



TRADITIONAL TREATMENT CONCEPTS IN WORKING WITH NATIVE AMERICAN CLIENTS

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DISCLAIMER

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Sheridan Ground
Poonoka Akatsii
“Whistling Elk”

Daniel Edwards
Awakiiman
“After Buffalo”

Durand T. Bear Medicine
MHA, LAC. CDC III
Mah-koo-yii-sii-kaan
“Wolf Robe”



WHO I COME FROM...



WHO I COME FROM....



HISTORICAL TRAUMA IN NATIVE AMERICA

- Maria YellowHorse BraveHeart, Ph.D. and Lemyra M. DeBruyn, Ph.D.
- Developed a model of Historical Trauma using information from Holocaust Survivors
- Understanding why the lives for many Native Americans is not “the American Dream”
- Also “unique” from Tribe to Tribe and individual members/citizens



CORE CONCEPTS OF HISTORICAL TRAUMA

- “Cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over one’s lifetime and from generation to generation following loss of lives, land and vital aspects of culture.” – Dr. YellowHorse BraveHeart.
- Native history is filled with trauma
 - Mass trauma – loss of cultural, familial, societal and economy
 - Those experiencing trauma respond with biological, social and psychological symptoms
 - Initial responses are conveyed to later generations through environment, psychology, prejudice and discrimination



FEDERAL INDIAN POLICY

- Contact
- Removal (1830s-1850s)
- Allotment and Assimilation Era (1880s-1940s)
- Boarding Schools (1860s-1960s)
- Termination and Relocation Era (1940s-1960s)
- Self-Determination Era (1960s-now)
- American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978)



GENERALIZED EXAMPLES OF TRAUMA

- Boarding Schools
 - Forced separation of families
 - Prohibited from speaking language and practicing religion
 - Forced to cut hair and change style of dress
 - Siblings separated
 - Discovering significant numbers of graves at boarding schools
- Relocation Programs
- Blood quantum
- Termination
- “Hiding of Identity”



EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

- Physical, Mental, Emotional and Sense of Identity
- Native Americans are approximately two percent of the US population but are often overrepresented in physical and mental health disparities and involvement in the criminal justice system



INTRODUCTION

Durand T. Bear Medicine-MHA, LAC, CDC-III

Education

MSU-Northern: (BA) *Community Leadership*, minor: *Native American Studies* (2020).

MSU Billings: (MHA) *Health Administration* (2022)

Certification/Acknowledgments/Public Service

- Northwest Indian Alcohol Drug Specialist Certification Board-Chemical Dependency Counselor-III (2008 – Present)
- Montana Licensed Addictions Counselor, # 3420. (March 2014-Present)
- NAADAC member, # 139451 (2014-Present)
- MAADAC Board member (2014-2021)
- PTTC Region 8 Advisory Board Member (2019-Present).
- Montana Board of Behavioral Health, LAC member (2016-2021)
- MT/WY Native American Recovery Professionals Association President (2022-Present)



FREQUENT QUESTIONS THAT ARE OFTEN ASKED ABOUT TRADITIONAL TREATMENT:

1. What is traditional treatment?
2. How is this form of treatment different than standard drug/alcohol treatment?
3. What can I learn from it or what should I expect?
4. Where can I find this kind of treatment?
5. Can anyone teach it or be involved in it?



WHAT IS TRADITIONAL TREATMENT?



WHAT IS TRADITIONAL TREATMENT



“The practice of using individual, Tribal beliefs, following the Tribal customs, values, and history. These are associated with the ceremonies, sweats, songs, dances and consultation from a elder or spiritual leader. Pikunii call this ‘Kiipaitapiiyssinnooni’ or Our Way of Life”.

~Tribal Elder~



WHAT IS TREATMENT AND HOW IS IT DEFINED?

The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
defines treatment as:

“A professionally recognized approach that applies accepted theories, principles and techniques designed to achieve recovery and rehabilitative outcomes for the persons served.”



