

Celebration of Survival:

Returning to the Sacred Path through Healing
Historical Trauma & Unresolved Grief



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Historical trauma (HT), defined as cumulative psychological and emotional wounding across generations, including the lifespan, is an important component of emotional, mental, and psychological experience. Tribal communities have elevated rates of trauma exposure within and across generations as well as frequent interpersonal losses, placing them at risk for unresolved, complicated, or prolonged grief as well as accompanying high risk for PTSD and depression. The HT paradigm provides a context for current trauma, grief, and loss across the lifespan by rooting them in the collective, social suffering or pathology across generations.

Dr. Brave Heart will present: an overview of historical trauma, including the historical trauma response features, and describe the Historical Trauma and Unresolved Grief Intervention. Prior work reveals that HTUG facilitates: (a) the participant's experience of not being alone in their depression and grief, (b) a reduction of stigma through the emphasis on the collective context, and (c) willingness to engage in therapy. Dr. Brave Heart has just completed a National Institute of Mental Health-funded study of the HTUG in Northern Plains reservation and Southwest urban tribal behavioral health settings and will share recommendations for future work. The presentation will conclude with an exploration of the role of the TREE Center for addressing aspects of HT in behavioral health for tribal, Latino, and other oppressed populations in New Mexico.

Presented by: