

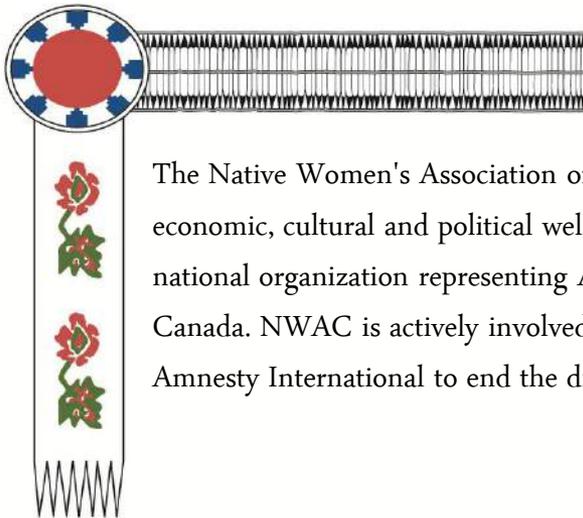
# DSIA Handbook



Native Women's  
Association of Canada



*This handbook has been created with the Love,  
Knowledge and Respect of the Daughter Spirit in  
Action Members and Staff.*



## **Native Women's Association of Canada**

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies. As a national organization representing Aboriginal women since 1974, NWAC's mandate is to achieve equality for all Aboriginal women in Canada. NWAC is actively involved with partner organizations across the globe towards this goal, including the United Nations and Amnesty International to end the discrimination against Indigenous women.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

*The traditional First Nations knowledge provided in this handbook is what we have learned in the DSIA program. Traditional knowledge varies amongst First Nations people and communities in Canada, so feel free to use this handbook with your own teachings and allow your spirit to guide you in your own practice.*

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## **What is Mental Health Promotion?**

‘Promoting Mental Health means promoting the best of ourselves.’

-Public Health Agency of Canada

**This handbook is designed with activities that will support positive mental health in your community in 4 areas;**

***Emotional, Physical, Mental & Spiritual***





## Introduction to the Daughter Spirit in Action project



*Daughter Spirit in Action is a National Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS), demonstration project. The emphasis of the program is on mental health promotion anchored by culture and Elder mentorship. This mental health promotion approach will illustrate how long-term positive programming will help reduce Aboriginal suicide attempts and suicide completions.*



### Meet our Members

Alexandra, Angeline, Carol, Chickadee, Janelle,  
Jojo, Katrina, Kerrie, Linda, Lisa and Skylar

Native Women's Association of Canada



# Let's Get Started: Work Plan

A work plan is a list of tasks that need to be completed and beside these tasks ,as you'll see in the example below, are dates that the tasks are due. By creating a work plan it shows that your organized and it will be helpful to keep track of who is responsible for what.

EXAMPLE;

TASK	DETAILS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Book Venue	- \$100 Budget or FREE if possible - Easily accessible for participants and guests	December 12, 2012	Kerrie

Here are some key tasks that you can add to your work plan;

**Complete and confirm program DATES** with your Elder(s), participants & presenters.

**Complete logistics for each program;**

- ♥ Agenda
- ♥ Invite Service Providers (Support or Presenter)
- ♥ Venue
- ♥ Decide on the number of Participants
- ♥ Materials Needed
- ♥ Facilitators Support Needs
- ♥ Promotional Materials Needed
  - Program Brochures
  - Program Banner
  - Program Gifts

**Write a brief layout** of everyone's Roles and Responsibilities so that no one is confused at the time of the program.

*Facilitator, Organizer, Elder, Presenter, Community Service provider*

**Evaluation.**

- ✓ Very important to have an evaluation, this will give you feedback on how well the participants enjoyed the program

and what they have learned during the session.

- ✓ It's also good to create a short evaluation for the Elder and any other support people were apart of the program

**Complete a program summary/report.** Here is a brief outline of some details you can include in your final report;

- ✓Summary of the program
- ✓Program Objectives
- ✓Program Results
  - Number of participants
  - Final budget
  - Recommendations
  - Pictures
- ✓Conclusion

It's important to note that some facilitators already have their own way to organize community activities and programs. Please feel free to organize in your own way.



# How to use the DSIA Handbook: Activity Layout

Each activity will have an FAQ page that will help with some potential questions you or your group may have.

**Title Page**  
In this area you will find details such as suggested materials needed, activity type, community support, ages, group size and length of time the activity will take.

### 7 Sacred Teachings

*"The traditional concepts of respect and sharing that form the foundation of the Aboriginal way of life are built around the seven natural laws, or sacred teachings. Each teaching honours one of the basic virtues intrinsic to a full and healthy life." - The Sharing Circle Documentary, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network*

The 7 Sacred Teachings is often a teaching that comes from our Elders and is a commonly shared with all ages as words to live by and a guide to living peacefully within ourselves and in our community.

The 7 Sacred Teachings are:

Love	Honesty	Respect	Wisdom	Courage	Humility	Truth
------	---------	---------	--------	---------	----------	-------

The 7 Sacred Teachings is a great activity to start your group off with because it reminds us that we always need to respond in a kind and gentle way when we are working with people and ourselves.

For example: If someone is sharing in a group setting, sometimes we start to reflect on our own experiences, by reminding ourselves to listen to that person we are responding with Respect and Humility. Once that person is done speaking, we can raise our hand and thank that person for sharing (Love) and then share our own thoughts and then responding with Wisdom and Truth.

**Materials Needed**

- Flip Chart with Paper
- Flip Chart Markers
- Print Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

**Activity Type:** Spirituality, Life Lessons, Healing, Natural Laws

**Suggested Support:** Elder, Spiritual Helper

**Ages:** 13-29

**Group Size:** 5-20

**Time:** 1.5 Hours

**Title Page**  
Each activity has a title page just like this one. This will give you an introduction to the activity.

You can also use this information to prepare your group on the topic.

### Step By Step: 7 Sacred Teachings

- Hand out the 7 Sacred Teachings Handout. (See Page 8) to all participants OR list the teachings onto a Flip chart.
- Engage the group by asking for a volunteer to read the 7 Sacred Teachings Handout out loud.
- Now you will review each teaching individually with the group with the 7 Sacred Teachings Facilitators Guide (Page #).
- Read out loud to the group the teaching of LOVE found on your 7 Sacred Teachings Facilitators Guide (Page #). Once you have completed this ask the group if anyone would like to share what LOVE means to them and how they practice this in their everyday life.
- Read out loud the teaching of LOVE found on your 7 Sacred Teachings Facilitators Guide (Page #). Now ask the group if anyone would like to share what the LOVE teaching means to them and how they practice this in their everyday life.

*Continue with this format for each teaching until all 7 teachings are completed with your group.*

*Want to debrief with your group on this activity? See How to Debrief on Page 8.*

#### FAQ's

**Do I have to ask an Elder to facilitate the 7 Sacred Teachings?**

Normally a traditional Elder would facilitate all teachings, including the 7 Sacred Teachings however this is not mandatory.

*If you would like to know more about how to ask an Elder to share a traditional teaching, see Page #*

*\*\*Please note that the Elder may not follow the teachings from this handbook and this is ok because we all have our own teachings.*

**Do I have to unbundle before I deliver the teaching?**

Traditionally we start all teachings with a Smudge and Prayer however this is not mandatory.

**Why are the 7 Sacred Teachings represented by animals?**

The Aboriginal culture believes that all living creatures are spirits that guide us through life. So if and when we see these animals that we are reminded to continue striving for these teachings.

**How come the 7 Sacred Teachings are different from what I have learned previous to this activity?**

There are many versions of the 7 Sacred Teachings. So who's right? Well the answer is EVERYBODY! Aboriginal people have different ways to share the 7 Sacred Teachings and this is expected since we have so many different Aboriginal communities and nations.

Each activity will give you a Step by Step guide on how to facilitate the activity. Everything from how to start and end the group.

### Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

**Love Eagle**

To feel true love is to know the creator [Great Spirit]. Love expressed and given to the Great Spirit was shown by loving oneself and how the Great Spirit made you.

Everyone needs and seeks the love of others. One has the love of a parent, a grandparent, siblings, other family members and friends; thus, this heartfelt love must be returned to those others as well. However, one is truly not alone if that individual can love oneself. You must enjoy yourself as an individual to be able to return love to others; thus, you will have to become your own best friend that you love.

The Eagle is the animal spirit that was chosen to represent this teaching of love because it is the one who could reach the highest in bringing vision to the seeker. Pure vision from the Creator was most treasured and sought after. The Eagle is the most revered animal spirit in all of First Nations' societies as it is the one that flies the highest and closest to the Creator. It is the one that can see the farthest and it is the animal that carries the prayers of the people to the spirits. The Eagle is also an animal guide as its feathers are utilized in most if not all spiritual practices and ceremonies. The Eagle is truly respected and loved to the utmost degree and loved unconditionally.

Love is considered the greatest and most powerful medicine and healing agent. But, it is very difficult to achieve and live in a world that does not acknowledge the importance of spirituality. Love is the easiest to explain and I feel the most important teaching as everyone needs to love and to be loved simultaneously. Love all people and all creatures of the world and this love will be returned to you. - *Excerpt by Dave Courchesne & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

**Respect Buffalo**

No animal was more important to the existence of Indigenous families than the buffalo. A single buffalo could provide food, shelter, clothing and utensils for daily living. First Nations people were true conservationists for they lived in a sustainable relationship with the buffalo and they believed themselves to be true caretakers of the great herds. Through this special relationship the true spirit of Respect was understood.

The buffalo, through giving its life and sharing every part of its being, showed the deep respect it had for the people. No animal was more important to the existence of Indigenous families than this animal. This sustainable and mutual relationship with the buffalo resulted in a relationship that was a true expression of respect. This spirit of respect was shown toward all of life because Native people saw the interconnectedness to all life. They saw very clearly their dependence on the land. Therefore, the land and its resources were to be given absolute respect. When this respect was abused, the buffalo were hunted for fun; therefore, we see no great buffalo herds in the wild any longer.

RESPECT should not be expected but earned. RESPECT is also reciprocal; that once it is given it is returned. - *Excerpt by Dave Courchesne, George Marsh, Lillian Paganopolous & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

The Handout is information for the participants. Please print.

### Handout: A Conversation about Suicide

<b>Youth Mental Health and Suicide Resource Guide</b>	<b>Kids Help Phone</b> 1 800 668 6868 <a href="http://www.kidshelpphone.ca">www.kidshelpphone.ca</a>
	<b>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b> 1 800 273 TALK (8255) <a href="http://www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.com">www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.com</a>
	<b>Youth Suicide Prevention</b> <a href="http://www.youthsuicide.ca">www.youthsuicide.ca</a>
	<b>Canadian Children's Rights Council (Search: Youth Suicide)</b> <a href="http://www.canadiansrcs.com">www.canadiansrcs.com</a>
	<b>First Nations, Inuit and Aboriginal Health-Suicide Prevention</b> <a href="http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-sptia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php">www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-sptia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php</a>
	<b>Teen Depression</b> <a href="http://www.teendepression.com">www.teendepression.com</a>
	<b>Yellow Ribbon (Suicide)</b> <a href="http://www.yellowribbon.org">www.yellowribbon.org</a>
	<b>Mind Your Mind</b> <a href="http://www.mindyourmind.ca">www.mindyourmind.ca</a>
	<b>Blue Wave</b> <a href="http://www.ok2blue.com">www.ok2blue.com</a>

A majority of the activities have a Facilitators Guide. The guide includes information that you will be sharing with your group.



# Spiritual & Traditional Protocols

Welcome to the Spiritual & Traditional Protocols chapter where you will find common traditional First Nations practices used in everyday living, ceremonies and gatherings.

Here is some of the knowledge that will be shared in this chapter;

## Elders & Spiritual Helpers

- ✓ What is an Elder and Spiritual Helper?
- ✓ How do I speak to an Elder/Spiritual Helper?
  - ✓ What do I need to bring with me?
  - ✓ What do I have to do?
    - ✓ What do I say?
- ✓ How do I find an Elder/Spiritual Helper?

## Ceremonies

- ✓ Smudge Ceremony
  - ✓ Sharing Circle
  - ✓ Sweat Lodge
- ✓ Traditional Feasts
  - ✓ Full Moon
  - ✓ Fasting
- ✓ Spirit Name

## Ceremony Protocols

- ✓ Sacred Bundles and objects
  - ✓ Skirts
- ✓ Ceremonial grounds
  - ✓ Offerings

## ELDERS & SPIRITUAL HELPERS

### **WHAT IS AN ELDER/SPIRITUAL HELPER?**

A Traditional Elder is someone who follows the teachings of our ancestors. It is said Traditional Elders walk and talk the good way of life. Traditional Elders teach and share the wisdom they have gained of the culture, history and the language. The sharing of their wisdom is healing. An Elder does not have to be a senior but could be someone younger who has many teachings and who has earned the respect of their community by contributing to its spiritual development. – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

### **HOW DO I SPEAK TO AN ELDER/SPIRITUAL HELPER?**

When you go to see an Elder or Spiritual Helper, be very respectful of their space and to them as a person.

### **WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING WITH ME?**

Take tobacco to give as an

offering. Tobacco is meant for that communication between you, the Healer and the Creator. The tobacco can be in any form. For example, it can be one cigarette from a pack, it can be a pack of cigarettes, it can be a pouch of tobacco or it can be loose tobacco wrapped in a small square of cloth (called a tobacco tie). – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

*Want to learn how to make a Tobacco Tie? See page 30*

### **WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?**

There are certain protocols specific to each Healer, Elder or Medicine Person. Many Healers will have helpers who will convey these protocols to you. For example, they will let you know whether you may receive treatment after having chemotherapy. – *Toronto Anishnawbe Health*

# Spiritual & Traditional Protocols

## ELDERS & SPIRITUAL HELPERS Con't...

### WHAT DO I SAY?

Talk to the Healer or Elder explaining why you have come to them. Refrain from taking alcohol or drugs for four days before going to a Healer. Women schedule their appointments with Healers for times when they are not on their Moontime. Other gifts can be given to express your gratitude for the help you have received. This may be in the form of an item such as a basket or blanket or it could be money. – Toronto Anishnawbe Health

### HOW DO I FIND AN ELDER OR SPIRITUAL HELPER?

As our awareness and knowledge of our traditions and culture increases, so does our honour and respect for these ways. This has not always been the case in our communities. There are always those who present

themselves as Healers, Elders or Medicine People who have not earned that title and may use the teachings and medicines in the wrong way. It is important for everyone, especially young people, to be aware of this and to exercise caution when they seek healing, teachings or advice. It is advisable to consult with people whom you trust to get referrals to respected and recognized Traditional Healers, Elders and Medicine People. – Toronto

Anishnawbe Health

*If you do not have a contact in your community, feel free to contact one of the organizations below;*

- Native Women's Association of Canada
- Assembly of First Nations
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
- Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
- National Association of Friendship Centres

[www.nwac.ca](http://www.nwac.ca)

[www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)

[www.itk.ca](http://www.itk.ca)

[www.abo-peoples.org](http://www.abo-peoples.org)

[www.nafc.ca](http://www.nafc.ca)

### CEREMONIES

*Traditionally in First Nations culture all healing, decision making and celebrations are facilitated with a ceremony. Here you will find some of the more common ceremonies practiced amongst many First Nations peoples. First Nations ceremonies are considered a way of life.*

### SHARING CIRCLE

A Sharing Circle creates a safe and welcoming environment for people to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences. The Sharing Circle is facilitated with a circle of people who share out loud by passing around a Talking Stick.

*Want to facilitate your own Sharing Circle? See page 16*

### SMUDGE CEREMONY

The Smudge Ceremony is a cleansing ceremony for our body, mind and spirit. This ceremony is often practiced first thing in the morning, in a meeting, in an event and almost anywhere. The Smudge Ceremony is meant to start your day or your event in a good way.

The Smudge Ceremony is facilitated by burning sacred medicine such as Sage, Sweetgrass, Cedar and Tobacco in a shell or wooden bowl. The smoke from the burning medicine is what people use to cleanse their bodies with.

*Want to facilitate your own Smudge Ceremony? See page 22*

# Spiritual & Traditional Protocols

## SWEAT LODGE CEREMONY

The Sweat Lodge has been called "the most powerful structure in the world." It is a place specially constructed to conduct ceremony. Sweats vary from purification and cleansing to healing sweats. It is said that the Sweat Lodge during ceremony "responds" to what the participants need.

Other types of sweats include clan sweats, such as Bear clan sweats, sweats for fasters both before and after they fast, sweats for sundancers and sweats when you seek your spirit name.

In some traditions, the women sweat together at one time and the men sweat at another. Specific sweats may be held for children or for warriors.

### Preparing for a Sweat Lodge Ceremony

When you request a sweat, an offering of tobacco is made to the sweat conductor.

Some sweat lodge conductors say you should abstain from alcohol or drugs for at least four days, others say seven days.

As our awareness and knowledge of our traditions and culture increases, so does our honour and respect for these ways. This has not always been the case in our communities. There are always those who present themselves as Healers, Elders or Medicine People who have not earned that title and may use the teachings and medicines in the wrong way. It is important for everyone, especially young people, to be aware of this and to exercise caution when they seek healing, teachings or advice. It is advisable to consult with people whom you trust to get referrals to respected and recognized Traditional Elders, Healers or Medicine People.

Native Women's Association of Canada

## TRADITIONAL FEAST

Feasting may be an individual or group event. At larger gatherings, drumming, singing and Traditional dancing may be a part of the ceremony and feast.

