

**Advocacy Curriculum:
Violence Against Native Women:
Root Causes, Dynamics & Trauma-informed Advocacy**

**SESSION 1:
History, Root Causes and Dynamics of
Violence & Social Change**

*Slides have been edited for virtual presentation by the
Tribal Law and Policy Institute*



VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN: Root Causes, Dynamics & Trauma-Informed Advocacy

1. Today's Reality: Violence Against Native Women & Their Children
2. Root Causes of Violence: Colonization & Culture
3. Connections Between Oppression, Internalized Oppression, Violence and Culturally-Based Solutions
4. Reflections of Social Change: Brief Herstory of the Movement To End Violence Against Native Women



Session Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Understand current rates of domestic and sexual violence against Native people, particularly Native women.
- Explain why it is important to know how we got to the levels of violence we see today.
- Describe the connection and impact of colonization to violence against women on Native people
- Describe impact of rates of violence against women
- Define internalized oppression and lateral violence, and describe how they are acted out in Native communities
- Describe the dynamics of hierarchical belief systems and resulting oppression
- Describe Natural/Indigenous belief system and importance of relationships
- Define concepts of social change, equity and equality
- Describe role of advocates as social change agents and connection to reclaiming cultural beliefs/values and sovereignty
- List historical markers of progress confronting violence against Native women/survivors

What Does History & Culture Have to Do With Advocacy to End Violence Against Native Women & their Children?



Culture:

- creates our view of the world and language
- values, beliefs and life ways
- defines our relationships
- determines how we interact with each other



History:

- tells the story of how we got to where we are today (depending upon the story-teller & their culture!)
- provides lessons that can be used to determine our future.

Without this knowledge and critical thinking, we will continue on the same destructive path, only providing reactive services, rather than ending the violence through social change.



U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT STATISTICS

US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: American Indians and Crime: 1992-96 Report

- American Indian women are raped at a rate more than double that of rapes reported by all races on an annual average. (All races: 2 per 1,000, Native Americans: 7 per 1,000)
- Violent crime rate among Native American women was 98 per 1,000 - more than twice that of whites (40 per 1,000) or blacks 56 per 1,000)
- At least 70% of violence experienced by Native Americans are committed by persons not of the same race.
- American Indian women were victimized by an intimate at rates higher than those for all other females (whites at 8.1 per 1,000; Indians at 23.2 per 1,000)

American Indian women are the most battered, raped, stalked and murdered group of women in the US ...70% of the time by non-native offenders.

**National Institute of Justice Research Report May 2016:
Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native
Women and Men 2010 Findings from Nat'l Intimate Partner & Sexual
Violence Survey:**



More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3%) have experienced violence in their lifetime. This includes:

- 56.1 % who have experienced sexual violence
- 55.5 % who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner
- 48.8 % who have experienced stalking
- 66.4 % who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner

IMPACT OF VIOLENCE



Among American Indian and Alaska Native victims of lifetime physical violence by intimate partners, stalking, and sexual violence —

- 66.5 percent of women and 26.0 percent of men were concerned for their safety.
- 41.3 percent of women and 20.3 percent of men were physically injured.
- 92.6 percent of women and 74.3 percent of men had talked to someone about what the perpetrators did.
- 49.0 percent of women and 19.9 percent of men needed services because of what the perpetrators did.
- 40.5 percent of women and 9.7 percent of men had to miss days of work or school because of what the perpetrators did.

The most common service needed was medical care (38.0 percent of female victims and 9.3 percent of male victims). 38.2 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women and 16.9 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native men were unable to get the services they needed.

National Institute of Justice Research Report May 2016: Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men 2010 Findings from Nat'l Intimate partner & Sexual Violence Survey



Between 95 & 98% of victims of battering are women.
Approximately 3-5% of battering victims are men.

Battering occurs within Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender/sexual and Queer/Questioning and Two Spirit (LGBTQ2S) communities. Just as racism makes Native women increasingly unsafe, heterosexism & homophobia makes members of the LGBTQ2S communities increasingly unsafe.

Violence against women is seen internationally as a human rights violation.



