GRIP ON REALITY

Hurting People Hurt People

Hurting people hurt people. They don't intend to. They're sick, horribly sick. Now that I know this, the pain is gone, the horror is gone. It's like a blind person bumping into me in an elevator. The hurt doesn't hurt in the same way.

Terror, Suicide, and Identity Trauma: An Identity Terror Management Paradigm (No author Identified,www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v9/TerrorSuicide&IdentityTrauma_blind.pdf)

There are at least two kinds of collective identity traumas: The first is the historical trauma … The second kind is the social structural trauma. Multigenerational transmission of structural violence constitutes extreme social disparities. The effects of the chronic and pervasive condition of society structure or social violence, created by generating extremely deprived social classes, are traumatic to the parents and their children. Social inequity results from differences in economic, prestige, and power resources of social class rather than from the influences of race and ethnicity alone. In situations of extreme social inequity, a given group possesses the social power to harm individual members of another group or to bar them from opportunities. Recognition of such extreme discrepancy in power results in a sense of relative deprivation.

Differential status identity (DSI) that is generated by the critical differences in social standing from the ordinate group, suggested by Foad et al., 2001, can demonstrate the case of such collective identity trauma and its transmission. The psychological effects of DSI are suggested to work through social stratification, one's own perception of social standing, and affects a person's self-concept and psychosocial development. Research on racial identity, social comparison, and psychosocial development supports this concept. Research suggests that comparisons with the ordinate group affect self-efficacy, self-enhancement, and ability to manage stress effectively. The effects of deprivation by poverty and demoralization go from parents to children and can cause collective terror that contribute to the kinds of conduct problems, violence, and drugs that are more prevalent in some inner-cities communities. These sub-cultures of deviance and destructiveness can be seen as an escape from the unbearable feelings of powerlessness and desperation as contrasted by primitive feelings of omnipotence. Deviance in such instances can be seen as political process. In such states, the situation is not a death wish or self-annihilation, but a wish for collective annihilation and destruction of the existing unfair system, which is perceived to be the enemy. The direct, and indirect cross-generational consequences of such structural violence, are devastating and enduring. Unfortunately people, accustomed to see such traumatized others suffering from these structural traumas, tend to regard the state of those others as part of the natural order of society…

Historical Unresolved Grief
The American Indian Holocaust: Healing Historical Unresolved Grief, Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, Ph.D. and Lemyra M. DeBruyn, Ph.D.
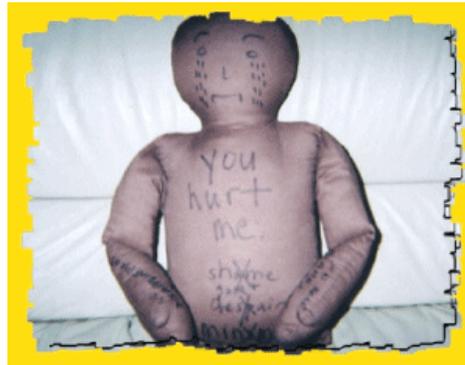
"American Indians and Alaska Natives are plagued by high rates of suicide, homicide, accidental deaths, domestic violence, child abuse, and alcoholism, as well as other social problems (Bachman, 1992; Berlin, 1986; Indian Health Service, 1995; May, 1987). Racism and oppression, including internalized oppression (Freire, 1968), are continuous forces which exacerbate these destructive behaviors. We suggest these social ills are primarily the product of a legacy of chronic trauma and unresolved grief across generations. It is proposed that this phenomenon, which we label historical unresolved grief, contributes to the current social pathology, originating from the loss of lives, land,

and vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by the European conquest of the Americas."

Colonial Trauma (MAPPING THE HEALING JOURNEY, The final report of a First Nation Research Project on Healing in Canadian Aboriginal Communities, APC 21 CA (2002), Solicitor General Canada)

For hundreds of years (in some cases as many as three hundred years), Canadian Aboriginal communities experienced wave after wave of debilitating shocks and traumas that left whole nations of people reeling and broken. These shock waves came in many forms:

• Diseases (such as influenza, small pox, measles, polio, diphtheria, tuberculosis and later, diabetes, heart disease and cancer);
• The destruction of traditional economies through the expropriation of traditional lands and resources;
• The undermining of traditional identity, spirituality, language and culture through missionization, residential schools and government day schools;
• The destruction of indigenous forms of governance, community organization and community cohesion through the imposition of European governmental forms such as the Indian Agent and the elected chief and council system which systematically sidelined and disempowered traditional forms of leadership and governance and fractured traditional systems for maintaining community solidarity and cohesion; and
• The breakdown of healthy patterns of individual, family and community life and the gradual introduction of alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, physical and sexual abuse, the loss of the ability to have or maintain intimate relationships, the loss of the ability to love and care for children, chronic depression, anger and rage and greatly increased levels of interpersonal violence and suicide.

It becomes clear when considering these various sources of trauma, that the eventual impact of trauma originating from outside Aboriginal communities was to generate a wide range of dysfunctional and hurtful behaviors (such as physical and sexual abuse) which then began to be recycled, generation after generation inside communities. What this has meant is that as many as three to five generations removed from externally induced trauma, the great great grandchildren of those who were originally traumatized by past historical events are now being traumatized by patterns that continue to be recycled in the families and communities of today.

The result of all of this trauma is a wide range of personal and social dysfunction that translates into symptoms such as these:

Individuals - who can't maintain intimate relationships, can't trust or be trusted, can't work in teams with others, can't persevere when difficulties arise, can't function as parents, can't hold a job and can't leave behind harmful habits such as alcohol and drug

abuse or family violence. (Of course we now know that all these "can'ts" can actually be reversed through healing and learning processes.)

Families - When individuals who are stuck (as described above) enter family life, the family becomes a generator of trauma and dysfunction, as patterns of addictions and abuse are passed on. Basic human needs for safety, security, love and protection are not met and the family system is no longer able to provide the foundation for healthy community life, as it once did in traditional society.

We note that many Aboriginal communities are considering returning to the clan system and to clan-based government, but this could only be viable if Aboriginal families again developed high levels of trust, intimacy, cooperative behavior, effective communication and adhered to a system of life- promoting, life-enhancing values, beliefs and moral standards.

