

USING MEDICINE WHEEL TEACHING AS A MODEL IN CRISIS COUNSELING

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The purpose of this article is to demonstrate how a therapist may apply medicine wheel teaching as a crisis counseling method within universities. A case study will be presented in which this method was used at a campus that experienced three student deaths within two months. Among these three deaths, two female students committed suicide and one male student died in an auto accident. This campus had never before experienced multiple student deaths in such a short period of time; therefore, the campus therapist took a different approach, a holistic approach, to providing post-trauma counseling during this crisis. The therapist involved was originally trained in marriage and family counseling, and then later was trained as a shamanic healer. In this case study and in this paper, campus crisis counseling has been expanded to encompass aspects of environmental psychology and indigenous tribal history sharing and ceremony. The healing on this stricken campus was achieved, in part, by initiating healing rituals and by increasing land consciousness (i.e., showing respect for the land and the people who came before). Further suggestions about the use of medicine wheel teaching in school counseling will be discussed.

Keywords: medicine wheel, indigenous healing ceremony, environmental psychology, shaman, campus crisis counselling.

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous communities have a close relationship with the land that connects them to natural sources of health and healing. The presence of the mind, body, emotions, and spirit as foundational aspects of human beings has been accepted by indigenous cultures for thousands of years, and this view is supported largely by narrative and experiential dialogues (Bell, 2014; Collins, 2013; McCabe, 2008). A growing number of people from indigenous populations around the world, such as those in Australia, Canada, the United States, South American and African countries, and New Zealand, are revisiting ecological beliefs and rituals as sources of achieving healing and maintaining wellness, and they are reconstructing and recapturing pre-colonial cultural norms (McCabe, 2008). For instance, Just Therapy is a reflective model mentioned by numerous modern social scientists (Waldegrave, Tamasese, Tuhaka, & Campbell, 2003) emphasizing individual self-worth as a primary goal of therapy. However, cultural partnerships are vital in the honoring of indigenous practice, and people from communal and extended-family cultures do not relate easily to concepts of 'self' (Waldegrave, Tamasese, Tuhaka & Campbell, 2003). Antone, Miller, and Myers (1986) state that culture should be considered as holistic, a living dynamic of all the social institutions that ensure the transference of beliefs, values, language, and traditions. Further, Archibald (2006) states, "Programs and healing strategies are rooted in the cultures and traditions of participants, as well as in community values, conditions and needs" (p.2). Post-modern therapy has created room for diverse conversations or dialogues. The Family Centre in New Zealand proposed the Just Therapy model as a way to include the micro and macro levels of

work. The macro levels include those with skills and community experience or cultural knowledge. Furthermore, as Solomon (2005) stated, narrative and social constructionist approaches are being applied in South Africa to look at the dominant story of the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA) in its maintenance of power, and explores alternative stories that have become marginalized.

It is easy to subordinate indigenous beliefs regarding nebulous, mysterious healing power to the more logical, fact-based western theories, concepts, and world-views. Empirical data is insufficient for supporting and explaining the beliefs of indigenous people, and the predominance of empirical methods has created an injustice to the indigenous people. Among the voices aligned with indigenous beliefs and views, a reflexive thinking on the mind-body connection in healing has emerged as a new trend treating the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual as a whole concept (Culligan, 1996; Lumadue, Munk, & Wooten, 2005; Marks, 2006; Lindsey M., 2015). Further, the natural environment is an unacknowledged mentor and guide for the maintenance of right relationship and balance, and responding to the Earth and using the Earth interactively as a therapeutic resource is becoming popular (Broomfield, 2015; Park, 1996).

Integrating traditional healing into counseling and psychotherapy

The twenty-first century has presented humanity with a crisis of existence. Climate change, globalization, economic and political stresses, AIDS, cancers, overpopulation, scarcity of food and water, language loss, environmental contamination, loss of biodiversity, and substance abuse are among the problems and issues that have resulted in heightened levels of anxiety and high suicide rates. There is a general lack of adequate resources and a deep sense of insecurity resulting from a breakdown of social and cultural structures (Vargas, 2000). Therefore, it is important to address these issues broadly and deeply. We must go beyond seeing merely the absence of disease and the attainment of approved academic qualifications as progress. We must create a way for humanity to live on Mother Earth sustainably. Archibald (2006b) states that holistic healing is the foundation of any therapeutic model that takes into account multiple perspectives of the individual: a person's spirituality, physical health, emotional and social dimensions, environment, connection to country, interpersonal relations and practical needs.

In western societies, indigenous healing recently has been trending upward as a recognized, alternative healing system, even though there has been a tendency in psychology and medicine to rely on the principles of cognitive psychology rather than on the insight-based methods. *Insight-based methods* usually provide an alternative to traditional task-based methods. Currently, Taiwanese therapists are generally adopting western psychotherapy or counseling models to serve people who need psychological assistance. Therapy or counseling sessions in campus settings are often limited to a dialogue in an indoor setting only. The connection between human beings and the land is usually not acknowledged as an important psychological health factor, and therefore, strategies and methods related to this connection are rarely included in the therapy or counseling process.