Tobacco is always offered and the foods served vary according to the customs of the community or territory and the reason for the feast.

## FULL MOON CEREMONY

It is said that the moon cycle is a gift to women.

It is a time to cleanse herself mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

**See Moontime on Page 34**

## FASTING

When you choose to go on a fast, it is with a purpose in mind.

You may go out to seek direction in your life or you may go out to learn more about our ways and about Creation. You may fast for your spirit name and colours. Healers may fast in order to find and gain permission to use a certain plant medicine. You may fast for many other reasons. Whatever the reason for your fast, you prepare yourself beforehand through prayer and tobacco.

It is said that when you fast you are sacrificing yourself for all, for your family and for your community, by denying yourself the basic comforts of shelter, water, nourishment and companionship.

## SPIRIT NAME

Everything in Creation has a name. The trees, animals, plants, fish, water and air all have names. When we receive our spirit name, we know who we are in Creation. We are able to identify ourselves when we communicate with the spirit of each thing in Creation.

— Anishnawbe  
Health  
Toronto

# Warm Ups & Ice Breakers

<b>The Artist Game</b>	<p>Give everyone a piece of paper and a pencil. In 5 minutes they must draw a picture that conveys who they are without writing any words or numbers. At the end of 5 minutes the host collects the pictures. Show the pictures to the group one at a time and have them try to guess who drew it. After this allow each of the artists to introduce themselves and explain how their work clearly conveys who they are.</p>
<b>Three in Common Game</b>	<p>Break the group into 3's. Their objective is for each group to find 3 things they have in common. But not normal things like age, sex or hair color. It must be three uncommon things. After letting the groups' converse for 10 - 15 minutes, they (as a group) must tell the rest of the groups the 3 things they have in common.</p>
<b>Three Questions Game</b>	<p>Everyone in the group writes down 3 provoking questions they would like to ask others in the group. Not the normal "what's your name" type questions but something like, "Where is the most interesting place you have ever traveled" or "Name a topic you feel absolutely passionate about".</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give them time to mingle, and to ask three different people in the group one of their three questions.</li> <li>2. Get back together and have each person stand and give their name. As they say their name, ask the group to tell what they know about this person.</li> </ol>
<b>The Pocket/Purse Game</b>	<p>Everyone selects one (optionally two) items from their pocket or purse that has some personal significance to them. They introduce themselves and do a show and tell for the selected item and why it is important to them.</p>
<b>Birthday Game</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have the group stand and line up in a straight line.</li> <li>2. After they are in line, tell them to re-arrange the line so that they are in line by their birthday. January 1 on one end and December 31 at the other end. The catch is that they must do all this without talking or writing anything down.</li> </ol>
<b>Paper Airplane Game</b>	<p>Everyone makes a paper airplane and writes their name, something they like and dislike on it (You may also want to add additional questions). On cue, everyone throws their airplane around the room. If you find an airplane, pick it and keep throwing it for 1-2 minutes. At the end of that time, everyone must have one paper airplane. This is the person they must find and introduce to the group.</p>
<b>Straw &amp; Paperclip Game</b>	<p>Give each group a box of straws (not flexible straws) and a box of paperclips. Check that the paperclips can fit snugly into the end of the straws. Give each group a task (you can use the same one for each group if you want) and let them go. Sample tasks: Build the structure as a group. Tallest, strongest, longest, most creative, most functional etc. Debriefing included describing teamwork and situational leadership skills used as well as how different models are needed to accomplish different tasks.</p>
<b>Human Knot Game</b>	<p>Divide into groups of 6-10 people. Each group forms a tight circle standing and facing each other. Everyone extends their hands into the circle and by inter mingling their arms, grasps hands with other members of the group. Instruct people to "be sure that the two hands you are holding do not belong to the same person". The groups' goal: untie the knot which results. Member of the group physically climb over/ under/ through each other's arms to untie the knot of bodies. Note: It's RARE but it is possible for a knot to be unsolvable or end in two separate circles. <b>OR ANOTHER FUN WAY TO DO THIS ACTIVITY...</b> Everyone sits on the floor in a circle with legs extended toward the middle. Each person grabs two others' hands and holds them. The hands cannot be those of either person sitting on your sides and also cannot be the two hands of the same person. Now, everyone stands up and untangles each other into a single circle, without letting go of the hands you have.</p>



# Warm Ups & Ice Breakers

<b>Marooned Game</b>	You are marooned on an island. What five (you can use a different number, such as seven, depending upon the size of each team) items would you have brought with you if you knew there was a chance that you might be stranded. Note that they are only allowed five items per team, not per person. You can have them write their items on a flip chart and discuss and defend their choices with the whole group. This activity helps them to learn about other's values and problem solving styles and promotes teamwork.
<b>Finish the Sentence Game</b>	Write the start of a question on the board (i.e. My Favourite job was.., My Hobby is...) and go around the room with each person finishing the sentence. When the group is finished, post another question and start again.
<b>Stretching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Perform a complete warm-up prior to any stretching</li><li>✓ Execute movements in a slow, controlled fashion. Bouncing or jerky movements may result in injury</li><li>✓ Hold stretches for a minimum of 15 seconds, up to 1 minute</li><li>✓ Do not stretch to the point of pain. Pain is a signal that your body is being stretched beyond reasonable limits</li><li>✓ Keep your stretches under control and your body relaxed</li><li>✓ Be sure to breathe while stretching</li><li>✓ Perform each stretch 2 or 3 times</li><li>✓ Symmetry is important, be sure to stretch both sides of the body equally. Example; you should follow stretching your right triceps' with stretching your left</li><li>✓ Pick one favorite stretch from each major area to start with.</li></ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- YMCA Winnipeg 'Tips on Stretching'</i></p>



"She turned her can'ts into cans  
and her dreams into plans."

- Kobi Yamada

# Sharing Circle

## *Materials Needed*

- Talking Stick (Rock, Feather or another object easy to hold and pass around the circle)
- Quiet environment
- Skirts
- Print Step by Step: Sharing Circle

*Activity Type:* Communication, Debriefing, Healing, Meetings, Teachings

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Teachers, Community Professionals

*Age Groups:* 13-16, 16-24, 24-29

*Group Size:* 5-20

*Time:* 10-60 Minutes

A Sharing Circle is an ancient ceremony that some Aboriginal peoples practice in Canada. The ceremony is traditionally facilitated by an Elder and is usually opened with a Smudge ceremony and a prayer to request support from the creator for those in the circle.

The Sharing Circle is used to facilitate a sacred and safe way for individuals to express themselves in a group setting. Some reasons to host a Sharing Circle would be to debrief and connect with a group of people after a tragic loss in the community or many people use the Sharing Circle at the start and end of their community program to check in with participants and staff. At times participants will not say anything in the Sharing Circle however this does not mean that they are not participating, the Sharing Circle is a great place for personal reflection as well.

Sometimes the Sharing Circle is not the best ceremony to practice, for instance if you have a group of individuals who are not willing to participate respectfully than the Sharing Circle would not be safe for people to share.

A Talking Stick is what's commonly used in Sharing Circles to indicate who's turn in the circle it is to speak. The Talking Stick helps maintain a safe space for people to share.

This ceremony can be facilitated almost anywhere and here's how you can use this ceremony in your own community.

## Step By Step: Sharing Circle

1	Ask that all women put on their skirts. This would also be a good time to grab your Talking Stick, Rock or the object that you choose to pass around the circle.
2	Ask everyone to sit in a circle. People can sit in chairs or on the floor however if you have an Elder at your Sharing Circle be sure to ask them where they would feel most comfortable sitting.
3	Ask participants in the circle to turn any electronics off. It is considered disrespectful to answer a phone call or text during a Sharing Circle.  If you choose to do a Smudge ceremony, start the ceremony once everyone is settled. <i>[Want to learn how to do a Smudge Ceremony? See page 21]</i>
4	Open the Sharing Circle by sharing some ground rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>What is said in the circle stays in the circle</i></li> <li>✓ <i>The person holding the Rock or sharing object has the floor and no one else can speak or answer that person unless they ask a direct question.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>If the person is laughing you can laugh with them</i></li> <li>✓ <i>If the person is crying you can pray for them</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Allow them to heal and cry without interruptions</i></li> <li>✓ <i>To show respect to the group, if you must the circle you should not walk directly across or through the circle</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Do NOT cut people off when they are speaking</i></li> </ul>
5	Choose the topic of your Sharing Circle. This can be done with the group or may have already been decided by the organizers.
6	As the facilitator you can start the Sharing Circle by sharing your own thoughts and feelings about the topic. Continue the ceremony by passing the Talking Stick to the person clockwise (to your left) of you. The Talking Stick will continue to be passed around clockwise until it ends up back in the facilitators hand.
7	Once everyone has spoken in the circle the facilitator can share some final thoughts or a prayer with the group.

## FAQ's

### What is a Talking Stick?

Don't have a Talking Stick? No problem. Many people also use a Rock or a Feather to pass around the circle for the same purpose. If you do not have either of these items, any small object that people can hold comfortably can be used to pass around the circle.

### Why do Woman have to wear skirts in the Sharing Circle?

Most Aboriginal ceremonies require women to wear skirts to honor their womanhood. If the women in the circle do not have a skirt than use a scarf, jacket or blanket to cover your lap during the ceremony.

### Does everyone have to share?

If someone is not comfortable sharing than allow the individual to pass the Talking Stick to the next person.

### Can I participate in a Sharing Circle if I am on my Moontime?

Women who are on their Moontime may participate in a Sharing Circle. However sometimes there are sacred items used in a sharing circle like a Feather, a Grandfather Rock that women who are on their Moontime can't touch. Just to be safe, ask the Elder or owner of the sacred item if those who are on their Moontime are able to use the sacred item.

*To find out what a women's Moontime is please see page 34*

# 4 Sacred Medicines

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper
- Flip Chart Markers
- 4 Sacred Medicines (Sage, Cedar, Tobacco & Sweetgrass)
- Print 4 Sacred Medicine Handout (1 per participant)
- Print Facilitators Guide: 4 Sacred Medicines
- Print Step by Step: 4 Sacred Medicines

*Activity Type:* Spirituality, Healing, Teaching

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper

*Age Groups:* 13-17, 18-29

*Group Size:* 2-20

*Time:* 1 Hour

Tobacco is the first plant that the Creator gave to Native people. It is the main activator of all the plant spirits. Three other plants, Sage, Cedar and Sweetgrass, follow Tobacco, and together they are referred to as the four sacred medicines.

The four sacred medicines are used in everyday life and in ceremonies. All of them can be used to smudge with, though Sage, Cedar and Sweetgrass also have many other uses.

It is said that Tobacco sits in the eastern door, Sweetgrass in the southern door, Sage in the west and Cedar in the north. Elders say that the spirits like the aroma produced when we burn tobacco and the other sacred medicines. – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

## Step By Step: 4 Sacred Medicines

1	Ask the group to sit in a circle and layout all 4 medicines in front of you. This will allow everybody to see the medicines.
2	Group Discussion: What is medicine? What is the purpose of medicine? (Feel free to use Flip Chart and Markers to record answers)
3	List the 4 Sacred Medicines to the group from your Facilitators Guide on Page #. Ask the group if anyone is familiar with these types of medicines and allow participants to share their experiences.
4	Review the 4 Sacred Medicines Facilitators guide with your group. Pages 19 & 20.
5	Once you have completed the review, allow the group to ask questions or discuss the medicines. At this time it's very helpful to have an Elder or and a knowledgeable traditional person in the group to help answer some of these questions.
6	Review Taking Care of Medicines Handout on Page 20.

## FAQ's

### **When handling sacred medicines as a woman, do I need to wear a skirt?**

It's important that we respect sacred medicines and objects and as a woman, by wearing a skirt this is showing respect to the medicines.

### **Where do I find sacred medicines?**

Sacred Medicines can be difficult to find depending on where you live and who you know. Most Elders and traditional peoples will have access or knowledge of where to find the medicines. Also, if there are Aboriginal organizations in your community you can call and ask them if they know how to find any of these 4 Sacred Medicines.

# Facilitators Guide: 4 Sacred Medicines

## Tobacco



Traditional people say that tobacco is always first. It is used as an offering for everything and in every ceremony. "Always through tobacco," the saying goes.

Traditional tobacco was given to us so that we can communicate with the spirit world. It opens up the door to allow that communication to take place. When we make an offering of tobacco, we communicate our thoughts and feelings through the tobacco as we pray for ourselves, our family, relatives and others.

Tobacco has a special relationship to other plants: it is said to be the main activator of all the plant spirits. It is like the key to the ignition of a car. When you use it, all things begin to happen. Tobacco is always offered before picking medicines. When you offer tobacco to a plant and explain why you are there, that plant will let all the plants in the area know why you are coming to pick them.

When you seek the help and advice of an Elder, Healer or Medicine Person, and give your offering of tobacco, they know that a request may be made as tobacco is so sacred.

We express our gratitude for the help the spirits give us through our offering of tobacco. It is put down as an offering of thanks to the First Family, the natural world, after a fast.

Traditional people make an offering of tobacco each day when the sun comes up. – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

## Sage



Sage is used to prepare people for ceremonies and teachings. Because it is more medicinal and stronger than Sweetgrass, it tends to be used more often in ceremonies. Sage is used for releasing what is troubling the mind and for removing negative energy. It is also used for cleansing homes and sacred items. It also has other medicinal uses. There is male Sage and female Sage. The female Sage is used by women. – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

## Cedar



Like sage and Sweetgrass, Cedar is used to purify the home. It also has many restorative medicinal uses. Cedar baths are healing. When Cedar is put in the fire with Tobacco, it crackles. When it does this, it is calling the attention of the spirits to the offering that is being made. Cedar is used in fasting and sweat lodge ceremonies as a form of protection: Cedar branches cover the floor of the sweat lodge and a circle of Cedar surrounds the faster's lodge. – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

## Sweetgrass



Sweetgrass is the sacred hair of Mother Earth. Its sweet aroma reminds people of the gentleness, love and kindness she has for the people. When Sweetgrass is used in a healing circle it has a calming effect. Like sage and cedar, Sweetgrass is used for smudging and purification. – *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

# Handout: 4 Sacred Medicines

## Taking Care of your Medicines

You take care of these sacred medicines by keeping them in a dry place. They can be stored in paper bags or wooden boxes. If you have been using alcohol or drugs, Healers say you should wait four to seven days before touching the medicines.

As our awareness and knowledge of our traditions and culture increases, so does our honour and respect for these ways.

This has not always been the case in our communities. There are always those who present themselves as Healers, Elders or Medicine People who have not earned that title and may use the teachings and medicines in the wrong way. It is important for everyone, especially young people, to be aware of this and to exercise caution when they seek healing, teachings or advice. It is advisable to consult with people whom you trust to get referrals to respected and recognized Traditional Elders, Healers or Medicine People. – Anishnawbe Health Toronto



## Sweetgrass



## Tobacco



## Sage



## Cedar

# Smudge Ceremony

## *Materials Needed*

- Smudge Bowl
- Sage
- Feather or Eagle Fan
- Skirts
- Print Facilitators Guide & Step by Step: Smudge Ceremony

*Activity Type:* Spirituality, Cleansing, Meetings, Groups, Coping

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper

*Age Groups:* 13-17, 18-29

*Group Size:* 1-30

*Time:* 20 Minutes

The smudging ceremony is a purification ceremony. Any one of the four sacred medicines can be used. Sometimes all of the sacred medicines are used. The most common one is sage. These medicines are picked from Mother Earth just for the purpose of purification. The four sacred medicines are *Sage, Sweetgrass, Cedar and Tobacco*.

The smudging ceremony can take place anytime, usually before a meeting or Grand Entry at a Pow Wow. Sometimes pipe carriers and elders recommend that this ceremony should be done if things get out of hand at the workplace or at home.

The sacred medicine is lit, and some use matches instead of a lighter. Some actually use wood from a sacred fire. The smoke from the sacred medicine purifies the mind, body and spirit. The inside of rooms, especially motel rooms, should be smudged. Some people smudge when they hear bad news, such as a death or illness. Most people who smudge use a shell as a container, and usually eagle feathers are used to fan the medicines. If a person does not have eagle feathers, then other feathers are used, such as hawk feathers. The ashes that are left should not be thrown away, but scattered by the entrance at the door to symbolize that bad thoughts, words and feelings are not welcome inside. – *Anishinaabemdaa.com*

## Step By Step: Smudge Ceremony

1	Before the ceremony starts, be sure that you have received permission to burn the sage inside or outside your location. All women should be wearing skirts and request that everyone turn off all electronics during the ceremony.
2	The best way to facilitate this ceremony is to have everyone sitting in a circle. If this is not possible, that's ok, just be sure that everyone is comfortable where they are and has the opportunity to smudge when the bowl comes around.
3	Take the sage and remove the leaves off the stems of the plant. You only need to use 3 or 4 stems to get a good amount of medicine. Now roll up the leaves into a ball and place into your smudge bowl (See picture on the right).
4	Now you can review the How to Smudge Facilitators Guide (Page 23) with your group.
5	Take your matches and light underneath the ball of Sage. If the Sage has a flame do not blow it out, just fan your feather or your hand over the smudge gently and the flame should go down and only burn enough to create a smoke.
6	Now that your smudge is lit you can walk around to each individual in the room and give them the opportunity to smudge.
7	Once everyone has had the opportunity to smudge allow the smudge to continue burning in the middle of the room until it stops completely. The ashes that are left should not be thrown away but given back to the land. Once the smudge stops burning you must scatter the ashes outside.

## FAQ's

### **Can I participate in a Sharing Circle if I am on my Moontime?**

Women who are on their Moontime may participate in a Smudge Ceremony only if the medicine that is being used is Female Sage (Female Sage has little buds at the top of the plant like the picture below, Male Sage does not have buds). Otherwise women on their Moontime are discouraged to smudge because they are already considered in ceremony.

*Need more information on the Moontime please see page 34*

### **Can I smudge if I had consumed alcohol or drugs the day before?**

When we struggle with drug and alcohol addictions the Smudge Ceremony can be a very supportive coping mechanism to use for our recovery, so it's ok to smudge the day after you have consumed alcohol or drugs. The Smudge Ceremony is a very sacred ceremony and should be free from alcohol and drugs and it is important that you are sober while taking part in the ceremony.

### **Can I smudge if I am a woman and do not have a skirt?**

Yes. It's important that you try to wear skirt to honor your womanhood and if you do not have a skirt than use a scarf, jacket or blanket to cover your lap during the ceremony.

### **What are the 4 Sacred Medicines?**

The 4 Sacred Medicines are Sage, Sweetgrass, Cedar and Tobacco.

*To find out more on the 4 Sacred Medicines please see page 17*

# Facilitators Guide: Smudge Ceremony

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

If you are not facilitating the ceremony outside be sure that you have a well ventilated room, the smoke from the smudge can be overwhelming for people.

Remind your group that there is no wrong way to smudge. It's ok if they do not follow the *How to Smudge* steps, these steps are only to be used as a guide.

If someone does not want to smudge ask them politely to just touch the bowl, this shows respect and allows everyone to feel included in the ceremony. If someone is allergic to the smoke from the smudge consider doing the ceremony outside.

If there are small children in the room who are not able to smudge themselves and with permission from the parents/guardian, you may smudge around the child. Do not allow smoke to go directly in the child's face.

Always be sure that you have permission to smudge in a building and/or on private property.

## How to Smudge



Take your hands and wave them over the smoke to bring the smoke towards your body.

Smudge your eyes so that you can see the good in others and in yourself

Smudge your ears so that you can listen with your heart and hear in a way

Smudge your mouth so that you always speak in a kind and gentle way

Smudge your stomach to cleanse illnesses that may come

Smudge over your shoulders to release guilt, anxiety, resentment and anger into the past

Smudge your feet so that you may walk gently on mother earth

Smudge your whole being so that you feel grounded and humble

Smudge your heart to give thanks

# 7 Sacred Teachings

## Materials Needed

- Flip Chart with Paper
- Flip Chart Markers
- Print Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

*Activity Type:* Spirituality, Life Lessons, Healing, Natural Laws

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper

*Age Groups:* 13-17, 18-29

*Group Size:* 5-20

*Time:* 1.5 Hours

*“The traditional concepts of respect and sharing that form the foundation of the Aboriginal way of life are built around the seven natural laws, or sacred teachings. Each teaching honours one of the basic virtues intrinsic to a full and healthy life. “ – The Sharing Circle Documentary, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network*

The 7 Sacred Teachings is often a teaching that comes from our Elders and is a commonly shared with all ages as words to live by and a guide to living peacefully within ourselves and in our community.

The 7 Sacred Teachings are;

<b>Love</b>	<b>Respect</b>	<b>Courage</b>	
<b>Honesty</b>	<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Humility</b>	<b>Truth</b>

The 7 Sacred Teachings is a great activity to start your group off with because it reminds us that we always need to respond in a kind and gentle way when we are working with people and ourselves.

*For Example:* If someone is sharing in a group setting, sometimes we start to reflect on our own experiences, by reminding ourselves to listen to that person we are responding with Respect and Humility. Once that person is done speaking we can raise our hand and thank that person for sharing (Love) and then share our own thoughts and thus responding with Wisdom and Truth.

## Step By Step: 7 Sacred Teachings

1	Hand out the 7 Sacred Teachings Handout (See Page 26-29) to all participants OR list the teachings onto a flip chart.
2	Engage the group by asking for a volunteer to read the 7 Sacred Teachings Handout out loud.
3	Now you will review each teaching individually with the group with the 7 Sacred Teachings Facilitators Guide (Page 26).
4	Read out loud to the group the teaching of LOVE found on your 7 Sacred Teachings Facilitators Guide (Page 26). Once you have completed this ask the group if anyone would like to share what LOVE means to them and how they practice this everyday.
5	<p>Read out loud the teaching of RESPECT found on your 7 Sacred Teachings Facilitators Guide (Page 26). Now ask the group if anyone would like to share what the RESPECT teaching means to them and how they practice this in their everyday life.</p> <p><b><i>Continue with this format for each teaching until all 7 teachings are completed with your group.</i></b></p>

## FAQ's

### **Do I have to ask an Elder to facilitate the 7 Sacred Teachings?**

Normally a traditional Elder would facilitate all teachings, including the 7 Sacred Teachings however this is not mandatory.

*If you would like to know more about how to ask an Elder to share a traditional teaching, see Page 9.*

*\*\*Please note that the Elder may not follow the teachings from this handbook and this is ok because we all have our own teachings.*

### **Do I have to smudge before I deliver the teaching?**

Traditionally we start all teachings with a Smudge and Prayer however this is not mandatory.

### **Why are the 7 Sacred Teachings represented by animals?**

The Aboriginal culture believes that all living creatures are spirits that guide us through life. So if and when we see these animals than we are reminded to continue striving for these teachings.

### **How come the 7 Sacred Teachings are different from what I have learned previous to this activity?**

There are many versions of the 7 Sacred Teachings. So who's right? Well the answer is EVERYBODY. Aboriginal people have different ways to share the 7 Sacred Teachings and this is expected since we have so many different Aboriginal communities and nations.

# Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

## Love Eagle



To feel true love is to know the creator [Great Spirit]. Love expressed and given to the Great Spirit was shown by loving oneself and how the Great Spirit made you.

Everyone needs and seeks the love of others. One has the love of a parent, a grandparent, siblings, other family members and friends; thus, this heartfelt love must be returned to those others as well. However, one is truly not alone if that individual can love oneself. You must enjoy yourself as an individual to be able to return love to others; thus, you will have to become your own best friend that you love. The Eagle is the animal spirit that was chosen to represent this teaching of love because it is the one who could reach the highest in bringing vision to the seeker. Pure vision from the Creator was most treasured and sought after. The Eagle is the most revered animal spirit in all of First Nations' societies as it is the one that flies the highest and closest to the Creator. It is the one that can see the farthest and it is the animal that carries the prayers of the people to the spirits. The Eagle is also an animal guide as its feathers are utilized in most if not all spiritual practices and ceremonies. The Eagle is truly respected and loved to the utmost degree and loved unconditionally.

Love is considered the greatest and most powerful medicine and healing agent. But, it is very difficult to achieve and live in a world that does not acknowledge the importance of spirituality. Love is the easiest to explain and I feel the most important teaching as everyone needs to love and to be loved simultaneously. Love all people and all creatures of the world and this love will be returned to you. – *Excerpts By Dave Courchene & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

## Respect Buffalo



No animal was more important to the existence of Indigenous families than the buffalo. A single buffalo could provide food, shelter, clothing and utensils for daily living. First Nations people were true conservationists for they lived in a sustainable relationship with the buffalo and they believed themselves to be true caretakers of the great herds. Through this special relationship the true spirit of Respect was understood.

The buffalo, through giving its life and sharing every part of its being, showed the deep respect it had for the people. No animal was more important to the existence of Indigenous families than this animal. This sustainable and mutual relationship with the buffalo resulted in a relationship that was a true expression of respect. This spirit of respect was shown toward all of life because Native people saw the interconnectedness to all life. They saw very clearly their dependence on the land. Therefore, the land and its resources were to be given absolute respect. When this respect was abused, the buffalo were hunted for fun; therefore, we see no great buffalo herds in the wild any longer.

RESPECT should not be expected but earned. RESPECT is also reciprocal; that once it is given it is returned.

– *Excerpts By Dave Courchene, George Martin, Lillian Pitawanakwat & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

# Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

## Courage Bear



To have courage is to have the mental and moral strength to listen to the heart. It takes courage to do what is morally right. First Nations people were told to be proud of who we are and never to deny the way of life the Great Spirit gave to us. Courage is facing our daily problems and challenges with strength of character. It is standing up to protect our values and being truthful in the face of ignorance. Courage is what enables each person to seek out the greater good for a higher purpose.

The Bear provides many lessons in the way it lives, yet courage is the most important teaching it offers. Though gentle by nature, the ferociousness of a mother Bear when one of her cubs is approached is the true definition of courage. When we have a hard time in our life, whether it be something we are going through or a decision that we have to make in our lives and we are afraid, we call on the spirit of the Bear to help us have the courage and strength to do the right thing in our lives.

Find the courage and maintain the bravery to become an all-around good and healthy person for the betterment of all of society as a whole. – Excerpts By Dave Courchene Jr & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education

## Honesty Sabe/ Saskquatch



People who are honest are very trustworthy. Being honest makes your life simple and pure. To be honest with yourself is to live in the spirit of how you were created. Never lie or gossip about each other. The more honest you are, the bigger you become as a person. The basic part of honesty is innocence [free from evil influence or effect]. Honesty meant that being an honourable [respectful] person is free from fraud or deceptions [lies]. Honesty meant a refusal to lie, steal or deceive in any way. The highest honour that one could bestow upon an individual was the saying: “There walks an honest person; they can be trusted.” Honesty to the elders meant, being true to yourself. Elders would say: “Never try to be someone else: - live true to your spirit – be honest to yourself, accept who you are and the way the Creator made you.”

The Sabe which represents this law and teaching symbolically reflects the understanding of honesty. The elders say that when you are honest and have nothing to hide or be ashamed of, your spirit is the size of the Sabe. When you lie or do something bad and hide it from the people, it affects your spirit, not allowing it to grow strong. It does not feel good when you know you have done wrong and hidden it. When one does this, it eats away at your spirit [conscience], suppressing it and not allowing it to grow strong. So in order to have a strong spirit we must be honest to ourselves and to others. To be truly honest was to keep the promises one made to the Creator, to others and to oneself.

“Keep your life simple and speak the truth. Choose honesty and kindness as your guides and happiness will follow you.”  
Dave Courchene Jr. – Excerpts By Dave Courchene Jr & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education



# Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

## Wisdom Beaver



To live in Wisdom is to know and understand that the Great Spirit gave everyone special gifts. When we know and use our gifts, we become an instrument of the Great Spirit, helping to bring peace to the world. Showing Wisdom is using your gifts to build a peaceful and healthy family and community. If we do not use our gifts – our Spirits will become weak because we are not fulfilling their use. This denial eventually leads to sickness because each human being's special gifts help impart self worth and identity. Therefore, when we use our special gifts properly and how the Great Spirit intended, these gifts contribute to the development of a peaceful and healthy community. Our Spirits will grow strong and good, just as our community will.

The building of a community is entirely dependant on gifts given to each member of the community by the Great Spirit. These gifts must be utilized for the betterment of the community. The beaver represents that building. The beaver's example of using his special gifts he has received, his sharp teeth for cutting trees and branches which he uses to building dams and lodges expresses this teaching. If the beaver did not use his gift to build, his teeth would grow and grow ultimately making it impossible for him to sustain himself and ultimately will lead to his demise. The beaver knows his gifts and uses them to the best of his abilities. The challenge for us today is to find out what our gifts are and to use them for the betterment of the community. We must learn, know and utilize the special gifts given to us for the betterment of all creatures of Mother Earth. This is WISDOM.

*– Excerpts By Dave Courchene Jr & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

## Humility Wolf



In the natural world, the wolf expresses this humbleness very clearly. The wolf lives within a pack of other wolves. The pack operates as a team. Each animal has a role within this pack to play. Several animals may be the hunters, some may be the protectors, some may be the nurturers and others may be the pups that follow, learn and grow. Each animal is not more important than the others as each animal must perform the role that it has for the survival and betterment of the pack. Each animal within the pack is very important thus none is better than the other.

When the wolf comes up to another larger creature, this animal will bow its head not out of fear, but out of humbleness. He humbles himself in your presence. A wolf that has hunted food will take this food back to the den to eat with the pack before he takes the first bite of food. The act of sharing from one animal to another is shown clearly with this example. The animal must share for the survival of the pack.

In this way, the Wolf became the teacher of this lesson. He bows his head in the presence of others out of deference. Once hunted, he will not take of the food until it can be shared with the pack. His lack of arrogance and respect for his community is a hard lesson, but integral in the Aboriginal way. *– Excerpts By Dave Courchene Jr, Richard Carlson, PHD & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

# Facilitators Guide: 7 Sacred Teachings

## Truth Turtle



Always seek the truth. The truth lives in spirit. Prayer was to be done every day at sunrise to give thanks to the Great Spirit for the gift of life. Each of the gifts and ceremonies were given by the Great Spirit to the original human beings to help them find the truth and the true meaning of their lives on Earth. Living the truth is living the Seven Sacred Teachings, living from the heart.

To know truth is to know and understand all of the original laws as given by the Creator – and to remain faithful to them. The elders say that if you can live out these laws, you will know TRUTH, thus leading to a strong and healthy life. To know these laws, one will know truth as the truth will always become prevalent. You are role models for everyone around you. It is your choice as to the kind of role model you wish to be. When you live your truth, you become a positive role model for others to follow.

It is said that in the beginning, when the Creator made man and gave him the Seven Sacred Teachings, the Grandmother Turtle was present to ensure that the laws would never be lost or forgotten.

The turtle also teaches us patience. As the turtle is one of the slowest moving creatures of Earth, it is her that seems to make it to her destination no matter the length of time that it may take her.

Grandmother turtle also carries her home on her back. She teaches us that all of life is sacred. The shell of the turtle represents the body of real events as created by the Higher Power and serves as a reminder of the Creator's will and teachings. These signs are a confirmation of the Truth which the turtle reflects. – *Excerpts By Dave Courchene Jr & Cindy Crowe, Calgary Board of Education*

# Tobacco Ties

## *Materials Needed*

- Cotton cloth (Red preferably)
- Tobacco
- Scissors
- Ribbon or String
- Skirts

*Activity Type:* Offerings, Requesting Spiritual Support

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper

*Age Groups:* 13-17, 18-29

*Group Size:* 2-15

*Time:* 60 Minutes

A tobacco tie contains a small portion of tobacco tied in a square piece of cotton material (usually Red material). Tobacco ties are easier to carry with you as opposed to loose tobacco and you can use the ties as offerings or to hold on to as a reminder of your prayers and connection to spirit.

Tobacco is a common offering to give to a traditional Elder/Traditional helper for spiritual guidance and teaches us that we must always be respectful towards people, animals and mother earth. When we go medicine picking (Sweetgrass, roots, cedar, and sage) or when we are hunting animals we offer tobacco as a sign of respect and appreciation for what we are receiving.

In ceremonies tobacco can be offered to Creator through the sacred fire to express gratitude or to pray for a loved one, a friend or a colleague and/or client. Tobacco is not only for spiritual people but can be offered to a friend, peer or a family member who has mentored you or supported you during a tough time.

## Step By Step: Smudge Ceremony

**Quick Tip:** It may be easier for a larger group to have the cloth cut into squares and ribbon before the activity starts. You can also use strips of cloth to tie your tobacco tie together.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Ask that all women are wearing skirts while making the tobacco ties. The activity can be facilitated in a circle or whatever way your group is comfortable. |
| 2 | Review the introduction to the Tobacco Ties activity on page 30 with your group.  |
| 3 | Review Good Thoughts in your Facilitators Guide on page 32 with your group.   |
| 4 | Hand out all the materials needed to the participants.  |
| 5 | Review the step by step Tobacco Tie presentation on page 32 throughout the activity.  |
| 6 | Review the What to do with your Tobacco Tie in your Facilitators guide on page 33.  |

## FAQ's

**What if I don't have access to a smudge for the tobacco ties, can I still make them?**

Yes. If you do not have access or you're unable to smudge in your meeting space, tobacco ties can still be made and will not lose their purpose.

**Where should I store my tobacco tie?**

Place your tobacco tie where you place other things that are very important to you, somewhere safe from drugs and/or alcohol.

You can keep it ;

In your pocket

In your bra

Traditional bundle

Under your pillow

In your closet

**Why do I have to hold the tobacco in my left hand?**

The left hand is the closest to your heart.



