Kateri Coyhis, Mohican Nation

Executive Director

WISCONSIN HOPE CONSORTIUM

THE WELLBRIETY MOVEMENT:
PRAYER, PURPOSE, PERSEVERANCE & PASSION
AUGUST 5, 2021

Kateri Coyhis, Mohican Nation

A sustainable grassroots Wellbriety
Movement that provides culturally based
healing for the next seven generations of
Indigenous people.

Mission Statement

Family

A sustainable grassroots Wellbriety
Movement that provides culturally based
healing for the next seven generations of
Indigenous people.
Wellbriety Means

• Sober lifestyles
• Wellness—balance (mental, physical, spiritual, emotional)
• Connected to principles, values, and Natural Laws
• Walking the Red Road
• You must create a Healing Forest

The Source of Indigenous Culture

Principles, Vision, Laws, Values

Physical World

Spiritual World

Vision

Principles

Laws

Values

Healing

Spirituality

Ceremonies

Elders' Teachings

InterConnectedness

Language

Cultural Values

Healthy Woman

Healthy Man

Healthy Youth

Healthy Elder

Healthy Warrior

Healthy Leader
Then……
Something
Happened
To Us……
Physical World

What did it take to destroy our communities?
The world in which you live, you did not create!

Spiritual World

Carlisle Indian School

Model school for the nearly 500 schools set up in the United States to assimilate American Indian and Alaska Native children
Historical Trauma
A combination of immense losses and traumatic events that are perpetuated upon an entire culture.

For Indigenous communities, these losses include:
- Culture
- Language
- Land
- People (deaths due to diseases and war)
- Way of life
- Spirituality
- Family structure (forced into boarding/mission/residential/seminary schools)

Common findings from studies on intergenerational/historical trauma - how people from traumatized cultures coped with their experiences:
- Impulse to protect children from the horror - people become silent and never talk about what happened
- Lack of trust - don't look for attachments
- Reject your own background and identify with another group - this is a form of protection for the self because to identify with your own group may be viewed as threatening or dangerous
- Lay low, keep quiet, be invisible
- Fight back and protest
- This is passed down through direct parent-child interactions and also through interactions with extended family and the community
- This means that people began to believe that feeling numb, being angry, acting self-destructively, and feeling hopeless was a normal way to be in the world.

What complicates the healing process?
- An inability to mourn - not knowing what happened to your family and loved ones (Relocations, family separations)
- Lack of political power - feeling unable to change things, so why bother?
- No sense of hope for the future
- Lack of acknowledgement of trauma by the dominant culture fuels powerlessness and helplessness.
We must understand the connectedness between trauma and current social issues and Family Healing!!

This is our current condition..... Can this be changed? Is it possible to go from this...

Back To This!!

Healing
Language
Spirituality
Ceremonies
Elder Teachings
Interconnectedness

Healing Man
Healing Woman
Healing Youth
Healing Elder
Healing Leadership

Anger
Guilt
Shame
Fear

Alcoholism
Mental Illness
Suicide
Meth
Heroin
Prescription Drugs
Child Abuse
Missing/Injured Women
Violence
Social Abuse
Mental Illness

Symptom
Cause
Generational Trauma

Sexual Abuser
Healthy Woman
Healthy Warrior
Healthy Leadership
Healthy Youth
Healthy Elder
Healthy Elder
Healthy Man

© 2005 White Bison, Inc.
www.whitebison.org
Change is from within.

In order for development to occur, it must be preceded by a Vision.

A great learning must occur.

You must create a healing forest.

The Process for Implementing Change:
The Four Laws of Change

Change is from within.

In order for development to occur, it must be preceded by a Vision.

A great learning must occur.

You must create a healing forest.

Change is from within

All Permanent and lasting Change…
All Permanent and Lasting Change…
All Permanent and Lasting Change…

Starts on the inside, then works its way out!!!!!!
Inside every human being is the innate knowledge of your own wellbeing.

You KNOW what to do..... You have the CHOICE to do it!

1. The Change is From Within
   New Environment

   First you set the goal... and then you see.
   You do not see first.

   White Bison, Inc.

2. No Vision - No Development

   You move toward and become like that which you think about.

   White Bison, Inc.
Law #3:
A Great Learning Must Occur

Elder

Adult Baby

Youth

© White Bison, Inc 2007 www.whitebison.org

Nation
Community
Family

Individual

4. You Must Create A Healing Forest

White Bison, Inc.
So Now What Do We Do?

