

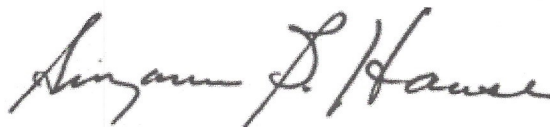
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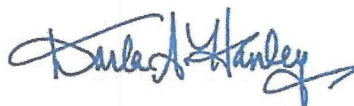
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Effect of a Culturally-Centered Group Drum Protocol on Empowerment of Indigenous

Adolescent Girls of the Six Nation of the Grand in Canada

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# EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

## Abstract

Empowerment-based protocols such as the MTIDE, as implemented with marginalized populations, aim explicitly to assist people and communities to recover from the consequences of disempowerment, so each can become active agents in reducing health disparities and inequities, increasing the capacity to manage individual and group health, and to adopt lifestyles through building strong community and cultural networks.

The investigator is a board-certified music therapist and a registered psychotherapist with experience among the Indigenous people. She developed and implemented MTIDE, or the Music Therapy Indigenous Drum Empowerment project, a music therapy protocol, and tested its' effects on the girl's relationships among themselves, within their families and also their communities.

A pre-posttest single group design was used to determine the effectiveness of the multi-faceted protocol. Pre-posttest measures included the Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM), administered to evaluate adolescent experiences of inner peace, healing and growth, connection and purpose. It was hypothesized that there would be significant pre-posttest changes ( $p = .05$ ) on scores of the Growth and Empowerment Measure as an indication of positive perception of empowerment of individuals within the group before and after the music therapy protocol. The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6) was used to evaluate distress. It was hypothesized ( $p = .05$ ) that there would be a significant difference in pre-posttest scores of the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale following the MTIDE protocol. It was hypothesized that there would be significant pre-posttest changes ( $p = .05$ ) in the reduction of perceived distress in the girls as a result of the music therapy protocol. The Medicine Wheel Wellness Assessment was used as a self-evaluation measure of individual health and wellbeing, to include any of four areas of cultural

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growth, spiritual, emotional, physical and mental change throughout the protocol. The talking stick, a culturally relevant tool, was used in each session, and in the final ceremony to facilitate verbal self-expression, and as means of sharing thoughts, ideas, and, ultimately themes shared by the girls.

The purpose of this study was to examine whether music therapy, consisting of a culturally-embedded drum protocol nested within Indigenous cultural traditions, would inspire perceived personal growth, empowerment, health and wellbeing. Secondly, the study examined whether participating adolescent girls would report decreased distress following the protocol when compared to the pretest as measured by the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6). Finally, the researcher was interested in whether individual changes in beliefs or behavior within the group would impact group relating as a whole, each girl's family and/or the greater community.

It was hypothesized that there would be significant pre-posttest changes ( $p = .05$ ) on scores of the Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM) as an indication of positive perception of empowerment of individuals within the group before and after the music therapy protocol. The null hypothesis on the GEM Scenarios and Emotional Empowerment Scale was rejected, indicating a significant difference pre- to posttest, ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . This indicated that the music therapy protocol was highly effective in increasing the reported perceived empowerment among the girls.

Secondly, the study examined whether the girls would report decreased distress following the protocol when compared to the pretest as measured by the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6). The null hypothesis of no differences was rejected at a significance level of ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . This again indicates that the music therapy

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protocol was resulted in significant decreases in perceived distress following the music therapy protocol.

Finally, of interest were the observed changes in the beliefs and behaviors of individual girls and the impact recognized on the group as a whole, each girl's family, and the greater community. Themes relating to self-empowerment, empowering peers, and embodying empowerment internally to inspire family and the community were gathered through coding and narrative analysis. Oral traditions form the foundation of Indigenous societies, and the connection between speakers and listeners within each ceremony was the oral gauge to measure increased empowerment over time.

Despite the small number of participants ( $n = 10$ ,) in this study, and the minimal number of weeks of the MTIDE protocol ceremonies (four ceremonies), significant positive changes in perceived empowerment and reduced distress were observed in the girls as evidenced by scores on the standardized measures, the Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM) and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6) as well as shared verbalized themes as expressed by the girls. Results indicate an increased sense of wellbeing in the group despite unchanged external stressors. This suggests improved wellbeing and self-belief even in the context of continued life stress.

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### Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful for the blessing of the Elders of the Six Nation of the Grand who invited me in as a music therapist, drummer, and student of the Indigenous culture. Dr. Peggy Coddling, thank-you for powerfully inspiring and challenging me as my advisor throughout this journey together. I was also privileged to have Dr. Suzanne Hanser and Dr. Darla Hanley provide valuable and timely feedback that deeply energized me and the scope of my study. Elizabeth Flynn-Dastoor, you are an APA inspiration.

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## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

### Effect of a Culturally-Centered Group Drum Protocol on Empowerment of Indigenous Adolescent Girls of the Six Nation of the Grand in Canada

#### **Empowerment and Well-being in Groups**

Inspiring the youth of a culture to independently invest in themselves and nurture self-empowerment through learning, taking risks and achieving will benefit individuals, families, community and the overall culture, in the present and for generations to come. Empowering adolescent girls of the First Nation of the Grand to embrace their individual potential in order to assume their traditional, yet significant roles in within their communities is an invaluable investment, one of great interest to everyone. “The empowerment of Indigenous women as powerful agents of change could only strengthen their communities and nations in the face of environmental and other challenges” (Wallerstein, 2006, p. 17). This statement was one of many made by Bruce H. Moore, senior United Nations official representing Canada at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2017. Continuing, he stated, “Specifically, for Indigenous women, traditional systems have been attacked and displaced. Key among these is displacement of Indigenous peoples and dispossession of lands, breaking up families by targeting children through Indian Residential Schools and the child welfare system and the discrimination and disenfranchisement of Indigenous women and their children through registration provisions of the *Indian Act*. As a result, Indigenous women and girls have been pushed to the margins more so than non-Indigenous counterparts, especially within urban settings” (United Nations, 2017, p. 1). Amidst these events and experiences, Indigenous women continue to show resiliency and strength (Bellamy & Hardy, 2015). Similarly, increasingly prosperous women now sustain flourishing communities (Stige, 2002); however, this prosperity is not possible without the community’s support.



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Empowering adolescent girls of the First Nation of the Grand will be essential to the present and future of these communities. Responsive programs, services and incentives will strengthen both individual women and the collective. One example of such an initiative is The First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework (United Nations, 2017) which was developed through intensive collaboration between Indigenous partners and Health Canada. This is a shared vision, wherein Indigenous individuals, families, and communities across Canada are supported to enjoy optimal levels of mental wellness. Achieving this vision requires: culturally grounded community development and capacity building that reduces risk factors and increases protective factors; comprehensive, coordinated, and high quality culturally responsive mental wellness services for Indigenous people living on a reserve (United Nations, 2017).

The World Health Organization seems to be in agreement with the role empowerment serves in the well-being of societies. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes community action and *empowerment* as prerequisites for health. WHO defines empowerment as “a process by which people, organizations and communities gain mastery over their affairs” (Wallerstein, 2006, p. 17); with community empowerment as “a social action process by which individuals, communities, and organizations gain mastery over their lives in the context of changing their social and political environment to improve equity and quality of life” (Wallerstein, 2006, p. 17). The World Bank describes empowerment as “the process of increasing capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes” [to] “build individual and collective assets, and to improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets” and the “expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in,

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negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives” (Wallerstein, 2006, p. 17).

Empowerment includes both processes and outcomes, with empowerment of marginalized people being an important outcome in its own right, and an intermediate outcome in the pathway to reducing health disparities and social exclusion. It is based on an assumption regarding community cultural assets that can be strengthened through dialogue and action. Dialogue, that is, participatory critical reflection in interaction with others through traditional cultural media, enables the development of collective actions in an ongoing cycle leading to future action. Empowerment begins in small increments, and grows. Empowerment involves culture and society, and is population-specific. It, therefore, requires action within a local community context. Empowerment can be seen as a dynamic interplay between the gaining of a greater internal control or capacity through personal transformation and psychological empowerment and a one involving an overcoming of external structural barriers which provides access to community or institutional resources. When these two events occur in successfully, and in balance, under appropriate leadership, positive community transformation can also occur.

“Agency” is also an important variable associated with community empowerment. as identified by the World Bank (2006). This seems especially true among is the role of marginalized communities seeking to exercise choice and transformation. “Agency” is defined as ‘what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important’ (Sen, 1999, p. 3). Agency involves processes within community that result in group empowerment. When agency is present, empowerment cannot be given to or bestowed on people, rather, people empower themselves.

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Empowerment and its sustainability occur as people create their own momentum, gain their own skills, and advocate for their own changes.

There is a revival in traditional ways, beliefs, and cultural interest among both young and old within the community of the Six Nation of the Grand reserve in Canada. It is perceived that empowerment of self and group is desirable and will lead to improved health and wellbeing within individuals and in the community (Chansonneuve, 2007). Overall, such empowerment could result in minimized depression, and fewer destructive individual and group behaviors resulting from poor self-concept or social isolation (Chinman & Linney, 1998). Valarde, et al., (2002) speak of such empowerment in terms of healing, that is, coming to terms with the past and present situation, and dealing with the pain; Gaining control: Becoming strong, both culturally and spiritually; Remaining calm despite turmoil; Finding voice, participating in change; Working together for a strong community (Velarde et al., 2002, p. 78). These values, implemented as components of a strong curriculum or protocol for empowerment, could result in a pattern of change for adolescents in search of enhanced health and wellbeing, both individually, and as a community.