**Violence against women was
extremely rare before
colonization.**

**Consequences were immediate
and severe.**



Root Causes of Violence: ***COLONIZATION AND CULTURE***

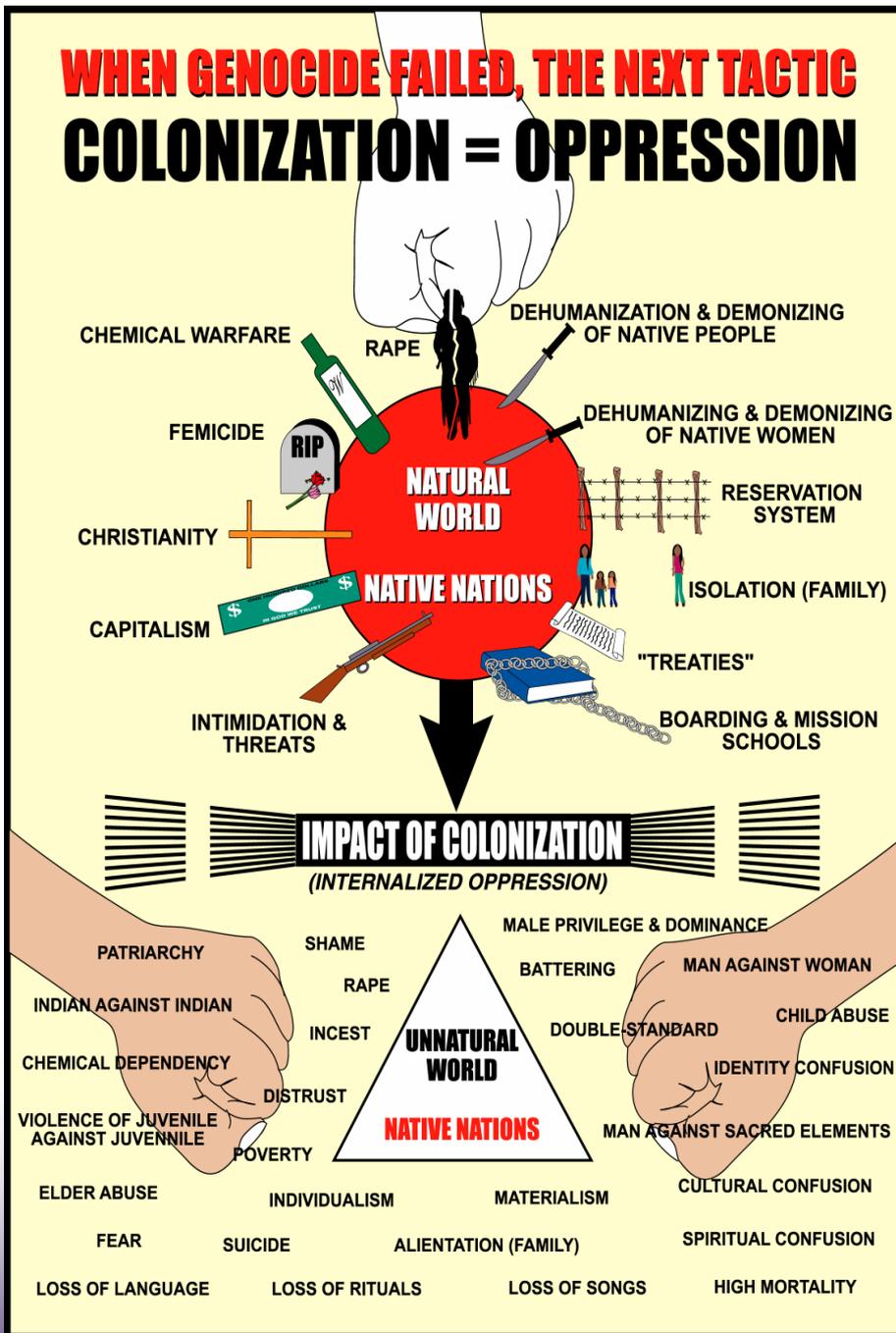


EXTERNAL OPPRESSION

External oppression is the unjust exercise of authority & power by one group over another.

It includes imposing one group's belief system, values & life ways over another group.

WHEN GENOCIDE FAILED, THE NEXT TACTIC COLONIZATION = OPPRESSION



Kill the Indian,



Save the Man





Connections Between Internalized Oppression, Violence and Culturally-based Solutions



INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION

External Oppression becomes INTERNALIZED oppression when we come to believe and act as if the oppressor's belief system, values and life way is reality.

Internalized Oppression means the oppressor doesn't have to exert any more pressure, we now do it to each other and ourselves.

Divide and conquer works!



RESULTS OF INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION

- Shame & disowning of our individual & cultural reality.
- See no value in Indigenous culture; let go of the past and live in the “now.”
- Drunkenness, disrespect for God, fighting, cussing & disrespect for women were “foreign” behaviors modeled by the Cavalry that worked their way into our communities.
- Competitiveness, gossip, negativity, etc.
- Previously unseen levels of violence, especially against women and children. Also includes among men, against LGBTQ2S and others.
- Materialism



Result of Internalized Oppression:

