

YOUTH SPIRIT PROGRAM



Chapter 2: Who I Am: Beginning at the Center



The goals of this chapter

...to learn about Swinomish values, traditional ways to introduce oneself, self-awareness, genealogy, family ties and integrity, and how to use the concept of the Four Seasons as a part of self-definition. Participants Youth are encouraged to explore the idea of a physical self, mental self, emotional self and spiritual self. Information about marijuana is also included.

Age Groups: Middle and High School Youth

Time: 30 minutes

Youth will:

- learn about how the Four Seasons contribute to who we are
- learn about the meaning of [word for “who I am”]
- learn about tribal and family connectedness, communal lifestyles
- learn about Swinomish values
- learn about “self-awareness”
- learn what “integrity” is
- learn about the harmful effects of marijuana use

*Optional - Make their own Longhouse

Materials

- Whiteboard/flipchart + marker(s)
- Youth Handouts
- A print-out of the booklet, "The Swinomish Totem Pole: Tribal Legends"

Preparation

- Preview Lesson plan
- Swinomish word for "Who I am" & "Friends and Family"
- Preview the Handouts for this lesson to determine what is most appropriate for your youths' levels and your goals. Print enough copies of the lesson handouts for each youth and small groups

Cultural Component Option(s)

Note: additional time needed for this activity

Materials

- Longhouse materials (string, cedar, glue, plywood, etc.)

Preparation:

- Consider inviting guest speakers to share: 1) A story that illustrates traditional cultural values, strengths and integrity, 2) Traditional Swinomish Housing, 3) Assist with Longhouse Creations



Welcome & Group Check in

2 minutes

Welcome youth, introduce yourself, have guest speakers and youth introduce themselves and direct youth where to sit.

Say, "Before we continue, do you have any questions or comments about the last chapter?"

Icebreaker

Time Varies

Use the "[Icebreaker](https://www.healthynativeyouth.org/stand-alone-lessons/)" activity guide found on Healthy Native Youth (<https://www.healthynativeyouth.org/stand-alone-lessons/>) to find an icebreaker appropriate for your group (i.e. small or large group, new or established group, etc.)



Introducing Activity Concepts

3 minutes

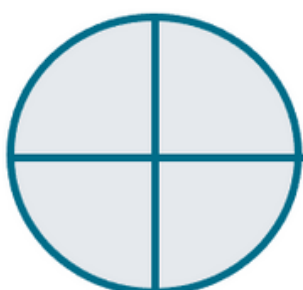
Say, "Today we're going to talk about what it means to introduce yourself in a traditional way. While I am talking, please feel free to turn to your doodle page to take notes, doodle, or draw what you're thinking."

Say, "Every culture around the world does it. For example, Navajo folks usually give an introduction first in Navajo (Dine) then in English; usually starting with a recognition of maternal and paternal clan groups. The Maori start with (pepeha) their name, where their ancestors are from, and where they live. In Swinomish traditional ways, we introduce ourselves by 'hello my name is (Indian name), then English name, where we come from and grandparents. We have a number of ways of knowing who we are. Today we're going to practice this and in turn learn more about ourselves. Why would it be important to know about ourselves before we start any journey?"

Allow for responses.

Say, "In order to experience true learning, each of the four dimensions of our being, the physical, the mental, the emotional and the spiritual, must be addressed. These four dimensions can also be paralleled with the four seasons.

Draw a circle on the board like this:

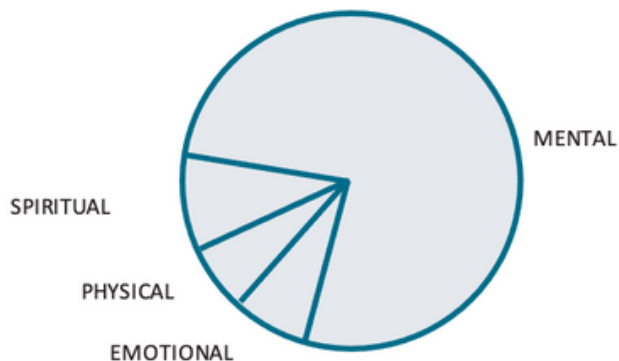


Say, "In real life, are we this balanced? Probably not, each of us has different strengths and areas to work."



Activity Concepts Continued...

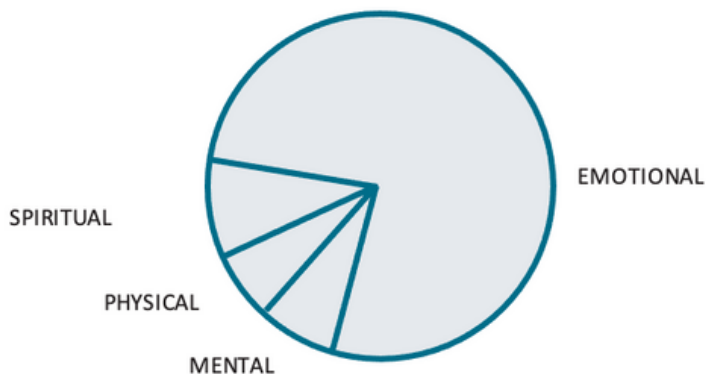
Say, "What kind of person does this diagram represent?"



