The GONA incorporate the value of these four levels of human growth and responsibility which are found in Native culture:

**Belonging**
A place for all ages, a place for all kinds of people. The first part of the GONA represents infancy and childhood, a time when we need to know how we belong.

**Mastery**
Empowerment, for individual and for community. The second part of the GONA honors adolescence as a time of vision and mastery.

**Interdependence**
Action and community leadership. The third part of the GONA is symbolized by adults, integral and interdependent within their families and communities.

**Generosity**
Teacher/Elder, and resources in the community. The final part of the GONA honors our elders, who give their knowledge and teachings to our generations of the future.

**Goals of the GONA**

1. To provide a training experience that offers hope, encouragement and a positive basis for Native community action.
2. To provide Native communities with a framework to examine historical trauma and its impact on alcohol, substance abuse and other debilitating conditions and issues today.
3. To provide a training experience that emphasizes skills transfer and community empowerment.
4. To present a prevention strategy framework that is based on values inherent to traditional Native cultures such as belonging, mastery, interdependence and generosity.
BELONGING
Team Success Factors

PURPOSE
Gives a team direction, an identity and focus. It means having goals to help build confidence and ability for handling tasks any challenges that may arise. With purpose, a team can concentrate on what’s important and direct its time and resources towards specific goals.

PROCESS
Are the established methods, systems, and procedures a team uses to accomplish its work. It can be a series of actions, steps, or operations that help a team reach a goal or complete a task. Or, it can refer to the methods used to identify a problem, develop a solution, analyze data, or reach an agreement.

COMMUNICATION
Is more than just talking. It is the exchange of ideas and feelings in a way that respects others.

INVOlVMENT
Ensures that all team members participate. It gives the team the opportunity to benefit from the individual talents and skills of its members.

COMMITMENT
Means you’re willing to give 100%. You are more likely to help others whose commitment may not be as great as yours. A team is committed when it feels it “owns” a situation, solutions, or system.

TRUST
Is the knowledge that you can rely on your fellow team members when you need them. It’s also the belief that your team-mates will live up to the promise they make.
What Broke Apart Our Indian World
Over the last several years there has been increased attention to the impacts of trauma on behavior. The term “trauma-informed” was coined as a way to help service providers (education, social services, health and medical, law enforcement, etc) and their agencies or departments better serve the people by better understanding their behavior.

Several key areas are involved to being trauma-informed:

1. A person has a profound understanding of the impacts of trauma on behavior

2. A person has a profound understanding of the impacts of trauma on behavior and understands the difference between:

3. “What’s wrong with you” vs. “What happened to you”

4. A person has a profound understanding of the impacts of trauma on behavior and seeks NOT to re-traumatize a person or group of people. (individual behavior, workplace policies, etc)

5. A person has a profound understanding of the impacts of trauma on behavior and has done their own personal healing work.

Having a “profound understanding” means that you have studied historical and intergenerational trauma (read books, attended training, been mentored by experts), you have experience working with people and communities impacted by trauma, you have an understanding of the brain and how it responds to trauma and you have done your own healing work in response to your trauma.

“Where there has been trauma, healing is the answer.”
Indian Policy Timeline

The Indian Experience

FEDERAL POLICIES TOWARD INDIANS

Pre-1800’s  Extermination, Manipulation and Colonization of Indians
Early 1800’s  The Civilization Act
    Appropriate money to “civilize” and “educate” Indians in white schools
    with white teachers who were usually missionaries.
1830  Removal Act
    Authorized President Jackson to remove Indians from the east to west of
    the Mississippi River.
1870-1890  Indian Wars
    Wounded Knee 1890 – famous Sioux massacre.
1870  Religious Persecution
    Attempt to get rid of plains Indian societies by destroying their “savage”
    religions.
1887  The Dawes Allotment Act
    Divided up Indian land and gave plots of land to the “head of household.”
    Much of original land allotted to Indians was later taken because they were
    unable to pay taxes. Government determined tribal roles and membership.
1924  The Snyder Act
    Until this time Indians were not considered citizens of the United States.
1934  Wheeler-Howard Indian Reorganization Act
    The “Indian New Deal” allowed tribes to establish elected tribal
    governments. Traditional chiefs, headmen and medicine men are
    not recognized by the government.
1953  Termination Policy
    Attempted to abolish federal supervision of Indian tribes. Effect was
    disastrous on those tribes that were terminated, most notably the Klamath
    Tribe in Oregon and Menominee Tribe in Wisconsin.
1968  Indian Civil Rights Act
    Imposed regulations on tribes in order to guarantee individual Indians
    similar rights in tribal matters as the Bill of Rights gives others.
1970  Self-Determination Policy
    Richard Nixon condemned the Termination Policy and extended more
    control of Indian affairs to Indians themselves.
1978  Indian Child Welfare Act
    Assures the preservation of the Indian family by protecting the proper
    placement of Indian children into Indian adoptive and foster homes.

References and Suggested Reading:
The column on the left lists various types of trauma that can affect our lives. The column on the right lists characteristics of trauma. Any of these may have affected you, your parents, grandparents or other people who have had a significant impact on your life. For each of the traumas and characteristics that have affected you, your family or significant others draw a line connecting the trauma or characteristic to “you” in the center of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trauma</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death of a loved one</td>
<td>Frequent periods of depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling addiction</td>
<td>Difficulty hearing positives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional abuse</td>
<td>Fear of conflict and anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug addiction</td>
<td>Continuing sense of guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
<td>Need to be in control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse</td>
<td>Fear of dependency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural loss</td>
<td>Overly responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholism</td>
<td>Very irresponsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>Overachievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Poor self-images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>Need to be right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Fear of trusting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Perfectionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Chaos junkies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
<td>Fear of feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
<td>Fear of intimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>Underachievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppression</td>
<td>Denial of problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>Fear of incompetence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of a job</td>
<td>Compulsive behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding school</td>
<td>Heavily depends on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War experiences</td>
<td>Repetitive relationship behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of spirituality</td>
<td>Unable to relax, let go, and have fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination of any kind</td>
<td>Hypersensitive to the needs of others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sexual Attitudes

**Sexual Abuse Mind-set**  
(Sex = Sexual Abuse)  

- Sex is uncontrollable energy  
- Sex is an obligation  
- Sex is addictive  
- Sex is hurtful  
- Sex is a condition for receiving love  
- Sex is “doing to” someone  
- Sex is commodity  
- Sex is void of communication  
- Sex is secretive  
- Sex benefits one person  
- Sex is emotionally distant  
- Sex is irresponsible  
- Sex is unsafe  
- Sex has no limits  
- Sex is power over someone

**Healthy Sexual Attitude Mind-set**  
(Sex = Positive Sexuality)  

- Sex is controllable energy  
- Sex is a choice  
- Sex is natural drive  
- Sex is nurturing, healing  
- Sex is an expression of love  
- Sex is sharing with someone  
- Sex is part of who I am  
- Sex requires communication  
- Sex is private  
- Sex is respectful  
- Sex is honest  
- Sex is mutual  
- Sex is intimate  
- Sex is responsible  
- Sex is safe  
- Sex has boundaries  
- Sex is empowering

---

From: The Sexual Healing Journey: A Guide for Survivors of Sexual Abuse by Wendy Maltz
In 1979, Jane Middleton-Moz and Lorie Dwinell identified the following 21 characteristics that adult children of alcoholics may exhibit. These characteristics may also be exhibited by anyone that has lived life and suffered any pain. Because of our unique experiences growing up, we will all react differently to different traumatic events in our lives. In fact, what one person finds to be extremely traumatic, another person may not find traumatic at all. Without healing intervention of some kind, as traumatic experiences happen in our lives our behavior may be affected and we may begin to exhibit some of these characteristics.

1. Fear of trusting. Some of us grow up believing that people are unpredictable - that others cannot be trusted because when we trust them, we are let down and hurt. These people may have great difficulty in trusting any responsibility to others or trusting that their feelings or needs will be taken care of.

2. Continuing sense of guilt. Some survivors of trauma believe that they have caused the trauma in their lives - that they are responsible for the behavior and actions of others, rather than being a victim of that behavior. They generally won’t do anything to “rock the boat” for fear that they will be blamed for any failure, but this also means that they won’t take an opportunity to create positive change.

3. Hyper-responsibility or chronic irresponsibility. Some of us learn that we must become extremely responsible at an early age - the “20 year old, eight year old”. We believe that we must take responsibility for getting everything accomplished or it won’t get done. Conversely, some of us have learned not to accept any responsibility for anything. That way, if anything goes wrong “It wasn’t my fault. You can’t blame me for anything.”

4. Perfectionist. Depending upon the trauma, some of us grow up believing that we must do everything perfectly. We develop a fear of making mistakes or doing something wrong because when we made a mistake there were severe consequences. We may spend too much time on inconsequential details, drawing attention away from other important issues.

5. Counter-dependence or fear of dependency. We may learn through our experiences that “I don’t need to depend on you, I can do it myself.” Some may learn to fear depending on others and will not share responsibilities or emotions as a result.

6. Need to be in control. Because of feelings of not having any control of life in younger years, some of us may overcompensate in later years by wanting to control everything around us. This can lead to micro managing, overbearing parenting, etc.

7. Difficulty hearing positives. Because of poor self-images, some of us have difficulty accepting positive feedback from others. We may ask ourselves, “What do they really want?” or feel pain or loss upon hearing others speak positively about us.

8. Overachievement or underachievement. Some of us may try to improve our self-esteem and sense of not being loved by seeking praise for our accomplishments. This could be getting good grades in school, joining every club and excelling in sports; or spending extra time at work and volunteering for every committee. Conversely, some of us may attempt to do very little so we can’t fail and can’t be blamed for anything.

9. Poor self-images. If we internalize the abuse, neglect or emotional distance that others direct at us, we may form a self-image that we “just aren’t good enough”. This could greatly impact our motivation to accomplish positive things.
21 Characteristics (continued)

10. Compulsive behaviors. Some of us may become alcoholics or workaholics, compulsive gamblers, over-eaters, over-spenders, or behave in other compulsive and unhealthy ways. We may use these behaviors to avoid feeling grief and pain from the past traumas of our lives.

11. Need to be right. Sometimes we may replace the need to feel loved with the need to be right. We may fear being wrong or inappropriate because of baggage from the past. We may even place being right as more important than relating well with others.

12. Denial. Through denial we try to protect ourselves by ignoring the pain of reality. We may choose denial over issues with those around us, rather than dealing with the issues because that may lead to an end of the relationship and feelings of abandonment and failure.

13. Fear of conflict and anger. Because of fears of the consequences of conflict and anger, or fear of their own unexpressed rage, some people will develop behaviors that avoid conflict. This could include isolating from others or always accepting blame, but ultimately losing their own identity in the process.

14. Chaos junkies. If chaos was the norm growing up, we may find ourselves more comfortable with chaos and conflict than with peace and cooperation. Or we may use chaos to hide from other feelings. Some of us will choose professions that are always dealing with chaos.

15. Fear of feeling. Some of us were not safe to express or allow feelings, being hurt or abandoned as a result. We learned to withhold feelings, or even lost the ability to feel or express emotions. Without intervention we may continue to act very coldly or emotionless today.

16. Frequent periods of depression. Depression has been described as when our expectations are not being met and we begin to believe that they never will be. Eventually our feelings of anger or disappointment are turned inward against ourselves and may show as symptoms of depression.

17. Fear of intimacy. We may have learned that intimacy leads to being emotionally or physically hurt. We may become unwilling to feel close to anyone and find ourselves pushing others away.