# Facilitators Guide: Smudge Ceremony

<b>Good Thoughts</b>	<p><i>Here are some good thoughts and steps to follow with your group just before you get started making Tobacco Ties.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ When you're making tobacco ties it's important to think about the intent and the reason why you are making your tie.</li><li>➤ Focus your energy and mind on the special purpose of the medicine and trust your inner voice. If your mind wanders onto other things while making your tie, then gently remind yourself to come back to the purpose of the activity.</li><li>➤ Trust your intuition. Sometimes we will start making tobacco ties for a specific purpose and then realize there is another reason for the tie(s). This is OK. This is you spirit telling you there's more to your intent than you originally started with.</li><li>➤ If you can't think of anything that you would like to make your tobacco tie for than just make the tie with positive thoughts and send the medicine love.</li><li>➤ Think about the actual situation where you will using your tobacco tie. Where you will take it, where you may be leaving it, who you may give it to and when you will be making the offering.</li><li>➤ <b>IMPORTANT:</b> Be sure to place your tobacco tie somewhere safe and special. The tobacco tie is sacred and should not be thrown just anywhere.</li></ul>
<b>Making Tobacco Ties</b>  <b>Step by Step</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Place your square piece of red cloth in front of you.</li><li>2. Take approximately 2 table spoons of tobacco into your left hand. If you require less tobacco for the size of your tie this is ok.</li><li>3. Smudge the tobacco.</li><li>4. While holding onto your tobacco in your left hand think about why you are making this tie. If you are making the tie as an offering for someone else, think about this person. If you don't why you are making this tie than think about things you can potentially use it for in the future.</li><li>5. Place the tobacco into the centre of your cloth.</li><li>6. First lift the East side corner of the cloth. It's important that you honour each direction of your tie, this will bring all the spirits together for your offering.</li><li>7. Continue clockwise by lifting the South, West and North corners one at a time eventually all coming together.</li><li>8. Holding onto the cloth with one hand, take your other hand and hold onto the tobacco in the centre of the cloth.</li><li>9. Twist the cloth around a few times so that the tobacco is secure. Hold tight!</li><li>10. Now wrap your ribbon or string where you have twisted the tie. Tie tight.</li><li>11. Your tobacco tie is now complete.</li></ol>



# Facilitators Guide: Smudge Ceremony

## What to do with your Tobacco Tie

No matter when, where, why, who and why you make your tobacco offering, make it special.

- ✓ Here are some great ways to use your tobacco tie
- ✓ Hang it in a tree as an offering
- ✓ Bury it in the ground
- ✓ Leave it in the bush
- ✓ Keep it with you
- ✓ Store it away in a safe place until you need it
- ✓ Offer to a traditional Elder or spiritual helper for guidance
- ✓ Offer to a friend, family person or peer
- ✓ Honour the Sunrise and/or Sunset
- ✓ Burn it in a sacred fire to ask for guidance

# Moontime

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper
- Flip Chart Markers
- Skirts
- Print Facilitators Guide and Step by Step: Moontime

*Activity Type:* Teaching, Right of Passage, Spiritual, Celebration, Women

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Grandmothers, Mothers, Aunts, Sisters

*Age Groups:* 13-17, 18-20, 21-29

*Group Size:* 5-15

*Time:* 60 Minutes

The definition of Moontime is a women's menstrual period. A time that Aboriginal people consider to be very powerful for a woman, it means that her body is cleansing physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

The Women's Moontime is considered to be a ceremony in itself. Like the Grandmother Moon in the sky, it takes an average of 28 days until the moon is full and once the Moon is full, as women, our body releases a blood flow and we are considered to be very strong at this time. It is because of this strength that women do not attend ceremonies, feasts and Pow Wow's where sacred items such as traditional pipes, whistles, feathers and drums are present.

The Moontime is a stage for women to reflect on themselves as a woman and their gift to bear children.

## Step By Step: Moontime

1	Create a warm and comfortable environment for the group to learn. Maybe use some candles, sit on the floor with pillows and/or play some light, soft spa like music in the background.
2	Group Discussion: What is Moontime? If the group doesn't know, ask them to take a guess and record their answers.  (Feel free to use Flip Chart and Markers to record answers)
3	Read out the description of Moontime from the beginning of this activity, page 34 and continue on with the Grandmother moon teaching in the Facilitators Guide Page 36.
4	Now that the group has a better understanding of what the Moontime is, ask them how they celebrate and/or acknowledge their Moontime. This may be a difficult question for some to answer so here are some examples;  <i>- "When I first got my Moontime my Aunty took me out for dinner to celebrate!"</i> <i>- When I have my Moontime I'm usually really grumpy and I spend my time alone."</i>
5	Now review with the group the Moontime and Moontime Teaching from your Moontime Facilitators Guide Page 36.

## FAQ's

### **I have been to traditional feasts on my Moontime, is this wrong?**

No, this is not wrong. Remember that traditions will vary depending on what community you are from. If you are not sure, just ask the Elder or spiritual person at the ceremony. Sometimes when women who are on their Moontime attend a traditional feast, it's their family or friends who serve them their food.

### **How do I cleanse my body if I am pregnant and no longer get my Moontime?**

When you are pregnant you are considered to already be ceremony because you are growing a child and this is a very significant role.



# Facilitators Guide: Moontime

<p><b>Grandmother Moon</b></p>	<p>Native people know that everything in Creation has spirit. The plants, the trees, the water, the wind, the rocks and the mountains have spirit. The sky worlds, including the moon and the other planets, have spirit. All of these are part of our First Family, the natural world. The Moon is called Grandmother Moon and great respect is paid her.</p> <p><i>It is said that Grandmother Moon watches over the waters of the Earth. We see this in her regulating of the tides. Grandmother Moon controls all female life. Much of the water life spawns according to the cycles of the moon. It is said that Grandmother Moon is especially close to women because she governs the woman's cleansing cycle, the natural cycle of menstruation known as the moon time. Just as Grandmother Moon watches over the waters of the Earth, it is said that women watch over the waters of the people. Water always comes before new life. – Anishnawbe Health Toronto</i></p>
<p><b>Moontime</b></p>	<p>It is said that the moon cycle is a gift to women. It is a time to cleanse herself mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. The moon time is considered a time of power, second only to the ability of the Great Spirit to give life. That is how strong that power is. Women can ask Grandmother Moon for direction in life, for wisdom, and for help for her children and others.</p> <p>Grandmother Moon can give her healing and balancing energy to women. Some teachings say that when women are on their moon time, the Creator comes closer to them. When women are on their moon time, their power is at its strongest and this is acknowledged in that they do not prepare foods or medicines, take part in ceremonies or use the pipes and other sacred items. The moon time is a ceremony of life for women and a time for renewal.</p> <p>The moon time is the time for women to relax and take it easy. All the chores are done by other family members. It is a time for women to think about themselves, their families, their relatives or anyone they think needs help. It is a time of reflection. – Anishnawbe Health Toronto</p>
<p><b>Teachings on the Moontime</b></p>	<p>In the past, when a young woman had her first moon time her aunts or grandmothers would take her to a small lodge where she would be close to the natural world. The young woman is sacred at that time. She is now able to give life. She would be given the teachings about her new life from her mother, grandmothers or aunts. She would be taught about her role as a woman in the community. – Anishnawbe Health Toronto</p>

# Traditional Rattle

## *Materials Needed*

-Print Facilitators Guide and Step by Step: Traditional Rattle

**PLEASE SEE FACILITATORS GUIDE FOR MATERIALS**

*Activity Type:* Teaching, Spiritual, Instruments, Meditation,

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Grandmothers, Mothers, Aunts, Sisters

*Age Groups:* 13-29

*Group Size:* 5-10

*Time:* Day 1- 5 Hours (Plan 4 days apart)

*Time:* Day 2- 2.5 Hours

Many First Nations in Canada use traditional instruments for celebrations, toys, protection, on regalia and in ceremony. There are many different legends and teachings of traditional First Nation rattles. In some of these teachings there are rattles made with rawhide and the beaks of birds inside the rattle. It's believed when you shake this rattle that the spirit of those birds protects you.

The traditional rattle that we will be making in this activity is commonly used in Plains Cree and Ojibwa ceremonies. Rattles can be used during ceremonies for healing and celebrating. The rattle can also be used with other traditional instruments such as an Eagle Whistle or a hand drum to welcome grandmother and grandfather spirits into a ceremony and ask them for help from.

This particular rattle that we will be making today is made with rawhide, a stick of wood and pebbles. This rattle can be used in ceremonies, celebrations and for personal meditation at home.

It's very important to feast your rattles before using them. The feast is a symbol of respect and honor for the animal who gave its life, to Mother Earth for the trees and to our Grandmother and Grandfather spirits for the rocks to make the rattle. This feast is also a celebration to help encourage you to use your rattle for your own personal healing.

## Step By Step: Traditional Rattle

1	Review Preparing for the activity and Materials Needed on page 39. (1 week prior to delivering activity)
2	Be sure that all the women are wearing skirts. Smudge all the materials that you will be using today for the activity.
3	Review the Introduction on page 37 with your group. This will give a clear explanation on what the group can expect.
4	Let's get started. See the Facilitators Guide Making the Rattle: Step by Step on page 40.
5	Wrap up and Clean up. See Facilitators Guide: Clean Up on page 41.
<p><b>VERY IMPORTANT:</b></p> <p><b>You must allow 4 days in between program days for the rattles to dry completely. Complete the remaining steps in Making the Rattle: Step by Step on page 40.</b></p>	
6	Close the program with a feast. See Facilitators Guide: Feasting the Rattle

## FAQ's

### What can I do with left over rawhide?

- ✓ You can make another rattle and gift it to someone
- ✓ Make a hand drum
- ✓ Donate it to an Elder or a Spiritual Person
- ✓ Burn it in a sacred fire

### Can I paint my rattle?

Once the rattle has been completed you may paint your rattle.

### Can I play my rattle on my Moontime?

The rattle is considered a sacred instrument and since you are already considered in ceremony when you are on your Moontime, out of respect, it's not a good idea to play your rattle.

# Facilitators Guide: Traditional Rattle

<p><b>Materials Needed</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Raw animal hide (Deer, Buffalo, Elk)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rattle stick (1 per rattle)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can be sticks that you make or pick yourself</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Or you can purchase the sticks from an aboriginal craft shop or a hardware store. If you purchase them at a hardware store, ask them to cut into 12 inch pieces for you</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rattle sticks should be 12 inches long and 1 square inch in diameter</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Size 3 Leather needle &amp; thimble (1 set per participant) OR Leather hole punch (1 pair per 3 participants)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leather scissors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 15 Small rocks or pea pebbles per rattle</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 cups of Sand per rattle</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Regular size funnel (1 funnel for every 5 participants)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cotton fabric ( 1 square meter will wrap 4 rattles)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cut the 1 meter square cloth into 4 equal sections</li> <li>✓ <i>For example:</i> If you have 12 participants making rattles, you will only need 3 meters of cotton cloth</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ribbon (1/2 meter per rattle)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sinew (Large roll)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Food for feast</li> </ul>
<p><b>Preparation</b></p>	<p>Here are some key tasks that need to be completed within the week prior to starting your activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Purchase rawhide (deer hide is usually substantially cheaper to purchase)</li> <li>➤ Offer tobacco to mother earth for the hide that you will be using for the rattles</li> <li>➤ Soak hide in water for 4 days (allow the hide to soak in a well ventilated area such as a garage, a secure place outside with a cover because it will start to get smelly)</li> <li>➤ All participants must be aware that they need to wear old clothes, this activity can get a little messy</li> <li>➤ Ensure that you have skirts for all the women and girls in your group</li> <li>➤ If you are planning to do this activity outdoors, please note that insects will be drawn to the animal hide and you will need to make sure that everyone has bug repellent and sun block if it's sunny</li> <li>➤ Be sure to smudge all materials before starting your activity, including all the participants (this can be done just before the program starts)</li> <li>➤ Cut fabric</li> </ul>

# Facilitators Guide: Traditional Rattle

## Making the Rattle

### Step By Step

### Day 1

1. Cut the 'Rattle Pattern' from page 43. Spread out the wet rawhide onto a flat surface. Now place the rattle pattern onto the hide, as close to the edges as possible to be sure not to waste too much hide.
2. Now trace the pattern with a pencil onto the hide. Make sure to cut out 2 patterns, 1 for the front and 1 for the back.
3. Take your leather cutting scissors and cut out the 2 identical patterns. Now you should have 2 pieces of rawhide that look exactly the same.
4. Now take your rawhide patterns and place the inside of the hide together, this way the outside of your rattle will be smooth on the outside.
5. Now let's sew your rattle together. You have 2 choices:
  - Take the leather hole punch and punch holes around the edges of the rattle head and neck, just like the holes in your 'Rattle Pattern'. Once the holes are completed, take sinew and sew it through the holes tightly.
  - Take the leather needle and a thimble and start sewing the edges of the rattle head and neck together with sinew. The thimble is very important to have if you choose to sew your rattle this way because the hide will be tough to poke the needle through.
6. Take a funnel and stick the funnel into the neck of the rattle. Now you will fill the head of the rattle with sand. Shake the rattle up a little to make sure the sand inside the rattle is packed down tight.
7. Now you will need to find a place where the rattles can sit and dry. The participants can take them home or if you have a program space that you can leave than set them aside so that they can dry for **4 days**.

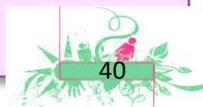
**Quick Tip: Check on the rattles throughout the days to make sure that the resting spot of the rattle is drying.**

## Making the Rattle

### Step By Step

### Day 2

1. Once the rattle is dry, pour the sand out and insert the rocks.
2. Now insert your stick into the neck of the rattle. Make sure the stick is all the way through the neck, this will help keep it in place better.
3. Take a long piece of sinew and wrap it around the neck of the rattle tight and then tie a knot. You can also use a strip of leather and wrap it around the neck of the rattle and glue it down.
4. Feast your rattle. See Feasting the Rattle on page 41.
5. Wrap your rattle in cloth and tie with a ribbon.



# Facilitators Guide: Traditional Rattle

## Feasting the Rattle

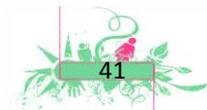
Feasts and giveaways are an important part of Native life. They are held throughout the year to acknowledge the help received from the spirit world, our relatives and ancestors, and other members of the community. Feasting gives us the opportunity to honour all those who have helped us, to feed them and express our respect for what they have done for us. Feasting is also spoken of as the way we strengthen the life and spirit of our bodies. Feasting may be an individual or group event. At larger gatherings, drumming, singing and Traditional dancing may be a part of the ceremony and feast. Tobacco is always offered and the foods served vary according to the customs of the community or territory and the reason for the feast. – Toronto Anishinawbe Health

Some tips for feasting your rattle;

1. Bring any type of food you have access to
2. Smudge all the food
3. Spread the food out and have someone make a spirit dish (this is a dish that consists of a little bit of all the food and the drinks for the feast)
4. Leave the spirit dish out until the end of the ceremony
5. Smudge and pray for the rattle (Want to know more about smudging? See page 21)
6. If you have a traditional elder or spiritual helper, they may want to speak about the rattle or give a teaching on the rattle
7. Now you can eat
8. Once the feast is done, be sure that no food goes to waste
9. All the remaining food goes into one bowl or container and must be placed in the bush with a tobacco offering (want to know more about tobacco offerings? See page 19)

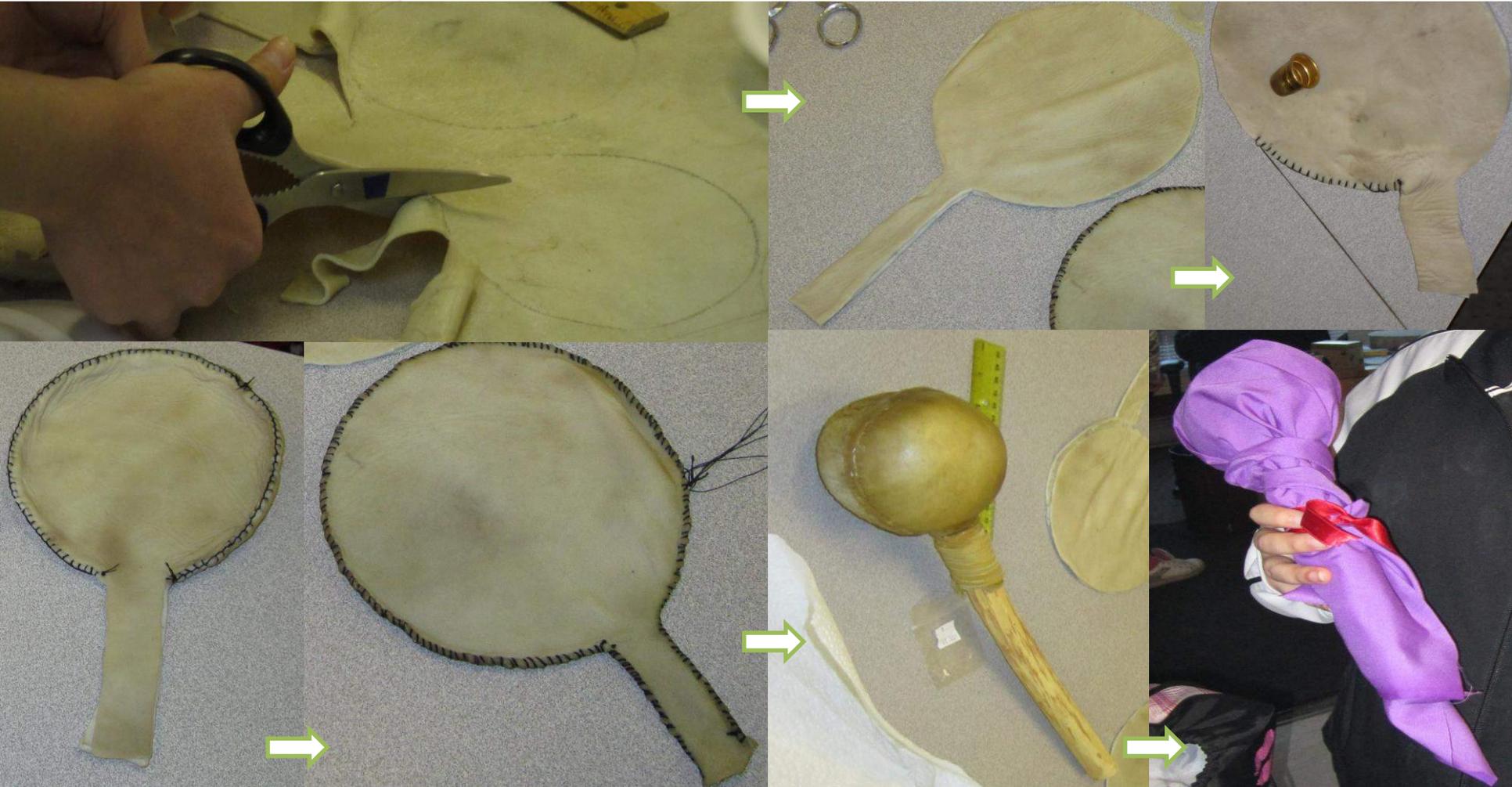
## Clean Up

- ✓ If you have left over rawhide, put it into a bag and freeze it. This way you can use it again. If you do not want to freeze it, offer it to someone who may be able to use it or allow it to dry and burn it in a sacred fire.
- ✓ Wipe all surfaces with a cloth
- ✓ Be sure that there is no left over hide in the garbage, this can cause the room to smell and it will



# Facilitators Guide: Traditional Rattle

## Images of making a Traditional Rattle



# Rattle Pattern

Diameter is 16.5 cm/6.5 inches

Trace this pattern onto your rawhide with a pencil.

