

# Webinar Transcript | Examining Wellbriety and Peer Recovery Support Services within Native American Cultures

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Welcome to the Comprehensive Opioid Stimulant and Substance Abuse Program COSSAP Webinar, Examining Wellbriety and Peer Recovery Support Services within Native American Cultures. My name is McKenzie Simmons, and I will be moderating for you today. Before we get started, I wanted to quickly highlight the learning objectives for today.

Upon completion of today's webinar, you will be able to summarize the Wellbriety Movement's guiding philosophies surrounding substance abuse and recovery, co-occurring disorders and trauma, describe how the Warrior Down Program offers recovery support, aims to prevent recidivism, provides referrals for those re-entering the community from treatment or incarceration, identify challenges around building culturally inclusive practices within PRSS and the potential impacts of cultural exclusion on recovery, also apply considerations for incorporating Native American traditions within PRSS.

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The National Criminal Justice Training Center, NCJTC of Fox Valley Technical College, is a Bureau of Justice Assistance funded tribal training and technical assistance TTA provider. NCJTC provides customized TTA focused on implementing system-wide community-based and culturally-driven strategies to address alcohol and substance misuse. TTA opportunities includes specialized on-site and virtual training, webinars, conferences, on-site meeting facilitation, peer exchange opportunities, community planning, grant implementation support, and more. TTA is available to coordinate a Tribal Assistance Solicitation-Purpose Area Three grantees, tribal Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program grantees and other tribal communities.

Altarum is the Training and Technical Assistance Center on Peer Recovery Support Services funded through the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program. Altarum believes that peer-based services are vital to the continuum of care for individuals impacted by the opioid epidemic. Altarum works with organizations and systems as they implement best practices and promising approaches related to PRSS.

Altarum supports federal, state, and local governments as well as national and community-based organizations to build a system of care that focuses on recovery, active involvement of consumers and their families, and multiple services to best meet individuals' needs and to strengthen and improve the health of communities. I'd like to welcome our presenter today. Joining us, we have Kateri Coyhis, executive director of White Bison. Kateri Coyhis of Mohican Nation is the executive director of White Bison in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

White Bison Inc. is an American Indian non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to creating and sustaining a grassroots wellbriety movement that provides a culturally-based healing to the next seven generations of Indigenous people. Kateri serves the Wellbriety Movement by providing community presentations to bring awareness to the programs White Bison offers for individual, family, and community healing. She's been providing training, delivering a variety of presentations, and offering technical assistance for over 20 years.

She's also a board member for the National Association for Children of Addiction. Kateri is co-author for a chapter in *Radical Psychology-- Multicultural and Social Justice Decolonization Initiatives* in 2018. She also received her master of Public Administration degree from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs in 2022.

I am McKenzie Simmons, and I have the privilege of serving as the behavioral health analyst for the BJA COSSAP TTA Center on Peer Recovery Support Services operated by Altarum. And I also welcome you on behalf of Tim Jeffries, our senior policy advisor for BJA who works closely with us in that center. Additionally, I would like to provide my colleague at NCJTC an opportunity to introduce themselves as well. Justine.

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

Hello, everyone. I'm so excited to be here. And I just love all of the love that the participants are showing Kateri here from Wellbriety. It just shows how much a part of Wellbriety and White Bison is ingrained into our tribal communities. So thank you for being here, Kateri.

Again, I'm Justine Souto. I am a member of the Oneida Nation, People of the Longhouse here in Wisconsin. And I'm also a member of the Bear Clan. I'm so happy to be here. Thank you. Kateri, the time is now yours.

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

Hello. My name is Kateri Coyhis. I'm a tribal member with the Mohican Nation. And I just gave you a greeting in my traditional language.

Although, I hail from here in Colorado Springs, my family is from the Stockbridge Munsee Reservation in Wisconsin. And we have Oneida relatives too. And I'm just really honored to be here with you all today. So thank you for the warm introduction and to the BJA for allowing me to be here and share some information about the Wellbriety Movement with you all.

For those of you who may not be familiar, White Bison was founded in 1988. And our mission is to provide a sustainable grassroots Wellbriety movement that provides culturally-based healing for the next seven generations of Indigenous people. For anybody who might not be familiar, Wellbriety, what that actually means is not only it's about living a sober lifestyle, but it's about being balanced emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually.

It's about healing individuals, families, communities, and nations. It's about being connected to traditional principles, values, natural laws that help guide the Wellbriety programs. It's about what we call walking the Red Road. It's about creating a healing forest.

And Wellbriety is all-inclusive. So we get a lot of our teachings from nature. So there's trees. There's different colored trees.

There's flowers. There's different color flowers. Well, there's humans, and there's different color humans. And so what we say is that there is only one race, and that's the human race.

And what you see here, this is just an Earth suit. We all have different Earth suits that we wear. But we're all part of the same race. So if this culturally-based approach happens to work for you, then you're welcome to sit in the circle.

One of the things I like to do is I like to give a little bit of history about how the Wellbriety Movement got started. White Bison was founded in 1988. The movement was founded in the early '90s.

But one of the symbols and how I got connected to the Wellbriety Movement is through this hoop of 100 eagle feathers that we have. And so this hoop was born from the vision from this native man. And so what happened in this vision is it happened at 3:00 in the morning, and there was this beam of light that came down.

And in this beam of light, this tree started to grow out of the ground into a plant. And so it went through the four seasons, spring, summer, fall, winter, grew into a big tree, got leaves. And after the leaves fell off in the wintertime and the branches fell off, then what happened is this tree turned horizontal like that. And it bent itself into a circle.

And then a dot came from the East. And it went, and it swooped down, and it attached itself to this hoop as an eagle feather and then from the South, and the West, and the North. And it did that until there was 100 feathers on this hoop.

And so this man took this vision to some elders in South Dakota. And they sat him down and said, tell us the story of your whole life. And so he sat down a really long time and told them the story of his whole life.

And after he got done, the elders instructed him to build this hoop. And they said, do you have any questions? And he says, yeah, I have one. He says, where am I going to get 100 eagle feathers?

In our culture, feathers are very sacred because they're the highest flying bird. And it helps us take our prayers up to the creator. And so even just one is very sacred.

And he's like, where am I going to get 100? I can't go to just Walmart or order them off Amazon. They said, don't worry. They'll come to you.

So he was walking down the road here in Colorado Springs downtown. And he passed this Native guy. And Natives, whenever we see another one, we always kind of check each other out first, look each other up and down. And when you recognize that you're Native, you go-- kind of give them the nod.

And so he gave him the nod, and they walked past each other. But then the guy turned around and said, hey, I don't know why, but I really feel like I need to give this to you. And he reached into his pouch, and he pulled out this eagle feather. And that was the first one that was attached to the hoop in the Eastern direction when this hoop was built in the mountains here in Colorado.