Indigenous cultures throughout the world emphasize relationships with the family, community, and the environment, or nature. The UN (2009) states that "spirituality defines the relationships of indigenous peoples with their environment as custodians of the land; it helps construct social relationships, and it supports meaning, purpose and hope to life. It is not separated but is an integral, infused part of the whole in the indigenous worldview"

(p.71). Further, the person does not exist in the world as a separate entity; rather, each person is connected to every other living being, or spirit, on the planet. Native people's relationship to the environment is more than a matter of surviving in the material world; it forms an integral part of their psychology (Mindell, 1993). From this indigenous healing perspective, medicine is used to heal a sick person in the four realms of body, mind, soul, and spirit. In this rich, interrelated belief system, healing involves more than simply curing a disease. It depends as much, or perhaps more, on helping the person come back to a whole again by restoring well-being and harmonious relationships with the community and with the spirit of nature. The four realms within are in relationship with the four realms in the "outer" world—other people, animals, plants, and minerals. Everything on earth is living spirit, and everything is interconnected.

In terms of their relationship with the environment, or nature, the indigenous people in Taiwan, like many of the indigenous people in the U.S., treat mountains, oceans, and forests as their homes, and animals as their friends. Indigenous hunters in Taiwan speak to nature with gratitude and a sacred heart; when they kill an animal, it is their custom to thank it for its sacrifice. They also strive to maintain a balance with nature in a harmonious way (Hou, 2006). Everything in nature has spirit, or lives—for instance, the wind, thunder, lightning, stars, and the moon—all are sacred and have individual characters. Sams and Carson (1988) explain that "the Medicine Wheel is used to gather together the energies of all the animals or creature beings, the Stone People, Mother Earth, Father Sky, Grandfather Sun, Grandmother Moon, the Sky World or Star Nation, the Subterranean, the Standing People or trees, the Two-Leggeds or humans, the Sky Brothers and Sisters, and the Thunder Beings" (p. 21).

The philosophy of the Medicine Wheel recognizes a person in a holistic view; that is, it incorporates an awareness of the circularity and interconnectedness of life, and in doing so, it escapes the limitations of a linear conception of time and space. The Medicine Wheel teaches that all lives are equal, and that life is a pathway to truth, peace, and harmony (Bell, 2014; Freeman & Lee, 1997; Sams & Carson, 1988). Health and wellness for a person are seen as an outcome of the balance and integration of body, emotions, mind, and spirit (Helsel, Mochel, & Bauer, 2004; Meadows, 1992; Steen, 2013). All four of these human elements are represented in the four cardinal directions—south, west, north, and east—depicted in the circle of the Medicine Wheel. Three other critical directions beyond the four cardinal directions are: upward to the upper world (sky), downward toward the lower world (earth), and into the center (toward the heart, or sacred fire). Together, these seven directions symbolize universal harmony and balance, visualized physically as a sphere. The Medicine Wheel is like a map or a compass that provides humans directions in life. Each direction has different aspirations, purposes, qualities, and insights that allow human beings to gain further clues to their own spiritual identities and to draw energy from different directions to complement their own. This model of balance and well-being is circular because the energy of the universe flows in a circle, and the sacred hoop and everything in life is circular. The Medicine Wheel model has been used for ages to assist humans in understanding the universe and themselves within it. Freeman and Lee (1997) state that the medicine in the wheel exists in multiple dimensions, and as long as the relationships between all the forces are maintained in a harmonious and balanced way, the medicine flows naturally and provides vision, strength, and healing.

Indigenous traditions have used the Medicine Wheel for tens of thousands of years, and they have taken the Medicine Wheel as a map for human consciousness (Bell, 2014; Villoldo, 1995; 2000; 2006; 2007; 2009). The Medicine Wheel has been used by practitioners and

community workers as a map to assist aboriginal communities in regaining community health through the process of visioning and self-determination (Freeman & Lee, 2007). The circle provides the worldview of the indigenous people, modeling the process of how life evolves, and how all things move toward their destiny. The importance of the circle or round perspective is evident in these words of Black Elk:

Everything an Indian does is in a circle, because the power of the world always works in a circle, and everything tries to be round. The sky is round, and the earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars. The wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for their religion is the same as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves (Neihardt, 1988, p.176).

The circle is a mirror of the entire cosmos and can be explored at the macro-level or at a more personal level in regard to the thoughts and feelings of a single human being. In other words, it provides the framework in which we can reflect upon the state of our inner world. It can also, conversely, provide a way of looking out at society or the world from the micro-level of a single person's feelings or thoughts. Villoldo (1995) stated that the Medicine Wheel is the mandala of the Incan shaman, and the journey through the Medicine Wheel is a journey undertaken to awaken vision and to discover and embrace the Divine within oneself. It serves to reestablish one's connection with Nature and the mystery of the cosmos, and it guides one in acquiring skills and finding the wisdom to use them for good.