# X 2



# Youth Engagement Conferences

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper
- Flip Chart Markers
- Pens & Note Pads for participants
- Print Facilitators Guide: Youth Engagement-Conferences
- Print Step by Step: Youth Engagement-Conferences

*Activity Type:* Engagement resources, Conference applications

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Chief and Council, Government Officials

*Age Groups:* 16-29

*Group Size:* 5-20

*Time:* 1 Hour

Youth voices are needed at all levels of government, and in public and private organizations too.

Sometimes the results of youth engagement are easily seen, sometimes they are not immediately evident, and other times youth engagement is completely missing! Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing population and there are many organizations that need your youth voice.

This activity is not intended for you to change the world immediately, but to help you get started on your way to make the world better for you, your family, your community and future generations to come.

In *Youth Engagement- Conferences* we will look at one specific way to get engaged and that is through conferences. A conference is an event that is held with a specific theme that has a number of different presenters sharing their knowledge with conference participants. You are just starting out so, you could be a participant at a conference and work towards being a conference presenter or organizer. Although our focus here is on Aboriginal-specific conferences, there are all kind of conferences aimed at youth generally and conferences that sponsor youth participants.

## Step By Step: Youth Engagement- Conferences

1	<p>Set up Flip Chart and Markers. Ask the group to share what their thoughts and knowledge on the following questions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is Youth Engagement?</li> <li>- What experience do you have with Youth Engagement?</li> </ul>
2	<p>Provide the definition of ENGAGEMENT from a dictionary. You can share this out loud or you can prepare this before the activity starts and have it written on the flip chart. (Don't forget to quote the source. AKA Make mention of where you got the definition from.)</p>
3	<p>Ask the group if they have experience attending conferences. <i>Example: Have you ever attended a conference? What did you do? What did you learn?</i></p>
4	<p>Now you will review with the group the Introduction in the Facilitators Guide on Page 46.</p>
5	<p>Ask the youth to write down an event or reason why they have been involved in their community. <i>Examples;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The death of a friend or relative such as homicide or suicide</li> <li>- Hurt by others in a position of trust</li> <li>- Having difficulty getting a job</li> <li>- Being in care</li> </ul>
6	<p>Ask the youth to share some of their answers from Step 5. Continue with the How do I get Started? in the Facilitators Guide on Page 46.</p>
7	<p>Review How to find Conference to Attend in your Facilitators Guide on Page 46 with the group.</p>
8	<p>Give the participants the Conference Application SAMPLE Handout on Page 48. Follow along and ask for 3 volunteers to read the 3 separate sections out loud to the group.</p>

## FAQ's

### A what age are you considered a YOUTH?

Across Canada there are many definitions of youth, for example, some organizations consider youth to be between the ages of 14-25 years old, while other use an under 30 approach. At NWAC, we consider youth to be individuals between 18-30 years old.

### What if there is a fee for the conference that I cannot afford?

Many youth conferences are often free to attend and some will even pay for your travel and accommodations to attend the event. However there are a few that will not cover all of your costs and/or non of your costs. In this case, do some fundraising, write a letter to organizations, your band and or businesses to get donations to put towards the event.

**9** Review out loud with the group I Was Chosen! What Should I Expect? In your Facilitators Guide Page 47.

**10** Handout to the participants the National Aboriginal Organizations Resource List on Page 56 of the Handbook.

# Facilitators Guide: Youth Engagement- Conferences

<p><b>How do I get Started?</b></p>	<p>You may have already started your journey to being a youth advocate. For many, we are mobilized to ask questions and use our voices when we are affected by difficult experiences or conditions that we know need to change.</p> <p>These events may even generate an angry response. The ability to control one's emotions and take charge of your life is shown by engaging in important issues of the day! Becoming involved and finding positive solutions is a way to make change and keep the event or events that you want to see changed from taking over your life in a negative way.</p>
<p><b>Finding Conferences to Attend</b></p>	<p>The internet is the most effective way to research upcoming conferences. You can use a search engine like Google to find conferences, or you can go to specific websites. We have included some of the National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs) that may have conferences or events with sponsored spaces at the end of this section. There are also many local and regional conferences or workshops that you may also be interested in applying to. The search is really up to you, and it is highly likely you will find something that you are passionate about!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I found a conference now what do I do?</li> <li>2. Read the application very carefully and see if you are eligible to apply. <b>(REFER TO HANDOUT)</b></li> <li>3. Is travel covered?</li> <li>4. Do you require a guardian to attend with you?</li> <li>5. Are references required?</li> <li>6. Is a nomination required? If it is, do NOT wait to be nominated, seek out a person who will nominate you.</li> <li>7. When filling out forms remember to have it proofread by someone to help ensure no mistakes are made.</li> </ol>
<p><b>I was chosen! What do I Expect?</b></p>	<p><i>A big party? No way!</i> Conferences are in many ways very fun, but they are hard work too. You need to have a focused mind all day long and sometimes into the evening too.</p> <p><i>You should plan to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Take lots of notes</li> <li>✓Keep a personal journal of how the workshops or presenters personally affected you</li> <li>✓Introduce yourself to presenters</li> <li>✓Have a clear sense of why you are attending the conference</li> <li>✓Know whose traditional territory you are on</li> <li>✓Be on time for each speaker's presentation</li> <li>✓Be polite at all times</li> <li>✓Collect your thoughts in your notes so you that you can ask questions</li> <li>✓Make new acquaintances and new networks, friends from home at the same conference can wait</li> </ul>

# Facilitators Guide: Youth Engagement- Conferences

I was  
chosen!  
What do I  
Expect?  
Con't...

Don't forget to...

- ✓ Re-read your application to get prepared
- ✓ Research the conference theme to be prepared for the event
- ✓ Go to bed at a reasonable time while at the conference
- ✓ Send thank you cards to the organizers after the event, sometimes the sponsors will have spent thousands of dollars for one person on things such as airfare, ground transportation, hotel accommodation and food
- ✓ Tell your friends and teachers/professors and important people in your life what you got out of the conference and how it will help you in your goals – you may inspire someone else to do the same.

*And remember...* Conferences are a learning opportunity, not only for those who are attending but also for those who are presenting. So don't feel that you need to be shy in offering your perspectives to presenters. Respectful, constructive feedback is important for everyone, even "experts".

If an Elder is involved with the conference, consider bringing a small gift like tobacco for them, or approach them to say hi and thank them for their prayer or words.

*\*\*Note that some conferences will include a contract related to participants not engaging in illegal activities or negative behaviour that would detract from your concentration or ability to fully participate in the conference.\*\**

*Always...* Demonstrate a respectful attitude and responsible behaviour at a conference is very important. The contacts you meet there could lead to future opportunities, and your first impression is important in making new connections.

# Handout: Youth Engagement- Conferences

## Conference Application SAMPLE



**MIYO MACHIHOWIN**

National Aboriginal Health Careers Conference and Tradeshow  
Edmonton, Alberta, March 11 & 12, 2010

### Application Form

Last Name

First Name

Aboriginal Ancestry

Address

Telephone

Email

The submit button will attach the application form to an e-mail. Please make sure that you also attach

- letter of intent
- description of how you see the differences between traditional and western medicine
- reference letter

Submit

- Include all updated information
- No phone number? Ask that they contact you by e-mail (You need to be sure that you check your e-mail on a regular basis)
- No permanent address? Ask a trusted family member or friend if you can use their address. Don't forget to pick up your mail!

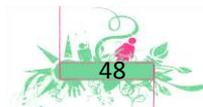
- This section is the most important!
- Be sure to complete all requested documents
- BE Creative
- Don't know how to write a letter of intent? Go online and search "How to write a letter of intent"

- Do not miss the deadline. Organizers are looking for participants who are on time and responsible.
- If an emergency comes up and you submit your application in late, than be honest with the organizers and share with them why you are submitting late.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JANUARY 29, 2010!**

5

MIYO MACHIHOWIN: *Our vision is to help guide career paths and create healthy futures for life.*



# A Conversation about Suicide

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper & Markers
- Light snack and beverage
- Pens & Note Pads for participants
- Print Facilitators Guide and Step by Step: A Conversation about Suicide

*Activity Type:* Roundtable, Warning Signs, Suicide Support

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Mental Health Worker, Nurse, Social Worker

*Age Groups:* 13-15, 16-21, 22-29

*Group Size:* 5-20

*Time:* 2.5 Hours

The Daughter Spirit in Action (DSIA) is a project that has derived from the high number of youth suicides taking place in Aboriginal communities. Suicide is a serious issue that needs to continue to be addressed with our friends, family and peers.

This activity will lead your group in a roundtable discussion about suicide including some discussion topics on the response to suicide in the community and remembering those we have lost to suicide.

## *Definitions;*

***Suicide:*** *a person who intentionally takes his or her own life.*

***Roundtable:*** *a number of persons gathered together for conference, discussion of some subject, etc., and often seated at a round table.*

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

**This activity provides only a glimpse at self-care and meditation. The information provided in this activity does not replace the professional opinions of health care professionals.**

# Step By Step: A Conversation about Suicide

# FAQ's

**Quick Tip: It's important that you have supportive professionals in the room when you are discussing a sensitive topic such as suicide. Sometimes people will relive traumatic events or create new ones by simply talking about suicide and we must always be prepared to support them.**

1	Preparing and Planning on Page 51 in your Facilitator Guide
2	Ask the group if they would like to start with a smudge, if not, that's ok. See how to smudge on Page 31.
3	Introductions: Ask everyone in the circle to share their names and the reason why they are there today (as a facilitator this will help you get an idea of where people are at mentally and emotionally. This will also be helpful information for the Elders and professionals in the room). Be sure that everybody is sitting in the circle and that everyone, including the professionals, introduce themselves and why they are here.
4	Create a list of ground rules for your roundtable with your group. Write them out on the flip chart so that everyone can see them and once the rules have been recorded. Keep the flip chart sheets up in the room throughout the roundtable.
5	<p>Open the discussion (Flip Chart &amp; Markers)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide the definition of Suicide.</li> <li>2. Who commits suicide? What are some reasons why people commit suicide?</li> </ol>
6	<p>Open discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the How can I tell if someone is thinking about suicide?</li> <li>2. What are some signs/symptoms that someone may commit suicide?</li> <li>3. Review activity</li> </ol>
7	Handout the Suicide Prevention Resources and other community support resources from your community.

## What do I do if there is someone in my group who discloses to me that they are suicidal?

When people disclose suicidal thoughts, feelings and/or plans it means that they have needs that are not being met and also that they are reaching out to you. This is the same in almost all disclosures including abuse and disabilities.

First things first. Remember if they are with you at program, they are more than likely in a safe space.

**YOU MUST** inform this person that you are obligated to breach confidentiality if this person wants to harm themselves, others or if someone is hurting them.

Right now it's a good time to be a listener. A good listener is someone who believes and respects that they are listening to someone who has chosen to tell them something very personal.

Identify both positive and concerning thoughts and feelings that this person is sharing with you.

Be prepared with resources like public services available in your area that could help this person with their personal struggle.

Be kind and gentle, this person is struggling and has finally found someone to talk to and that person is you.

Don't assume anything, don't demand that this person must get help and most importantly express to them that their wellbeing is important to you and you will see them through this.



# Facilitators Guide: A Conversation about Suicide

<p><b>Preparing and Planning a Roundtable</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Create an agenda</li> <li>✓ Because this is such a sensitive issue it's important to take short breaks often</li> <li>✓ Stick to your agenda, time is important. If the group tends to take more time on a specific agenda item be flexible and ask them if you can move the agenda around a bit to accommodate their interests</li> <li>✓ When planning a roundtable remember that you are inviting youth to share their experiences, thoughts and feelings and we must always respect and honour people individually when we are asking them to share.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Some examples;</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Thank you for sharing.” OR “That’s a really good point” OR “Thank you for your contributions” OR “That took a lot of courage to share, thank you”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engaging in discussions on common issues that affect us as a community can be considered very powerful work because it brings us together as a community and this is how change happens</li> <li>✓ Make people feel welcome by saying hello when they come in and having light snacks and beverages provided throughout the roundtable</li> <li>✓ Breaking up a larger group into smaller discussion groups can be much easier for people to share. If you choose to do some small group activities you can ask that one person from each group share what their group had discussed</li> <li>✓ ALWAYS finish your roundtable by debriefing with your group. <i>Ask the participants how they feel about the discussions today, what is something new they learned and what they will be doing for the rest of their day</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Group Discussion</b></p> <p><b>What are some of the issues that contribute to suicide?</b></p>	<p>Suicide isn't usually caused by a single issue or event. It is usually the result of many combined issues that a person or community faces. Some risks factors that have been linked to suicide include:</p> <p>Examples;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Low self-esteem</li> <li>✓ Depression</li> <li>✓ Substance abuse</li> <li>✓ Other known suicides in someone's peer group, family or community</li> <li>✓ Feeling disconnected from family, peers, school and the community</li> <li>✓ Unresolved grief or trauma, as a person or in a community</li> <li>✓ A history of emotional, sexual or physical abuse</li> <li>✓ Poverty</li> </ul> <p>Although these factors have been linked to suicide, they don't necessarily mean that people who have some or all of these traits will become suicidal.</p>



# Facilitators Guide: A Conversation about Suicide

<p><b>Group Discussion</b></p> <p><b>How can I tell if someone is thinking about suicide?</b></p>	<p>There are danger signals that may appear in someone who is thinking about suicide.</p> <p>Examples;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Past suicide attempts.</li> <li>✓ Saying things like, "I wish that I were dead" or "Life is hopeless."</li> <li>✓ Depression.</li> <li>✓ Changes in behaviour like giving away personal possessions or changes in spending habits.</li> <li>✓ Drastic changes in sleep patterns like either over-sleeping or not sleeping.</li> <li>✓ Changes in eating patterns like either overeating or having no appetite.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Public Health Agency of Canada <i>Suicide is a Serious Issue in our Communities. How Can We Deal with This?</i></p>
<p><b>Suicide</b></p> <p><b>The Facts</b></p>	<p>Suicide is a very serious issue that affects youth in all walks of life. Suicidal thoughts and actions can be attributed to such things like mental illness, low self-esteem, limited opportunity, and poor living conditions.</p> <p>Some factors that have contributed to an increase suicide among First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth are things like unemployment, poverty, lack of adequate housing, and a shortage of health-care professionals working in remote Aboriginal communities. These things impact how we feel about ourselves and our future.</p>
<p><b>Suicidal Thoughts</b></p>	<p>For those thinking of suicide, the following thoughts may be racing through their heads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I can’t stop the pain.”</li> <li>“Nothing makes sense anymore.”</li> <li>“I can’t see any way out of this situation.”</li> <li>“I’m so sad all the time.”</li> <li>“Everything hurts.”</li> <li>“I am useless.”</li> <li>“No one cares about me.”</li> <li>“My life is out of control.”</li> </ul> <p>There is not one ‘type’ of suicidal person. These thoughts and feelings can affect anyone. It happens to the young and old, rich and poor. For this reason, it can be tough to tell who is at risk of committing suicide; however, they may show some warning signs.</p>

# Facilitators Guide: A Conversation about Suicide

<p><b>Someone might be suicidal if he or she</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Talks about committing suicide.</li><li>– Has trouble eating or sleeping.</li><li>– Suddenly changes his/her behaviour (withdrawal, lack of interest in things).</li><li>– Self-mutilates (bites, cuts, scratches, burns themselves).</li><li>– Loses interest in hobbies, work or school.</li><li>– Gives away possessions.</li><li>– Has previously attempted suicide.</li><li>– Takes unnecessary risks that may increase their odds of injury or death.</li><li>– Has experienced a recent loss, like the death of a family member or friend.</li><li>– Loses interest in their personal appearance.</li><li>– Increases their use of alcohol, drugs or inhalants.</li><li>– Show signs of depression (crying, hopelessness).</li></ul>
<p><b>Group Discussion</b></p> <p><b>What should I do for myself?</b></p>	<p><b>Talk to someone you trust.</b> Although things may seem very bad for you at times, the crisis can and will pass.</p> <p><b>Ask for help.</b> You can be helped and you deserve it. Try talking to a relative, friend, Elder, or counsellor in your community. Sometimes a solution can be found just by talking about your problems and feelings. If there's nobody close to you that you feel you can trust, try talking to someone from the community resource list below. The Kids Help Phone 1-800-866-8686) is a free, anonymous, 24-hour help line and the number won't show up on your phone bill. Facebook and other online forums can also be a good place to express yourself. You can also join the Honouring Life Network Facebook group to seek out support and resources.</p> <p><b>Do not blame yourself.</b> If you think the way you feel is all your fault, you are wrong. If the conditions in your community are poor, your problems will seem much worse. Lower suicide rates have been linked to communities that have achieved self-governance and control over education, health, police, and other local services. Remember that your community appreciates the unique qualities you have to offer (and yes, you DO have unique qualities to contribute).</p> <p><b>Seek Traditional Healing and Knowledge.</b> Low suicide rates in Aboriginal communities have also been linked to strong traditions, customs, ceremonies, and traditional healing methods that provide you with a sense of security, belonging and identity. Some Elders say we have lost balance, control and harmony in our lives. Try reconnecting with your culture— it may be the first step to feeling good about yourself. Having a strong sense of culture will give you a strong sense of who you are, and what your valuable role is in the community.</p>