And so they started to come from all over the place without advertising or knowing what was going on. And suddenly, they stopped. And so one day, the staff said, well, that's funny. There's no more feathers coming in. And something's wrong.

And so we laid out the feathers on this big table. And we counted them. And there was exactly 100 feathers. And so this hoop was actually taken, and it was born from a prophecy that's been handed down for 400 years.

But they said, we're in this time of healing. And we know that based on a couple of different prophecies that came into fruition in the early '90s. And so one of them was that a white buffalo calf would be born. Now, those are very rare.

But a white buffalo calf was born in the early '90s in Janesville, Wisconsin. So we took this hoop up to where the white buffalo calf was born after we built it in the sweat lodge in the mountains here in Colorado. And then we had a gathering of multicultural elders from the four directions, red, yellow, black, and white.

We had 27 Indigenous nations represented. We had some elders from Tibet that came over, one of which was the teacher the Dalai Lama. We had a tribe from Africa come over. And then we had a group from Finland called the Sami people to represent the Northern direction.

And so what they did is they put four gifts into this hoop. And that was hope, healing, unity, and the powers to forgive even the unforgivable. And so everywhere that this hoop has traveled, then what we have done is we have-- the hoop brings these gifts to all individuals, and families, and communities that come across it.

So people come and drive from a really long way to offer their prayers, to bring their babies, to touch them, to see it. And we are able to bring this hoop to people's communities and do some ceremony and healing events with it. So this has become kind of like a symbol of our Wellbriety Movement and what the Wellbriety Movement represents.

And so what we did in 1999, we took this hoop on a journey. And what we did is we visited all the tribal colleges in the nation. And this one was called Journey of the Sacred Hoop-- Healing the Nations.

And what we did during that journey is we were promoting our Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps to a.k.a. our Firestarters Program and letting people know that this program existed and raising awareness about it. Then in the year 2000, what we did is we actually embarked upon a walk across the United States from Los Angeles to Washington DC. We did it to help raise awareness for domestic violence on Indian children. And at this particular point in time, I was 16 years old and going through addiction for meth, and alcohol, and a whole bunch of other drugs. But I got an invitation from White Bison to embark upon this journey.

So when we got to LA, I was two days sober, and I was going through withdrawals from meth. And nobody knew that, so I was actually detoxing in secret. But when we started on this journey, it was really the first time that I got to be surrounded by my culture. And I got to be surrounded by other people in recovery.

Now, I grew up with a dad who was in the rooms, and so I kind of knew about recovery. But this was the first time that I really sat down and paid attention. And for 3 and 1/2 months, what we would do is walk or run by day. And then we would set up a camp at night and cook a meal and have a talking circle or go to a community event.

And we did 10 conferences along the way on things like alcohol, and FAS, and teen suicides, and boarding schools, and things like that. But this journey changed the trajectory of my entire life. And so I feel really, really passionate about the work that White Bison does because I can sit here and literally tell you that this organization saved my life. And now here, 23 years later, I have the very honor of serving as executive director for the organization that saved my life.

In 2002, we embarked upon another journey. It was West of the Mississippi where we focused on the healing of Native women and children. And then in 2003, we did East of the Mississippi to focus on the healing of Native children.

And so when this hoop was built, we were instructed that we were to take this hoop to the people. And so that's what we've been doing ever since the hoop was built in the early '90s. And this hoop has traveled over 200,000 miles. And we've been up to Canada, and we've been up to Alaska.

And we actually took the hoop on a ferry where they had a raising of a Wellbriety totem pole in one of the communities up there in Alaska. And so this is not our hoop. We're just the keepers of the dear hoop. And we have to take it to where this is being requested.

And so we were instructed that when we take this hoop, we have to carry these messages. And one is that the healing time is here. One is that recovery is possible. One is that the solution is within the community.

The elders' teachings are coming back and that we have to understand the connection between past, present, and future, and then finally, that the Wellbriety Movement is here. We have a course of fundamental teachings that we incorporate into every program into our philosophies and everything that we do. And one of the things that we say is that we get all of our teachings from the Earth, from nature.

And we know that there is a physical world that you can see and there's a spiritual world that you cannot see and that they're interconnected. And so this is where we get our culture and our teachings from. And so a long time ago, our communities used to look like this.

And so our kids would grow up, our little baby trees. And they would grow into healthy men, healthy women. And then our healthy individuals would grow to be our healthy elders. And we would be the keepers of our stories and our teachings.

We had healthy leadership. We have a warrior system. We have healthy young people. And they were grounded in healing, and spirituality, and ceremonies, and language, and cultural values, teachings from our elders. They were grounded in interconnectedness.

And then something happened to us, and it took us from a community that looks like this to a community that looks like this. And instead of being grounded in those cultural teachings and that interconnectedness with each other, we have been grounded in anger and guilt and shame and fear. And so now what we see is we see alcohol use.

We see substance use. We see sexual violence. We see family violence. We see our missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and kids. We see prescription drugs and especially fentanyl, and mental illness, and suicides.

And so what we know today is that dangerous enemies have invaded our camps. And so when we very first started doing this work, it was just about alcohol. That was the main issue in our communities.

But these issues that we see today, they're like locusts that are attacking our trees. And this is our current condition. So now we have to come up with a different strategy because it's a lot more than just about alcohol now.

And so what we see is that our kids, our babies, our young people, some of them are growing up, and they're starting to go into the prisons or jails. Some of them are going into the treatment centers. Some of them are going into the court systems. And then unfortunately, we're losing some of them to the spirit world due to homicides, or overdoses, or suicides, or things like that.

And so what did it take to destroy our communities? Because the world in which you live, you did not create. It was created for you.

So what happened? What did it take to destroy our communities? So I want to issue a content warning here because sometimes we have to have these really tough and uncomfortable conversations to get an understanding about, how did we get where we are today?

And so notify the staff if you need somebody to talk to. If it gets too uncomfortable, it's OK to step out of the space. But these uncomfortable conversations are important because they help us gain an understanding of why our communities are the way that they are today.

So in 1879 in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, this was the very first Native American boarding school. This became a model for the nearly 500 schools that were set up all throughout the US and Canada. There was one goal, and the goal was to assimilate our Indigenous children into dominant culture.

And so their hair was cut. They were given English names. They were forced to speak English. They were forbidden to speak their traditional language or practice any other cultural traditions or anything like that.

And so this first one came in 1879. And it was founded by General Colonel Pratt. And General Pratt, they even had a slogan. And it was called "Kill the Indian, save the man."

