



National American Indian and Alaska Native
MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Healing the Returning Warrior: Keys to Understanding Unique Challenges and Strengths of American Indian, Alaska Native Veterans: Module 5

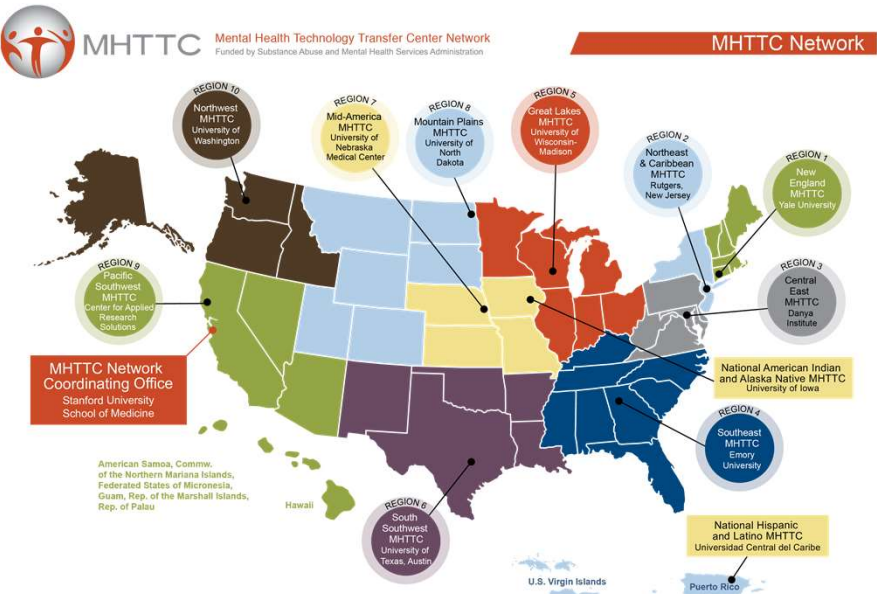
Sean A Bear 1st, BA
National American Indian and Alaska Native MHTTC
Ray Daw, MA



Native Center for
Behavioral Health



THE UNIVERSITY
OF IOWA



MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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American Indian & Alaska Native Mental Health Webinar series

This webinar is provided by the National American Indian & Alaska Native MHTTC, a program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

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Webinar follow-up

Evaluation: SAMHSA's GPRA

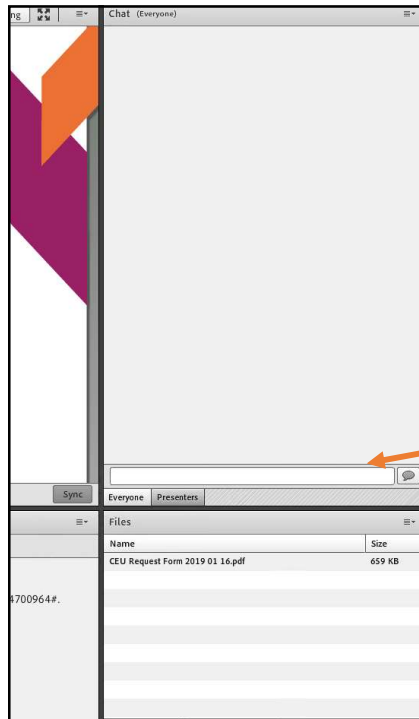
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Participation in our evaluation lets SAMHSA know:

- How many people attended our webinar
- How satisfied you are with our webinar
- How useful our webinars are to you

You will find a link to the GPRA survey in the chat box. If you are not able to complete the GPRA directly following the webinar, we will send an email to you with the survey link. Please take a few minutes to give us your feedback on this webinar. You can skip any questions that you do not want to answer, and your participation in this survey is voluntary. Through the use of a coding system, your responses will be kept confidential and it will not be possible to link your responses to you.

We appreciate your response and look forward to hearing from you.



Adobe Connect Overview

Participant overview:

- To alternate between full screen mode, please click on the full screen button on the top right of the presentation pod. (It looks like 4 arrows pointing out)
- To ask questions or share comments, please type them into the chat pod and hit "Enter."