# Facilitators Guide: A Conversation about Suicide

<p>Con't...</p> <p>Group Discussion</p> <p>What should I do for myself?</p>	<p>Get support from others who have experienced similar feelings. Try reading some of the stories that youth have contributed to the Honouring Life Network. These stories show how others have gotten through tough times. It may be hard to do anything right now, but it is important to realize that you are not alone and that other people want to help you.</p> <p>The bottom line is there is no shame in asking for help. Suicidal thoughts can be scary and extremely upsetting for youth. Dealing with these thoughts is not easy, but there are people who want to help you.</p>
<p>Group Discussion</p> <p>What could I do for my friend?</p>	<p><b>Take them seriously.</b> No matter who the person is telling you about their suicidal thoughts, pay attention to them. Suicide and suicidal thoughts are not a joke, and should not be taken lightly. Listen. Allow them to express their feelings. Accept these feelings and keep an open mind. Ask questions about their feelings.</p> <p><b>Be non-judgmental.</b> Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether their feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life. Don't argue with the person.</p> <p><b>Show your concern.</b> Tell them how much you care and that you want to help them. Don't act surprised. If someone tells you about their intentions, don't act surprised. This will put distance between the two of you.</p> <p><b>Don't dare him or her to do it.</b></p> <p>Make him or her aware of the alternatives. Be sincere; do not offer unrealistic and far-fetched alternatives. Don't offer them clichés or things they have heard a million times like, "it's all in your head" or, "you'll grow out of it".</p> <p><b>Take action.</b> Remove means of committing suicide, such as guns or pills. Stay with that person until you know they are out of danger.</p> <p><b>Get help.</b> Contact a parent, Elder, school counselor, teacher, psychologist, doctor, et cetera. Do not swear to secrecy because you may not have the ability to provide the person with the help that they deserve.</p>

# Facilitators Guide: A Conversation about Suicide

<p><b>Group Discussion</b></p> <p><b>What Can Aboriginal Communities Do to Deal with the Issue of Suicide?</b></p>	<p>Aboriginal communities can do many things to help reduce the risk of suicide.</p> <p>They can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ develop school activities that focus on self-esteem and mental well-being</li> <li>✓ hold community-wide cultural activities and healing ceremonies</li> <li>✓ make sure that professionals such as community workers, doctors and teachers in the community are trained in suicide prevention.</li> <li>✓ offer substance abuse programs</li> <li>✓ offer treatment and counselling services as well as peer support and mentoring programs.</li> <li>✓ monitor suicidal individuals.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Public Health Agency of Canada <i>Suicide is a Serious Issue in our Communities. How Can We Deal with This?</i></p>
<p><b>Canadian Statistics Show...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Suicide and self-injury are the leading causes of death for First Nations people between the ages of 10-44.</li> <li>✓ For First Nations males 15 to 24 years old, the suicide rate is 126 per 100 000 compared to 24 per 100, 000 for the same age group among the general population.</li> <li>✓ For First Nations women between 15 to 24 years old, the suicide rate is 25 per 100 000 compared to only 5 per 100 000 for non-Aboriginal women.</li> <li>✓ Inuit suicide rates are 11 times the national average, and 83 per cent of these people are under the age of 30 (ibid).</li> <li>✓ There are currently no Métis-specific statistics on youth suicide.</li> <li>✓ Statistics show that 60 per cent of all Aboriginal people who attempt and succeed in committing suicide are acutely intoxicated (drunk) at the time, compared to 24 per cent of all non-Aboriginal cases (ibid).</li> <li>✓ Youth suicide has tripled in Canada over the past 40 years.</li> <li>✓ Suicide is among the leading causes of death in 15 to 24 year-old Canadians, second only to accidents; 4,000 people each year die by suicide in Canada (ibid).</li> <li>✓ Not all Aboriginal communities experience youth suicide. British Columbia researchers report that 90 per cent of the suicides take place in just 10 per cent of B.C. communities.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Acknowledgements</b>  <a href="http://www.healthyplace.com">www.healthyplace.com</a>          The Canadian Mental Health Association: <a href="http://www.cmha.ca">www.cmha.ca</a>          Suicide Information and Education Collection: <a href="http://www.suicideinfo.ca">www.suicideinfo.ca</a></p>



# Handout: A Conversation about Suicide

## Youth Mental Health and Suicide Resource Guide

**Kids Help Phone**

**1 800 668 6868**

[www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

**1 800 273 TALK (8255)**

[www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.com](http://www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.com)

**Youth Suicide Prevention**

[www.youthsuicide.ca](http://www.youthsuicide.ca)

**Canadian Children's Rights Council (Search: Youth Suicide)**

[www.canadiancrc.com](http://www.canadiancrc.com)

**First Nations, Inuit and Aboriginal Health-Suicide Prevention**

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php)

**Teen Depression**

[www.teendepression.com](http://www.teendepression.com)

**Yellow Ribbon (Suicide)**

[www.yellowribbon.org](http://www.yellowribbon.org)

**Mind Your Mind**

[www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)

**Blue Wave**

[www.ok2bbblue.com](http://www.ok2bbblue.com)

# Grief & Stress

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart & Markers
- LCD Projector
- Lap Top w/ PPP or PDF
- Pens
- Note Pads

*Activity Type:* Discussions, coping, understanding symptoms

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Mental Health Worker, Nurse, Social Worker

*Age Groups:* 13-15, 16-19, 20-25, 26-29

*Group Size:* 5-20

*Time:* 2.5 Hours

Grief and Stress are emotions that we respond with sometimes when we are feeling overwhelmed, sad, angry and/or excited in our lives. These two emotions can be linked on many levels however in this activity the handbook will present them separately.

## **Definitions**

by [www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com)

1) grief (grēf) intense emotional suffering caused by loss, disaster, misfortune, etc.; acute sorrow; deep sadness

2) stress (stres) mental or emotional tension or strain characterized by feelings of anxiety, fear, etc.

*"Stress is nothing more than a socially acceptable form of mental illness."  
- Richard Carlson*

*"And remember, it's also very funny, because side by side with grief lies joy."  
- Fran Drescher*

## Step By Step: Grief & Stress

## FAQ's

**IDEA: Due to the serious nature of these subjects, it's a good idea to have a smudge ceremony or/and a sharing circle to check with participants to start the program in a good way.**

- 1 Ask the group to sit in a circle. Allow the group to share their own knowledge of Stress and Grief.  
  
Group Discussion: What do you know about stress and grief? Have you ever felt stress or grief? If so, what happened?
- 2 Now share out loud with the group the introduction to this activity including the definitions of stress and grief from page 57.
- 3 Now you can start the Grief Presentation.  
  
\*\*When facilitating an activity with a PowerPoint Presentation remember to continuously interact with your group, do not just read your notes or what's on the screen.\*\*  
  
Refer to your Grief & Stress Facilitators Guide on Page 59.
- 4 Now you can start the Stress Presentation.  
  
Refer to your Grief & Stress Facilitators Guide on Page 60.
- 5 Debrief with the group in a Sharing Circle.  
  
Ask the group to share how they feel about today's activity.  
  
Please allow at least 15 minutes for the debrief. Some participants may end up sharing a little longer and it's important for them to process their own feeling and thoughts that came from today's activity.

### Can stress make me physically sick?

Yes. It has been proven that stress for long periods of time can do serious harm to your body. If you not sure about how Stress affects you, speak with your doctor or a health care professional about your stress levels and concerns.

### Is it ok to grieve over money?

Absolutely. Money is necessary to live and if you loose your job than a majority of the grief is usually from not being able to afford to pay your bills or your lifestyle. Also, if you have a job that paid well and than had to change to a job that paid less, this could be considered a loss as well and sometimes people grieve for their lifestyle when they made more money. This is all ok.

### Why does it feel like the end of the world when I am grieving and/or stressed out?

Stress and grieving are very consuming emotions. Our thoughts and our actions are focused on trying to find an answer or a way to feel better about ourselves. It's this process that makes it seem as though the world is ending BUT we are here to tell you it's not. Remember to take care of your whole self, Physically, Mentally, Emotionally and Spiritually and be patient on your journey.

Need someone to talk to? *Feel free to call National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255).*

### Can I call National Suicide Prevention Lifeline if I'm not suicidal?

Yes. This line is for anyone who needs some help figuring things our in a stressful and grieving time.

# Facilitators Guide: Grief & Stress

Slide #	Grief Presentation
1 Title	Grief is how we respond when we lose someone or something that we care for and/or love.
2	<b>It Could be...</b> Read the slide to the group. Question to group: What are some other things in our life that have or could cause us grief?
3 Group	Be sure that everyone has paper and a pen to write their answers down. Once everyone finished writing ask them to share some of their answers.
4 Unresolved Grief	<p>Grief can affect us in 4 different ways. Physically, Emotionally, Spiritually and Mentally.</p> <p><b>Physically:</b> Lack of sleep, restless, fatigue, pain and tension in our body, inactive, clumsiness and decrease in immune system</p> <p><b>Emotionally:</b> Sad, anxious, low self esteem, guilt, loss of interest in intimacy, fear, crying, irritability, anger and helplessness</p> <p><b>Spiritually:</b> Closeness or distant from a higher power, anger towards a higher power, sensing the presence of a deceased person</p> <p><b>Mentally:</b> Isolated, loss of interest in things you would usually enjoy, impatient, difficulty making decisions, flashbacks &amp; daydreaming, mental confusion and relationship stress</p>
5 Group	Be sure that everyone has paper and a pen to write their answers down. Once everyone finished writing ask them to share some of their answers.
6	<b>Taking Care...</b> Read out the list of ways to help take care of yourself when grieving and the final note at the bottom of this slide.
7 Help a Friend	Review this slide with the group. Reminder: When helping those you care about, your own mental health comes first. Be sure to support yourself and make sure your in a good space when helping others.

# Facilitators Guide: Grief & Stress

Slide #	Stress Presentation
1 Title	Grief is how we respond when we lose someone or something that we care for and/or love.
2 Stress?	Read the slide to the group.
3 Group	Discuss as a group.
4 & 5 Signs & Cause	Read the slide and associate some of the answers from this slide to the answers that the group provided in the previous Slide 3.
6 A Serious Problem	<p>Like grief, we respond to stress Physically, Emotionally, Mentally and Spiritually.</p> <p>Ask a participant to read this slide out loud.</p> <p><b>Physically:</b> Decrease immune system, dizziness, nausea, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, body aches, sleeping too much or too little, using alcohol and drugs to relax and pain</p> <p><b>Emotionally:</b> Depression, loneliness, isolated, feeling overwhelmed, irritable, short temper and moody</p> <p><b>Spiritually:</b> Distant from a higher power and anger towards a higher power</p> <p><b>Mentally:</b> Procrastinating and neglecting responsibilities, nervous habits, memory problems, poor judgment, anxiety, constant worry and inability to concentrate.</p>
7 Group	Discuss as a group.
8 Tips	Review the slide to the group.

# Self Image

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper & Markers
- Light snack and beverage
- Pens & Note Pads for participants

*Activity Type:* Identity, Awareness, Self Esteem, Body Image

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Mental Health Worker, Nurse, Social Worker

*Age Groups:* 13-15, 16-19, 20-25, 26-29

*Group Size:* 5-20

*Time:* 1.5 Hours

In this activity you will learn about yourself! Self-image is how you view yourself, your characteristics and abilities. It is the value you place on yourself and how worthy you feel.

Self image is influenced by your **body image**, **sexual orientation**, **gender identity** and your **self esteem**.

## **Improving your Self-Image**

There are many ways to improve your self image. Your self image depends on what you tell yourself. There are many ways to turn negative thoughts into positive ones.

- Ontario Women's Directorate  
- YOUth Space, Beauty Marks: Coping with Body Image

## Step By Step: Self Image

1	Review the Self Image PowerPoint presentation prior to facilitating the presentation.
2	Self image can be a difficult topic for many youth so if you can, try to start your activity off with a Sharing Circle or/and Smudge ceremony or simple do a roundtable and ask everyone to check in and share how they are doing today.
3	Go through the Self Image PowerPoint presentation on Page 63 with your group.
4	Facilitate a debrief with your group before the group is complete.  Here are some debrief questions;  - How do you feel about today's topic? - What is something that you learned today that you didn't know before program?

*It is estimated that 3% of women will be affected by eating disorders in their lifetime. Approximately 0.5% to 4% of women will develop anorexia nervosa during their lifetime, and about 1 to 4% will develop bulimia. BED affects about 2% of the population.*

- A Report on Mental Illness, Public Health Agency of Canada

## FAQ's

### Stigma Associated with Eating Disorders

Anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa do not have the same public manifestation as other mental illnesses. In general, public embarrassment due to unusual behaviour is not an issue. Essentially, these illnesses are a private family affair. As a result, the stigma associated with eating disorders comes from the mistaken impression that others (parents in particular) are to blame for the illness. The stigmatization isolates parents from their peers and other family members.

Individuals with BED who are obese must contend with negative societal attitudes toward obesity. These attitudes isolate them, and the loss of self-esteem exacerbates the illness.

### What is binge eating?

Binge eating without compensatory behaviours, such as vomiting, excessive exercise or laxative abuse. Individuals are often obese.

### What is Anorexia

Resistance to maintaining body weight at or above a minimally normal weight for age and height with an intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat, even though underweight.

### What is bulimia nervosa?

Recurrent episodes of binge eating, accompanied by inappropriate compensatory behaviour in order to prevent weight gain, such as self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives, or excessive exercise.

- A Report on Mental Illness, Public Health Agency of Canada

# Facilitators Guide: Self Image

Slide	Self Image Presentation
1 Title Page	Feel free to discuss the picture on the title page with the participants and this can be a good way to start the presentation.
2 Self Image?	Ask a participant to read out the description. Review some of the pictures in the thought bubble.
3 Break Down	Review the bullets under each category with the participants. Allow them to write it down if they'd like.
4 Group	Allow the group share out loud their thoughts. Be prepared to write them down on a white board, flip chart or overhead projector.
5 Important	<i>Self Esteem is important! Why?</i> Review this slide with the group. Remember to always watch how the participants in your group are responding to the activity. Maybe they are feeling overwhelmed, or lost in the activity. Take this opportunity to do a small recap of what you have covered so far.
6 Low & High	<i>Low Self Esteem &amp; High Self Esteem</i> Ask the group if they have anything to add under the categories listed on the slide.
7	Do's & Don't: Review with group
8 Sexual Orientation	Review list of sexual orientations with the group and the More on Sexual Orientation explanation below.
<b>More on Sexual Orientation</b>	
<i>There's more than one kind of sexuality. You may find that you are attracted to people of the opposite sex. If you are, people call that being</i> Native Women's	

Slide	Self Image Presentation
	<p><i>heterosexual or straight. You may find that you are attracted to people of the same sex. If you feel this way, you may be gay or lesbian.</i></p> <p><i>You may find that you are attracted to both sexes. If you feel this way you may be bisexual . Or you may feel that you are in the wrong body. If you are a girl, you may feel that you should have been born in a guy's body or if you are a guy you may feel that you should have been born in a girl's body. If you feel this way you may be transgender.</i></p> <p><i>Having these feelings can be scary and confusing because there is still fear and prejudice against people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. This can make it difficult for you to be okay with these feelings and difficult for you to tell other people about them. But remember, it's okay to be yourself. In fact for your own health, it's important that that you be who you know you are. There are many youth and adults who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or two-spirited. Here are some other excellent web sites that provide information on sexual orientations. <b>NOW engage your group by asking them first what they think what each orientation is.</b></i></p>
9 Sexual Orientation	Review list of sexual orientations with the group and the More on Sexual Orientation explanation below.
	<p><b>Bisexual:</b> Someone who is attracted to both men and women. A bisexual may prefer either a man or a woman on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines himself or herself as bisexual.</p> <p><b>Dyke:</b> In the past, this was a derogatory term used to describe lesbians. But now the word is being reclaimed by many lesbians as a positive title.</p> <p><b>Gay Man:</b> A man who is attracted to other men. A gay man prefers other men on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines himself as gay.</p> <p><b>Gay Woman:</b> A woman who is attracted to other women. A gay woman prefers other women on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines herself as gay. Also uses the term lesbian.</p>
	<b><u>More on Next Page...</u></b>

