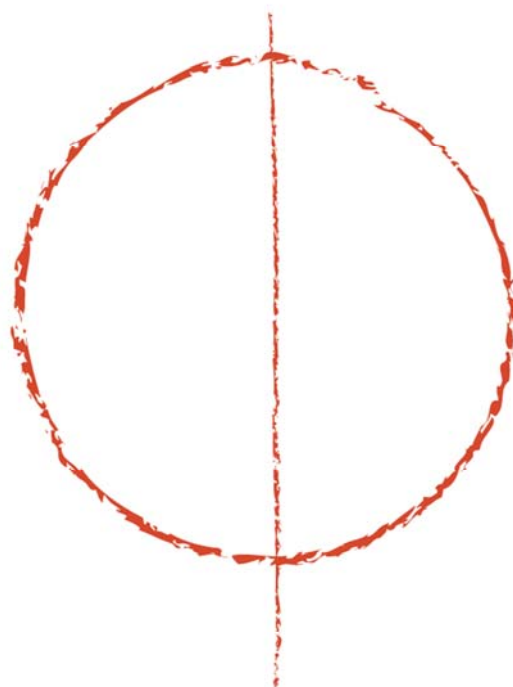


"Strengthening the Circle"

Curriculum and Support Workshops
for Native American Gay/Two Spirit Men



THE RED CIRCLE PROJECT
AIDS Project Los Angeles

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Introduction:

The Red Circle Project (RCP) at AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) is currently the only HIV prevention program in Los Angeles County that specifically targets Native American Gay Men (known by the culturally specific term as Two-Spirit individuals).

RCP began in August 2003 as a demonstration project with an initial one-year grant from the US Conference of Mayors. In March 2005, RCP was re-established with a grant from the Office of AIDS Programs and Policy, County of Los Angeles. Within the Scope of Work of this grant, RCP will deliver informal support group sessions that encourage maintenance of newly acquired risk reduction skills. Also, a social marketing campaign will be implemented to include poster advertisement and role model story palm cards.

This support group curriculum is developed as six (6) workshops to address issues such as decision making issues; skills building; healthy image/body fitness issues; HIV/AIDS and STD information; risk reduction information; and storytelling.

“*Strengthening the Circle*” Curriculum and Support Workshops is a beginning for HIV Prevention education for Native American Gay/Two Spirit Men in the urban communities such as Los Angeles, California. The curriculum is designed to be inclusive of Native American communities in general and of various cultural groups. The term *Native American* is used to describe individuals who have a heritage of American Indian, Alaskan Native, Indigenous, First Nations, and Native Hawaiian ancestry.

Each workshop will be approximately two (2) hours that will include discussions, assessments, journal time, and cultural activities. The workshops are designed to allow participants to “drop-in” and use the information as needed.

The storytelling component will use information from the CDC Intervention *Community Promise*. Role Model Stories will “depict the actual or planned behavior change of the specific target population member or ‘role model.’” These stories will eventually be produced as palm cards, comical books, and possibly through digital media.

RCP successfully fills a crucial HIV prevention gap by providing culturally competent resources, referrals, innovative materials, and programming for Los Angeles Native American Gay/Two-Spirit Men.



Table of Contents

I.	Workshop 1: The Gathering	Pg. 4-7
II.	Workshop 2: Connecting the Circle	Pg. 8-12
III.	Workshop 3: All Things Are Connected	Pg. 13-16
IV.	Workshop 4: Protecting Our Spirit	Pg. 17-20
V.	Workshop 5: Living in Balance	Pg. 21-26
VI.	Workshop 6: Telling Our Stories	Pg. 27-29
VII.	Appendix A: "Drowning in Fire" Novel Questions.	



= Instructor provides information



= Group Discussion



= Cultural Activity



= Power Point



= Journal Writing



= Show video



= Optional Activity



THE RED CIRCLE PROJECT

RESOURCES, REFERRALS & INFORMATION ABOUT HIV/AIDS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN GAY MEN

Workshop 1: The Gathering

Time: 2 hours

Purpose/Goal:

This workshop will introduce the Red Circle Project to participants and explain the program's past and present history. It will also allow an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves individually and to our community.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify Project's goals, objectives, and outcomes.
- Identify individual and community relationships.
- Define who is within their community/communities and the support networks that may exist.

Materials:

Timer/Clock

Flip Chart/Stand

Tape

Compact Disc – Native American Music

Journal Notebooks

Pencils/Pens/Markers

Audio Recorder

Power Point Projector

Learning Activities:

This workshop will be led by lecture style and discussion format.