And so what happened during this time is the United States government was looking at a lot of different policies and implementing a lot of different laws regarding our Indigenous people. And there was actually a study that was done, a financial study, because at that particular point in time, they were offering bounties for scouts, a certain amount for men, a certain amount for women, et cetera. And they were looking at the financial feasibility of continuing on with this policy of extermination or looking at a policy of assimilation.

And they found out it was actually more cost effective to look at assimilating our kids into dominant culture. And so the idea of these boarding schools came into place. And so what we found is that it generated a legacy of intergenerational and historical trauma.

And so what does that mean? It's a combination of immense losses, traumatic events that are perpetrated upon an entire culture. And for Indigenous communities, those losses included our culture, our language, our land, our people due to diseases and wars, our way of life, our spirituality. A long, long time ago, we were actually very, very, very good at raising families and teaching our children education in a lot of different ways that weren't in a dominant culture way.

We taught our kids botany, and astronomy, and geography, and all of these different things. But it wasn't done in that way. It was done through our stories, and it was done through our ceremonies. And that's how we taught our kids. And they were very well educated in these things.

But the way that we raised our families was taken away when we were forced into these boarding schools, or mission schools, or residential or seminary schools. And so common findings from studies on intergenerational and historical trauma, this is how people from traumatized cultures cope with their experiences. And I got to issue this content warning one more time because some people have an impulse to protect their children from the horror. And so what that means is that people became silent and never talked about what happened to them.

In 2009, we embarked upon another journey across the United States called the Journey of Forgiveness. And what we did is we gave boarding school survivors an opportunity to tell their stories, sometimes for the first time in their whole life. And not all the stories we heard were bad. But most of them were pretty bad.

And so I want to share this one particular story with you that really stood out to us. So we came across this grandma. And this grandma, she only had three fingers on one of her hands.

And so what happened is her grandbaby came home and said, grandma, grandma, guess what I learned today. And that grandbaby spoke their traditional language. And that grandma reached across and smacked that grandbaby across the face because when she was young, she was a boarding school survivor.

And every time that she spoke her language, they'd chopped off one of her fingers. And so she was horrified. She wanted to protect that grandbaby from the horror that she experienced.

And so some people never had talked about their experiences before. When we had people share their stories on this journey of forgiveness, it was the first time that they had ever shared that story in their whole life. But we did it to help raise awareness that these schools existed, about understanding the impact of intergenerational trauma on our communities today, and then to spread the message of forgiveness and healing in our communities too.

Some people had a lack of trust, and so they didn't look for attachments. Some people had a tendency to reject their own background and identify as something else as a form of protection because to identify as Native was actually very, very dangerous. Some people would fight back and protest.

And then people began to believe that feeling numb, or being angry, or acting self-destructively, self-medicating, feeling hopeless, that that was a normal way to be in the world. And so our communities grew into these very dysfunctional communities. Now, this is actually passed down through direct parent-child interactions and through interactions with the extended family and with the community.

Now, studies have found that when trauma is introduced into the system, there are these scientific studies that have shown that it literally changes the epigenetic discourse of the DNA. And so the trauma is handed down through the DNA. And so things that complicate the healing process is people have an inability to mourn because they didn't know what happened to their family and loved ones.

A lack of political power, feeling unable to change things. So why would you bother? They just felt like giving up. No sense of hope for the future. A lack of acknowledgment of this trauma by the dominant culture, which only fueled their feelings of powerlessness and helplessness.

And so what we know about intergenerational trauma today is it exists in four directions, red, yellow, black, and white. And what we know is that everything that we are experiencing today is a result from seven generations ago. And everything that we are doing today is going to affect the next seven generations of our people.

And so what we know is that there's a physical world that you can see and the spiritual world that you cannot see and that they are interconnected. And so what happens is when this trauma is introduced in that spiritual world, it starts to manifest into our communities as all these different issues that we see today, the family violence, the sexual abuse, the unhealthy relationships, the substance use, all these different things. And what we know today is that we have been looking at treating the symptoms. These are symptoms of something that's deeper, and we have to look at the actual root cause, which is the introduction of this trauma.

And so we have to understand the connectedness between trauma, and current social issues, and family healing. And so what I'm here to ask today is, do you think that this can be changed? And is it possible to go from a community that looks like this that's grounded in anger and guilt and shame and fear to a community that looks like this again, where we're grounded in healing, and spirituality, and acceptance, and commitment, and values, and interconnectedness to each other, and hope, and encouragement, and understanding? And we believe that we can go back to a community that looks like this with our healthy individuals and families.

And so how we do that is we say, here's a formula for change. A plus B plus C equals willingness to change. When A is the vision, B is a dissatisfaction with the old. And C is practical first steps because we can't keep doing what we're doing and saying what we're saying and expecting different results.

So are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? And if so, we have a process for implementing community change that can help your own communities. And so one of the ways that we do that is through our four laws of change.

The first law says change is from within. The second law says, in order for development to occur, it must be preceded by a vision. The third law says a great learning must occur. And the fourth law is you must create a healing forest.

So the first law, change is from within, the teaching says all permanent and lasting change-- and I'm going to say it again, all permanent and lasting change starts on the inside and then works its way out. You can't force people to change that don't want to change. It has to start from within you first. It starts on the inside.

Now, we must have an internal desire to make changes in our lives. We must make a conscious effort to change our intent, our choices, our behaviors, our feelings and assumptions about who we are as spouses, as parents, as family members because becoming a healthy person requires a commitment from within ourselves. So becoming a healthy family or community, it requires that same kind of commitment.

And so the teaching is about innate knowledge. And it says, inside every creature is the innate knowledge of its own well-being of how to conduct itself. So every creature on Earth is born with a blueprint inside.

The salmon, they're born with a blueprint inside. And they know what to do to be a good healthy salmon. They know they have to swim up the river and lay their eggs. And they know what to do. They do it naturally.

The bear has a blueprint inside. And that bear knows how to be a good healthy bear. It doesn't go around and try to be a moose.

That bear tries to be a bear because that's what it was born to do. It has that blueprint inside. And it has innate knowledge. Well, inside every human being is the innate knowledge of its own well-being. And so we were also born with a blueprint inside.

And so we know what to do. We have that blueprint inside. And we have the choice on whether to do it or not. We have that free will. And so the second law says, in order for development to occur, it must be preceded by a vision.

The teaching says, you move towards and become like that which you think about, not that which I think about, but that which you think about. So it's like, inside our heads, there's this little projector screen. And this is projecting a vision of some kind.

And so what are you having thoughts about? Because we're going to move towards and become like that which we think about whether it's good for us or not. So what kind of vision are you holding?

Are you holding one for your communities for having healthy families, healthy individuals, healthy youth, healthy leadership? Are you holding a vision for bringing culture and cultural teachings into your community, having spirituality? What is it that you're holding the vision for?