(Again, we now know that families can learn, can heal and can overcome a long history of intergenerational trauma and dysfunction through hard work and a lot of love and support from others.)

Communities - Aboriginal communities that have been traumatized display a fairly predictable pattern of collective dysfunction in the form of rampant backbiting and gossip, perpetual social and political conflict and in-fighting, a tendency to pull down the good work of anyone who arises to serve the community, political corruption, lack of accountability and transparency in governance, widespread suspicion and mistrust between people, chronic inability to unite and work together to solve critical human problems, competition and turf wars between programs, a general sense of alienation and disengagement from community affairs by most people (what's the use?), a climate of fear and intimidation surrounding those who hold power and a general lack of progress and success in community initiatives and enterprises (which often seem to self-destruct).

(We now know that those patterns too, like their counterparts at the individual and family levels, can be transformed through persistent and effective processes of community healing and development.)

So What?

It is abundantly clear that Aboriginal nations cannot progress as long as this pattern of recycling trauma and dysfunction generation after generation is allowed to continue. Something is needed to interrupt the cycle and to introduce new patterns of living that lead to sustainable human well-being and prosperity.

Part Eight: Lessons about Healing as the Rebuilding of Nations
Linking Healing and Economic Development

(1) Healing is inseparable from social and economic development and nation building. While everyone knows this intellectually, in practice in most communities there has been

a functional separation between healing activities and the work of political development, economic development, housing and even human resource development (training and education).

(2) This orientation constitutes a new emphasis in perspective within the Aboriginal "healing community" across Canada in the past few years. During several previous national studies conducted by Four Worlds, there were always a few people in every community who made vague references to the linkages between healing and community development, but now those linkages are front and centre in everybody's minds. While in the past there was always a conceptual divide in many communities between those who advocated for economic development as a solution versus those who advocated for healing as a solution. Now many leaders of thought in community healing are saying that economic development and political reform are healing and need to be actively pursued as part of the healing agenda.

(3) The economic dimension and particularly the addiction many communities have to the welfare system, needs to be included in our analysis of community healing. There are direct and fundamental relationships between the lack of productive work opportunities, structurally enforced poverty and hopelessness on the one hand and the capacity individuals and communities have (or don't have) to move beyond patterns of hurt and dysfunction into constructive processes of development on the other hand. When people have enough income to meet their basic needs with dignity and can participate in society without shame, some of their pressing healing issues are being addressed.

We need to heal.

Global Status of Women

"The World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 set as a priority for governments and the United Nations the achievement of the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights, the integration of human rights into the United Nations system-wide action

and the full participation of women as both agents and beneficiaries of development…Women throughout the world have found that declarations and conventions are not enough to guarantee their human rights. Of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty 70 percent are women; the majority of the world's refugees are women; female illiteracy is invariably higher than male illiteracy; women and girl children are becoming commodities in cross-border prostitution rackets and the pornography industry. Women in every country are regular victims of domestic violence and every day women are targeted in armed conflicts. One of the starkest reflections of the low status accorded to women is the discrimination against them in the law. In many countries, women are not treated as equal to men – whether in property rights, rights of inheritance, laws related to marriage and divorce or the rights to acquire nationality, manage property, or seek employment." Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1999.

Women Climb Corporate Ladder, But Slowly
Paper: Houston Chronicle, Date: TUE 11/19/02, Section: BUSINESS, Page: 01, Edition: 3 STAR, By L.M. SIXEL, Staff

The number of women in the workplace has probably never been higher. But for the most part, they are still the ones answering the phones, fetching the coffee and planning the holiday get-togethers.

It is getting a bit better, however.

Catalyst, a New York research and advisory organization that tracks the progress of women in corporate leadership positions, found that women hold 15.7 percent of corporate officer positions in the Fortune 500, up from 12.5 percent two years ago. And in 1995, only 8.7 percent of corporations had women responsible for running day-to-day operations.

Inequity in the workplace / Study finds second glass ceiling / Minority women lagging in pay, management jobs
Paper: Houston Chronicle, Date: THU 10/23/97, Section: BUSINESS, Page: 1, Edition: 3 STAR, By JENALIA MORENO, Staff

Minority women earn less and hold fewer managerial positions than white women, a study released Wednesday found.

"It's data that dispels the assumption that women of color have a double-edged advantage," said Kathy Giscombe, project director for the study titled "Women of Color in Corporate Management: A Statistical Picture."

The study was conducted by Catalyst, a New York City-based research organization that works to advance women in the business world.

Instead of realizing an advantage because of their race and gender, African-American and Hispanic female managers are earning 58 cents and 48 cents, respectively, for every dollar earned by a white male, the study found.

They are earning less than white women and males of their same race, the study found.

The national study found that of the 57.8 million women in the work force, 23 percent are minorities.

In Houston, a little more than a third of working women are minorities, according to 1990 census data.

The study found that of the 2.9 million women in managerial positions nationwide, only 14 percent were minorities.

In Houston, of the 94,159 women in executive positions, 25 percent are minorities.

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Women's Dance Shawl - Significance of Shawl Design

The shawl design below is based on the cloud shape of the Navajo. The ribbon used contains the four Sacred Plants (beans, squash, tobacco and corn). The use of four shapes on top of one another is to represent the four Sacred Mountains.

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Child Abuse

"The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) was developed by the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Human Services in partnership with the States to collect annual statistics on child maltreatment from State child protective services agencies. This summary of key findings presents highlights based on data submissions by the States for calendar year 2000.

Investigations of Child Abuse and Neglect

In 2000, three million referrals concerning the welfare of approximately five million children were made to CPS agencies throughout the United States.

Almost one-third of investigations or assessments (32%) resulted in a finding that the child was maltreated or at risk of maltreatment.

The remaining investigations resulted in a finding that the maltreatment did not occur, the child was not at risk of maltreatment, or there was insufficient information to make a determination.

Victims of Maltreatment

Approximately 879,000 children were found to be victims of child maltreatment.