Different indigenous peoples ascribe different meanings to the four cardinal directions. However, the various meanings are often related to body, mind, soul, and spirit. In this paper, the author adopts the medicine wheel model used by Alberto Villoldo, a Cuban medical anthropologist and psychologist. This medicine wheel is based on the Incan indigenous healing culture from Peru. Dr. Villoldo is the founder of The Four Winds Society and its Light Body School (2015/3/5 retrieved from <http://thefourwinds.com/>). In the 2008-2010 time period, the author participated in the seven courses of training from The Four Winds Society and has been applying the medicine wheel philosophy in her daily life. In this Medicine Wheel system, the body represents the direction of south, the mind represents the direction of west, the soul represents the direction of north, and the spirit represents the direction of east.

Another aspect of this model is that four animals are guardians of the directions: the serpent is associated with the south; the jaguar, the west; the hummingbird, the north; and the eagle or condor, the east. The south serpent path is where one goes to shed the past, just as a snake sheds its skin. The west jaguar path is where one loses fear and faces death. The north hummingbird path involves discovering the ancient wisdoms and creating a union with the Divine. The east eagle path is the flight to the Sun and the journey back to one's home to exercise one's vision in the context of one's life and work (Villoldo, 1995; 2000; 2006; 2007; 2009).

Native healing traditions cannot be taken out of the context of their relationships to the four constructs of spirituality (Creator, Mother Earth, Great Father), community (family, tribe), environment (daily life, nature, balance), and self (inner passions, thoughts, and values) (Portman & Garrett, 2006). Therefore, the healer may require a great deal of time apart from

usual daily activities—time needed for reflection, emotional awareness, and meditation—to search for inspiration about what has gone wrong or where there might be an imbalance. In other words, the healer or therapist seeks guidance from great spirits through messages that are not yet in the healer's or patient's consciousness from "outside" incidents in the visible world.

Portman & Garrett (2006) state that vision is a personal, inner knowledge. In a healing vision, the meaning of medicine in the Greater Circle is revealed to you through your spirit helpers. The standard psychotherapy and counseling models from the western world are based on the visible, tangible world. For a traditional healer to seek guidance from invisible spiritual helpers, other than Jesus, in working with clients or maintaining daily work is an unfamiliar concept to many western people, and it may even sound impossible. For a native healer, however, illness is viewed as a power intrusion; a person who is dis-spirited or who experiences a spiritual imbalance has lost the energizing force, the guardian spirit (Harner, 1990; Voss, Douville, Soldier, & Twiss, 1999; Zacharias, 2006). This philosophy is quite different from western healing systems, which assume that people who are ill suffer from a "one-sided gerontomorphy," and therapists then become more concerned with watching, recording, and diagnosing than with relating (Shulman, 1997, p.203). Illness is not a physiological phenomenon only, but an indicator of a deeper social, spiritual and emotional imbalance (Cajete, 1994; Marks, 2006) or imbalance among the biological, social, psychological, physical, and cosmic environments (Cajete, 1994; Thomason, 2010). From this perspective, healing is an integration of all things, rather than the act of treating any part as a separate entity. The healing process is intended to heal the pain and suffering in order to facilitate the return to wholeness or to a larger scale of equilibrium. Thus, the traditional healer has to track different levels of messages from different cardinal directions or different layers of reality. So, it is important for the traditional healer to sit in the center of the wheel to connect with, or track, messages from different dimensions. This tracking is done both backward in time, to the individual or the community's past, and in the present, from the dream process.

Donald Sandner (1979) pointed out that Navajo categories of disease include: displeasing the spirit entities, annoying the primordial elements of Nature (fire, water, wind, earth), disturbing or disrespecting animal or plant life, exhibiting neglectful or disrespectful behavior to the celestial bodies, and misusing or misconducting a sacred ceremony. Other diseases may be based in the realm of the human heart and may be fueled by negative energies such as jealousy, envy, hatred, and acting to serve the ego without regard for one's actions or their effects on others (Cajete, 1994). Heaven (2001) described that the shaman's power for energetic transformation is the removal of energy blocks, first by understanding where, why, when, and how—and, sometimes, as a result of whose actions—the natural flow of energy came to stagnate at this point (p. 271).

Healing is sacred and is related to the indigenous philosophy of nature, connections between persons, ancestors, the interconnectedness to all living beings, harmony and balance, and an interactive meaning-making process. For an indigenous healer or a shaman healer, Levers (2006) indicated ten tenets of an indigenous healing system: (1) mind, body, and spirit are all interconnected; (2) healing is based on harmony and balance; (3) healing is a sacred process; (4) healing is a personal meaning-making process; (5) there is a connection between the person seeking healing and the healer; (6) healing involves multiple interactive processes; (7) wellness represents harmony; (8) illness represents a disruption of natural balance; (9) there is an active relationship between the physical and spirit world; and (10) the healer remains an

important medical resource and cultural intermediary. Mark (2012) also shared that healing in the Maori culture is “a continuous process of life; is a co-construction of healing through the healer/client relationship; includes collaborative whakawhanaungatanga (family-like) relationships in healing; involves the synergy of the alliance between people and plants; and utilizes the tipuna (ancestors) as the wairua (spirits) that conduct the healing” (p. ii).