Lateral Violence

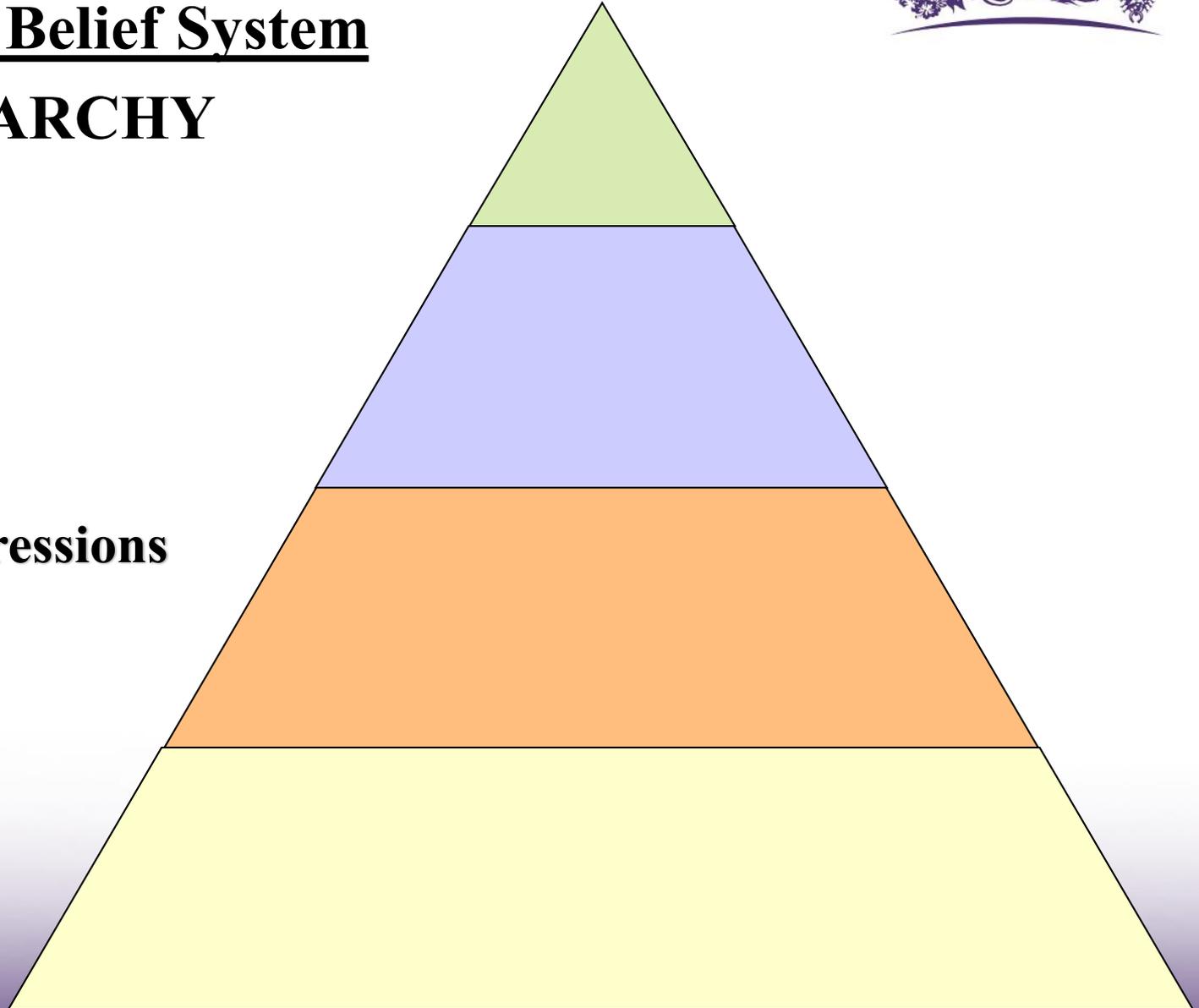
- Lateral violence is displaced violence directed against one's peers rather than adversaries.
- Lateral Violence occurs within marginalized groups where members strike out at each other as a result of being oppressed.
- The oppressed become the oppressors of themselves and each other.

THE ROOT CAUSE OF VIOLENCE:

Unnatural Belief System

HIERARCHY

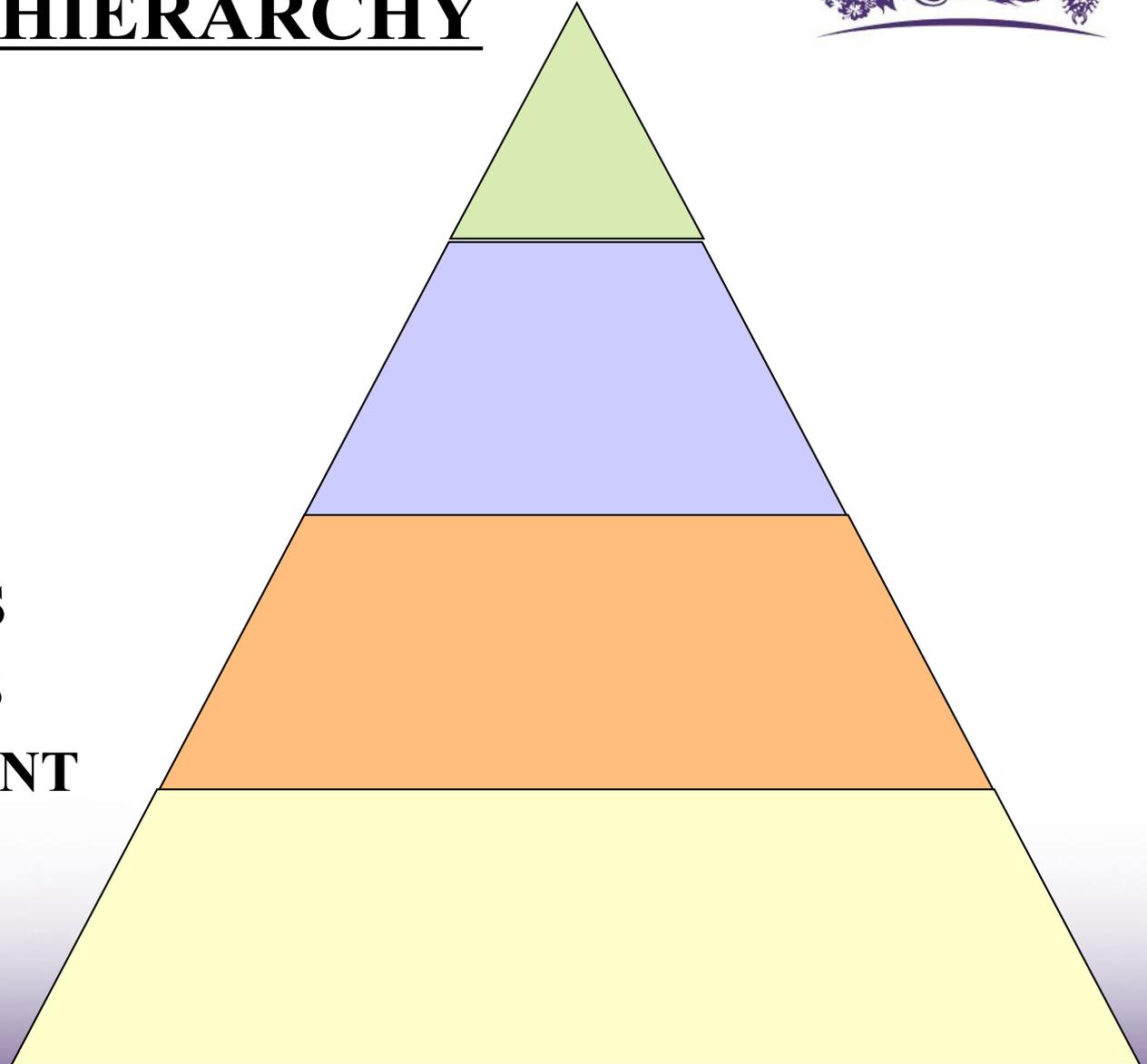
Racism
Sexism
Heterosexism
Classism
& Other Oppressions





HIERARCHY

FAMILY
CHURCH
BUSINESS
WORKPLACE
MEDICAL
GOVERNMENT
JUSTICE SYSTEMS
HUMAN SERVICES
LAW ENFORCEMENT
SCHOOLS





The breaking of relationships is a requirement for hierarchy and the resulting oppression, violence and battering/IPV and sexual violence/rape.



