

Notes from Open Space Topic Convenors

What was your topic or practice?

The Relationship between Indigenous Healing and RCC and Healing Healthcare

What were major discussion points?

- Relationships to Indigenous communities and healing are part of the shadow of western medicine and relationship-centered care (RCC) and Healing Healthcare.
- There is pain in non-representation and lack of voice.
- Indigenous ways are often respected and/or integrated while the full plight of the people is ignored—a tendency to love the glamour and not the guts.
- Intentions are often good, but context is critical, so is consultation and involvement.
- There is a need to be careful of generalizing about Native people and cultures.
- There is a need for learning—but as equals and full partners.
- There are issues regarding who uses Native practices—there is an importance to move towards universal representation to earth and nature and away from the need to romanticize it via calling it “Native American.” There are many universal spiritual ways that honor all religions and people by not being culturally specific. (I.e., St. Charles’ chapel.)
- History is problematic—even when intentions and efforts are honorable, many Native communities may still react from a place of woundedness. This should be seen as natural and not discouraging. Its okay to learn from errors—be honest about your limits or misunderstandings.
- Gatherings, programs, and services should always ask, “Who is missing—what voices are not being heard.”
- Addressing and ending racism should be fundamental to RCC and Healing Healthcare.
- There are good examples of successful partnerships—its not all bad news. (Group members had examples from Winnipeg, Canada, Hawaii, and Warm Springs.)
- We need to balance an honest about racism and a history of pain, with the desire to not address issues because of risk or the fear of making a mistake.
- Racism impacts all: those present and absent. Everyone loses when valuable contributions are left out and/or stereotypes are enforced.
- There is a wealth of wisdom Indigenous communities have to offer, as partners, to RCC and Healing Healthcare: power of prayer, relationship, relationship to natural world, the honoring of medicines and how we relate to them, the role of stories, healing as a journey, and healer as sacred, are all examples.
- Addressing issues of disparity is healing for all, and teaches, implicitly the values of RCC.

What did you learn?

Whom should we contact for more information?

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Who helped create this new practice?

Mike Marcott, Karen Castlebaum, Lynn Drover, Robin Henderson, Terri Turner, and Jonathan Ellerby.