Workshop 1: Agenda



Networking and Gathering: (10 minutes)

Allow participants to mingle and view power point pictures of events. Have refreshments and past social marketing materials available.



Welcome and Introductions: (20 minutes)

Ice-Breaker –“One-Minute Histories”

- Have participants pair with someone they do not know. Encourage everyone to move across the room to find a partner.
- Tell them they are going to share their entire life story with their partner in one-minute – its not a lot of time, so tell them to get in as many details as they can.
- Have them introduce themselves with Name, Tribal Affiliation, Clans, Hometowns, etc.
- When one partner is sharing their story, the other partner must listen silently and very carefully and try to remember every detail. The person sharing his life story is the only person allowed to talk.
- Tell them you will instruct them when to switch. At that point, the other person will tell his story while the original storyteller listens in silence.
- Next have the partners introduce each other to the group by remembering all of the details they heard in the life stories in one-minute.



Content for Activity:

Remind everyone that when Native Americans meet for the first time, we try to find out a little bit about them: who their family is, what tribe or community they are from, what they do for a living, etc. This helps us to establish “relationships” with each other and begin to form “community.”



Administer Pre-Test (5 minutes)



Project Information: (10 minutes)

Briefly re-introduce the Red Circle Project and welcome everyone to the workshop.

- Give background information on Project – current funding, accomplishments, current goals and expectations.
- Review RCP activities in 2004 and upcoming gatherings, etc.
- Review meeting dates and topics
- Advise participants that the workshops will be audio recorded to assist with development of social marketing materials (poster and story cards)



Break (5 minutes)



Administer Risk Assessment (5 minutes)



Discussion: (50 minutes)

Discuss individual, community and Red Circle Project. There is a direct relationship between the development of an individual and the community. It can be nurturing and supportive. At the individual level, a person should consider what he/she has received from the community and what is given back. To work towards health for a community, requires a program that concentrates on individual as well as community development.

Write the following questions on a flip chart stand and ask participants to respond to the questions for discussion:

- What is community to them? – Whether LGBT community and/or Native community.
- Who is a part of their community/communities?
- What have they done for their community/communities?



Journal Time: (10 minutes)

Play Native American music softly. Give participants about 10 minutes to write in journals about workshop discussions. This will enable further review of workshop objectives and personal narratives.



Content for Activity:

Refer to the discussion questions on the flip chart as the topic(s) to be written about in their journals.

- *What is community to them? – Whether LGBT community and/or Native community.*
- *Who is a part of their community/communities?*
- *What have they done for their community/communities?*

Have participants explain their personal, professional, and/or social experiences and their understanding of who is a part of their community/communities.



Summary/Close: (5 minutes)

Ask for additional questions or comments on workshop topic(s).
Announce upcoming workshop date and topic. Continue to encourage participants to recruit potential participants to attend workshops.



Workshop 2: Connecting the Circle

Time: 2 hours

Purpose/Goal:

This workshop will focus on individual and community strengths. It will also give an opportunity for participants to enhance their **decision making skills** by understanding the importance of self and community.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify personal strengths, attributes, and traits.
- Identify community strengths, attributes, and traits.
- Make a connection between their individual identity and community identity.

Materials:

Compact Disc – Native American Music

Journal Notebooks

Pencils/Pens/Markers

Audio Recorder

Flip Chart/Stand

Craft Hoop

Cloth Pieces

Paint

Yarn

Beads

Glitter

Pipe Cleaners

Scissors

Glue

Learning Activities:

This workshop will be led by lecture style and discussion format.



Workshop 2: Agenda:



Welcome and Introductions: (10 minutes)

- Have participants introduce themselves with Name, Tribal Affiliation, Clans, Hometowns, etc.
- Have participants identify an animal they most relate to and explain why?



Content for Activity:

Remind everyone that when Native Americans meet for the first time, we try to find out a little bit about them: who their family is, what tribe or community they are from, what they do for a living, etc. This helps us to establish “relationships” with each other and begin to form “community.”

By identifying an animal that most relates to oneself can portray self identity and even tribal identity as some animals are considered sacred beings in most Native American traditions – for example: the bear may signify protection or coyote as the “trickster” or messenger. This activity will enable participants an opportunity to identify their characteristics and strengths. Activity can be used as part of “Cultural Activity.”



Discussion: (35 minutes)

Discuss the importance of individual and community strengths for each participant.