The law of vision ensures that your future will not be an accident. And once you develop the vision in the spiritual world, then it will give you a development plan and guide your actions to move towards the vision that you just created. So creating that vision is super important.

The third law says a great learning must occur. And so everybody has to be part of this. From baby, to youth, to adult, to elder, we all have to participate in this learning process.

And it says first, the individual must heal. Then the family can begin to heal. Then the community can start to heal and then the nation. It's going to take all of us.

What we do is we-- we'll have to use that to create a healing forest. And so the four laws of change, what we do is we say-- let's just say we get all of our teachings from nature. So let's just say we have this really sick tree in this really sick forest, right.

And we take that tree out of the sick forest. And we take it down the road and take it to treatment. And we give it all the tools, and training, and education, and knowledge that it needs to be a good healthy tree.

And then we say, OK, tree, time to go home. And it goes back to that sick forest. What's going to happen to that tree? Well, that tree is going to be sick again. And so we have to make sure that we focus on healing everybody in that whole forest.



So the four laws of change, it provides a pathway for moving from a sick force to the healthy force. And so we do that by creating talking circles, by offering trainings, by family engagement through sober leadership, community activities that all contribute to creating this healing forest. So this is what the goal is. This is the vision that we're holding.

A healing forest is an environment that is characterized by positive and shared values, nurturing relationships, interconnected lives, and the respect of one person for another. And so it's like a healthy community. It's an ecological system that nurtures, and nourishes, and replenishes itself.

And so this is the goal of that. And we want to create that healing forest model. And this is some ways that we can help do that.

So now what? What do we do with that information? I really like this quote by William White. And it says, "history does not dictate personal or collective destiny."

We don't have to keep on doing the same things that everyone else has been doing because it's not working fast enough. It's not working fast enough. We are losing our people. We are losing our kids. And that is unacceptable.

So now what? What we're trying to do through the Wellbriety Movement is we are trying to create intergenerational healing instead. And so what does that mean?

It's a combination of immense healing, community training, and a return to the cultural ways of our people by bringing back our culture, and our stories, and our spirituality, our language, rebuilding our family structures as we knew them, restoring balance emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. Now, that doesn't mean that we go back to completely traditional ways where we don't participate in some of the modern ways of life. What that means is that we have to focus on those teachings, and teach our kids that, and start to go back to that kind of belief and that kind of thinking pattern.

So how we get there, some pathways to healing from intergenerational trauma, we work on healing ourselves because change starts from within. That's the first law. --by facilitating recovery efforts, by creating healing spaces in your own communities, by addressing issues around shame, by restoring pride and cultural heritage and identity, by practicing forgiveness, by including everyone in the healing process and then helping to create a healing forest.

And then what we want to do is we want to implement culturally-based approaches at all levels of healing. So we have to gain that foundational knowledge about why our communities are the way they are in order to make those changes. And so part of that healing process is going to start with each and every one of us. And it starts when we find out what our purpose is.

And so what we started to do is to create these recovery groups, these Wellbriety groups, all over the US and Canada. And it actually is like a web. In 1991-- the Wellbriety Movement was actually born in 1998.

And it's a live forest consisting of large numbers of people who are interconnected with a focus of working on wellness. It's one message carried by many, many, many different messengers because we're in a time of healing. We're creating that vision of that interconnectedness vision.

And so the different messengers that we have in our communities, it looks like this. We have mental health. We have family services. We have peer recovery support.

We have our schools. We have treatment centers. Some of us have our church or our spiritual support, our friends, our family, law enforcement.

This is our one message carried by many different messengers because it really does take an entire village of bringing everybody to the circle. What we've been taught is that the opposite of addiction is connection. And so we have to connect to one another and uplift one another's efforts of what we're doing in the community.

And so what we know is that a community has to change together. And how we do that as we get everybody working toward the same vision and goal. We motivate people to participate.

We develop skills and knowledge through training and education, like so many of you are doing, reclaiming and implementing cultural values and traditions. And by creating a supportive environment to sustain those changes, we have to create a supportive environment for our people that are coming into recovery, out of incarceration, out of treatment, back into our communities. So we have to be able to offer a variety of recovery support services to sustain the changes that we want them to make.

So what we know is when you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. And so sometimes we just need a little help with changing our perspective. And so what we started to do is to change our approach a little bit because we know that we have some really great programs to offer, but they're not quite working fast enough with what we need.

And so what we decided to change our strategy and adjust it is that we wanted to start a recovery community, a whole recovery movement in each of the different communities. And so you'll see that there's people that are coming out of-- some people were maybe selling drugs, or participating in domestic violence, or all these different things. And what they're doing is if we were able to start a recovery community when we bring our people into these recovery movements, you'll see that the trees, the individuals, come into the circle, but the issues don't.

It stays outside of the circle because when we start to heal, these aren't things that we do anymore. When we start to heal and get into recovery, we're not selling drugs anymore. When we start to heal and get into recovery, we're not participating in violence against our families anymore.

And so these issues are not allowed in the recovery movement because they're protected. And so what we want to start doing is offering training on how to start recovery communities and recovery organizations in your communities because there are forces that are present outside of these circles that could hinder our recovery process. But they're not allowed in the recovery movement because they're protected.

And so it's like, right now, our communities are in this fall. People are kind of talking bad about it. Oh, council won't approve our programs. There's no grant funding. There's gossip, gossip, jealousy, jealousy in our own communities.

What we actually have to do is we have to look out for each other now. And we have to work on changing the consciousness in our own communities. We have to change the way we talk about ourselves.

We have to change the way we talk about each other because we can't do this alone. If nothing changes, nothing changes. But we cannot afford to be our own enemies anymore because people are dying, because we can't wait any more for the BIA, or for the funding, or for permission from our tribal councils.

So this fog limits what we can see. And we're talking and arguing about permission and money. We're waiting for the government to approve culturally-based efforts and things like that. Some people are saying, oh, it's always going to be this way.

This is the talk in our communities right now. And it doesn't have to be that way anymore because we can actually work on changing the beliefs in our communities. We can work on changing consciousness. We can work on how we uplift it.

And this is going to be a grassroots community-led effort. And that is the only way we're going to get change. And so what we know is that we are the future. And the future starts now.

We are the ones we've been waiting for. A year is going to pass by, whether we do anything or not. What do you want your community to look like in a year?

What do you want your family to look like in a year? Because the time's going to go by either way. But we are the future, and this change is going to come from the grassroots up.

So if enough of you are in recovery and you're pissed off and no one else is doing anything, then you're the ones that we're talking to. You're the ones that are sick of watching our kids die and watching our women disappear. And you, who are dissatisfied, can create recovery community organizations. You can get people trained as recovery coaches.

This is going to be your army. We have to invest in creating a peer recovery workforce. And what we are going to do is we are going to start treating what we call recovery activists, people who want to focus on recovery advocacy and change in their own communities.