18. Fear of incompetence. This may also be called the “impostor syndrome” - when we begin to believe that if people really knew us they wouldn’t like us. We may act in ways that we feel aren’t our true nature, putting on a false face hoping to be more acceptable to others.

19. Hypersensitivity to the needs of others. Some of us learned that life was much safer by being extremely aware of the changing moods of those around us. Today, we may still be scrutinizing the behaviors of others in our attempt to predict how they will behave next. This affects our ability to focus on other issues.

20. Repetitive relationship patterns. This may be an attempt to recreate the painful experiences of childhood - returning to what was normal. This could also be a reflection of our feelings of low self-esteem. We may look to find or create unhealthy relationships over and over again.

21. Inability to relax let go and has fun. When others were playing and having fun, some of us were learning to survive in difficult situations. Not only did we not learn how to relax and play, we may have a fear of doing so.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Member</th>
<th>Visible Qualities (things seen)</th>
<th>Inner Feelings</th>
<th>Family Role</th>
<th>Characteristics Without Help</th>
<th>Possible Future Characteristics Without Help</th>
<th>Cont.’ In Children With Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Hero</td>
<td>Visible successes, does right thing, family caretaker</td>
<td>Inadequacy, loneliness, confusion, anger</td>
<td>Family can me proud, self worth, super responsible</td>
<td>High achiever: Grades, sports, good kid, follows rules, works for approval, family care taker, parental or bossy attitude</td>
<td>Workaholic, never wrong, responsible for everything, marries needy/dependent</td>
<td>Learns to accept failure, good leader, asks for help, learns self responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scapegoat</td>
<td>Hostility, defiance, anger, tough</td>
<td>Hurt, guilt, withdrawn, sullenness, loneliness, fear of rejection</td>
<td>Takes focus off alcoholic, provides distraction</td>
<td>Negative attention, social jerk, won’t compete with “family hero”</td>
<td>Prison, drug/alcohol problems, trouble maker in social or workplace, unplanned pregnancy</td>
<td>Good counselor, expresses feelings, asks for help, able to see reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Child</td>
<td>Withdrawn, loner, anger, attaches to things not people</td>
<td>Loneliness, unimportant, hurt, angry, rejection, anxiety</td>
<td>Relief, one child to not worry about</td>
<td>“invisible”, quiet, no friends, follower, trouble maker</td>
<td>Little zest for life, sexual identity problems, promiscuous, or stays alone, often dies at early age</td>
<td>Independent, talented, creative, imaginative, self actualized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mascot</td>
<td>Humor, fragile, immature, needs protection, hyperactive, clown</td>
<td>Fear, insecurity, confusion, loneliness</td>
<td>Fun and humor (comic relief)</td>
<td>Hyperactive, short attention span, learning disabilities</td>
<td>Ulcers, can’t handle stress, compulsive clown, marries “hero” for care, remains immature</td>
<td>Takes care of self, No longer clown, fun to be with, good sense of humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Person</td>
<td>Charm, anger, protection</td>
<td>Pain, guilt, fear</td>
<td>Focal point of family</td>
<td>Blaming, makes excuses</td>
<td>Gradual deterioration, Death</td>
<td>Increased self awareness, self esteem, returns to responsible productive life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recovery Checklist

◊ Maintaining appropriate daily routine
◊ Setting and achieving daily and long term goals
◊ Personal care
◊ Choosing behaviors
◊ Well rested
◊ Resentment free
◊ Accepting (versus denying)
◊ Neither controlling others nor feeling controlled by them
◊ Open to appropriate criticism and feedback
◊ Free of excessive criticism of self and others
◊ Gratitude versus self pity and deprivation
◊ Responsible financial decisions (not over or under spending)
◊ Appropriate nutrition (not over or under eating)
◊ Not escaping or avoiding- through work or SEX
◊ Self responsibility (versus scapegoating and blaming)
◊ Valuing wants and needs
◊ Free of victim self image
◊ Free of fear and anxiety
◊ Free of guilt and shame
◊ Free of worry and obsession
◊ Not feeling excessively responsible for others
◊ FAITH in a higher power
◊ Trusting and valuing self
◊ Making appropriate decisions about trusting others
◊ Maintaining recovery routine (meetings, groups, support systems)
◊ Mind clear and peaceful; logical thinking; free of confusion
◊ Feeling and dealing appropriately with feelings, including anger
◊ Appropriately disclosing
◊ Reasonable expectations of self and others
◊ Needing people versus NEEDING them
◊ Feeling secure with self, self affirming
◊ Communicating clearly, directly, and honestly
◊ Balanced mood
◊ Maintaining contact with friends
◊ Feeling connected and close to people versus lonely and isolated
◊ Healthy perspective; life looks worth living; loving unconditionally
◊ Not using alcohol, medication, bingo, shopping, eating, or sex to cope
◊ Do not use people for a “one night stand” (objectifying men and or women)
My Experience with Grief

Stages of Grief

Loss-Hurt

Shock
Numbness
Denial
Emotional Outbursts
Anger
Fear
Searchings
Disorganization
Panic

Loss Adjustment

Helping Others
Affirmation
Hope
New Patterns
New Strengths
New Relationships
“Re-Entry” Troubles

Depression
Isolation
Loneliness
Guilt

My Experience

Loss-Hurt

Shock
Numbness
Denial
Emotional Outbursts
Anger
Fear
Searchings
Disorganization
Panic

Loss Adjustment

Helping Others
Affirmation
Hope
New Patterns
New Strengths
New Relationships
“Re-Entry” Troubles

Depression
Isolation
Loneliness
Guilt
Our grieving is influenced by a number of myths. Therese Tando lists these myths:

- All losses are the same
- It takes months to recover from grief
- All bereaved people grieve in the same way
- Grief always decreases steadily over time
- When grief is resolved, it never comes up again
- Family members will always help grievers
- Children grieve like adults
- Feeling sorry for yourself is not allowable
- It is better to put painful things out of your mind
- You will not be affected much if your parent dies when you are an adult
- Parents usually divorce after children dies
- It is not important for you to have social support in your grief
- Once your loved one has died, it is better not to focus on him or her but to put him or her in the past and go on with your life
- You can find ways to avoid the pain of your grief and still resolve it successfully
- You should not think about your deceased loved ones at the holidays because it will make you too sad
- Bereaved people only need to express their feeling to resolve their grief
- Expressing feelings that are intense is the same as losing control
- There is no reason to be angry at people who tried to do their best for your deceased love one
- Because you feel crazy, you are going crazy
- Only sick people have physical problems in grief
- You should feel only sadness that your loved one has dies
- Infant death shouldn’t be too difficult to resolve because you didn’t know the child that well
- Children need to be protected from grief and death
- Rituals upset and grieving means that you do not believe in god or trust your religion
- You and your family will be the same after a death as before your love one died
- You will have no relationship with your loved one after the death
- The intensity and length of your grief are testimony to your love for the deceased
- There is something wrong if you do not always feel close to other family members since you should be happy that they are still alive
- There is something wrong with you if you think that part of you has dies with your loved one
- Of someone has lose a spouse, he or she know what it is like to lose a child
- When in doubt about what to say to a bereaved person, offer a cliché
- It is better to tell a bereaved people to “be brave” and “keep a stuff upper lip” because then they will not have to experience as much pain
- When you grieve the death of a loved one, you only grieve for the loss of that person and nothing else
- Grief will affect you psychologically, but in no other way
- Losing someone to sudden death is the same as losing someone to an anticipated death
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Emotion</th>
<th>Creates Organ System Imbalance</th>
<th>Healing Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Kidney</td>
<td>Courage/Love, Fearlessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness (Grief)</td>
<td>Lungs</td>
<td>Happiness/Joy/Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain/Loss</td>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Pleasure/Bliss/Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Liver/Gallbladder</td>
<td>Forgiveness/Love</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The SPIRIT Essence is always intact - Unblemished and powerful and LOVE heals. One can reconnect/re-establish the Mind/Emotion and Body with Spirit Essence to recreate and to re-establish Balance/Harmony/Health and a state of WELL BEING.

Copyright 1999 - Dr. Avis Archambault, D.C.M., Ph.D
Healing comes from the word HAELEW, meaning to be or become whole. Healing can also be described as removing unbalance from self. It is bringing wholeness to body, mind, heart and spirit.

Healing is a “personal cleansing” of...

- Mistrust
- Unresolved grief
- Loss and hurt
- Anger / hatred
- Historical trauma
- Shame / guilt
- Fear
- Negativity
- What else?

We heal by...

- Forgiveness – self and others
- Looking within – introspection
- Feasting
- Praying
- Sharing ourselves
- Therapy
- Being generous
- Taking healthy risks
- Changing unhealthy behavior
- Practicing spirituality
- Loving ourselves and others
- What else?
# Healing Plan

## MY PERSONAL HEALING JOURNEY!

You wouldn’t go on a trip to a new destination without a map, would you? Well, a Healing Plan is your map to your Healing Journey. What are you going to do this month on the path to your own Wellness?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spiritual</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td>Pray for my healing and my families healing every morning before I go to work.</td>
<td>Go to weekly talking circles and share what I am feeling about my healing.</td>
<td>Make a digital story about my healing journey.</td>
<td>Walk 3 miles every day after work to allow my body to stay healthy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Week 1**

**Week 2**

**Week 3**

**Week 4**

*Remember: Healing is a journey, not a destination! Happy Travels!*

Native Wellness Institute
You know you are getting better when…

There are clues that will help you to see that you are beginning to work through your grief. These ever so slight clues can be missed unless you are aware of their importance. Such clues might be:

| When you are in touch with the finality of death | When you can find something to be thankful for |
| When you can review both pleasant and unpleasant memories | When you can establish new and healthy relationships |
| When you can enjoy time alone | When you feel confident again |
| When you can drive somewhere by yourself without crying the whole time | When you can organize and plan your future |
| When you realize that painful comments made by your family or friends are made in ignorance | When you can accept things as they are and no keep trying to return things to what they were |
| When you can look forward to holidays | When you have patience with yourself through “grief attacks” |
| When you can reach out to help someone else in a similar situation | When you look forward to getting up in the morning |
| When the music your loved one listened to is no longer painful to you | When you can stop and smell the flowers along the way and enjoy experiences in life that are meant to be enjoyed |
| When you can sit through a religious service without crying | When the vacated role that your loved one filled in your life are now being filled by yourself or others |
| When some time passes in which you have not thought of your loved one | When you can take the energy and time spent on the decease and put those energies elsewhere, perhaps on helping others in similar situations or making concrete plans with your own life |
| When you can enjoy a good joke | When you can acknowledge your new life and even discover personal growth from your grief |
| When you’re eating, sleeping, and exercise patterns return to what they were before the death |  |
| When you no longer feel tired all the time |  |
| When you developed a routine to your daily life |  |
| When you can concentrate on a book or a favorite television show |  |

If you observe some of these behaviors in yourself, you can take heart in the knowledge that you have started to put your life together once again and to find new important directions for it. As you work with your grief you can experience new personal growth and a new awareness of the pain and suffering of the people around you. You will find others who are experiencing a loss sometimes turning to you for help and comfort, knowing that you are someone who has been or is going through something similar to what they are experiencing. Helping others in like circumstances can help you to further resolve your own grief and to accept that the loss you have suffered is, regretfully, a common human experience.
INTERDEPENDENCE
1. A colonized ally stands in the front. A decolonized ally stands behind.

2. A colonized ally stands behind an oppressive patriarchy. A decolonized ally stands behind women and children.

3. A colonized ally makes assumptions about the process. A decolonized ally values there may be principles in the process they are not aware of.

