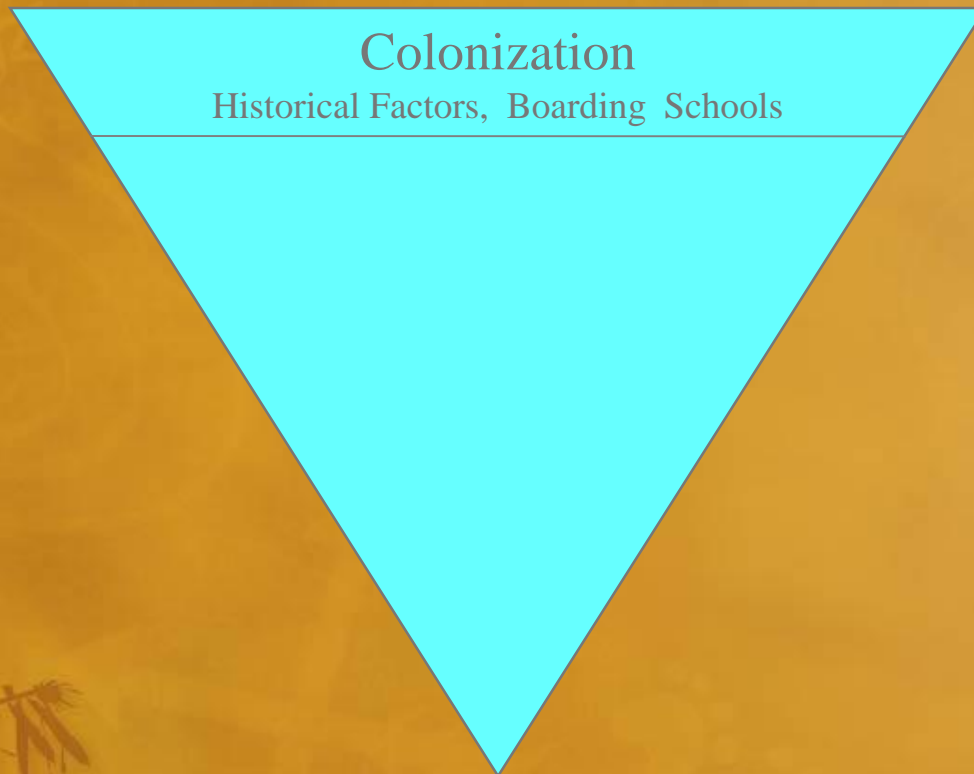
# Self-Determination and Tribal Sovereignty

- 1968: American Indian Movement (AIM) participates in the civil rights movement, protesting injustice and asserting rights of Native Americans
- 1975: The Indian Self-Determination Act
- 1976: The Indian Health Care Improvement Act
- 1978: The Indian Child Welfare Act
- 1978: The Indian Religious Freedom Act