Maltreatment categories typically include neglect, medical neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological maltreatment. Almost two-thirds of child victims (63%) suffered neglect (including medical neglect); 19 percent were physically abused; 10 percent were sexually abused; and 8 percent were psychologically maltreated."

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Teenage Pregnancies
• Each year approximately one million U.S. teenagers become pregnant — 11 percent of all women aged 15–19 and 20 percent of those who are sexually active (AGI, 1998).
• About 40 percent of American women become pregnant before the age of 20 (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998).

• About 78 percent of teenage pregnancies are unintended, accounting for one-quarter of all accidental pregnancies per year (AGI, 1998).
• Among sexually experienced teens, approximately eight percent of 14-year-olds, 18 percent of 15–17-year-olds, and 22 percent of 18–19-year-olds become pregnant each year (AGI, 1998).
• Each year, approximately 19 percent of black women, 13 percent of Hispanic women, and eight percent of white women aged 15–19 become pregnant (AGI, 1994).
• About 40 percent of teen pregnancies (excluding miscarriages) end in abortion (AGI, 1998).

Teenage Childbearing and Parenting

In general, teenage mothers do not fare as well as their peers who delay childbearing:
• Their family incomes are lower.
• They are more likely to be poor and receive welfare.
• They are less educated.
• They are less likely to be married.
• Their children lag in standards of early development.
(AGI, 1998; Hoffman, 1998)

Threatened Peoples, Peoples of the Earth Series, 1973

"Tribal minorities, who live at the opposite end of the philosophical spectrum from technological man, face extinction by the end of this century. The threat to their existence, comes not only from direct attacks involving murder, enslavement, disease and dispossession of their lands but, at an increasing rate, from economic exploitation, surrounding population pressures and the demoralizing effect of being regarded as 'backward' and a barrier to progress." Robin Hanbury-Tenison, Chairman of Survival International which seeks to prevent the extinction of the world's remaining tribal groups.

We have been kicked to the curb.

Poverty

The three-year-average (1999-2001) poverty rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives was 24.5 percent, with an estimated 800,000 living in poverty. American Indians and Alaska Natives were the only group to show a decline in their poverty rate when the two-year 2000-2001 average was compared with the two-year 1999-2000 average. (The average was used because the American Indian and Alaska Native population is relatively small and multiyear averages provide more reliable estimates.)

The three-year-average (1999-2001) median household income estimate for American Indians and Alaska Natives was $32,116. As with the poverty data, averages were used because the American Indian and Alaska Native population is relatively small and multiyear averages provide more reliable estimates. Based on comparisons of two-year-average medians (1999-2000 versus 2000-2001), the real median household income of American Indians and Alaska Natives did not change statistically. U. S. Census Bureau, Sep. 24, 2002.

We can't put food on the table.

Mis-Education

We can't use our education.

In 1990, 66 percent of the 1,080,000 American Indians 25 years old and over were high school graduates or higher, compared with only 56 percent in 1980. Despite the advances, the 1990 proportion was still below that for the total population (75 percent). American Indians were also less likely than the entire U.S. population to have completed a bachelor's degree or higher. About 9 percent of American Indians completed a bachelor's degree or higher in 1990, compared with 8 percent in 1980 - still lower than the 20 percent for the total population in 1990.

We are not being educated on the one subject we need to understand - racism.

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Unemployment, Underemployment, and Mis-Employment

"Unemployment rates for American Indians are horrific -- from 20 percent to the high 80s.

"While U.S. unemployment rates fell to unusually low levels in the late 1990s, unemployment rates and poverty rates in many Indian communities remained discouragingly high. According to the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (U.S. Department of the Interior 1999), average unemployment across all Indian reservations in 1999 was 43%; on some rural reservations it ranged into the 70 and 80% range or higher." The Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, The University of Arizona.

This does not factor in the many Indians underemployed or mis-employed due to workplace discrimination.

We can't use our toolbox.

Institutional Racism
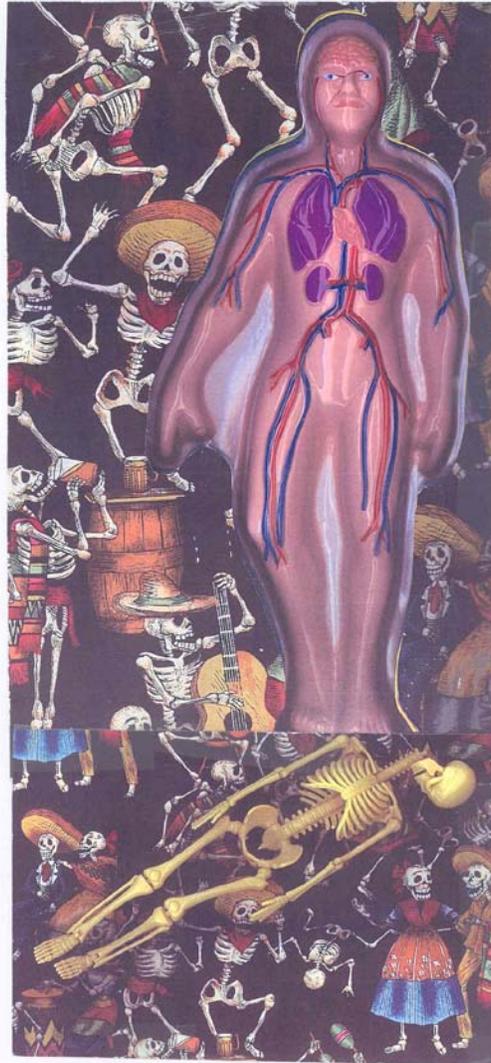
Institutional racism or systemic racism describes forms of racism which are structured into political and social institutions. It occurs when organizations, institutions or governments discriminate, either deliberately or indirectly, against certain groups of people to limit their rights.

This form of racism reflects the cultural assumptions of the dominant group, so that the practices of that group are seen as the norm to which other cultural practices should conform. It regularly and systematically advantages some ethnic and cultural groups and disadvantages and marginalizes others.

