

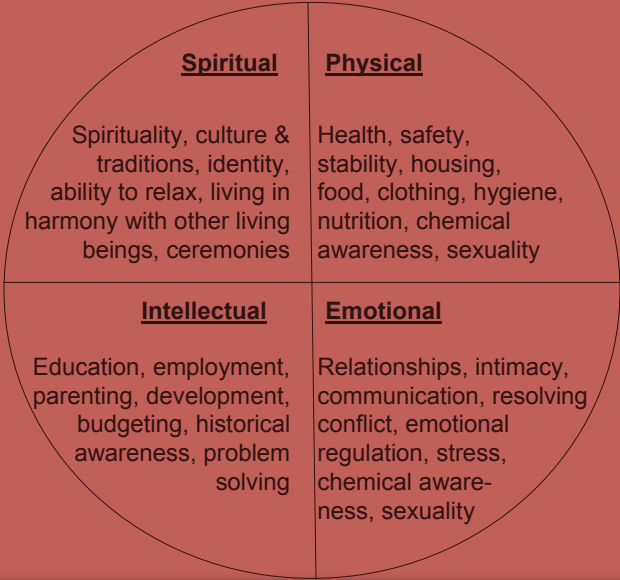
# American Indian Mental Health

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# Medicine Wheel: Model of Wellness



# Extermination and Colonization

## Areas of Focus

1. Prayer
2. Roles of Men
3. Roles of Women
4. Remove the children
5. Prohibit native language
6. Roles of Elders
7. Impose religion, roles and language
8. Introduce alcohol

## Desired Results of Colonization

- ❏ Interrupt Balance and Harmony established by the traditions of the people you are colonizing
- ❏ Confuse the Roles between the sexes
- ❏ Interrupt connection between ancestors and future generations is lost
- ❏ Break up Family structure
- ❏ Change Community-based way of living to individualistic way of living
- ❏ Create dependency on colonists for all physical needs

## Damage to Wheel

### Physical

- ❏ Alcohol addiction
- ❏ Poor diet: refined sugar, starches, “commodities”
- ❏ Poor health
- ❏ Inactive lifestyle

### Spiritual

- ❏ Alcohol addiction
- ❏ Internalized helplessness
- ❏ Connection to the Great Spirit is lost: lost ceremonies, identity, spirituality, traditions, etc.
- ❏ Harmony with the Earth lost

## Damage to Wheel

### Emotional

- ☞ Alcohol addiction
- ☞ Emotional detachment
- ☞ Behavior problems
- ☞ Self-hatred, invalidation
- ☞ Ability to cope with stress
- ☞ Attachment issues

### Intellectual

- ☞ Individualism vs. communal ways of life
- ☞ Learning disrupted: conflicting learning styles, values being taught, etc.
- ☞ Traditional parenting disrupted
- ☞ Lost language

## Identities

- ☞ Low acculturation, “traditional”
  - ☞ Rebellious against norms of mainstream
  - ☞ Live as close to the way ancestors did as possible
- ☞ “Walking in both worlds”
  - ☞ Dual status
  - ☞ Schizophrenic in nature
- ☞ Highly acculturated
  - ☞ May have little connection to the community
  - ☞ Very connected to mainstream values and culture

## Considerations when working with American Indian children

- 📖 Eye contact- not always considered appropriate
- 📖 Traditional learning styles include an observation period, followed by a “learn by doing it” period
- 📖 Community-based vs. individual-based
- 📖 Saying “bye”
- 📖 Traditional American Indian culture is much different than mainstream culture, so **DO NOT MAKE ANY ASSUMPTIONS.... ASK!**



## Contact Info

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