Read excerpts from “*Creating a Vision for Living with HIV in the Circle of Life*” Curriculum (Section IV: pages 34-35, 36-37, 38)

- Our Ancestors and elders fought many battles that we may be alive and well today; they left us teachings and values for which we are all caretakers.
- Our elders remind us to “know who we are and where we come from.”
- Honor the good times at your Sacred Place.



Write the following questions on a flip chart stand and ask participants to respond to the questions for discussion:

- Was there a time when you felt that you did not feel like you belong?
- How do you reconnect to feeling like you belong?
- Is there a place you go or action that you do to become reconnected?

- What do you consider to be one of your greatest strengths, attributes, or traits? (For example – “I’m a humorous person.”)
- What do you consider to be the greatest strength, attribute, or trait of you tribe/community? (For example – “My tribe has a strong connection with the Earth.”)



Administer Pre-Test to new attendees (5 minutes)



Break (5 minutes)



Administer Risk Assessment to new attendees (5 minutes)



Exercise: (20 minutes)

Do worksheet from “*Creating a Vision for Living with HIV in the Circle of Life*” Curriculum (Section IV: page 39)

- Where are you from? What is your history? Describe your background – in as many ways as you can.
- Why is your heritage important to you?
- Describe the activities in you life that help create balance and harmony. (Write down as many responses as you can).



Journal Time: (10 minutes)

Play Native American music softly. Give participants about 10 minutes to write in journals about workshop discussions. This will enable further review of workshop objectives and personal narratives.



Content for Activity:

Refer to the discussion questions on the flip chart as the topic(s) to be written about in their journals.

- *Was there a time when you felt that you did not feel like you belong?*
- *How do you reconnect to feeling like you belong?*
- *Is there a place you go or action that you do to become reconnected?*

- *What do you consider to be one of your greatest strengths, attributes, or traits? (For example – “I’m a humorous person.”)*
- *What do you consider to be the greatest strength, attribute, or trait of you tribe/community? (For example – “My tribe has a strong connection with the Earth.”)*



Cultural Activity: (25 minutes)

Warrior Shield Making

- Play Native American music in background.
- Drawing from the discussion on strengths, participants should decide what kind of shield or animal symbol they want to create. Have art materials on a separate table.
- When the participants know what they want to create, they can collect materials from the materials table.
- They may use craft materials provided for them to work on the shield throughout this workshop.
- The shield does not have to be completed during this workshop and will be used as an activity in subsequent workshops.



Content of Activity:

This activity symbolizes personal attributes and strengths of each individual. Remind them that the shield should be seen as “protection” rather than an object used to battle with issues. Stress their creativity and understanding to be displayed on their shield.



Optional Activity:

Read Novel “*Drowning in Fire*” by Craig Womak, Mvskoke, about a gay Native American’s life experiences in rural Oklahoma and cultural history of the Muskogee Creek Nation.



THE RED CIRCLE PROJECT

RESOURCES, REFERRALS & INFORMATION ABOUT HIV/AIDS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN GAY MEN



Summary/Close: (5 minutes)

Ask for additional questions or comments on workshop topic(s).
Announce upcoming workshop date and topic. Continue to encourage participants to recruit potential participants to attend workshops.



THE RED CIRCLE PROJECT

RESOURCES, REFERRALS & INFORMATION ABOUT HIV/AIDS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN GAY MEN

Workshop 3: All Things Are Connected

Time: 2 hours

Purpose/Goal:

The workshop will focus on cultural and sexual identity development of Native LGBT/Two Spirit and **healthy images and relationships**. During the course of this workshop, the group will engage in dialogue about the historical understanding of Native LGBT/Two Spirit culture and its connection to their own sexual identity development.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Understand Two Spirit definition and history.
- Identify personal identity as Native American/Alaskan Native and a Gay/ Two Spirit Man among their community.
- Recognize healthy images and relationships.

Materials:

Compact Disc – Native American Music

Journal Notebooks

Pencils/Pens/Markers

Audio Recorder

Flip Chart/Stand

Craft Hoop

Cloth Pieces

Paint

Yarn

Beads

Glitter

Pipe Cleaners

Scissors

Glue

Learning Activities:

This workshop will be led by lecture style and discussion format.



Workshop 3: Agenda



Welcome and Introductions: (10 minutes)

- Have participants introduce themselves with Name, Tribal Affiliation, Clans, Hometowns, etc.



Content for Activity:

Remind everyone that when Native Americans meet for the first time, we try to find out a little bit about them: who their family is, what tribe or community they are from, what they do for a living, etc. This helps us to establish “relationships” with each other and begin to form “community.”