3 KEYS AREAS WE WILL BREAK DOWN ON THIS TOPIC:

- Concepts
- Competencies
- Variations



HOW IS THIS FORM OF TREATMENT DIFFERENT THAN STANDARD DRUG/ALCOHOL TREATMENT?



Calf Shirt, Blackfeet Spiritual Leader



CONCEPTS NON-TRADITIONAL VS. TRADITIONAL

Non-Traditional Concept

- Psychologists, counselors, etc.
- Treatment plans (i.e. problem, goals, objectives, methods, deadlines, etc.)
- Support resources (AA/NA meetings, Al-Anon, Church, Cursillo, Pilgrimages)
- Credentials/licenses, accreditations (i.e. degrees, professional licenses, national/state standards, administrative rules, ethics, etc.)

Traditional Concept

- Elders/Spiritual Advisors, Medicine Men/Women
- Activity plans (i.e. outlining problem, daily schedule, goals, objectives, not time based, etc.)
- Support resources (sweats, ceremonies, prayer/smudging, social gatherings/powwows)
- Honors/Earned Rights/Privileges (i.e. transfer names, paint, pipe carriers, lodge/bundle keepers, protocols, virtues, ethics and guidelines)



ELDERS, SPIRITUAL ADVISORS, MEDICINE MEN/WOMEN

- Teachers
- Mentor
- Leaders
- Instructors

Traits are:

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Wisdom
- Values
- Guidance



ACTIVITY PLANS OUTLINE

*Daily Events, which are not hourly based

Morning

- Prayer Session
- Smudge
- Pipe Ceremony
- Crafts

Afternoon

- Talking Circle
- Storytelling
- Bundle Opening



TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES OFFER THERAPEUTIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR:

- Healing
- Prayer
- Smudging with sweetgrass, cedar, sage, sweet pine, etc.
- Concentration on individual identity



The OKAN is the most important ceremony of the Blackfoot people. Offers are made to the SUN, 'Napit-Natosii' every year.





COMPETENCIES

- Rights to put on sweat lodges are earned.
- It takes the skill to put one up, following protocols and safety precautions as taught by elders before.
- When used properly, has the ability to assist those suffering from ailments and sickness, disease, etc.
- Has been used for years by Native Americans, a practice still used today.

SWEAT LODGE

- Used for Purification
- Signifies being in the Womb of a Mother
- Bring cleanliness, rebirth and rejuvenation



TRADITIONAL

- Native Traditions taught and learned Orally/Observation. (i.e. Language, Ceremonies, Prayer)
- Knowing the community and values of the individual. What is the behavior?
- Communication: Many Native Americans excel by talking, sharing vs. writing and reading



NON-TRADITIONAL

- Education/History taught in schools, universities (i.e. books, videos, classroom setting, etc.)
- Communication

Ex: Caucasian or Native American professional sympathizing with an African American about the pain suffering ancestors endured from slavery.



“Just as a candle cannot burn without fire,
men cannot live without a spiritual life.”
— Buddha



SELF-IDENTITY



- Seeing who they really are
- What have I learned?
- Finding strengths/weaknesses
- Always knowing there are choices
- Living culturally expects sobriety



In all forms of leadership, whether you are a coach, a CEO, or a parent, there are four words that, when said, can bring out the best in your team, your employees, and your family.

"I believe in you."

Those four words can mean the difference between a fear of failure and the courage to try.

Coach K-Duke University



WHERE CAN THIS FORM OF TREATMENT BE FOUND?



- Most reservations consist of these resources. Traditionalists occupy many of the communities.
- Urban areas occupied by Native Americans who have access to resources.
- Wherever there is culture, there is traditional help.



CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: CAN ANYONE TEACH IT OR BE INVOLVED IN IT?



