

# Gaining Cultural Awareness working with Native American populations

PRESENTED BY ALBERT TITMAN  
NISENAN, MIWOK, MAIDU, PIT RIVER  
CADCII, A.S.

# The Braided Way Walking the Red Road

JOURNEY TO INTERGENERATIONAL HEALING

# American Indians/Alaska Natives and traditional healing

AI/AN traditional healing practices have been used for generations among AI/ANs in the U.S.

AI/AN traditional healing practices continue to be used to promote AI/AN cultural identity, history, and traditions.

AI/AN traditional healing practices are utilized clinically to address the unique health care needs and treatment requests of this population.

Engaging in AI/AN traditional practices may help in the treatment of substance use issues among AI/ANs.

# Why is Cultural Awareness Important Serving Native Americans?

- ❖ Builds rapport, establishing trust is primary.
- ❖ Respect is shown for cultural values, beliefs and practices.
- ❖ Health care facilities and organizations are seen as a place where Native People can receive quality services and care.
- ❖ Helps clearly communicate medical information and treatment options more effectively to Native patients
- ❖ Tailor healthcare plans that include family, community resource, cultural and linguistics

# What Is Culture?

When we know about others' cultures, we better understand their way of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Culture is complex. It's many things, like values, norms, expectations, and identity. It effect how we:

- See the world
- Live our lives
- Connect with others
- Organize our home and communities

# What Is Culture?

Culture includes:

- ❖ Behavior, Language, Beliefs, Religion, Values and Customs
- ❖ Race, Ethnicity
- ❖ Thoughts, Actions, Communication
- ❖ Social groups, Gender, Sexual identity and Age
- ❖ Ability, Education, Status
- ❖ Culture is fluid People can belong to many cultures throughout their lives.

# Cultural Humility

“Lifelong process of learning, self-examination and refinement of one’s own awareness, knowledge, behavior and attitudes on the interplay of power, privilege and social contexts.”

*Tervalon, M. & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998)*

*Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved, 9(2), 117*

# Cultural humility requires a respect for difference

- ▶ In practice, cultural humility means bridging perspectives between ourselves and the people with whom we work



*Cultural humility requires consistent self-reflection; check in with yourself... forever*



# Indians Are NOT Indians

## Racism, Colonialism & Language

- ▶ Violence is embedded into the American culture, including the myths and beliefs through time. The reasons are that they keep certain groups oppressed, both from the in-group, and the out-group.
- ▶ Even the English language has genocide, racism and violence embedded in it and has become “institutionalized”...meaning we don’t think about it because it is so common that it is part of our infrastructure as a culture. The prime example of this is that “Indians are NOT Indians”....

## Federal Indian Law

- ▶ Federal Indian Law has its own designation under American Law, separate because it changes the most frequently.
- ▶ There are several things to note about this that are of special concern in working with SUD populations

# Indians Are NOT Indians

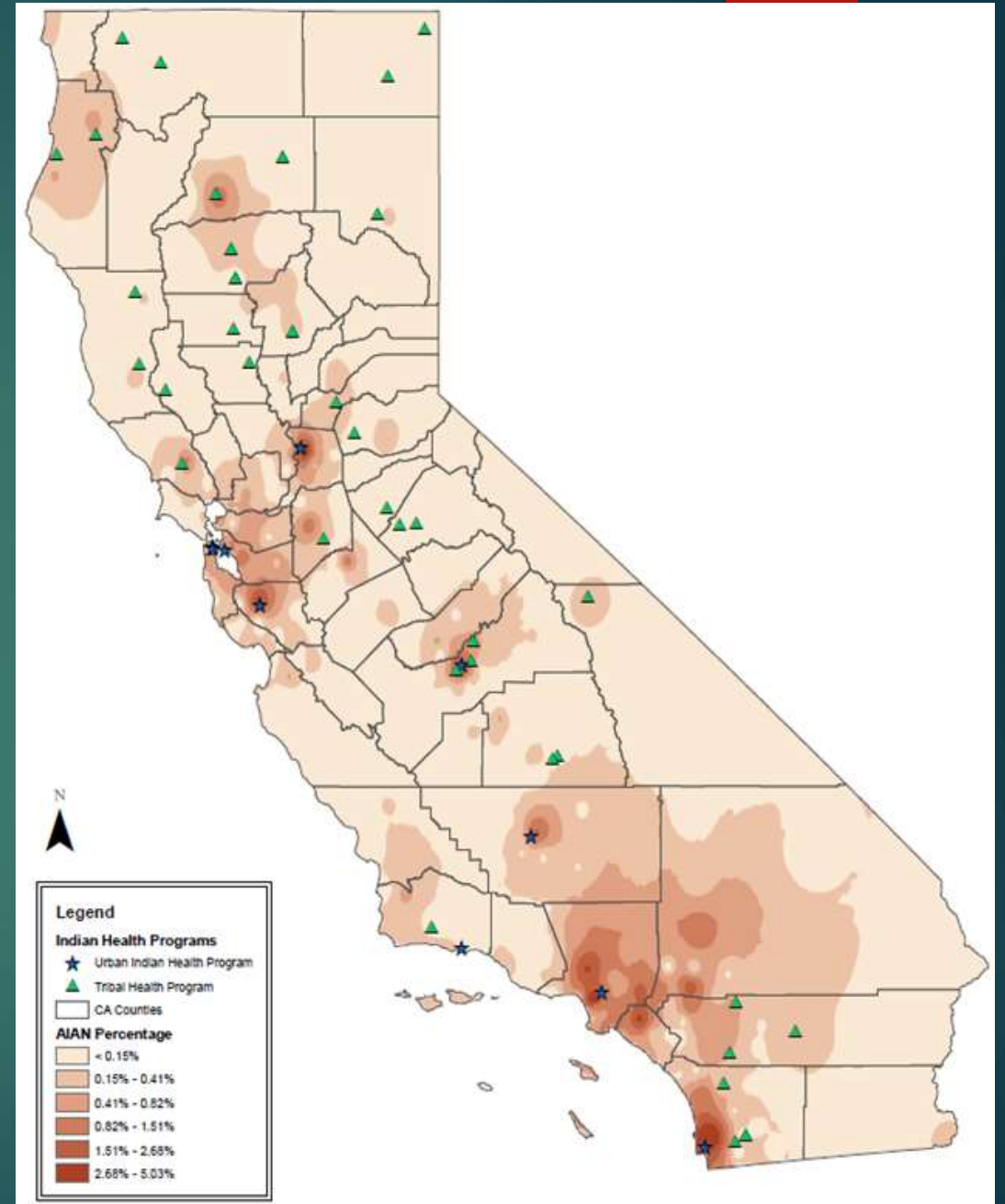
- Migration from many places in the world.
- **Bringing European ideas, myths, lifestyles, and religious beliefs with them.**
- Some ideas evolved into slavery, indentured servitude, and what today we use as “racial distinctions”. However, in fact, race is a social construct. We are all People

# Marginalized Populations

- Attitudes, beliefs, religious edicts and practices of the time affected the way that Natives were treated, often portrayed as demons or non-humans.
- **This allowed for “other-ization”, “depersonalization”, “marginalization” which led to abuses.**
- This is just a little bit of what there is to know.

# California History

- There are currently **109** federally recognized Indian tribes in California and **78** entities petitioning for recognition. Tribes in California currently have nearly 100 separate reservations or Rancherias. There are also a number of individual Indian trust allotments. The original inhabitants of Palms Springs are the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla. The Cahuilla believe their creation began there in the Coachella Valley. 2010 census 410 population.
- There are **562** federally recognized Indian tribes, bands, nations, pueblos, rancherias, communities and Native villages in the United States. Approximately **229** of these are located in Alaska; the rest are located in 33 other states. Tribes are ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse.





# California History

- ▶ Before the missionary, fur trapping, and gold rush era migrations,
- ▶ California's Native American population was estimated at about 600,000 -1,000,000 people.



# California Native History



- ▶ The Spanish Missionaries began to systematically colonize California in the mid to late 1700's. California Native Tribes were enslaved into the Mission system and endured physical, mental, and sexual abuses by Spanish priests and armed forces.
- ▶ Native Americans living in the Missions were forced into Christianity and violently punished for speaking their Native language and practicing tribal traditions. By 1836, 1/3 of the Native population were wiped out.



# California Native History

## ► Other important facts:

1. *Justices of the peace could remove Native people from lands that were in a white person's possession.*
2. *The kidnapping, selling, and use of Native children as slaves was common.*
3. *Indentured servitude of any Native (one report mentioned 110 servants who ranged from ages 2 to 50, 49 of whom were between 7 and 12 years old).*

- Unprecedented numbers of colonizers arrived in the region in 1848-49 and violence erupted, particularly against Natives who resisted the intrusion of Gold Rushers onto their land. Within 2 years of the discovery of gold over two-thirds of the remaining Native population were killed, some 100,000 people.
- Between 1840 and 1870, however, that population declined to 12,000 due to disease, removal, and death/GENOCIDE



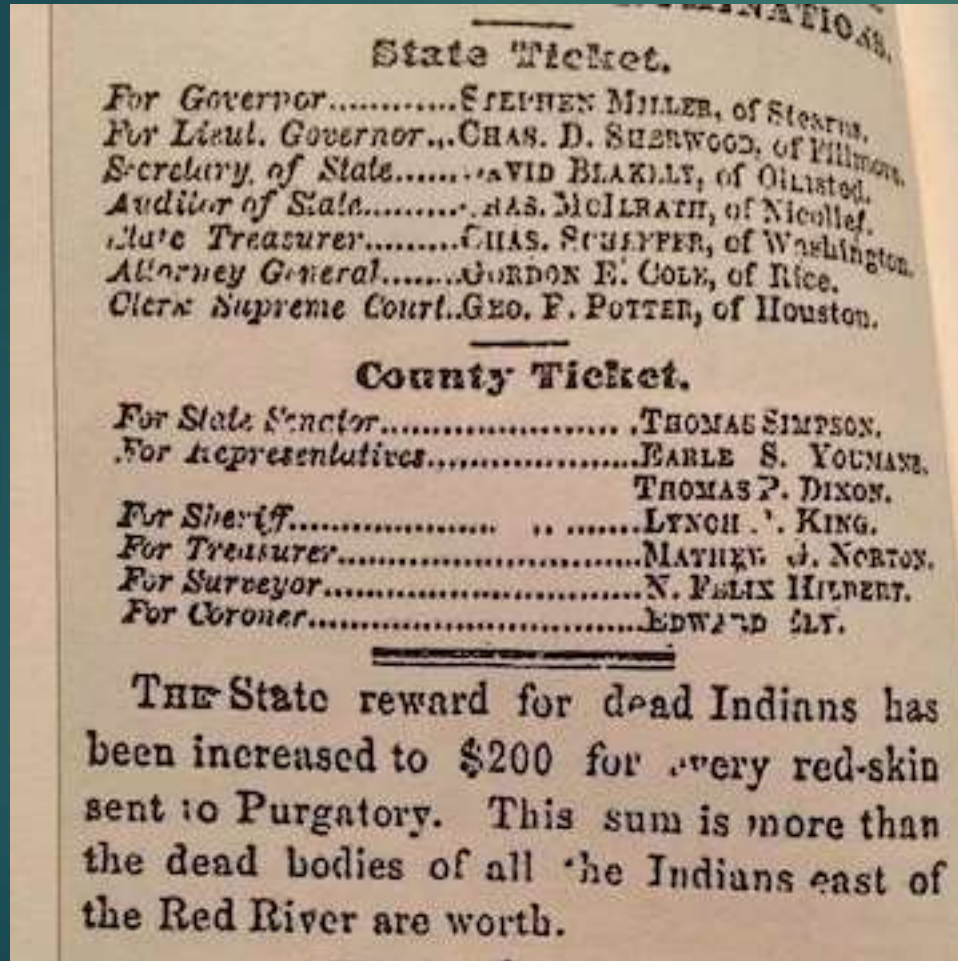
# Boarding Schools and Prisons



- ▶ The U.S. government wanted to "Americanize" Native people by indoctrinating them with Euro-American ideals and extinguishing Native culture
- ▶ In the late 1800s, many Hopi refused to send their children to boarding schools and also refused to give up their lands, and when they did so, they were arrested and sent to Alcatraz

# California Native History

## Genocide



Some experienced genocide as a bounty on their scalp (at .25 cents each), which was a lot of money during that era. It was a time when people were so desperate that they would scalp their neighbors in order to collect money.