Ice Breaker – *Mind Reading Game.*

- This game creates a sense of fun and community. Ask everyone to find a partner who they do not know. Remind them Native people are great mind readers and they are to practice mind reading skills.
- The game involves 3 characters – Bear, Hunter, and Indian Princess.
- Call out each category and have the group assign a symbolic gesture and/or sound to it.
- For example, they might raise their hands over their heads like an attacking bear and growl; pretend to shoot a bow and arrow for the hunter; and show a crown/tiara or wave like an Indian Princess.
- Have partners turn back and role play the categories, then do again with overpowering categories – hunter over bear; bear over Indian princess; Indian Princess over hunter. Repeat 2-3 times.



Discussion: (20 minutes)

Among our traditional communities, Native LGBT/Two Spirit individuals were held as reverent. This can assist with their traditional and contemporary identity. Part of developing a healthy sense of self as a Native LGBT/Two Spirit man is the ability to develop a healthy perspective on who we are and our own identity.



Power Point: (10 minutes)

Presentation: “*Sexual Orientation: Two Spirit, Native American/Alaskan Native and LGBT*” to be discussed.

An integral component of developing a healthy self, Native LGBT/Two Spirit individuals need to be able to develop a healthy perspective on who they are and our own identity in a contemporary manner and also a historical context. The attitudes and perspectives of unhealthy sexuality among Native peoples and non-Natives is a result of historical trauma and non-traditional beliefs.



Break (5 minutes)



Administer Risk Assessment to new attendees (5 minutes)



Administer Behavioral Commitment Form (5 minutes)



Exercise: (25 minutes)

Discuss with the group their understanding of Native LGBT/Two Spirit among their own tribes/community. Continue to allow them to discuss their experiences here in Los Angeles and their home communities (reservations, villages, pueblos, etc.).

- What do you know about your own tribal beliefs regarding sexuality?
- How am I sexually different or similar to others?
- What was your coming out process like?
- What is it like to be gay, bisexual, and/or two spirit around Native people vs. being around non-Native people?



Journal Time: (10 minutes)

Play Native American music softly. Give participants about 10 minutes to write in journals about workshop discussions. This will enable further review of workshop objectives and personal narratives.



Content for Activity:

Refer to the discussion questions on the flip chart as the topic(s) to be written about in their journals.

- *What do you know about your own tribal beliefs regarding sexuality?*
- *How am I sexually different or similar to others?*
- *What was your coming out process like?*
- *What is it like to be gay, bisexual, and/or two spirit around Native people vs. being around non-Native people?*



Cultural Activity: (25 minutes)

Warrior Shield Making

- Play Native American music in background.
- Drawing from the discussion on strengths, participants should decide what kind of shield or animal symbol they want to create. Have art materials on a separate table.
- When the participants know what they want to create, they can collect materials from the materials table.
- They may use craft materials provided for them to work on the shield throughout this workshop.
- The shield does not have to be completed during this workshop and will be used as an activity in subsequent workshops.



Content of Activity:

This activity symbolizes personal attributes and strengths of each individual. Remind them that the shield should be seen as “protection” rather than an object used to battle with issues. Stress their creativity and understanding to be displayed on their shield.



Optional Activity:

Read Novel “*Drowning in Fire*” by Craig Womak, Mvskoke, about a gay Native American’s life experiences in rural Oklahoma and cultural history of the Muskogee Creek Nation.



Summary/Close: (5 minutes)

Ask for additional questions or comments on workshop topic(s). Announce upcoming workshop date and topic. Continue to encourage participants to recruit potential participants to attend workshops.



Workshop 4: Protecting Our Spirit

Time: 2.5 hours

Purpose/Goal:

The workshop will focus on providing basic understanding of **HIV/AIDS and STDs** and their modes of transmission. The workshop will also provide strategies for identifying and decreasing risky behaviors and **provide risk reduction information**. By using **decision making skills**, participants will identify risky behavior(s) and possible change behavior.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Define HIV/AIDS and modes of transmission.
- Name the five (5) bodily fluids that transmit HIV.
- Briefly describe our body's immune system.
- List the basic facts about three (3) STDs including syphilis, its means of transmission, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and prevention.
- Associate certain behavioral risk factors with contracting HIV and/or STD.
- Use decision making skills to understand safer sex practices and behavior to prevent transmission of HIV.

Materials:

Compact Disc – Native American Music

Journal Notebooks

Pencils/Pens/Markers

Audio Recorder

Flip Chart/Stand

Printed Cards of Risk Behavior (hugging, kissing, oral sex, anal sex, rubbing)

Condoms

Lube

Dildo

Learning Activities:

This workshop will be led by lecture style and discussion format.

