AMERICAN INDIAN WELL BEING MODEL IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Advice from Great Grandma:

• “My children: always remember who you are, where you are from, and where you are going in life.
• Believe in yourself, believe in your goals, believe in your people; Dream of finishing what you started; envision success.
• You all have strong young wings and I am sure you are eager to fly higher.”
Presentation Format

- Purpose
- Connections to Well Being
- Four main pillars of Well Being
- 16 pillars of Well Being
- Question and answer session
- Closing
Holistic Learning

• Holistic Education is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace. –Ron Miller, (2009), Holistic Education Review.

• Well Being: The combination of our love for what we do each day, the quality of our relationships, the security of our finances, the vibrancy of our physical health, and the pride we take in what we have contributed to our communities. Most importantly, it’s about how these five elements interact,” Tom Rath & Jim Harter (2010), Well Being; the Five Essential Elements.
Dissertation

• “Beneath Our Sacred Minds, Hands, and Hearts, Stories of Persistence and Success Among American Indian graduate and professional students,” University of New Mexico, (2009).

• Question: “How did you become successful as an American Indian graduate or professional student?”
Study Analysis

• Mixed method study using online survey and personal stories. 23 study participants representing 19 different tribal groups and 18 institutions across the U.S.
• 17 were first generation graduate students.
• Professional Level Participants N=-9
• Doctoral Level participants N=6
• Masters degree participants N=7
• 8 married participants
• 7 single participants
• 8 divorced participants
• Age range: 21-65 years of age.
• 12 female participants
• 11 male participants
Research on Well Being

- Stage One: Elder perceptions on well being (traditional Native perspective)
- Stage Two: 23 Study participants perception of well-being (Native Scholars)
- Stage Three: Western ways of knowledge (non-Native perspective)
- Stage Four: Indigenous conferences and studies (International Native Scholars)
Well Being

- Write down your personal definition of well being.
- A few thoughts:
- Why did you become involved in education?
- What is your philosophy in life?
- How did you become successful?
• **Identity**
  - tribe, family, clan, norms, history, background, sub-groups,

• **Purpose**
  - ceremony, hope, self-acceptance, dreams, life/death, achievement.

• **Spiritual Well Being**

• **Cultural Well Being**

• **Linguistic Well Being**

• **Artistic Well Being**

• **Expression**
  - Gifts, song, dance, stories, ritual, food, crafts.

• **Language**
  - home, school, work language, literacy, teaching, revitalization.
Spiritual Well Being

- Definition: Sense of relatedness or connectedness to others; create meaning and purpose in life; having a belief in and a relationship with a power higher than the self. (WSU Well Being Site, 2009).
- ORIGIN: American Indian elders
- KEY WORD: PURPOSE
- Question: What is my sense of purpose in life?
- Examples: Daily prayer, career goals, achievement, success, life fulfillment and happiness, elder teachings, faith in self.
Cultural Well Being

• Definition: Developing one's unique identity and the acceptance of all cultures. It's basically knowing who you are, where you are from, and where you are going in life. (Tohajiilee Tribal Elders, 2009).

• ORIGIN: American Indian Scholars

• KEY WORD: IDENTITY

• Question: How do I balance my culture and the modern world while I am in college?

• Examples: Sense of belonging, cultural practices and capital, pride in self and community, giving back to people, and self acceptance.
Linguistic Well Being

• Definition: “Learning how to communicate in a variety of modes that focus on speaking, listening, reading, writing, and leading.”
• Origin: Indigenous Scholars
• KEY WORD: EXPRESSION
• Question: “How will my literacy skills advance my chances of success?”
• Examples: Native language, expressive arts, poetry, communication.
Artistic Well Being

• DEFINITION: Identifying attributes that define what skills you have mastered including artistic talents, gifts, and arts.
• Origin: Indigenous Elders
• KEY WORD: GIFT/CRAFT
• Question: What basic skills have you mastered and can perform well?
• EXAMPLES: arts, crafts, dance, songs, mastery learning, giftedness.
• **Mind**
  - thinking skills, critical thinking, study skills, test strategies, Learning Styles.

• **Heart**
  - Anger Mgt. Feelings, Stress Mgt. Happiness, care, positive attitude

• **Future**
  - Science, math, computer literacy, development, planning.