The importance of integrating spirituality into health care has been recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO (2002) states that Indigenous medicine has a central role to play in the twenty-first century and that indigenous medicine has a long history that extends beyond today’s conventional medicine. The indigenous healer lives in an undivided world in which ancestor, dream, plant, animal, stones, river, mountains, oceans, soil, body, mind, and spirit are all interconnected. The indigenous healer is proficient in dealing with altered states of consciousness where the interrelatedness of all is apparent throughout the past, present, and future. Villoldo (1995) states that a shaman, in general, is a “person of knowledge,” a “man or woman of vision,” a mediator between the natural and supernatural forces of nature. Because these were the forces that the shaman held responsible for health and disease, the shaman was a healer. And, “although ignorant of modern medicine, the shaman was said to be able intuitively to diagnose disease and, through ritual, to effect a positive change in a patient’s health” (p.13). The traditional healer or shaman travels from the visible realm to the invisible world, or from the conscious mind to the sub-conscious or unconscious mind, to track the energy that creates the imbalance and disharmony. This healing process requires intuition and inner knowing that relate to right-brain functioning from the practices of “going into the silence” or meditating.

Ceremonies and Rituals

According to the United Nations' State of the World's Indigenous Peoples report (2009), most indigenous cultures maintain an interactive relationship between the community, nature, and ancestors. Many of the activities of daily life are accompanied by rituals and cultural practices that reflect and strengthen this close relationship with the ancestors and nature. Cultural practices relating to ancestors are particularly important because of the reciprocal relationship that exists between living and deceased persons. Other cultural practices relate to nature and are intended to maintain the relationship with the forces in nature on which the people’s success as farmers, hunters, and pastoralists depends.

For instance, among different Native American tribes, there are many different ceremonies used for healing, giving thanks, celebrating, clearing the way, and blessing. All of the ceremonies are designed to offer thanks for, create, regain, and maintain a strong sense of connection through harmony and balance of the mind, body, emotions, and spirit with the natural environment (Moodley, Sutherland & Oulanova, 2008; Portman & Garrett, 2006). These ceremonies connect to the guiding myth about the relationship of self and the meaning of life or the understanding of the cosmos. These ceremonies are performed to keep oneself in balance with others—family, community, and the natural environment. The ceremonies create psychological and emotional benefits and result in an affirmation of one’s true identity and the re-establishment of harmony regarding social and supernatural relationships (Moulton, 2011). Cajete (1994) states, “Ceremony and ritual were social and spiritual mechanisms that maintained or re-established harmony with natural processes” (p. 89). Ceremonies and symbolic ritual acts are usually performed to ensure a balanced relationship when something is taken from the natural world, for example, when an animal is killed (Cajete, 1994).

Through regular or cyclic ceremony and prayer, the dynamic balance at the communal level renewed a person's or a tribe's quest for the meaning of life, generation after generation.

Voss, Douville, Soldier & Twiss (1999) gave the Lakota example in which the term "mitakuye oyas'in" often is heard in ceremonies, reaffirming the participants' relationships to ancestral spirits, powers, and energies of creation, and to their tios'paye, or kinship relatives, extended families, and communities. Moulton (2011) examines the Navajo concept of health and of healing ceremonies, and he finds that the Enemyway and other ceremonies affirm identity and aid healing. Communal ceremonies provide a guiding myth that can help people understand themselves in relation to the greater universe. For instance, the Great Corn Dances of the Pueblos are performed in relation to the growing cycle of sacramental corn. The Great World Renewal ceremonies performed by the Northwest and California Native people and the Sun Dance performed by Plains people are communal ceremonies performed to maintain right relationship (ayni) with all Nature (Cajete, 1994).

Other ceremonies may be used by indigenous people to cure illnesses, such as asthma. Van Sickle, Morgan, and Wright (2003) indicated four ceremonies prescribed for the treatment of asthma: the Shooting (na'at'oooyee) or Lighting Way (hochxo'iji); the Navajo Wind Way (Dine'binilch'iji); the Evil Spirit Way (hochxo'iji); and the Mountain Top Way (dzilk'iji). These ceremonies vary in length from short invocations to nine-night ceremonies, and they typically progress through stages of prayer, blessing, and singing, as well as the creation of sand paintings. They help an individual care for oneself, one's family, and one's community through ceremonial cycles that renew a tribe's quest for life from year to year and from one generation to the next. Portman and Garrett (2006) make note of several healing ceremonies or rituals of Native Americans, such as: The Sweat Lodge Ceremony, Vision Quest, Smudging Ceremony, Blessing Way, Pipe Ceremony, Great Corn Dances, Great Renewal Ceremony, and the Sun Dance Ceremony.

Rituals have the mysterious aspect of opening one's reality to new possibilities. The ceremonies and rituals are acknowledged to have healing potential due to their linkage with the mystical world (Thomason, 2009). The ritual, myth, dance, and performance allow the transformation back to a healthy state to occur (Cajete, 1994). Healing rituals are applied in therapy as well and can relieve suffering and demoralization (Frank & Frank, 1991). Rituals applied in the family also offer a way to create bonds between family members (Bhagwan, 2009).

Application of Medicine Wheel of Crisis on Campus

On November 25, 2013, a female student at National Taitung University committed suicide. On December 30, 2013, another female student committed suicide on campus. On January 1, 2014, a male student at the university died after hitting a tree on his way back home from a New Year final countdown celebration. (See Appendix A for news reports of these deaths.)