### **Evaluation of Empowerment**

It is a challenging task to evaluate cultural empowerment within community, even as ideas or values that reflect empowerment are identified with some level of agreement. Still, interventions that result in reductions in social exclusion and health disparities are laudable. Literature is scant that incorporates comparison of neighborhood, village, municipal or greater projects seeking to empower groups. By their very nature such research can be complex and does not easily fit into experimental design (Fetterman, 2002 The World Health Organization published five conclusions regarding the evaluation

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of empowerment interventions, indicating that evaluation should: 1) be participatory, 2) have adequate resources, 3) examine both processes and outcomes, 4) use a mix of methodologies and designs, and 4) consult additional expertise in complex design (Wallerstein, 2006, p. 83). Rifkin (2003), identified six desirable outcomes resulting from empowerment as each might impact health, wellbeing and development within a group: Capacity-building, human rights, organizational sustainability, institutional accountability, contribution, and enabling environment.

### **Indigenous Adolescent Young Women At Risk**

Adolescence has been recognized as a time of dramatic change in the body and brain (Giedd, 2015). According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2013), about one in four adolescents have been diagnosed with a mental illness, which places them at much higher risk of experiencing mental illness during adulthood. This precarious period in development is the peak time for the emergence of anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, depression, eating disorders, and psychosis. It is also the most common time for the onset of substance abuse (Geidd, 2015). Research suggests that Indigenous adolescents are at higher risk to suffer from chronic health conditions than are their non-Aboriginal peers (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

Individuals who have endured a combination of perceived threat and historical lack of protection due to environmental factors struggle with negative impulsive behaviors including: risk taking, avoidance, aggression, self-harm, and maladaptive self-soothing through addictions and negative compulsions (Grof & Grof, 2010). In Indigenous culture, healing refers to a reprogramming that comes from a purposeful restructuring of self and community accomplished through the teaching of emotional

regulation (Van der Kolk, 2014) and resilience (Grof & Grof, 2010) through community-based learning.

Among adolescents of the Indigenous people, the ability to regulate personal emotion is an ongoing challenge that contributes to an inability to negotiate healthy and supportive relationships (Faulkner, 2017). Indeed, observed mental suffering is caused by this duopoly. Emotional self-regulation is the ability of an individual to adequately adjust to the distresses of daily life, and it is central to wellbeing and positive adjustment (van Der Kolk, 2014; Ogden, Minton, & Pain, 2006).

### **Cultural Considerations Affecting Interventions**

Recent trends in treatment dictate that counselors and therapists should consider the cultural background and life experience of a client or when planning for successful clinical intervention in various settings (Whitehead-Pleaux & Tan, 2017). Increasingly, evidence demonstrates that the most effective addictions prevention and intervention programming for Indigenous people is grounded in the wisdom of traditional Inuit, Metis, and First Nations teachings (Ellis, 2003). The center of intervention for these people is a holistic approach focused on a healthy life (Frank, 1992). Indigenous belief systems have much to teach about a broad approach to recovery because each value set emphasizes: (a) that all aspects of wellbeing are equally important and interconnected, including the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual; (b) that balanced wellbeing is important throughout the lifespan; and (c) that individual health is a function of the health of families, communities, nations, and the environment. Each of these three values must be emphasized in clinical or community intervention settings in order to implement and sustain the health and wellness of the Indigenous people over the long term, especially in regards to addictive behaviors (Chansonneuve, 2007).

### **Music, “Therapy,” and Ritual as Considerations in Groups**

Music is essential to human experience and is known to be a part of all cultures in some form. Music is the abstraction and transformation of human emotional and physical energies into acoustic energies that reflect, parallel, and resonate in synchrony with the physiological system (Stige, (2002). Through music, individuals see themselves reflected in the most faithful, intimate, profound, and exposed manner. “Music is what human beings are; it behaves as human beings behave, and causes the human system to behave as music behaves” (Stige, 2002, p. 68). “It is the mirror of human physical and emotional energy transformed into sound. It is a temporal, non-static, developmental, evolutionary transcription of life” (Schneck & Berger, 2006, p. 137). Although music’s cathartic and transformative powers may be universal, the ways such powers are harnessed and directed appear to be culturally specific. “Indeed, the forms musical healing may take within a given community are determined by how its members conceive of health and illness, as well as their relationship to the material and spiritual realms” (Janzen, 2000, p. 64).

One might ask why music is an essential tool to promote clinical or cultural change. Music therapist, researcher, and Indigenous woman Carolyn Kenny (2006) states that, “feeling is a global term in the Native world that suggests not only feeling in the emotional sense, but in a holistic sense. From experience in music therapy and in my own culture, I believe that the sense of art, that sensibility which is difficult to name, but natural as the light of day or the darkness of night, creates integration, coherence, and strength in our people. This sensibility can help us to realize that we belong. This acceptance and sense of belonging is reflected in our relationships with each other and is demonstrated through empathy, a belief in the interconnectedness of all living things. If

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our children can feel this coherence, they can do more than survive. They can thrive” (p. 134).

Values essential to “healing,” culture and music have been conveyed by others. McCormick (1995), in a study on Indigenous healing, found that expression was the most important factor in spiritual, mental, physical and emotional healing among indigenous people. In analyzing responses from First Nations study participants, slightly over one third of those responding rated expression the highest, on his list of categories on themes of healing. In the Navajo culture, a person’s wealth is judged by the number of songs he can sing (Witherspoon, 1977). Kenny (2006) shares that “In our art we reveal ourselves to one another and to society at large. This revelation helps us to define ourselves individually and collectively and therefore has many important healing aspects. We build community.” She says, “we share our hopes and dreams. We participate in the creative spirit. We create our identities. We participate in the creation of our destiny as individuals and as communities” (p. 97). Ritter (1996) stated that elders remind us to face the future with a computer in one hand and a drum in the other. “As a therapist,” Kenny (2006) states, “I always wait for the creative impulse, the spirit from within, which moves one to better health. Each person has an inner vision of health. My role as a creative arts therapist has been to assist people in finding their vision so that they can take charge of their own destinies” (p. 154).

Regarding culture and music, she asserts, “rituals are repeatable forms that make space for innovation, and repetition is a fundamental concept in traditional, Indigenous societies because the cycles of the Earth, the phases of the sun and moon, the developmental stages of peoples’ lives, the processes of healing all depend on repetition for keeping the world in balance. Repetition of musical expressions in safe space is

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critical for efficacy of our work” (2006, p. 167). According to d’Aquili et al.’s (1979) ritual affects us deeply. It may serve to stimulate both the parasympathetic components of the central nervous system and lower brain mechanisms and, as a result, ritual may function as a unifying agent within the brain. It is notable that d’Aquili et al. (1979) describes that ritual itself is the stimulant irregardless of music or another phenomenon! However, in *The Mythic Artery* (1982), Kenny (2006) relates, “the music itself could also be considered a ritual” (p.181).

### **Music’s’ Effects on Individuals and Community**

There is growing evidence to indicate that rhythmic music may positively affect emotion regulation in individuals. Research in neurology indicates that the specific areas of the brain impacting perceived emotional response are many of same areas of the limbic system influenced by rhythmic music (Levitin, 2009). This suggests that individuals with enhanced vulnerability to dysregulation, impulse control and depression, that is, a reduced ability to self-regulate, may be assisted by directed, evidence-based music therapy protocols designed to assist in reducing reactivity of brain function when brain function is made more vulnerable (less functional/adaptive) by either one’s external or internal environment (Chanda & Levitin, 2013).

Juslin and Västfjäll (2008) have proposed six underlying mechanisms through which music may induce emotions: with musical expectancy (the way we expect a piece of music to continue) being identified as one of those. Musical expectancy reflects learned schemata about specific styles of music that differ from one culture to another and that make listeners from different cultures react differently to the same piece of music (Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008, p. 569). Indigenous girls living on the Six Nations of the Grand, have been intensely aurally stimulated with traditional music to create a strong



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sense of cultural identity which deepens the connection within a music therapy intervention and the innate predictability and familiarity increases the possibility of emotion regulation.

Music is also an effective tool for affective and motivational change within groups. Henderson (1983) found a positive effect of music therapy on awareness of mood, group cohesion, and personal self-esteem among adolescent psychiatric clients. Early research by Montello (1999) suggested that music bypasses the defenses of the brain's higher cortical functions and directly affects the limbic system's emotional processing. She further indicated that traumatized clients are not fully aware that their overcharged nervous systems distort natural life rhythms that accompany life experiences. As a physiological tool (forcing function) for triggering functional adaptation, music helps drive the sophisticated feedback control system that is the human body, to adjust its operating set-points (reference signals). This the body does through mechanisms of entrainment that, in turn, set into motion functionally adaptive processes. These processes can result in redirected physiological patterns, as well as psychological attitudes (Schneck & Berger, 2006, p. 115). Straus (2017) stated that when people feel vertically integrated (awareness of our body and feelings in the moment), our bodies, limbic region, and cortex in the right hemisphere are all linked, and one is able to recognize and listen to one's feelings through awareness of one's bodies. Vertical integration helps the brainstem, limbic, and bodily states (all nonlinear, nonverbal, nonlogical) to be fully present in awareness. In these times, an individual has a wider window of tolerance and a broader range of emotions. As a result, one does not become emotionally dysregulated as quickly (Straus, 2017). It is when we become emotionally

dysregulated that we act impulsively, are affected by the symptoms of depression, or act on the craving of an addiction.

