Out of the Darkness

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APA Division 35 Mid-Winter EC Meeting
Section 6 Presentation
Alaska Native/American Indian/Indigenous Women
Seattle, Washington
January 2011
Raven Steals the Sun
Intergenerational Trauma

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Intergenerational Trauma

Definition

Exposure of an earlier generation to a traumatic event that continues to affect the subsequent generations.
Prevalence

• Exact mechanisms of transmission of trauma have not been fully explored

• How widespread is it? There is tremendous grassroots identification
Participatory Action Research

• Research developing a scale of “perceived losses” and a scale focusing on “feelings pertaining to historical losses”
  Whitbeck 2004

• “Towards Wellness” is a positive strengths based approach with a focus on recovery and protective factors.
  Mohatt et al 2004
Dynamics

• Layers of Grief Work
  • Erosion of Family
  • Erosion of Tribal Structure
  • Loss of Spiritual Ties

• Trauma Work
  • Multiple Traumas
  • Historical Trauma
  • On-going Traumas
Continuing Dynamics

“...the losses are not confined to a single catastrophic period. Rather they are ongoing and present.”

“There has been a continual, persistent and progressive process of loss…”

(Whitbeck et al. 2004)
Effects on:

• Identity
• Relationship skills
• Personal behavior
• Transmission of mores and values
• Attitudes and beliefs that affect future generations
“If you are going through hell.. keep going”

-Winston Churchill

Some of us have kept going…the “ability of American Indians to maintain optimism during adversity is related to spirituality, compassion, empathy, humor, friendships and familial and community strengths.”

Goodluck (2002)
“Not About Us Without Us”
The Essence of Successful Interventions

Indigenous interventions
Gone (2009)

Solutions and answers come from the communities themselves.

Campbell (2009) based on the works of Mohatt et al.
The Essence of Successful Interventions

Match the Individual
Community Based Interventions
Stage Based, First Things First
Multi-disciplinary & Interdisciplinary
Evidence Based Practices or Practice Based Evidence
Examples of Positive Coping

Holistic…reflects the medicine wheel familiar to many tribes/nations

‘Takini” Lakota meaning “to come back to life”  Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart

Musk Ox story  Campbell 2009
Successful Delivery

• Be strength based…tell them what is right, what can be built upon
• Respectful
• Relational
• Spiritual
Mask of cedar and ermine tails by Ken Mowat
REFERENCES