4. A colonized ally wants knowledge now! A decolonized ally values their own relationship to the knowledge.

5. A colonized ally finds an Indigenous token. A decolonized ally is more objective in the process.

6. A colonized ally equates their money and hard work on the land as meaning land ownership. A decolonized ally knows that land ownership is more about social hierarchy and privilege.

7. A colonized ally projects guilt. A decolonized ally knows it is their work to do.

8. A colonized ally projects emotions. A decolonized ally knows Indigenous people have too much to deal with already.

9. A colonized ally has no respect for Indigenous intellectuals. A decolonized ally knows Indigenous people have their own intellectuals.

10. A colonized ally has no idea they need to decolonize. A decolonized ally understands they have to continually decolonize.

11. A colonized ally has no idea of the concomitant realities of Indigenous oppression. A decolonized ally understands the many, layered, and intersectional oppressions Indigenous people live under.


13. A colonized ally takes on work an Indigenous person can do and is doing. A decolonized ally takes on other work that needs to be done.


15. A colonized ally says, “It is time to get over it.” A decolonized ally realizes one’s relationship to the harm is subjective.

16. A colonized ally appropriates another nation’s Indigenous knowledge. A decolonized ally does the hard work to uncover their own Indigenous knowledge.

17. A colonized ally will loath this truth offered. A decolonized ally will recognize the hard work telling this truth is.

Lynn Gehl, Ph.D., is an Algonquin Anishinaabe-kwe from the Ottawa River Valley, Ontario, Canada. She has been an Indigenous human rights advocate for over 30 years. She has a doctorate in Indigenous Studies, a Master of Arts in Canadian and Native Studies, an undergraduate degree in Anthropology (summa cum laude) and a diploma in Chemical Technology. Lynn worked in the field of environmental science for 12 years in the area of toxic organic analysis of Ontario’s waterways.

www.lynngehl.com
http://www.lynngehl.com/black-face-blogging/a-colonized-ally-meets-a-decolonized-ally-this-is-what-they-learn
Native Wellness...

- Is a cultural and traditional model of lifestyle.
- Is a holistic approach to living one's life in a good way.
- Has 4 “Directions.” These directions are interdependent.
- Is about making good choices and having pride in your culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional (Feel)</th>
<th>Spiritual (Connection)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like yourself</td>
<td>Proud to be Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good attitude</td>
<td>Pray everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control anger</td>
<td>Respect all things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share problems</td>
<td>Don’t hit or yell at others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy relations</td>
<td>Always try to do your best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express affection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental (Thinking)</th>
<th>Physical (Movement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learn from mistakes</td>
<td>Non-smoker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about the future</td>
<td>Non-drinker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good decision making skills</td>
<td>Don’t eat fast food/sodas everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t give into peer pressure</td>
<td>Practice safe sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like to learn Creative Vision</td>
<td>Body image acceptance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In each direction, write the things you do well in the inner circle and the things that need improvement in the outer circle.
Living by the Warrior Spirit means being positive, productive, and proactive.

Positive thinking means to reaffirm your belief system and your strengths. It is thinking about what can be done, instead of what cannot. Positive thinking is different than being optimistic. Thinking positive allows you to be open to more positive life experiences and filters out the negative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAITS OF A POSITIVE THINKER</th>
<th>TRAITS OF A NEGATIVE THINKER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys life</td>
<td>Is generally unhappy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t see barriers, but challenges</td>
<td>Gives up easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans for the future</td>
<td>Predicts the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepts responsibility</td>
<td>Blames others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earns respect</td>
<td>Expects respect without earning it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filters out the negative</td>
<td>Does not accept positive messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciates others</td>
<td>Puts down others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledges their strengths</td>
<td>Concentrates on their weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracts strong people</td>
<td>Attracts like-minded people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is successful</td>
<td>Fears failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create opportunities</td>
<td>Misses opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive thinking is good medicine. Medicine is anything that you use or do to help move you toward wellness.

Medicine can be plants or herbs. It can be food or drink. It can be laughing or crying. It can be dancing or singing. It can be praying or sharing, anything that helps to move you along on your wellness journey. Using medicine daily was a positive, productive, proactive way of life for our ancestors!

In today’s society, medicine is viewed as having a different effect. Medicine is seen as something that you use to get rid of an illness. If we have a symptom, we are told to take some medicine and it will go away. Because of this, a person who uses medicine on a daily basis today is seen as a weak and unhealthy person.

A person who uses medicine on a daily basis is known to be a strong and healthy person. Are you positive, productive and proactive like your ancestors?
SIGNS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

- You enjoy being with the other person.
- You feel good about yourself when you are with this person.
- You are able to be yourself without feeling as though you have to act like someone else.
- You feel secure and trusting because the person has earned your trust.
- You can continue to grow and reach personal goals.
- The other person respects your personal values and desires.
- The other person respects your wishes to do, or not do, things.
- You feel your relationship needs are being met.
- You are both able to communicate in a way that meets the other’s needs.
- You both have similar expectations (same wants) from the relationship.

SIGNS OF AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

- You don’t enjoy being with the other person.
- You feel inferior, guilty, or worthless when you are with this person.
- You feel as though you have to put on an act to impress this person and keep this person interested in you.
- The other person puts you in situations that create stress or risks in your life.
- Your physical, mental, and emotional health needs are ignored or placed at risk.
- The other person attempts to use guilt or anger to manipulate you into doing things.
- You do not feel as though your relationship needs are being met.
- One or both of you fail to communicate in a way that meets the other’s needs.
- You both want different things from the relationship.
Circle the value that you feel best fits you. Add others that you feel are missing. Be prepared to discuss your choices with a partner or in the large group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Native Values</th>
<th>Non-Traditional Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>Winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present-time oriented</td>
<td>Future oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time non-awareness</td>
<td>Time awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony with nature</td>
<td>Conquest of nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritualistic</td>
<td>Materialistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciates/ Honors silence</td>
<td>Avoids Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect of other religions</td>
<td>Converting/Proselytizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age/Wisdom</td>
<td>Youth/Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>Speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Ego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Religious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Which of the values in either column do you feel fit you best?
2. Do Native people live by these values today? Why?
3. Can values be right and wrong? Why?
4. What examples can you give of some of the values from both columns?
5. What would Native families and communities be like if they lived by the list of traditional Native values? What would they be like if they lived only by the list of non-traditional values?
6. Which values do tribal leaders embody?
GENEROSITY
An old Indian is teaching his grandson about life.

“A fight is going on inside me,” he said to the boy. “It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil— he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.”

“The other is good— he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith.”

“This same fight is going on inside you and inside every other person, too.”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, “which wolf will win?”

The grandfather simply replied, “The one you feed.”
You have the right to put yourself first
You have the right to make mistakes
You have the right to be the final judge of your feelings
You have the right to have your own convictions and feelings
You have the right to change your mind or decide on a different course of action
You have the right to protest unfair treatment of criticism
You have the right to negotiate for change
You have the right not to take other peoples advice
You have the right to say no
You have the right not to be responsible for somebody else’s problems
You have the right to be well
You have the right to heal from past hurts and move forward
You have the right to learn and embrace your culture just as your ancestors did

Assertive behavior is behaviors which enables a person to act in his/her own best interest, to stand up for him/herself without undue anxiety, to express his/her honest feelings comfortably, or to exercise his/her own rights without denying the rights of others.
RESOURCES
In Indian Country How Do We Make Sense Out of Relationship Dynamics Within Addicted/Traumatized Family/Clans/Relatives/Co-workers?
By
Theda New Breast, MPH

Since December 2008, I have facilitated the certification of Healthy Relationship curriculum to hundreds of participants for the Native Wellness Institute. I receive questions like, “What do you do when someone shows up drunk to work and no one does anything?” And “How do you bring back Courtship?” Or “How do you help LGBTQ youth who attempt suicide?” And “How do I leave someone who is too controlling?” and so many other questions that I wished I could pull out the answer sheet and give it to them. Life is not that easy, so I thought it might be helpful to summarize behaviors that some Native people learn in childhood from generations of addiction and traumatic experiences.

In any Native community you will find families that are functioning in emotional extremes. Feelings can explode and get very big, very fast or implode and disappear into “nowhere” with equal velocity. Often the situations that don't matter can get unusual focus and attention, while what does matter gets swept under the rug. You see families take small, insignificant behaviors and blow them way out of proportion while outrageous, horrific, and even abusive behaviors are entirely ignored and unidentified. Things don't really get talked about but instead become shelved, circumvented or DENIED.

Living the Native experience can turn our sense of “normal” on its head, put us regularly on emotional overload, and cause us unusual fear and stress. This can be traumatizing. Living with addiction, whether its eating bad, drinking or living at the casino disturbs our sense of an orderly and predictable life. Normal routines get thrown off, feelings get hurt, doors get slammed, car windows get bashed in, hearts get broken and families get torn apart. Family members are all too often left staring, dazed, and disillusioned, as they witness the lives of those they love, in spite of their best efforts to stop catastrophe, fall apart and end badly. “Don’t Talk, Don’t Feel, and Don’t Trust” become the norm.

The Cost of “No Talk” Rules

Because alcoholic family systems are often steeped in defenses such as denial and minimization, Indian families resist talking about the fear and anxiety they are experiencing. Instead intense emotions explode into the container of the family and get acted out rather than talked out. Though acting out brings temporary relief, it does not lead to any real resolution or understanding, so nothing really gets fixed, mended, or amended. Walls go up and the battle lines get drown as family members silently collude to keep their ever widening well of pain from surfacing, blaming it on anything but what’s really going on. They avoid talking about their worries, thinking that if they don’t get discussed, they aren’t really that bad or might just disappear on their own. Perhaps they worry that talking is a “call to action” that they don’t feel ready to take. But by avoiding discussing what is going on and how they feel about it, they lose one of their most valuable and available routes for processing and relieving pain; namely using their thinking minds to translate powerful feelings into words so that they can be made conscious and brought into balance through insight and understanding.

Because they don’t have healthy ways of finding emotional middle ground, they tend to achieve balance by swinging from one end of the pendulum to the other. When feeling closeness becomes too claustrophobic, for example, they disengage for space and breathing room because regulating intimacy is tough for them. When emotional chaos gets too overwhelming they shut it down with rules and regulations that seem to appear out of nowhere because handling feelings of anger, hurt, or sadness
makes them feel vulnerable and out of control. Their emotions and behaviors seesaw back and forth from 0-10 and 10-0 with no speed bumps in between. Some Indians have trouble self regulating and living within a range of 4, 5, and 6.

**The Trauma Extremes: High Intensity vs. Shutting Down**

In Indian Country we see “chaos junkies” who hardly sleep, always going, and listening to the scanner. Then there are some who never talk. How does the dynamic of seesawing between emotional and behavioral extremes get set up? Here is one explanation that grows out of trauma theory.

The intense emotions of fear and terror are common living with addiction. They ignite our natural fight or flight trauma response. These emotions flood the body with adrenaline so that we can prepare to flee for safety or stand and fight. When we can do neither, when fighting seems exhausting and pointless or when children or spouses feel that they are trapped and cannot really get away, which is often the case with familial trauma, we may simply shut down or freeze so that we don't have to feel such intense pain, fear, rage, or helplessness. Shutting down is also part of the trauma response, it is the freeze state. It is our body/mind system trying to preserve itself from overheating, with too much emotion. Watch any frightened cat, dog, freeze because it senses danger and you are seeing a natural trauma response.