### **Drumming, and Indigenous Culture: Intervention of Choice**

Drumming has been an integral part of Indigenous cultures since time immemorial. The drumbeat represents the heartbeat of Mother Earth; the drumbeat is humanity's common pulse (Ritter, 1996). Many non-Indigenous people approach playing a drum as a means of creating sound, but in the Indigenous culture, the desire is, rather, to *draw out* the sound from the drum. In this culture of the beating drum as "human heart" and "heartbeat of the earth," s/he who draws out the sound from the drum, channels sound so to connect one's spirit with that of the earth and the Great Spirit (Meadows, 1996).

The teachings of the Elders are the identity of the Indigenous people, as these are passed verbally from generation to generation and have become the center of human identity (Tsey & Every, 2000). In one-on-one experiences with Elders on the Six Nations of the Grand, the researcher has heard them share the wisdom that, "one must know where one has come from to know *who* one is". Cultural identity is a key determinant of how Indigenous people view and express themselves (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Stories of the Indigenous people tell variations of the legend of a drum being given first to the woman by the Great Spirit, who is told to share it with men who were then to create peace between warring nations (Garrett, 1999). Wilson (2005) further describes how cultural identity, and, significantly, how health and wellness are inseparable and are essentially expressed through Indigenous traditions. Lounsberry (2001) describes cultural practices surrounding the drum to include the teaching of younger generations about the drum: to treat one's drum like a child, by covering it with

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a blanket when it is cold, and refraining from drug and alcohol use when around the drum because it is sacred. Patterson (1996), shares that Elders also teach that one cannot pick up another's drum without that person's permission as this act is disrespectful to the other. As the youth of the Indigenous people learn more about traditional sacred items like the drum, the greater the opportunity to know themselves and understand how to acquire and maintain spiritual, emotional, physical and mental balance (Vennum, 1982). The drum and drumming are integral to the culture and beliefs of the Aboriginal community.

A knowledge of rhythm and an understanding of circular patterns and cycles of self, culture and community are conceptually intertwined and are essential to wellness among the Indigenous people. Almost all human behavior falls into patterns or cycles. Within the neural structures of the brain, rhythm can positively reflect and alter hazardous personal, recurring behavior (Faulkner, 2017). Rhythm, and the use of drums to bring it about, has, for years, been a means of communicating with and influencing the physiological system. Rhythm through drumming is a syntax that the physiological system of the Indigenous people understands from birth, and one to which it profoundly responds (Goudreau, et al., 2008).

Essential to the conversation regarding the significance of drumming to Indigenous culture is that, as much as active drumming can provide energy, it can also relax and calm our bodies. Drumming in time with our heartbeat can help our psychology to realign with our body's natural rhythms (Friedman, 2000). Sound, vibration and rhythm can assist us in responding more functionally to tension, which is especially vital to experience as "many people suffering rhythmic mismatches and stressful demands

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may refrain from their natural rhythmic selves in order to accommodate the external world” (Faulkner, 2017, p. 24).

Entrainment is the human body’s natural predisposition to connect with and respond to – via feedback/feedforward control loops – both its internal and external environments (Schneck & Berger, 2006). Despite the non-repetitive nature of ever-changing polyrhythms that evolve in group drumming, the fact that such random rhythms are superimposed over the steady, repetitive pulse of the “mother drum” to which all adhere sustains the brain’s attention and brings about entrainment to the point of euphoria (Schneck & Berger, 2006, p 157). Music is especially suited to providing for adaptation of this nature because music does not depend on language to be understood. Music does not rely on the cognitive processes to influence activity. One almost acts musically before thinking about what and how to respond (Schneck & Berger, 2006). Music’s predictive qualities, present in beat and rhythm, and the mechanism of entrainment can drive human beings to re-set themselves to a more desirable biological and personal space. Music can move one from hopeless to hopeful, from lack of focus to focused through entrained movement and participation.

### **Culture Connection and Group Experience**

Since ancient times, rituals and group gatherings have facilitated deep transformational change and healing in all cultures and all times. In group healing, the collective group empowers the inner process of the individual exponentially. When it is said that a person cannot do something alone, it is most often effortless and much easier to accomplish with the collective mind, strength and intention of the group (Coyle, 2018).

In his book, *The Culture Code*, Daniel Coyle (2018) defines culture as, “a set of living relationships and interactions that generate behavior and belief which moves a

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group towards a goal” (p. 64). Within the group dynamic, he identifies cues that indicate belonging as: proximity, eye contact, energy, mimicry, turn taking, attention, body language, vocal pitch, consistency of emphasis, and whether everyone talks to everyone else in the group. These cues involve three basic characteristics that translate into: *We are close, we are safe, we share a future*. On an individual level this clearly states: *You are safe here*. These are the indicators of psychological safety. One of our most important cognitive functions is in alerting to danger, a function which involves the brain’s amygdala, and feeling. The amygdala is associated with positive feelings as well and plays an important role in building responding to others in interactions and social connections. The amygdala takes a received belonging “cue” and tracks members of a group, tunes into their interactions, and sets the stage for meaningful engagement (Coyle, 2018). Cultural interventions within groups, tied to ritual and drumming and nested in music therapy practice, could be an effective prevention/intervention protocol when used as a means of empowering young women. This is especially true in some cultures when the protocol is presented in a context of a community music experience rather than a therapeutic one.

### **The Present Study**

Music, especially group drumming embedded in the cultural beliefs and traditions of the Indigenous culture, could be effective in introducing and forming affective and motivational elements of personal self-regulation and community empowerment. The symbols, beliefs and drumming experiences, as well as the drums as symbols of culture, speak to the people and to their identity and needs. They are already embedded in the ways of the Indigenous people and speak to the spirit and to healing. The purpose of this

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pilot study is to:

- (a) design a culturally-centered group drum protocol using music and symbols associated with the Six Nation of the Grand;
- (b) implement a community-based program for a small group of Indigenous girls from the Six Nation of the Grand, and;
- (c) test assessment tools for measuring outcomes related to self-concept, motivation and empowerment of individuals within this culturally-specific group as related to health and wellbeing (e.g., self-concept, motivation, and empowerment) as considered effective by a board-certified music therapist who is also a registered psychotherapist familiar with the culture of the Six Nation of the Grand.

### **Intervention**

The Music Therapy Indigenous Drum Empowerment (MTIDE) was used as the protocol for this pilot study. This method is a culturally-based music therapy drum protocol that has been developed for Indigenous adolescent girls living within the Six Nations on the Grand reserve in Brantford, ON, Canada by this researcher, a board-certified music therapist and registered psychotherapist. Since drumming traditions may vary among the 3000 plus Indigenous tribes worldwide (Ross, 2006), an opportunity is created for professionals using the MTIDE protocol to provide a treatment model that can accommodate diverse tribal traditions. While MTIDE focuses on drumming as its central therapeutic activity, it also draws upon elements from other treatment programs that are congruent with Indigenous-based healing concepts. These treatments include talking circles (Indigenous processing group) and reference to the Medicine Wheel. The Medicine Wheel is widely utilized as a conceptual framework and integrative approach to health and wellness for Indigenous people.

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MTIDE respectfully utilizes clinical music therapy drumming within the corresponding quadrants of the Medicine Wheel (Appendix B). The clinical music therapy drumming interventions reflect the tribal traditions of the community where the music therapy sessions were provided. The MTIDE protocol consists of six ceremonies, one hour in length, conducted once weekly by the investigator. During the first session, participants engaged in making their own personal drum that they used for the remainder of the ceremonies. The specifics of each ceremony are described in detail in Appendix A.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

Ten Indigenous young women participants from the Six Nation of the Grand reserve, aged 14-18 years, were recruited for the present study. All participants were residents of the Six Nations of the Grand, enrolled in either the Six Nations Polytechnic or the Kawenni:lo/Gaweni:yo high schools, and recruited through previous music therapy participation with this researcher. Eligibility criteria also include the availability and means to attend each weekly ceremony at the designated time and location, and the physical capability to independently interact in the construction and playing of a hand drum. No formal music education was necessary and individuals with prior music experience had equal opportunity to participate. Individuals who had been involved in previous music therapy sessions were provided the opportunity to participate in the present study with consideration of their physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental needs. This included girls who had previously disclosed feelings related to depression and anxiety, a desire to connect deeper with their surrounding culture, an interest in improving their physical health and were looking for a healthy outlet for self-expression.

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All participants in the present study were volunteers and gave their assent to participate in the research.

### **Setting**

Six Nations of the Grand in Brantford, ON, Canada was the location of this pilot study. Six Nations is the largest First Nations reserve in Canada with an approximate 12,271 reported living on the reserve. It is the only reserve in North America that has representatives of all six Iroquois nations living together (Wilson, 2005). A private, designated room in the community center on the Six Nations of the Grand reserve and the room was set up with chairs in a circle.

### **Design**

The investigator observed the effects of a six-week drum protocol with a single group, pretest-posttest design. All assessments were conducted before the intervention, after the third ceremony, and upon completion of the final ceremony at the end of the six weeks. Pre-determined interview questions were given aurally by the present researcher during the final, sixth ceremony, in a talking circle format.