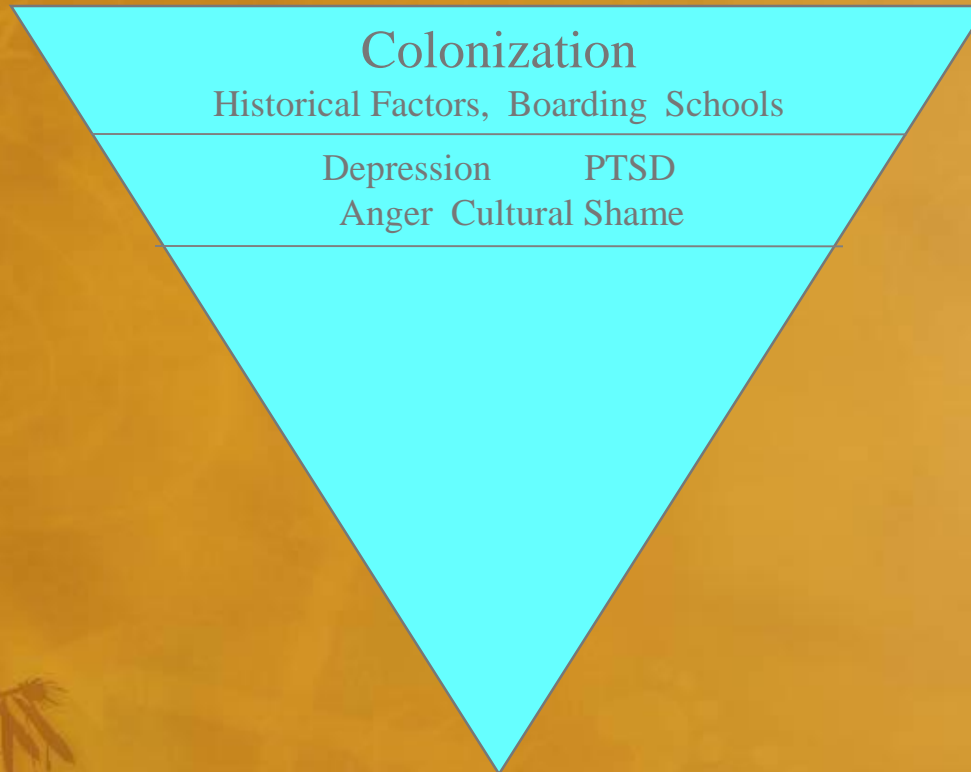
# Native American Healing Model

## A Community Healing Circle ©



# *Native American Healing Model*

## *A Community Healing Circle* ©





# Survivor's Child Complex

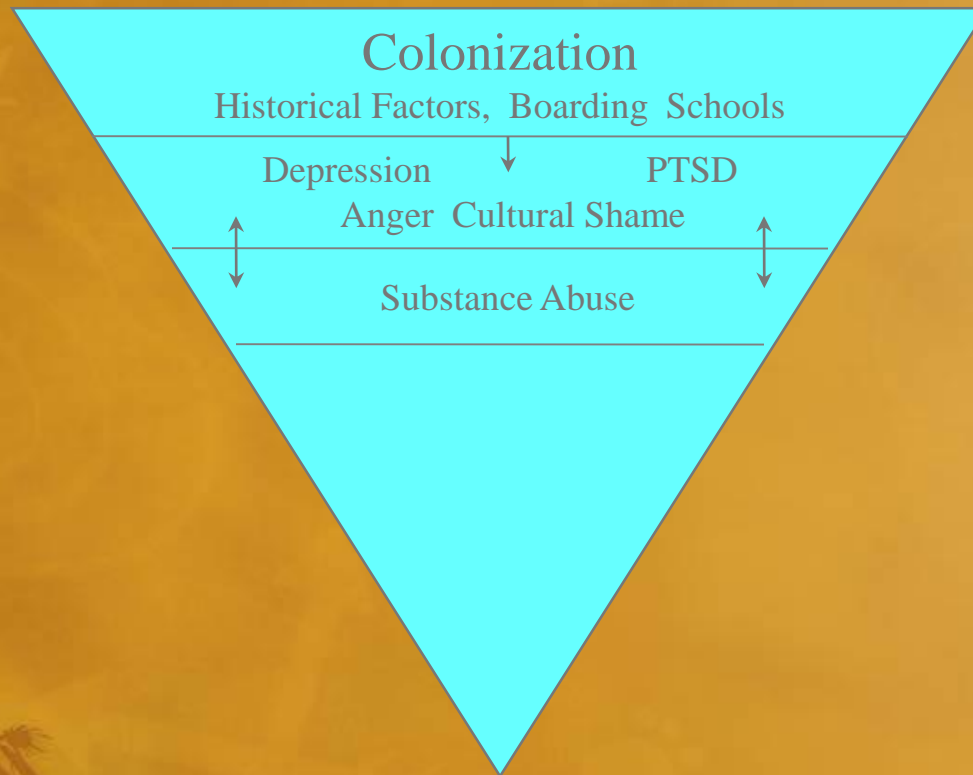
- Anxiety and impulsivity
- Intrusive holocaust imagery including nightmares
- Depression
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Guilt
- Elevated mortality rates
- A perceived obligation to share in ancestral pain as well as identification with the deceased ancestors
- Compensatory fantasies
- Unresolved grief

# Depression, PTSD, Mental Health

- Depression due to loss of culture, identity, language, personal losses and feelings of rejection, discrimination and hopelessness
- PTSD- Flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilience, avoidance of situations, thoughts, feelings that remind one of the abusive event, restricted range of affect, heightened startle response, anxiety disorders