When these swings from feeling flooded with feeling to shutting down, happen over and over again, they can become central to our personal operating style and the operating style of the family.

Here are some examples in which seesawing from one emotional extreme to the other, may influence our thinking, feeling and behavior of the family.

**Impulsivity vs. Rigidity**

Impulsivity can lead to chaos.....then......family members try to manage their chaos by clamping down and becoming rigid and controlling. They see saw between intense emotional behaviors and shutting down behaviors.

Impulsive behavior can lead to chaos. Painful feelings that are too hard to sit with explode into the container of the family and get acted out. Blame, anger, rage, emotional, physical or sexual abuse, over and under spending, and sexual acting out, are some ways of acting out emotional and psychological pain in dysfunctional ways that engender chaos.

“Only Serial killers have a clean house, and everything is super organized” Rigidity is an attempt to manage or shut down that chaos both inwardly and outwardly. Adults in an addictive/traumatizing family system may tighten up on rules and routines in an attempt to ward off the feeling of falling apart. Many Indians who went to Boarding schools adopt a lifestyle of becoming both controlled and controlling. There is a lack of spontaneity and middle ground, where strong feelings can be talked over or even explodes momentarily but then be worked through toward some sort of tolerable resolution. Black and white thinking with no gray becomes the extremes.

Self-regulation is a basic developmental accomplishment that allows the growing Indian child and eventually the adult to regulate their thinking, feeling and behavior. That is why we sometimes have a 40 year old Indian Man or Woman, who behaves like a teenager.
Despair vs. Denial/Dissociation

When addiction makes family members feel despairing, because they feel that nothing they are doing is making a difference or they are too afraid to openly address their mounting problems, they may use denial or dissociation as a way of distancing their pain. They see saw between intense emotional behaviors and shutting down behaviors.

Denial is a dysfunctional attempt to ward off ever growing feelings of despair. Reality gets rewritten as family members attempt to bend it to make it less threatening, to cover up their increasing anxiety, guilt, resentment, and fear. Denial takes the place of honest self-disclosure, worries and anxieties are hidden rather than talked about and as a result, and despair deepens. Suicides in Native LGBTQ’s community are an example of this despair, being rejected and ignored by family and community. Dissociation actually creates a wall of oblivion between consciousness and unconsciousness because undesired emotions get literally thrown out of conscious awareness. Native families learn to deny rather than develop the skills of confronting and managing problems, the more despairing they become the greater their need to fall back into denial or dissociation. Denial/dissociation and despair feed off each other in a vicious circle.

Reality orientation or an ability to live with life on life’s terms is an important part of recovering one's balanced sense of self and a balanced orientation toward the world.

Enmeshment/Disengagement

One way that frightened family members may attempt to ward off fears of aloneness and abandonment may be to become enmeshed. When a house full of family becomes suffocating, some Indians disengage to regain a sense of personal space. They see saw between intense emotions and behaviors and shutting down behaviors.

Enmeshment is a relational style that lacks boundaries and often discourages differences or disagreement, seeing them not as healthy and natural but disloyal and even threatening. Some Indian families will defend the Sexual abuser and take their side, “because they are family”. Enmeshment can also be a way of coping with fear that the family is falling apart in which certain family members huddle together for a sense of safety and may develop traumatic bonds. Enmeshment styles of relating formed in childhood tend to repeat themselves in adult relationships.

With disengagement family members are seeing the solution to keeping pain from their inner worlds from erupting as avoiding subjects, people and things that might trigger it. They retreat into their own emotional and psychological orbits and they don’t share their inner worlds with each other. They isolate. Some Indian families disengage when they move to the city, and they never move back to the reservation.

Many addicted families cycle back and forth between enmeshment and disengagement, they yearn for closeness but lack the kinds of healthy boundaries that would let them take space, hold different points of view or hang onto a sense of self while in each other’s presence and allow others to do the same.

Balanced relatedness is neither a withdrawal from another person nor a fusion with them. It allows each person their own identity and to move in and out of close connection in a natural regular flow.
Over functioning vs. Under Functioning

Over functioning can wear many hats; spouses may over function to maintain order and “keep the show on the road” while the addict falls in and out of normal functioning. Children may over function, taking care of siblings when parents drop the ball. Or they may work over time striving to restore order and dignity to a family who is becoming increasingly neglectful, irresponsible or strange. One might see an acting out child (a scapegoat) as over functioning on behalf of the system to take focus off the family’s real problems.

Under-functioning may be associated with the learned helplessness that is part of the trauma response, in which one comes to feel that nothing they can do will make a difference or make things better, so they give up. Family members may freeze like deer in the headlights, unable to mobilize, think clearly or make useful choices.

The addict themselves, along with others in the system, may do both, over functioning to make up for periods of under functioning. Here we see a lack of ability to self regulate as a family unit, to work as a team where each member is expected to carry their load, to suit up and show up.

Balanced functioning is the obvious in between of over and under-functioning. When we do what is appropriate to the circumstance and when we have conscious choice around the degree to we function.

Caretaking vs. Neglect

Caretaking can be an attempt to attend to, in another person, what needs to be attended to within the self. We project our own unconscious anxiety or pain onto someone else, seeing it as about them rather than understanding it as our own. Then we set about fixing in them what actually may need fixing in us. It is a form of care that is all too often motivated by our own unidentified pain rather than a genuine awareness of another’s. Because this is the case, neglect can be its dark side. We neglect or don't see what is real need within another person because we can't identify real need within ourselves.

Neglect can take the form of ignoring or not seeing another’s humanness, withholding care, nurturing and attention or a shutting down of the relational behaviors that reflect attunement and connection.

Neglect can be particularly difficult to address in recovery because there is no obvious parental abuse to point to. Some recovering Indians are left feeling that they have too many needs for anyone to meet and are often mistrustful of deep connection. Consequently, they may push away the very vehicle that might help them to heal, mainly relationships.

Balanced care of self and others is part of living a healthy life of Wellness.

Abuse vs. Victimization/Collapse

The line between who is abusing whom can get very fuzzy in a pain filled family system. Abuse is part of the impulsivity that characterizes families where feelings are acted out rather than talked out. The victim is the person who is being abused. When individuals are unable to process personal pain, anger and hurt and talk it out, they are at risk for acting it out instead. These roles are traded back and forth, as family members bully and hurt each other over and over and over again. Hurt people hurt people. They see saw between intense emotions and behaviors and a shutting down, or collapsing into helplessness.
Sometimes the roles become stratified and certain family members become the obvious abuser while others become the obvious victim, small children are sitting ducks for being abused and victimized by out of control parents and older siblings. Both roles can become personality styles or relationship dynamics that get carried along through life.

Unfortunately, the abused child, the victim, is at risk, without recovery, of becoming an abusing parent. Rather than identifying and feeling their own helplessness and rage at being a victim of abuse, they act out their childhood pain by passing it on in the form in which they received it, (e.g. the abused child becomes the abusive parent). All of these patterns reflect a lack of emotional and behavioral balance. Eventually, whether alcohol and drugs are present or not, painful patterns of relating continue to insidiously move down through the generations and become inter-generational trauma.

Balance can be achieved when intense emotions can be tolerated both within the self and within the emotional container of the relationship or family. When this is possible, painful feelings, even if they explode momentarily, can be worked through toward some sort of resolution. After a disconnection occurs a reconnection can occur which will represent a slight step up in relating, healing, wellness, or interpersonal awareness and understanding.

So What Is The Good News?

Emotional modulation is a skill that we learn literally in our parent’s arms and within our family systems. When children have extreme emotional responses they are “wooed” back into emotional balance through the nurturing and sustained actions of mature parents and caring adults. Over time they absorb the skills of self-regulation through these healthy family interactions. As we see in this article the opposite is also true, we can equally learn the skills of emotional toxic behaviors if we live with toxic patterns for long enough. The good news is that skills of Wellness and balance can be relearned in recovery through regulating activities like sweats, renewal ceremonies, twelve step programs, therapy, meditation, yoga, massage, deep breathing and exercise; activities that quiet and soothe the emotional system and teach skills of mind/body/spirit balance.
Cultural Pain and Wellness Issues for Native People

Our country's history of the treatment of American Indian people, including genocide, institutionalized racism, and lateral oppression, has resulted in many challenges we face as Indigenous people. These challenges produce cultural pain and must be recognized, felt, grieved, and accepted in order to move toward wellness. Cultural pain causes us to feel insecure, embarrassed, angry, confused, torn, apologetic, uncertain, shame, or inadequate because of conflicting expectations and pressures of being an Indian person.

Below are examples of what is said, felt, or observed when an Indian person is experiencing cultural pain:

◊ “I am not your paycheck.” (A youth from a tribe with a casino.)
◊ “I am not enrolled. Does that mean I am not Indian?”
◊ Resentment when another Indian person seems to be denying his or her Indianness.
◊ Discomfort when an Indian uses “broken English” in the presence of non-Indians.
◊ Embarrassment when a non-Indian tries to act Indian or like a “wanna-be.”
◊ Discomfort when a non-Indian is patronizing on racial issues. For example, “Your people and their jewelry-making talent is so wonderful. Did you make what you’re wearing?”
◊ Anxiety when a non-Indian expect an Indian to explain or defend questionable behavior by other Indian people.
◊ Anxiety when we wonder if we have done enough for our Indian community.
◊ Internal conflict when we have two different sets of mannerisms, speech, slang, and humor: one set is used when around other Indian people and the other set is used when around non-Indians.
◊ Anger and discomfort when an Indian faces overt or covert racism.
◊ Discomfort, anger, or shame during discussions of the “drunken Indian” or all the “awful statistics of Indian people.”
◊ Feeling awkward about not speaking one’s tribal language and hurt when someone says, “You’re not saying that right,” or “That’s not how you say it.”
◊ Feeling inferior if you’re “light complected” or “dark complected.”
◊ Feeling embarrassed by the conditions of the rez and what people must think when they see it.
◊ Confusion or discomfort when an Indian or someone else says, “Those days are gone. That Indian stuff is just devil worship.”
◊ Feeling embarrassed and shame about not knowing one’s own culture. For example, “I don’t have an Indian name, and I’m scared to ask. Who and how do I ask for one?”
◊ Engaging in shameful behavior, such as the embezzlement of tribal funds.

The above issues can be healed and talked about in wellness circles. Welcome to the healing.
I am an empath. I discovered I was an empath after I got involved in a very deep and highly destructive relationship with a narcissist.

I am writing this article from the perspective on an empath, however, would love to read the view from the opposite side if there are any narcissists that would like to offer their perception on this. Through writing about the empath personality type I have connected with many other people who class themselves as an empath and time and again I have heard people tell me how they have also attracted relationships with narcissists. There is a link. So, I decided to explore it further.

This is my theory…
From my own experience and studies on the narcissist personality type, there is always one core trait: A narcissist is wounded.

Something, somewhere along the line, usually stemming from childhood causes a person to feel worthless and unvalued and, due to this, they will constantly and very desperately seek validation. Here comes the empath, the healer. An empath has the ability to sense and absorb other people's pain and often takes it on as though it were their own. If an empath is not consciously aware of boundaries and does not understand how to protect themselves, they will very easily and very quickly bond with the narcissist in order to try to fix and repair any damage and attempt to eradicate all their pain.

What the empath fails to realize is that the narcissist is a taker. An energy sucker, a vampire so to speak. They will draw the life and soul out of anyone they come into contact with, given the chance. This is so that they can build up their own reserves and, in doing so, they can use the imbalance to their advantage.

This dynamic will confuse and debilitate an empath, as if they do not have a full understanding of their own or other people's capabilities, they will fail to see that not everyone is like them. An empath will always put themselves into other people's shoes and experience the feelings, thoughts and emotions of others, while forgetting that other people may have an agenda very different to their own and that not everyone is sincere.

The narcissist's agenda is one of manipulation, it is imperative they are in a position whereby they can rise above others and be in control. The empath's agenda is to love, heal and care. There is no balance and it is extremely unlikely there ever will be one. The more love and care an empath offers, the more powerful and in control a narcissist will become.

The more powerful the narcissist becomes, the more likely the empath will retreat into a victim status. Then, there is a very big change—the empath will take on narcissistic traits as they too become wounded and are constantly triggered by the damage being in the company with a narcissist creates. Before long, an extremely vicious circle has begun to swirl.

When a narcissist sees that an empath is wounded they will play on this and the main intention will be to keep the empath down. The lower down an empath becomes, the higher a narcissist will feel. An empath will begin to frantically seek love, validation, confirmation and acceptance from a narcissist and each cry for help as such will affirm to the narcissist what they are desperate to feel inside—worthy. A bitter battle can ensue.
As an empath focuses solely on their pain, trauma and the destruction of their lives, they become self-obsessed and fail to see where the damage is coming from. Instead of looking outwards and seeing what is causing it, the empath will turn everything inward and blame themselves.

An empath at this stage must realize the situation they are in and wake up to it, as anyone who is deeply in pain and has been hurt can then become a narcissist themselves as they turn their focus onto their own pain and look for others to make them feel okay again.

Any attempt to communicate authentically with the narcissist will be futile as they will certainly not be looking to soothe and heal anyone else. Not only this, they are extremely charismatic and manipulative and have a powerful way of turning everything away from themselves and onto others. A narcissist will blame their own pain on an empath, plus they will also make sure the empath feels responsible for the pain they too are suffering.

An empath will know that they are in a destructive relationship by this stage and will feel so insecure, unloved and unworthy and it can be easy to blame all of their destruction onto the narcissist.

However, an empath should not be looking to blame anyone else. An empath has a choice, to remain the victim, a pawn in the narcissists game or to garner all strength they can muster and find a way out.

Emotionally exhausted, lost, depleted and debilitated an empath will struggle to understand what has happened to the once loving, attentive and charismatic person they were attracted to. However we allow ourselves to be treated is a result of our own choices. If an empath chooses to stay in a relationship with a narcissist and refuses to take responsibility for the dynamic, they are choosing at some level what they believe they are worth on the inside. An empath cannot let their self-worth be determined by a narcissist. It is imperative they trust and believe in themselves enough to recognize that they are not deserving of the words and actions the narcissist delivers and to look for an escape.

In an empath’s eyes, all they searched and looked for was someone to take care of and love and to ultimately fix.” That is where the trouble began and that is the most profound part of this that an empath must realize.

We are not here to fix anyone. We cannot fix anyone. Everyone is responsible for and capable of fixing themselves, but only if they so choose to.

The more an empath can learn about the personality of a narcissist the sooner they will spot one and the less chance they have of developing a relationship with one. If a relationship is already underway, it is never to late to seek help, seek understanding and knowledge and to dig deep into one’s soul and recognize our own strengths and capabilities and do everything we can to build the courage and confidence to see it for what it is and walk away—for good.

The chance of a narcissist changing is highly unlikely, so we shouldn’t stick around waiting for it to happen. If a narcissist wants to change, then great, but it should never happen at the expense of anyone else. They are not consciously aware of their behavior and the damage it causes and in their game they will sacrifice anyone and anything for their own gain—regardless of what pretty lies and sweet nothings they try to whisper.
An empath is authentic and is desperate to live true to their soul’s purpose and will very likely find the whole relationship a huge lesson, a dodged bullet and painfully awakening.

A narcissist will struggle to have any connection to their authentic self and will likely walk away from the relationship very easily once they realize they have lost their ability to control the empath. The game is no longer pleasurable if they are not having their ego constantly stroked, so they will seek out their next victim.

The ability for these two types to bond is quite simply impossible. The narcissist’s heart is closed, an empath’s is open—it is nothing short of a recipe for a huge disaster, and not a beautiful one.

**Mirror, mirror on the wall...the narcissist wants to be fairest of them all.**

Often consider the narcissist personality as being similar to the Jekyll and Hyde character, two opposing sides of a scale that never finds an equilibrium. When involved with a narcissist, there never seems to be any balance.

Relationships or dealings with people who have Narcissistic Personality Disorder can have an enormous impact on our well-being due to the toxic amount of energy that these interactions can produce.

The narcissist is skilled at trickery and a master of deception and they will always manage to find the right angle to twist and finger to point the blame away from themselves, so that those around them are held accountable for any wrong doings.

The narcissist personality type is often seen as being associated with vanity and self-absorption, however the full extent of the characteristics that associate with this type of person are far more extreme.

Like with most things, there is a spectrum. Some will have mild symptoms of narcissism, others will align and identify strongly.

I believe that the majority of us carry some traits of the narcissistic personality type. Mainly because we aren’t always able or willing to see the full truth of who we are within. We push ourselves, build ourselves up and often the opinions we have of ourselves are a little unrealistic and don’t fully align with our authentic selves.

Although a narcissist is thought of as being “in love with them selves,” it is more often the case that they are only in love with the idyllic image of themselves they perceive and wish was the truth. Deep down within a narcissist can live self-destructive and crippling self-doubt coupled with extremely low self-esteem.

A narcissist is often the child of narcissistic parents, who may have built up their esteem by telling the child how special, amazing and gifted they are and how they would go on to do great things—but then offered no solid foundations or stability from where the child could function.

A narcissist’s parents will often have been so wrapped up in themselves they will only have paid attention to the child when it suited their needs. So, the child swings from very little love and attention to the opposite, receiving love and attention in abundance, usually to the parent’s benefit and the child’s detriment.
The narcissist personality type takes on a grandiose opinion of their self, often seeing themselves as superior and far better than others. They often have very big personalities due to their superior belief about themselves and can be very magnetic and charming at times. This is so they are capable of captivating others so that they are capable of manipulating others for their own needs. The beginning of a relationship with a narcissist can feel like an addictive and intoxicating fairy tale with the narcissist playing the role of the charming prince or princess and their partner being completely swept off their feet. Narcissists will fall into (what appears to be) love and want to commit very quickly, however, as time passes and their partner starts to see the truth of what’s within, problems can quickly arise as the relationship begins to break down.

If the partner of a narcissist tries to address the issues, the narcissists will go into meltdown and complete denial, often attacking their partner with accusations in a poor attempt at defending themselves, or go for the vulnerable sensitive approach. A narcissist will always be correct, so getting into any kind of debate, argument or dialogue where faults are concerned will most often prove futile.

When it comes to right or wrong, a narcissist has an impulsive desire to ensure they are right regardless of the cost. If being right costs them friends, family or relationships, they will most often suffer the consequences of the loss rather than admit to being wrong. However, they will put up a defensive and destructive battle of wills beforehand.

A narcissist will basically role-play and respond in whatever manipulative manner that garners the best response. If they are up against a strong, determined and independent person they will move into the role of a sensitive, loving, caring and vulnerable character. If they interact with a codependent personality type, they will likely move into the role of aggressor.

There can be confusion when identifying a narcissist, as it is very healthy to have self-love, self-worth, to have our own desires, wants and needs and also to value our selves highly.

However, when these things derive from an internally wounded place, one of self-loathing, low self-esteem and deep-rooted insecurities that have not been addressed and when someone needs other people’s admiration and validation to make themselves feel good, this is when the narcissist personality arises.

Everyone likes to feel as though they are important and worthy, but the narcissist has an unrealistic perception of themselves, and they require other people to constantly boost and validate their opinions so that their feelings of worthiness remain at an elevated height.

If they do not meet with regular approval or if they are criticized, they will be sure to speak loudly and make their perceived self-worth known.

A narcissist will drain the other person of their energy. Like a vampire they will suck the life from their partner so that they are weak and far easier to manipulate. All the energy that is taken will boost the narcissist’s ego and their own energy levels. This suits the narcissist as it keeps them firmly where they need to sit, high above looking down.
They will often verbally attack another person using insults and put-downs to make them feel confused and disoriented so that others surrender easily and this keeps the illusion strong in the narcissist’s mind that they are the more powerful and significantly better person. A narcissist will try to keep their opponent deep within the chaos so that they remain submerged and willing to tend to their needy attention seeking and demanding requests.

Knowledge is power; the more we know about a condition the more likelihood we have of understanding it and dealing with it. That is when we are in a position to take all the steps necessary to protect and prepare ourselves so that the narcissist can no longer keep us tangled and cocooned in their sticky and endlessly spun web of lies.

If closure is something that is sought after it can often be difficult to achieve when dealing with a narcissist as they will beg, plead, persuade, charm and use every trick in the book to place the other person back into the safety of their web.

A relationship with a narcissist can be emotionally distressing, feeling like a roller coaster going from one extreme to the next. When a narcissist is receiving all the attention then things will be great for them and they will be at their happiest, but as soon as this diminishes they will quickly manipulate the situation and may play the role of charmer, or even an aggressor.

If there are any concerns for emotional or physical safety, it is always best to seek help, either together or separately.

A relationship or interaction with a narcissist is an illusion, as nothing with a narcissist is actually as it seems. Their inner truth remains deeply hidden and they will only reveal what they carefully choose to show. The key is to understand why the connection has taken place, recognize why the attraction was so strong and learn as much about a narcissistic personality as possible so that informative decisions can be made about the current relationship and also to be wary of falling into another one again.

Disclaimer: For anyone who feels that they need further information or help for themselves, or for someone they know, there is more information to be found below. This is just a basic outline of the personality type and there is help available for more detailed explanations or support.

For those who have been affected by a relationship with a narcissist, try not to feel responsible for their behavior or feel foolish for not seeing signs sooner. A narcissist has often developed magnetizing qualities and a seductive charm as they need these things in order to ensure the mask they wear is never questioned or removed.
A game of manipulation has been played and the only way to end the game is to regain self-confidence and take back control.

Some key traits to recognizing a narcissist are:
- Charismatic
- Charming
- Controlling
- Conceited
- Inflated self-perception
- Creates drama/over dramatic
- Likes to be in the spotlight
- Exaggerates their achievements
- Requires constant admiration
- Takes advantage of others
- Compulsive liar
- Cannot deal with criticism
- Gets hurt easily
- Extremely jealous
- Appear strong on the surface
- Desire for power
- Difficulty understanding other people’s emotions
- Lack empathy
- Need control
- Needy Behavior
- Centre of attention
- Inauthentic
- Highly Dominant
- Attention seeking

**I am an empath.**

I have always known I was quite different to many of those around me. Discovering more about the empath personality type has led me to discover a good understanding of myself, and also my relationships with others and the world that surrounds me.

For so many years I felt like an alien on this planet. I often used to say, “I am not of this world.” I didn’t know many people who were like me, who felt things the way I did or who could relate or resonate to things in a similar way to which I did.

The most striking thing for me about being an empath is the way I feel the physical, mental and emotional pain of others as though it were my own. This can be and has been emotionally and physically crippling and it has caused me to suffer tremendously. It is often described as being similar to a sponge, absorbing every emotion and piece of energy around me, and then becoming weighted down by it.

Learning about the empath personality type helped me greatly, as not only do I now understand myself better, I have also learned how to protect myself and not allow outside toxic energies, emotions or behaviors to affect me negatively.
Rather than absorbing all other energies, I now observe them. This prevents me from becoming overwhelmed, exhausted, suffering mentally or physically and being overly emotional.