Workshop 4: Agenda



Welcome and Introductions: (10 minutes)

- Have participants introduce themselves with Name, Tribal Affiliation, Clans, Hometowns, etc.
- Have them tell what they consider to be a “protector” and why?



Content for Activity:

Remind everyone that when Native Americans meet for the first time, we try to find out a little bit about them: who their family is, what tribe or community they are from, what they do for a living, etc. This helps us to establish “relationships” with each other and begin to form “community.”

By identifying a “protector,” participants will be able to focus on the importance of protection for themselves – body and spirit. This activity will also give participants an opportunity for personal insight of what protection means to them whether a person (boyfriend, relative, etc.) or behavior (using a condom, risks, etc.).



Discussion – Part 1: (15 minutes)

Discuss and understand behaviors that contribute to the risk of HIV/AIDS and STDs are essential. Participants will be given basic knowledge of HIV/AIDS and STDs modes of transmission and brief description of the human body’s immune system.



Power Point: (15 minutes)

Presentation “*HIV/AIDS 101, HIV Transmission,*” to be discussed.

Write the following questions on a flip chart stand and ask participants to respond to the questions for discussion:

- Define HIV/AIDS – what is the difference? How is it transmitted to the human body?
- What are the bodily fluids that transmit HIV?
- What are STD’s?
- What is the connection between HIV/AIDS and STDs?



Break (5 minutes)



Exercise: (20 minutes)

Sexual Risk Behavior Activity –

- Distribute list of sexual risk behaviors – include unprotected anal sex, oral sex, cuddling, scat, water sports, etc. from high risk to low risk.
- Have group discuss sexual behavior risks.
- Have individuals begin to align in order of sexual risk behavior from lowest risk to highest.
- Ask participants if alignment is correct? Do they want to change?
- Then give them the correct sexual risk behavior order.
- Discuss more about certain terms.



Discussion – Part 2: (15 minutes)

The second part of the discussion will give information on steps that we can take for reducing our risk for transmitting or contracting HIV and other STDs. Additional harm reduction strategies will be given such as communication and negotiation skills, sexual and drug risk reduction, and HIV testing. A condom demonstration and information will be presented.



Power Point: (15 minutes)

Presentation: *“HIV/AIDS & STDs and Risk Reduction Strategies”* to be discussed.

Write the following questions on a flip chart stand and ask participants to respond to the questions for discussion:

- What are high risk and low risk behaviors?
- Is there a risk of being a “top” or “bottom” – insertive or receptive?
- What are your risk reduction strategies?
- How do you use a condom?



Administer Risk Assessment to new attendees (5 minutes)



Video: (35 minutes)

View the Video *“The Phillip Smith Story”* -

This video was produced by the Association of American Indian Physicians in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in 2004. In the video, Phillip Smith, a young Choctaw man living with AIDS, educates American Indian and Alaska Natives about the consequences of high risk behavior. By following Phillip in his day-to-day life, the video portrays his personal and family life on the true journey of what it is like to live with AIDS.



Content for Activity:

This video is a contemporary story of a Native American Gay Man who lives in an urban city. His discussion of his diagnosis of becoming HIV+ is an important “story” for participants to listen too. His family and kinship network is important to his confronting his diagnosis which is valuable to most Native Americans during such situations.

Allow for discussion about participants reaction to Phillip’s situation – being Native American, Gay/Two Spirit Man, and living in an Urban City.

- How can or do they relate to his situation and circumstances?
- How is his story different from other communities – example on reservations, pueblos, villages?
- Do you think “your community” can be as supportive as Phillip’s family/friends?
- Is the video effective for Native American HIV Prevention?



Journal Time: (10 minutes)

Play Native American music softly. Give participants about 10 minutes to write in journals about workshop discussions. This will enable further review of workshop objectives and personal narratives.



Content for Activity:

This workshop had a lot of information about HIV/AIDS and STDs with many questions for discussion. Allow participants to continue to write about their views and answer questions.

Refer to the discussion questions on the flip chart as the topic(s) to be written about in their journals.



Summary/Close: (5 minutes)

Ask for additional questions or comments on workshop topic(s). Announce upcoming workshop date and topic. Continue to encourage participants to recruit potential participants to attend workshops.