NOTE: In the following discussion, the name Mary (a pseudonym) will be used to refer to the second female who committed suicide.

Mary's body was found around 1 PM in the dormitory, and Siraya, the shaman/therapist, received news of the suicide news at 5 PM. Although Siraya was not Mary's therapist, she began to pray and reflect on what she could do about this. She had to return to the campus at 6:30 that evening to host a guest speaker whom she had invited several months ago for a

workshop on card reading and counseling. After introducing the guest speaker to the students who came to attend the counseling activity, Siraya went downstairs to be with Lisa and Lynn (false names), the two students who had found their roommate Mary hanging in the dorm room and who had taken Mary's body down. That evening Lisa and Lynn were in the company of their class advisor as they were being asked to make a deposition. Siraya did not know these two students prior to this.

Lisa and Lynn were still terribly shaken from the shocking event. They initially did not want to tell their parents what had happened because they were afraid their parents would worry about them. However, Siraya knew it would be important for them to have parental support going forward, so she encouraged the students to make the calls. Siraya assisted them as they made phone calls home to talk to their parents, and she told the parents what the school would do to assist their daughters in adjusting to this tragedy. Lisa and Lynn burst into tears after talking to their parents.

That night, arrangements were made for Lisa and Lynn to sleep with other classmates in a different dormitory room. Similar arrangements were made for Michelle (false name), a fourth roommate who was taking a nap in the room when Mary committed suicide and who did not know what had happened until she awoke to Lisa and Lynn screaming.

While supporting Lisa and Lynn in making their depositions with the police, Siraya met the secretary of the university president in the hallway. Siraya told the secretary that there were certain professional, procedural things that needed to be done—but were not—when the first student committed suicide a month before. The secretary encouraged her to talk to the president directly, but Siraya refused at that time, feeling that she needed some time to clarify her thoughts. She went home around 11 PM still wondering how this second suicide could have happened so soon after the previous tragedy.

On December 31, 2014, at 4 AM the therapist awoke with a vision. Siraya envisioned talking to the university president and the director of the counseling center, and she told both of them that the second suicide should not have happened and that the university must find out why it did. Siraya then meditated for about an hour before going back to sleep.

Later that day, before going to her afternoon class, Siraya ran across a Military Education Officer who informed her that Mary's family was planning a religious ritual to call back the soul of the dead, after which they would ship Mary's body back to their house (at least a six-hour trip from the campus). Siraya placed an invited guest speaker in charge of her afternoon class and went to the dormitory to meet Mary's family members. She introduced herself to the family members and had a chance to talk with the twin sister of Mary. After completing the rituals, the family left the campus. At that time, the Military Education Officer who had spoken to Siraya earlier approached her and said he had seen a student follow her into the dormitory. She was not aware of a student following her, and she asked the Military Education Officer to find that student. After a short search, he found the person on the first floor of the dormitory. It was Michelle, Mary's roommate who had been taking a nap in the dormitory room when Lisa and Lynn found Mary. As it turned out, Michelle had not participated in any of the counseling that the university offered to students in the wake of the tragedy. The Military Education Officer explained to Siraya that Michelle was an indigenous student and was more optimistic, and she had told everyone that she would be fine without counseling. Siraya told the Military Education Officer that they could not take any risks that Michelle would be fine, and that many times PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) does not

appear until days after a traumatic event. So Siraya called Michelle's family and scheduled a counseling session with Michelle for January 6.

When she hung up the phone after speaking with Michelle's family, Siraya saw that there was a phone message; it was from the university's credit card company, and they were claiming that Siraya was late in paying for a charge she had made. She was sure this was in error. Wanting to use a telephone in the university's administrative offices to document the mistake, Siraya went to the Military Education Office with the Military Education Officer to call the credit card company and refute the billing. There really was no actual basis for the credit card company's claim, but, serendipitously, it took Siraya to the administrative building, where the university president's office is.

After making the phone call to the credit card company and correcting the error, Siraya had a feeling to go to the president's office without making an appointment with the president ahead of time. The secretary of the president was not at her seat, so Siraya just walked into the president's office and told him that she needed to talk to him. She then sat down with the president and shared her feelings regarding the school counseling system. She suggested that the president hire more faculty members with a counseling or therapy background, and she adamantly stated that the chair of the counseling center needed to be a person with a professional therapy background. The president took the advice and immediately made a phone call to a program chair who was hiring a new faculty member, and the president told this person to hire someone with a specialty in counseling.

After she finished talking to the president, Siraya received a phone call from her teaching assistant that her class with the guest speaker was finished, and the speaker was about to leave. Siraya hurried back to the classroom to see this guest speaker and explained to the speaker why she had left the classroom in the middle of the presentation. She then took the guest speaker to the speaker's lodging in the city and returned to the university counseling center to clock in for her two hours of on-duty appointment time that she was obligated to fulfill twice a week. There, waiting for her, she found Lisa, Lynn, and another good friend of theirs. Siraya had two clients scheduled for appointments that afternoon, but—again, serendipitously—both failed to show up for their sessions. This enabled Siraya to assist Lynn and her friend instead. Lisa was already in a session with a counselor at that time.