Have youth guess.

Say, "Yes, this is a person who is mostly focused on the mental aspect of him/herself and maybe he/she is the kind of person who works at Microsoft."

Say, "And what kind of person does this diagram represent?"



Have youth guess.

Say, "Yes, a very emotional person."

Say, "Now I would like each of you to draw a diagram that best describes what you are like. I will do it first."

Draw your diagram then ask each youth to try the exercise.

Invite them to draw their diagrams on the board or individual sheets of paper.

Go around, until everyone has an opportunity to share.

Distribute the next handout (Four Seasons & Defining Ourselves).



Doodle Page

Feel free to draw while you listen.
It can help you learn better!

Doodle Page

The Four Seasons

Winter - Mental

COLOR: Black

REPRESENTS: Wisdom, reflection and spiritual insight.

STAGE OF LIFE: Elder

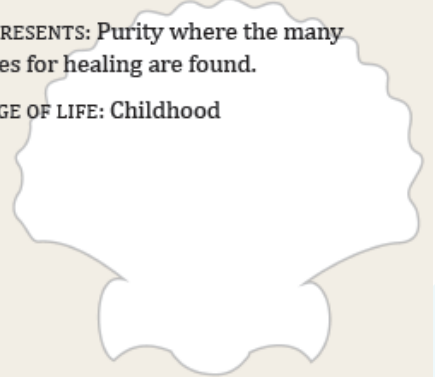


Spring - Emotional

COLOR: White

REPRESENTS: Purity where the many cures for healing are found.

STAGE OF LIFE: Childhood

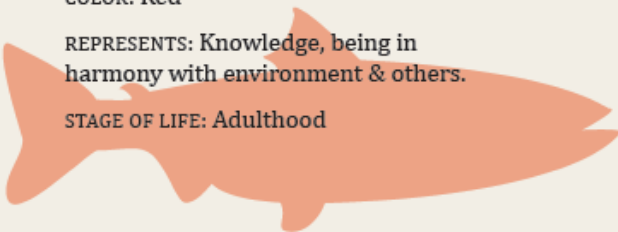


Fall - Spiritual

COLOR: Red

REPRESENTS: Knowledge, being in harmony with environment & others.

STAGE OF LIFE: Adulthood



Summer - Physical

COLOR: Yellow

REPRESENTS: Potential for learning new things and respecting everything around us.

STAGE OF LIFE: Adolescence



Defining Ourselves

Winter - Mental

EXAMPLES:

I like to analyze how things work.

I think very carefully about my decisions.

I know I am intelligent.

Spring - Emotional

EXAMPLES:

I am usually happy.

I am often sad.

I like to hurt/help be with others.

I am sensitive.



Fall - Spiritual

EXAMPLES:

I value my friends, my family, etc.

I believe in a Creator/Higher Power.

I am usually truthful with myself.

Summer - Physical

EXAMPLES:

I like to exercise.

I like to play sports.

Sometimes I bring harm to my body.

I like to test my stamina.



Defining Ourselves

5 minutes

Say, "What I would like you to do with this handout is to identify the different aspects of yourselves and write them down in the different sections. So ask yourself..."

- What is your spiritual self?
- What is your mental self?
- What is your physical self?
- What is your emotional self?

Say, "You'll notice that the handout has some examples if you are finding this difficult."

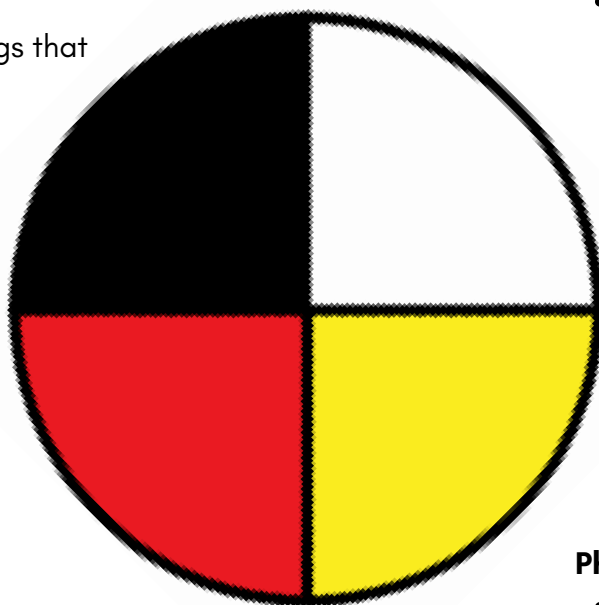
Generate responses and include some of the following if the youth can't come up with their own.