Workshop 5: Living in Balance

Time: 2 hours

Purpose/Goal:

The workshop will provide a symbolic framework for understanding the importance of keeping life in balance: our needs, desires, experiences, challenges, relationships, and health. A Medicine Model will be used to identify issues that will assess **identity development and overall wellness**. Native perspectives on **healthy body/fitness issues** will be discussed through personal views and opinions.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Apply the “Medicine Wheel” concept and relate their understanding to their Physical, Spiritual, Mental and Emotional identity.
- Be able to identify health issues among Native communities and how they affect their overall wellness.
- Understand their overall well-being by using **decision making skills** of activities and concepts of healthy living.

Materials:

Compact Disc – Native American Music
Journal Notebooks
Pencils/Pens/Markers
Audio Recorder
Flip Chart/Stand
Craft Hoop
Cloth Pieces
Paint
Yarn
Beads
Glitter
Pipe Cleaners
Scissors
Glue

Learning Activities:

This workshop will be led by lecture style and discussion format.



Workshop 5: Agenda



Welcome and Introductions: (10 minutes)

- Have participants introduce themselves with Name, Tribal Affiliation, Clans, Hometowns, etc.
- Have them tell their favorite color and why?



Content for Activity:

Remind everyone that when Native Americans meet for the first time, we try to find out a little bit about them: who their family is, what tribe or community they are from, what they do for a living, etc. This helps us to establish “relationships” with each other and begin to form “community.”

By identifying a favorite color, participants will be able to relate to one’s self identity and use color to signify sacredness or symbols. For example, in some tribal traditions there are four sacred colors like red, white, yellow and black – which can signify direction, life sequence, or geographic elements. This activity can also be used as part of “*Medicine Wheel Activity*” and/or “*Cultural Activity*.”



Discussion: (15 minutes)

Discuss wellness and/or healthy living among our Native communities to include the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional.

The *Medicine Wheel* is used as a way to understand the human journey through our life cycle. The sacred four directions: East, South, West, and North are used as visual representation of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of ourselves.

These can be changed with external and internal factors and balance can be difficult. It is important to restore and maintain balance of our being – ***Hozho Nahsalli*** (Restoring Harmony and Balance – Navajo).

Read excerpts from “*Creating a Vision for Living with HIV in the Circle of Life*” Curriculum (Section I: pages 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, and 8)

- Our Circle has four parts: Physical, Spiritual, Mental and Emotional.
- When we walk in balance we are in the Center of Our Circle.
- From the Center we can better hear our inner Wisdom.
- Listening to our Inner Wisdom helps us walk in balance.



Power Point: (15 minutes)

Presentation “*Prevalent Health Conditions among NA/AN and Complete Wellness*” to be discussed.

Discuss health issues among Native communities such as diabetes, substance abuse, etc. and how these issues relate to overall wellness. Certain diseases and conditions are known to affect the Native American population with more frequency and/or severity than other populations. It is important to discuss these issues to understand how these diseases may alter or impact our lives.

Have participants use decision making skills to identify physical, spiritual, and emotional aspects of their health and living - such as walking/running, prayer/ceremony, support group/talking circle.

Ask the following questions for further discussion healthy body/fitness issues:

- How do you feel about images of being a Native gay man or Two Spirit individual?
- How do you feel about the contemporary Gay image of gay men?
- How do these issues relate to your sense of image and belonging?
- How do you balance your life with “fitness”? Walk, run, exercise?



Break (5 minutes)



Administer Risk Assessment to new attendees (5 minutes)



Exercise: (30 minutes)

Medicine Wheel worksheet will be used by participant to write down answers to the following questions:

Living in Balance –

- When we are living in balance what happens to us?
- How do the results of our actions, thoughts, and feelings manifest in our lives?

Living out of Balance –

- When we are not taking good care of ourselves what happens to us?
- When we are under stress or when we choose to live in dysfunctional situations, what happens to us?
- How do the results of our actions, thoughts, and feelings manifest in our lives?



After the participants fill in their worksheets – discuss the following questions:

- What did you write in your Medicine Wheel?
- What things are you doing well to stay in balance?
- What are some areas that need improvement?
- What are some lessons from your own cultures that are like those of the Medicine Wheel?



Journal Time: (10 minutes)

Play Native American music softly. Give participants about 10 minutes to write in journals about workshop discussions. This will enable further review of workshop objectives and personal narratives.



Content for Activity:

Refer to the discussion questions on the flip chart as the topic(s) to be written about in their journals.