- Racism
- Sexism
- Able-Bodyism
- Classism
- Heterosexism



A Look at the Natural Belief System

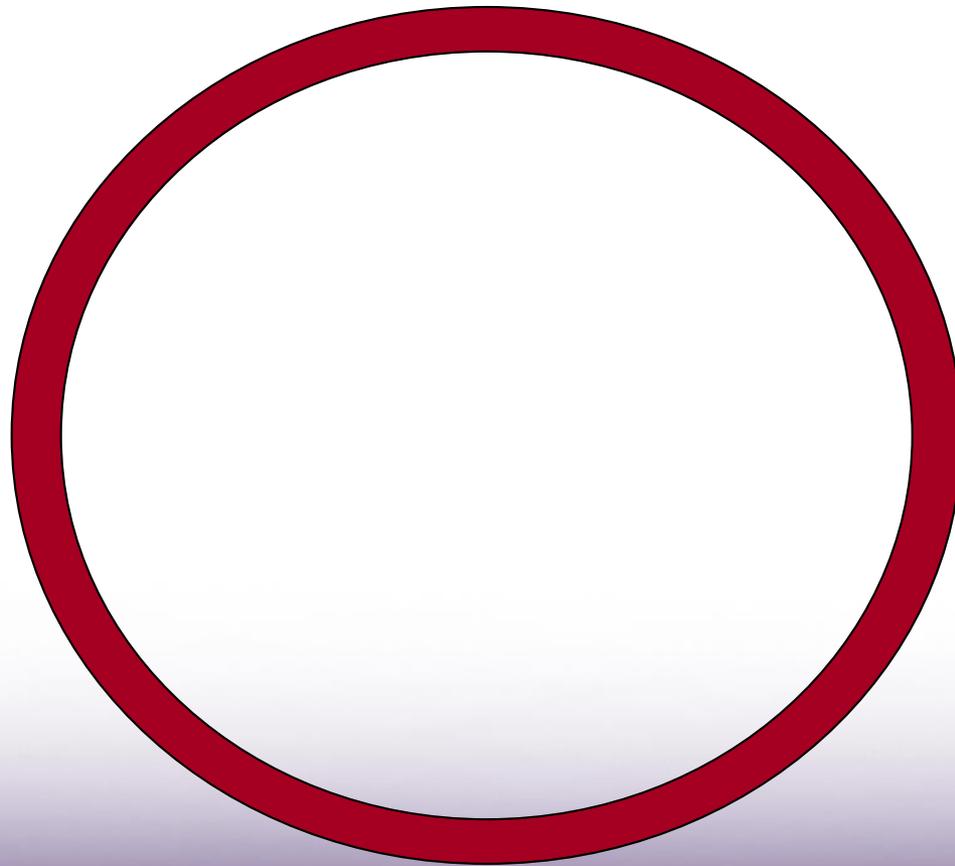




ROOT CAUSE OF NON-VIOLENCE:

Natural Belief System

Respect
Equity
Equality
Connection
Relationships





What are the values of the Sacred Circle?

What are our traditional beliefs about spirituality, relationships and how we treat each other?



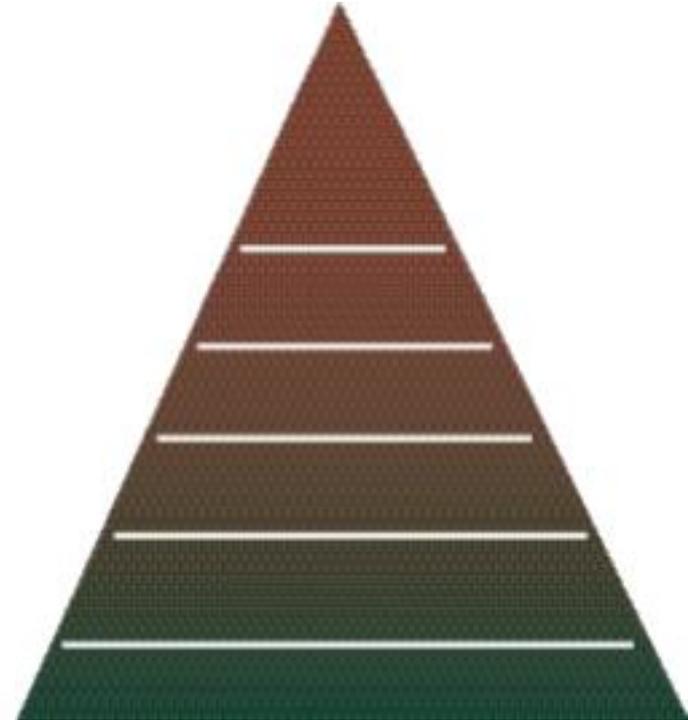
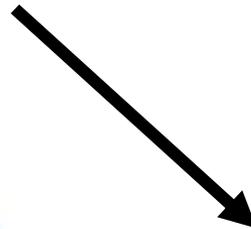
**Honoring and Nurturing
Relationships are Integral
to Non-violence and social
change.**