Institutional racism is often the most difficult to recognize and counter, particularly when it is perpetrated by institutions and governments who do not view themselves as racist. When present in a range of social contexts, this form of racism reinforces the disadvantage already experienced by some members of the community. For example, racism experienced by students at school may result in early school dropout and lower educational outcomes. Together with discrimination in employment, this may lead to fewer employment opportunities and higher levels of unemployment for these students

when they leave school. In turn, lower income levels combined with discrimination in the provision of goods and services restrict access to housing, health care and life opportunities generally. In this way, institutional racism may be particularly damaging for minority groups and further restrict their access to services and participation in society. See www:racismnoway.com.au/classroom/Factsheet/32.html.

To me, this is the most damaging and life threatening form of racism because it includes all aspects of racism: blatant racism, unaware racism (unconscious attitudes about minorities acted out), cultural racism (dominant group's culture is accepted standard), and internalized racism (brainwashing with stereotypes and negative messages about a group such that an individual believes what they have been taught is correct - heathen, savage, comical, romantic Indian view). From www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/Factsheet/32.html

After viewing a Prime Time video on institutional racism against African- Americans, a group watching the video was asked how they thought African-Americans might feel as a result of the disparate treatment. The responses were: fearful, angry, sad, weary, hopeless, duped, crippled and insane.

Institutional racism has a life of its own. It does not need to perpetuated - it is, by definition as being institutionalized, self-perpetuating. It no longer needs to find a host to propagate; it is airborne.

Hate Crimes Today: An Age-Old Foe In Modern Dress
http://www.apa.org/pubinfo/hate

Hate crimes--violent acts against people, property, or organizations because of the group to which they belong or identify with--are a tragic part of American history. However, it wasn't until early in this decade that the federal government began to collect data on how many and what kind of hate crimes are being committed, and by whom. Thus, the statistical history on hate crimes is meager. Psychological studies are also fairly new. Nevertheless, scientific research is beginning to yield some good perspectives on the general nature of crimes committed because of real or perceived differences in race, religion, ethnicity or national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or gender.

According to the FBI, about 30% of hate crimes in 1996, the most recent year for which figures are available, were crimes against property. They involved robbing, vandalizing, destroying, stealing, or setting fire to

vehicles, homes, stores, or places of worship.

About 70% involve an attack against a person. The offense can range from simple assault (i.e., no weapon is involved) to aggravated assault, rape, and murder. This kind of attack takes place on two levels; not only is it an attack on one's physical self, but it is also an attack on one's very identity.

Who commits hate crimes?

Many people perceive hate crime perpetrators as crazed, hate-filled neo-Nazis or "skinheads". But research by Dr. Edward Dunbar, a clinical psychologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, reveals that of 1,459 hate crimes committed in the Los Angeles area in the period 1994 to 1995, fewer than 5% of the offenders were members of organized hate groups.

Most hate crimes are carried out by otherwise law-abiding young people who see little wrong with their actions. Alcohol and drugs sometimes help fuel these crimes, but the main determinant appears to be personal prejudice, a situation that colors people's judgment, blinding the aggressors to the immorality of what they are doing. Such prejudice is most likely rooted in an environment that disdains someone who is "different" or sees that difference as threatening. One expression of this prejudice is the perception that society sanctions attacks on certain groups. For example, Dr. Karen Franklin, a forensic psychology fellow at the Washington Institute for Mental Illness Research and Training, has found that, in some settings, offenders perceive that they have societal permission to engage in violence against homosexuals.

Extreme crimes tend to be committed by people with a history of antisocial behavior. One of the most heinous examples took place in June 1998 in Jasper, Texas. Three men with jail records offered a ride to a black man who walked with a limp. After beating the victim to death, they dragged him behind their truck until his body was partially dismembered.

Researchers have concluded that hate crimes are not necessarily random, uncontrollable, or inevitable occurrences. There is overwhelming evidence that society can intervene to reduce or prevent many forms of violence, especially among young people, including the hate-induced violence that threatens and intimidates entire categories of people.

How much hate crime is out there?

Educated "guesstimates" of the prevalence of hate crimes are difficult because of state-by-state differences in the way such crimes are defined and reported. Federal law enforcement officials have only been compiling nationwide hate crime statistics since 1991, the year after the Hate Crimes Statistics Act was enacted. Before passage of the act, hate crimes were lumped together with such offenses as homicide, assault, rape, robbery, and arson.

In 1996, law enforcement agencies in 49 states and the District of Columbia reported 8,759 bias-motivated criminal offenses to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the federal government agency mandated by Congress to gather the statistics. However, points out the FBI, these data must be approached with caution. Typically, data on hate crimes collected by social scientists and such groups as the Anti-Defamation League, the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force show a higher prevalence of hate crime than do federal statistics.

The Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998, introduced in both the House (H.R. 3081) and Senate (S. 1529), seeks to expand federal jurisdiction over hate crimes by (1) allowing federal authorities to investigate all possible hate crimes, not only those where the victim was engaged in a federally protected activity such as voting, going to school, or crossing state lines; and (2) expanding the categories that are currently covered by hate crimes legislation to include gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

As with most other offenses, reporting hate crimes is voluntary on the part of the local jurisdictions. Some states started submitting data only recently, and not all jurisdictions within states are represented in their reports.

In addition, time frames for reporting are uneven, ranging from one month to an entire year, depending on the jurisdiction. In 1996, only 16% of law enforcement agencies reported any hate crimes in their regions. Eighty-four percent of participating jurisdictions-including states with well-documented histories of racial prejudice-reported zero hate crimes.

Another obstacle to gaining an accurate count of hate crimes is the reluctance of many victims to report such attacks. In fact, they are much less likely than other victims to report crimes to the police, despite-or perhaps because of-the fact that they can frequently identify the perpetrators. This reluctance often derives from the trauma the victim experiences, as well as a fear of retaliation.

It also appears that some people do not report hate crimes because of fear that the criminal justice system is biased against the group to which the victim belongs and, consequently, that law enforcement authorities will not be responsive. The National Council of La Raza holds that Hispanics often do not report hate crimes because of mistrust of the police.

Another reason for the underreporting of hate crimes is the difficulty of identifying an incident as having been provoked by bias.

What is the emotional damage?

Intense feelings of vulnerability, anger, and depression, physical ailments and learning problems, and difficult interpersonal relations-all symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder-can be brought on by a hate crime.

