



# Indigenous Behavioral Health Series

*for American Indian and  
Alaska Native Providers*

## IOWA

**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

*Selected resources from:*

# Crisis Intervention

Select Clinical Topics when Helping  
Clients Deal with a Crisis

*Presented on: September 12, 2023*



National American Indian & Alaska Native

**ATTC**

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



National American Indian & Alaska Native

**PTTC**

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

Treating Trauma with Trauma Informed Care:  
Shifting the Focus from “What’s Wrong with You to What Happened to You”

 Foundational steps to move toward fully adopting a trauma-informed approach to care include:

 1. Building awareness and generating buy-in for a trauma-informed approach;

 2. Supporting a culture of staff wellness;

 3. Hiring a workforce that embodies the values of trauma-informed care/training;

 4. Creating a safe physical, social, and emotional environment; and

 5. Identifying and treating trauma.

# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being a Good Relative

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# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being a Good Relative

- Water
- Song
- Hope
- Connectedness
- Good Words
- Prayers
- Welcome
- Sprit Blessing
- Choice
- Accountability
- Confidence
- Support
- Openness
- Acknowledgements
- Safety
- Reassurance



# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being a Good Relative Communication is Important

- Feelings and feelings expression are an important part of communication
- When feelings are overwhelming, there may be a shut down of communication or an outburst of negative exchanges
- Many times anger is a means of communicating withdrawal, indifference, hurt feelings, pulling up barriers, or hidden feelings
- Children and adolescents with trauma histories are still developing emotionally, physically, and sexually, all this can be confusing and unsettling, they may appear to distance themselves from any offers of assistance



# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being a Good Relative Secondary and Vicarious Trauma

- Self Care includes recognizing how secondary and vicarious trauma(s) can impact one's own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and relationships
- Self Care is understanding when others share their trauma experiences, that by listening and having empathy to their suffering and pain can create an overwhelming sense of hopelessness, fear, helplessness, and urgency
- Self Care is recognizing that media reports and other sensory images can cause secondary or vicarious trauma reactions even when not in the immediate area of danger or threat such as violent encounters toward the Water Protectors at Standing Rock.
- Self Care is important for modeling and demonstrating for individuals with trauma histories and their families that there are healthy and productive means of caring for self and others.



# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being A Good Relative Understanding Transition Periods

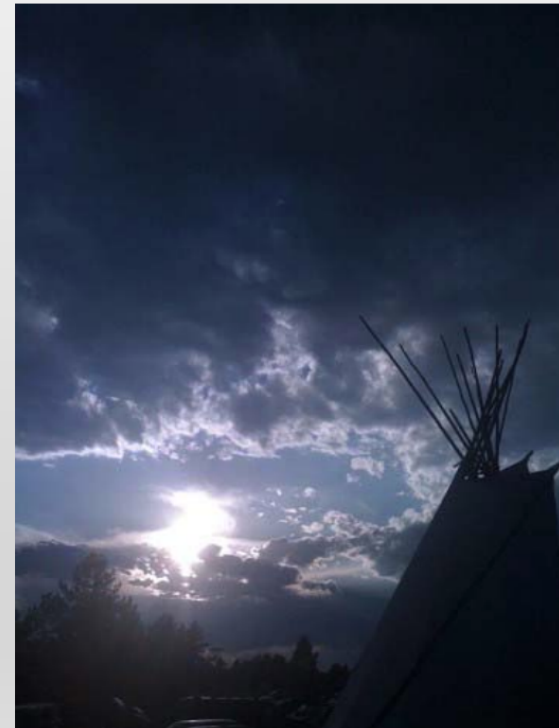
- Transitions period have always been a part of Indigenous ways and practices
  - Brushing off an individual: Acknowledging that there is something healing that the person needs and there is a time for attending to the person in a good way
  - Naming: Giving a person a new name is the most common typically because of a change in status or a change in what was before to what is now different
  - Starting out a song: Typically one singer/drummer starts the song with a drum beat, then others follow, allowing the head drummer to begin the song
  - Being silent: Not immediately responding when verbal conversations are on-going



# Select Clinical Topics when Helping Clients Deal with a Crisis: Resources

## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being A Good Relative Understanding Transition Periods