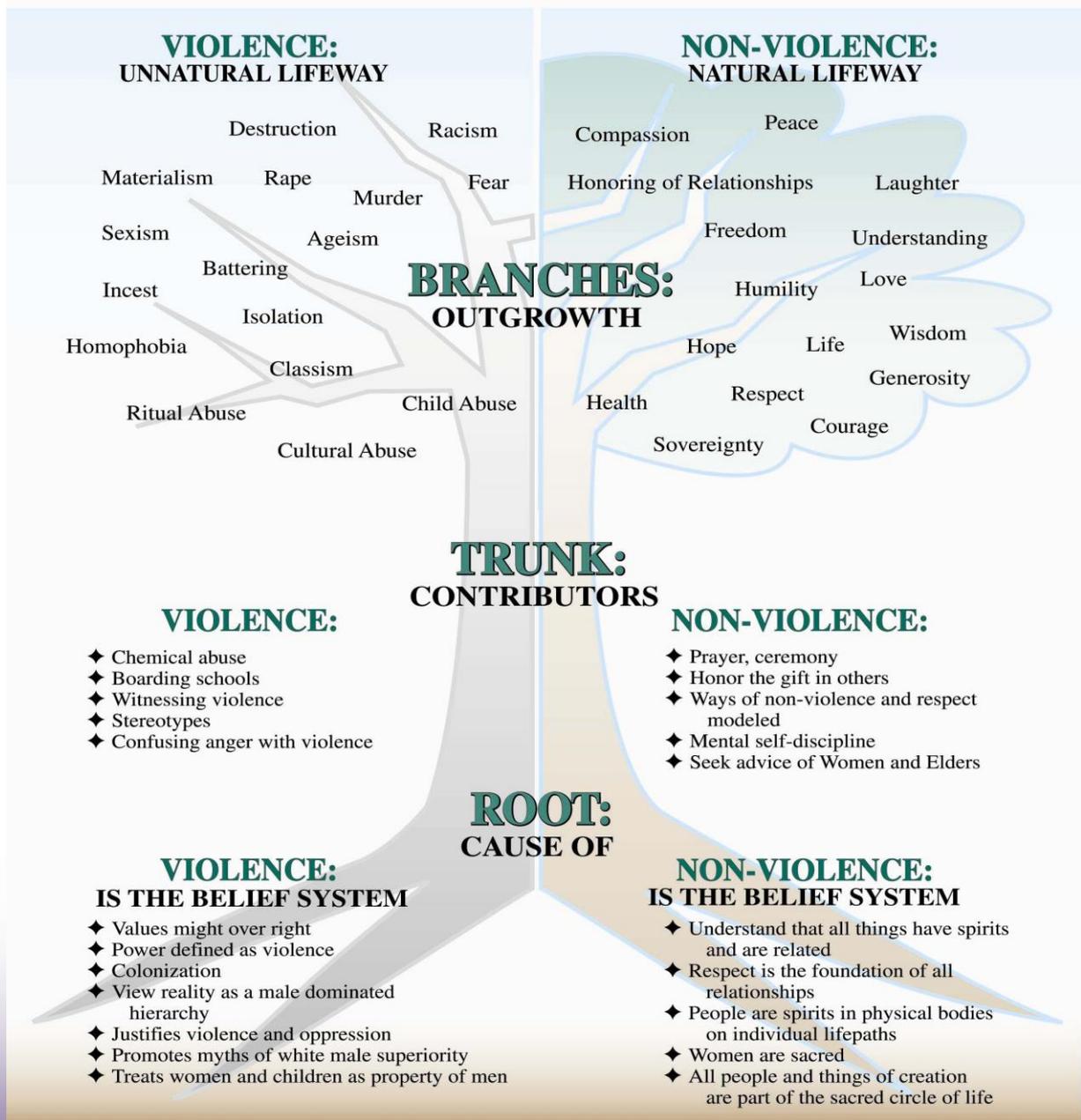
THE IMPACT OF COLONIZATION



THE NATURAL WORLD
CHARACTER-BASED



THE UNNATURAL WORLD
GENDER, RACE, CLASS, ECONOMIC,
SEXUAL ORIENTATION-BASED





**How do we incorporate our beliefs
and values into our lives and work?**



From Lateral Violence to Lateral Kindness

Lateral Kindness



In response to the destruction caused by lateral violence in Indigenous communities, the concept of lateral kindness has emerged, drawing on Indigenous values that promote social harmony and healthy relationships.

Emmy Manson of the FNHA defined lateral kindness in the simplest of terms: **“It’s holding each other up.”** Instead of focusing on negative behaviours and issues, **lateral kindness celebrates positive behaviours in others, even small ones. It is a system in which individuals are lifted up and supported.**



**Reflections of Social Change:
Brief Herstory of Movement to
End Violence against Native Women**



Key concepts:

- Social Justice
- Equality
- Equity
- Social Change
- Sovereignty



What is the social significance of what we are doing?

Bishop Desmond Tutu has said
our work is not about violence.

Our work is about justice.

Seeking justice requires demanding the truth be told,
repairing the damage that has been done
and altering the social conditions that gave rise to the
injustice in the first place.”

Ellen Pence- 2010

What is social justice?



Social justice is the distribution of benefits and how they are allocated in society. It is thought of as a society that affords individuals and groups fair treatment and a just share of the benefits of society.

Social justice is often equated with the concepts of human rights and equality. Because the word justice can be vague, ambiguous, and subjective, individuals in a society can have different ideas of social justice and what “just” means.