# California Native Culture

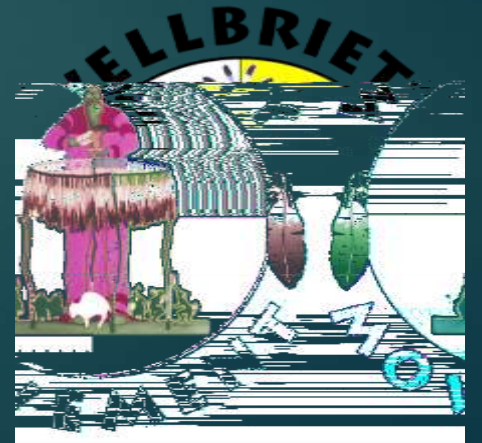
- In the 1950s, nearly 100 years later, the federal government's continued attempts to force assimilation on the entire Native American population resulted in the termination (i.e., loss of federally recognized status) of over 109 tribes throughout the United States. In California, this came about through the Rancheria Act of 1958, which resulted in the termination of federal status of 44 Indian tribes.
- The Relocation Act of 1956 provided funding to establish relocation centers for Native Americans in urban areas like Denver, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, and to finance the relocation of individual Native Americans and their families.
- Nearly 100,000 Indians were relocated to California from 1952-1968 as a result of these and other, related policies.

# White Bison, Inc.

Native American Approaches to Healing

PRESENTED BY ALBERT TITMAN

NISENAN, MIWOK, MAIDU, PIT RIVER







# NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAMS

Culturally based tools for changing individuals,  
families, communities and nations

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[www.whitebison.org](http://www.whitebison.org)

Eagles view of the  
Wellbriety Community  
Change Program

Applying your own  
Culture.....to all programs.....



# Mission statement

A sustainable grassroots Wellbriety Movement that provides culturally based healing for the next seven generations of Indigenous people.

Indigenous people  
healing for the next seven generations of  
Movement that provides culturally based  
A sustainable grassroots Wellbriety

# A Long time ago.....

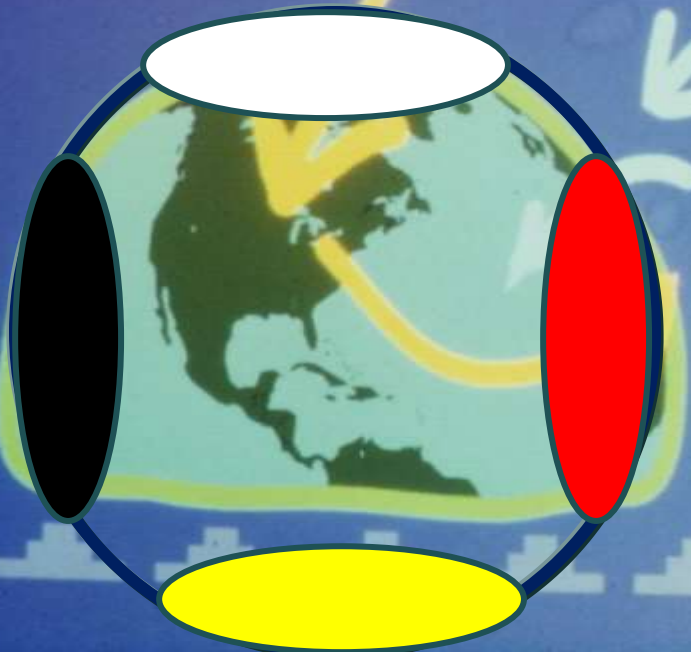
▶ Before you were born.....  
when our ancestors lived....

WE.....