After assisting Lynn and her friend, Siraya went to pick up another guest speaker for an evening event at the university. This person was a dentist, but also a shaman and an energy healer. The therapist invited Lisa, Lynn, and their friend to come to the energy healing class from 7 to 9 PM that evening. Although the friend had a previous job commitment, Lisa and Lynn were able to attend. This guest speaker had trained to be a shaman with the Four Winds Society, the same group with whom Siraya had studied. Siraya discussed with the dentist-shaman how to best assist these two students before he came to present the workshop. In the session, he discussed how to protect oneself from negative energies, and how to release negative energies, as well. He also shared energy candles with all of the workshop participants, including Lisa and Lynn. Lisa and Lynn later reported that they felt much calmer that evening after following the shaman's guidance and releasing negative energies. This was the second day after Mary's death.

After the second campus suicide, Siraya realized that the university had not provided adequate grief counseling to students after the first suicide in the preceding month. In the Bowenian language of family therapy, there was unfinished business on the campus from the

first student's suicide. A student had committed suicide, and her classmates had not spent any time formally discussing this experience. This neglect can leave unresolved feelings inside each student. Therefore, Siraya suggested that the president hire someone from the counseling profession in the future. The president asked Siraya if the director of the counseling center was professional, and she answered, "Maybe not because the director does not have direct therapy experience with students."

On January 1, 2014, two days after the second suicide, the director of the counseling center asked Siraya to go out for lunch to discuss Mary's suicide. During their lunch discussion, Siraya told the director about the conversation she had had with the president. She also told the director that she [the director] should have gone to the suicide site when Lisa and Lynn discovered Mary's death, because she had been on campus at the time when it occurred. The director had sent her subordinate from the counseling center to the scene, instead, as she continued working on finishing up writing a research grant proposal. Also, Siraya shared with the director that the class counseling should have begun when the first student committed suicide a little over a month earlier. The negative energy of the unfinished business could influence the campus.

On January 7, Siraya hosted another speaker, Seer. This speaking event had been arranged two months previously—i.e., before any of the deaths had occurred. Seer was a graduate of the university, and he had known Siraya since he was still a student 8 years ago. Siraya knew Seer could see spirits in a different time and space with his third eye. He had been working as a full-time body-mind-spirit teacher, as well as a shaman, in Taipei since his graduation. After the talk was over, Siraya asked Seer to accompany her to Mary's room to see if Mary's spirit was still there. Seer agreed to do this favor right away. Siraya and Seer were escorted to the dormitory room by the dormitory manager, and when they entered the room, even though she could not see if Mary's spirit was still there, Siraya felt the heavy energy. They left the room after spending 5 minutes there, and Siraya asked Seer what he had seen. He replied that Mary was still in the room, standing where she hanged herself.

That evening, Siraya discussed with Seer how to lead Mary's spirit to where it was supposed to go. Seer decided to journey back to the dormitory with the assistance of a rattle and a candle along the path. A little later, upon reuniting with Siraya, he described what happened during this journey. He said he met an old man dressed up in traditional indigenous clothing who introduced himself as "Miarup." This name means "Deity of the land" (Yang, 2003) in the Kasavakan tribal language, as Seer learned from googling the name. Seer said that Miarup told him that there were many different tribes and ethnicities at National Taitung University today. These tribes fought for the land, and the energy of all this fighting was still there at the site of the university. Miarup told Seer that the tragedies happened on campus because the students involved were pulled into this fighting energy field; therefore, they became the victims. Also, Miarup revealed that the land where National Taitung University is located has a long history of indigenous cultures. He said that these indigenous cultures should be honored, and he suggested that the campus erect more indigenous totems. Seer also asked the black jaguar who usually takes care of the death realm to lead Mary to where she should go.

After hearing all of Miarup's teachings from Seer, Siraya felt a need to tell the university president that an indigenous ritual or ceremony to honor the ancestors living on the land needed to be done for the good of the students. Anything that could be helpful for the students' safety needed to be considered. When Siraya called the president's office to suggest this, he was away at a conference, but his secretary promised to convey the message. The

secretary added that she could understand the need for this ritual because she used to do mountain climbing with indigenous people, and the indigenous elder who led these hikes would carry out rituals along the way to communicate to the ancestral spirits.

Shortly thereafter, Siraya had a phone conversation with the president, and he agreed to invite a tribal leader to come to the campus to conduct such a ceremony. Siraya then consulted Dr. Liu, the university's dean for technology, who had a great relationship with many of the indigenous tribes in Taitung. Dr. Liu advised that the president go to visit and consult the Kasavakan's tribal leader in person. The president promised to go, accompanied by his principle secretary, Dr. Liu, and Siraya. However, when the day of the scheduled visit came, the president was unable to accompany the other three to the meeting. Upon hearing about Miarup, Chief Haku, the tribal leader, laughed and told us the history of his ancestor, who used to live on our campus site. Before we left the Kasavakan village, Chief Haku agreed to come to campus on January 16th for the land ceremony.