# *Native American Healing Model*

## *A Community Healing Circle* ©



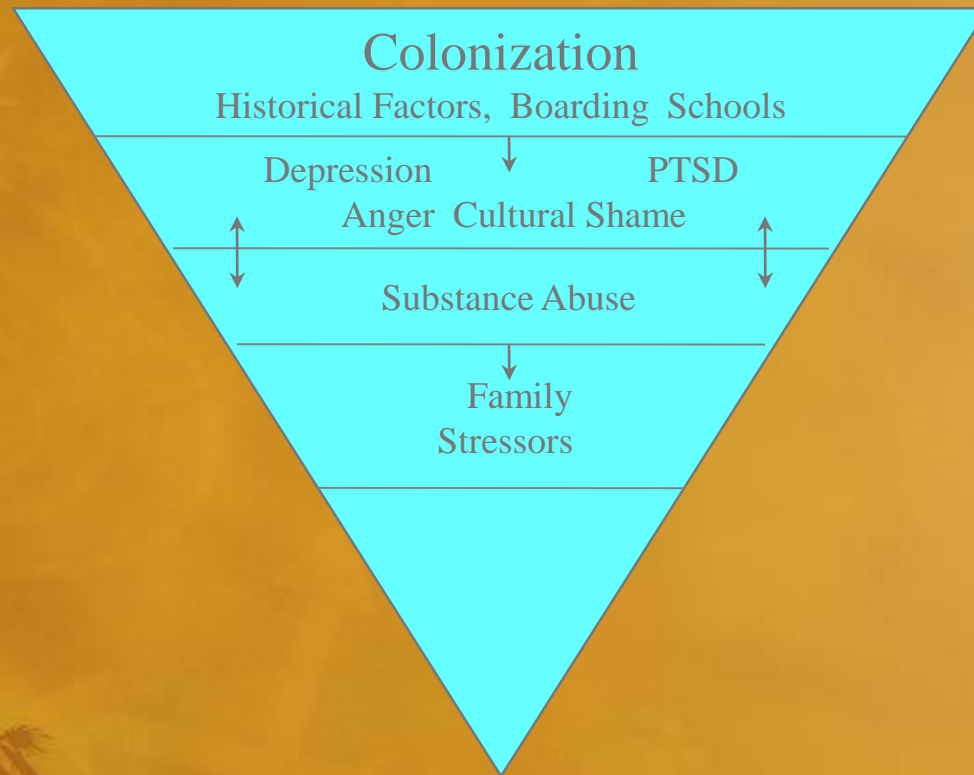
# Prior to European Contact

- Prior to 15th century, North American indigenous people did not have alcoholic beverages
- Peyote was used by ceremoniously among some southwestern tribes
- Traditional tobacco was used by many tribes within a religious and ceremonial context



# *Native American Healing Model*

## *A Community Healing Circle* ©





# Domestic Violence among AI/AN Women

- AI/AN women report significantly higher rates of intimate partner violence (IPV): nearly 16% were raped, 31% physically assaulted, and 10% were stalked by their partners
- Nearly 75% of AI/AN women homicide victims are killed by someone they know; **almost 1/3 are killed by family member**
- While 11% of intimate victims and 5% of family victims report the offender to have been of a different race, **among AI/AN women these rates are 75% and 25%, respectively.**
- AI/AN women at highest risk for IPV are those in interracial marriages or coupling and women who are more likely to live in urban centers.








# Sexual Assault among American Indian Women

- Rape and sexual assault among AI/AN women **3.5 times greater than the overall population.**
- About 9 in 10 victims estimated to have assailants who were of a different race.
- **NVAWS:** AI/AN women reported a higher lifetime prevalence of rape (34.1%) and physical assault (61.4%) than any other racial group.
- According to BJS, 70% of Sexual Assaults are not reported. For AIAN this may be higher due to a high level of distrust to non-Indian agencies and helpers, fear of being ostracized by their families, difficulties associated with the legal system and growing tolerance of abuse by victims and community.



# Associated Risks for Violence among AI/AN Women

- Alcohol & drug use significantly positively correlated with IPV and FV.
- Nearly 75% of AI/AN victims of FV reported their offender had been drinking at the time of offense.
- Associated risk for AI/AN women is compelling given the relationship between substance abuse and violence:
  - Alcohol-related deaths for AI/AN women are significantly higher than rates for women of all racial groups.

Extra \$!!!  
Talk to the   
  
 Boss  
"You might be Top Dog but  
No job is worth  
SEXUAL  
ASSAULT  
HARASSMENT  
ABUSE"  
Employee  
  
Don't be  
a  Dog!