An empath is someone who is highly sensitive to the energy and emotions emanating from people, animals and everything that exists around them. They have the ability to scan other people’s auras and souls and can intuitively pick up on past, present and even future thoughts and feelings and can quite accurately determine another person’s emotional, mental and physical state.

The saying “never judge a book by its cover” would ring true for an empath. Never would they trust the outer appearance or deceptive superficial exteriors; they will always sense what goes on behind the masks, if they trust their own judgment.

Unfortunately all too often an empath is led to believe that these paranormal type skills do not exist in today’s world and their words are criticized, disbelieved and are told to be wrong. Downplaying an empath’s intuition, will benefit someone who may be trying to manipulate or use trickery, or someone with very little faith that these abilities exists.

It is vital that, to thrive, the empath personality type needs to work towards learning to trust their own judgment and intuition so that they can be at one with the inherent superpowers they have been born with.

If an empath does not have a good understanding of themselves and how to work with energy rather than pushing against it or absorbing it all, not only can this be emotionally debilitating, it can also result in physical illness with depression, stress and anxiety taking a toll on the body and a very high chance of suffering from the effects of burnout.

Like with all things, there are variations of the empath personality type. Some people will identify strongly, others will only recognize themselves in a few of the following traits:

1. Feels calmer when alone, and, in relationships, requires distance and regular periods of solitude.
2. When in the company of others an empath struggles to work out whether they are feeling their own emotions or the emotions of those around them.
3. Struggles to remain present as the chaos of emotions around them pushes and pulls on an empath’s own thoughts, feelings and emotions.
4. Often says yes to others without thinking of their own needs.
5. In relationships or friendships, very often puts other people before themselves, as though everyone else’s pleasure and happiness is more important than their own.
6. Relationships can often move too fast and can become intense very quickly as the empath connects on a deep, intimate level very quickly due to the ability to absorb other people’s energy and emotions.
7. An empath will often take full responsibility for how others treat them and for anything that goes wrong in relationships. They have a great amount of compassion and can clearly see other people’s emotional baggage and so they make many excuses for why people behave as they do, and this is very often to the detriment of an empath.
8. Tends to connect with people who are suffering and often wants to heal others or try to make the world a better place for them.
9. Can find themselves taking on and absorbing other people’s problems and being used as a sounding board or dumping ground so that others can offload their emotional baggage.
10. Instinctively knows when someone around them is not being truthful.
11. Sometimes empath’s just know things, without having any idea of where they gained the information. When trying to work out the truth from a lie it can seem as though the information has been presented forward so that it can be used to help make a decision. The empath should only trust the information if they are highly skilled at reading themselves and others accurately and if paranoia or other information is not clouding their judgment.

12. An empath’s mind is an inquisitive one and they are constantly searching for answers and theorize and philosophize constantly.
13. An empath who is highly in tune with themselves and skilled at reading others will often be able to pick up on someone else’s thought processes even if they are thousands of miles away.
14. Connects very strongly to the animal kingdom and identifies very easily with the emotional and physical pains that animals go through.
15. Is often most at peace and feeling harmonious when spending time with nature and roaming around the outdoors.
16. Can feel the energy surrounding physical things and will often choose clothing or material purchases based on the energy that has attached to them.
17. Very creative and highly imaginative, writing, art, music, painting, dancing, acting, painting, building and designing are a few of the traits that empath’s very often are passionate about.
18. An empath will likely get distracted easily when they are doing things they don’t enjoy and will quickly zone out or day dream when placed in situations where their mind is not stimulated.
19. Can struggle to fully relax in the company of others and really let their hair down and have fun, unless they are extremely comfortable and at ease with those surrounding them.
20. Prefers their living space to be clutter free and minimalistic; chaotic surroundings make for chaotic minds for an empath and they have enough inner sensations happening without cluttering their psyche further.
21. Finds it very difficult to be around people who are egotistical or enjoy putting others down to make themselves look better. Empath’s will often come to the defense of those that have been rejected or bullied in any way.
22. Crowded places are emotionally overwhelming and downtime is required after social gatherings.
23. Highly sensitive to sounds, smells, bright lights and the feel of certain fabrics.
24. Regularly suffers with fatigue and can feel drained following interactions with others.
25. Can become shy and withdrawn as a method of self-protection. This can result in empath’s becoming introverts as a way of avoiding the emotional and physical pain that often stems from interactions.

Other people may see empath’s as moody or loners due to the amount of alone or downtime they need. Others may struggle to understand that these things are just part of the personality type and feel comfortable and the most natural ways to exist for an empath. Empath’s do like connection, but they need to balance that out by creating a safe space for themselves to exist in alongside it. Supermarkets, bars/clubs, family gatherings and any crowded event can all be energetically overbearing. Frequent downtime or escapism to a garden, bathroom or kitchen will occur to temporarily break away from the intensely high energy that occurs when many people are close together in the same venue.
Empath’s may have an addictive personality and can pick up habits such as drinking alcohol, playing on-line games or excessively indulging in a particular interest as a form of escapism to blot out feeling so much pain.

Listening to or watching local or worldwide news can be traumatic as the pain or violence the people or creatures involved experience is often transferred onto the empath as though the pain was theirs.

Empath’s are free spirits, adventurers, life-seekers, rule breakers, they live outside the box. Often it can seem to others as very unconventional or unorthodox lifestyles. However, these lifestyles often suit an empath perfectly and feel to them the most natural way to live.

As empath’s learn more about themselves, many of the traits above can become a thing of the past, or a new way of dealing with them is discovered so that they do not have negative side effects. While many people may recognize themselves in the traits above, there will be some who see a lot of these things as how they used to be before finding ways to combat or work towards understanding areas so that life becomes less painful.

The key to thriving as an empath is to recognize each of the traits and then spend time thinking about each one and looking at how it may be negatively impacting or hindering a certain part of life. When we have a good understanding of how a certain characteristic affects us, we can work out ways to turn any trait that may have negative side effects into positive ones.

The easiest way to look at the empath type is as though the personality is a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing to have the ability to feel and experience life at such a highly sensitive level, so the joy and love around them will feel like constant electric pulses beating through them. However, the curse is that the lows are felt at an equal intensity.

When empath’s learn to protect themselves by becoming consciously aware of how they are allowing outside energy to penetrate them, they are then in a position to turn the curses to blessings so that the painful and toxic energies are not absorbed within the psyche/soul. Empath’s must be sure to surround themselves with others whose energies vibrate at a similar frequency so that they are not vulnerable and exposed to energy that can cause them harm. Self-protection is vital. I will cover all aspects of self-protection in a follow-up article.

Being an empath really is a beautiful way to live and to experience life. Finely tuning our frequency so that we keep our energy levels high and refuse to take on or absorb anything that will harm us is the simplest, harmonious and magically unique way to exist.

Relevant Reads: The Practice of Peaceful Abiding. ~Author: Alex M
Native Women have always had power within their tribes. Historically, we have taken on some outside culture's diseases, gender values, gender beliefs, and may have limited our own personal growth and ability to live a Joyous and fulfilling life. For 30 years, I have facilitated Native women's groups, and have found The Perfect Daughter Syndrome to be one of the biggest challenges. A resource for great healing is from Dr. Robert Ackerman and these worksheets have been adapted to what Native women face in everyday day life, in cities, reservation or communities.

Understanding Oppression and “The Perfect Daughter Syndrome”

◊ Do you ever find yourself exhausted, not able to say “No”, and guilty for not meeting everyone's needs?
◊ Are you attracted to high-risk relationships?
◊ Are you ever overwhelmed with your schedule? And expected to organize family or community events?
◊ Do you take on too much responsibility?
◊ Are you still trying to have a relationship with your mother or father? Or is the person you married or your domestic partner just like your mother or father?
◊ Do you feel different from other Native women?
◊ Are you very self-critical, and do you struggle with perfection?
◊ Do you feel as if something is “missing” in your life?
◊ Are you unsure of your parenting skills, but don't know why?
◊ Do you have relationship problems and are always attracted to the wrong people?
◊ Are you incredibly competent in some areas of your life, but feel vulnerable in other areas?
◊ Do you secretly try to hide your low self-esteem?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you may have unresolved issues from your childhood that still affect you today. Native women, who choose a wellness path, must re-look at repeated self-defeating patterns in relationships (romantic, siblings, child-parent, co-workers). So, if you choose moving through the deeper wounds, really feeling them and forgiving those for things they did or didn't do, you can move on and begin to heal.

Getting Started By Understanding Some of Our Behaviors:
Common themes of childhood trauma can leave us with the following feelings and issues (sexual abuse, parental alcoholism, divorce, eating disorders, violence):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learned helplessness</td>
<td>Losing the feeling that you can affect or change what is going on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Unexpected emotion, agitated, anxious, feeling flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotionally constricted</td>
<td>Numbness and shutdown as a defense against overwhelming pain and threat and a lack of range of expression of emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distorted reasoning</td>
<td>Convoluted attempts to make reason out of senseless pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of trust and faith</td>
<td>Deep rupture in primary, dependency relationships and breakdown of an orderly world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyper vigilance</td>
<td>Anxiety, waiting for the other shoe to drop, constantly scanning environment and relationships for signs of potential danger or repeated chaos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic bonding</td>
<td>Unhealthy bonding style resulting from power imbalance in relationships and lack of other sources of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of ability to take in support</td>
<td>Fear of trusting and depending upon relationships and emotional shutdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of ability to modulate emotion</td>
<td>Going from 0 to 10 and 10 to 0 without intermediate steps, rashness, loss of control, black-and-white thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily triggered</td>
<td>Stimuli reminiscent of trauma like yelling, loud noise, criticism or gunfire trigger person into shutting down, acting out or intense emotional states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-risk behavior</td>
<td>Sexually acting out, thrill seeking, fighting relationships risks, gambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorganized inner world</td>
<td>Disorganized object constancy and relatedness, fused feelings like sex/anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to self-medicate</td>
<td>Attempt to quiet and control turbulent, troubled inner world with drugs/alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survivors guilt</td>
<td>From witnessing abuse and trauma and surviving, from “getting out” of a particular family (moving from the reservation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of RIGID</td>
<td>Dissociation, denial, splitting, withdrawal aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycles of reenactment</td>
<td>Repetition of pain-filled dynamics (same relationship chaos, different person)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Childhood Lessons Learned If Your Mother Was Alcoholic**

◊ I am angry with my mother.
◊ I wanted to love my mother, but she and her behavior kept pushing me away.
◊ I learned to be disappointed and disgusted with my mother, and I have difficulty respecting her.
◊ I learned how to be responsible for my mother’s duties, and I resented always being in charge.
◊ I was denied information about my own sexual identity, how to be a woman and how to prepare for my future roles.
◊ I was unhealthy ways to relate to other people.
◊ I experienced poor parenting skills, and I am unsure of my own parenting skills.
I find it difficult to trust other women.
I felt abandoned and let down.
I am not sure of how to give and receive nurturing, because I was not nurtured.

The seven issues that daughters of alcoholic mothers most commonly focus on are role models, relationships, parenting, identity, trust, trying to please and shame.