Dr. Herek and his colleagues found that some hate crime victims have needed as much as 5 years to overcome their ordeal. By contrast, victims of nonbias crimes experienced a decrease in crime-related psychological problems within 2 years of the crime. Like other victims of posttraumatic stress, hate crime victims may heal more quickly when appropriate support and resources are made available soon after the incident occurs.

Why do people commit hate crimes?

Hate crimes are message crimes, according to Dr. Jack McDevitt, a criminologist at Northeastern University in Boston. They are different from other crimes in that the offender is sending a message to members of a certain group that they are unwelcome in a particular neighborhood, community, school, or workplace.

Racial Hatred

By far the largest determinant of hate crimes is racial bias, with African Americans the group at greatest risk. In 1996, 4,831 out of the 7,947 such crimes reported to the FBI, or 60%, were promulgated because of race, with close to two-thirds (62%) targeting African Americans. Furthermore, the type of crime committed against this group has not changed much since the 19th century; it still includes bombing and vandalizing churches, burning crosses on home lawns, and murder.

Among the other racially motivated crimes, about 25% were committed against white people, 7% against Asian Pacific Americans, slightly less than 5% against multiracial groups, and 1% against Native Americans and Alaskan Natives.

Is there anything we can do?

Because of insufficient information on the extent of hate crimes, it is likely that many law enforcement agencies and communities are not taking the necessary steps to stamp out these violations of law and order. It is also likely that only a small percentage of hate crime victims receive the medical and mental health services that public and nonprofit agencies make available to victims of violent crime; thus, their pain and suffering is more likely to become a heavy burden and last many years longer than is typical for other crime victims.

The American Psychological Association, therefore, has urged that Congress undertake the following actions:

Support federal antidiscrimination laws, statutes, and regulations that ensure full legal protection against discrimination and hate-motivated violence. Most important, enact the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998.

Increase support of the Community Relations Service (CRS), an arm of the Department of Justice that works with local officials to resolve racial and ethnic conflicts and is often seen as the federal government's peacemaker. Law enforcement officials, community

leaders, educators, researchers, and policymakers must work together to halt hate crimes. Failure to enforce the law against these crimes leaves entire groups of people feeling isolated and vulnerable.

Support programs that offer training for police and victim-assistance professionals on early intervention techniques that help hate crime victims better cope with trauma. The curriculum could be similar to one developed by the CRS.

Encourage communities to launch educational efforts aimed at dispelling minority stereotypes, reducing hostility between groups, and encouraging broader intercultural understanding and appreciation. Specifically, according to Dr. Franklin, it is important that school administrators, school boards, and classroom teachers constantly confront harassment and denigration of those who are different. Antibias teaching should start in early childhood and continue through high school. Teachers must also know that they have the backing of administrators and school board members to intervene against incidents of bias whether inside the school or on the playground.

For more information, contact the following organizations. The Community Relations Service, Department of Justice, is the only federal agency whose primary task is to help communities respond appropriately to organized hate groups. It was created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. CRS helps prevent and resolve community wide conflict stemming from race, color, and national origin. Its staff provides mediation and conciliation, technical assistance, training for law enforcement personnel, public education and awareness, and contingency planning for potentially provocative events. In 1996, the agency helped resolve 800 cases of conflict in all 50 states.

Community Relations Service (CRS)
U.S. Department of Justice
Second and Chestnut Street, #208
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215/597-2344

The Broken Hoop - An Apology

The one thing we need more than anything else is a faith that makes sense to us. For many of us, it was taken away from us. This has made it harder to connect with the God of our understanding.

A Public Declaration to the Tribal Councils and Traditional Spiritual Leaders Of the Indian and Eskimo Peoples of the Northwest, November 1997

In 1987, the Bishops and Denominational Executives from churches in the US Pacific Northwest, offered to you, on behalf of the Christian churches they represent, an apology for long-standing participation in the destruction of traditional native American spiritual

practices. Since that time, our churches have been challenged to act in accordance with this act of contrition. We are still growing in our understanding of our own words.

We have prayed together, we have sat in a circle together; we have stood in solidarity and faced struggles together. We have tried to open our eyes to the ways of compassion and justice. We have opened our ears to listen and to learn from our native teachings. We have spoken from the strength in our common faith about the sacredness of all creation and Gods claim on all life. We embrace the spiritual power of the land and respect the ancient wisdom of your indigenous religions. They are great gifts to the churches. We confess our lack of consciousness and our insensitivity to the integrity of Native ways of life. We know that healing takes many forms. Healing will take commitments of time, energy and financial resources. Healing will come when we accept the grace, which comes as a gift of the Creator. Our spiritual tradition affirms a God who regenerates all that has life. We give thanks to a God who restores life from death; recovers identity when it is threatened; reclaims and protects the meaning of spirituality when it is dishonored. Because of our faith in a God of resurrection and rebirth and hope, God revealed in Jesus Christ, we make the following re-affirmations from the 1987 Apology;

To honor and defend the rights of Native Peoples to practice and participate in traditional ceremonies and rituals with the same protection offered all religions under the Constitutions and public policies of the lands in which we live.

To secure access to protection of sacred sites and public lands for ceremonial purposes.

To respect the use of religious symbols for use in traditional ceremonies and rituals.

To participate in the struggles to end political and economic injustice against tribal communities.
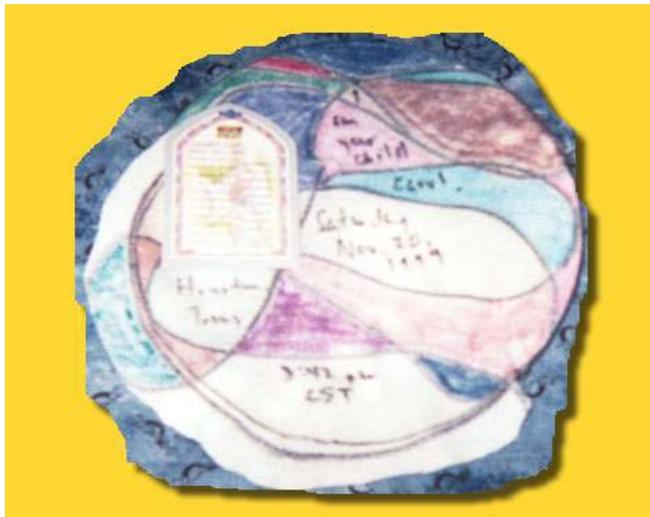
We continue to call upon people of faith to recognize and respect the traditional ways of life of Native and indigenous peoples. We renew our pledge to be with you in circle. A circle where peoples come to know one another. A circle where peoples come to deepen

their bonds and their connection with one another. A circle where partnership and companionship embrace the notion of reciprocity.