Siraya promised the principle secretary of the president that she would write an invitation letter to all the university faculty and students to join the January 16th ceremony, but when she returned home she felt no inspiration to write this letter. Then, on January 14th, five students came into Siraya's office seeking counseling. After listening to their thoughts and sensing their feelings, Siraya felt that having a Hochi Care ceremony with these five students would be healing for them. They all agreed to join in on this Hochi Care ceremony to bless the land of National Taitung Campus. The five students and Siraya stood in a circle and held hands to begin to connect with the energy from the universe and to bless the land they were standing on. The entire Hochi Care ceremony lasted only about 10 minutes and was done in Siraya's office. After the ceremony, Siraya asked the students how they felt. They began to share their experiences of seeing different colors of light and of feeling their bodies spinning during the ceremony. Siraya decided to share a story about a Hochi Care blessing ceremony she had held 8 years earlier with another five students from the university at that time. It was when Seer was still a college student that Taitung had a very big earthquake one day, and Siraya called Seer to discuss this event. At the time, Seer was on the train back to Taitung. Siraya told Seer that her grandmother had always said that if a big earthquake happened, spirits kept underground would come out. After Seer arrived at the Taitung train station, he did see a lot of spirits. The train station of Taitung was built at the site of a prehistorical indigenous tribal village. Siraya decided to host a Hochi Care blessing ceremony that night, and five students came to join the ceremony, including Seer. Afterward, they all said they had seen different colors of the lights during the ceremony, and some of the students were also actually spinning during the ceremony. This memory of an almost identical experience 8 years earlier made it feel as if this Hochi Care ceremony on campus had an inheritance meaning.

Ironically, just a few hours later, at 2 AM, on January 15, after the Hochi Care ceremony on January 14, Taitung experienced a large-scale earthquake. Upon awakening, Siraya felt what was happening, and she began to connect with the earth. There were two more smaller earthquakes later that morning, one around 3 AM and the other at 6 AM. When Siraya woke up, she found that she still lacked any inspiration for writing the invitation for the whole campus to attend the healing ceremony. However, at 7 AM, as she overheard a neighbor boy and his father having a conversation outside of her house, Siraya felt inspired to write the following letter:

Dear teachers and students of National Taitung University:

There were three earthquakes that we could feel strongly. This morning the neighbor and his son had a conversation. Father said, "There were three earthquakes last night, and I was awake when each earthquake came." Son said, "I was in a deep sleep and felt nothing." Father continued to say, "The first earthquake was 'shake' and the second was 'shake''shake'. Son went on to say that the third was "The teacher said everyone shake with me." Then the father and son both laughed.

Yes, like the neighbor Father said, "I am all awake and I could feel them shaking." How many of us can feel the existence of the Earth when there is no earthquake? The first thing we do when we get out of our bed is to step on Her body, and we forget about Her when we get into our busy schedules. The earthquakes allow us to be "awake," to feel what we take for granted every day. Is it not so? The Earth has no obligation to allow us at any time to step on Her thoughtlessly, without recognition. This is our other Mother, other than our biological birthing mother that we developed our relationship with since we came through the birth canal. Like the neighbor father and son said in their conversation, we should feel Her and join the dance with Her to celebrate the good life we have.

National Taitung University is going to invite Chief Haku from the Kasavakan tribe to hold a ceremony to honor Mother Earth, to honor the land and to show respect to our ancestors and their history, those who came first and those who came later. Different tribes have dwelled on this land, and this past has been taken for granted.

This is a ceremony to show our respect to the land and to honor our Mother Earth. It helps us to return to human humbleness and to show deep respect for life. It is a life education ceremony, and all are welcome to join us.

This invitation letter was finished on Wednesday, January 15, a day before Chief Haku came to give us a blessing ceremony. This same day, Siraya felt a need to do another blessing ceremony on campus, so she invited some students, including the five students who joined the Hochi Care ceremony to the land. Before the ceremony began, two other students showed up, and they were also invited to join the ceremony. So, eight people, including Siraya, went to find a site on campus and to light candles and to offer cookies, candies, and millet sorghum wine to be shared with the land. (The millet sorghum wine was brought by a student who did not even know there was going to be a ceremony that night.) As we walked across the campus, the wind blew very hard, as if it were there to help us make our way through the darkness. We were singing and chanting to the land, and everyone took turns applying the Ho'oponopono therapy to our own lives. Ho'oponopono is a Hawaiian system tool taught by Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len to help us heal and love ourselves and our environment by saying these four simple sentences: Thank you---I love you---Please forgive me---I am sorry. Ho'oponopono can bring atonement, correct errors, erase the effects of past actions and memories that cause havoc and grief in our lives, and in the lives of others, and on Mother Nature as a whole (Vitale & Len, 2007). The wind was so strong and powerful that he or she blew out some of the candles. Then the wind suddenly ceased, and the air showed a different, calmer atmosphere until we finished applying Ho'oponopono therapy to our lives.