# Facilitators Guide: Self Image

Slide	Self Image Presentation
	<p><b>Heterosexual:</b> Someone who is attracted to members of the opposite sex. A heterosexual prefers members of the opposite sex on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines him or herself as heterosexual.</p> <p><b>Heterosexual:</b> Someone who is attracted to members of the opposite sex. A heterosexual prefers members of the opposite sex on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines him or herself as heterosexual.</p> <p><b>Homosexual:</b> This is an older term that has come to include both gay men and lesbians. It was originally used only for men. Today it is not used as often as the terms gay or lesbian.</p> <p><b>Lesbian:</b> A woman who is attracted to women. A lesbian is a woman who prefers other women on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually—and defines herself as lesbian.</p> <p><b>Queer:</b> Formerly a derogatory term and still used in that way by some heterosexuals to describe other sexual orientations. Today the term is used by many LGBT (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender) persons to include anyone who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or two-spirited – but not straight.</p> <p><b>Straight:</b> A term for a heterosexual person.</p> <p><b>Transgender:</b> Someone who is not comfortable with (or rejects) their birth gender. The term includes transsexuals, transmen (FTM), transwomen (MTF), transvestites and cross dressers.</p> <p><b>Transsexual:</b> Someone who has strong and lasting feelings that they are the wrong sex. Some, but not all, transsexuals have full or partial sex reassignment surgery (when a man or woman changes his/her genitalia to that of the opposite sex) and/or hormone therapy.</p> <p><b>Two-Spirit:</b> A term from North American Indian culture that identifies persons who have both the spirit of a man and a woman in one body. Traditionally these people were regarded as having received a special gift.</p>
10	Read description of Two Spirit.
<b>What is Two Spirit</b>	

Slide	Self Image Presentation
11	Read out the following storey and be prepared to facilitate a short discussion afterwards.
<p><b>The Gift of Honouring the In-between</b></p> <p><i>“I see myself as a mediator in-between the sexes. I can talk to women, I can talk to men. I think I understand both” –Paul</i></p> <p><i>Traditionally aboriginal communities also valued the in-between times and ceremonially marked such transitions. (summer /winter solstice), Our stories , art, masks and rites also honoured diverse transitional and fluid journeys- dreamtime, fasting, mythical beings and creation stories moved us in to new realms.. in a similar way, many aboriginal communities had words to describe a minority of unique community members whose gender identities and gender roles were not male/not female but on a continuum of gender fluidity and difference. Many communities accepted this difference and incorporated the gifts of this difference in to the everyday lives of their communities, this extended to include an acceptance that two-spirit people’s choice of partners- even when they were of the same biological sex.</i></p> <p><i>The central focus was not on whom one slept with or what one did in private, but more on what contribution each person would make to their communities and families as a whole, and these contributions were typically given through the vehicle of one’s gendered roles. Two spirit peoples being recognized as having unique expressions of gender identities, were seen often thus to have unique role contributions to offer. A number of two spirit people in older times greatly helped their communities through many different roles-including warriors, crafts peoples, skilled negotiators, and spiritual role models. In the same way, many two spirit people today are actively contributing to their communities today as educators, artists, counselors, and in other ways..but because of unhealed legacy issues, they do not always feel safe to make that contribution as publically “out” or visible two spirit people. We need to make communities safe again for people to contribute positively as who they are without shame.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>- Fiona Cook, Two Spirit People, The Intersection of Sexual Orientation</i></p>	



# Facilitators Guide: A Conversation about Suicide

Slide	Self Image Presentation
<b>11 Discussion</b>	<p><b><i>The Gift of Honouring the In-between Discussion</i></b> Lead the group in a short discussion on this story. Here are some questions to get the discussion going;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What sort of traditional roles do two spirit people have?</i></li> <li>2. <i>Why would a two spirited person feel unsafe to share their sexual orientation?</i></li> <li>3. <i>What are your personal thoughts are the storey?</i></li> </ol>
<b>12 What is Gender Identity</b>	<p>What is Gender Identity? 'Unlike sex [Gender], which is biologically based, gender is largely a cultural construct. When asked to name the genders in most Western societies, most people would name two: male and female. However, in some traditional societies, there is considered to be a third sex.' – <a href="http://www.hubpages.com">www.hubpages.com</a> <i>What Gender Identity are you?</i> An example is the Aboriginal people of North America and the Two Spirited. Two Spirited people were traditionally granted the identity of both female and male. Two spirited people are considered very important and have specific roles in ceremony.</p>
<b>13 Influences</b>	Review with group.
<b>14 Group Activity</b>	Gender Expression: Ensure each participant has a pen/pencil and paper to write down their gender expressions. Ask the participants to share some of their expressions. If they choose not to share, this is ok.

Slide	Self Image Presentation
<b>15 Group</b>	Facilitate a discussion on Positive and Negative. Ask your group what they think both types of body images mean to them.
<b>16 Negative &amp; Positive</b>	Review what Positive and Negative Body Image is. Ask your group if they have anything to add under these topics.
<b>17 Group</b>	Who/What influences our Body Image and why?
<b>18 Myths</b>	Ask your group if they have anything to add under these topics.
<b>19</b>	<b>Factors</b> Review with group.
<b>20 &amp; 21</b>	<b>Eating Disorders.</b> Review with group.
<b>22</b>	<b>How do you know?</b> Review with group.
<b>23 Group</b>	Encourage the participants to share about a time that they may have noticed that someone they cared about had an eating disorder.
<b>24</b>	<b>Suggestions.</b> Review with group.
<b>25 A Letter to your Body</b>	Review the question in the presentation and be available to the group as they are creating their letters.
<b>Handout Self Image Resource Guide to all participants</b>	

# Handout: Self Image

## Self Image Resource Guide

### **Native Youth Sexual Health**

[www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com](http://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com)

### **National Eating Disorder Information Centre**

Toll Free 1-866-NEDIC-20 (1-866-633-4220)

[www.nedic.ca](http://www.nedic.ca)

### **Let's Talk About It**

[www.loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org/letstalk/](http://www.loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org/letstalk/)

### **Teen Talk**

[www.teentalk.ca](http://www.teentalk.ca)

### **International Size Acceptance Association**

[www.size-acceptance.org](http://www.size-acceptance.org)

### **Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sports**

[www.cces.ca](http://www.cces.ca)

### **Body Positive**

[www.bodypositive.com](http://www.bodypositive.com)

### **The Body Image Site for Everybody: Adios Barbie**

[www.adiosbarbie.com](http://www.adiosbarbie.com)

# Healthy Relationships

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper & Markers
- Light snack and beverage
- Pens & Note Pads for participants

*Activity Type:* Discussions, Relationships, Healthy, Abusive

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Mental Health Worker, Health Staff

*Age Groups:* 13-15, 16-19, 20-25, 26-29

*Group Size:* 5-15

*Time:* 1.5 Hours

What are relationships? What's the difference between Healthy and Unhealthy relationships?

These are some very good questions. Welcome to The Basics of Healthy Relationships, an activity that will help you explore the Who, What, Where, When and Why of Healthy Relationships.

No matter what cultural background or gender you are, everyone has relationships with someone or something. In this activity we are going to discuss the relationships we have with other people and more specifically we will talk about Healthy Relationships.

Why is it important to have healthy relationships?

When you have a healthy relationship with someone else, this makes us feel really good about ourselves and the other person.

*For example; Healthy relationships allow us to have healthy conflict in our relationships, situations where we don't always agree is considered to be apart of a good relationship however our behavior towards the conflict is what can be the cause of an unhealthy relationship.*

## Step By Step: Healthy Relationships

1	Ask the group to settle into their seats. Hand out pens or pencils to everyone, these will be used later in the activity.
2	Go to: <b>Who Am I in a Relationship with?</b> Page 69
3	Go to: <b>What are some things that you look for in a partner? Or in any relationship?</b> Page 69
4	Go to: <b>Am I in a Healthy Relationship?</b> Page 72
5	Go to: <b>Things to look out for in a New Relationship</b> Page 73
6	Go to: <b>Warning Signs of Abuse</b> Page 74
7	Go to: <b>What YOU can do if YOU think YOU are using Abuse</b> Page 75
8	Go to: <b>Good Communication</b> Page 77
9	Go to: <b>Boundaries</b> Page 79
10	Go to: <b>The Relationship Bill of Rights</b> Page 81

## FAQ's

**What is I have someone in my group who realizes that they are in an abusive relationship?**

Take the time to sit with them during the program or approach them at the end of program and ask them if they would like to talk a bit more. Sit with them, listen and offer resources from your community. If you have an Elder or a professional available, ask them to come and support this individual with you.

**REMEMBER: IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU THAT THEY ARE PLANNING TO HARM THEMSELVES OR HARM SOMEONE ELSE YOU HAVE TO DISCLOSE THIS TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES.**

**What if I know I'm in an unhealthy relationship but the person I need to leave is someone I live with?**

Seeing as how you are already in a safe space here at the program, this would be a good idea to approach someone that you trust at the program and disclose to them your current situation. Talking to a professional, elder or someone you trust in the community will support you to make the changes that you need to make in your life.

Disclosing abuse and/or an unhealthy relationship with someone you trust is a great start to creating a better life for yourself and your family.

**"If someone wants to be a part of your life, they'll be there. So don't bother saving a spot for someone who won't make an effort to stay."**



# Facilitators Guide: Healthy Relationships

<p><b>Who am I in a Relationship with?</b></p>	<p>Group discussion. Facilitate an open discussion with the group and write down answers on flip chart. Question: Who am I in a relationship with?  <i>Examples; Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Mother/Father, Grandmother/Grandfather, Aunts/Uncles, Cousins, Brother/Sister, Pets, Friends, Teacher, Doctor</i></p>
<p><b>What are some things that you look for in a partner?</b></p>	<p>Group discussion. Facilitate an open discussion with the group and write down answers on flip chart. Question: What some things that you look for in a healthy relationship?  <i>Examples; positive self image, humor, trust, affection, calls me when they say they're going to call, enjoys stuff I like to do, someone who will try new things</i></p>
<p><b>Am I in a Healthy Relationship?</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hand out Participants Activity</li> <li>2. Review the questions statements with the group out loud.</li> <li>3. Remind the group: It's important to be honest when answering the statements and that they will NOT have to share these answers with anyone.</li> <li>4. 5 Minutes to complete the activity</li> <li>5. Facilitate an open discussion about the importance of each statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Trust is important to feel comfortable and safe. This creates the perfect environment for a healthy relationship to grow.</li> <li>✓ Honesty is all about being truthful even if the truth sometimes hurts our feelings. When we are honest in our relationships we are using our integrity and being accountable to ourselves.</li> <li>✓ Relationships often provide some sort of emotional/mental support, especially when we are in a romantic relationship with someone. Support means making time to listen to one another, helping someone reach their goals or just a shoulder to cry on.</li> <li>✓ To be fair doesn't mean that everyone has the same thing, it's about compromise and assuring that you feel apart of the relationship on an equal level.</li> <li>✓ Hiding who we are is never something that makes us comfortable or proud, it's important to feel comfortable in your own skin. Be proud of your accomplishments and acknowledge your mistakes. No one can take that away from you.</li> <li>✓ Communication looks different in all relationships.</li> </ul> <p><i>For example: Annie recognizes that every time Allen has a bad day at work he usually comes home and will walk by her without saying hello. Since this has happened before Annie know to give him some space. After some time passes Annie approaches Allen with a glass of water and sits beside him and simply asks "Anything interesting happen today?".</i></p> </li> </ol>

# Facilitators Guide: Healthy Relationships

<p><b>Am I in a healthy Relationship?</b></p> <p>Con't...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Worrying is a sign of stress and anxiety in a relationship. When we start worry this is a clear red flag that something in our relationship is not right. If you feel worried, talk about with someone, a trusted friend, a professional or a relative.</li> <li>✓ When people feel the need to ignore or make fun of others it means that they are feeling a lack of control over their own life. This type of behavior is not acceptable and needs to be confronted as soon as possible.</li> <li>✓ When we wear certain clothing and hang around certain people we are expressing ourselves. If someone is trying to control how you dress or who you hang out with this is another red flag for an unhealthy relationship. Healthy relationships are not about control, they are about sharing and compromise.</li> <li>✓ When someone is physically hurting us this is call physical abuse and this needs to be addressed immediately. If you feel that you cannot address this abuse because of fear that it may get worse than tell someone that you trust as soon as possible</li> </ul>
<p><b>New Relationship</b></p>	<p>Review this handout out loud with the group. Allow time for discussion on why these are warning signs.</p>
<p><b>Warning Signs of Abuse</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Split the group into 2 separate groups.</li> <li>2. These groups will work together to come up with a list of 5 examples of I AM BEING ABUSED WHEN... &amp; I AM BEING ABUSIVE WHEN... (10 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group A: I AM BEING ABUSED WHEN...</li> <li>Group B: I AM BEING ABUSIVE WHEN...</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Ask both groups to choose someone in their group to share with the group the list of examples they came up with.</li> <li>4. Once everyone is done, handout the Participants Activity: <i>Warning Signs of Abuse</i></li> <li>5. Review with the group.</li> </ol>
<p><b>What YOU can do if YOU think YOU are using Abuse</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Handout the participant activity: What YOU can do if YOU think YOU are using Abuse</li> <li>2. Ask for different volunteers to read each bubble.</li> <li>3. After each bubble has been read, ask if anyone would like to share their thoughts, feelings or experiences about that specific message. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Here are some Questions that can help your discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q: How would it make you feel?</li> <li>Q: What do you think this would look like?</li> <li>Q: How do you handle change?</li> <li>Q: Why do we blame others?</li> <li>Q: What are some things you have felt guilty about?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol>

# Facilitators Guide: Healthy Relationships

<p><b>Good Communication</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Handout the participant activity: Good Communication</li> <li>2. Review out loud all 10 titles. Each participant is to come up with an example for each title, ways that they will communicate better in their relationships. This is an individual exercise. (15 minutes)</li> <li>3. While participants are working, walk around the room to see if anyone needs help understanding the activity or have other questions.</li> <li>4. Once everyone is done, allow participants to share a couple of their answers with the group if they would like.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Boundaries</b></p>	<p>To avoid reading from a paper, as the facilitator, you will have to be sure to read this activity before you present this to your group. You will be reading the information from the participants activity: <b>What are Boundaries?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the definition of Boundaries. Feel free to ask if anyone has anything to add to Wikipedia's definition however this is not necessary</li> <li>2. Review the list of Healthy Boundaries with the group</li> <li>3. Review the list of Unhealthy Boundaries with the group</li> <li>4. Hand out the activity to all participants so that they can have their own copies.</li> </ol>
<p><b>The Relationship Bill of Rights &amp; Healthy Relationships Resources</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hand out the Healthy Relationships Resources page to everyone to take home.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read out the Relationship Bill of Rights activity to everybody.</li> <li>2. Invite the participants to add another right under number 10 if they wish.</li> <li>3. Ask everyone to sign it and to take it with them as a reminder.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>The following format would be good if you have an ongoing program where the participants will see this Bill of Rights every time they attend the program.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write down the Relationship Bill of Rights on a flip chart paper or poster board.</li> <li>2. Read out the Relationship Bill of Rights activity to everybody.</li> <li>3. Ask that everyone sign all together.</li> </ol>

## Am I in a Healthy Relationship?

Here are some questions that you can ask yourself that will help you reflect on your own relationships. Think of someone you have a relationship with right now. For example) Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Parent, Friend, Relative, ect...

*Remember it's important to be honest and you will not have to share these answers with anyone.*

**Please circle your response to the statement.**

#	Statement	Your Response		
		Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
1	I trust this person	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
2	I can be honest with this person	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
3	When I need support this person is here for me	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
4	I know that this person will always be fair and will treat me equally	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
5	I sometimes have to hide who I am or things I enjoy in front of this person	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
6	Me and this person communicate very well	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
7	I spend a lot of time worrying about my relationship	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
8	Sometimes this person ignores me or makes fun of me in front of others	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
9	This person usually tells me how to dress and who I should hang around with	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really
10	This person has pushed or hit me	Absolutely	For the most part	No, not really

## Things to look out for in a new Relationship

### Warning Signs

This person doesn't like any of your friends and feels ok to mention it

Makes fun of you and then says it's only a joke

Doesn't respect your other commitments (work, school, friends, community...)

A history of behaving badly in relationships

Refusal to use a condom (or practice safer sex)

Defends the use of violence

You feel hurt, scared, unsafe, or feel like there is something wrong with you

Tries to tell you what to wear

Jealousy/possessiveness

Makes any kind of threat, direct or implied

Personality changes when using drugs and alcohol

Wants to be in charge of where to go and what to do

Constantly blames others when something goes wrong

Does things to scare you (may deny this as the motive)

Doesn't respect boundaries, especially when you say "no"

## Warning Signs of Abuse

### Abuse Might be Happening to me if my Partner:

- Looks at me or acts in ways that scare me
- Acts jealous or possessive
- Puts me down or criticizes me
- Tries to control where I go, what I do or wear
- Texts, call or IM's me too much
- Blames me for the hurtful things they say or do
- Threatens to hurt me or themselves if I leave
- Tries to cut me off of my friends and family
- Tries to force me to have sex when I don't want to
- Makes me feel uneasy or unsafe
- Hits, slaps, pushes or kicks me



### Abuse Might be Happening to me if my Partner:

- Call them names
- Text/call all the time and get mad if they don't answer
- Monitor their e-mail, Facebook or other sites
- Feel I have a right or need to know where they are
- Get jealous/angry if they hang out with friends/family
- Ask them to change their clothes, style or body size
- Get in their face when we fight
- Push, slap or hit them for any reason
- Hold them back so they can't leave if we are fighting
- Try to change their mind when they say no to sex
- Threaten to hurt them/myself if they do something I don't like or break up with me
- Feel like I can't control my temper/get mad a lot



## What YOU can do if you Think you are using Abuse

Recognize that you have a problem which will get worse if you don't do something about it.