As we continue to experience the power of the circle, we commit ourselves to be responsive to the challenges that face our communities, to protect our childrens future and to honor the relationships of Christian and Native spiritual leaders in order that we may share knowledge and experience of the Spirit.

We offer these words humbly and respectfully to the Native American Peoples of the Pacific Northwest. We pray today for the blessing of the Creator on our peoples. May the God of Jesus Christ, and the spirit who lives in both cedar and Salmon People, be forever honored and celebrated.

The Rev. Dr. Paul D. Aita, Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches of the Northwest; The Rev. Randy Hyvonen, Conference Minister, United Church of Christ, Washington, North Idaho Conference; The Rev. Lynne Simcox Fitch, Conference Minister, United Church of Christ, Washington, North Idaho Conference; The Rev. Donald H. Maier, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Northwest Washington Synod; The Rev. Elias Gabriel Galvan, Bishop, United Methodist Church, Pacific NW Annual Conference; The Rev. Gary F. Skinner, Synod Executive, Presbyterian Church (USA), Synod of Alaska/Northwest; The Rt. Rev. Sanford Z.K. Hampton, Bishop Assistant, Episcopal Diocese of Olympia; The Most Rev. William S. Skylstad, Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Spokane; The Rt. Rev. Vincent W. Warner, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Olympia; The Rev. David C. Wold, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Southwestern Washington Synod.

Language Variation and Cultural Stereotyping

Professor Montano-Harmon, California State University, found that Native American speakers have their own oral and written style of discourse which is NOT linear. Many times their academic performance is considered substandard because they do not use, nor are they aware of, the dominant English direct style of communication. Equally important is the lack of awareness of the language register (code) required in a particular setting.

Montano-Harmon studied Navajo, Yaqui and Apache communication styles and found that they are not linear, they are circular. These are critical, stereotyping issues which create conflict for Native peoples in an academic, business or legal

setting. Students cannot read nor write standard American English if they do not know the discourse pattern expected in expository compositions or in informational oral presentations. The end result is being downgraded for sub-standard performance, difficulty in standardized testing and "dropping out," physically or mentally.

Non-native speakers of English are plagued by language variations, which result in unfair stereotyping, by some native speakers.

Source: Montano-Harmon, M. R. Developing English for Academic Purposes, California State University, Fullerton.

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Health

In 1994-1996, the Indian (IHS service area) age-adjusted death rates for the following causes were considerably higher than those for the U.S. All Races population in 1995. These Indian rates have been adjusted for miscoding of Indian race on death certificates.

1. alcoholism - 627 greater,
2. tuberculosis – 533 greater,
3. diabetes mellitus – 249 greater,
4. accidents – 204 greater,
5. suicide - 72 percent greater,
6. pneumonia and influenza – 71 percent greater, and
7. homicide – 63 percent greater. Indian Health Service, ihs.gov

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Gangs

Five years ago, most of the murders and aggravated assaults were the result of fights between intoxicated adults. Today, they more often are committed by juveniles. There are a number of reservations where Indian youth have committed serious crimes in gang-like fashion. There have been homicides, armed robberies, drive-by shootings, car thefts, graffiti, wearing of colors and a general disregard for authority. Many witnesses are

terrified and hesitant to cooperate with criminal investigators for the fear of gang retaliation. While one may surmise that youth violence. may be more prevalent on those Indian lands near metropolitan areas, this is not the case. There are similar problems on rural reservations. Last June, the BIA's Office of Law Enforcement Services conducted a survey of BIA and Tribal police, representing 132 tribes. They identified 375 gangs and over 4,600 gang members in Indian Country. Many who investigate and prosecute gang violence in Indian Country agree that gang killings typically lack economic or drug related associations. Rather, the dismal backdrop of gang violence depends on a plain disregard for life – just killing to kill." STATEMENT OF KEVIN GOVER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY - INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES SENATE, HEARING ON THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE INITIATIVE ON INDIAN COUNTRY LAW ENFORCEMENT, JUNE 3, 1998

Crime

As outlined in the Final Report of the Executive Committee, there is a public safety crisis in Indian Country due to the rising crime rate. While nationwide violent crimes in 1996 dropped 16 percent below 1992 levels and murders were down 20 percent, this was not the case in Indian Country. In fact, there continues to be a general downward crime trend, including violent crime, while crime continues to rise in Indian Country. Just two weeks ago, the FBI reported that crime has continued to decrease in America for the ninth straight year. In contrast, in the past two years, according to reports submitted by tribes and BIA law enforcement agencies, there has been an overall 18 percent increase of Part One crimes from 1996 to 1997, Part One crimes include homicides, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson. Because data automation for the BIA, and tribal law enforcement agencies is either non-existent or sporadic at best, and because not all tribes provide annual crime reports, it is likely the

actual figures are higher. STATEMENT OF KEVIN GOVER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY - INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES SENATE, HEARING ON THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE INITIATIVE ON INDIAN COUNTRY LAW ENFORCEMENT, JUNE 3, 1998
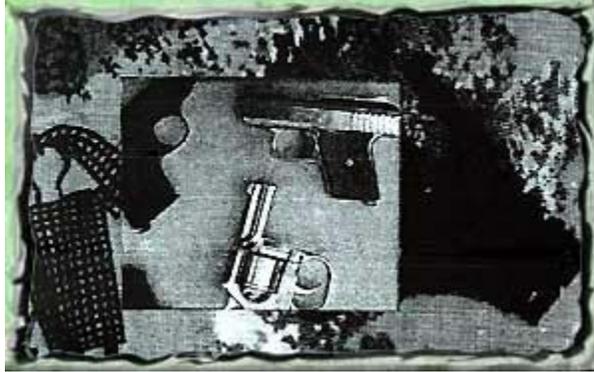
Incarceration

For Native Americans, problems including racial profiling, confessions obtained under questionable circumstances, frequently inadequate legal representation and processing through courts that have historically been hostile toward Native Americans have marred access to equal processing through the courts. While the origin of the problems are complex, and it is impossible to highlight one particular fault, statistics reveal that the sum of those problems places Indians into confinement far earlier, and for less serious crimes than other Americans. Additionally, indications are that being denied parole opportunities may increase the sentences served by Indians even further.

