

# Cultural Safety in the Face of Pandemic: Historic and Contemporary Realities Through a Trauma Informed Lens

Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health UBC Centre for  
Teaching, Learning, and Technology & UBC Learning Circle

A Webinar Presented by Harley Eagle

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# Acknowledgments

- ▶ Land and Indigenous People & Hosts
- ▶ Influences- Past, Present and Future
- ▶ Challenge of this format and other western influences
- ▶ Nature of this talk can be difficult



# Objectives for this session

- ▶ The importance of Cultural Safety in this time of global crisis
- ▶ The importance of understanding Trauma and current realities for Indigenous Peoples and the practice of trauma informed care during this time of pandemic
- ▶ Expanding the purview of Cultural Safety and what that might mean for the healthcare system and providers
- ▶ Comments & Questions



# Introduction: A little about me

- Indigenous Rights Advocacy
- Dismantling Racism/Oppression
- Conflict Resolution Practitioner/RJ
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Cultural Safety Facilitator



# Cultural Safety in this time of global crisis

- ▶ Now is the time for CS
- ▶ Challenges:
  - ▶ When stressed we tend to forget new learning
  - ▶ We operate from a triggered place



# Cultural Safety

An environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together. - **R. Williams**

## **Emerging Concept: *Cultural Humility***

a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. – First Nations Health Authority



# Trauma informed care principles during this time of pandemic

- ▶ Prevalence of Trauma
- ▶ We don't need to know the details of an individual's traumatic experience/s but we can learn the context to provide us some idea about what might be coming up for all of us but especially for Indigenous People
- ▶ Applying Trauma Informed Care response practices On-line PDF([COVID-19 Considerations for a Trauma Informed Response for Work Settings \(Organizations/Schools/Clinics\)](#)) - Trauma Informed Oregon/Portland State University



# Trauma Informed Care practices during this crisis

- ▶ Support and model regulation
  - ▶ Take time for breathing, grounding exercises and physical movement
  - ▶ Model calm behaviour
- ▶ Prioritize relational practice
  - ▶ Keeping physical distancing as top priority encourage creative connections to reduce stress
- ▶ Explain why and what to expect
  - ▶ In uncertain times knowing/transparency is stress reducing
- ▶ Reframe behaviours
  - ▶ Emotional regulation will be difficult in time of fear and chaos





# Historic and Current issues to Remember

- ▶ History of epidemics
- ▶ Disease in Residential Schools
- ▶ Indian Hospitals
- ▶ Lack of trust for government policies
- ▶ Impact of colonial infrastructure on the lives of Indigenous People and the challenges it has created
- ▶ Relationship and concern for Elderly population
- ▶ Remote communities and differing world views
- ▶ Systemic Racism



# Thinking Beyond Cultural Safety in Health care- Creative Collaborations

- ▶ Thinking beyond our siloed way of working keeping other systems in mind
- ▶ Initiating new partnerships and thinking creatively about possible collaborations
- ▶ Looking too and learning from other systems and their creative responses in this time of crisis
- ▶ Learning from our steps and learning from each other



# Q & A



Thank you!