And this is what your army is going to look like. And so what you can do is you can start all these different recovery efforts. There are so many different pathways to recovery.

We have AA, and NA, and 12 step fellowships, and SMART Recovery, and Wellbriety, and recovery centers and treatment, and all these different things that we start doing in our own communities. You can learn how to do that in your own community. And there's this recovery community organization in Colorado Springs. And what they actually started to do is they started to use recovery coaches to get connected to emergency rooms.

As soon as there's an overdose reported, they're on the phone with a recovery coach. And they go right over there, and they connect with the person. And they say, hey, if you want to change your lifestyle, if you want a different way, here's some resources for you.

We can get you connected to recovery support services. And bam, right away, they can get them started and getting them interested in treatment and different things like that. Then they started actually growing and having recovery coaches go to jails and prisons.

And these are actually positions that you can get funded by grants. You start building these recovery connections in your own community. So maybe you're a person who's really passionate about helping women in prison.

Or maybe you want to focus on activism by making your community a safe place to come back to. Or maybe you want to focus on helping elders or single parents. Recovery connections, recovery coach, recovery activism, and then White Bison training, these can all further develop those that are working within these systems. And this is how we start to build our recovery communities.

So how do you get going? One thing that we know is we believe that the solution resides within the community, that it's going to take everyone to heal it, that it will take place through an application of cultural and spiritual knowledge, that the healing of our communities is entirely possible, and that it's going to be generated from the grassroots up. So we will train you. We want to include everybody, red, yellow, Black, white, mixed, man, woman, transgender, LGBTQ+.

We want everybody. We want you. We want your help, and we need it. And we're not going to make as much headway unless we have you involved.

And so we can help with that. And so all of our trainings, they're peer led. They're being facilitated by people who have lived experience, whether that be through their personal lives, through friends and family.

They're based on traditional teachings and values. They're all culturally relevant. And then the really cool thing that I love about our programs is that they're easily adapted to fit unique cultural needs.

And what that means is we provide a template, a framework. We say, here's this core set of traditional teachings and knowledge. Now, you take it back to your community, and you make it your own. And you incorporate your own language, and your own ceremony, and your own traditions into what we do.

And so one of the things that I like to say is that I was doing a presentation one time for this leadership academy of all the peer recovery support workers. And they were really, really wonderful. But I had a lady in there who said, well, I never grew up knowing my cultural traditions. So how do I do that?

Well, that's OK because you can learn. You can reach out. But what culture actually is is it's a shared womb, shared values, spirituality, traditions, language, customs, art, symbols, history, stories, relationships, ancestors, behaviors.

So sometimes we have to think about culture in a different way. It's not just the culture of our ancestors. But it's our recovery culture as something that we need to incorporate too, and so just some food for thought that I like to share.

Now, some of the trainings that we have to offer in order to help build these recovery communities is we have our adult treatment and recovery programs, which is our Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps. This is a culturally-based 12-step model. We have our youth prevention programs, which is our Sons and Daughters of Tradition, Mending Broken Hearts.

That one focuses on healing from grief and trauma and especially the impacts of intergenerational and historical trauma. We have our youth treatment and recovery program called our Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Youth. We have a program called Understanding the Purpose of Life-- Health Teachings for Youth.

A lot of times in our communities, we weren't taught about the meaning and purpose to life. And so we have a program that focuses on helping young people find their purpose, and their gifts, and their talents. But it also takes a focus on education.

We have our healthy parenting program, which is our Mothers and Fathers of Tradition. And then we have connected with-- I'm partnered with the National Association for Children of Addiction. And what we did is we took their evidence-based family program called Celebrating Families. And they allowed us to incorporate a cultural overlay into the program to make it applicable to Indigenous communities.

And so it's a really great program that focuses on healing the whole family. They have five different age groups, parents, adolescents, pre-adolescents, teens, children. And then now they even have a component for babies.

They're all learning the same teachings. When they meet, the families come together. But it's done in an age-appropriate way. So if the parents are learning about communication, then the children are, and the teens are and everybody. So it's a really great program.

But I'd like to put a little bit of emphasis on our Warrior Down Recovery Coach Program because what this is is it's a relapse prevention and recovery support program. So we call it Warrior Down because it's the cry that's used to signify that a warrior has been wounded or incapacitated in some way and needs help. And so this program creates a response team that provides the support and finds resources to get that warrior individual back into the recovery process.

This is a peer-to-peer program that is designed to equip individuals in recovery to provide recovery support and community referrals in their community. It also parallels as a recovery coach program. So we have a recovery coach component for people that it's to--

When we train facilitators, it's designed to support the people that are coming out of incarceration or out of treatment back into the community. And so what we do is we essentially teach people how to bring together those different community resources to help that individual be successful and be able to support and maintain their recovery process. We also have a program for collegiate recovery that we're coming out with.

And so again, this is a structured approach for Warrior Down to create a community support system to help with relapse prevention, reduce recidivism. Individuals get trained to provide peer recovery support services. And that's how we operate with that particular program. It's a really, really great program that I want to feature.

And I'll close with this is that I really like this quote by Margaret Mead. And it says, "never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." And so we know that we have to make these changes ourselves.

And so really quickly, I want to share about a couple of upcoming projects that we're working on. One is going to be really important that we're going to start developing what we call Well-Anon. And Well-Anon is going to be geared towards friends and family members of all addictions recovery.

It doesn't matter what you're in recovery from. It's to support the friends and family members. There's some meetings that are going on right now on Tuesday nights, which I'm happy to share a little bit later in the chat if anybody wants to join this group. It is so awesome.

And the person who facilitates it has been a member of the friends and family fellowships for a really long time. And we're going to start focusing on whole family recovery. We want to develop a life skills program because in our communities, they're very dysfunctional. And we're not necessarily taught how to do and learn some of those really important adulting skills that we need as adults.

And so we're going to talk about how to change a tire, how to do financial management, and how to do all this stuff in a culturally-based way. We're going to be increasing our efforts for incarcerated individuals, especially our Native women and our veterans that are in prisons. And so we have a whole effort of being able to offer free training at prisons not only for volunteers, and staff, and people from surrounding communities, but for free materials for our incarcerated women that are in there in prisons.

We're creating a program to help with the deaf community. We have actually translated our Medicine Wheel and 12 steps into sign language for the deaf community. And we're starting to work on some Spanish translations of some of our books and programs.

We actually did our very first bilingual training for our Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps in Texas a couple of months ago. And it was really awesome to have people come up, our relatives from Mexico, and get trained and start implementing programs there.

And then we're developing a collegiate recovery starter kit. What that means is we want to have a starter kit for people that want to start Wellbriety meetings and programs on their university or college campus. And we want to get them going in all of our tribal colleges too.

