

CHRISTIANNA JONES

The Medicine Wheel

The medicine wheel is a powerful teaching tool in Anishinabek culture. In this project the medicine wheel was used as a reflective tool and to explore how residential school impacted on the four aspects of self. The medicine wheel helps to discover which aspects may be out of balance and explore ways to restore and balance self. The unbalance in any area has an impact on other areas. People can make themselves physically sick when experiencing a strong emotional situation.

Spiritual – it is the essence of “who” we are, the unbalance of our spiritual self can cause problems in the three other aspects of self. The spiritual aspect of self can include religion, ceremony or the inner essence of who you feel you are.

Emotional – describes how we react and feel about things. Think about what makes you laugh, cry, happy, sad, angry, all the emotions we feel, but more importantly explore why a situation produces that reaction.

Mental – how we use our brains and what we think about things. There can be a disconnection between what we think is logical and how we react on an emotional level. “My head says NO, but my heart says YES.” In exploring the emotional think about mental illness, intelligence, problems solving, all the ways you use your mind.

Physical – looking after the vessel that contains the other three aspects of self. Explore how your body reacts to different stimuli and also how you look after your body. Exercise, nutrition and proper self-care affect how well you handle stress.

Using the medicine wheel for reflections and balance.

When a situation arises use the medicine wheel to explore how each aspect of self is affected. Then second time around the medicine wheel explore the people or things that can help to heal the parts that are out of balance.

Questions

1. Did your parents or other family members talk about their residential experience? What did they say?
2. What do you know about the residential experience?
3. How did you feel at:
 - \$ home,
 - \$ school,
 - \$ community
4. What are some of the things you heard about yourself from others?
Dialogue
5. What sorts of things did you tell yourself about school and your ability to learn?
6. Rate the negative impact that others had on how you felt about yourself. Circle the one.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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little impact greatest impact
7. Describe your school, work and family experience.
8. When did your feelings about yourself and learning change?
9. What is some of the dialogue that changed your thinking?
10. How do you feel about yourself now?
11. How did being assessed change your thinking?
12. What are you hoping to do in the future?

Use a creative way to express your journey.

- \$ music - choose songs that express your feelings
- \$ painting
- \$ collage
- \$

Chart of Risk Factors

These are factors that create more stress in our lives. These stresses can prevent us being success and well adjusted at home, school and community.

Check off all that apply to you.

Individual		Family		Environment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Anti-social behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parental pathology(such as alcoholism, depression or chronic illness)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low socio-economic status
<input type="checkbox"/>	membership in a minority racial.ethnic community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exposure to violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poverty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stressful life experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	Separation from parent or lack of parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Violent neighbourhood
<input type="checkbox"/>	Male gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Life stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deviant peer group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult temperament	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malnutrition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious medical conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large family size		

Chart of Protective Factors

These are the factors that help us to deal with the stresses in life.
Check all that apply to you.

Individual		Family		Environment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Good genetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive parent-child attachment and interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive relationship with an adult
<input type="checkbox"/>	Easy temperament	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality parenting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participation in extra-curricular activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intelligence/cognitive ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure and rules within the household	<input type="checkbox"/>	Church involvement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family hardiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive school experience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sense of control over one's life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Father involvement in childcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking responsibility (in home or at work)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent or caregiver expectations of a positive future for their children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opening opportunities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Optimism regarding future events	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mother's education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extra-familial support for mother
<input type="checkbox"/>	History or competence or success	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small family size	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community involvement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Experiencing a positive event before or after a stressor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Detachment from troubled background as adults		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ability to detach from conflict at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive/non-deviant spouse		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sense of responsibility or helpfulness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive perceptions of mother		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sense of responsibility or helpfulness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maternal employment		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hardiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive marital relationship		