### **Music Therapy Indigenous Drum Empowerment (MTIDE) Protocol**

MTIDE was developed by the music therapist over a two-year period and evoked by the music and the significance of the drum in the culture of the Indigenous people of the Six Nation of the Grand and their relationship with the Medicine Wheel. It was created and inspired in conjunction with Elders and the girls and women of the Six Nations of the Grand. Their input directed the structure of each ceremony, and the stories used were taken directly from various Elders with a blessing for their use in this protocol. This application of MTIDE consisted of six, one hour ceremonies over a six-week period and led by this researcher. Sessions were structured in the following format:



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- Session One: Drum Making and blessing of the new born drum by an Elder
- Session Two: Focuses on the East/Spiritual/Fire aspects of the Medicine Wheel and intuition/self-love/sun rising/the heart
- Session Three: Focuses on the South/Emotional/Water aspects of the Medicine Wheel and feelings/desires/the soul/fluidity
- Session Four: Focuses on the West/Physical/Earth aspects of the Medicine Wheel and the five senses/body sensations/containment/inertia/solidity
- Session Five: Focuses on the North/Mental/Air aspects of the Medicine Wheel and movement/ideas and thoughts/creativity/communication
- Session Six: Final Ceremony and the predetermined Talking Circle questions

### **Measures**

Assessments included the Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM), (Appendix C & D), Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6). (Appendix E), and Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement (Appendix F) paper form pre-, mid- and post-intervention.

**Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM)** (Haswell et al., 2010, p. 3).

“Empowerment, it’s like a tree – there is a foundation (seeds, roots), then the energy and self-esteem to look after yourself (trunk), so you can grow – the more you grow the bigger it gets...on the branches (of the tree) are education, job opportunities, housing” (Haswell et al., 2010). The word empowerment has been adapted by Indigenous people to mean healing from past wounds, developing strength and skills to live life in a positive way, to have good relationships with others and to work together to make communities a better place (Haswell, 2010).

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The GEM was developed to measure the empowerment and growth within oneself, one's family, and one's community. This tool was created through listening and consulting with Indigenous people who shared their ideas about questions that should be asked and how the form should take shape. The process of empowerment story scenarios approach empowerment like a tree with the underlying assumptions that we all have basic needs that have to be met and reflecting on those basic needs leads to gaining understanding of self and situation which begins the process of empowerment. The Kauri Pine is one of the oldest, strongest living trees in the world, and its presence in Australia can be traced back 30 million years (Haswell et al., 2010, p. 4). This measurement tool incorporates the Kauri Pine Tree as a symbol of empowerment and the reclaiming of Aboriginal culture and strength. While many other Australian trees have significant meaning for different Aboriginal groups, the choice of the Kauri Pine in this work aims to represent the collective strengths of Aboriginal culture as one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world (Haswell et al., 2010).

The GEM collects background information of the participant, covering age, gender, community (the participant's Indigenous status), and housing situation (where the participant is currently residing). Two instruments comprise its main body: Emotional Empowerment Scale (EES14) and 12 Empowerment Scenarios (12S). Within this study, Scenario 9 (level of respect in your workplace) was removed because of its irrelevance to the adolescent age group, with none of the participants currently holding a job. It is completed on paper with a pen/pencil and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

EES aims to capture the extent to which the person is able to feel and show specific signs of wellbeing in their everyday life. The 12S measures functional aspects of

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empowerment. Each scenario assesses the extent to which the person has achieved movement between empowerment states, pre- to posttest, from the lowest (scored 1) to highest (scored 4). The selection and broad wording within each stage was identified through interviews, and completed and refined through the workshop consultations. The GEM scenarios and EES showed strong reliability on a range of tests, Cronbach's alpha consistently  $>0.85$  when initially tested in Australia with local Indigenous people (Haswell et al., 2010).

**Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6)** (Kessler et al., 2002), is a self-report measure of psychological distress which involves six questions about a person's emotional state. Each question is scored from zero (none of the time) to four (all of the time). Scores of the six questions are then summed, yielding a minimum score of zero and a maximum score of 24. Low scores indicate minimal levels of psychological distress and high scores indicate elevated levels of psychological distress. The K6 is included because questions from this scale (sometimes with modification) have been relatively widely used in Indigenous wellbeing surveys and screening tools, including the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) (Andrews & Slade, 2001; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2009; and Furukawa et al., 2002). Strong links between high Kessler scores and increased likelihood of distress-related mental disorders have been demonstrated in mainstream populations (Kessler, et al. 2008 & Kowal, et al. 2007). Inclusion of the K6 enables a reference point with previous studies and a possible link with mental health problems. The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale used in this study is a Government of Canada document. All of the assessments were self-administered through a written paper format. These instruments

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use a client self-report measure making it a desirable method of assessment because it depends on the clinician's genuine pursuit to collect information about the client's current condition.

### **The Medicine Wheel Wellness Measurement** (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006).

The Medicine Wheel stems from an Indigenous philosophy of life which promotes health and wellness through a 'fully ecological' and holistic approach based on the Medicine Wheel (see Appendix B). The purpose of the Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement is to help the individual to focus on self through a view of his/her current life and through self-reflection on all four facets (physical, emotional, mental, spiritual) involved in initiating change in order to promote empowerment and well-being for self and others.

The Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006) was developed as an Indigenous contribution to the helping professions in focusing on social interventions with the individual. The Medicine Wheel combines both the 'emic' (based on cultural particularities), and 'etic' (based on universally shared human characteristics) approaches to helping and is adaptable to a variety of cultures (Massé, 1995). The Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement graphically identifies small steps that one can take on the self-help path to empowerment and wholeness. This tool is a positive visual incentive for motivation and stimulation of the violation to change one's negative and destructive attitudes, thinking patterns, self-talk and behaviors for the benefit of the whole (Bopp et al, 1984). The Medicine Wheel also provides a check list for an individual to see her progress and adjust herself or her plan on her journey to empowerment. It can help in transforming herself, her impulse to control others, her situations and the environment and assists her as she steers herself toward the acquisition

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of self-discipline (Morrisseau, 1998). According to Bopp et al., (1984), the Medicine Wheel Wellness measure may be utilized as a model for what human beings could become should it be decided to develop one's full potential and act upon that decision to do so.

There are two stages to the Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement. The first exercise is self-assessment where the individual is instructed to write her name in the center circle of this wheel of life. The following question initiates the process: *What am I doing presently to enhance my physical well-being?* The individual begins by listing all the actual positive activities or things that she is doing in the physical quadrant of the circle. The same procedure is carried out, with the same basic question, for the completion of the other three quadrants; *emotional, mental and spiritual*. The second exercise is to provide the individual with a graph depicting the first wheel. Writing their name in the center of the wheel, they will then begin with the *physical* quadrant and starting from the center of the circle (beside their name), shade one square for each activity that is on her list in the first wheel (ex. Three activities listed, the first three squares will be shaded). The individual continues this process for the three other aspects of life, filling the number of squares corresponding to her positive activities listed in each quadrant. After each section is completed, the person joins the outermost shaded boxes of the four sections by drawing a continuous line in a circular motion from the first to the last. This joining together of her activities in the four aspects of life will demonstrate if her wheel is actually a balanced circle or if it looks like an uneven shape. The purpose of this experience is to provide a new level of personal and self- knowledge. If it is not a completely round circle, then her wheel of life is out of balance. The individual's strengths and weaknesses become clear. This measurement highlights the attitudes and

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behaviors one may need to develop in order to live a balanced, harmonious, responsible and accountable life.

### **Informed Consent Forms**

Informed consent forms were comprised of information regarding procedures, benefits and risks of participating in the project, an explanation of how to acquire the results of the research, availability of counselling services, voluntary participation, and contact information for the researcher (Appendix G).

### **Materials**

Approaching each music therapy session as a ceremony with respect to the Indigenous culture, notes were recorded by the investigator with a pen and paper. After each ceremony, the data recorded within the session as well as additional notes to be coded for qualitative analysis were completed on a password protected computer. The young women were supplied with pens to complete their measurements.

To complete the construction of the drums in the first ceremony, pre-cut drum bodies and dried animal skin (for the heads) were supplied and delivered by an Elder, who remained for the ceremony to assist in the building and blessing of each new born drum. The completed drums were in the style of a tubano shape and decorated with painted symbols, animals and designs unique to each girl. At the beginning of ceremony two, three, four and five, each individual drum was placed in the middle of the room, and the drums remained covered until the appropriate time in the ceremony. They were covered at the conclusion of each session and placed into a locked empty office room where they remained until the following ceremony. At the completion of the final ceremony, each drum was given a blessing by the Elder to be brought into the homes of their creator and owners.

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The talking stick was also presented at the completion of the first ceremony by the Elder and collected by the Elder at the completion of the final ceremony. The talking stick chosen for use in these ceremonies was made of birch, which signifies truth, new beginnings and cleansing of the past, and wrapped partly with leather. It was decorated with orange beads which represent kinship, intellect and determination as well as black beads which represent clarity, focus and success. At the bottom of the stick were purple and white beads that represent love, peace and family.

### **Results**

Ten Indigenous adolescent girls participated once a week for 90 minutes in the six-week protocol from February 28<sup>th</sup> to April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. All ten young women were in attendance for every session, with one arriving late in the second session, and one different girl leaving early in the third session, having given notice due to prior commitments.

### **Data Analysis**

Pretest and posttest results from the GEM (EES and Scenarios) and the K6 were compared, using the Mann-Whitney U Test. This nonparametric statistical test for comparing two dependent groups was applied, as the small number of research subjects negated assumptions of a normal distribution of scores. Qualitative data was composed of transcripts from four ceremonies, text from the drum construction ceremony that began the protocol, and notes from the hour and a half concluding talking stick ceremony. This researcher also wrote memos that contained reactive remarks regarding possible ways to categorize the data and expose possible relationships. Data were coded using Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software. First level codes, which summarize segments of data, were determined. These codes were then arranged into pattern codes, which held

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commonalities and formed themes. For example, first level codes of the girl's meaning of community were "the houses, the apartments, the basements, the centers, the schools and the ceremonies". These were collapsed into the subtheme "physical infrastructure."