And I know they're going to put some of the links in the chat. But we have some additional resources for anybody who might want to get involved or get connected. We have Wellbriety meetings on Zoom.

You can actually log on to our website and get links to Wellbriety meetings that are in your area, whether that be in person or online. And then we partnered with this place called intherooms.com. And they're a platform for every recovery pathway fellowship, anything that you can possibly imagine. You can attend the meeting right from the comfort of your own bed if you want. And on Tuesday nights and Thursday nights at 6:00 Mountain Time, I believe then we have the Wellbriety meetings.

We are actually also going to be participating in our Wellbriety All Addictions Recovery Gathering. We're hosting it in Phoenix in September. And it's a gathering of people from all multiple pathways to recovery.

We're going to have AA speakers and NA. And we have a CODA speaker. And we have people come in. It's not your traditional conference where you get CEUs and you get education and all these things.

It's just focused on personal growth and healing as a whole. And so check the additional resource links in the chat. And with that, if you're interested in bringing training to your community, or participating in trainings that we're already having, or doing virtual trainings, please feel free to reach out to us.

We definitely can come to your community to offer training. And we have a lot of really wonderful resources, books, literature, things to celebrate, recovery milestones, things like that. You can log on to our store, which is [thewellbrietystore.org](http://thewellbrietystore.org).

We're very active in our social media. And we do a lot of promotional giveaways and things like that. June is actually focused on men in Wellbriety. And so we'll do a lot of daily inspirational quotes.

We have a free meditations app that you can download on your phone or get the meditations emailed to you. So there's a lot that we have to offer. And please feel free to get connected to us.

That being said, thank you-- anushiik, that means thank you in my language-- for your time, for your attention. And we would love to come support you in your work, in your communities, in any way that we can. So please let us know how we can be of service. Thank you.

Absolutely. Thank you, Kateri. That was so fabulous. It's always wonderful to hear you speak. Lots of love coming from everybody in the chat.

I know that there were several questions. Just want to do a quick recap on the COSSAP Resources Center, so that we can get to those questions and move on. So featured resources available, including funding opportunities, COSSAP grantees, site profiles of the data visualization tool, information about demonstration projects, peer-to-peer learning, and recordings of all previous COSSAP webinars covering a wide range of substance use disorder-related topics and strategies.

The COSSAP TTA program offers a variety of learning opportunities and assistance to support tribal, local, and state organizations, stakeholders and projects, and building and sustaining multidisciplinary responses to the nation's substance misuse crisis. Of particular significance is the ability to request training and technical assistance, whether you are a COSSAP grantee or not. TTA can be requested at the link shown on your screen.

For more information, you can also contact the COSSAP TTA Program at [cossap@iir.com](mailto:cossap@iir.com). So without much further ado, let's go ahead and get to those questions. Randy asked, how does a non-Native American LAC develop the competency to offer assistance to help?

That's a really great question. We have training available that you can participate in to get more knowledge on some of those culturally-based approaches. We also have a really great book for professionals that are working with Indigenous clients.

It's called *Understanding Native American Culture*. Feel free to visit our Wellbriety store to get the book. Or feel free to attend any of our trainings.

Thank you. Another question from Patrick. How can recovery coaches promote Wellbriety without being too pushy?

Well, I think-- and hello, by the way. I think that what's really important is that through recovery activism, that we are able to advocate for the importance and relevance of culturally-based approaches. So if you're coming from a community that may not value that, that we take opportunities to do advocacy and to show why that stuff is important, I think that in terms of just being able to continually offer that as an approach, that's really important just to consistently show up because some people aren't familiar. Or they might not know what that means. So just keep showing up, and just keep on using your voice to help elevate the message.

And Patrick, too, I know you. He's my 'kyase' from Oneida. I am so proud of you for the work that you're doing, Pat. But also, an invitation is not being pushy. It's up to the people to respond to that yes or no.

And as long as you keep making the invitation to people to come and be a part of the programming that you offer, then one of these times, they're going to just think about that and remember that you're there for assistance and that there are programs out there.

So inviting is not being pushy. It's just making the opportunity available to people. And when they're ready, they'll accept that invitation.

Absolutely. Another question, how can we get our communities interested in the Wellbriety programs? How can we get more family members involved, not just the person in recovery? How can we get help from tribal leaders to organize Wellbriety trainings and community programs? And I'm happy to break that down for you if that makes it a little easier.

Yeah, I think that sometimes what we're able to do is we are able to come to a community and give an overview of the Wellbriety Movement and the services that we have to offer. We don't even have to come to your community. We can do presentations online, to tribal leadership, to program heads, to community members.

That's one really great way is to let people know. We have a ton of literature if you want to get information out that way. And sometimes we do experience where our leadership isn't always supportive.

And that's OK because sometimes it's better to ask forgiveness than permission. So sometimes how we do that is we do that through getting written into grants to be able to provide trainings that way or things like that. So if you're ever interested in learning more about some of our programs, we can email you information.

We have a training information booklet that offers a brief description of all the programs that we have and how to get training in your community. Now, the cool thing is that sometimes you can do that without funding. And how you do that is as long as you have a space, you provide the A/V equipment, which is flip chart paper, and markers, and a projector, and a screen.

We can actually-- if you host and provide the snacks, then we will have what's called a public training option, where we can come to your location. You provide the space. We provide the training. And you can get a scholarship to go to the training for free.

And so it'll come to your community. You don't have to pay for it, except for the snacks and stuff like that. And it's a really great way for people who are on a limited budget or might not be getting approval from leadership.

Now, as far as being able to get the family more involved, I highly recommend our Wellbriety and Celebrating Families Program because it's something for the whole family. And it's an evidence-based program. It makes it a lot easier to write it into grants and to get funding.

And it's just a really, really great program. It is in alignment with our Cycle of Life teachings. And I highly recommend that as a great starting point to get people more involved and to get the family involved in the recovery process as well. So hopefully, I answered all those points.

Kateri, would you say that maybe that's part of the first step in creating a healing forest in your own tribal community?

Well, I think that it really depends on the community. I think that one of the things that's really important is to get that foundational knowledge about the impacts of trauma and healing from it. And then we actually have ways to go in and gauge the readiness of communities for change.

So we have a way to implement what's called the Community Readiness Model that was designed by Dr. Barb Plested and Dr. Pam Jumper-Thurman. And what we do is we'll get in communication with about eight or so individuals of the community that are well informed. That doesn't mean that they have all this education and blah, blah, blah.

It just means that there are people in the community who know what's going on. We can call them and interview them. And we put together this kind of scoring to find out what is their readiness score to bring change into their community. And then from there, we will go into the community and do a whole community visioning process.

And so we'll work with the leadership. We'll work with the program heads. We'll work with the community to do a mind mapping process to build a vision of what you want your community to look like.