Seen World

# The Source of Native Culture

Unseen World





**Vision**

**Principles**

**Laws**

**Values**

**Traditional Man**

**Traditional Woman**

**Traditional Clan Mother**

**Traditional Elder**

**Traditional Youth**

**Traditional Warrior**

**Traditional Chief**

**Healing**

**Spirituality**

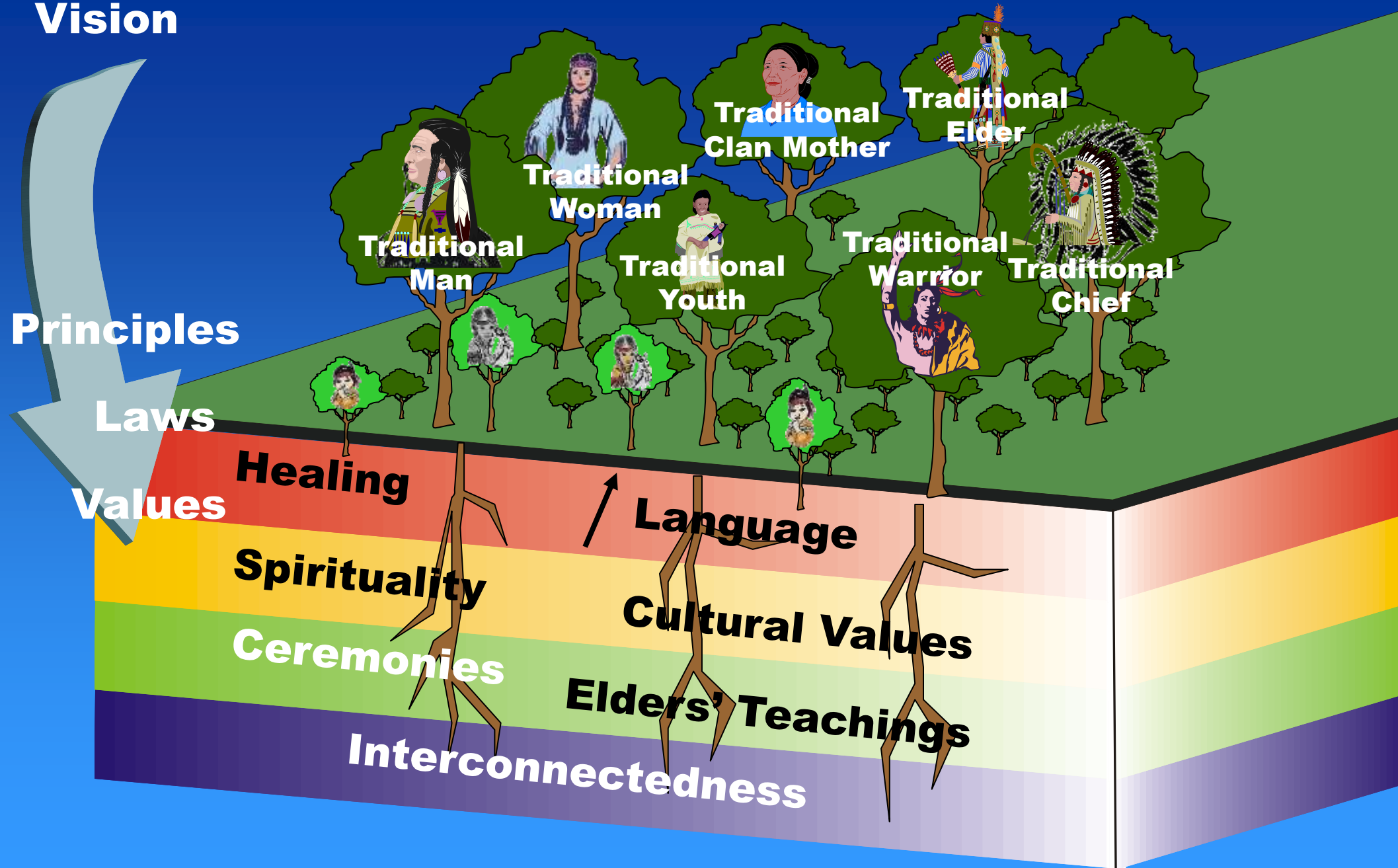
**Ceremonies**

**Interconnectedness**

**Language**

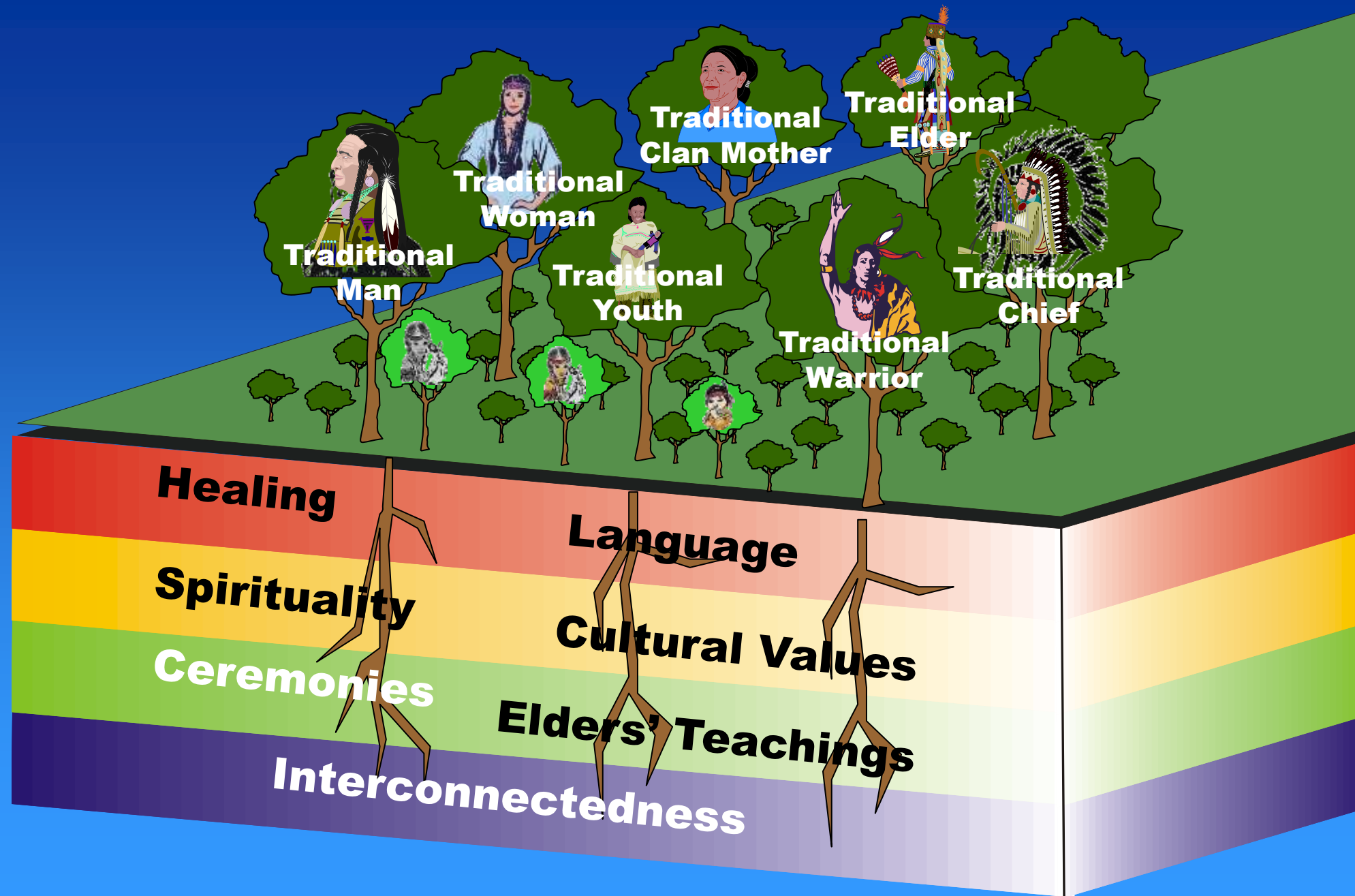
**Cultural Values**

**Elders' Teachings**

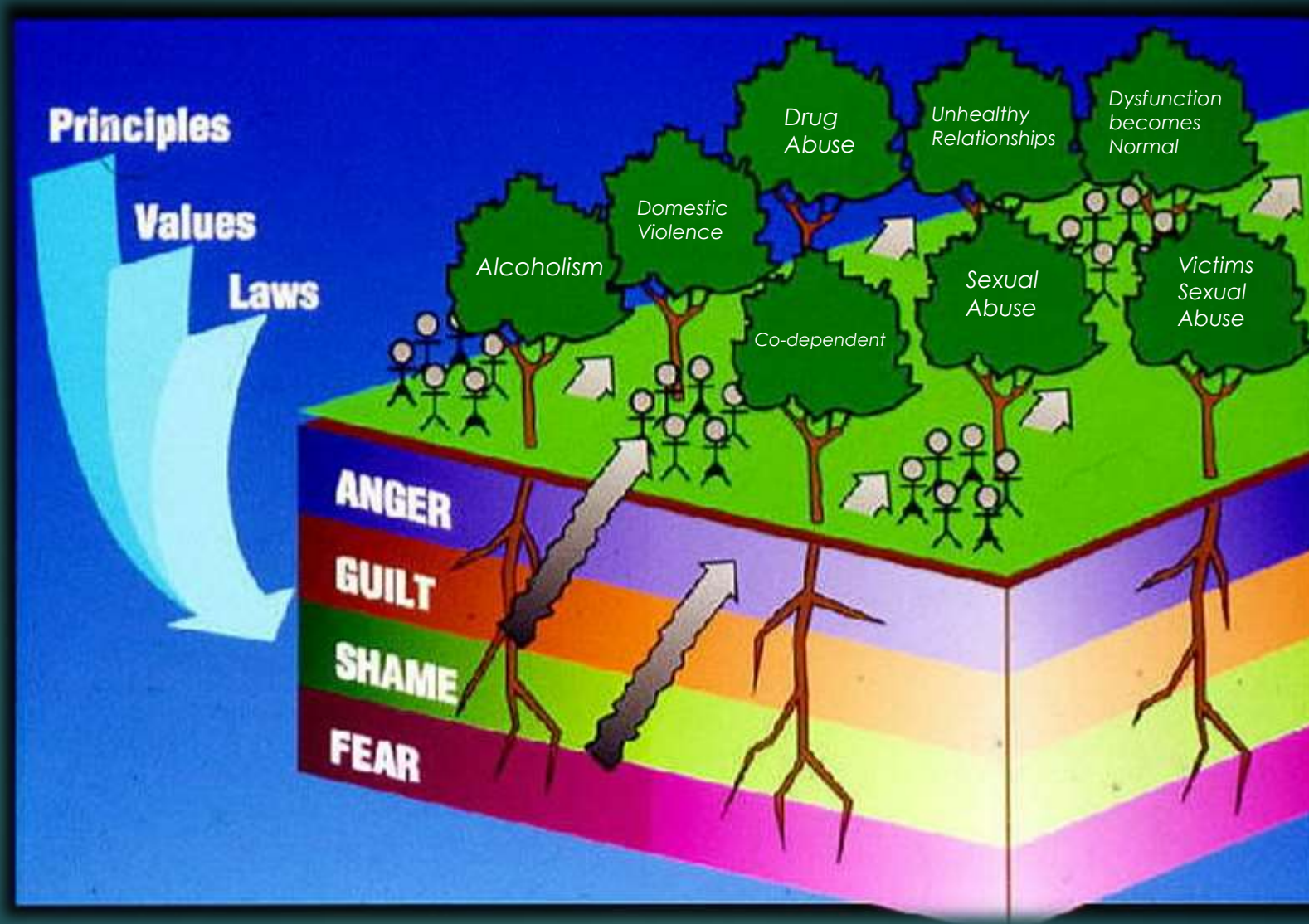




Then.....  
Something  
Happened  
To us.....