Constant comparison was used to verify the existence of themes on the basis of examples that repeatedly occurred in the data. It was also used to look for relationships among themes. Memos created during data collection and analysis informed the themes and their relationships to broader concepts. This served as an audit trail to strengthen the dependability of the results. The former is the ability to track shifts in the emergent design and the latter ensures that data, interpretations, and outcomes are rooted in the contexts and experiences of the persons involved (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). Narrative analysis was the tool that allowed the girls' experiences throughout the six ceremonies to be highlighted through their own unique words with a focus on the content. Oral traditions form the foundation of Indigenous societies, connecting speaker and listener in communal experience. The MTIDE protocol is rooted in the cultural intertwining of stories and the performative and interactive practice of drumming as it relates to expression and communication. The participants and their context are described in detail for the reader to judge whether the findings can be transferred to other settings, as a measure of transferability.

The null hypothesis of no differences between pretests and posttests on the GEM Scenarios and Emotional Empowerment Scale was rejected, due to significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . The null hypothesis of no differences between pretests and posttest on Kessler 6 was rejected, due to significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . This indicated that the music therapy protocol was highly effective in increasing the reported



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perceived empowerment among the girls. Despite the low number of participants ( $n = 10$ ) who completed the protocol and the minimal number of weeks of the MTIDE protocol ceremonies (four ceremonies) change was observed on these standardized measures. Furthermore, all of the girls increased their scores on the GEM and EES, from pretest to posttest.

Secondly, the study examined whether the girls would report decreased distress following the protocol when compared to the pretest as measured by the Kessler (K6). The null hypothesis of no differences was rejected at a significance level of ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . This again indicates that the music therapy protocol was resulted in significant decreases in perceived distress following the music therapy protocol.

Finally, of interest were the observed changes in the beliefs and behaviors of individual girls and the impact recognized on the group as a whole, each girl's family, and the greater community. Themes relating to expanding self-empowerment, empowering peers, and embodying empowerment internally to inspire family and the community were noted.

Although the number of participants ( $n = 10$ ) in this study were quite low, and the number of weeks of the MTIDE protocol ceremonies was minimal (four ceremonies), significant positive change in perceived empowerment and reduced distress were observed in the girls as evidenced by scores on the standardized measure, the GEM and the K6 as well as shared verbalized themes as expressed by the girls. Results indicate an increased sense of wellbeing in the group despite unchanged external stressors. This suggests improved wellbeing and self-belief even in the context of continued life stress.

### TABLE 1.1

*Pretest, Posttest Mean Scores and Range of Possible Total Scores of GEM Scenarios*

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	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S10	S11	S12
Mean Pretest	1.5	2	1.5	2	1	1.5	1.5	2	1	1.5	1.5
Mean Posttest	3	3	3	3.5	3	3	3	3	3.5	3	3.5
Lowest Score Pretest	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Highest Score Pretest	1.5	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2.5	2
Lowest Score Posttest	1.5	3	2.5	2.5	2.5	3	2.5	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
Highest Score Posttest	3	4	3.5	3.5	4	4	4	4	3.5	3.5	4

*Table 1.1* Pretest, Posttest Mean Scores and Range of Possible Total Scores of GEM Scenarios

TABLE 1.2.

*Pretest, Posttest Mean Scores and Range of Possible Total Scores of EES*

	Mean Pretest	Mean Posttest	Lowest Score Pretest	Highest Score Pretest	Lowest Score Posttest	Highest Score Posttest
EES1	2.21	3.79	1	2	3	5
EES2	1.93	3.71	1	3	4	5
EES3	2.14	3.69	2	3	3	4
EES4	2.14	3.74	1	2	3	3
EES5	1.86	3.78	1	3	4	4
EES6	2.29	3.93	1	3	4	5
EES7	2.07	3.64	1	2	3	5
EES8	2.21	3.86	1	2	3	4
EES9	2.07	3.57	2	3	3	5
EES10	2	3.79	2	3	4	5
EES11	2.11	4.07	1	3	3	5
EES12	1.97	3.68	1	3	3	4
EES13	2.04	4.01	2	3	4	5
EES14	1.89	3.59	1	2	2	4

*Table 1.2.* Pretest, Posttest Mean Scores and Range of Possible Total Scores of EES

TABLE 1.3.

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### *Pretest, Posttest Mean Scores and Range of Possible Total Scores of K6*

	Mean Pretest	Mean Posttest	Lowest Score Pretest	Highest Score Pretest	Lowest Score Posttest	Highest Score Posttest
K1	3.08	2.75	1.5	4	1.5	3.5
K2	3.17	2.76	2.5	4	2.5	3
K3	3.42	2.54	3	4	2.5	3
K4	3.25	2.83	3	4	2.5	3
K5	3.43	2.67	3	4	2.5	3
K6	3.75	2.92	3	4	2.5	3

*Table 1.3.* Pretest, Posttest Mean Scores and Range of Possible Total Scores of K6

### **Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM)**

**Scenarios.** Scenario six ‘How do you think about your own spirituality’ and scenario eight ‘Are you able to speak out and be heard in your community’ showed the most significant increase over the six weeks. Two girls felt their situation had progressed from never thinking about spirituality and it not having any particular deep meaning to feeling that they are deeply spiritual people, recognizing the power of spirit through active music making experiences, connections with other people, their culture, land and past. This gave them a sense of strength which seem to help guide their actions. Three different girls moved through feeling that they have a long way to go to be sure their voice is heard, to feeling that people generally respect their words, even when they are not in agreement with them. They identified the non-verbal aspect of drumming as the starting point to having themselves be heard. The scenarios are divided into two components based on their relevance, which is summarized in Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1 GEM Scenario Components

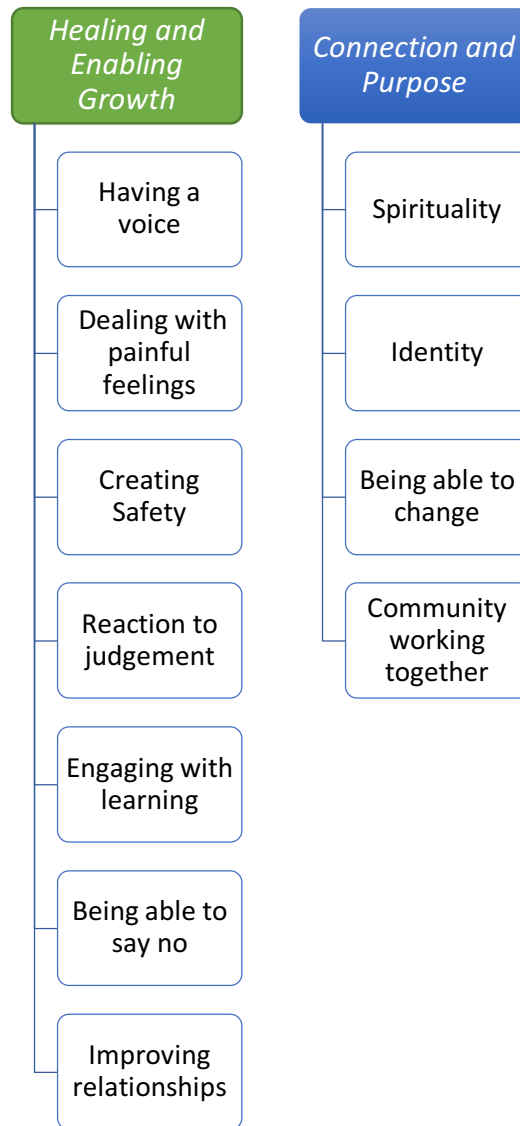


Figure 1.1. GEM Scenarios divided into two components based on relevant themes

**EES.** EES reflects the extent that the person feels *Inner Peace* and may indicate social and emotional outcomes of empowerment and the extent to which the person is achieving their *self-capacity* to engage confidently with the world. The pre-ceremony and post-ceremony data reflect that feeling valued and holding self-confidence for one’s self were the two most improved areas on the Emotional Empowerment Scale within the six-

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week study period. The scenarios are divided into two components based on their relevance, which is summarized in Figure 1.2. below.

Figure 1.2. EES Components

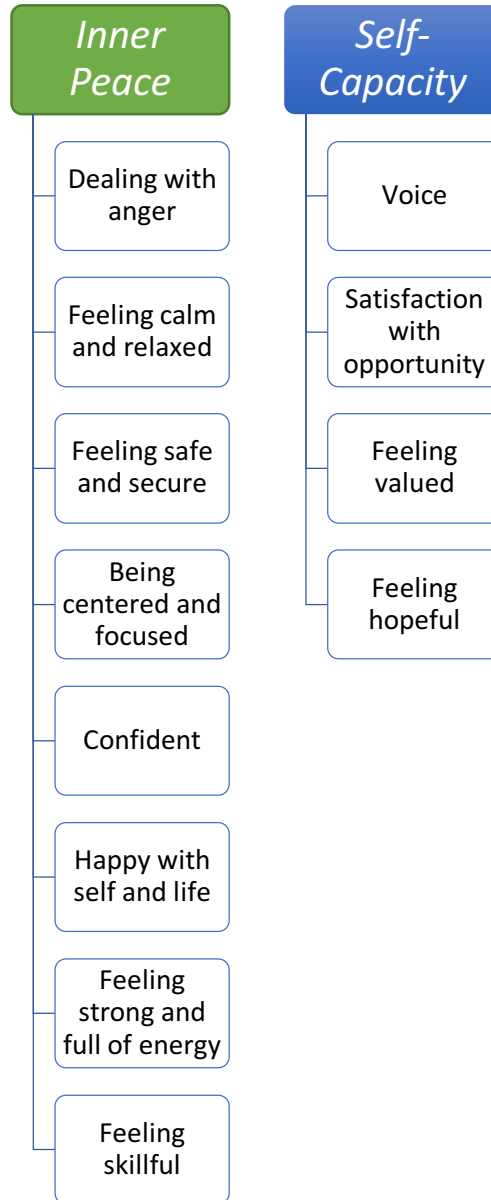


Figure 1.2. EES divided into two components based on relevant themes

**Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6)** The comparison of pre-ceremony with post-ceremony responses revealed that question four, 'How often did you feel so

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*depressed that nothing could cheer you up?* and question five, *During the past 30 days, how often did you feel that everything was an effort?* showed the highest level of decreased intensity within the participants. 'Depression' appeared most frequently within the ceremonies and concluding talking circle, and was spoken by every girl at least once in every ceremony. 'Motivation' and 'effort' were identified as frequently spoken about within a context of struggle, connectedness to family behaviors and a lack of interesting and safe opportunities. Putting effort into participating in 'unhealthy' and 'illegal' activities were described as easily accessible as residents of the Six Nations of the Grand reserve.