STOP  
and know that  
bosses have the power  
control my life and that  
there's others who are going through  
and don't have to, that  
here is help and someone  
will listen. All you have to  
do is ask. **Please, it  
could save not only you  
but someone else!**

Does she  
love me  
or is she  
just  
using me  
for  
sex?

Does she  
love me  
or is she  
just  
using me  
for  
sex?

Does she  
love me  
or is she  
just  
using me  
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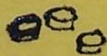
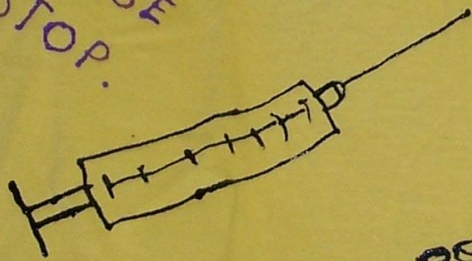
BEAT ME

INTO

SUBMISSION

PLEASE  
STOP.

AREN'T  
YOU SUPPOSED  
TO LOVE  
ME?



NUMB

THE

PAIN

Northern

loss  
OF  
Innocence

I did dese  
This...

Once again you lied!  
Saying  
you wouldn't hit  
me anymore!



You've done nothing, but  
hurt me inside!

But Never Again,  
No More!

# Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

- Encompasses the wide range of physical, mental and behavioral effects seen under the diagnosis: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), partial FAS (p-FAS) and alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND)
- One of the most leading known preventable causes of mental retardation and birth defects
- FAS highest among American Indians than any other racial group

# Attachment Disorders

- Insecure Attachments
- Rage/View world as an extremely hostile environment
- A need to control events and people in their lives
- Lying
- Lack of a real connection to others
- Inability to give and receive attention
- Impulsive/acting out behavior- ADHD?
- Moderate to Severe Personality Disorders
  - usually Borderline or Dependent PD



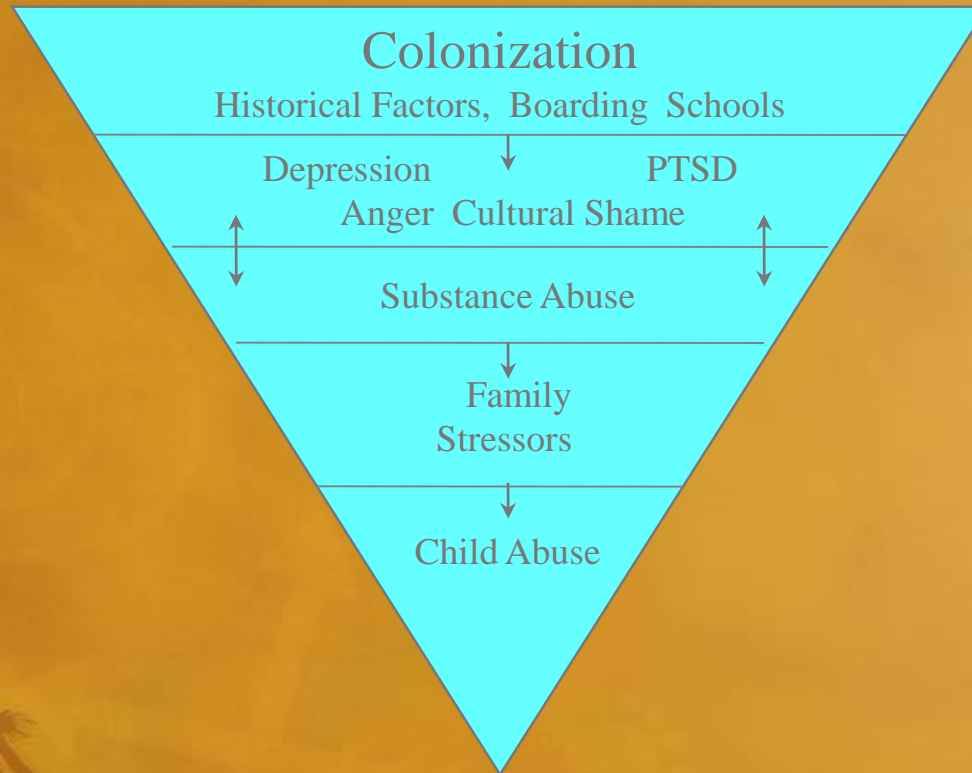
# Attachment and Domestic Violence

- Women with attachment problems are more likely to experience physical abuse, and frequent psychological abuse
- Difficulty getting out of abusive relationships.
  - They are use to being treated “bad”
  - Staying attached helps them regulate feelings of fear, anger, anxiety