Mental might include:

- I think about who I am
- I think positive thoughts and negative thoughts
- I think about my future
- I think about doing things that are not good for me

Emotional might include:

- I am a sensitive person
- I am sometimes moody
- I am sometimes happy
- I am a loving and caring person



Spiritual might include:

- Anything that is unseen
- Believing in the Creator or a Higher Power
- Thinking that we have a purpose in life
- Honoring our inner values

Physical might include:

- I like to be physically fit
- I like to feed my body healthy food
- I like to do things that are relaxing
- I like exercise



Defining Ourselves Continued

Say, "While most of us have physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental aspects, each aspect is not necessarily divided evenly. It depends on who we are and what we work on strengthening.

Say, "I'd like you to color in the different aspects of yourselves. You can journal about these concepts or take photos that represent the different aspects of yourselves too. When we're done, I'd like for each of us to share with the group — of course you can chose not to, but I'd encourage you to take a healthy risk and share. "

Give youth time to complete and share.

Say, "From this exercise we have learned more about you. But more than that, we have learned how you perceive yourself."



Defining Family

5 minutes

Say, "Family not only includes blood relatives, but also people who we choose to call family. Who do you chose to become your family?"

Allow time for responses.

Say, "We are also bonded with other people in the community — ties that go beyond blood. (Insert Swinomish word for "Friends and Family.") Another example of community is when an Elder mentions they have been hungry for oysters. By evening time, shucked and cleaned oysters would be delivered to their door, usually done anonymously. Another example is large harvests of seafood being donated for large community events."

Distribute handout - Journal Space: What is important to me? What are my values?

Allow time for youth to write and share their responses.

Write some of their responses on the board

Chapter 2
Youth Handout
#2

Journal Space

What is important to me?
What are my values?



Defining Family Continued...

Say, "What are some Swinomish values? Ideas that we hold to be important?"

Write responses on the board.

List the following on the board if they don't come up with them themselves:

- Differences of wealth (acquisition vs. giving away)
- Importance of Elders
- Respecting women
- Respecting two different opinions (OK to disagree)
- Listening
- Learning traditions

Distribute handout - Cultural Beliefs. Discuss contents.

Distribute handout - My Character Strengths.

Give youth time to fill out the handout.

If time allows, ask youth to share any observations.

Chapter 2
Youth Handout
#3

My Character Strengths

There is a line between each of the following pair of characteristics. This line is meant to help you choose a place along the line that best fits who you are.

I am athletic.



I am not athletic.

I am independent.



I depend on others.

I show feelings.



I don't show feelings.

I go along with others.



I do my own thing.

I get excited easily.



I am calm.

I take part in activities.



I prefer to be alone.

I want to win when I
with others.



I don't care if I win. compete

I make sense.



Sometimes I don't
make sense.

I keep things to myself.



I am open with others.

I am culturally active.



I am not culturally active.

I have good work habits.



I do not like to work.

Cultural Component Option(s)

If time allows, have guest speaker share on:

- A story that illustrates traditional cultural values, strengths and integrity
- How traditional Swinomish houses were built. For example, with multiple hearths under one roof. Each immediate family had a hearth, but children probably ate at multiple hearths throughout the day. All are members of one home, an example of a communal lifestyle. "It takes a village to raise a child."
- Create longhouses with many fires diorama. Share examples of how family members have taken care of one another, during an emergency, or celebration or just everyday life.

**If you choose this option, this will add additional time allotted in the outline.*





Marijuana

5 minutes

Minilecture & Whole Group Discussion

Say, "The next drug that we will be talking about is marijuana. Before we look at the handout, let's see how much you already know about marijuana. What are some other names used for Marijuana?"

The list may include: chronic, weed, joint, Mary Jane, ganja etc.

Say, "Can someone tell me what is marijuana?"

Allow for responses.

Say, "Marijuana is a greenish-gray mixture of the dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds and flowers of Cannabis sativa, the hemp plant. Most users smoke marijuana in hand-rolled cigarettes called joints; some use water pipes called bong. The major active chemical in marijuana is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which causes the mind-altering effects of marijuana intoxication."

Say, "Can someone tell me whether marijuana is addictive?"

Allow for responses.

Say, "Long-term marijuana use can lead to addiction for some people. Many continue to use marijuana even though it often interferes with family, school and activities."

Say, "What are the effects of heavy marijuana use?"

Allow for responses.

Say, "The side effects of heavy marijuana use can be drowsiness or stupors state, lack of concentration, loss of motor coordination, a distorted sense of time passage, tendency to overestimate time intervals, trouble with thinking and problem solving, problems with memory and learning, distorted perception (sights, sounds, time and touch), depression or panic, hallucinations from large doses, increase in heart rate (up as much as 50 percent)."