Today's Speaker

- Ray Daw, MA is Navajo , originally from Houck, Arizona. Graduated from boarding school and UNM. He has been in the behavioral health field for about 35 years working with the Navajo Nation, non-profits and most recently in Alaska. His work in behavioral health has been heavily towards developing Native trauma-appropriate approaches that are healing and effective in tribal behavioral health prevention, Intervention, and treatment services.

Today's Speaker

Sean A. Bear, 1st, earned his B.A. from Buena Vista University in 2002, majoring in psychology/human services. He also studied mental health counseling at Drake University for 2 years. He is a member of the Meskwaki Tribe, in Tama, Iowa, and has worked with Native Americans with substance abuse issues for many years. He is an Army Veteran of 9 years, and was honorary discharged from the 82nd Airborne.

Mr. Bear has worked as an Administrator/Counselor in EAP, as a counselor in adolescent behavioral disorder programs, substance abuse, and in-home family therapy. He has experience in building holistic, Native American based curriculum, and implementing these curricula/programs in substance abuse treatment and prevention program.

Overview of the Training

5 Modules in “Healing the Returning Warrior” are designed for the 2.5 day Training Of Trainers (TOT).

- Historical Overview of Natives in Warfare, Military
- Trauma, Historical Trauma, and PTSD
- Approaches to Assessment and Treatment
- Traditional Beliefs & Healing Practices
- Healing The Healer

Native Veteran Curriculum: “Healing the Returning Warrior”

Healing the Healer:
Honoring Self through Native American Teachings/Wisdom

Objectives

- Discuss the challenges of working with clients/patients
- Understand how healing creates resilience
- Describe compassion fatigue
- Understand the value of managing stress



Objective 1: Discuss the challenges of working with clients/patients

- Purpose: This training may be a promising means of providing culturally competent training to AI/AN treatment providers utilizing Native American Beliefs and practices

While working with clientele

- Death, client safety, and issues in life. Things bothering me all weekend, affecting my personal life and family.... Working, need to rest.
- I remembered learning of this is school. Remembered balancing ones personal life and work. Remembered that we must not make their issues, Ours.
- What areas of information do you tend to remember? Positive, Negative? Which ones do you tend to take home with you?
- These are the ones that are affecting your home/personal life.

What I did:

Each day, I began to take the last 15-20 minutes of work, or stay late to meditate on letting go.

At first this was very difficult, yet over time this began to work.

It got easier and easier, as I tried to make sure all things with clients were addressed, to make sure I did everything I could and learn not to make their issues mine, that they have choices too and that I can only do my part.

At times, as soon as I was done, or about to leave, I would remember again, so I would go back and meditate a bit longer.

Over time, this helped me, so as soon as I reached the front door and stepped out, it became more of my home/personal time.