And then based on the feedback that we get, we create this vision book. And then from there, we are able to come into the community and customize the trainings that we are able to offer based on the issues that people are telling us that exist in those communities. So it's a really great process and a really great way to start building and developing those recovery communities.

Some people are like, man, we really need help with our families. And bring all the kids in, so we can offer them a la cart, so to speak, the trainings. We can just start doing trainings.

Or sometimes we even have people who go, hey, we don't have money for training. But we want to start a meeting, at least, a Wellbriety meeting in our community. Great. We have a group starter kit that you can get on our store for \$45. And start a meeting. You don't even need training in order to do that. So there's a lot of different ways to get going.

Thank you for that. And I just wanted to comment too about getting the family members involved. Would you say that one of the things you could do is just simply ask the person you're coaching who they would like to see come and support them? And in which ways do they want support? Because that might look different for everybody.

Sure. And I think that when we start implementing our Warrior Down Recovery Coach Program is that they have sort of a plan of what they're going to do. So that could mean involving family members in their treatment plan. So that's definitely a doable way to do that.

I really like our youth prevention programs too, our Sons and Daughters of Tradition, because it starts bringing in a whole bunch of people from the community because you might have somebody who's a storyteller. And you have them come in and tell stories. Or you might have somebody who teaches basket weaving when you have them come in.



Or you might have an elder that shares the longhouse teachings. And they come, and they teach that. So we start to pull in all these different people from the community to help support our young people.

So I've got a few more questions for you. And we should have time to get to everybody's questions, which is fantastic. Does the White Buffalo have ties for communities to help speak out for our MMIW?

I would say in a limited way, what we did is in 2016, I want to say, we had an intern come out from Duke University. And she helped us to develop a documentary. And the documentary is called *Silent No More*.

Now, you can view it for free on YouTube. And what she did is she actually traveled out to Lame Deer Montana and I think Pine Ridge and some other places where she interviewed some families of some high-profile cases that told the story of what happened, whether or not they were able to find out what happened to their relative and that whole process that they would do. It's a really powerful documentary that we are able to help raise awareness for our MMIW issues.

And we offer these community screening kits. If you call in and you say, hey, I want to get a Silent No More kit. We'll send it out to you for free. You can show it to the community to help raise awareness there.

Right now, I would say that's probably the extent of the resources that we have to offer. But we're working on-- we got a grant a couple of years ago. And the grant was to develop a culturally-based self-help group for victims of homicide. And so we have to tailor it a little bit since the grant is over. But we're going to be able to start offering that as an additional training or program that people can get these groups going in their own communities as well.

Thank you. Someone said, I love the fog analogy. It reminds me of the iceberg analogy. You only show what you want others to see. Powerful.

Let's see. How often is the youth training available?

I would say as often as it gets requested. Sometimes we have them virtually. And then sometimes we just have them in person.

You can contract with your organization to offer that training. I would say right now, we're starting to schedule into the fall and winter seasons. So if you want to bring training to your community, reach out to us as soon as possible, so we can schedule it for you.

Could you talk about the re-entry program?

Yeah. Just to elaborate a little bit on our Warrior Down Recovery Coach Program, there's a re-entry component to it. And I think I probably gave a little bit more of an overview of that. But I would say it like this.

When we first started it-- gosh, this must have been 20-some years ago that we started our Warrior Down Program. What we did is we set up in this community in Idaho to where individuals-- we had a list of individuals who were coming out of incarceration. And they were coming back into this one particular community.

And we had it set up to where we could get them automatically connected to sober living, that they would start getting connected to local recovery support group, whether that be through Wellbriety, which in our case, it was, Wellbriety meetings, where they had people that were ready to be sponsors and ready to get them in. We had it set up to where they would get job opportunities. They were shown how to fill out their resumes.

They were able to get some funding to get work boots, or help them get their IDs, or help them whatever the case may be to help support them in their reentry process. And I think we had 45 guys in our first group. And out of that, only one of them relapsed. And the guys went and tracked him down, and got him out of the bar, and got him into treatment, and helped his family pay bills and do that while he was in treatment.

So it was very, very successful. And we're connected to the Healing for Reentry Program in the state of Washington, who does a lot for our incarcerated relatives, getting them connected to those reentry services from all over the state. And then we're starting to even start getting groups going in the prisons first, so that they're able to support and maintain their recovery in the prisons or jails and then get individuals trained to start wellbriety groups and meetings. [INAUDIBLE].

So the training is awesome. And I highly recommend it for anybody who wants to learn more about how to build those in your own communities. Check out our website too, [whitebison.org](http://whitebison.org).

All of our public training opportunities are posted on our website. So hopefully, you can see that link in the chat to see our upcoming trainings and events. So if you want to attend one that we already have scheduled, whether that be virtual or in person, then feel free to do that.

Thank you. Another question, do you have to go through training to get certification to teach these?

So what we do is we do a training of facilitators type of approach. So when people go through our training, they get certified to facilitate and implement the program in their community or in the work that they're doing. So we don't do a train the trainers.

But you do have-- in certain programs, you do not have to go through the training in order to start groups. For example, our Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Men and Women, you can go ahead and just get materials through our store and start Wellbriety meetings and groups in your community. You do not have to have training to do that. But it does help. And if you go through the training, then you will definitely get the certification to be a certified facilitator.

Thank you. Someone else said what they've seen in their community is changing the way recovery is obtained is stuck in the colonized way of thinking, which may work for some, but not others. So choices in their area is often very limited and met with resistance within treatment itself.

You're not alone. You're not alone in that. And I think that's why we want to start training recovery activists and show them how to advocate for this culturally-based approach. We've also been doing that ourselves at a federal level and being able to participate in some advisory groups, and committees, and boards, and things like that that will help with people that are issuing the grants to be recognizing the importance and value of a culturally-based approach.

So I think that in the coming years, you'll see a lot more of that language, and verbiage, and opportunities to incorporate that because we're really pushing for having the appropriate evaluation tools to evaluate our culturally-based approaches. Right now we have evaluation and data collection, all these things. We have this evidence-based approach.

And what they're only doing is they're only evaluating emotional, mental, physical. And they're leaving out that spiritual component. And we have to have that in order to have that culturally-based approach.

They're using their own measuring tools. And so we want to start helping to create culturally-based evaluation tools, culturally-based approaches. But meanwhile, some of the things that we're doing is we're saying, hey, we don't need your permission to implement our cultural ways. We've been doing this for hundreds of years.

But if you want to get on board and help offer some funding to help us out and get people greater access to recovery support services, then awesome. But anyway, we're just kind of doing our own different advocacy for that. But we'll start bringing some of that in into our recovery activism training and showing people how to build RCOs and how to build recovery communities.