- *How do you feel about images of being a Native gay man or Two Spirit individual?*
- *How do you feel about the contemporary Gay image of gay men?*
- *How do these issues relate to your sense of image and belonging?*
- *How do you balance your life with “fitness”? Walk, run, exercise?*



Cultural Activity: (25 minutes)

Warrior Shield Making

- Play Native American music in background.
- Drawing from the discussion on strengths, participants should decide what kind of shield or animal symbol they want to create. Have art materials on a separate table.
- When the participants know what they want to create, they can collect materials from the materials table.
- They may use craft materials provided for them to work on the shield throughout this workshop.
- The shield does not have to be completed during this workshop and will be used as an activity in subsequent workshops.



Content of Activity:

This activity symbolizes personal attributes and strengths of each individual. Remind them that the shield should be seen as “protection” rather than an object used to battle with issues. Stress their creativity and understanding to be displayed on their shield.



Optional Activity:

Read Novel “*Drowning in Fire*” by Craig Womak, Mvskoke, about a gay Native American’s life experiences in rural Oklahoma and cultural history of the Muskogee Creek Nation.



Summary/Close: (5 minutes)

Ask for additional questions or comments on workshop topic(s). Announce upcoming workshop date and topic. Continue to encourage participants to recruit potential participants to attend workshops.



THE RED CIRCLE PROJECT

RESOURCES, REFERRALS & INFORMATION ABOUT HIV/AIDS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN GAY MEN

Workshop 6: Telling Our Stories

Time: 2 hours

Purpose/Goal:

The purpose/goal is to continue to **discuss and tell personal stories** of participants lives and issues (cultural and personal) that have led them to Los Angeles, everyday living as a Native American Gay /Two Spirit man. Interviews will be conducted in workshop groups with participants and editing/review will be done by Artistic Consultant.

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Share personal stories and understand the concept of storytelling.
- Use their personal stories and apply their ideas artistically.
- Understand their personal challenges/struggles and enable them to balance their lives.

Materials:

Compact Disc – Native American Music

Journal Notebooks

Pencils/Pens/Markers

Audio Recorder

Flip Chart/Stand

Learning Activities:

This workshop will be led by lecture style and discussion format.



Workshop 6: Agenda



Welcome and Introductions: (10 minutes)

- Have participants introduce themselves with Name, Tribal Affiliation, Clans, Hometowns, etc.
- Have them tell their favorite movie and why?



Content for Activity:

Remind everyone that when Native Americans meet for the first time, we try to find out a little bit about them: who their family is, what tribe or community they are from, what they do for a living, etc. This helps us to establish “relationships” with each other and begin to form “community.”

By identifying their favorite movie, participants can relate the story and characters of the movie to their own lives or experiences. This activity will enable participants to comprehend the concept of storytelling as movies are originally written as stories before production.



Administer Post-test (5 minutes)



Discussion: (30 minutes)

- Review and discuss personal stories written or told during the workshops attended. Share journal stories.
- Artistic Consultant will use stories and give presentation on skills of using their “voices” for artistic expression.
- Artistic Consultant will display and present artistic design of poster advertisement, palm cards, and personal narratives/role model stories.



Break (5 minutes)



Administer Behavioral Commitment Follow-up Form to attendees (5 minutes)



Exercise: (30 minutes)

Share and tell stories of the personal shields that have been created during previous workshops and display shields.

Ask the following questions to participants about the activity:

- What did the shield symbolize?
- How personal is the shield to your life?
- How should we use our shields to protect ourselves and/or defend ourselves?



Cultural Activity: (30 minutes)

Letting-Go Ceremony –

- Provide a large bowl of water and put in center of table.
- Have participants close their eyes and think of all the challenges and struggles they have encountered in their life.
- Let them think of their commitment of staying in balance and letting go of all things causing imbalance in their lives.
- Read “The Sacred Well” “*Creating a Vision for Living with HIV in the Circle of Life*” Curriculum (page 56).
- Have participants open their eyes and each (if willing) to reach into the bowl of water and rinse their hands.
- This is symbolic of renewing their sense of balance.

Bring everyone together in one large circle and have a willing participant read “Closing Prayer” “*Creating a Vision for Living with HIV in the Circle of Life*” Curriculum (page 57).

Ask participants to offer their own prayers or insights of their experiences from the workshop(s).



Content for Activity:

The activity will give participants an opportunity to express their spirituality while “letting go” of difficult challenges and experiences. Some issues discussed may bring up personal and cultural experiences that may be very emotional. This ceremony will give participants a sense of renewal.



THE RED CIRCLE PROJECT

RESOURCES, REFERRALS & INFORMATION ABOUT HIV/AIDS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN GAY MEN



Summary/Close: (5 minutes)

Ask for additional questions or comments on workshop topic(s).
Announce upcoming workshop date and topic. Continue to encourage participants to recruit potential participants to attend workshops.