Currently there are over 26,000 Native Americans in adult correction facilities including state and federal prisons, as well as jails both within and outside of tribal jurisdiction. While Indians are roughly 1% of the US population, Indians make up 1.6% of the

population of prisoners in the Federal Prison System and 1.3% of prisoners in state systems. Comprising roughly 10% of the population of South Dakota, according to the most recent SD DOC statistics, Native Americans comprise 21% of male prisoners and 34% of incarcerated women. Numbers vary from state to state, with Minnesota's population 1.2% Native American, yet Indians represent nearly 7% of prisoners in that state. Across the board, the situation is alarming." Lakota Journal, Rapid City, South Dakota, Ruth Steinberger.

Suicide

American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) adolescents are more than twice as likely to commit suicide as any other racial/ethnic group. With 52.9 deaths per 100,000, adolescent AI/AN males are at four times the risk for suicide than are males of any other racial/ethnic group. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for AI/AN males. (CDC Wonder, 1999 & IHS, 1999).

**Substance Abuse and Mental Illness**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Office of Applied Studies (OAS) reports the following:

In 2001, an estimated 15.9 million Americans age 12 years or older used an illicit drug in the month immediately prior to the survey interview.

About 10.1 million persons age 12 to 20 years reported current alcohol use, i.e., were underage drinkers.

In the 12 months preceding the interview in 2001, an estimated 3.1 million persons age 12 or older received some kind of treatment for a problem related to the use of alcohol or illicit drugs; of these, 1.6 million received treatment at a self-help group.

In 2001, there were an estimated 14.8 million adults age 18 or older with a serious mental illness; an estimated 3 million had both a serious mental illness and substance abuse or dependence problems during the year.

THE LIVER AND ITS FRIENDS
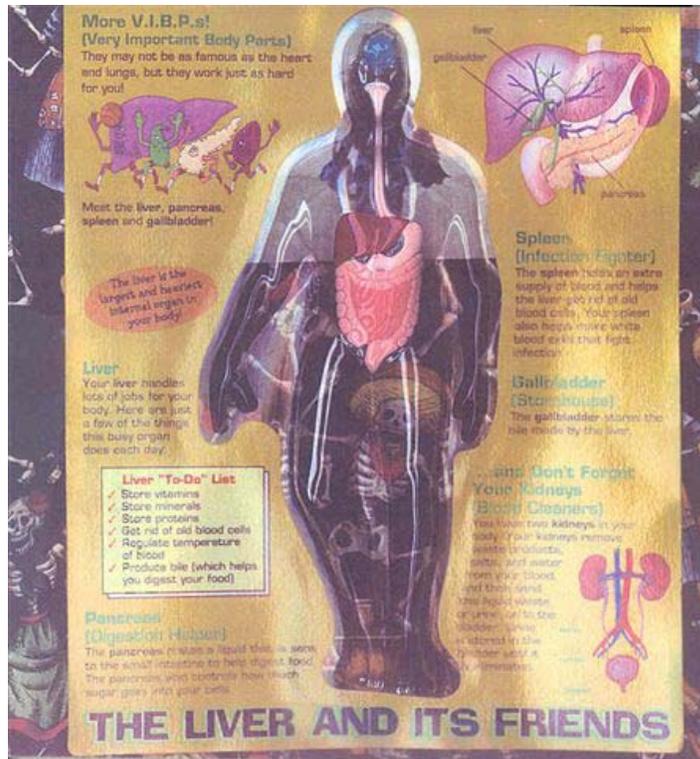
Violence by Intimates/Divorce

"The fact book, "Violence by Intimates" (NCJ-167237), presents up-to-date analyses of intimate violence drawn from a number of BJS and Department of Justice statistical programs, including the National Crime Victimization Survey, a hospital emergency department study, BJS surveys of jail and prison inmates and the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program. During 1996 there were an estimated 840,000 female victims of violent crimes inflicted by an intimate, compared with 1.1 million in 1993. By contrast, intimate violence against males, about 150,000 in 1996, showed no significant fluctuations during the 4-year period."

Trapped

Genocide

The term Genocide derives from the Latin (genos=race, tribe; cide=killing) and means literally the killing or murder of an entire tribe or people. The Oxford English Dictionary defines genocide as "the deliberate and systematic extermination of an ethnic or national group" and cites the first usage of the term as R. Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, (1944) p. 79. By 'genocide' we mean the destruction of a nation or an ethnic group. The U.N. General Assembly adopted this term and defined it in 1946 as "…a denial of the right of existence of entire human groups." Most people tend to associate genocide with wholesale slaughter of a specific people. However, "the 1994 U.N. Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide, describes genocide beyond outright murder of people as the destruction and extermination of culture." Article II of the Convention lists five categories of activity as genocidal when directed against a specific "national, ethnic, racial, or religious group." These categories are:

• Killing members of the group;
• Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of group;
• Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
• Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
• Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

(The Genocide of Native Americans: A Sociological View, Sharon Johnson, C. S. U. Hayward)

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Better Dead Than Red

We have internalized the European-American genocidal message Better Dead Than Red. We no longer need to be killed; we are killing ourselves and each other. The circumstances of our lives are causing serious bodily and mental harm, calculated to bring about our physical destruction in whole or in part, the continuation of our genocide.

The Merry-Go-Round

This past Spring, I went to the carnival. It was a rainy, cloudy day, but the carnival was open.

My life reminded me of the carousel – repetitive, cyclical; its stories as dead as the horses, frozen in motion.