### **Final Ceremony**

The girl's perceptions of the meaning of empowerment were comprehensive. They also held idealized views of who an Indigenous Six Nations of the Grand woman is, the impact of participating in the MTIDE protocol as a group, the positive and negative effects felt through family interactions and the connection to the greater community. Throughout the six-week protocol, each girl identified that she had valuable input to share about all four areas. Overall, they shared many negative experiences, with the majority feeling that they had little control or power within their personal lives, families and community. Some of these topics were approached, communicated and shared together non-verbally through active drumming and music, but the data shared in this study pertained to the pretest-posttest words inspired through the rhythmic connection. The common themes were those of individual empowerment and wellbeing, social connectedness, family growth and strengthened sense of community. Table 1.1 lists the questions that were posed during the 90-minute talking circle closing ceremony. Questions were derived directly from the identified sub-sections of the GEM

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Scenario, EES measurements and the culturally relevant Medicine Wheel. Ceremonial drumming began the ceremony, marked the completion of one empowerment focus and centered the group to begin the next empowerment focus, and centered the group to begin the next empowerment focus and the concluding ceremony. A blessed talking stick directed the flow of conversation and allowed each participant to independently initiate sharing their own experiences. An Elder was present upon completion to give one final blessing on each individual drum as they were leaving the sacred space they had been built, and to collect the sacred talking stick and give a blessing on the words that it inspired. Table 1.2 provides a synopsis of the participant's answers. To keep anonymity, pseudonyms were created to represent the ten participants.

TABLE 1.1.

### *Final Ceremony Talking Circle Questions*

	Individual Empowerment	Group Empowerment	Family Empowerment	Community Empowerment
Culture	How can I keep my wheel of life in balance?	How can we support each other in keeping life balance?	How can my family keep our wheel of life in balance?	How can my community keep our wheel of life in balance?
Drum	How is the drum important to me?	How is the drum important to us?	How is the drum important to my family?	How is the drum important to my community?
Skill	How can my self-capacity effect my daily life?	How can my self-capacity effect my peers?	What am I doing to help my family grow?	How do I meaningfully connect with my community?
Action	How do I maintain inner peace?	How do my actions support peace within my peers?	How do my actions help my family to heal?	How am I acting purposefully for my community?

*Table 1.1.* Division of Talking Circle Questions by four identified themes

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TABLE 1.2.

*Key Components, Final Ceremony Talking Circle Responses*

	THEMES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IDENTIFYING	QUOTES
Individual	Starting a hobby	B, F, I, J	<p>“Get balanced”</p> <p>“Peace inside cause it distracts from the pain”</p> <p>“When I’m playing my drum I’m not spending that time getting high and I feel like I’m making a better me”</p>
Individual	What’s important to me	A, C, D, F, G, H, J	<p>“Feel in control when I’m doing something just for me”</p> <p>“Making and now owning my own drum, I am can speak when I have no words”</p>
Individual	Believe in myself	A, C, D, E, I	<p>“I feel like I have a power that I didn’t have before, and nobody can take it away from me, no matter what”</p>
Individual	Planning for my future	B, C, F, G, I, J	<p>“I’ve never felt like I have a purpose but talking about my future changes that”</p> <p>“It gives me a visual map, like it’s going to take me outta here”</p>
Group	More opportunities	A, B, D, F, H, I, J	<p>“I’m gonna get more done cause I’ve got this squad, and we’ve got power together, playing my drum makes me feel like I can do anything”</p>
Group	Got my back	C, D, E, G, I, J	<p>“We are connected now and nobody can take that away”</p>
Group	Relating to my anger	A, B, C, E, G, H, J	<p>“She’s yelling these words that sound like they’re coming out of me and it’s connecting to the drum”</p>
Family	Calm in chaos	B, C, F, G, H, I	<p>“So many people living in my house and they’re out of control, but I’m trying to go into myself where it’s more calm”</p>
Family	New trust	A, D, E, F, H, J	<p>“I’m wanting to live more with the Medicine Wheel because I feel I can let myself trust some (family) that I couldn’t connect with before. Maybe I can be like a healer”</p>
Family	Happy where we’re at	B, C, D, F, G, I	<p>“Learning about being rich inside myself makes me more happy because it kinda feels like my</p>



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Family	Sharing new skills	A, C, D, E, H, I, J	(family) are already giving me what I need. Maybe I'm not noticing it that great" "My (family) and I have been talking about drums and my (family) even sang a couple songs last week that I had never heard. I felt closer to my (family) then I ever, ever had"
Community	Thinking about others	B, D, E, F, G, H, I, J	"I have lots of friends that are struggling and playing our drums, making our drums, I think they would start to feel different like me"
Community	Reaching out to people	A, B, C, G, H, I, J	"When I'm sharing music nobody is getting hurt, everybody feels safe and it's like I feel closer to people than in any other way. It makes me want to help other people for the first time"
Community	Learning from Elders	A, B, C, E, F, G, I, J	"When we built our drums in the first ceremony with (the Elder) I felt proud to be (Indigenous), it felt like a privilege. That's the first time I've felt like that. Ever. Normally I'm super embarrassed cause this place is usually so depressing and ugly"

*Table 1.2.* Final Talking Circle Responses divided by identified themes

the findings of increased empowerment and wellbeing and decrease in despair were echoed in the data analyzed from the talking circles and informal commentary and observation

**Individual Empowerment.** Subthemes that were identified through the individual empowerment discussion included: "starting a hobby," "what's important to me," "believe in myself" and "planning for the future." Each participant strongly connected with the cultural approach that the Medicine Wheel Wellness Measurement provided through a visual representation of balance versus imbalance. "Starting a hobby" was recognized by the girls as a way to achieve both balance and inner peace and to counter the time spent engaging in harmful activities. Making music was identified as a healthy hobby that most had never considered or never would have thought they would

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be so inspired by engaging together. “What’s important to me” and “believe in myself” were both identified as ways the young women felt ‘powerful’ and ‘more in control’. “Planning for the future” was spoken of in terms of a skill that gave them ‘purpose’ and also ‘a visual map’ that would help guide them into a more positive direction. Discussion about their personal drum brought strong and passionate words including: ‘love,’ ‘strength,’ ‘release’ and ‘pride in ownership.’ Several girls indicated they had never built something and indicated an immense sense of satisfaction in both the process and the physical outcome.

**Group Empowerment.** “More opportunities,” “got my back,” and “relating to my anger” are all sub-themes that were identified within the group empowerment talking circle discussion. Although these girls were acquaintances through school, the weekly ceremonies and interactive engagement of music and connection, both verbal and non-verbal, their proud description of “got my back” was not only shared with words, but was evident through body language that became more intimate and comforting as the protocol unfolded. Similar opinions shared within ceremonies led to observable connections which blossomed into “more opportunities” of growth and healing in a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual way. Anger was both talked about and displayed in various forms and degrees throughout the 6-week protocol. Vulnerability brought on by raw emotion surrounding living situations, families consumed with addiction and many other commonalities invited individuals to share a little more freely and deeply with each passing ceremony. Drumming within this group and in their future, was identified by several girls as a means to working towards balance within the Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement.