• **Wisdom**
  - character, survival, life skills, etiquette, instinct.
Mental Well Being

- Definition: A state of well being that an individual realizes his/her own abilities, coping skills, and learning how to think in a variety of ways. Can also be referred to as “Intellectual well being”. (WSU Well Being Site, 2009).
- Origin: American Indian Elders
- KEY WORD: MIND
- Question: Am I academically prepared to meet the rigors of college?
- Examples: study skills, learning styles, problem solving, test preparation, research, creativity, technology, and challenging one’s self.
Emotional Well Being

• Definition: Emotional well being is based on your self esteem, how you feel about yourself and healthy behaviors and choices.
• Origin: American Indian Scholars
• KEY WORD: HEART
• Question: Do I know how to balance my emotions to succeed in college?
• Examples: stress management, anger management, anxiety, responsibility for self and others, character development, humor, positive attitude, and grieving process.
Intellectual Well-Being

• DEFINITION: Our degree of openness to new ideas, challenges, and thought provoking mental activities.
• Origin: Indigenous Scholars
• KEY WORD: Wisdom
• QUESTION: What basic skills have I learned in my life to navigate college?
• EXAMPLES: Instinctive learning, basic life skills, teachings from elders, interaction. Survival skills.
Technical Well Being

- DEFINITION: The ability to comprehend and apply technology by navigating sources of information.
- Origin: Western ways of knowledge
- KEY WORD: Future
- QUESTION: Do I have the necessary computer skills to succeed in college?
- EXAMPLES: computer literacy, communicative technology, science, math.
• **Body**
  - Diet, exercise, hygiene, health awareness, drug awareness

• **Place**
  - Home and school culture, travel, nature, mother earth, father sky, living things.

• **Physical Well Being**

• **Environmental Well Being**

• **Cyclical Well Being**

• **Medicinal Well Being**

• **Time**
  - Maturation, stages of life, rites of passage, death, birth, adjustment

• **Healing**
  - Rest, relaxation, reward, talking circles, counseling, trauma, medicine
Physical Well Being

• Definition: The ability to understand what can make our body most efficient and effective, and the ability to recognize and respect our own limitations, (WSU Well Being Site, 2009).

• ORIGIN: American Indian Elders

• KEY WORD: BODY

• Question: What is good for my body and how do I take care of myself?

• Examples: personal hygiene, exercise, sports, diet, food preparation, drug and alcohol awareness, sex education, hobbies, sleep and rest, working with hands, motivation.
Environmental Well Being

• Definition: The aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences that shape the life of a person or group of people. (Webster’s Dictionary, 2009).
• ORIGIN: American Indian Scholars
• KEY WORD: PLACE
• Question: Is the college that I plan to attend a “good fit” for me and my career or academic goals.
• Examples: campus climate, positive role models, respect for nature and animals, student support services, land, and navigating college resources and services.
Cyclical Well being

- **DEFINITION:** The acknowledgement of time and change in our daily lives and to address our stages in life.
- **ORIGIN:** Western Ways of Knowledge
- **KEY WORD:** Time/Change
- **QUESTION:** Do I know how to manage my time to succeed in college?
- **EXAMPLES:** planning, time management, age, life stages/development, acculturation,
Medicinal Well Being

• DEFINITION: The ability to heal ourselves from setbacks in life and to restore our balance in mind, body, spirit, and relations.

• ORIGIN: Indigenous Scholars

• KEY WORD: Healing

• QUESTION: How do we cope with challenges and balance our lives?

• EXAMPLES: healing ourselves from trauma, challenges, abuse, historical knowledge.
- **Goals**
  - short and long term goals, planning, career awareness, job skills, development.

- **Relation**
  - cooperation, humor, circle of friends, communication, social media.

- **Social Well Being**

- **Professional Well Being**

- **Financial Well Being**

- **Political Well Being**

- **Stability**
  - money management, financial aid, taxes, meth, credit management, finances.

- **Leadership**
  - decision making, responsibility, sponsorship, collaboration.
Social Well Being

• Definition: Our ability to interact successfully within a community and throughout a variety of cultural contexts while showing respect for ourselves and others. (WSU Well Being site, 2009).

• Origin: American Indian Elders

• KEY WORD: RELATION

• Question: Where is my network to help me succeed in college?

• Examples: Time management, mentoring, intimacy, cooperation, dialogue with professor/students, circle of positive friends.
Professional Well Being

- **Definition:** Planning a successful college experience and professional career.
- **Origin:** American Indian scholars
- **KEY WORDS:** GOALS
- **Question:** How am I going to plan my college education and my future?
- **Examples:** Financial literacy, planning, money management, career development, training, life goals, etc.
Economic Well being

- **DEFINITION:** The management of finances, literacy, and future stability.
- **Origin:** Western Ways of Knowledge
- **KEY WORD:** Finances
- **QUESTION:** Do I possess knowledge to manage my finances and economic stability?
- **EXAMPLES:** financial aid/literacy, money management, stability, banking. EFC, accounting, retirement, scholarships, etc.
Political Well Being

- DEFINITION: Our development of positive leadership attributes that include community development, positive change, and progress of people.
- ORIGIN: Indigenous Scholars
- KEY WORD: Leadership
- QUESTION: Do I have leadership skills to create positive change in my environment?
- EXAMPLES: leading, learning, positive change, dialogue with people, role modeling, character.
Well Being Model

- Center of circle where all points meet is the individual.
- First layer of circle: Personal Strengths
- Second layer of circle: Resources (Person, place, or thing).
- Third outer layer of circle: Personal Challenges
- Fourth outer layer of circle: Plan of Action
- Outer Layer of circle: Follow-up and assessment of well-being pillar, challenges, and plan of action.
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