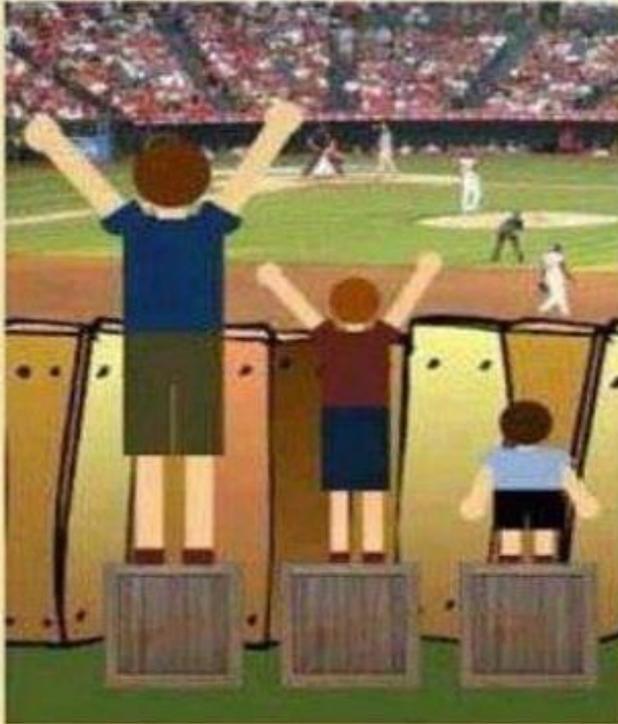
Equality? Equity?



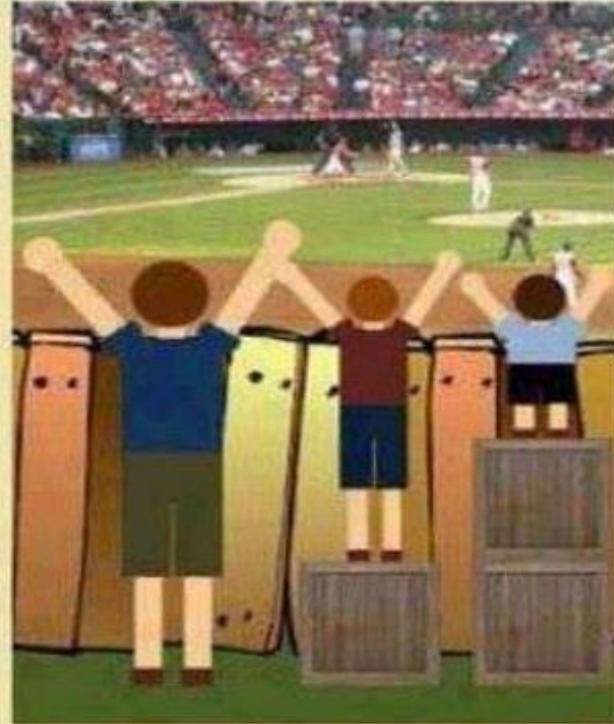
Equality means everyone gets exactly the same outcome - two shoes - without regard to individual differences - large or small feet, for example.

Equity means everyone gets the same quality of outcome - shoes that fit their individual needs.

Equality doesn't mean Justice



This is Equality



This is Justice

What is social change?



Social change builds community-based responses that address underlying social problems on an individual, institutional, community, national and/or international level.

Social change can change attitudes, behaviors, laws, policies and institutions to better reflect values of inclusion, fairness, diversity and opportunity.

Social change involves a collective action of individuals who are closest to the social problems to develop solutions that address social issues.

Social Change Requires Vision



Ending violence & reclaiming the sacred status of women requires vision.

That vision comes from our ancestors before colonization.

Imagine a world without violence or fear.

Imagine a world with respect & harmony.

TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY:



All Tribal Nations possess or have a right to:

- **A land-base:** Possession and control is unquestioned and honored by other nations. To exist without fear, but with freedom
- **Self-governance:** The ability and authority to make decisions regarding all matters concerning the Tribe without the approval or agreement of others. This includes methods of decision-making in social, political and other areas of life.
- **An economic base and resources:** The control, use and development of resources, businesses or industries the Tribe chooses. This includes resources that support the Tribal life way, including the practice of spiritual ways.
- **A distinct language and historical and cultural identity:** Each Tribe defines and describes its history, including the impact of colonization and racism, tribal culture, worldview and traditions.

WOMEN'S SOVEREIGNTY:



All Native Women possess or have a right to:

- **Control their bodies and paths in life:** The possession and control is unquestioned and honored by others. To exist without fear, but with freedom.
- **Self-governance:** The ability and authority to make decisions regarding all matters concerning themselves, without others' approval or agreement. This includes the methods of decision-making in all areas of life.
- **An economic base and resources:** The control, use and development of resources, businesses or industries that Native women choose. This includes resources that support individual Native women's chosen life ways.
- **A distinct identity, history and culture:** Each Native woman defines and describes her personal and tribal history, including the impact of colonization, racism and sexism, women's culture, worldview and traditions.



Reflections of Social Change:

A Brief Herstory of the Movement to End Violence Against Native Women

*Honoring the Sisters who came before us
and set the Path.*



TIMELINE:

SIGNS OF SOCIAL CHANGE FOR SAFETY OF NATIVE WOMEN 1977-2017

1977

- The White Buffalo Calf Woman Society established the first and at that time only domestic violence shelter in Indian Country on the Sicangu Lakota Reservation in South Dakota.
- There are approximately 89 domestic violence shelters in the U.S.