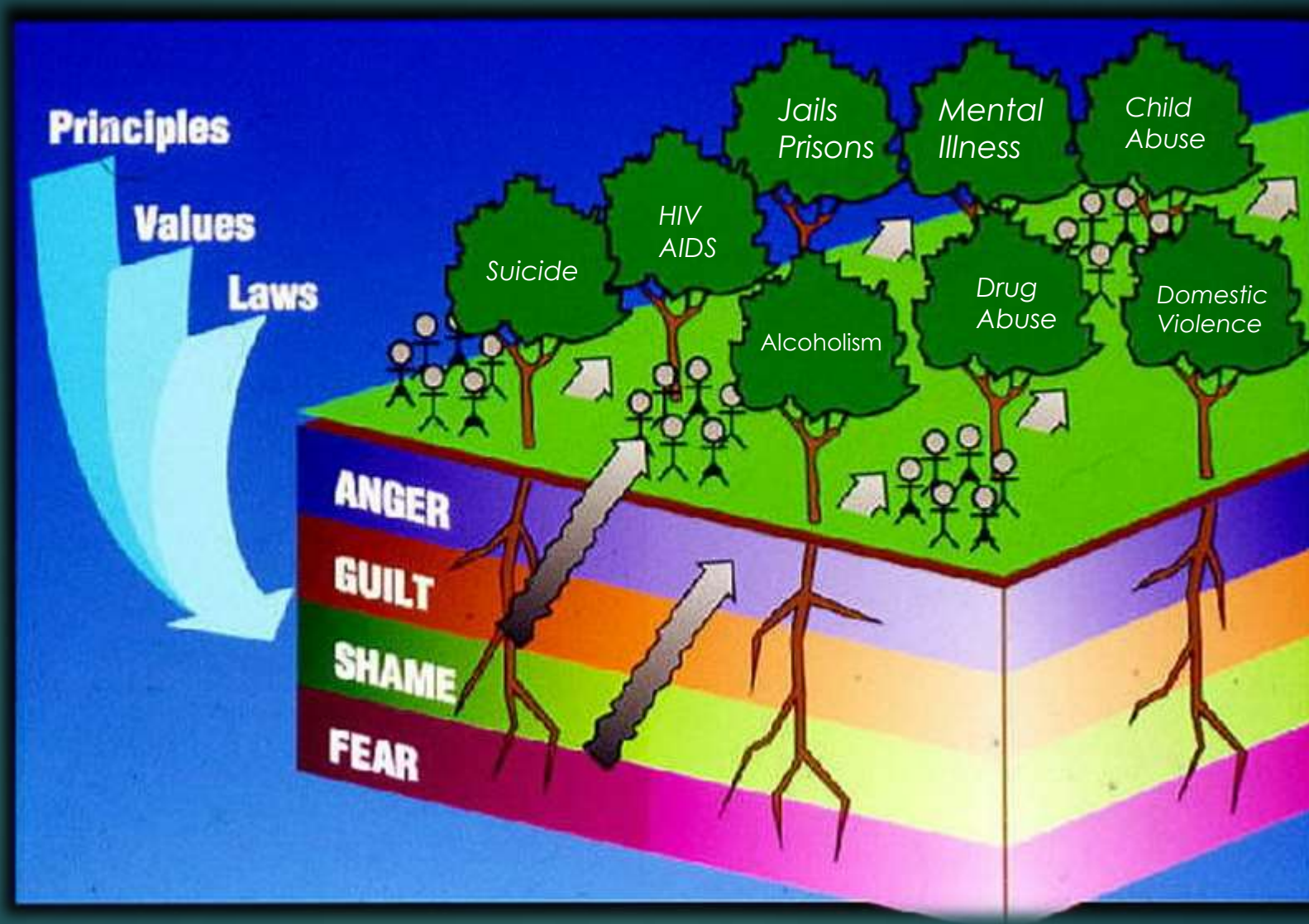


# Effects of Historical Trauma

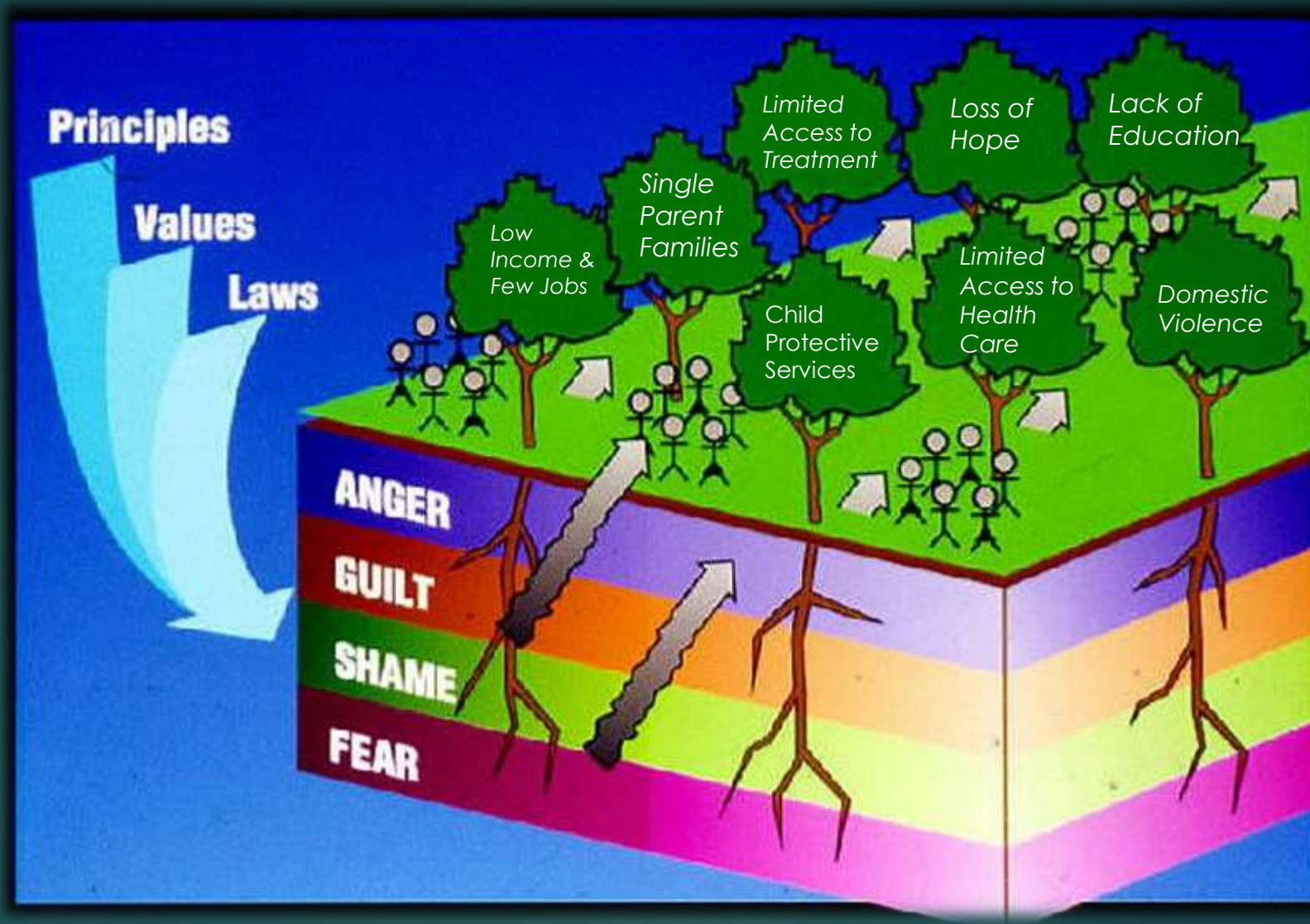




# Effects of Historical Trauma

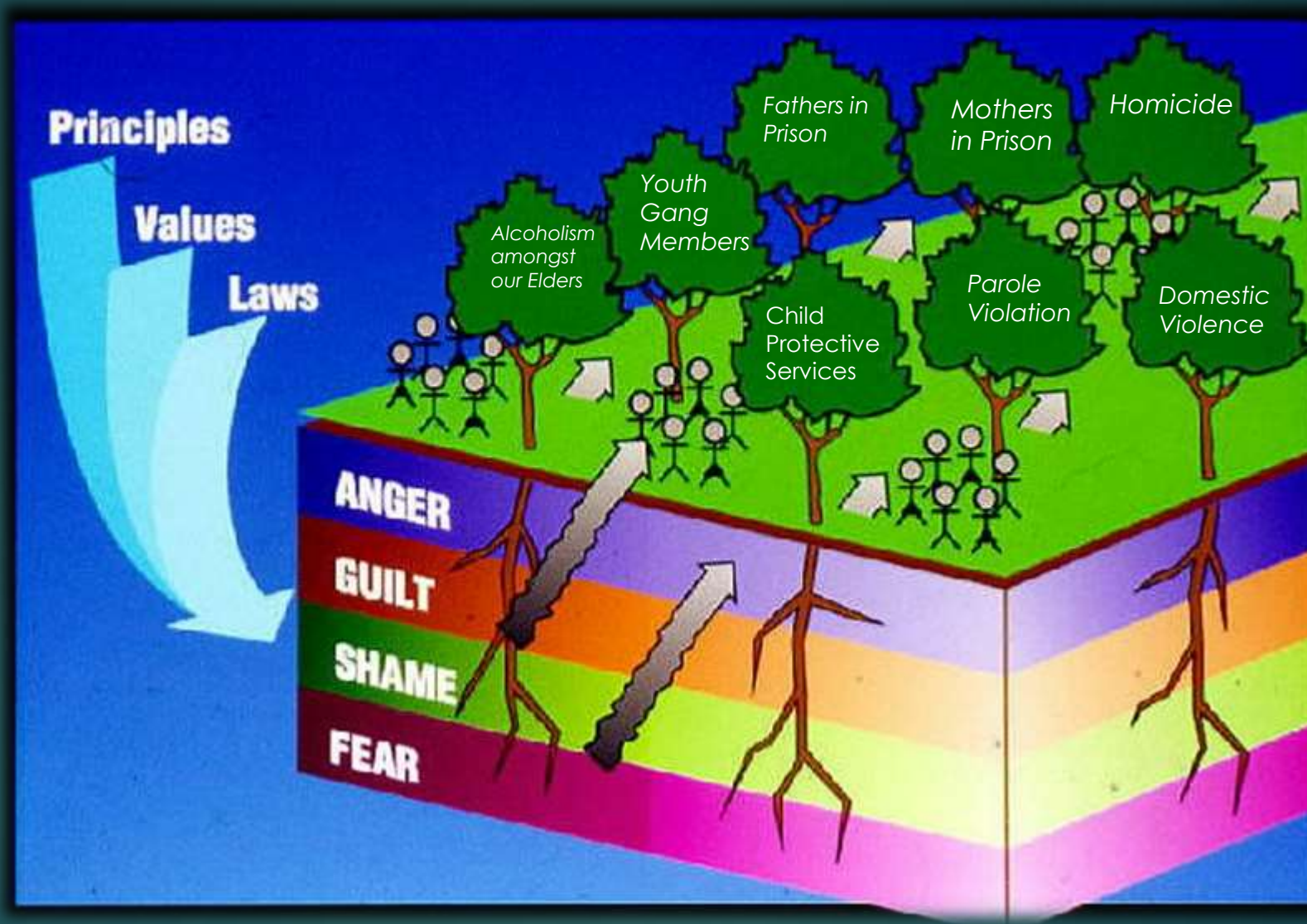


# Effects of Poverty

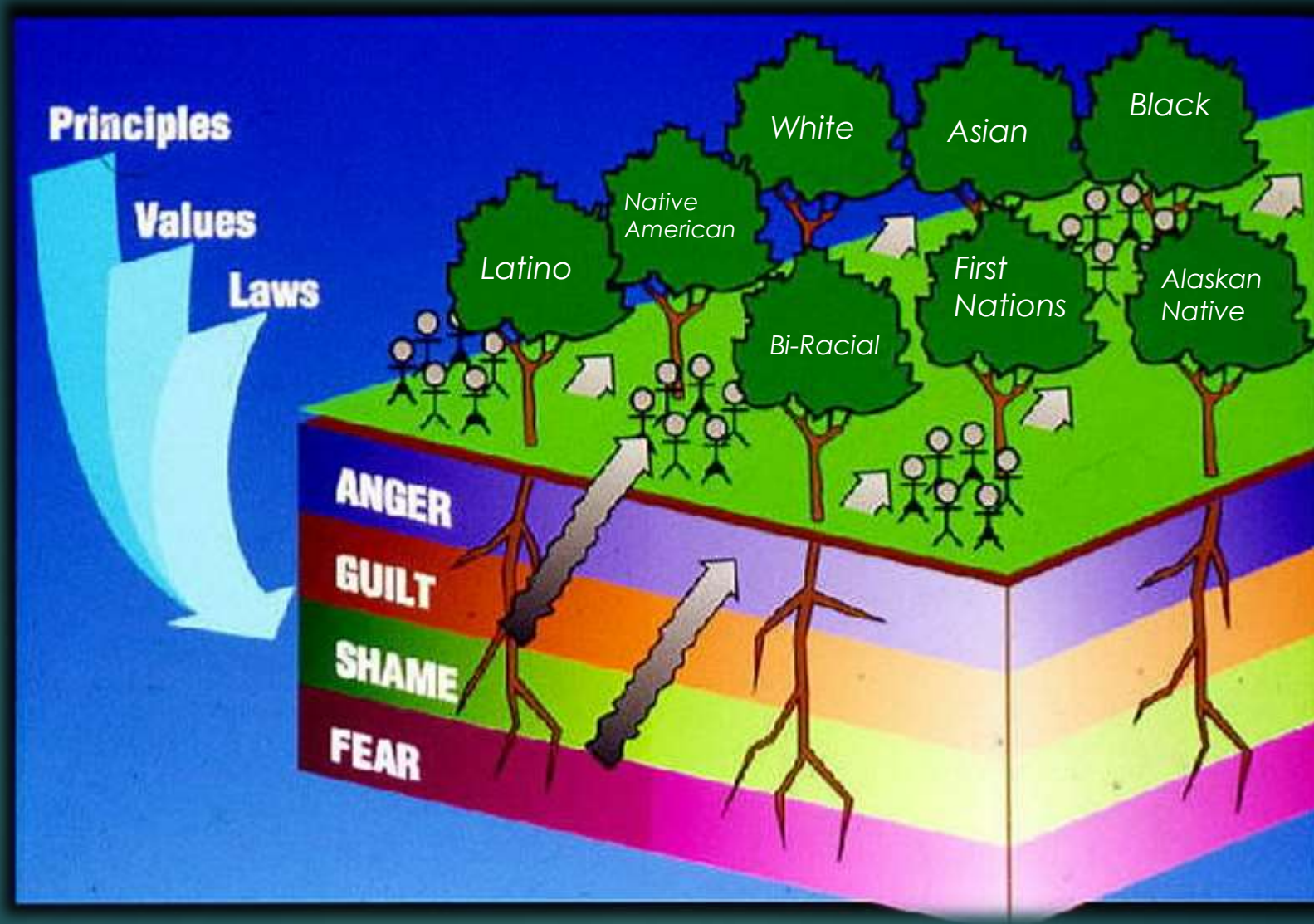




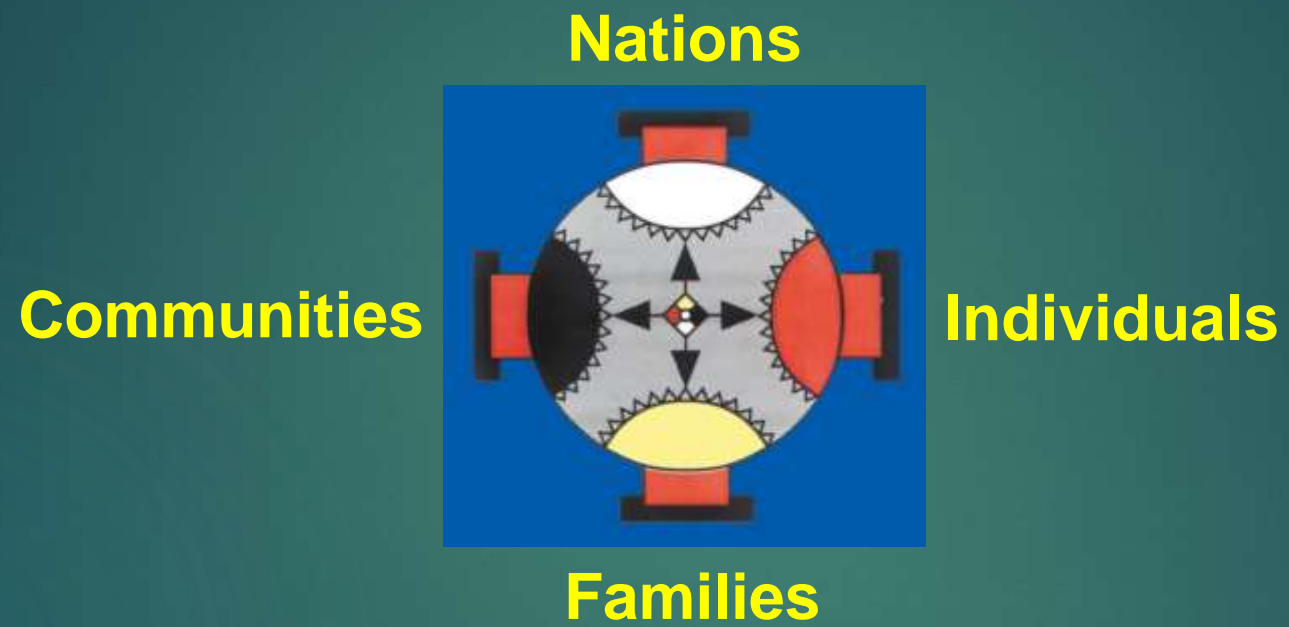
# Effects of Historical Trauma



# Universal Effects of Trauma



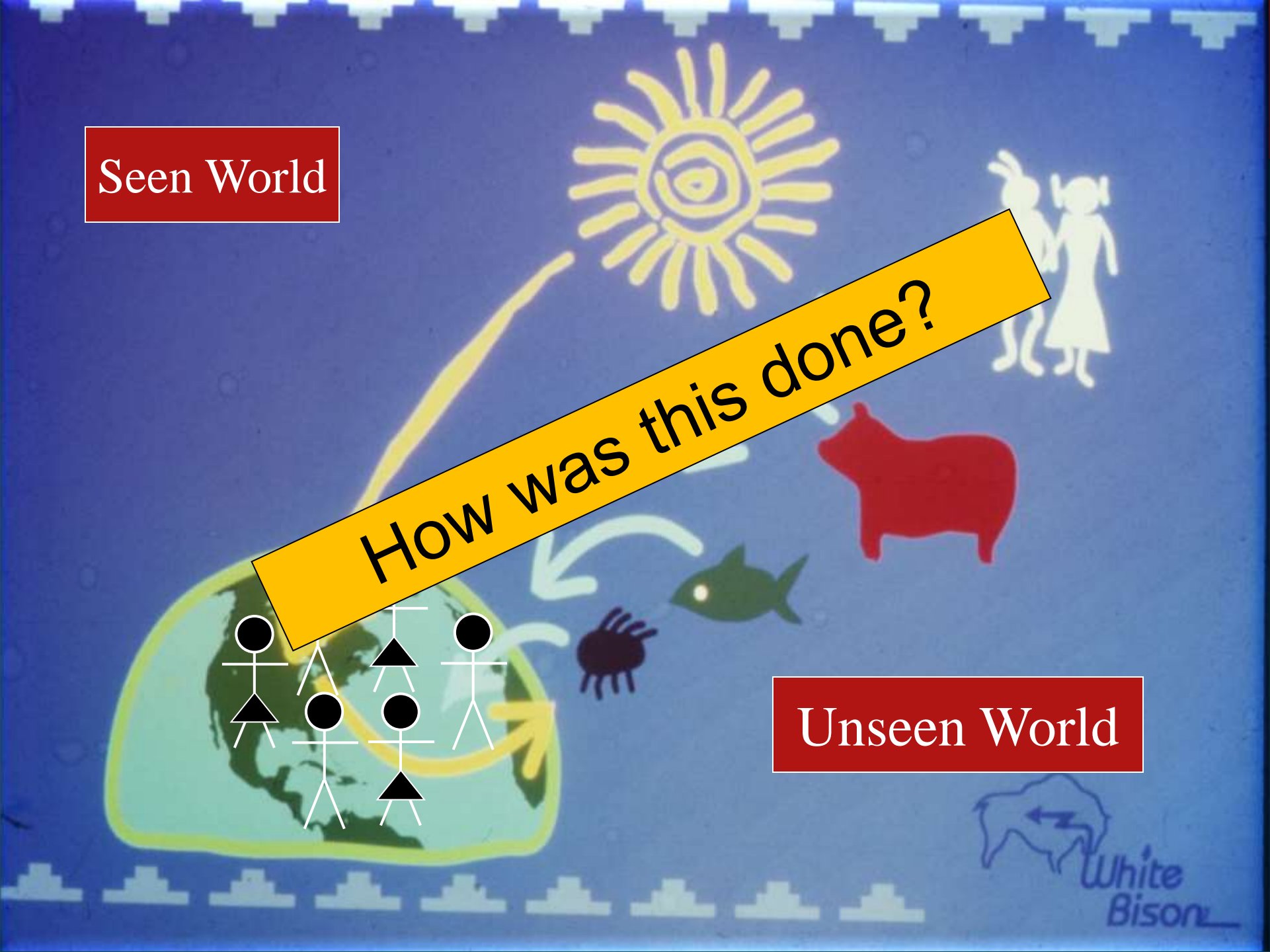




Seen World

How was this done?

Unseen World



# Carlisle Indian School



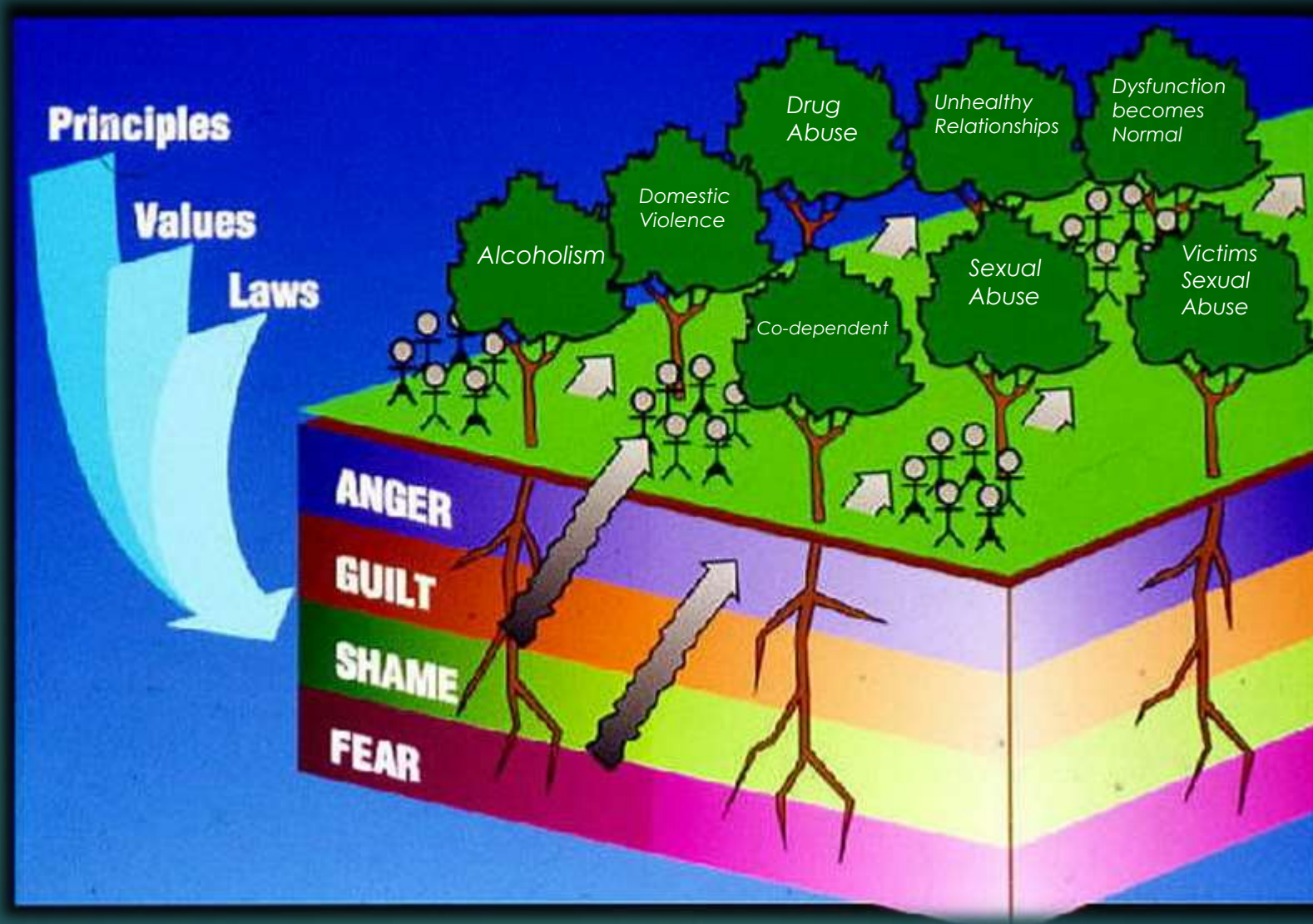
Model school for the nearly 500 schools set up in the United States to assimilate American Indian and Alaska Native children

# *Kill The Indian Save the Man*

- ▶ Two Hundred years ago on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1819 the Civilization Fund Act ushered in an era of assimilationist policies, leading to the Indian Boarding School era, which lasted from 1860-1978.
- ▶ First Indian Boarding School 1860 Yakima Indian Reservation in the state of Washington.
- ▶ Carlisle Indian School 1879-1918 developed by Army General George Pratt. More than 12,000 Indian children were “Civilized” many died while attending this school.
- ▶ Bureau of Indian Affairs operates four off reservation Indian Boarding schools today in four states: Sherman I
  1. Sherman Indian School, Riverside CA.
  2. Riverside Indian School, Anadarko OK.
  3. Chemawa Indian School, Salem Or.
  4. Flandreau Indian School, Flandreau SD.



