Effective Treatment for Native American Substance Abusers

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U.S. Population

1600  estimated 70-100 million
1900  less than 200,000
2000  less than 2 million (.8%)

Youth Dominated:
32% - 15 and younger
5%  - 64 and older
The Native American People

- Not a singly defined unit
- 510 tribes
- 56.2 million acres/278 reservations
- <50% of reservation population
  - Land allotment
  - Leasing arrangements
  - Opening of reservations to non-Natives
Pre-European Culture

- Skilled providers and preparers of food, clothing and shelter
- Deeply religious
- Complex belief systems
- Independent societies
- Complex governmental structures
- Fine artists
- Connection to Earth
Assimilation

Boarding schools
- Far from homes
- Parents resisted
- Kidnapped children
- Physical, sexual abuse
- Forced Christianity
- Punishment
  - no native tongue
  - no native religion
1961 American Indian Movement

- Improve urban conditions
- Prevent police harassment
- Preservation of culture
- Fight for and protect rights
2006 Conditions

• Oppressive poverty
• Physical health: lifestyles, expectancy
• Mental health: depression, suicide
• Racial perceptions
• European interest of spirituality, culture and worldview
Awareness/Affect/Heart

Where to start making connections for therapy?
In group-Out group affiliation and paradigms

• Race/ethnicity/nationality/tribe/descent
• Socioeconomic Status/Class
• Gender/Gender Identity and Expression
• Sexual Orientation/Sexual Identity
Awareness/Affect/Heart con’t

• Ability-Visible/Invisible, Physical/Cognitive
• Body size/image
• Spirituality/Religion
• Urban/Reservation
• Level of Acculturation/Assimilation

This is not an either/or can be both-continuum, circles of infinite possibilities.

Where are the points of connection for therapy? Where are the points of resistance for therapy?
American Indians look on all things as having life, as having spiritual energy and importance. A fundamental belief is that all things are connected, all things have life, and all things are worthy of respect and reverence.
Skills/Blending Head and Heart

Kinship tells us that our biological and mythological grandmothers and grandfathers, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers are reflected in the environmental grandmothers (moon) and grandfathers (sun), mothers (earth) and fathers (sky), sisters (plants) and brothers (animals) and forces of creation (earth, wind, fire, and water).
Skills/Blending Head and Heart

What is positive, collaborative, integrative?

- American Indian Values
  - sharing
  - cooperation
  - noninterference
  - time orientation, mark time by events, circular not linear
  - extended family/tribe
  - harmony with nature

- View of Mental Health
  - connectedness
  - spirituality, rituals-vision quest, sweat lodge (Inipi).
  - harmony and balance
Skills/Blending Head and Heart

- Tribes and the individuals within each tribe differ greatly and cultural knowledge needs to be tribal specific. Some tribes of NE: Omaha, Ponca, Santee Sioux, Winnebago.
- The client’s level of acculturation must be assessed prior to planning treatment
- American Indian healers and healing experiences and spiritual solutions may frequently be a part of the mental health treatment. Referrals may need to include the healers or medicine person in lieu of traditional Western mental health treatment.
- Group work/talking circles may be most effective when it is consistent with the culture and values of the American Indian.
Skills/Blending Head and Heart

• Elders
• Storytelling/Story Circles
• Talking Circles
• Medicine Wheel
Education concerns for the Sioux Indians in Omaha and Surrounding areas

Drop-Out Rates

- National Drop out rate is 38%
- Midwest Drop out rate is 65%
- Most Drop out between 6\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} grade
- Our Treatment populations education data reflects …..
Comprehension Concerns

• Learning styles vs. Teaching styles
  – 3rd Grade presented Kinesthetically
  – 4th-8th Grade presented Visually
  – 9th Grade-College presented Auditory
  – Preferred learning style- Visually

• Metaphors, images, or symbols can be more effective than dictionary-style definitions – this is a strength that many non-Indian students do not have.