**Childhood Lessons Learned If Your Father Was Alcoholic**

- I still want to understand my father. I still want his acceptance and approval.
- I want to love him, but I hate what he does.
- I have a low opinion of marriage and relationships. I fear I cannot find a successful relationship.
- I am aware that I have issues with my nonalcoholic mother.
- I have difficulty relating to males positively.
- I learned to tolerate too much inappropriate behavior from males.
- Am I good enough to be loved?
- She who gives away the most is the best.
- I find “healthy” males boring, and the “wrong” available.
- I never received enough attention.
- I missed not having a “father-daughter” relationship.
- I have difficulty expressing anger to my father.
- The greatest fear that adult daughters express is that they will wind up in a similar relationship similar to their parents. They share their issues and concerns about males in the following ways:
  - How to relate to controlling men
  - Understanding healthy relationships
- Distrust of males
- Looking for Father in their relationships
- How to have a male friend
- No male is good enough
- Seeking unavailable men
- Addicted to relationships

Experience Emotional Incest (occurs when a parent shares information with his child that should be shared with the spouse)

**The Following Nine Resiliency Skills Help Develop Protective Factor For Healing:**

All resiliency skills are based on self-esteem. You must think enough of yourself to try new behaviors and skills. You must believe that not only can your life be different, but that it also can be better. Set your goals for yourself high—intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. No one rises to low expectations. Set your bar high:

1. **Resiliency includes knowing what you want.** What would your new self look like? How would you like to feel? How many new emotions would you have? Make a list of how you would like to be in your recovery? Do you need to change jobs? Go back to school? Go on road trip? Pow wow all summer?
2. **Resiliency includes letting go.** You cannot hold on to the past and expect to grow in the future. A person in recovery is not past-oriented, but growth-oriented. Let go of negative emotional baggage, past relationships, how your family should be, living poor, not learning your language, chaotic jobs, let it all go. Letting go makes room for new feelings such as being comfortable with your self, and others. You will have a higher self-worth and more energy.
3. Resiliency includes balance. Your previous life was out of balance. Your new self is searching for balance. Your old adult daughter was willing to go to any limits to accommodate a lot of unhealthy behaviors, which kept you out of balance and a stranger to yourself. Get enough sleep, eat better, meditate, do Zumba, dance, join a support group, date for a year without commitment.

4. Resiliency includes healing. Face your pain and injuries, get doctored, and forgive people who have injured you. Ask yourself, how will forgiving help me to heal? Healing takes time. Do not be too anxious. When you are injured and you return to your normal activities too soon, you risk another injury. Pray for patience. Listen to other woman who have gone through this, to get encouragement.

5. Resiliency includes giving. Resiliency means that you are able to find all the things that you missed and then give them to your self. Who has your gift? You do, not this conference, but in your heart, you’re spirit, and your emotions.

6. Resiliency includes developing your sense of “self.” You will know it when you begin to believe and feel that you can be yourself without fear. Celebrate yourself, make peace with yourself, and look in the mirror and say, “I like you.” You know you are developing a healthy sense of self when you start to do some of the following:
   ◊ You no longer feel that you must be controlling.
   ◊ You begin to have the kinds of relationships that you always wanted.
   ◊ You begin to feel more and think less about your emotions.
   ◊ You no longer fear your memories.
   ◊ You have internally made peace with people who have harmed you.
   ◊ You trust your own judgments.
   ◊ You no longer live in fear of me phobia.
   ◊ You are able to affirm your qualities.
   ◊ You no longer think of your self only as an adult daughter.
   ◊ You are beginning to respect yourself.
   ◊ You are learning to like and love yourself.
   ◊ You can receive love and intimacy from others.
   ◊ You can say “no” to others and “yes” to yourself.
   ◊ You learn to embrace the spirit of recovery.

7. Resiliency includes learning to like you. The most devastating impact from alcoholic families is that they produce people who do not like themselves. If you do not like yourself, you will find living with yourself harder than living with an alcoholic. Celebrate yourself as a survivor and not a victim. Enjoy humor that is not rooted in painful sarcasm. You will improve your relationships because you will feel that you deserve the best and that you have a lot to offer. The perfect you is not codependent. The perfect you is not controlled by others. The perfect you is not afraid of herself.

8. Resiliency includes developing boundaries. Healthy boundaries are made, not born. Establish personal, professional, and spiritual boundaries. A key to autonomy is boundaries. “If you don’t stand for something, you will fall for anything.”

9. Resiliency includes learning to receive. Your greatest barrier to self-worth will be your inability to receive. You can try to change yourself and attend Wellness workshops forever, bottom line know how to accept it. Break down the barrier. You cannot expect others to be able to help you if you insist on doing everything yourself. Letting others into your life and accepting their contributions takes growth. You must be able to receive what you want in order to change. If you want to feel good about yourself, you must be able to receive good feelings. If you want healthy relationships, are you prepared to receive love when it is offered? Can you accept a relationship with a healthy person? Joy, love, beauty, compassion and peace are gifts. Receive them.
Are You a Silent Son?

By
Theda New Breast, M.P.H.

These Handouts are to help Native Men and Women who love them to begin making Healthier choices in their lives and relationships. They can also be used for same sex relationships. The first step in Change is Awareness, then Admitting, then Acceptance, and finally Action.

Some of the dominant characteristics of a silent son are:
◊ He keeps things that bother him to himself, “Strong, Silent Type”
◊ He denies that unpleasant events occur.
◊ He fears letting people know him.
◊ He has difficulty interacting with parents, spouse, or children.
◊ He has a strong fear of criticism.
◊ He is angry.
◊ He can’t express his feelings.
◊ He disproportionately fears failure.
◊ He is obsessively driven to succeed.
◊ He desperately wants his life to be better but doesn’t know how to change.

A Silent Son may be in pain, but has many positive Characteristics:
◊ He is good under pressure.
◊ He is Adventuresome.
◊ He is Independent.
◊ He is a survivor.
◊ He is empathic.
◊ He is a hard worker.
◊ He is a loyal friend.
◊ He is willing to help others.
◊ He is a problem solver.
◊ He has a good sense of humor.

Indicators Of Silence

Silent Sons believe that they’re just like everybody else, many either believe that their family was not dysfunctional (when in fact it was) or believe that it was dysfunctional, but they are not affected.

Classic behavior patterns:
◊ Limited Expression (Men are hospitalized for stress-related disorders such as heart attack, stomach problems, or addictions.)
◊ The Strong Silent Type: Negative silence is the silence of a man in pain. Your silence keeps you locked in and others locked out.
◊ The Silent Treatment: Do you know when you are giving those around you the silent treatment? I’ll bet you do, but you won’t admit it. We can give people the silent treatment for many reasons, but usually is because we are upset about something.
◊ Target Practice: The opposite of silent treatment is taking out our frustrations on others, who become targets of our internal struggles. It means that instead of dealing with what is really
bothering us, we project our negative feelings, usually anger, on others.

◊ The Impostor Syndrome: At the core of the impostor syndrome lies low self-esteem, a feeling of unworthiness and the belief that appearance comes first and substance, second. We don't believe that people will like us for who we are. We don't believe that we are good enough. So being anyone other than ourselves must be an improvement.

◊ One-dimensional Man: Do you often feel out of place when you are not working? Do you think all non-work time is nonproductive time? This is not an unusual belief for many Silent sons, and it exemplifies the problem of one-dimensional identity. No matter how good we are at work, we can be painfully aware of not being as good at other things, so we either work more, or view non-work time as unimportant. We can discount our children, relationships, interests, and ourselves.

◊ Hidden Feelings: How many times do you think, I'll just keep it to myself? For many silent Sons, keeping our feelings and thoughts to ourselves became a way of protecting ourselves and our families from exposure to the outside world. It was also a way of trying to minimize the problems within our families, by not communicating with each other. This is especially true in families that talk about everything but the dysfunction.

◊ Short Fuse: Are you often angry, but don't know why? Do you get upset over “small things” very quickly? When it comes to your temper, do you have a short fuse?………unresolved anger inside…few alternatives for dealing with stress.

**OK, Why Should We Want Change?**

Trouble in romantic relationships, be they heterosexual or homosexual, is the primary reason why most silent sons seek help. Even when talking about mothers, and fathers, silent sons turn the discussion to the impact their dysfunctional parents had on their current relationship abilities. The problems they identified were:

◊ Excessive caretaking behavior directed toward their partner
◊ Need to dominate or control
◊ Fear of intimacy
◊ Infidelity
◊ Lack of honesty
◊ Inability to express emotions
◊ Lack of communication
◊ Anger
◊ Fears of abandonment, getting too close, rejection, or self-disclosure
◊ Leaving when it “gets too tough”
◊ Low self-esteem
◊ Fear of commitment
◊ Inability to keep the relationship going
◊ Mistrust
◊ Boredom after a few years
◊ Lack of respect for women
◊ Inability to confide
◊ Lack of knowledge about what a healthy relationship is
◊ Performance anxiety
So What Are We Shooting For In A Healthy Relationship?

When we realize that our excess baggage has limited our capacity to love and beloved, we have to begin with understanding the characteristics commonly found in a healthy relationship:

◊ You feel you are respected as a person.
◊ Your physical and emotional needs are met.
◊ You like the other person and you feel liked by them.
◊ You are appreciated and not taken for granted.
◊ You are not afraid to be yourself.
◊ You can communicate effectively with your partner.
◊ You can affirm and support one another.
◊ Trust is mutual and continual.
◊ There is a sense of humor and play.
◊ Responsibilities are shared.
◊ Privacy is respected.
◊ You are not constantly fighting for control.
◊ You both admit and seek help for your problems.
◊ You want to spend time together.
◊ Love is a verb, not a noun.
◊ You are both growing and the relationship is growing.
◊ You feel good about yourself.

To start, what is your definition of Male Intimacy?

The key is not our capacity to love but our ability to express it. In his book Male Intimacy, Michael McGill points out five common ways men show love and share with others, these five ways can also be used to withhold love in relationships:

◊ Sex: Intimacy, love and emotions are confusing. Men can have sex without intimacy. Men can have intimacy without sex. If you ask men what they want in their relationships, many will say “more sex”. How many ways do you know to be intimate that are not sexual? How well do you communicate in your relationship? Can you communicate with more than your organ?
◊ Giving: Do you mostly give material possessions, or a part of yourself? A man and woman may see another man walking down the street carrying flowers. While the woman may think, oh isn’t that sweet, the man sees the flowers and thinks, Boy, did he screw up! Are gifts given out of guilt, substitutes for affection?
◊ Touch: Men are very conscious of the power of touch, but we are also afraid to use it too much. We hesitate to touch another man beyond a handshake, to hug a boy after a certain age, or to touch a woman in a platonic way. We often use touch not as a means of expression, but also as the testing ground for how close we can get. Touching is one of the most confusing ways of sharing for men.
◊ Intellectualizing: The intellectualizer talks about everything but his feelings Common to men is focusing on logic and rationality. Intellectualizing keeps you in your head and out of your heart. The next time an issue comes up in your relationship, don’t jump to intellectualize. Be spontaneous, and tell your partner what you’re FEELING right from your heart.
◊ Listening: Some men have a difficult time listening to anything. Ironically, these same men want, and often demand, to be listened to themselves. When you don’t listen you are telling your partner that he or she is not important. When you do listen, you communicate RESPECT.
Taking Control Of Your Life

No matter how you go about taking control of your life, you will be faced with at least four major issues along the way:

1. Making Peace with Pain and Reality. One Man has said, “I have come to realize that I have used my adult relationships and experiences as a stage to play out my unresolved trauma from childhood. This path of escapism has led me to alcoholism and addiction which nearly killed me, but I have discovered that the only way out is through it.”

2. Making Peace with Yourself and Finding Power. True peace comes from within and begins by learning to like yourself. How can you be at peace with someone you don’t like?