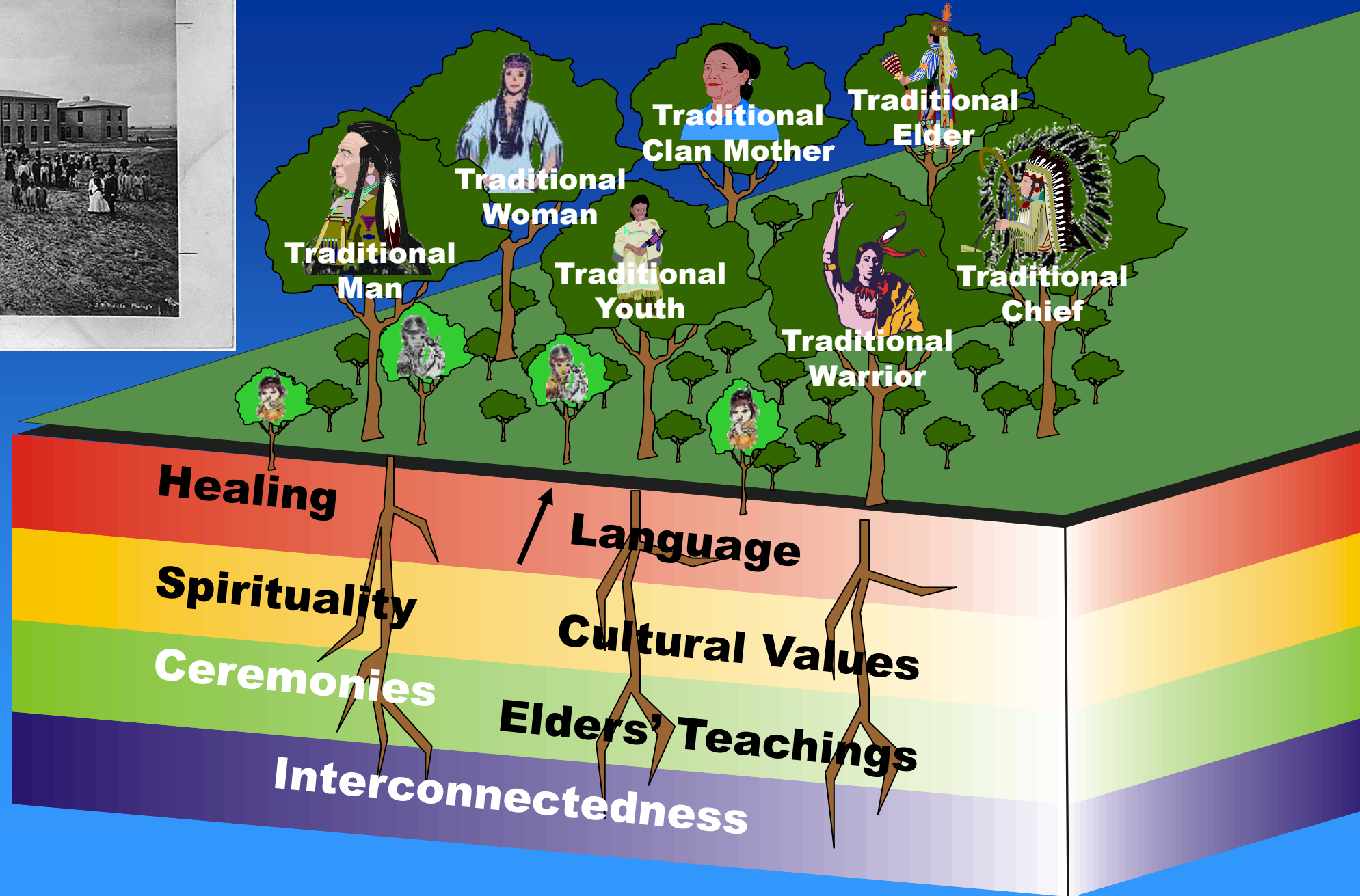
# Family Structure....



Families started to fall apart....



1885—





Violence

Sexual Abuse

The Boarding Institutions

The Mission Institutions

The Residential Institutions

No teachings

No Ceremonies

Sexual abuse

No Culture

Cut your hair

Soap in mouth

Cult

Elders' Teaching

Intercom

stedness

Healing

Quality

Take away

Language



# Historical Trauma

A combination of immense losses and traumatic events that are perpetrated upon an entire culture. *Maria YellowHorse Braveheart*

For Native Americans, these losses include:

- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Land
- ▶ People (deaths due to diseases and war)
- ▶ Way of life
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Family structure (forced into boarding schools)





# How do we know about intergenerational/historical trauma?

1. From research on Holocaust survivors,
2. Japanese-Americans who were placed in internment camps,
3. African Americans (slavery),
4. Central American refugees and
5. More recent studies on Native American people.

# How does trauma get passed down through generations?

People adapt to traumatic experiences by

1. Developing defense mechanisms and coping skills that often can be detrimental.
2. For Native people enduring immense losses, grief and post traumatic stress became a way of living.
3. People believe that feeling numb, being angry, acting self-destructively, and feeling hopeless is a normal way to be in the world.



## Other unfortunate consequences of trauma include:

1. Not believing you have a future
2. Difficulties in relationships
3. Distrust of the outside world.

These consequences are often passed down through direct parent-child interactions, with extended family and the community.



Often 2-3 generations pass before the most challenging symptoms of trauma show up in individuals, families and communities.

Cultures go through a grief process similar to individuals.





Hurt People....

Hurt People!!!

# Genocide Meets Culture

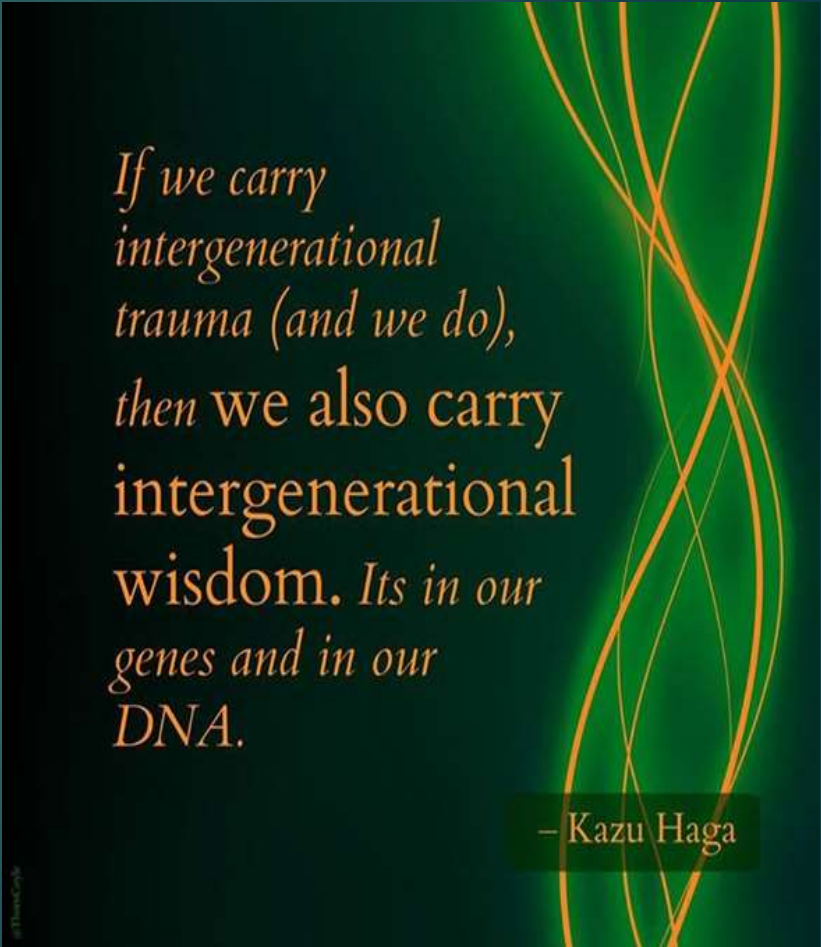
**Genocide continues today through** the attitudes, behaviors, cultural norms of First Families as well as non-Native families. The past has not been resolved.

**Many families still struggle with**

- how to survive, repeating strategies that weren't successful for previous generations or fighting for resources;
- returning to the old ways to find identity and meaning to life;
- painful relationships and lack skills to choose differently.
- escapism.

# How our Past Effects our Present

- ▶ **Intergenerational Trauma:** Serious trauma can affect the children and grandchildren of those who had the first-hand experience, due to living with a person suffering from PTSD and the challenges that can bring.
- ▶ **Epigenetics and Trauma:** Traumatic experiences in early life are risk factors for the development of behavioral and emotional disorders. Such disorders can persist through adulthood and have often been reported to be transmitted across generations
- ▶ **Historical Trauma:** Cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experience.
- ▶ **Cultural Repercussions:** Fracturing of the family unit, loss of culture, drug and alcohol abuse, physical and emotional abuse, culture and language loss



*If we carry  
intergenerational  
trauma (and we do),  
then we also carry  
intergenerational  
wisdom. Its in our  
genes and in our  
DNA.*

– Kazu Haga

# Internalized Oppression

- ❖ While some might say that *history is in the past*, if you think about it, stories and behaviors are passed along to families as we usually get to know our grandparents, who also knew their grandparents.  
***Historic times are not so long ago.***
- ❖ Inter-generational fears have passed down, as well as mal-adaptive behaviors that people used to survive. Molest and abuse that occurred in the past, continues today.



# Stereotypes

When Stereotypes are used about any People, several things occur:

1. It de-personalizes the targeted group (they can feel diminished, suffer, loss of resources, etc.);
2. The non-depersonalized people agree that this is true and treat the other group in that way (reinforcing the stereotype);
3. It begins to sew the seeds of genocide, as has been documented around the world. A dismissed People is easier to “eliminate”.

# Mental Illness and Wellbeing

- Migrating populations suffer great trauma by displacement (mental illness of all types, post traumatic stress disorder, depression, painful relationships).
- Multiple losses and continual abusive events (either experienced, witnessed, or passed along through stories) compound trauma.

# Mental Health Issues

- AI/AN experience serious psychological distress 1.5X more often than the general population.
- Experience PTSD more than twice as often.
- Experience alcohol and drug addiction at younger ages, and higher rates, than all other ethnic groups.

# Native Curriculum Based Interventions

- ❖ White Bison Red Road to Wellbriety. [www.whitebison.org](http://www.whitebison.org)
- ❖ Fatherhood & Motherhood is Sacred.  
[mikedndninc@gmail.com](mailto:mikedndninc@gmail.com)
- ❖ Gathering Of Native Americans GONA- Native Wellness Institute
- ❖ Generation Red Road- [info@redroad.org](mailto:info@redroad.org)





# Culturally Integrated Approaches

## Recommendations

- Promotion of drug-free zones on reservations, including sober events
- Increase awareness of services available (e.g. when and where) for AI/AN
- Services that will enhance motivation for treatment
- Access to MAT programs
- Sliding fee scale for services
- Transportation support to obtain services
- Integration of cultural services into Western treatment services
- Life and re-entry skills and resources
- More aftercare and follow-up after discharge from a treatment program

# Cultural Resources that Promote Mental Wellness and SUD Recovery



# SUICIDE

200 AI/AN Sacramento community members identified suicide prevention as a significant need (Suicide Prevention Needs Assessment, 2015).

- ▶ **67%** agree or strongly agree that **suicide and suicidal behavior is common in their community**;
- ▶ **78%** agree or strongly agree that an **AI/AN culturally focused suicide awareness campaign is needed in their community**;
- ▶ **96%** agree or strongly agree that **traditional cultural events** (i.e. pow wows, drumming circles, beading classes) are needed;
- ▶ **94%** agree or strongly agree **education is needed to address healthy relationships** (i.e. communication, parenting, etc.);
- ▶ **94%** agree or strongly agree that **mentoring** (i.e. adult mentoring teen, teen mentoring youth) is needed;
- ▶ **80%** felt that suicide and suicidal behavior is **most common among individuals who use alcohol and/or drugs**;
- ▶ **76%** felt that AIAN youth attempt suicide because they **don't know where or how to get help**.



# CULTURALLY ADAPTED OPIOID CAMPAIGN

Developing, collecting, and disseminating culturally tailored materials addressing:

- OOD prevention and reversal training
- OUD prevention, treatment, and recovery
- Medication assisted treatment and access
- Safe opioid prescribing and disposal
- Suicide prevention

All materials created in a way to reduce stigma around opioid use disorder and medication assisted recovery.