Marijuana continued...

Say, "What are the effects of long-term use of marijuana?"

Allow for responses.

Say, "Long-term use can impair thinking, which can affect the ability to learn. Impairment can affect reading, comprehension, and memory, verbal and mathematic skills. Use can also have a permanent, harmful effect on attention span, judgment, and logical thought. People who user marijuana typically inhale the smoke deeply and hold it in their lungs as long as possible to get the full effect of the drug. Because the smoke is in contact with lung tissues longer, it can damage the lungs.

Distribute handout - Marijuana and briefly discuss its contents.

Say, "What impacts do you think marijuana might play in your life's journey?"

Allow participants to think about this question, and then ask for a few responses to the question, and the reasons behind their response.

Say, "It is important to remember that regardless of state and federal law, marijuana is a controlled substance and is not legal for people under 21, just like before.

Marijuana

What is marijuana?

Marijuana is a greenish-gray mixture of the dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds and flowers of *Cannabis sativa*, the hemp plant. Most users smoke marijuana in hand-rolled cigarettes called joints, some use water pipes called bong. The major active chemical in marijuana is delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which causes the mind-altering effects of marijuana intoxication.

Is marijuana addictive?

Long-term marijuana use can lead to addiction for some people. Many continue to use marijuana even though it often interferes with family, school and activities. When you use marijuana regularly, you begin to think that you can't feel normal unless you are high.

Slang terms for marijuana

Pot, Weed, Grass, Boom, Herb, Mary Jane, Reefer, nail, bud, kush, green, hash, wacky tobacco, ganja, the dank, good good, trees, sticky icky, paka lolo, maui wau, reefer

Effects of initial use

rapid • loud talking • bursts of laughter • heightened feelings of well-being • cravings for sweets • increased appetite • increased heart rate • reddening of eyes • lowered body temperature • confusion • reality distortion

Effects of heavy use

drowsiness or a stuporous state • lack of concentration • loss of motor coordination • a distorted sense of time passage • tendency to overestimate time intervals • trouble with thinking and problem solving • problems with memory and learning • distorted perception (sights, sounds, time and touch) • depression or panic • hallucinations from large doses • increase in heart rate (up as much as 50 percent)

Adverse effects

- Marijuana contains 50 – 70% more cancer-causing chemicals than tobacco smoke
- Tolerance and psychological dependence cause an increased need for more of the drug in order to experience the expected high
- Overdose or long-term use can result in paranoia or hallucinations
- Extended use of marijuana causes risks to lungs and the reproductive system
- Smoking 1 marijuana cigarette is as harmful as smoking approximately 4-5 regular cigarettes
- Long-term use can result in chronic lung disease and possible lung cancer

Long-term effects of marijuana use

- Use can impair thinking, which can affect the ability to learn. Impairment can affect reading, comprehension, memory, verbal and mathematic skills
- Use can have a permanent, harmful effect on attention span, judgment, and logical thought
- Users typically inhale the smoke deeply and hold it in their lungs as long as possible to get the full effect of the drug. Because the smoke is in contact with lung tissues longer, it can damage the lungs
- Withdrawal symptoms include irritability, difficulty sleeping, aggression and anxiety
- For adolescents, use may affect both short- and long-term development. Symptoms include: increased apathy (lack of interest), loss of ambition, loss of effectiveness, reduced ability to carry out long-term plans, difficulty in concentrating, and a decline in school or work performance
- Marijuana impairs driving skills for at least 4 to 6 hours after smoking a single marijuana cigarette

Closing and Final Reflections

5 minutes

Distribute the handout - What Did You Learn? Encourage youth to write what they have learned. If necessary, draw on the board and give the participants a few examples of what they may have learned from this chapter.

Allow participants time to complete the handout and discuss some of their ideas.

Say, "Today we have taken the time to think about what kind of individuals we are. We have examined our values. We have also learned what "integrity" is and how it pertains to us. This is our Mental health.

Say, "We have also looked at what we value in others. We have learned about what values are important to us. We have considered what integrity is and how a lack of integrity can affect our spiritual health.

Say, "We have learned how our physical presence matches with what we are on the inside. In examining who we are, we have considered how important our physical health is.

Say, "In thinking about who we are, we have considered how important the emotional aspect is. We have examined how a lack of integrity affects our emotional health."

Mention the next meeting time, location and the topic that will be covered, if applicable.

If time allows, close with a poem, song, story or tradition that highlights the activity concept.



Chapter 2
Youth Handout
#5

Journal Space

What have I learned Today?

Think about your mental, spiritual, social, and physical self.
Then draw, doodle, or write about what you have strengthened
today.