APPENDIX A

Novel Questions for Journal or Discussion: *Drowning in Fire* by Craig S. Womack

Chapter 1: Hitchi

Josh Henneha, Weleetka, Oklahoma, 1964

1. Like Josh's Aunt Lucille, is there a female figure in your life that you can relate and/or communicate openly with? Explain.
2. Are there traditional remedies, such as Aunt Lucille blowing smoke in Josh's ear, that you or your tribe practice?

Chapter 2: The King of the Tie-Snakes

Josh Henneha, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 1972

1. Have you felt as Josh did growing up – separate or different than the other group of guys? Were there stereotypes for being different and/or gay?
2. What is the relationship between Josh's daydreaming and Grandpa's cultural story of the "snake?" Do they connect a special spiritual understanding of Josh being Two Spirited?

Chapter 3: Whippoorwill's a Widow

Lucille Self, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 1911

1. Is Lucille's father's illness caused by Dave and his participation in a ceremony? Does Dave also have a "special spiritual understanding?"
2. What is the connections of *Lokha*, Dave speaks about to Lucille and his letting the wolf pups free?

Chapter 4: Burning Jimmy's Jacket

Josh Henneha, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 1973

1. What does Jimmy's jacket symbolize to him, to his father, and to their relationship?
2. How does Josh feel after him and Jimmy have their "experience" on the night of the sleep over? Do such adolescent feelings/acts explain the "nature or nurture" debate of homosexuality?



Chapter 5: Catching the Moon

Josh Henneha, Eufaula and Oklahoma City, 1978

1. Does Aunt Lucille know about Josh's feelings for Jimmy and does she accept it? Why?
2. When Josh and Jimmy venture into the park in Oklahoma City, Josh describes the individuals in the trees as "ghosts" – why does he use the term to describe them and their activities? Is it cultural term?

Chapter 6: Once around the Lake

Lucy, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 1990

1. In Lucille's story, she mentions her hatred for her father – Is this because of his beliefs and that he is White? Or because of what he tried to do to her and did to her cousin?
2. How does Lucille's songs and playing the trumpet help her deal with her life experiences?

Chapter 7: Jimmy's Advertisement

Jimmy Alexander, Weleetka, Oklahoma, 1991

1. Jimmy and C.A.'s secret friendship was hidden in their school days, but it also helped Jimmy deal with his homosexuality – Are their characteristics similar or different? Why?
2. Jimmy wants to write a personal ad seeking an Indian boyfriend while C.A. prefers White guys – Why is it difficult for Jimmy to find an Indian boyfriend? Are inter-racial relationships viewed differently in the Native community? In the gay community?

Chapter 8: Visiting Lucy at the Senior Citizen's Center

Josh Henneha, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 1991

1. Years later, Josh visits his Aunt Lucille in the nursing home – How has her life experiences and stories affected Josh's life?
2. In Josh's story of Dave's interaction with Becky Katch (the medicine woman), she tells him that "there is not a thing wrong with him" – What does she mean? Are Two Spirited people such as Seborn and Tarbie wrong?



Chapter 9: Aunt Lucy's Funeral

Josh Henneha, Eufaula, Oklahoma, 1993

1. What does Uncle Zeke's character symbolize? Why is he not accepted in the Church even though he has strong Christian beliefs?
2. How does Josh feel about "hooking-up" with Jimmy after his Aunt Lucille's funeral? Is it guilt or the irony that Aunt Lucille already knew of their relationship?

Chapter 10: The Colors of Fire

Josh Henneha, Oklahoma City, 1993

1. What does Seborn and Tarbie's relationship represent? What roles did they have in the camp?
2. Why is Mucogee-Creek history important to Josh's story? How has it impacted his life?

Chapter 11: The Spirit of Resistance

Josh Henneha, Oklahoma City, 1993

1. Does Josh still feel Aunt Lucille's presence as he explains to her of his experiences and feelings for Jimmy?
2. How did Jimmy deal with his HIV+ status with Josh? How does Josh feel about his own desires for Jimmy and the possible sexual risks involved?

Chapter 12: I'm Gonna Marry Me That Horse Trader

Lucy, Weleetka, Oklahoma, 1904

1. What does Josh and Jimmy's relationship symbolize among their Native community or urban Indian community? How have the stories of Muscogee -Creek culture and modern culture influence Josh's understanding of who he is as a Two Spirit/ Gay Native American?
2. Has this novel, *Drowning in Fire*, made you more aware of the cultural beliefs of most tribes of Two Spirit individuals? What character do you most relate to and why?