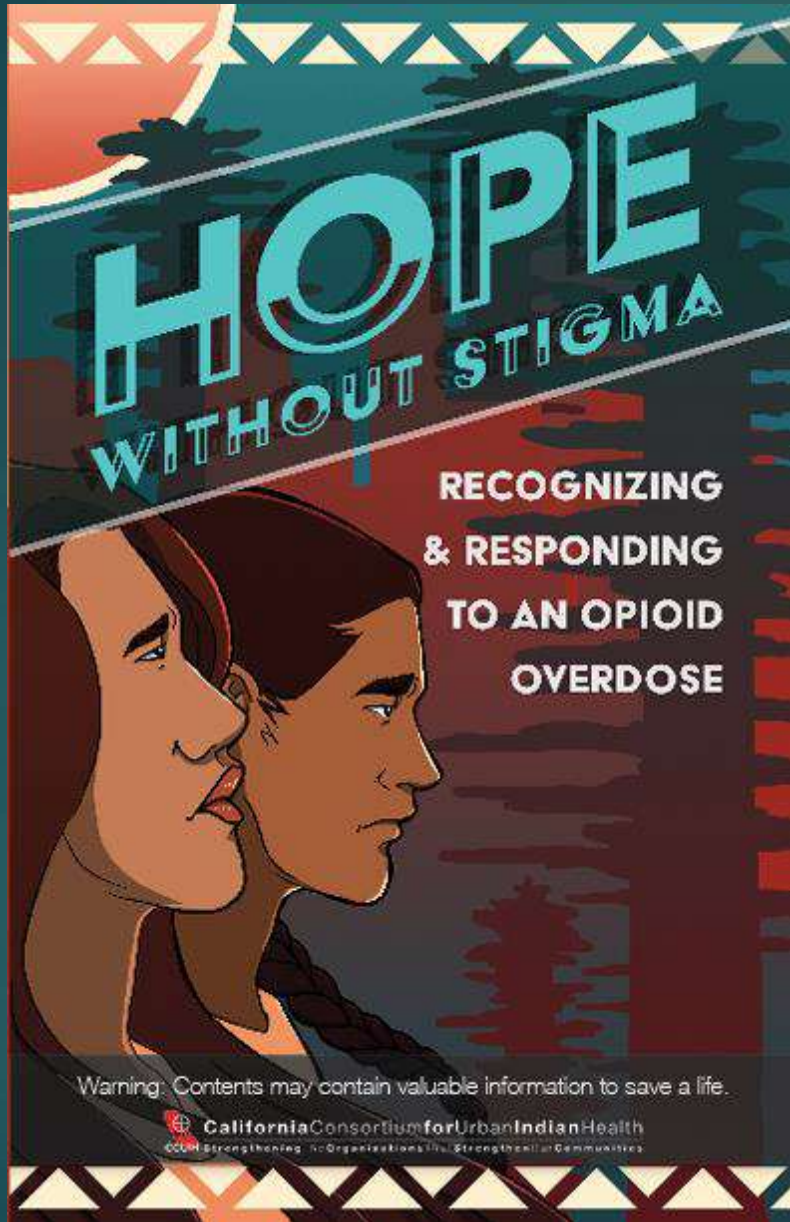
AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES EXPERIENCE  
HIGHER RATES OF OPIOID RELATED DEATHS THAN  
PEOPLE FROM OTHER RACIAL GROUPS. CDC 2014

BUT WE HAVE  
**HOPE**



THERE ARE  
EFFECTIVE MEDICINES  
TO HELP PEOPLE RECOVER  
FROM OPIOID USE DISORDER.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS  
THAT ADDICTION IS TREATABLE  
AND RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE!





## 2 WHAT IS AN OPIOID OVERDOSE?

Opioids depress the nervous system, which means they can make your brain, heart, and lungs function at a much slower rate. If you take too many opioids, your heart and lungs may slow down so much that they stop working altogether.

1

Lungs stop working.

2

No oxygen going to the brain.

3

Eventually the heart stops.

## 6 IF THEY DO NOT WAKE TO NOISE OR PAIN:

1

Call 9-1-1 right away!

2

Stick to the basics, share your location.

3

Say that your friend is not breathing nor responding.

Remember: GOOD SAMARITAN LAWS protect you from arrest when calling to help someone who may be overdosing.

## 4 WHAT DOES AN OPIOID OVERDOSE LOOK LIKE?

### SIGNS OF AN OVERDOSE

Fingernails or lips look blue/purple/ashen.

Slowed or stopped heartbeat.

Face is more pale than usual and/or clammy to the touch.

Cannot be woken up.

Body is limp.

Shallow or slow breathing, snoring or gurgling.



### 3 WHAT CAUSES AN OPIOID OVERDOSE?

An overdose happens when someone takes too many opioids and their heart and lungs slow down and may stop working.

Mixing Drugs Like Alcohol, Stimulants, and Pills



Using Drugs by Yourself or When you Feel Lonely



Using Poor Quality Drugs or Drugs of Unknown Quality



Never lock the door when you are using alone.

Having a Low Tolerance Level  
For example:



After leaving hospital or detox.



After recent stay in jail.

Using Drugs with Existing Health Problems



Liver Problems



Breathing Problems



Dehydration

### 7 BEGIN RESCUE BREATHING



1

Check Airway For:

- Toothpicks
- Gum
- Pills
- Syringe Caps
- Fentanyl Patches, and anything else!

2

Tilt head back; lift chin, pinch nose.

3

Give two normal breaths. Ensure chest rises with each breath.

4

Then give one breath every five seconds until emergency personnel arrive or the person wakes up.

# Considerations?

- ❖ If you are working with Native clients, what are some things you would take into consideration?
- ❖ Has your answer changed based on this presentation?

# How To Be An Allie

- ❖ When working with Native people, take their histories and culture into consideration
- ❖ Use a trauma-informed approach
- ❖ Every culture has different ways of healing. Traditional forms of healing are valid
- ❖ Help clients/patients find culturally appropriate resources
- ❖ Refrain from making assumptions about Native people and Native cultures
- ❖ Remember, all Native cultures and traditions are different

# CONSIDER THE SEVENTH GENERATION

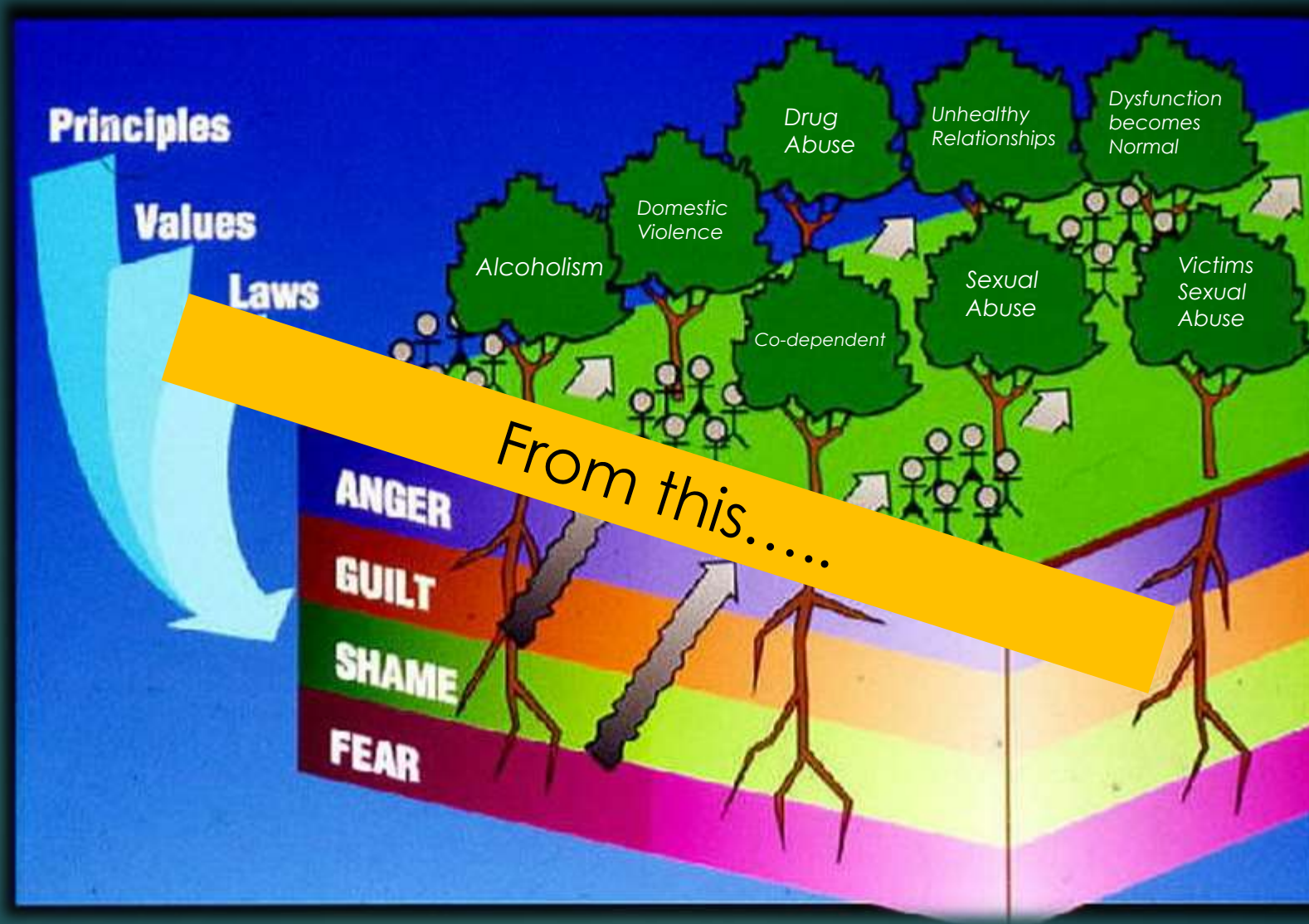


The Descendants of the  
Boarding Schools!!!

This is the cycle we must break!!!!