Avoid blaming. Abuse is always a choice – you are responsible for changing your abusive actions. Using your partner, anger, jealousy, alcohol, drugs, or other stresses as excuses can distract you from moving toward the respectful relationships you want.

Admit you need help. Change is easier when you have help and support. Don't try to solve this problem alone. Learned abusive behavior can be unlearned.

Go for help before you use abuse again. Find a friend or counselor to talk with who will help you make changes. Making changes will make you feel better about yourself.



## What YOU can do if you Think you are using Abuse

Respect your partner's right to be safe and healthy as you work towards change, even if this means you can't be together. Take time out from relationships.

Because change is hard, there may be times when you try to justify your actions or feel like giving up. Remember that those who really want to change are more likely to be successful.

### **Remember:**

It takes **COURAGE** and **STRENGTH** to seek help but you and your partner deserve to live without violence.



## Good Communication

*In this activity you will provide personal examples of good communication with each title.*

1. Know your own feelings- if you feel unhappy or uncomfortable take time to figure out where the feeling is coming from.

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2. If you are having a disagreement, try not to generalize with “never” or “always”

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3. Use “I” statements.

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4. Listen.

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5. Negotiation.

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## Good Communication Continued...

6. Time and Space.

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7. Gender roles...ditch em'.

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8. Consent.

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9. Fun Stuff.

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10. Other Tips for good communication.

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# What are boundaries?

### **Wikipedia Definition:**

*Personal boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify for him- or herself what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around him or her and how he or she will respond when someone steps outside those limits.*

*'Personal boundaries define you as an individual. They are statements of what you will or won't do, what you like and don't like...how close someone can get to you'.*

- <http://en.wikipedia.org>

Boundaries are important to have for many reasons but most importantly boundaries really helps us define who we are and it also helps us protect our identity.

Below you will find some examples of healthy and unhealthy boundaries in relationships.

# What are boundaries? Continued...

Healthy Boundaries	Unhealthy Boundaries
Communicating with others about personal space	Physically touching someone without their permission
Understand what your needs are and learn how to ask for them	Expecting that others will fulfill your needs without you asking
It's ok to say no when your personal values, time, capacity and interests are not being considered	Feeling guilty when you say no
Standing your ground when a situation arises that goes against your personal morals or rights	Going against personal morals or rights to please someone else
Having a clear understanding of what you want in someone that you love and don't give up	Falling "in love" with someone you barely know
You define You!	Allowing someone else to define who you are
Take what you need and leave the rest	Taking as much as you can for the sake of taking
Give what you can and leave the rest	Giving as much as you can for the sake of giving

## Bill of Rights

I hereby declare that I have the following rights in my intimate relationships. I also recognize and respect that all other people are entitled to the same rights at all times.

- 1 To have and express my own feelings and opinions, whether or not others agree
- 2 To make decisions about myself, and to have equal decision-making power in my relationships
- 3 To say “no” to physical closeness, sexual behavior or any other act that makes me uncomfortable, at any time
- 4 To refuse a date at any time
- 5 To choose my own friends, and to maintain relationships with those friends
- 6 To participate in activities that do not include my partner
- 7 To control my own money and other possessions
- 8 To live free from fear and abuse
- 9 To end a relationship
- 10

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Healthy Relationship Resources

[www.hotpeachpages.net/lang/langdoc.html#SA](http://www.hotpeachpages.net/lang/langdoc.html#SA)

[www.scarleteen.com](http://www.scarleteen.com)

[www.dawn.thot.net/safe.html](http://www.dawn.thot.net/safe.html)

[www.whiteribbon.com](http://www.whiteribbon.com) *Men working to end violence against women*

[www.freevibe.com](http://www.freevibe.com)

[www.teenwire.com](http://www.teenwire.com)

[www.yesmeansyes.com](http://www.yesmeansyes.com)

*Project Respect from Victoria BC with information about consent and communication*

[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

*Information on gender roles, violence prevention, etc.*

[www.youthresource.com](http://www.youthresource.com)

*Part of Advocates for Youth*

[www.sacc.to](http://www.sacc.to)

*Sexual Assault Care Centre in Scarborough*

[www.fsacc.ca](http://www.fsacc.ca)

*Sexual Assault Crisis Centre in Fredericton, New Brunswick*

**The following resource centres listed are proven LGBTT\* \* friendly services**

[www.outragenl.ca](http://www.outragenl.ca)

*A site from Newfoundland on violence prevention*

Men's Resource Centre\* 1-866-672-3422 or 956-9528

Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre\* 477-1123

Rainbow Resource Centre\* 1-888-399-0005 (for rural MB and NW Ontario) or 284-5315

Evolve\* (domestic abuse counselling for women, men and children) 784-4208 (Winnipeg, MB)

[www.klinic.mb.ca/counsel-sexual.htm](http://www.klinic.mb.ca/counsel-sexual.htm)

*Information on sexual assault in 12 different languages  
You deserve to be safe: A guide for girls who with different abilities*

# Self Care & Meditation

## *Materials Needed*

- Flip Chart with Paper & Markers
- Light snack and beverage
- Candles

*Activity Type:* Spa Activities, Personal care, Relaxation

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Mental Health Worker, Health Staff

*Age Groups:* 13-17, 18-29

*Group Size:* 2-30

*Time:* 30minutes - 3 Hours (Pending on activity)

The Self -Care and Meditation activity will show you how to create a relaxing environment and feel good about yourself. Feeling good about yourself creates a confidence that will encourage you to make healthy decisions, positive lifestyle choices and reduce stress.

Self-care can be difficult for most people to achieve for many reasons, for example personal stress, a busy schedule and for many people surviving abuse. This is why it's important to complete this activity with a group of trusted people.

It's important to find a way to take care of our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs and this can be overwhelming. This activity will welcome you to simple holistic self-care without having to spend a lot of time, money and energy just trying to relax.

## Definitions

**Self-care** [is the] care of self without medical or other professional consultation

**Meditation** is the continued or extended thought; reflection; contemplation

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

**This activity provides only a glimpse at self-care and meditation. The information provided in this activity does not replace the professional opinions of health care professionals.**

## Step By Step: Self Care & Meditation

1	Review Why is Self-care Important on Page 85 in your Facilitators Guide
2	Choose an activity to do with your group from Suggested Activities for Self-care
3	Complete the Meditation activity on Page 87 in your Facilitators Guide
4	Continue with the self-care activity that your group has decided on.

## FAQ's

### **How do I tell someone that I need some personal space to meditate or do my own self-care?**

Here are some suggested statements that you can use if you are having difficulty asking for time alone.

- ✓ *I need some time to myself to I can think*
- ✓ *I can use some alone time to do my own thing*
- ✓ *I'd like to be alone for a [insert time here] and then when I'm done I'll will get back to what you need from me*
- ✓ *I need to take care of myself right now and to do that I need some personal space*

### **Where can I find more meditation exercises?**

You can find meditation exercises on the internet, library, books stores, YMCA, Community Recreation centres and Yoga studios.

# Facilitators Guide: Self Care & Meditation

## Why is Self Care so Important ?

Group Discussion (Flip chart answers)

- Why is Self-care important?
- What kind of things do you do for your own self-care?
- What are some challenges you may have achieving self-care?
- What are some solutions that may help you overcome those challenges?

Examples of self-care;

*Physical:* Nutrition, Exercise, Yoga, Touch, Sleep & Hydration

*Emotional:* Positive thinking, Laughing, Crying, Friends & Family

*Mental:* Journaling, Stress Relief, Music & Volunteering

*Spiritual:* Meditation, Smudging, Prayer & Traditional Ceremonies

This activity provides only a glimpse at self-care and meditation. The information provided in this activity does not replace the professional opinions of health care professionals.

## *Suggested Activities for Self Care*

### Mini Pedicure

This is a great activity to do with a small or large group. This activity will teach you how to do self-care with others.

#### Step by Step

1. Remove any nail polish with nail polish remover and a cotton ball
2. Soak your feet in a small tub of warm water with bath salts.
3. Moisturize your feet with lotion
4. Lightly dab a cotton ball with nail polish remover to clean toes of any lotion (If you have lotion left on your nails this will make it difficult to paint your nails evenly so be sure to clean your nails really good)
5. Paint nails any color

#### Materials needed:

Nail polish

Nail polish remover

Nail file

Small foot tub Bath salts

Body lotion

# Facilitators Guide: Self Care & Meditation

## *Suggested Activities for Self Care*

### **Mini Manicure**

This is a great activity to do with a small or large group. This activity will teach you how to do self-care with others.

#### Step by Step

1. Remove any nail polish with nail polish remover and a cotton ball
2. Soak your feet in a small bowl that you can fit your hands into one at a time
3. Moisturize your hands and cuticles with lotion
4. Lightly dab a cotton ball with nail polish remover to clean finger nails of any lotion (If you have lotion left on your nails this will make it difficult to paint your nails evenly so be sure to clean your nails really good)
5. Paint nails any color

#### Materials needed:

Nail polish	Nail polish remover	Nail file
Small bowl	Bath salts	Body lotion

### **Movie night (as a group)**

This activity allows you to enjoy entertainment with others who have common interests. When you're watching a movie make sure you are comfortably seated and are wearing comfy clothes.

#### Materials needed:

Rated G/PG/PG 14 Movie	DVD Player
TV	Snacks (Optional)

### **Journaling**

Journals help us visualize our thoughts and help us process our feelings on paper. These Journals can remain private or can be shared in a group. Create a quiet space and if you'd like to add further ambiance, have light music playing and candles burning.

#### Materials needed:

Pens (1 per person)	Journals (Book of blank paper/recycled paper)
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# Facilitators Guide: Self Care & Meditation

## Meditation Activity

*Before we get started:*

- ✓ Dim the lights
- ✓ Light candle(s)
- ✓ Remind everyone to turn off their personal electronic devices & cell phones
- ✓ Make sure you are speaking in a soft, slow voice when reviewing the steps of the meditation (practising before delivering the meditation is a good idea)
- ✓ Offer some pillows (if you have access)
- ✓ Play soft music in the background (optional)
- ✓ Have a timer or a clock with you to help you keep track of time

1. Everyone sit comfortably in your chair or on the floor. If you are sitting up make sure you are not crossing your legs and rather allowing your legs to be heavy and relaxed
2. Place your hands lightly on your lap or to your sides
3. Close your eyes. If you'd like to keep them open, focus on one object in the room
4. Inhale through your nose (do this along with your group) and exhale through your mouth slowly. Repeat 5 times.
5. Continue breathing normally as we start to get deeper into the relaxation
6. Bring your focus to your toes and start to relax each of your toes.
7. Now move up to your feet, let them fall to the sides
8. Keep breathing calmly (10 seconds)
9. Feel your legs getting heavier into the floor or chair
10. Now relax your stomach and allow your shoulders to become heavy
11. Next relax your neck and allow your head to become heavy
12. Focus on your breathing as you inhale....and exhale
13. Your mind may start to wonder and think about things you have to do later today or this week, or maybe things that have happened recently.
14. Welcome these thoughts into your mind. Take a breath and picture these thoughts or images as bubbles in the air.

15. Now by using your imagination, allow a soft wind to drift these thoughts away and come back to the room.
  - If you are having difficulty letting go of a thought than bring your focus back to your breath. It might help if you tell yourself in your mind to 'breath in' when you in inhale and 'breath out' when you exhale.
16. Maybe you've thought of a solution or an answer that you have been searching for for work or school. Allow your thoughts to come and go.
17. Acknowledge these thoughts, let them pass by and trust that you will remember them later
18. Focus back on your body. Have you started to tense your shoulders? Or maybe your squinting your eyes? Let go of these tensions and go back to relaxing your body
19. Continue to breathe... (30 seconds)
20. Allow yourself to let go of the time
21. Continue to breath...(30 seconds)
22. Acknowledge the small movements and noises of your body and bring yourself further into your relaxation
23. All you have to do right now is breath... (1 minute)
24. Now I'll ask you to bring your focus back to your toes and fingers and gently start moving them.
26. Now allow your body to gently stretch. You can bring your arms over your head, stretch your legs out, move your shoulders ever so lightly side to side. Don't get up just yet.
27. Now you're going to stretch your face by taking a big yawn and ending it with a smile
28. One last deep breath, Inhale.....exhale.....
29. Slowly start to get up out of your seat or off the floor and take one final stretch by reaching for the sky.
30. Enjoy your day ☺

**Now debrief with the group about their experience with the 10 minute meditation. Here are some example questions to get the discussion going;** How do you feel mentally? Physically? What are some thoughts that came to mind? Do you think this is something that you can do at home?

# Handout: Self Care & Meditation

## Other Forms of Meditation

- ✓ Traditional medicine picking
- ✓ Cleaning traditional medicine
- ✓ Stretching
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ Making tobacco ties (See page #)
- ✓ Smudge Ceremony (See page #)
- ✓ Walking, Running, Jogging
- ✓ Sitting by a fire
- ✓ Coloring, Painting, drawing
- ✓ Journaling
- ✓ Reading self-help books
- ✓ Playing traditional instruments
- ✓ Listening to your headphones

# Hosting A Vigil

## *Materials Needed*

- See Hosting a Vigil: Step by Step on page #

*Activity Type:* Sharing, Healing, Awareness, Closure

*Suggested Support:* Elder, Spiritual Helper, Mental Health Worker, Health Staff, Anybody

*Age Groups:* 13-29

*Group Size:* 1-100

*Time:* 2-3 Hours

*Throughout this activity we will use the Sisters in Spirit (SIS) project as an example.*

*What is a vigil?* A vigil is an activity or event that brings attention to an issue or person in a peaceful way.

*For example;* Sisters in Spirit Vigils are held every October 4th and raise awareness of the alarmingly high rates of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

Vigils come in all shapes and sizes. (most of which cost nothing)

Some idea's include: Hearing from families, balloon launch, community feast, unity march, moment of silence, candlelight vigil, gathering at a local park, prayer service

This SIS vigil honours the lives of missing murdered Aboriginal women and girls, supports grieving families and provides opportunities for healing and it's become a movement for social change.

*'We firmly believe that Sisters In Spirit Vigils are a movement for social change. In only four short years, the number of SIS Vigils has grown from 11 in 2006 to an impressive 72 vigils in 2009. October 4th is a day where we honour the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. The violence experienced by Aboriginal women and girls in Canada is a national tragedy. We must take the time to give thanks to the families who have inspired the SIS movement and who are our reason we all continue to demand action.'*

*—Sisters in Spirit*

## Step By Step: Hosting a Vigil

<b>1</b>	<p>Establish partners and host organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○Bring like-minded organizations and businesses together</li> <li>○You may need to form a committee and meet regularly</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>Create an Estimated Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○Hosting a vigil doesn't need to cost anything</li> <li>○Don't know prices of items to create a budget? Guess! The internet is a great resource.</li> <li>○Ask for donations or raise some funds with a bake sale or donation drive</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p>Keep a local focus. Share the stories of those from your community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○Invite a political leader, police chief or local celebrity to be the Master of Ceremony</li> <li>○Reach out to families and provide them an opportunity to share their story</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p>Decide on a location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○Pick a location that is well-known and is accessible for everybody (public park, monument, city hall, etc ...)</li> <li>○Consider renting a bus to bring people from a gathering point such as a university or church to your event</li> <li>○If you are holding your event in a public place, call your local city hall or police station and ask if you need a permit</li> <li>○Be mindful of weather conditions</li> <li>○Estimate how many people may attend based on how you will be promoting the event and make sure you have enough space to accommodate your group</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p>Build a volunteer base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○Find a group of people to help you on the day of the vigil</li> <li>○Think about making an official 'Call Out' for volunteers so people can register with you and you can assign them tasks (Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter are a great place to start)</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<p>Design a poster and PUBLICIZE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○Post in busy locations and bear where the event will take place</li> <li>○Email to your contacts, post on message boards and other social media sites</li> <li>○Invite the media, local newspapers, radio and TV to you vigil and have 1 contact person available for interviews</li> <li>○Take plenty of pictures of your event and share them with those involved as a 'thank you'.</li> </ul>

## FAQ's

### Where do I find partners?

- ✓Friendship Centres
- ✓Women's Shelter or Aboriginal Women's Group
- ✓Amnesty International Chapter
- ✓Student Federation or Student Council
- ✓United Church or Women's League
- ✓Worker's Union or Public Service Alliance
- ✓Band Office or City Hall
- ✓Local Aboriginal or Non Aboriginal Community Organizations

### What kind of donations can I ask for?

- ✓Promotional materials designing and printing
- ✓Media advertising
- ✓Balloons
- ✓Candles
- ✓Snacks
- ✓Beverages
- ✓Audio Visual equipment rental fees
- ✓Poster boards
- ✓Paint
- ✓Gifts for speakers
- ✓Hiring a bus to bring people safely to the event

**7** Make sign and/or create a banner

- Signs and banners are a great way for people to visualize the importance of your vigil
- Invite others to bring their own signs and/or banners to show their support for the cause

**8** Support people

- Vigils are a great way to bring awareness and honour families and sometimes this can bring up strong emotions for people, be prepared to support each other and if possible have Elders or professionals in the crowd to support those who are having a difficult time.

# A Special Thank You to...

DSIA Members

NWAC

Health Canada

Public Health Agency of Canada

Toronto Anishinawbe Health

Spirit of Life Network

