



INDIGENOUS WELLBEING CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Nurturing Communities, Fostering Healing

Pre-Conference - Monday, February 5, 2024

5:00 – 8:00 PM Pre-registration – Fantasyland Conference Foyer

Day 1 - Tuesday, February 6, 2024

7:30 AM **Traditional Ceremony** – Ballroom

7:30 AM **Registration Opens** – Foyer

7:45 – 8:45 AM **Breakfast** – Ballroom

9:00 – 9:45 AM **Welcoming Masters of Ceremony**

Francis Alexis & Eugene Alexis

- **Opening Prayer & Remarks**
- Chief Tony Alexis
- AFN National Chief Cindy Woodhouse
- Dr. Parminder Thiara - Regional Director General, ISC

9:45 – 10:45 AM Keynote Speaker – Theoren Fleury

Presentation Title: Power of me too

Description:

The audience will hear about the early years when Theo first discovered the game of hockey and fell in love with the sport the first moment he stepped on the ice. Theo will share with the audience the issues that he faced as a survivor of abuse and yet succeeded at an elite NHL career and earned an Olympic Gold Medal. He will provide insight on how he overcame his painful past, alcoholism, and drug addiction to become an inspirational Victor over life's obstacles.

10:45 – 11:00 AM Morning Break

**11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Keynote Speaker – Professor Leigh Sheldon , R.
Psychologist**

Presentation Title: Bridging the Divide with Clinical and Cultural Approaches

Description:

Indigenous Holistic Well-being provides individuals with the necessary tools and resources to aid them in their self-discovery and healing journey. This presentation titled "Bridging the Divide" employs the Two-Eyed Seeing approach by Albert Marshall's Indigenous Healing. It highlights the connection between the mind, body, spirit, and kinship in order to support physiological changes related to ethnostress, which is linked to Indigenous trauma. By incorporating body-based trauma techniques that recognize the wisdom of the body, this approach promotes healing from the "Soul Wound," a term coined by Eduardo Duran. This presentation recognizes the limitations of Western approaches to healing and incorporates Indigenous perspectives to create a more inclusive and practical method of promoting health and wellness. Leigh shares research from Polyvagal, Window of Tolerance (Stephen Porges & Deb Dana), Three Parts to the Brain (Dan Siegel), and Somatic Experiencing (Peter Levine). The "Bridging the Divide" aims to create a more comprehensive framework for promoting health and wellness. This approach incorporates the healing of the heart, soul, and body, which supports intergenerational trauma.

12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch – served in Ballroom

- Guest Speaker(s) – To Be Confirmed

1:00 – 2:00 PM Keynote Speaker – Dr. Darlene Auger

Presentation Title: Iyiniw Healing Ways: Relevant then Relevant Now.

Description:

This wisdom of our ancestors takes us back to the values and laws of holding one another in a relational way. From the cosmos to the earth beings, WE are the medicine we need. When we add "WE" to illness, it becomes "WELLNESS". The answer lies in our ability to hold another together; to remember that we are never alone; to truly understand what it means to be in relationship with the trees, the plants, the lakes, the rivers, the mountains, the 4 legged, the winged, the finned, the crawlers and the scaled the way our ancestors were. For thousands of years our relationship with the earth and all its beings, including human beings, kept us WELL and thriving, living a good life (Miyopimâtsiwin). In the last 500 years since colonization, we have lost our footing but we know that WE have the answers for living a good life, WE know what it means to be WELL, we must teach other human kind and we must do it now!

2:00 – 2:15 PM Afternoon Break

2:15 – 3:15 PM Keynote Speaker – Brenda Reynolds, MSW

Presentation Title: The Path to Reconciliation

Description:

Brenda's work started with Indian residential school trauma in Gordon's Indian Residential School, Saskatchewan. In June 1988, 17 girls disclosed that they were being sexually abused by one of the residential school staff members leading to the first litigated case of sexual abuse by an Indian Residential School staff member in Canada. Later the litigation was a catalyst for creating the 2007 Canada Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

Healing from personal trauma is the path to reconciliation. Reconciliation is now being recognized internationally as the pathway to peace. Peace with oneself, family, communities, and nations. You will listen to the various paths of personal reconciliation taken by former Indian residential school students, their families, and Canadians.

3:15 – 4:30 PM Group Sharing Circle

Closing Prayer for the Day

Closing Song

Day 2 - Wednesday, February 7, 2024

7:45 – 8:45 AM Breakfast

9:00 – 9:30 AM Prayer and Recap

9:30 – 10:30 AM **Keynote Speaker – Dr. Michael Yellow Bird**

Presentation Title: The Power of Ceremony: Indigenous Contemplative Practices, Neurodecolonization, and Indigenous Mindfulness.

Description:

In this presentation, Dr. Michael Yellow Bird will discuss colonization, decolonization, and neurodecolonization, and their role in Indigenous Peoples' health and well-being. He will share how he uses western science to describe what is happening to the chronically stressed, traumatized colonized mind and body of Indigenous Peoples. He discusses traditional Indigenous contemplative practices and what's happening in the brain and body according to western science and how Indigenous contemplative practices create resilient coping in the brain and body.

