

WAHTA WELLNESS SERIES CONFERENCE
JANUARY 2017
COMMUNITY VISION NARRATIVE
COMPOSED BY
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This narrative was composed from the responses to the questions highlighted below that community members who attended the conference provided.

1. What have you learned from this presentation that you could or already have used to improve your life and your relationships?

Our traditions and culture offer beliefs and values that can help us to develop positive attitudes and perspectives for living healthier lifestyles. If we develop these and put these into action we can develop healthier relationships within our families and in our community.

We need to learn the skills to develop healthier relationships through our challenges in life. It is thru reflecting on our personal stories that we can learn these valuable lessons. It is also through connecting with the teachings of our ancestors that we can learn these skills.

We have also recognized the importance of literature to our children and giving them a meaningful voice in our community. We need to consider the wisdom that our ancestors shared with us about governance structures that promoted equality and inclusivity as opposed to the hierarchical power structures that have been forced upon us.

2. What ideas from this presentation have you already tried or are now willing to try out?

Rebuilding our language and culture is key to rebuilding the values and beliefs that can help us to build a healthier and more peaceful community. All of this begins with each of us as we learn to govern ourselves by developing skills for self regulation and self control. We can only change ourselves. We need to relearn our roles and responsibilities related to fostering and supporting each new life that creator gives/sends to us and that has chosen to come to us so that

each new spirit can live the good life we are all meant to. In doing so we will strengthen our families and in turn our communities. We will also begin to learn again from our children. Much of this knowledge comes from the experiences and teachings of our ancestors before contact. What is ultimately most important in life is our relationships with family and (community). In order to teach our children of their importance to our community we need to consider developing a children's council.

3. Why are you willing to try these ideas out?

We believe that our traditions and culture related to the teachings of our ancestors offers us the capacity to strengthen ourselves, our families and our communities. We want to be better/healthier human beings and to have healthier better relationships. We want to not only learn the healthier talk but we want to walk that talk. We want to give our children learning opportunities that will lead them to become strong leaders with strong voices. We believe that children's and youth councils can help foster this development. We would like to see our women step up to their traditional roles of leadership with our men. We acknowledge that we are always role models to someone and so we want to be good role models. (The best that we can be).

We recognize that not everybody is ready for or want change. We know that we have a responsibility to help others to learn why these changes are necessary and important.

4. What changes do you think trying these ideas out will or has made in how you think, how feel and you act?

We have recognized the increased importance of spirit and spirituality in peacemaking. We have an increased concern for ourselves, each other and all of creation. We have an increased desire to come from a place of love and compassion so that we can 'move into the light.' We believe that our culture can be a powerful support to the changes that we believe we need to make. Ceremonies for our men could be an important part of this. We believe that these changes have increased our sense of connection with each other and that we are becoming more inclusive, reducing division and increasing the opportunities for people to feel that they belong.

5. How might or has making these changes effected your relationships?

We will have increased and healthier connections with family and community. Some have already recognized improved relationships with their children because they have become more attentive to how they role model for their children and how their children teach them.

People recognize that by moving forward with these changes that there will be increased honesty and trust in their relationships and that they will have more peaceful relationships. This will strengthen family and community relationships.

One person recalled how bringing her children door to door in the community during Halloween allowed her to connect with other community members in meaningful ways that normally she does not have the opportunity to experience.

One of our groups (yellow) proposed that we create a "Lighthouse" program that would be a way for families to open their homes to others to socialize safely and foster community connections. They also propose a T-shirt campaign that will encourage wearers to extend themselves to foster healthier relationships within community.

6. How will or do you know that making these changes makes a difference to your life and relationships?

These changes will create healthier families that experience less conflict and are happier. They will also foster more trusting and safe relationships between community members that will contribute to breaking down existing barriers between community members.

These changes will encourage people to think before they act/respond and act confidently with skills that foster healthier and more peaceful relationships.

7. How have you and others benefited from the ideas shared in this presentation?

The ideas shared in these presentations encourage us to commit to work hard to create healthier relationships by being more open in our communications and making dedicated efforts to understand the other person's perspective. 'Walk a mile in the other person's moccasins'. This will result in us coming together, and working together as a collective unified community. This is a positive vision of hope for our community.

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