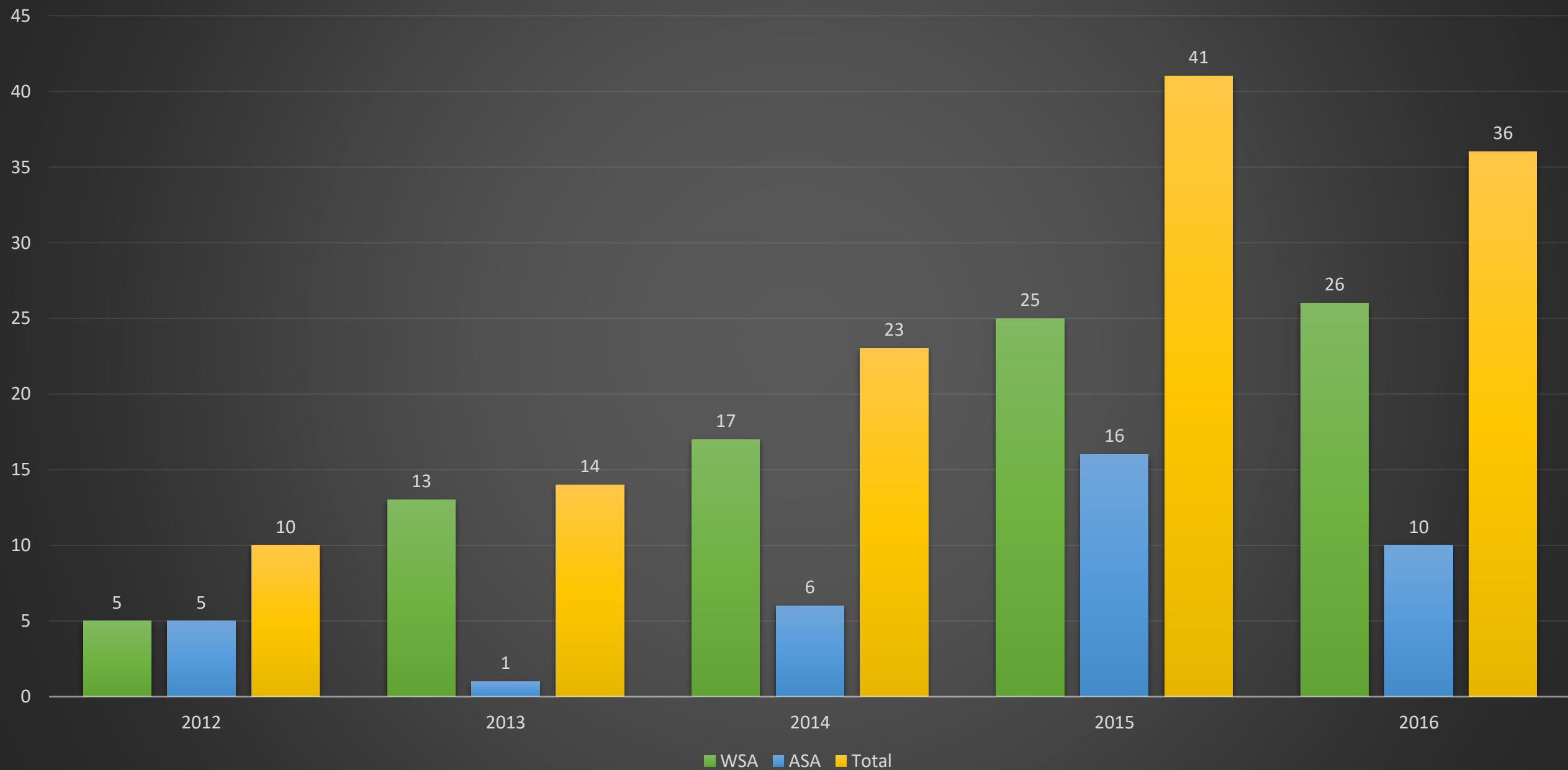
Mary Ground,
Blackfeet Elder – Fluent Speaker



Bartose Stranz ,
Poland



Outcomes of Tradition Treatment Model: With Staff Approval (WSA) vs. Against Staff Approval (ASA)



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YouTube Video: [You Got to Prove the Power](#)

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<https://youtu.be/mQCd3DGWqZ8>