The next day, January 16, we were waiting at the university entrance door for Chief Haku, who came with his son. The president of the university, the principal secretary of the president, the secretary of the president, Dr. Liu and his graduate students who were writing

their thesis papers about indigenous peoples, Siraya, and all her students who participated in the ceremonies during these times showed up for the land ceremony being led by Chief Haku. It was a very bright, sunny morning, with very blue sky and white clouds. Everyone noticed the big difference in the weather, as it had been gray and rainy for ten days prior to this. We had not seen such a bright day for a long time. It seemed that the weather was welcoming Chief Haku's coming. Chief Haku began by calling all the ancestors of this place from different times, shared millet wine, betel nuts and ended with gratuities. The whole ceremony lasted about 40 minutes.

Afterword

It has now been over two years since the ceremony was done by Chief Haku. The university has hired a new full-time counselor. There had been only one full-time counselor for the first 14 years that Siraya had been on campus—prior to the winter of the deaths. It seems that a lot of what Jung called “synchronicity” happened during the two weeks following Mary's death. However, all of this synchronicity seemed to happen after the shaman therapist began to tune herself into the flow, the energy, and the medicine wheel.

The medicine wheel is a circle, and because it has many layers the shaman can “tune in” and can bring in allies or assistants from anywhere. The shaman can tune into the flow of the medicine wheel and can enable whatever is blocked to flow again. Freeman and Lee state (1997) the symbols and directions of the medicine wheel are as codes and pathways, which are easily followed once one understands their meaning.

After all that had happened at this university in such a short period of time in late 2013 and early 2014, it seemed as if the universe had planned everything a long time ago. It seems as if the universe has plans for us, and we are here on earth primarily to find this greater plan from the universe and to act on it. Everyone who played a part in this story seemed to connect to it somehow as part of a greater purpose that we all carry. There was no right or wrong about anyone in this story, but everything happened just “right” in order to promote the growth of collective consciousness. If any one person had not been in the story, the story would not have come this far—would not have been the same—and this paper would not have been written.

A shaman therapist is only a representative of anyone who has the consciousness to tune into the circle, the collective conscious, the wheel, the greater plan, or the energy flow to allow that bigger plan to emerge for itself. The universe still holds many mysteries for us to discover. It requires a very quiet heart to listen to the messages in order to decode the mysteries.

Although this story has been shared here through written words, many of the feelings from Siraya that are associated with these events are unspeakable. She surrenders to all spiritual relations and offers gratitude for all that has happened—and all that is still happening now. She offers this suggestion to all future campus counselors: walk in beauty with each step—walk humbly and surrender yourself, trusting that you can learn with everyone else from all that is happening. Do this and carry the lessons you learn to your campus and even to the world.

Appendix A:

The timeline of the crisis counseling based on Medicine Wheel (told in first-person narrative form, from Siraya's perspective)

Date	Time	Event
11/25/13		First student commits suicide
12/30/13	1:00pm	2 nd student (Mary) commits suicide
12/30/13	5:00pm	Received a phone call from the director of the counseling center and began to pray about how I could be of help in this crisis on campus.
12/30/13	6:30pm	Met the secretary of the university president in the hallway and received the suggestion to make an appointment with the president directly.
12/30/13	6:50pm	Met the two students, Lisa and Lynn, (and their advisor) as they were making depositions with the police
12/30/13	7:00pm	Introduced the guest speaker at the evening event and then went back to accompany Lisa and Lynn in making their depositions and in making phone calls home.
12/31/13	2:00pm	Went to the dormitory and talked to Mary's twin sister; also talked to Michelle (Mary's roommate who was sleeping in the room when Mary hanged herself) and arranged a counseling session with her.
12/31/13	2:30pm	Received a phone message about a credit card issue and went to the administrative building to check it out; while there, went to visit the president without an appointment to discuss recruiting a new faculty member with a counseling background as well as hiring a new full-time counselor.
12/31/13	3:20pm	Went to counseling office; when two scheduled clients did not show up, was able to assist two students (Lisa and her friend) instead; Lynn was already being helped by another counselor.
12/31/13	7:00pm	Lisa and Lynn were invited to the dentist shaman's workshop, where they were helped to clear the heavy energy; both reported feeling "lighter" later.
1/1/14	Early morning	Another university student wrecked his motorcycle into a tree and passed away after a New Year's final countdown event.
1/1/14	12:00pm	The Director of the counseling center called to have lunch.
1/7/14	10:15am	Attended Seer's (another shaman) talk and went to Mary's room to see if Mary was still there.
1/7/14	8:00pm	Seer journeyed into the spirit world to see if Mary was there, and he met Miarup (deity of the land). Miarup told that many indigenous tribes used to live on this land where the university was built, and the energy of the ancestors is still here. He suggested honoring the tribes by placing more indigenous totems around the campus. Seer asked black jaguar to escort Mary to

		where she belonged.
1/13/14	2:00pm	Visited Chief Haku with the Principle of the President, Dr.Liu
1/14/14	2:00pm	After the Hochi care blessing ceremony to the land, three earthquakes occurred before 7am the next morning.
1/15/14	8:00am	Finished writing the invitation letter for Chief Haku to host a land blessing ceremony.
1/15/14	7:00pm	Hosted another land ceremony on a windy night on campus with 7 other students; shared Ho'oponopono therapy with each of the participants.
1/16/14	8:00am	On this bright sunny day, Chief Haku and his son came to perform a land blessing ceremony.

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