10:30 – 10:45 AM Morning Break

10:45 – 12:00 PM **Keynote Speaker –Gene Tagaban, Native Wellness Institute**

Presentation Title: Choose Respect: Men's Healing and Wellness Journey

Description:

What we have learned in the Indigenous Healing Movement is that men need to engage other men in healing. In Choose Respect, we utilize storytelling and cultural teachings. We share successes and challenges to engage men's healing and wellness within the community. We provide strategies that are rooted in cultural tradition. The time is now for men to take the lead in stopping the abuse, violence, hurt and harm towards others and themselves. Let us explore and re-indigenize what it means for men to heal and Choose Respect.

I CHOOSE RESPECT!

I choose to respect women

I choose to respect the rights of women.

I choose to speak-up for the rights of women.

I choose to be an advocate for the safety of women.

I choose to learn.

I choose to educate.

I choose to bring awareness and change.

I choose to respect, advocate for my LGBTQ relatives.

I choose to listen, listen, listen.

I CHOOSE RESPECT!

I CHOOSE RESPECT!

I CHOOSE RESPECT!

HOW ABOUT YOU?

#ICHOOSERESPECT

12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch – served in Conference Ballroom

- **Guest Speaker – Marlene Oar**, CEO, Native Counselling Services of Alberta

1:00 – 2:00 PM Keynote Speaker – Dr. Kelly Fellner

Presentation Title: Returning to our original instructions: (re)igniting narratives of survivance and trauma wisdom in iyiniwak wellness

Description:

Iyiniwak (Indigenous) psychologies and approaches to wellness have existed for as long as our communities have. We have intricate understandings of human suffering, trauma, healing, development, and relationships rooted in natural law and wahkohtowin (kinship). While mainstream colonial narratives depict iyiniwak as burdened with generations of trauma and victimry, Indigenous counter-narratives highlight our survivance (Vizenor, 1999) pre-Eurosettler contact and since. As we continue to restore our cultural lifeways in the wake of 500 years of attempted genocide, iyiniwak approaches to wellness are (re)emerging at the forefront of community-driven healing. Our peoples carry tremendous wisdom to benefit the world today, including wisdoms of “all the knowledge that emerges through surviving 500 years of attempted genocide, resistance to violence and oppression, countless generations of living and thriving with the land and traditional teachings pre-contact and since, as well as contemporary Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing that are continually (re)emerging and evolving” (Fellner, 2019a, p. 163). This presentation discusses the power of (re)centering our original instructions and lifeways as we focus on our personal, family, and community well-being.

2:00 – 2:15 PM Afternoon Break

2:15 – 3:15 PM Keynote Speaker – Jon Jon and Paula Rivero

Presentation Title: How To Create A ‘Safe Place’ Exercise:
My Name Is Trauma Workshop

Description:

Discover how to use guided imagery and mindfulness meditation to help a child living with trauma by creating a safe place to help them feel grounded and be able to process challenging and stressful situations. Based on the curriculum from the internationally acclaimed children’s illustrated book, My Name Is Trauma, participants will be able to not only learn how to implement a guided safe place exercise, but can also experience the power of creating a safe place both in their mind and afterwards through expressive art creation. Led by the authors, Trauma Specialist, MSW/RSW, EMDR Trained, Paula Audrey Rivero and award-winning producer, director, actor, and Occupational Therapist, Jon Jon Rivero, this dynamic couple has led seminars and has been featured in APTN’s

Queen of the Oil Patch Docuseries as well as in the feature film, *Balikbayan: From Victims To Survivors*.

3:15 – 4:30 PM **Group Sharing Circle**
Closing Prayer & Closing Song

Day 3- Thursday, February 8, 2024

7:45 – 8:45 AM Breakfast

9:00 – 9:15 AM Prayer and Recap

9:15 – 10:15 AM **Keynote Speaker – Jordin Tootoo**

Presentation Title: All the Way: My Life on Ice

Description:

Tootoo is the bestselling author of *All the Way: My Life on Ice*, a searing, honest look at his toughest battle — the tragic loss of his older brother right before his first shift with the Predators, and his ensuing battle with alcoholism. Tootoo checked himself into rehab in 2010 and has been sober since. As a speaker, he offers a moving and timely discussion of grit and resilience, goal setting, overcoming adversity in the pursuit of excellence, and how life can be improved through meaningful stewardship.

10:15 – 10:30 AM Morning Break

10:30 – 11:30 AM **Keynote Speaker – Don Burnstick**

Presentation Title: HEALING THROUGH HUMOUR: *Laughter is Good Medicine*

Description:

Our Elders say “laughter is good medicine”. As Don shares this traditional teaching, he discusses some difficult topics but leaves the audience members enlightened, inspired, and definitely entertained. (**Please note:** this is not a comedy show. It is a workshop which discusses the importance of laughter as traditional medicine.)

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM **Chief Tony – Closing Comments & Next Steps**

12:00 – 1:30 PM **Lunch**
Meet and Greet Presenters
Evaluations
Door Prizes

Closing Prayer & Song