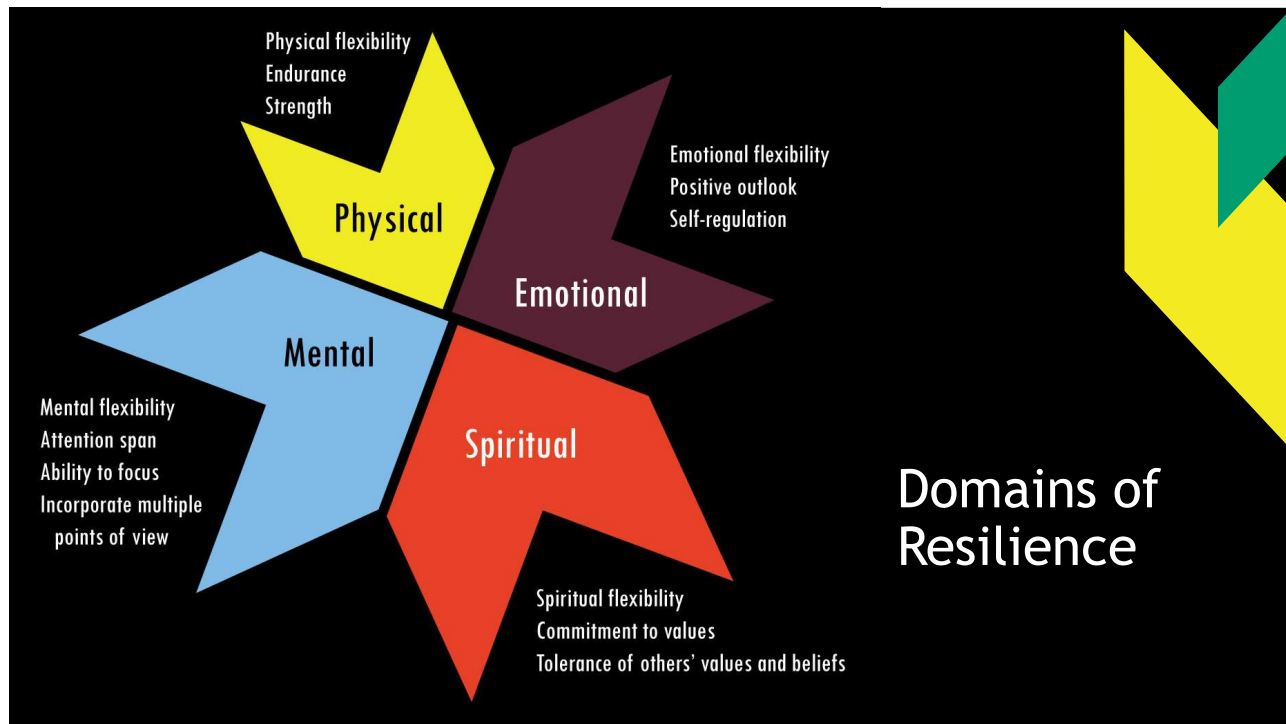
Learning from the Old

- Long ago, our Ancestors knew that all of creation worked in a circular motion and that harmony with it, was key to living in harmony with one's self, that we are not separate from it/others, but connected through it by spirit, which is one of the teachings of the spider web. Through teachings of the medicine wheel, participants will learn to assist in their own healing by utilizing the importance of taking care of the whole person, ie., Mind, Body, Spirit, Emotions, in order to assist themselves in letting go, and honoring the person as a whole



Objective 2: Understand how healing creates resilience

- Purpose: discuss how in Native culture resilience is taught.



Healing

- During healings, many things can be removed from others, much like removing a cup from the cupboard, dusting, or washing ones car, by use of healing objects like stones, feathers, medicinal herbs, teas.
- Some may require fasting, or doing something such as bathing, drinking tea, prayer for certain help.
- Some may require a specific ceremony, such a sweat lodge, bear ceremony, dark room ceremony... in which spirits will be doing the healings themselves.
- Some things cannot be removed unless the person lets go of it, or with some things, the healer is used for it to pass through.



Healing

- Healing is said to be a mutual thing. Faith in the person, the healing... faith, belief.
- Teaching: Sage, Cedar, Sweet grass, or others may be utilized but you must believe in it, so your belief in it is important.
- We all have gifts.
- Self-healing.

Taking time out

With Native Healers and Medicine peoples.

- They are taught that they must take time out of healing or they may become sick.
 - With healing others, they act as a filter at times for the people they help.
 - Much like a filter, the process may take time but also build-up can acquire over time. Therefore, time must be taken to clean this out or the build up may have other affects, such as becoming clogged or draining much more slowly.
 - Over time, healing can take a toll on healers. A time out is required in order for them to heal themselves, or through the assistance of spirits or other healers.
 - If not done as instructed, this can become much worse and may develop into a physical sickness for themselves.

Taking time out

During this time, they are not allowed to heal others, sometimes not even allowed to run any ceremonies at all. During this time they are told to take care of themselves through prayer, rest, relaxation, and getting into balance with Nature and their lives

- Just as others needed help, they too may undergo healings or take care of themselves, just as those whom they've helped to heal
 - Prayer
 - Rest
 - Eating right
 - Exercise
 - Meditation
 - Fasting

Acknowledge the Old

- We must remember that long ago, people were taught not to do things that would harm others. This may be through:
 - Words
 - Thoughts
 - Feelings
 - Emotions
 - Acts
- All things have a spirit, such as a tree, stone, animals, birds, water, fire, people,... but even so, there is also Energy which is comprised in all, even in words, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviors. These can also be positive or negative, so these may affect other individuals, groups, communities, and the environment

Relating to the world around us

- As we learn that all of Creation has energy, we realize that every part of how we think, feel, believe, speak, and act affects those energies.
- We realize that we each walk around in our own bubbles of energies.
- Those energies of ours and others bump into one another, which also carries the core energies of our internal beliefs, thoughts, and being.
- As energies affect one another, so too do the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of people affect each other. (ie., families, neighbors, cities, states, continents, worlds, solar systems, and so forth.

The Mind is stronger than many think

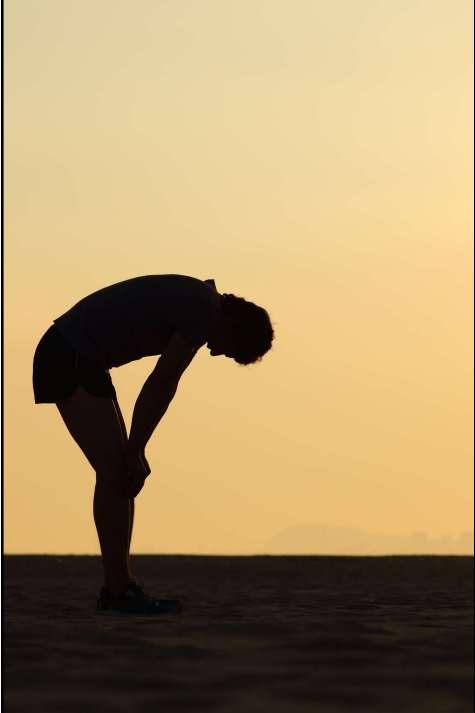
- A medicine man had said, "If a person cannot get in control of their thoughts of fear, the thoughts will overwhelm the person, making them seem crazy"
- "Thoughts can guide the spirit into the future or the past"
- "What they may experience then, is not from the physical"
- "Some of the people with Diagnoses, such as Schizophrenia, have actually wandered too far into the spirit world, without knowing or proper instruction."
- "Even some Medicine peoples have difficulty in maintaining a balance between the physical and the spiritual"
- "With these, they need to learn how to control this by focusing on the other, until they learn to turn it on/off at will."

"Maharishi Effect."

- Studies of mass meditation and prayer during the Israeli-Lebanese War in the early 1980's. The 1983 studies followed earlier experiments indicating that if as little as one percent of a mass population practicing unified forms of peaceful prayer and meditation, this was enough to reduce crime rates, accidents, and suicides. Studies conducted in 1972 showed that twenty-four U.S. cities, each with populations over ten thousand, experienced a statistically measurable reduction in crime when as few as one percent (one hundred people for every ten thousand) of the population participated in some form of meditative practice.


In Contrast

- As you know, Therapists are continually helping others, much like a filter, yet we must also remember to rid ourselves of these as well. Take care of yourself or you won't be able to take care of others.
- Many times, the therapist may hold on to clienteles' issues, worrying about what may/may not happen, which brings more stress upon the therapist.
- We must stay healthy in mind, body, spirit, emotions if we are to continue helping clientele. By honoring the whole person, "US" and learning to "let go," will allow us to focus our efforts in harmony, so as not to be inhibited by our own issues.



In Contrast

- To Help heal the Therapist if we are to continue helping clientele through one's own self-healing in relationship to Native American teachings, wisdom, and the Medicine Wheel.
- If we don't keep ourselves healthy and in balance, we won't be as successful in promoting the healing and wellness of others."



Objective 3: Describe compassion fatigue

- Purpose: describing how healers experience compassion fatigue.

Compassion Fatigue

- Compassion fatigue can be looked at much the same way as with healers, as knowledge of pain, sorrow, “the hurt” can be like a reflection of the one being healed. This is felt as it was their own. If unknowingly an empath, this may be interpreted as their own.
- Energetically, they may share energies within the bubble, especially if they are unaware of how to protect oneself or to control / have the capacity to feel their own energies going out or others coming to.
- Sickness for instance: Break up,.....