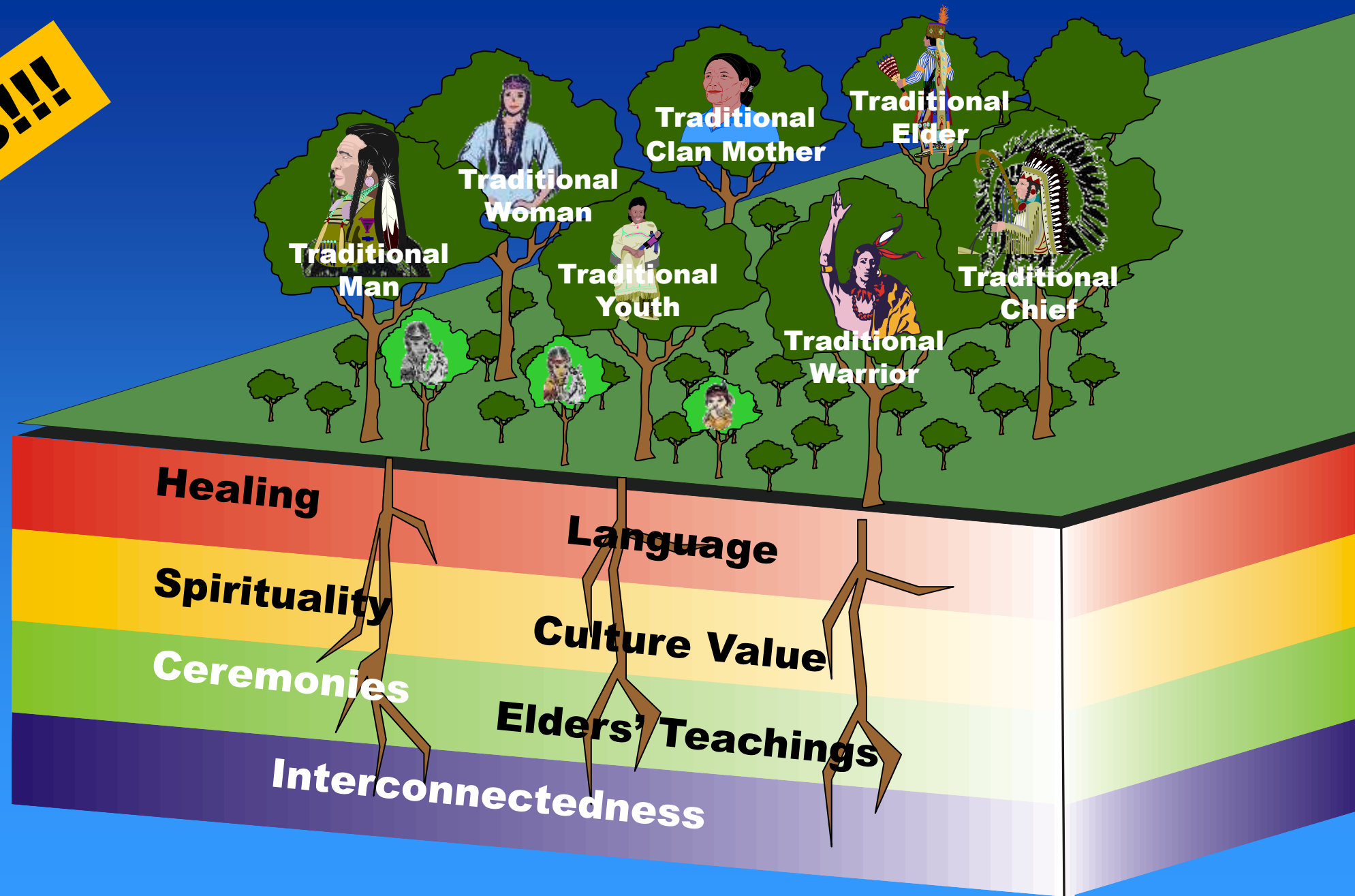


# Effects of Historical Trauma





**To This!!!**





## ▶ Cultural Teachings

- ▶ Four Laws of Change and the Healing Forest Model
- ▶ Teachings of the Medicine Wheel
- ▶ Cycle of Life Teachings
- ▶ Culture is Prevention
- ▶ The Circle is the Healer
- ▶ Two Thought Systems & the Thought Process
- ▶ Spirit and Intent

*Wellbriety: a sober lifestyle that is balanced emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually.*

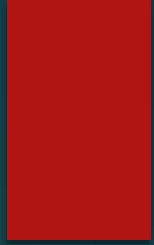
The  
Eagle  
Has  
Landed..



The Healing  
Time would  
begin!!







The Women  
will begin to  
sing.....









# Wellbriety Means



- ▶ Sober lifestyles
- ▶ Wellness—balance (mental, physical, spiritual, emotional)
- ▶ Connected to principles, values, and Natural Laws
- ▶ Walking the Red Road
- ▶ You must create a Healing Forest



Who Am I

Why Am I

Where Am I Going



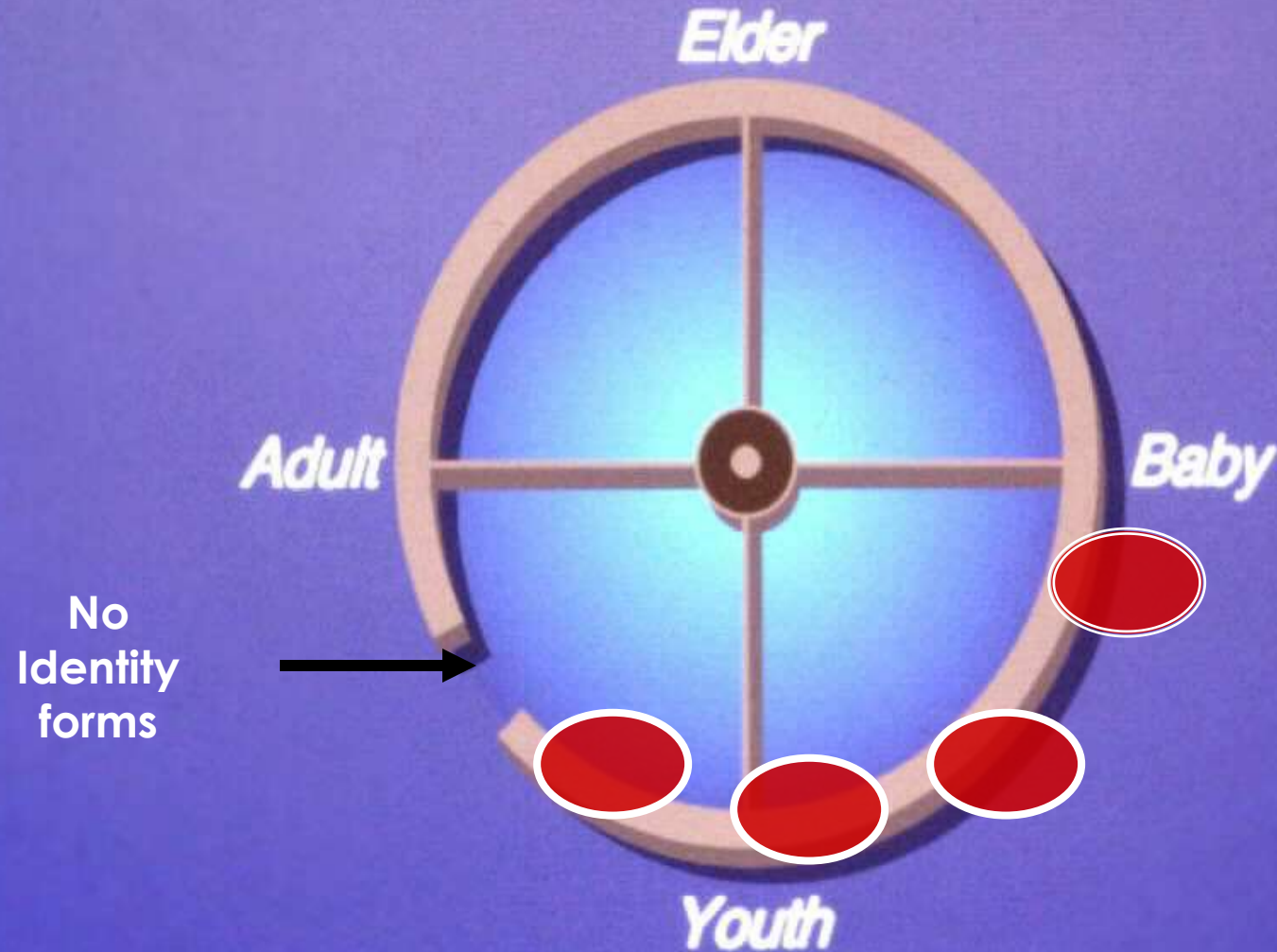
**8 Feelings and 8 Thought Patterns**

*Healthy Families must heal the hurts from the past*



# The Cycle of life....

*IS BROKEN...*





# Gifts of the Sacred Hoop



**Forgiving the Unforgivable**

**Unity**

**Healing**

**Hope**



1999



**Sacred Hoop  
Journey I:  
Healing the  
Nations Tribal  
Colleges**

2000



**Sacred Hoop  
Journey II:  
Wiping of the  
Tears**

2002



**Sacred Hoop  
Journey III:  
Healing Native  
Women and  
Children**



2003



**Sacred Hoop  
Journey IV:  
Healing Native Men  
and Children**

2009



**Sacred Hoop  
Journey V:  
Journey of  
Forgiveness**

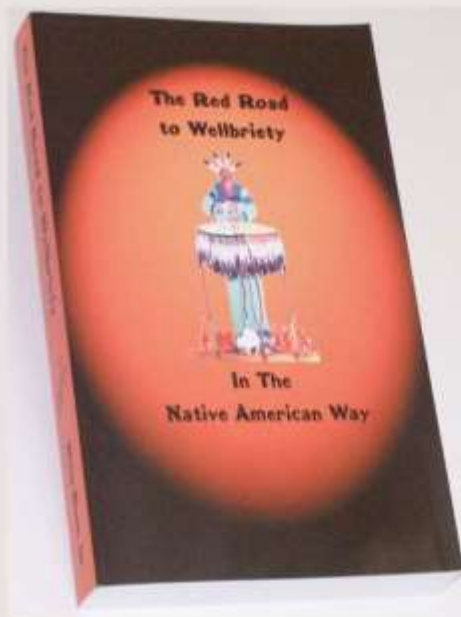




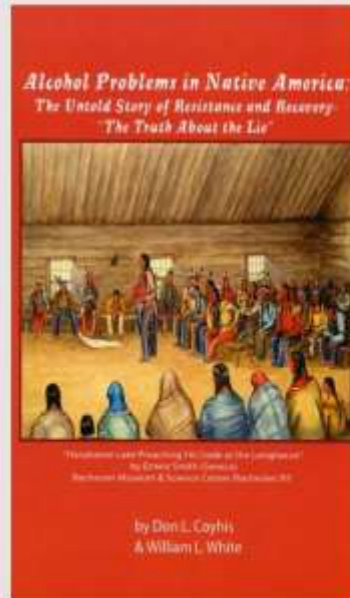


The Seven Trainings

# Wellbriety Books



**The Red Road to Wellbriety**  
by White Bison, Inc.  
2002



**Alcohol Problems in Native America**  
by Don L. Coyhis  
& William L. White  
2006



**Meditations with Native American Elders: The Four Seasons**  
by Don L. Coyhis  
2007



**Understanding the Purpose of Life: 12 Teachings for Native Youth**  
by Don L. Coyhis  
2008



*Books for your own recovery and wellness journey!*

Order online at [www.whitebison.org](http://www.whitebison.org) • Order by phone: toll-free 1-866-518-5275 or 719-548-1000



# RED ROAD APPROACH FOR YOUTH

**VIRTUAL TRAINING  
DECEMBER 16-18, 2020**

## **RED ROAD APPROACH CURRICULUM FOR YOUTH:**

A Cognitive & Experiential Workshop on Native American/Indigenous Philosophies Activating the Spirit for Individuals, families and communities.

### **WORKSHOPS OBJECTIVES:**

The Objectives of the Red Road Approach Curriculum is to provide participants with an opportunity for self-examination and personal growth through experiencing a holistic and culturally relevant model to heal from addiction and grief. Providing cultural knowledge with an opportunity to generate one's spirit for balance. To promote an understanding of the importance of considering cultural UNIQUENESS when counseling and engaging with Native American individuals and families.

### **WHO SHOULD ATTEND:**

The Red Road Approach is a grass roots-based program for community members, social workers, mental health clinicians, addiction counselors, case managers, spiritual practitioners, tribal law enforcement, tribal counsel leadership and anyone interested in learning the Red Road Approach to Healing.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Red Road Approach curriculum is a 16-20 week program for communities and organizations to utilize for individuals participating accessing your services.

### **REGISTRATION INFO:**

info@genredroad.org or (605) 900.6181  
\$450 for certificate training

**24 hours of CEUS will be provided through the  
Counseling Board of South Dakota**



**GENERATION  
RED ROAD**

## **FEATURED TRAINERS:**

**J CARLOS  
RIVERA**

**SERENE  
THIN ELK**

**"SPECIAL TRAINER"  
GENE  
THIN ELK**

**3 DAY TRAINING  
"RED ROAD  
APPROACH  
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