• Instead of presenting new information sequentially and then presenting the overall structure or purpose, use the global view first.
Field Dependence vs. Independence

• Western norms
  • Individualism
  • Competition
  • Trial by error
  • Try and try again
  • Verbal participation

• Native norms
  • Team work- may share answers
  • Silence/Learn by observation
  • Self-testing
  • Will only attempt if task can be done correctly the 1st time
Considerations for Counselors

- How to assess learning styles.
  - True Colors
  - Learning Styles Questionnaire
- How to assess teaching styles.
  - What are my learning strengths
- Recommendations for using direct observation
- Using Imagery
- Global perspective vs. Sequential
Alcoholism
An Ongoing Crisis among Native American Populations

• Statistics
• Theories and Factors Related to the Prevalence of Alcoholism
• Preventative Work
• Treatment
• Implications for Counselors
Statistics

• 22 million people suffer from alcoholism in US
• Native Americans tend to be affected more than the general population
• 4/10 leading causes of death for Native Americans are alcohol related
• 80% of homicides, suicides, and car accidents are alcohol related
Lakota Sioux Statistics

• More than 75% of tribal population directly affected

• 80% of the 1,200 annual referrals to Reservation Human Service offices related to alcohol in 1995

• 90% of suicide attempts were alcohol related in 1995
Theories and Factors Contributing to the Prevalence of Alcoholism in the Native American Population

- Behavioral
- Cultural
- Historical
- Physiological
- Psychological
- Societal
Preventative Work

- Six step process for preventative group work
  - Educate youth on drugs and alcohol
  - Teach problem solving skills in rejecting alcohol
  - Develop a cognitive rehearsal strategy
  - Implement behavioral rehearsal
  - Establish a positive social network
  - Pair youth up to assist one another in rejecting drugs and alcohol
Treatment Considerations

- Identify cultural orientation type of client:
  - Traditional
  - Marginal
  - Bicultural
  - Assimilated
  - Pan traditional

- Work with client out of that cultural orientation set
Treatment Examples

• A client working out of an assimilated set might find:

✓ cognitive, behavioral, or affective oriented therapies paired with AA helpful;

✓ social skills training, motivational enhancement, and community enforcement beneficial.
Treatment Example

• A Lakota Sioux client working out a traditional set might find:
  ✓ themselves in conflict with AA practices;
  ✓ traditional practices such as the Seven Sacred Rites helpful. The Seven Sacred Rites are Keeping of the Soul, Purification, Vision Quest, Sun Dance, Making of the Relatives, Womanhood, and Throwing the Ball.

• Counselors may need to help their client connect with these traditional practices.
Implications for Counselors

• Work to provide culturally competent services
• Demonstrate culturally sensitive practices:
  ✓ greetings
  ✓ hospitality
  ✓ silence
  ✓ cultural orientation type
  ✓ eye contact
  ✓ intention
  ✓ direction
Implications for Counselors

• Work to provide culturally competent services
• Demonstrate culturally sensitive practices:
  ✓ greetings
  ✓ silence
  ✓ cultural orientation type
  ✓ eye contact
  ✓ intention
  ✓ direction
  ✓ include tribal leaders and/or family if appropriate
  ✓ time and place sensitivity
Theories

Four primary treatment approaches used with our inpatient population.

3. Behavior Therapy
4. Cognitive Therapy (REBT)
5. Solution Focused Therapy
6. Affective Therapy (Client Centered)
Behavior Therapy

• Individuals are products of their surroundings & life experiences.
• Learning is driven by imitation and positive and negative consequences in the environment.
• Focus is on behavioral change & self-management skills.
Cognitive Therapy

• Feelings & subsequent behaviors are determined by rational or irrational thought patterns.

• Individuals develop emotional & behavioral difficulties when they mistake preferences for needs.

• Focus is on changing dysfunctional thought patterns.
Solution Focused Therapy

• Individuals already have the skills & abilities to solve present concerns.
• Individuals’ strengths, competencies & past successes will generate possible solutions
• Action oriented: Individual has a plan of action after the first session.
Affective Therapy

• Individuals are predisposed to self-preservation, happiness, to love and be loved, communion with others, growth & self-actualization.

• Client-Centered: Emphasizes responsibility & capacity of individuals to encounter their own reality and find their own answers to recovery from within.