



DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - IPV

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THE UNIQUE GET TOGETHER SOCIETY

- Here at Unique Get Together Society, we see the value in everyone. We are dedicated to empowering Indigenous, marginalized, and underserved communities, individuals, and families. Dedicated to strengthening their overall physical, mental, social-emotional, and spiritual development. To assist families, communities and individuals through our programs such as nutritional health, family support advocacy and subsidies. We are here to fight racial and other social inequities with love and compassion

STATISTICS ON INCARCERATION RATES

- Indigenous people make up only 5% of Canada's population, they are grossly overrepresented in Canada's prison system.
- According to the most recent statistics from Statistics Canada, "Indigenous adults accounted for about one-third of all adult admissions to provincial and territorial (31%) and federal (33%) custody, while representing approximately 5% of the Canadian adult population in 2020.

STATISTICS ON INCARCERATION RATES

- Indigenous women represented 42% of female custody admissions to provincial and territorial custody and 40% to federal custody in 2020/2021
- Indigenous youth accounted for one-half (50%) of youth admissions to custody in 2020/2021,
- Male Indigenous youth represented 48% of youth male admissions to custody, while female Indigenous youth represented 62% of youth female admissions to custody” (Statistics Canada, 2021)
- while representing about 8% of the youth population.

WHAT IS CAUSING THIS

- Intergenerational trauma due to colonization is the hypothesized cause and to address the problem we must start with early interventions in the Indigenous homes
- Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a major contributor to Indigenous incarceration, as well as addiction and poverty related crimes such as theft.
- Unstable environments growing up lead to repeated cycles of maladaptive behaviours which perpetuates the trauma cycle.

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- “Indigenous women (61%) were more likely to experience some form of IPV in their lifetime (since the age of 15) compared with non-Indigenous women (44%).
- Similarly, when asked about the past 12 months, 1 in 6 (17%) Indigenous women experienced at least one form of IPV—psychological, physical, or sexual—compared with 12% of non-Indigenous women” (Statistics Canada, 2018).

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- The scope of the violence in Indigenous families is likely under-reported due to the Indigenous mistrust of colonial patriarchal systems.
- Often violence will go unreported because Indigenous victims are afraid to seek help for a variety of reasons.
- These can be, but are not limited to, a fear of arrest for fighting back, loss of children, mistrust of police and social services, imprisonment and being looked down on by their community for reporting the IPV.

DIALECTIC BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY

- DBT created in 1993 by Dr. Marsha Linehan using the Eastern philosophy of mindfulness in combination with traditional western cognitive interventions. The four areas of focus are mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance and interpersonal effectiveness skills.
- The therapy was designed to treat extreme, or multiple traumas (BPD)
- Research finds that after DBT treatment up to **77%** of patients no longer meet their diagnostic criteria after 12 months of treatment, making it **87%** more effective than any other psychotherapy (National Institute of Health. 2014)

DIALECT BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY

- Emphasis is placed on learning to be more comfortable with strong emotions such as anger, sadness, and fear, and learning to think in a more integrated way that accepts both good and bad features of the self and others
- This therapy is client centered and tailored to each person's unique circumstances and needs

INCLUDING CULTURE

- The consensus of the researchers doing cultural therapy research was that culture added an aspect to clients, especially clients belonging to a racialized, marginalized, or oppressed cohort, were more accepting and willing to participate in clinical therapies that had elements that were culturally relevant to them.

INCLUDING CULTURE

- The research indicates that there is a higher retention rate of acquired skills, a lower drop out rate, and a statistically relevant reduction in reoffending. The cultural implementation has been studied in predominantly Brazil, New Zealand, and Nepal

INDIGENOUS CULTURE

- Services for people struggling with IPV were originally designed by and for the neo-liberal, Caucasian Western populations. Indigenous peoples who manage to access these programs often find staff with limited cultural competence and program supports that have little cultural safety or relevance for them.

DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- Elders are central to the role modelling of traditional knowledge and values and the spirit of hope and strength emerging in the collective.
- It is imperative to have an elder present during the entire facilitation of this program. Elders are respected members of any Indigenous community and are viewed as safe and trustworthy people by indigenous communities

DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- The traditional teaching of the Medicine Wheel guides a holistic healing process, examining the intersectionalities of IPV in relation to physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual domains.
- Land-based therapy/traditional medicines
- Peer Support
- Sharing circles
- Ceremony
- Wrap-Around After Care – Indigenous Harm Reduction/Indigenous Recovery = the return of spirit

DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- This program is designed to replace the standardized court ordered treatment programs for, addicts, victims and perpetrators facing criminalization or loss of children.
- As was extensively discussed, the criminalization of Indigenous peoples is at a crisis level. The intervention needs to be early, and it needs to be addressed in Indigenous homes first.

DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- This program will take a standardized 12-month DBT program currently in line with the Comprehensive Dialectic Behavioral Skills program at St. Joseph's Care group right now.
- This program has no Indigenous components and although it is effective, it is not as approachable to Indigenous people as it is very clinical and institutional and is heterogenous in its clients.
- The current comprehensive DBT program, services people with severe mental illness that is interfering with the functioning of their day to day lives.

DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- The program would comprise of the following modules: Mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance and interpersonal effectiveness skills. The skills group would be held one time per week for 3 hours.
- In addition to the skills group there would be one 1-hour individual session where an Elder and a therapist would do one-on-one counseling with each client.

DIALECTICS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- The purpose of the individual sessions is to tailor the treatment to the individual as each of their situations will be unique and they will have unique sets of target behaviours they will choose themselves that they feel are the root causes of their emotional and behavioural responses.

OBJECTIVES

- Short Term Goals
 - Safety for victims of IPV
 - Treatment for perpetrators of IPV
 - Avoidance of criminalization
 - Keeping Indigenous families together and out of the systems
 - Providing a set of healthy coping mechanisms to participants
 - Reduce negative target behaviours (hopefully eliminate)

OBJECTIVES

- Long Term Goals
 - Indigenous healing of intergenerational trauma
 - Reconciliation
 - A repairing of Indigenous relations
 - A restoration of trust in the justice system and government and health institutions
 - Decreasing the number of incarcerated Indigenous people
 - Restoring culture back to the Indigenous communities

MEASURES

- Number of workers – 2 facilitators per tier plus one elder and the program coordinator
- Number of participants – 20 offenders and 20 Victims of IPV for a total of 40 participants

MEASURES

- Training – Dependent on capacity of the existing employees in the organization but facilitators would require training in facilitation of DBT as well as comprehensive Indigenous knowledge training.
- Estimated time for length of training 6 to 12 months depending on pre-existing skill set of workers or the need to hire and train qualified workers may reduce the need, time, and cost of training.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- I intend on measuring the success of the program with 12 monthly aftercare surveys to document the improvements or relapses of the participants.
- The data collected from the aftercare surveys will be used to create statistics to determine the success of the program.
- These surveys would be preferably done via zoom or on the telephone.

IMPLICATIONS TO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

- Should this program be approved for funding and implementation, it would signify true effort to heal intergenerational trauma forced on the Indigenous communities through colonization and assimilation.
- This program has the potential to repair relations with the Indigenous community and the courts, the government institutions and western society by validating their experiences and offering culturally appropriate treatment options.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

- In addition to this, it can help lower the Indigenous presence in prisons
- It has the potential to keep Indigenous families together by providing them with a healthy skill set of mechanisms to cope with big emotions and avoid negative coping mechanisms and repeating cycles of violence.
- The implications for healing and the restoration of trust are endless.

CONCLUSION

- Indigenous people in Canada face several challenges and barriers that are unique to us.
- We have less access to life chances and have suffered horribly for centuries. This abuse that was handed to us has left deep wounds that have yet to heal.
- The Canadian Government has made commitments to the Indigenous community to help us heal from the effects of colonization and assimilation.

CONCLUSION

- Healing needs to start at the source. With us. In our homes.
- Our relationship within our families is where we need to begin to heal.
- We need to keep our babies with us and out of jails.

CONCLUSION

- We need to show the children what Lee Maracle states is the most important thing for them to know, that is that no matter what, their parents love each other. For that to happen we must be validated in our experiences and in our pain and we need to love ourselves again.
- This therapy is the hope and the spirit returning to us. It is our future being handed back to us.