What happened to me is not unique, is not my fault and is not about me. My family merely made visible the trauma of disempowered native peoples.

The rainstorm turned into thunder and lightning, cutting off the electricity fueling the merry-go-round. The merry-go-round stopped. I climbed off my horse and stepped off the carousel, glancing one last time at the mirrored horses. I left the carnival.

Our Valor

The addictive, violent, destructive behavior we see in Indian communities is a BADGE OF OUR HONOR, equal to the valor awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and Purple Heart, not our shame. It is the only way we have had to survive, to fight the daily fear and dread, the manipulation and control, the legalism, the horror, the terror of an insane, unjust system. Our acting out is a mirror of the depth of America's trauma, a shadow reflecting shame, secrecy, silence, fear, disappointment and despair, a wake-up call for the end of the denial of our genocide.

Yet, at the same time, our reaction is fueling the system. We must recognize, for the sake of our well-being and our children, that we didn't cause nor can we cajole, persuade, cure or change insanity; we can only stop reacting to it self-destructively. We need to detach psychologically from the diseases of racism and sexism, over which we are POWERLESS. Our inability to cure racism and sexism does not make us incompetent, nor should we feel ashamed of these diseases. In accepting the reality of these diseases and their consequences on our lives, we neither condone nor approve of the injustice. Instead, we face head-on, without flinching, the horror of our Holocaust, the heart of darkness, indifference, and ignorance, the insanity hidden behind racism and sexism. With our energy freed from a futile, unwinnable, unceasing battle, we can begin rebuilding our self-esteem. We can begin taking care of ourselves so that we can take care of our families and our communities.

We need to support and encourage one another as we grieve our suffering, our losses, and our missed opportunities. It will not be easy. It will not be fun. It will not be pretty. It will not be quick. We need to move through the denial, the anger, the bargaining and the sadness of our grief, without getting stuck along the way.

Yet, we are no longer alone, isolated, separated and paralyzed by fear. We no longer need to use denial as a shield. Many of us have globally and publicly proclaimed our truth, the secret of our continuing genocide revealed. We have each other, no longer controlled by lies about who we are. Together, we can heal. We need to go back to consciously release our pain, so that we can go ahead, unburdened by fear, relinquishing getting back, setting aside the leeches of hatred, bitterness, resentfulness and unforgiveness, getting off the merry-go-round of abuse, leaving the carnival. It is in our power.

Overcoming Fatalism

I had grown weary in working on this project, wondering if it would help at all. I reminded myself of the Navajo deities that come unasked to restore us. I reminded myself of the power of synchronicity.

Then I went to www.indianz.com as I do every morning and I saw the reason for my work, for trying to heal. They were back on the beat! I had missed their coverage over the holiday season, as if cut off from my world. There were a series of articles on the Warm Springs Reservation, "the deadliest place in Oregon for children."

"The Oregonian's analysis of mortality rates at Warm Springs found that residents are more than three times as likely to die between ages 24 to 44 than the statewide average. Accidents and violence - often involving alcohol - are the top causes, just as they are for children. A child growing up in Warm Springs is immersed in death. Yet a cultural reluctance to talk about death has made it difficult for people at Warm Springs who work with children to examine the causes behind each tragedy or address the trauma. "Death is everywhere, and children are forced to deal with it all the time," said Dawn Smith, principal at Warm Springs Elementary, a rare oasis of safety for children on the reservation. "But we do not give them a lot of help to deal with it, and they grow up with unresolved grief." Alongside the cultural values the people are struggling to restore, death becomes another tradition that many young people embrace. "It's what they see among their friends, and parents and relatives - early death," said Tom Dyer, who has worked in Warm Springs for eight years as an adolescent substance abuse counselor. "So many of these kids just gear up for death." Copyright 2004 Oregon Live. Sunday, December 7, 2003.

There are a series of articles from The Oregonian whose titles recognize the problem:

Part One: A place where children die, The broken chain, History leaves tribes in transition.

Part Two: Driven to death, Young lives, wrecked dreams, Tribes turn tide against infant mortality.

Part Three: Fatally flawed, Judge balances future of children, tribes.

Part Four: Taking the dry road, Store rings up alcohol sales, police calls, Teen dies in post-treatment 'whirlpool.'

Part Five: Soothing the tribes' soul.

Several other articles follow, including a Commentary: This nation has failed Indian children. Yet the face of racism remained obscured.

The fatalism was familiar to me.

We are all fully aware of the insane diseases of racism and sexism. This website will not add anything new. It will only show you how one person imprisoned by these diseases escaped.

Evolution

Many Native cultures didn't consider man separate from nature, but a part of it; a completion of its wholeness. Our present suffering can lead to restoring this connection, as we seek a better life. As in Navajo tradition, we can travel to our Source, overcoming obstacles and fear along the way through prayer, relinquishing self-will, enabling ourselves to know our reality, the union of our physical and spiritual selves, which makes it possible to dethrone the ego. Then we will manifest our Source on Earth, revealing a sacred world of beauty and harmony, the world created for us. Beyond this, in our abdication of the egoic mind is wholeness, stillness, silence, formlessness, colorlessness, non-consciousness, the womb of creation. It is a state that doesn't know of expectation, disappointment, resistance or resentment, a state in which we share. This is the truth of all sages.

For me, this journey led to the creation of this site. I am a link in life's chain of evolution, continuously changing. I can be this link or not, at this point in time, at this point in evolution.

I bear witness to the evolution of consciousness. I choose to live fully, happily, and joyously. I know now that discrimination is not my fault and it is not my responsibility to invade other people's boundaries to fix them. I can mind my own business. I can focus on myself. I can be the person I want to be. I don't have to accept anyone else's version of reality.

On my walk, I saw an adult red-eared slider turtle at the bottom of an embankment, stuck on its back, flailing its legs. I climbed down the slippery, muddy hill, picked it up and put it back in the Bayou, hopeful it had not been out in the sun too long. The next day I had the wonderful gift of seeing the same turtle in the same area, swimming in the shallow water of the Bayou. It was alive and well.

Hurting people hurt people. I have worked to heal from the past, so I won't consciously or unconsciously hurt anyone anymore.