Kateri, somebody else spoke about this earlier wondering about how to incorporate or apply Wellbriety to an individual Native culture. And somebody else here just commented that they'd like to have a system of training on the four directions and the four seasons. And is that training available?

We do incorporate some of that in our different trainings. If you want to learn more about some of those Four Seasons of Recovery, for example, we have a YouTube channel. And you can watch some of the videos on YouTube for free. So that's a really great way. But yeah, can you say the beginning part of the question again about incorporating Wellbriety?

Sure, about applying the four directions, and teachings of the four directions, and things of that nature. But I love that idea of your YouTube channel, so what an awesome resource that is. And I would also encourage everyone to reach out to your own tribal community elders. Or if you have some kind of a cultural preservation program, they should be able to take any of these concepts and put it into the language that makes sense for your own community.

Yeah, that's the really wonderful thing about this Wellbriety approach is that it can be incorporated with your own language and ceremonies into any tribe in any community. And because of that, not only are we able to work with our communities here in the US, but our First Nations relatives in Canada. And we've actually been expanding into Ireland, and Australia, and New Zealand, and UK, and Mexico. This is a really just great template that is highly customizable to your own communities.

Another question was, do you think it's appropriate for non-Native Americans to run Native groups like Wellbriety?

We have people that are. When we do, we just really highly recommend that you bring in an elder or a person from the local community, so that they can be there to offer that spiritual guidance or guidance on protocols and you can be really knowledgeable about that. So we do have some people that might initially start facilitating. But bring in people from the local community to help make your group more successful and knowledgeable about that particular community's ways.

It looks like someone else has mentioned that they utilize Wellbriety for AA within their community. Let's see. Someone asked, they know of two Wellbriety sites-- and I'm probably going to go to this-- near Okmulgee in Oklahoma. Are there any closer sites?

I don't know off the top of my head. But if you're looking for a Wellbriety meeting near you, I would highly recommend going to our website and looking at the circles and meetings that we have registered through our website. Please also feel free to send an email to us at [info@whitebison.org](mailto:info@whitebison.org). And we can speak to some of the locations that are closer to your area.

But we really have a lot going on in Oklahoma, especially. We just came from a trip there through Southern plains and everything. They're offering a lot of different trainings. And it's really been an honor to watch the Wellbriety Movement grow in the state of Oklahoma.

Absolutely. Someone else asked, do you teach about the seven values or seven generations?

We do talk about the impact of the seven generations, especially through our teachings around intergenerational historical trauma. We do incorporate that into our trainings.

Well, I love that you talk about the next seven generations and how you address the work you do in the communities now is definitely going to affect the next seven generations just as the trauma experienced in those boarding schools has affected generations beyond that. And I know that for sure-- the Journey for Forgiveness that White Bison did several years ago, what a powerful opportunity it was for so many people to begin their trauma recovery. And I have ancestors too that went to Carlisle Boarding School.

But the seven grandfather teachings, if that's something that you're referring to, that's specific to a culture, the Ojibwe culture, Anishinaabe. And other cultures will definitely have their own sets of values similar to that that would support that, like in my Oneida culture and some of you on this call, might be the teachings of the good mind. Everyone has that. And Navajo, it's K or ka. I know that there's just those different values that all can be adopted into and infused into this Wellbriety practice.

I'm going to read a few more comments here as we're rounding out our time together. Someone mentioned *The Red Road to Wellbriety* book has been so powerful in my recovery and to bring awareness of how all the dysfunctions we experience fogs who we are as Natives in clouds or spirit. The book has brought powerful awareness of finding who we are as Natives to be able to be a part of the healing forest and to use the tools we have in and on our Native lands for our healing. Thank you.

Thank you. Stay tuned for *The Red Road to Wellbriety* book two that we're currently working on.

And someone asked where can they get *The Red Road to Wellbriety* book. And that is located on your website, correct?

Correct. You can order it through [thewellbrietystore.org](http://thewellbrietystore.org). Or you can order it through Amazon.

OK. And one last question. Someone mentioned they are a youth court coordinator/case manager and work with troubled youth. They would like some information on utilizing that and helping them on the road to recovery.

Absolutely. We've worked with some tribal wellness courts or some courts in being able to get them assigned or sentenced to our Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Youth Program. We do have some experience with that, which has been really successful because it's-- I really love this Medicine Wheel 12 Steps for Youth Program because it's still the 12-step process, but it's done in more of a storytelling way. So it incorporates some of the stories about the good wolf, bad wolf and some of those different really awesome teachings.

But what I really liked about it is when I was 16 and I very first got into recovery, I remember going to my very first AA meeting in Tennessee while we were on the walk. And it was great. And I'm so grateful for AA and all the fellowships.

But it didn't really speak to me because a lot of the people in the room, they were older. They were talking about losing their house, and their spouse, and their families. And those weren't the issues that I was facing as a young person in recovery.

I was facing going to school, and peer pressure, and navigating my emotions. And how do I heal the relationships and my family that I damaged through my addiction? --and just kind of going through life and figuring out how to adult and things like that in a sober way.

And so when we developed this program, what we did is we went to a juvenile detention facility in the state of Montana. And we got permission to film with the young people in that detention facility. And so it's young people's stories.

It's young people's issues. It's a really, really powerful program. So I highly recommend that as being one of the avenues that could get connected to the work that you're doing.

Thank you. And our final question as we close out our time, there are people that confuse spirituality with religion. And how do you approach this with sensitivity?

That's a pretty good question. I think that what we do is we talk about, through our programs, is being connected through spirituality in a lot of different ways. And so that could be through your religion.

That could be through the Native American church. That could be through ceremony. That could be through just being connected to nature, and meditation, and things like that. And so when we take a look at that, we just let people know that as long as they have something, some kind of higher power in their lives, that that's what we encourage them to tap into.

I just responded to that one too in the Q&A. So I loved your answer for that, Kateri. I also encourage people to recognize that everyone has spirituality. And spirituality can be your way of life. It can be your upbringing within your family context or your tribal culture context.

And I remember my brother saying that when he was getting sober, he wasn't quite sure he understood what it meant to have a connection with his higher power. But in the springtime, he was raking leaves. And underneath all the dead, crunchy leaves, he saw the sprouting and the growth of some of those early spring flowers.

And to him, that was the beginning. It was his connection to a spirituality, knowing that renewal and growth comes from sometimes even the ugliness of where all these dead leaves are. And it's just a start. It's what empowers you to begin practices of religion that can help you become stronger. And that's just different for everybody.

Thank you, Justine. And this concludes our webinar today. Thank you again to our presenter, Kateri, for a great webinar and a great discussion today.

We had so many wonderful questions. And to our attendees, we hope you can join us again for future webinars. Thank you so much. Have a wonderful day.