Intergenerational Trauma in Native American Communities

A Framework for Healing
Definitions

- Cosmology: Human attempts to understand and explain the universe.
- Culture: The medium within which all human development takes place.
- Epistemology: Study of the nature and theory of knowledge.
- Etiology: Causal explanations of disorders.
- Hegemony: Dominance of one state over others.
Internalized Oppression

- Internalization of what appears to be genuine power in an effort to cope with despair caused by complete loss of power. The result is an intense self-hatred.
Diagnostic Paradigms

- Individual Deficiency
  - Intervention Strategies
    - Providing services
  - Supporting Belief/value systems
    - Democratic pluralism
    - Science
    - Organizational reform
    - Principle of inducements

- Dysfunctional Environment
  - Problems conceptualized a function of system output.

American Indian Experience

- Contact
- Systematic genocide
- Systematic ethnocide
- Post-colonialism
Intergenerational Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

- Intergenerational transmission of psychological consequences of unresolved grief.
  - Depression
  - Danger
  - Fear
  - Hatred
  - Chaos
Clash of Worldviews

- Past attempts at treating problems were firmly grounded in western ideology
- Iatrogenic Injury was the result
Clash of Worldviews

- Dualism
- Individualism
- Modernity
- Holistic
- Collective
- Spiritual
Healing

- Validation of Externally imposed craziness
- Interpretation/understanding of etiology come from within the cultural experience of the client
- Interventions must incorporate indigenous epistemological principles.
- Interventions must incorporate an indigenous cosmological worldview
PTSD: Evolution from trauma to possible recovery

- Impact or Shock
- Withdrawal and Repression
- Acceptance/Repression (magical thinking)
- Compliance and Anger (Decompensation)
- Trauma Mastery (Healing)