# *Native American Healing Model*

## *A Community Healing Circle* ©



# Child Abuse

- Current national statistics and published reports suggest that child abuse and/or neglect is a serious problem among AI/ANs, with prevalence/risk higher than the general pop.
- Parental alcohol abuse has been associated with child abuse.
- A study found that a child's mother was most frequently indicated as the offender in neglect cases (62.9%), fathers in physical abuse cases (36.3%) and biological relatives in sexual abuse cases (55.3%). This study showed that substance abuse was a factor in most cases, except for sexual abuse (Chino, Melton & Fullerton, 1992).

# Long Term Effects

- At least one half of families in which their mother is abused, the children are also abused.
- Boys are more likely to abuse their partners when they grow up if they have been raised in a violent home
- Seventy-three percent of abusers were abused as children and 80 percent of men in prisons grew up in violent homes
- Girls learn that society accepts violence against women.
- A study found that child abuse and both physical and sexual abuse were risk factors for conduct disorders and that both child abuse and conduct disorders were risk factors for alcohol dependence. Alcohol dependency was a risk factor for physical intimate partner violence. However, just a history of physical abuse in childhood was a significant predictor of being a victim and a perpetrator of physical partner violence (Kunitz et al. 1998).

Mandan  
Hidatsa

GIVE ME MY Kids!!

plse  
stop



STOP



Violence

I want  
MY  
MOM  
&  
DAD



I want 2 go home  
stop



FOR  
Your  
Kid's

DONT  
+urst  
Family

KEEP Your  
At home OR they  
Be gone

Kid's  
wi

Mom



NO MORE  
ABUSE



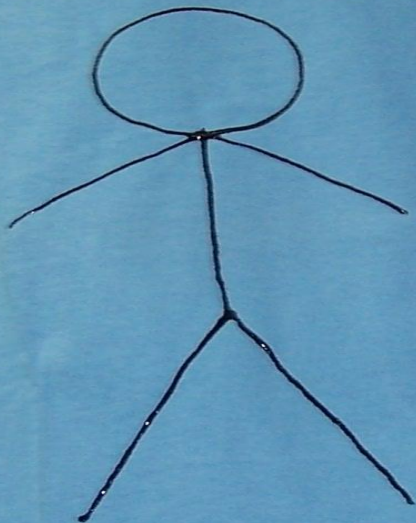
Hurt tears  
Pain abuse  
Sad Jail foster Home

Being abused Lead to my drug  
abuse is that lead to me losing  
my kids " But i will get Stay  
Sober is get my Kids again  
- i am worth it -



10 10 2 2 2 2 2

DAD



TRUST  
NOBODY EVER  
AGAIN

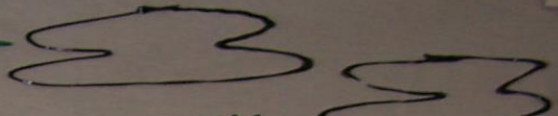


WHY DID YOU TAKE MY  
INNOCENSE  
DAD!