Mind over Matter

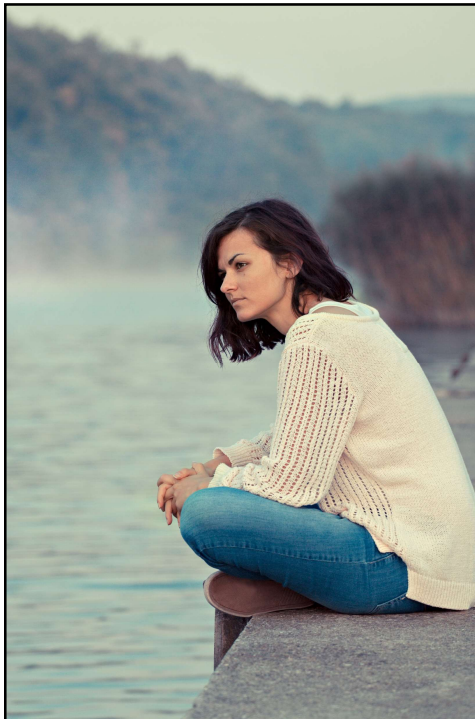
- Depression:
About the Past
- Anxiety:
About the Future
- Living:
 - “When I grow up, I want to be, _____”?
 - “Life is about, _____”?

Our Own thoughts

- Exercise:
 - Close your eyes, don't think, don't speak, relax. No internal Dialogue.
 - What were your experiences?
 - What does Peace mean to you?

Peacefulness

- To me, Peace meant a quiet mind.
- I began to fully believe that to find peace within chaos would be a great achievement, so it became one of my personal goals in life.



From Teachings

- Fear, Anger, Shame, Guilt, Jealousy, Greed, Envy, and etc., were meant to be fought and overcome.
- We often worry about things that don't even really matter



“Letting Go”

- Think of something that frightens you.
 - Example: Mice, Snakes, Worms
- For the people who don't have fear, something that gives you the willies?
 - For this exercise, you must not think or place meaning. Detachment.
 - You are in a safe place, so don't worry.
- Sit, Close your eyes, and envision your fear before you. Watch it, observe it, until it is over/becomes funny.

In Letting Go, You must let Go

- Energetically, if you have a hold on something, or won't let go, it makes it more difficult to be released.
- This is very important in healing, for if a person is not willing to let something go, or stop doing, it will be more difficult to help them.
- Remembering that thoughts, feelings, emotions, and actions have energies, sometimes, it is from these energies, that people must “fast” from. This can alleviate the drive, desire, or habit of repeating them.

Spiritual lives were learned and Lived.

- In the past, Native's Lives were not something we only did on certain occasions or on Sundays.
- This was our way of Life.
- Many times today, People base their Religions around their lives, while, at least before Columbus (B.C.), Natives lived their lives based upon Spiritual Beliefs.
 - It was not something that was just for certain things, but something to be cognizant at all times. All Lives Matter.



Objective 4: Understand the value of managing stress

- Purpose: understanding how stress can be identified and resolved.

Stress

- Stress is a normal part of our lives, yet learning from Nature, we learn that those animals in close quarters become ill if the population becomes too large.
- Teachings:
- Energies affect each other, but also based upon which types of energies those are.
- Stress takes a toll on you physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually

Meditation

When I returned from the Military, I had travelled over many states looking for a medicine man that could help me.

I had fasted, and during this time had a dream of a couple who could help me.

When I finally met these two, they looked exactly as I had seen them.

He later told me, that while he was speaking to the spirits, he was told that I needed to meditate. I hadn't known how, but kept searching my own way until I found what worked for me.

Traditional Healing practices

- Many American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans may prefer to use Traditional healing and spiritual practices over Western approaches to recover from trauma.



Healing the Healer

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From Teachings

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Managing Stress

- Get away from your regular routine of work, not doing what you do for work, but to relax, have fun, peace. Get exercise, walking reduces stress. Walk during breaks, lunch. Build healthy, fun activities into your routines
- End of day activities. Changing your clothes, shoes, or hat as a move from work-life into home-life.
- Also taking a shower, and visualizing yourself as washing away worries and energies of others off you and out of you. Visualize the water flowing through you and cleansing you.

Follow-up

- National MTTC can do introductory presentations with tribal leaders and providers on the Veterans Wellness Curriculum
- National MTTC can adapt the Veterans Wellness Curriculum to be tribally-specific with tribal leaders, providers, and tribal veterans.
- National MTTC can provide local training with tribal co-trainers that be up to 2.5 days.
- National MTTC can do trainer-of-trainers to develop tribal trainers to incorporate the modules within tribal systems, courts, etc.



Can we answer
your questions?

- Thank YOU