What is Intergenerational Healing?
A combination of immense healing, community training and a return to the ceremonies, spirituality, and the cultural ways of our people by bringing back:

- Culture
- Language
- People’s health emotionally, mentally, physically, spiritually
- Way of Life
- Spirituality
- Rebuild the family structure
Pathways to Healing from Intergenerational Trauma

- Heal ourselves (Change starts from within)
- Facilitate recovery efforts
- Learn the TRUTH about the past
- Creation of healing spaces
- Address issues around shame
- Restore pride in cultural heritage and identity
- Practice forgiveness
- Include everyone in the healing process
- Help create a Healing Forest
- Seek out your purpose

When you change the way you look at things….
The things you look at change
The healing approach….
There was a farmer out in the forest...

Orphaned eaglets

“I’ll just put them in with the chickens.”
“You know, we’re different. We don’t look like them.”

“What are you laughing at?”

…the owl flew down and landed by the eagle and said, “I want you to get on my back and hang on.”
The eagle is hanging on the owl and he's so scared of the height and he's saying, "No, I'm a chicken, I'm a chicken. Get me back down."

The eagle went tumbling through the air...

...and the owl dived down alongside the eagle and he said, "Spread your wings, spread your wings."
...all of a sudden, he just started soaring.

He whispered into his ear and he said, "You know something, we're eagles, we're not chickens."

He took his brother for a walk and met the owl, and together they put him on the owl and up they went...
And he learned. He learned that he, too, was an eagle.

Finding Our Purpose

North Perseverance
Hold the Vision of Passion. Your passion is your dedication & commitment to move forward when you have stumbling blocks in your way.

West Perseverance
Hold the Vision of Perseverance. Never give up, no matter what. Challenges are a part of your path, but you must find purpose and strength to stick with something so that it may be accomplished.

East Prayer
Hold the Vision of Prayer. In our traditional communities, prayer was used to talk to and call on the Creator for help.

South Purpose
Hold the Vision of Purpose. When you find your purpose, hold it deep in your heart, then whenever you do it love will flow like a stream down the river.

Cycle of Life

We are often no longer living tonight
the meaning in life?
The Universe is designed as a giving system. Our purpose is to be spiritual and to serve and help our people!
Four Teachings

North
Keep good, positive friends in your life.

East
Build a relationship with the Creator, daily prayer, meditation, or something else that is meaningful in your life.

South
Participate in ceremonies, traditions, or activities within your own culture that have meaning for you.

West
Talk to an Elder or someone else you trust.

The secret to finding your purpose is hidden in the seed of service to others! If you want to find your purpose, start helping!

Inside every creature is the innate knowledge of how it is to conduct itself. They KNOW what to do... They do it naturally!

The secret to finding your purpose is hidden in the seed of service to others! If you want to find your purpose, start helping!
1. The Change is From Within

New Environment

First you set the goal... and then you see.
You do not see first.

White Bison, Inc.
Conflict

Conflicts precede clarity: struggle is a part of growth. The tension that is experienced in conflict is a means for realignment.

Another way is to approach conflict through reliance upon a higher power or connection to something outside ourselves, like nature (which is a love-based system).

Conflict occurs when the things we see or experience don't match the pictures in our head about how things “should” be.

2. No Vision - No Development

You move toward and become like that which you think about, so it is important to set some healthy goals so as to not get off track.

White Bison, Inc.
Passion

"Purpose is the reason you journey. Passion is the fire that lights the way."

The Wellbriety movement
Introduced to Indian country

1998

The Wellbriety movement
Introduced to Indian country

100 Communities in Healing
Cypre Consulting, Inc.
Upcoming Projects

- Warrior Down for Youth
- No More Fallen Feathers: A Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative
- Wellbriety Lifeskills Program for Youth
- Native Veterans in Prison
- Developing a Technical Assistance Center
- Collegiate Recovery Starter Kit
WHITE BISON CONTACT INFO

- For more information, or to schedule a training in your community, please contact White Bison at 719-548-1000 or email us at info@whitebison.org.
- To order Wellbriety products and materials, please visit www.coyhispublishing.com.
- Facebook Groups and Pages:
  - White Bison, Inc.
  - Sobriety is Traditional
  - Wellbriety Training Institute
  - Wellbriety Response to COVID-19
  - Official White Bison Elders Daily Meditations

White Bison, Inc.
6495 N. Union Blvd, Ste 102
Colorado Springs, CO 80918
Phone: 877-871-1495
Fax: 719-548-9407
info@whitebison.org
www.whitebison.org

Q & A