hole

Broken Trust, Last Love



Broken

Domestic



Violence

Broken Home 

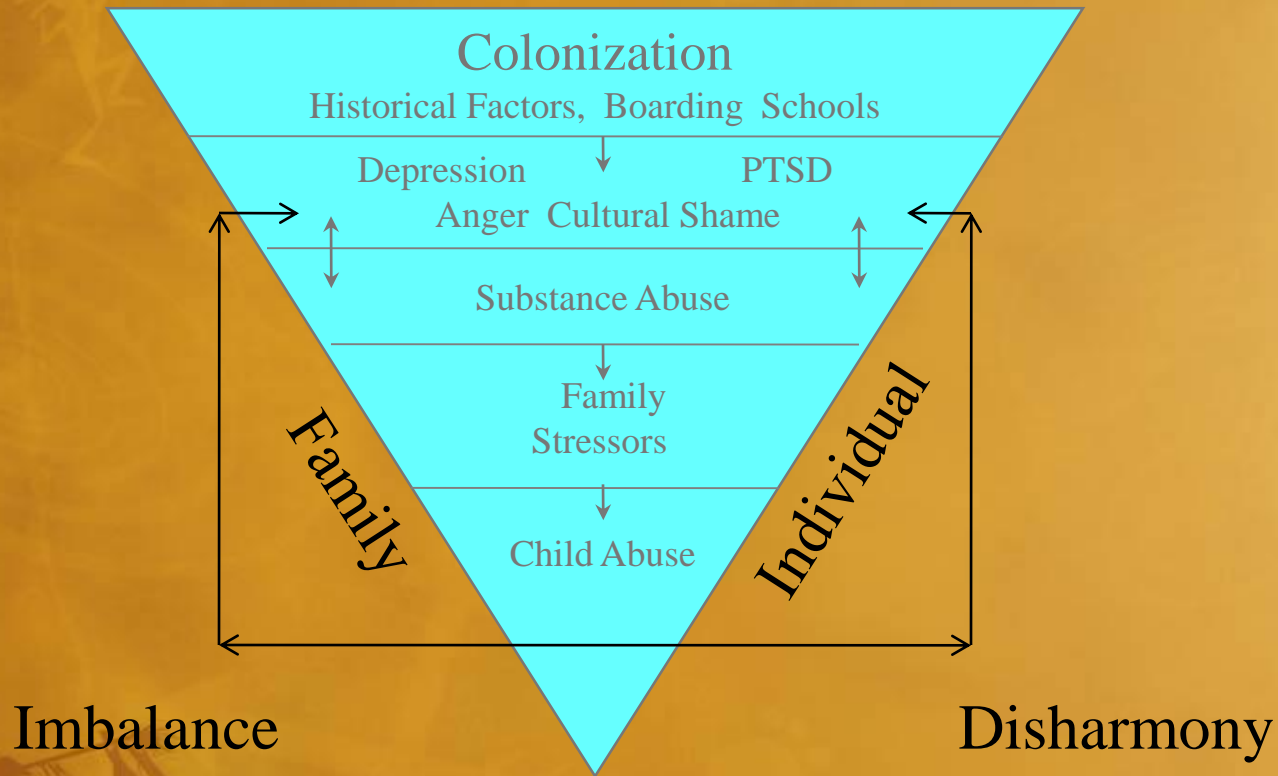
Lost Angels Last Innocence

She loses herself in Drugs to Stop the pain what about her Kids? what about their PAIN



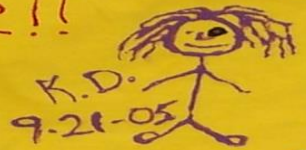
*Native American Healing Model*  
*A Community Healing Circle* ©

Community



*The Historical Trauma Cycle*

please  
don't beat  
me!!



K.D.  
9-21-05

BROKEN  
HOME



DRUGS  
helped ME  
KILL THE  
PAIN!

Let's Brake the Cycle of  
Violence

LOVE does  
NOT SUPPOSE  
to hurt!!

Broken



Heart

K.D.  
9-21-05

# Native Pathways to Healing:

## Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program

Providing services to Native women victims of domestic violence/sexual assault

Program began in 2001

Currently in 10<sup>th</sup> year

Funding: \$ 138,201



Funded by CalOES



# PROGRAM CONSIST OF Seven MANDATORY OBJECTIVES

## GOALS

1. Provide training to 5 agencies.
2. Provide 5 community outreach programs addressing sexual assault and domestic violence to community members.
3. Provide accompaniment and /or advocacy to 30 American Indian women.
4. Supply emergency food/clothing to 20 women.
5. Supply emergency shelter to 10 women.
6. Provide Psychotherapy services to a minimum of 6 American Indian women clients who are victims of domestic violence.
7. Provide Psychotherapy services to a minimum of 4 American Indian women clients who are victims of sexual assault.

# Culturally Adapted Approaches and Promising Practices

- Motivational Interviewing
- MICUNAY
- DARTNA
- Trauma Focused CBT-Mending the Circle
- Positive Indian Parenting
- GONA
- Mindfulness Based Interventions
- Wellbriety
- Trauma Informed Care
- Integrated Care

# Cultural and Community Activities Building supports and community connections

- Beading
- Drumming
- Dancing
- Regalia making
- Sage Picking
- Talking Circles
- Positive Indian Parenting



# Outdoor Events!



It was a Great Day !!





Dance/Drum  
Workshops  
May-September  
2020





# Traditional Activities



# Traditional Activities



# Traditional Activities



# Native American Healing Model- A Community Healing Circle ©