1978

- The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights commissions Battered Women: Issues of Public Policy, a document created by activists that compiles 700 pages testimony. It examines need for federal role in domestic violence. Tillie Black Bear testifies on wife beating regarding domestic violence committed against Native women.



1984

- The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) is authorized, providing federal funding for first time for victims of domestic violence and their children.

1990

- Senator Joe Biden introduces the 1st version of Violence Against Women Act to Senate. Native women were involved in this initiative and continue to be.

1994

- VAWA is reintroduced in Congress and enacted and signed into law on September 13th by President Bill Clinton.
- South Dakota took the marital rape exemption out of rape law.



1995

- Department of Justice creates the Violence Against Women Grants Office to implement VAWA grant programs and the Violence Against Women Policy Office.

1997

- Sacred Circle, National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women opens in Rapid City, SD as a project of Cangleska, Inc. 1st national resource center specifically for Indian Country. The other National Resource Centers gave some of their own funding for the first year to make this happen! Sisterhood is powerful!

1999

- US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: American Indians and Crime: 1992-96 Report is issued. It is the first Report to explicitly study violence against Native people and Native women.

2000

- VAWA is reauthorized & signed into law. It creates 1st federally funding for Tribal Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Coalitions.
- Approximately 2,000 domestic violence shelters in the U.S.



2003

- The National Congress of American Indians establishes National Task Force on Violence Against Native Women.

2005

- VAWA is reauthorized (signed into law by President G.W. Bush, Jan. '06)
Includes the first title dedicated to the Safety of Indian Women.
- Sacred Circle, National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women survey finds there are 30 domestic violence shelters in Indian Country, about one-third are in SD.

2007

- Maze of Injustice Report was published, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/mazeofinjustice.pdf>



2010

- President Obama announces the US support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration affirms indigenous rights, including the rights of Native women to gender equality, security of the person and access to justice.
- Tribal Law and Order Act is signed by President Obama. Specifically, the law enhances tribes' authority to prosecute and punish non-Indian domestic violence criminals...”

2011

- The National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center is founded and funded as the Native specific member of the Domestic Violence Resource Network (DVRN).



2011 continued

- Senate Committee Indian Affairs Chairman Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI) introduces S. 1763, the Stand Against Violence and Empower Native Women (SAVE Native Women) Act.
- Congress fails to reauthorize VAWA and remained expired for over 500 days due in part to opposition to restoring limited criminal jurisdiction to Indian Tribes over non-Indians committing domestic violence, dating violence & violating orders of protection on tribal lands.

2013

- President Obama signs into law the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, restoring limited criminal jurisdiction in Indian Country in cases of domestic violence and other important amendments.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLiYMwNCApE>



2016

- United States Supreme Court affirms constitutionality of Federal Government's reliance on the existence of prior Tribal Court convictions to create federal criminal jurisdiction over a repeat offender's third assault on a Native woman. The Supreme Court's decision in United States v. Bryant, 579 U.S. 15-420 (2016), upholds the constitutionality of the Habitual Offender Provision of VAWA.
- Supreme Court Affirms Tribal Court Jurisdiction Over Dollar General Corporation (Dollar General Corp. v. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians), 579 US 13-1496 (2016): upholds tribal civil jurisdiction over non-Indians who sexually assault Native children on tribal lands.
- U.S. Supreme Court affirms federal firearm prohibition, prohibits an individual convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from possessing a firearm, regardless of whether the underlying crime of domestic violence was committed with knowing, intentional, or reckless intent. (Voisine v. United States, 579 U.S. 14-10154 (2016))



2017

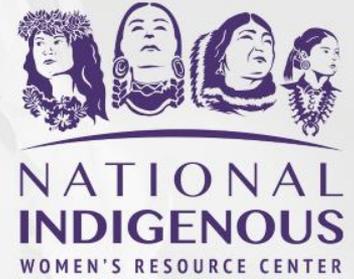
- StrongHearts Native Helpline was founded in March of 2017 as a result of discussions that began in 2012 between the NIWRC and the National Domestic Violence Hotline, with input from tribal leaders, a Native women's council, domestic violence experts, and the FVPSA program.

Significant portions of this timeline were taken from the book: Safety for Native Women: VAWA and American Indian Tribes, written by Jacqueline Agtuca through the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center. Additions made by the Native Women's Society of the Great Plains.



Resources

- The Violence Against Women Act – Title IX: Safety for Indian Women: http://www.tribal-institute.org/lists/vawa_2013.htm



Thank you!

For more information, visit niwrc.org

To review related TLPI resources, visit
<https://www.Home.Tlpi.org/violence-against-native-women-publicatio>

niwrc.org

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Please remember to fill out the session evaluation.

Session Information

Session 1: History, Root Causes and Dynamics of
Violence & Social Change

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

8:30am PT | 9:30am MT | 10:30am CT | 11:30am ET



Q & A