- Transitions period have always been a part of Indigenous ways and practices
  - Prayer: Offering words before beginning any activity is a way of moving into that activity
  - Ritual: Making an offering of water or some other objects to set that time as being sacred or important
  - Gift giving: Recognition of someone being present or leaving and honoring that time since the person will no longer be around
  - Coming of age ceremony: Passing from one way of awareness of self to the next level of awareness of self





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## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being A Good Relative Understanding Transition Periods

- Behavior and thoughts engaged in before are now being changed
- Relationship may be strained between family members due to trauma or victimization and now there is a opportunity to decide appropriate kind of boundaries for rebuilding a relationship or for moving away from the relationship
- Acknowledgement of a history of distrust in general does affect other relationships, especially if children and youth are involved; this is an opportunity for changing negative or unhealthy perception of relationships, toward what is desirable in a positive and reassuring relationship



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## Another Way to View Trauma Informed Care: Being A Good Relative Understanding Transition Periods

- Discussions about illegal, harmful, or oppressive behaviors can be anxiety provoking and there may be limited confidence or understanding of how to shift toward more open conversations
- A shift toward more strength based and non-judgmental understandings and practices of all providers toward individuals with trauma histories is critical
- A shift toward recognizing the impact of trauma and victimization offer relief and insight into self assessment



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## Addressing Survivors and Significant Others

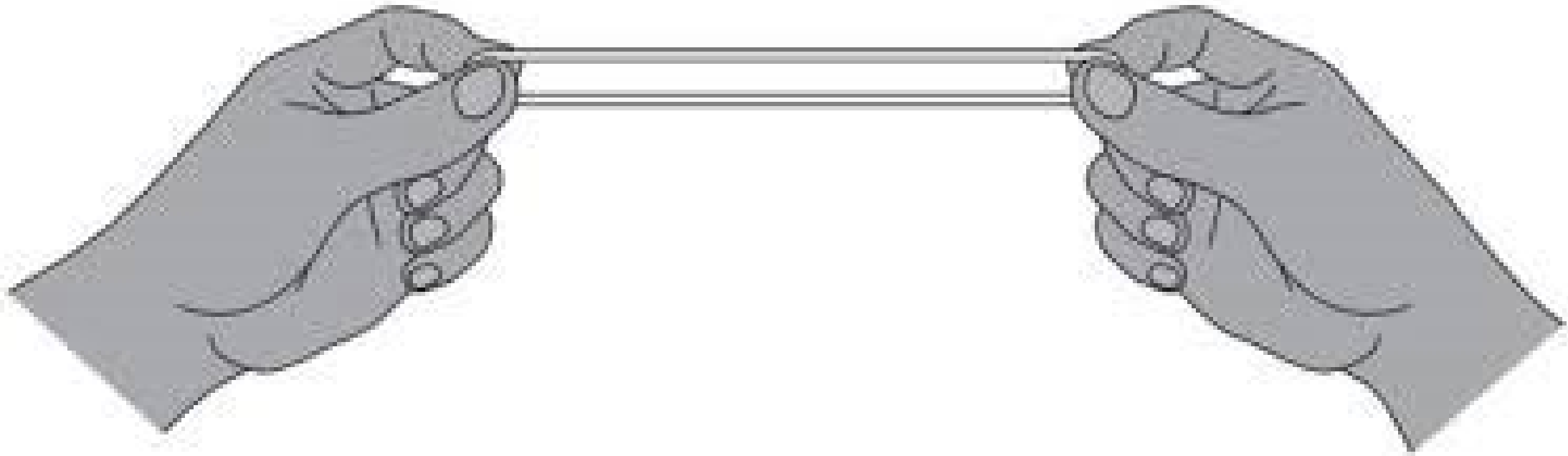
Suggested strategy: support resiliency skills

- resiliency = the ability to bounce back from hardship and trauma
- American Psychological Association: “The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of threat.”
- definition implies two, somewhat paradoxical factors:
  - hardiness, toughness, and resistance
  - elasticity and flexibility



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**Image Reflecting the Definition of Resiliency**



# Future Sessions

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**Session 3, *September 19, 2023*: Case Illustrations**

**Session 4, *September 26, 2023*: Reflections Upon  
Important Crisis Intervention Topics and Q&A**