3. Making Peace with Your Family. Once you have completed the first two stages, you might want to or need to move on to the third stage. Making peace with your family must always be an addition to your growth, not a substitute for it. Your issues and potential must come first. Diffuse guilt, retrain your emotional habits, understand your parent’s childhoods, break free of the approval trap, develop your own support family, your life first, theirs second.

4. Achieving Your Potential. When you make it to this stage, you are ready to fly. Join a support group, establish male relationships, and use SPIRITUALITY.
It’s 2016 and Indian Country is still experiencing ripple affects from historical traumas. These affects often reveal themselves as shootings, suicides, pill addictions, meth addictions, romance break-ups or betrayals. Sudden death of mentors and murdered love ones push us into the grief process so fast we feel confused and just want to run away. Below is a journey through grief of “feelings” for most Native people, and those who complete their grieving, either on their own or with help, will one day learn to live and laugh again.

**SHOCK**
The first reaction of family and friends to a tragic, unexpected death is shock. The effect is that far away look in their eyes (much like being hit on the head or sticking one’s finger in a live socket). The tragic news impacts us spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically.

A Native perspective of this stage of the grieving process is softer. Traditional teachings tell of loved ones crossing over the Milky Way (Wolf’s Trail) and they are being greeted by all of their loved ones who have crossed over with hugs, smiles, feasts, gatherings.

**PANIC**
After the initial shock, panic often sets in. In this stage, the person is not able to think clearly, can’t sleep and will even run around the room crying or screaming. They cannot make up their own minds or organize themselves for action.

To soften this phase, one should ask permission to hold them, sit by them, take them by the hand and guide them through this phase. Family members should take turns, de-brief, light a smudge, look into their eyes, and tell them, “We will get through this together.”

**DENIAL**
The denial phase is almost automatic. Once the news sinks in, the natural reaction is to say it is wrong. Some feel it is a shock absorber for the soul and is a form of protection. By saying “NO” to the tragedy, they are able to absorb the facts more slowly, allow themselves time to adjust. In this phase we think it must be a mistake, we just seen them very much alive. There is no way they could be dead.

To soften this phase, one should ask permission to hold them, sit by them, take them by the hand and guide them through this phase. Family members should take turns, de-brief, light a smudge, look into their eyes, and tell them, “We will get through this together.”

**NUMBNESS**
A third phase of grief is numbness. The unexpected tragedy temporarily overloads the emotional circuits. The survivor is left somewhat dazed or numb. Often this reaction may carry them through the burial arrangements and the funeral without any display of emotion. People will make comment on how brave and strong someone is looking composed, when in reality they are in this phase of numbness, no tears because they are unable to cry. This numbness may be expressed in a physical sense where parts of the body lose a measure of feeling. The length of this phase may be as brief as a few hours or as long as several days, and it is sometimes delayed in happening. In some cases, it may not appear until several
months later when all of a sudden the hands, feet, or some other part of the body begins to feel numb. To be safe, get checked by a doctor, but most often it is grief-related and will disappear in time.

The way this can be softened is to maintain contact with the family and offer support. Be aware of changes that may be occurring with the individual. There might be an opportunity to refer for counseling or to offer an opportunity for a smudge or a sweat or perhaps to see a traditional healer.

RAGE
Rage is totally opposite to numbness. It burns and boils and often strikes out unreasonably. Violent acts, abusive acts, blaming relatives, doctors, nurses, physically hurting self or others comes out sideways. Turned inward with drug or alcohol use can become suicide. Several days may pass before it appears, but it may always come. It is at this point where many Indian people get stuck in the grieving process. Their rage comes, but it won’t go away. It continues to churn inside until they find a way to resolve it or it destroys them. Rage against self can be long periods of drinking or using pills to blank out. Another example of rage and behavior while grieving from being sexually abused (a trauma that is complicated) comes out with obesity and managing emotions with food. So we find the raging might be eating the whole gallon of ice cream, eating the whole bag of cookies by our self or in secret.

ANGUISH-DESPAIR
Another phase of grieving that many Native people have trouble with is the anguish and despair. This is where the pain and sense of loss hit them full force. People may experience long bouts of depression, not wanting to get out of bed, take a shower, wash and clean themselves. They may stop answering the door, don’t answer the phone, and shut the world out. For many, it is more than they can handle.

Information to family members about the signs and symptoms of depression would be key, so that the family can refer for therapeutic support and assessment for depression and suicide ideation.

BARGAINING
Bargaining is the phase of grief that begins to wrestle with the acceptance of the loss, in an effort to get on with living. This phase the griever might try to make contracts with Creator or God. Pledge to Sundance, pledge to stop drinking, pledge or vow to live right if only Creator will make it not true, or give some peace to the heart. As the mourner works through this phase of grief, they might say, “I could accept the death if only we had not had a fight the last time we saw each other” or “I know he can’t come back, but why did he have to be drinking when he died?”

It is important to reflect back that this was an earlier time in the person’s life and that to focus on this as a last memory of the person is not healing or positive for the person or the deceased as well. Offer to pray or smudge or sweat to address these thoughts.

FORGIVENESS
Another difficult phase for those who are grieving over a tragic, unexpected death is forgiveness. During grief of this type, a lot of blame is laid in many directions. Before the mourner will be able to finish grieving, they will need to forgive those that they have been blaming for the loss. Sometimes it is the person who died. Sometimes it is the boyfriend or girlfriend who caused it.

Sometimes it is God, and they lose faith, or get angry with God. Sometimes the griever blames himself or herself, like there was something they could have done to prevent it???? Whoever, or whatever, they feel is at fault must be forgiven or the grief will continue to haunt them.
Forgiveness is a gift that we give to ourselves and those around us. Letting the Creator help us deal with our feelings and again offering a smudge or sweat or the power of prayer. Sometimes the Dragon of anger keeps breathing fire on our life or injustice torments us. The trick is not to force forgiveness—you will feel a lessoning of that dull constant pain. Keep talking and feeling with people you trust. You will notice the anger and bitterness that clutch your heart dissolve as you talk and “let go”. Forgiveness is an act of grace—and grace can only flow into an open heart.

ACCEPTANCE
Acceptance follows logically once a person has taken the step of forgiveness. Suddenly, at this point, a realization comes that no amount of grieving will bring back the deceased or change the past. The person can realize that going to the gravesite every week, keeping their room the same for years. Acceptance is moving on and life begins again. The cycle of life. You notice the sunshine; you can be joyful at ordinary things. You have gratitude for life, health, a good laugh, a good meal, a good night’s sleep.

GROWTH-MATURATION
Once grieving starts, personal growth and development stop, and it stays that way until the grieving process is completed. This is why it is so important for Native people to mourn and finish their grief work. Getting stuck in painful phases like rage, anguish-despair, bargaining and forgiveness leave us in a 50-year-old body with a teenager maturity. Moving through these stages and feeling all the feelings that go with it allows the grief work to be done. And when it is done, the person can begin to grow again and develop meaningful relationships. The Amazing thing about life is we can begin again, and having gone through these phases we learn compassion and are a better person for it.

It must also be noted that we can have complicated grief which is perhaps generational, or multiple losses. Grief isn’t always about death, it can be the loss of employment, the loss of a relationship, the loss of belonging.
When we heal from grief we have the sense of belonging again to the universe, the world, our community, our family and our lives.
For the Gathering of Native Americans (GONA): Who can facilitate a GONA?

What is a Healer/Helper? A healer or a helper is someone who can safely and effectively facilitate or lead the healing process for individuals or groups through the use of a variety of tools either western or traditional or both.

A Good Healer/Helper has:
◊ A solid track record of ethical conduct supported by references
◊ Experience in the community
◊ Power, humility, honesty and gentleness
◊ Worked through their anger
◊ Completed transition through stages of grief
◊ Recognition by others as a healer
◊ Absolute self-acceptance
◊ A history of successful recovery
◊ The ability to share their history and healing strategies
◊ Well-established personal boundaries that protect them from harm/burnout
◊ The respect of the community
◊ Unmistakable inner peace characterized by fearless, unflappable (not easily surprised) leadership
◊ Knowledge of and comfort leading or participating in ceremonies
◊ An open mind
◊ Freedom from the need to control
◊ Unmistakable positive energy
◊ Assumed responsibility for their actions
◊ Been alcohol and drug free (>two years)
◊ A clear understanding of their limitations and makes appropriate referrals
◊ A developed plan for continued Wellness
◊ A commitment to breaking the cycle of abuse that is clear through their initiatives toward community action and their encouragement of ownership
◊ A spiritual grounding
◊ Reconciled with Mother Earth
◊ Freedom from depression, recognizes life goes on

A Good Healer/Helper Can:
◊ Process intense emotion, defuse negativity
◊ Swiftly determine risk and intervene in a crisis
◊ Distinguish between crisis and long-term need
◊ Facilitate a group
◊ Blend techniques and approaches or work well in a blended team
◊ Use traditional medicine or partner with traditional healers effectively
◊ Address unresolved trauma (grief, physical and sexual abuse) and guide recovery
◊ Intervene in and prevent suicide
◊ Share their history and healing strategies
◊ Understand and dissipate lateral violence
◊ Plan and lead
◊ Counsel sexual abuse victims and/or perpetrators
◊ Handle sexual abuse disclosures
◊ Openly and confidently discuss healthy sexuality
◊ Listen intently, hear, clearly, communicate effectively
Encourage and facilitate personal responsibility
Maintain good client records/charts
Accept responsibility for their actions and encourage others to do the same
Recognize when to remove themselves
Accept, learn from and work with clinical supervision
Accept their limitations and make appropriate referrals
Recognize where trauma is stored in the body
Initiate community action and encourage ownership
Understand and engage whole families in healing

Note: This list was compiled by GONA trainers who have facilitated more than 50 GONA Healing Processes and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GONA SUPPLIES:</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Registration:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMES TAGS: (Participants Make Their Own)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Hole Paper Punch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Cards 3 x 5 (1 pack colored)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarn or String</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GONA Sign In Sheets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll of tickets for door prizes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Affirmations:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon Printer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon Printer Ink and Paper Supplies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Paper (Regular Size)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Sided Tape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Team Building:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Cards 3 x 5 (6 packs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balloons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hula Hoops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music – CD’s of Soothing Music and CD Player</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Banners/Team Building:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yard Squares of Duck Cloth – up to 6 (depending on the # of participants expected)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric Paint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric Markers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For River of Life:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foam Stickers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stickers (numbers, animals, crosses, symbols)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glitter Glue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glue Sticks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glue Bottles (6 to 8) Tacky Glue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markers (6 boxes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Paper Pads (12” x 18”) Larger than the Regular Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint Brushes (various sizes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint Small Cups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Crafts:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Needles (different sizes)
Needle Threader
Spools of Thread – assorted colors
Leather (small pieces)
Metal Rings
Sinew
Needles (#10) for Leatherwork and Beading
Seed Beads – Pony Beads – Crow Beads
Feathers
Leather Cord
Jewelry Findings – earring hooks, necklace hooks, etc.
Jewelry Beads, Rocks, etc.
Leather Hole Punch
Glue Guns (4)
Glue Sticks for Glue Gun
Small pieces of multi-colored fabric
Faux Fur
Clothespins
Popsicle Sticks
Yarn – Red, White, Yellow, Black (Sacred Colors) note: some tribes have different sacred colors.
Scissors
Pipe Cleaners (assorted colors)
6 Snap Stack Boxes (for storage of craft items after opened)

Office Supplies:
Copy paper
Stapler
Flip Chart Markers
Masking Tape
Clear Packaging Tape
Flip Charts x 2

For Return:
Return Fed Ex Label