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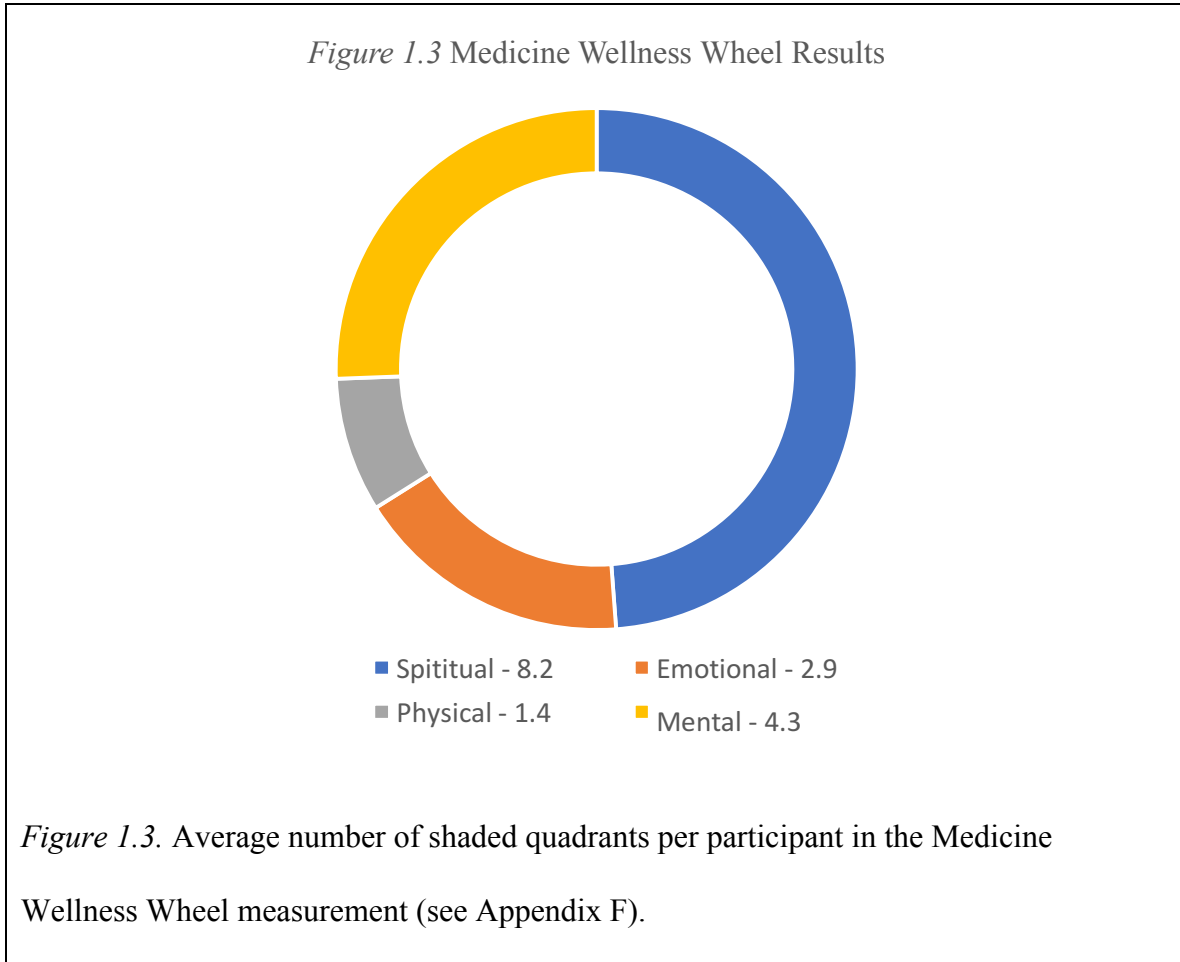
**Family Empowerment.** There was a wide variety of living situations and family dynamics that the young women shared with the group e.g., “calm in chaos,” “sharing new skills,” “new trust,” and “happy where we’re at.” With a high prevalence of multiple generations living together, the Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement revealed several girls highlighting the importance of how their home situation was out of their control, but that they had the ability to turn inward and try and find inner peace. “Sharing new skills” was directly centered around the drum, and how it had brought the girls together with different family members as they shared their drum experience. In two cases, other family members uncovered their drums, engaging and connecting with cultural music and growing together. Discussions of an individual’s past, experiences growing up and the not always knowing who to trust gave way to a “new trust” which puts the focus ahead and in line with Indigenous belief, and the possibility for some family healing. The pressures of material desires (Indigenous focus on inner richness) struggled with being “happy where we’re at” and this often fluctuated from ceremony to ceremony.

**Community Empowerment.** “Thinking about others,” “reaching out to people,” and “learning from Elders” were the sub-themes that were uncovered within the community focus. Adolescence is a time of self-discovery and inward focus, but in the fifth session, “thinking about others,” a characteristic of the South quadrant of the Medicine Wheel was brought up in the context of how others would enjoy and could benefit from participating in this protocol. This led directly into “reaching out to people” and how sharing music and sharing songs was a ‘safe’ and ‘fun’ way to do that. “Learning from Elders” came up in the first ceremony, directly stemming from the building and construction of each participant’s drum. Deciding the depth of desire to invest in the Indigenous culture, ways and traditions was identified to likely be a life long

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

challenge and yet they felt that learning and listening could provide wisdom throughout life's journey.

### Medicine Wheel Wellness Measurement



Within the four quadrants, positive activities around spiritual well-being were the highest frequency and physical well-being being the lowest frequency (see Figure 1.3). 'Participating in ceremonies' and 'listening to Elders and our tribe's beliefs' were both identified by the majority of the girls as areas that they felt promoted individual spiritual connectedness. 'Not liking myself and my body' and 'various dependencies' were identified as factors preventing physical well-being. All of the participants found it challenging in one way or another to consider physical well-being a priority as one girl

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

stated, “I inhale so much tobacco smoke in my house throughout the day, why would I stop smoking myself?” All but one participant felt that the visual representation of the imbalance in their wheel of life made this a priority and helped to identify both their strengths and weaknesses.

### **Discussion**

Empowerment-based protocols such as the MTIDE, as implemented with marginalized populations, explicitly aim to assist people (and communities) recover from the consequences of disempowerment, so that they can become active agents in reducing health disparities and inequities, increasing young people’s capacity to manage their own health and adopt healthier lifestyles with a strong emphasis on building on existing community and cultural networks. These improvements can only occur within a health service that is accessible and flexible enough to allow groups such as the girls of the Six Nations of the Grand to flourish.

The GEM, K6 and Medicine Wheel Wellness measurement scores demonstrate a significant increase in sense of self-capacity and psycho-social empowerment through adverse circumstances over the six-week engagement period. Results indicate an increased sense of wellbeing in the group despite unchanged external stressors, suggesting improved wellbeing and self-belief even in the context of continued life stress. The null hypothesis of no differences between pretests and posttests on the GEM Scenarios and Emotional Empowerment Scale was rejected, due to significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . The null hypothesis of no differences between pretests and posttest on Kessler 6 was rejected, due to significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) with  $T = 0$ . Despite the low number of participants ( $n = 10$ ) who completed the protocol and the minimal number

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of weeks of the MTIDE protocol ceremonies (four ceremonies) change was observed on these standardized measures. Furthermore, all of the girls increased their scores on the GEM and EES, from pretest to posttest. Qualitative data obtained from the concluding talking circle ceremony, were divided into the four categories of individual, group, family and community. Individually, the highest number of respondents identified with the theme ‘What’s important to me’, signifying the girl’s discovery of how honing into and identifying one’s individual values and beliefs creates the feeling of inner strength, or empowerment. Within the group category, ‘more opportunities’ and ‘relating to my anger’ equally had the highest number of respondents identifying. Having both the physical presence of support and the perceived sense of support beyond the group meeting put accomplishment as something that is now achievable and ‘relating to my anger’ held space for all the participants as they could relate to both the words and the passion shared amongst the girls. The family category had ‘sharing new skills’ as the highest number of respondents as the girls felt compelled to connect with various family members and inspired culturally to engage with newly refined skills. Finally, ‘thinking about others’ was the highest number of respondents from the community category. The girls’ meaningful experience lent them to identify peers and friends who they felt would benefit from MTIDE involvement and how this could create a ripple effect throughout the reserve.

MTIDE was guided and inspired by the Indigenous people of the Six Nations of the Grand to facilitate working from strengths and focusing on empowerment, emphasizing relationship development, demonstrating Indigenous leadership, providing reliable and consistent services, facilitating connection to culture, fostering connections

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to other services, maximizing opportunities for choice making and enabling creative pathways for growth. MTIDE was several years in development, and included an inclusive, inspiring and original establishment process beginning in the community. Taking the time and space to find the right path with the community, utilizing meaningful evaluation processes, emphasizing mechanisms to celebrate small and large achievements and a focus on strong and sustaining relationships with the community and Elders were all important steps in implementing MTIDE.

This research supports the use of the MTIDE protocol with several groups concurrently to continue with respected Six Nations women as leaders in addition to this researcher. This would be impactful to achieve its full potential in reaching out to Indigenous girls in the area, while facing the challenges of a lack of consistent and sufficient resources. The acceptance of western music therapy within the Indigenous cultural context has given way to the opportunity for the deepest form of healing - one without stigma and actively involving multiple subjective and objective input. The current limited physical group space could potentially restrict growth in participant numbers, although there is a high level of support from the center. This restriction was identified as potentially affecting both sustainability and growth. However, as another piece of evidence to support the growth of empowerment, the girls initiated an independent gathering that they referred to as their 'seventh ceremony,' with the purpose of brainstorming about other potential venues that could give MTIDE an appropriately sized space and permanent home.

Participants provided both qualitative and quantitative evidence of promising changes in their lives, particularly in the area of finding meaning and purpose. The data

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

suggest that the girls are beginning to recognize the capacity within themselves to make positive changes in their lives, while learning to deal better with painful feelings, strengthening their identity and handling conflict and criticism more safely. The group appeared to be gaining skills, voice, confidence and energy to develop creatively and educationally, as well as to access support for addictive behaviors.

To achieve its full potential and maximize its impact on adolescent health outcomes in the broader community, MTIDE requires long-term commitment through policy and resource allocation processes. The benefits of social support in ensuring healthy life opportunities are enormous for the adolescent to grow individually and within their family, in order to further impact their community and all that is the Six Nations of the Grand.

### **Reflections**

The generosity of time and resources given by the Elders of the Six Nation of the Grand towards this study was immense. Recognizing the greater issue of a county in crisis, how their people and adolescent girls are being impacted and the potential for western music therapy and Indigenous culture to compatibly provide empowerment opportunities is remarkable. The MTIDE protocol, although developed with adolescent girls as the primary focus, could easily be effectively introduced to adolescent boys as well as adult women and men. Empowerment begins within one's self and can be deeply life enhancing at any age. The original focus on empowering adolescent girls stems from the role of women in Indigenous culture and the widespread influence each girl has as they grow into young women and mothers.



## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

The drum is what brought everyone together. Its aural and tactile sensations and circular shape connected everyone musically, physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally. The drum inspired non-verbal communication at times, and promoted narrative and listening at other times and unearthed the concept of empowerment within each participant.

*The Circle can handle all emotion.*

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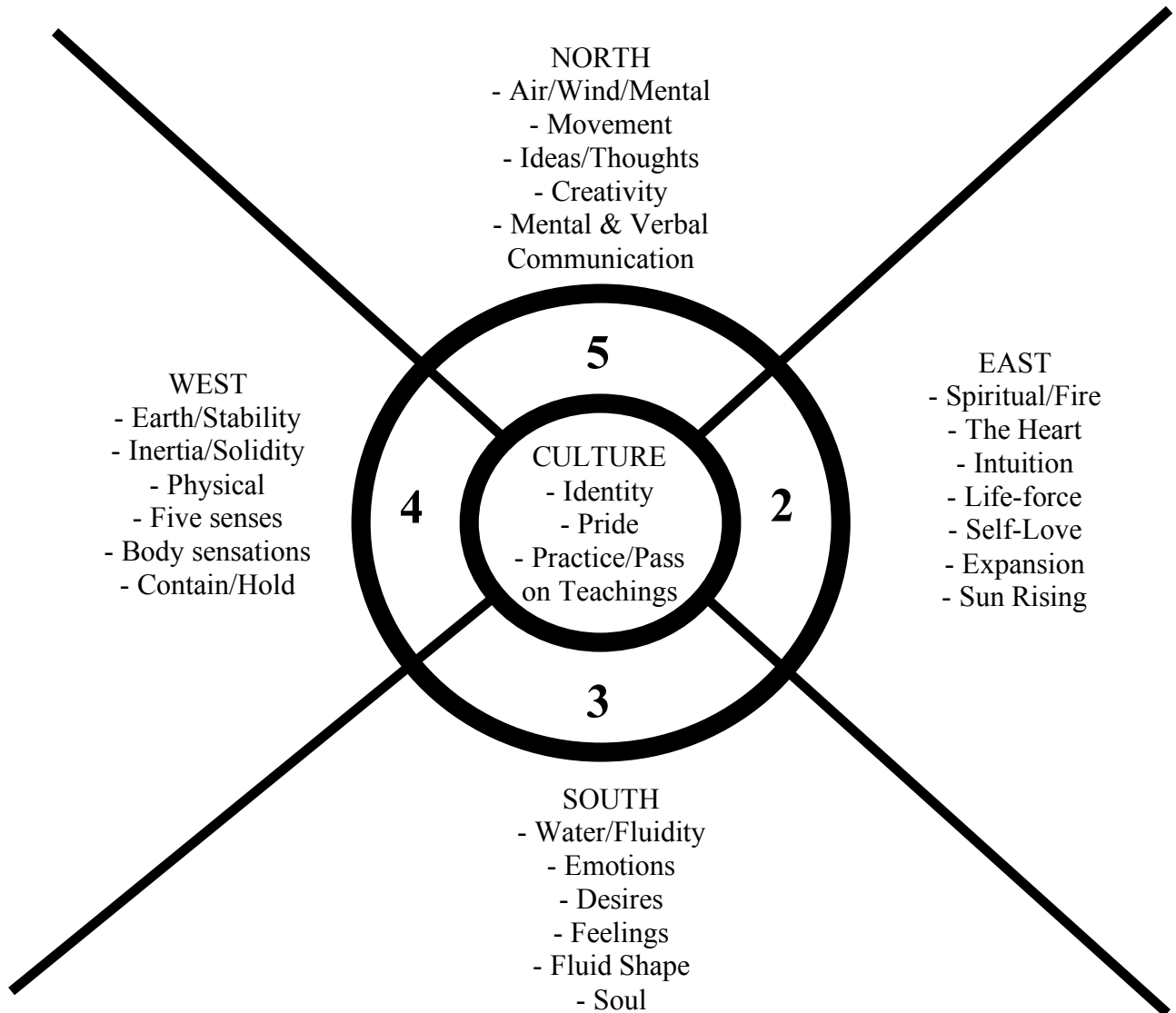
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Appendix A



## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

*The goal is not to return a person to an average or "normal" state; instead, the goal is to help the patient actualize his or her fullest potential by discovering the gifts of Spirit.*

### **Music Therapy Indigenous Drum Empowerment (MTIDE)**

#### *Session One – Construction of the drums*

##### Room Set Up:

- chairs in a circle

##### Music Therapist Sits Facing:

- the north

##### 1. Smudging/Sharing Circle

Light your smudge and call upon the spirits of the smudge to cleanse and protect you, saying:

“Sacred smudge (sage or incense), drive away all negativity from my heart; take away everything unworthy and impure.”

First waft the smoke toward your heart. Hold the smudge stick (or incense) away from you and use the feather to waft the smoke toward you. Then take the smudge smoke over your head, down your arms and down the front of your body. Imagine the smoke lifting away all negative thoughts, emotions and energies that have become attached to you.

Breathe in the smudge, visualizing the smoke purifying your body from within. (Note, be careful if you suffer from respiratory difficulties).

Now bring the smoke down the back of your body toward the ground. Visualize the last vestiges of negativity being taken back into the earth and up away into the air.

Repeat your smudging once again, this time calling on the sacred spirit of smudge in this way

“Sacred smudge (sweet grass or incense) bring me the positive energy I need to do this work.

Help me to become balanced and purify my soul.” As you smudge, imagine yourself being

surrounded by a gentle, loving energy – breathe in positivity, courage and love.

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

Then you can ask “Mother Earth, keep me safe and grounded throughout this day, stretch yourself up toward the sky and say “Father Sky give me the confidence to fly like and eagle today”, Move feet slightly apart and stretch arms out above shoulders and say “May the elements balance within me to give me strength, wisdom, peace and joy this day.” Visualize a warm glow in the area of your solar plexus.

2. Blessing by the Elder
  3. Materials are used to construct individual drums.
  4. Blessing of the Talking Stick
  5. Closing Blessing
- Drums are returned to the middle of the circle and covered
  - One individual leads the group in the final blessing;

With beauty before me, I walk  
With beauty behind me, I walk  
With beauty above me, I walk  
With beauty below me, I walk  
From the East, beauty has been restored  
From the South, beauty has been restored  
From the West, beauty has been restored  
From the North, beauty has been restored  
From the zenith in the sky beauty has been restored  
From all around me beauty has been restored

### *Session Two – East/Spiritual*

#### Room Set Up:

- chairs in a circle

#### Music Therapist Sits Facing:

- the east

#### Drum Placement:

- in the middle of the circle, covered individually

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

### 1. Smudging/Sharing Circle

Light your smudge and call upon the spirits of the smudge to cleanse and protect you, saying:

“Sacred smudge (sage or incense), drive away all negativity from my heart; take away everything unworthy and impure.”

First waft the smoke toward your heart. Hold the smudge stick (or incense) away from you and use the feather to waft the smoke toward you. Then take the smudge smoke over your head, down your arms and down the front of your body. Imagine the smoke lifting away all negative thoughts, emotions and energies that have become attached to you.

Breathe in the smudge, visualizing the smoke purifying your body from within. (Note, be careful if you suffer from respiratory difficulties).

Now bring the smoke down the back of your body toward the ground. Visualize the last vestiges of negativity being taken back into the earth and up away into the air.

Repeat your smudging once again, this time calling on the sacred spirit of smudge in this way “Sacred smudge (sweet grass or incense) bring me the positive energy I need to do this work. Help me to become balanced and purify my soul.” As you smudge, imagine yourself being surrounded by a gentle, loving energy – breathe in positivity, courage and love.

Then you can ask “Mother Earth, keep me safe and grounded throughout this day, stretch yourself up toward the sky and say “Father Sky give me the confidence to fly like an eagle today”, Move feet slightly apart and stretch arms out above shoulders and say “May the elements balance within me to give me strength, wisdom, peace and joy this day.” Visualize a warm glow in the area of your solar plexus.

### 2. Awakening the Drum/Dedication of Drum

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

Walk around the room, wafting smoke into each corner. Call on the spirit of sage to drive away all negativity from the room. Then ask the spirit of sweet grass to bring harmony and balance into the room.

Move to the center of the room and briefly stand still. Turn to the East of the room and fan smudge out into that direction four times, saying: “Spirit of the East, great Spirit of Air, cleanse and inspire this drum.”

Turn to the South and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the South, great spirit of Water, strengthen and bring peace to this drum.”

Turn to the West and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the West, great Spirit of Fire, energize and protect this drum.”

Turn to the North and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the North, great Spirit of Earth, ground and cleanse this drum.”

Return to your original position and look up toward the heavens, this time sending smudge upwards four times, saying: “Great Father sky, guard this drum from above.”

Finally, squat toward the floor and send smudge down to the earth four times, saying: “Great Mother Earth nurture this drum from below.”

Put down your smudge stick and stand quietly with your eyes shut. Visualize the great spirits you have summoned standing guard around your room. You could imagine them as the great archangels or the four Spirit Animals of Native North American tradition (North – Buffalo, East

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

–eagle, South – Coyote and West – Grizzly Bear). Visualize the loving energy of the mother and father spirits above and below you. Give thanks to all of them.

Move to the center of the circle and remove your drum from its covering. Carry it back to your chair.

### 3. Heartbeat

- The music therapist begins a traditional Tsimshian heartbeat and individuals are invited to join in their own time
- Tsimshian: Two eighth note pulses followed by three steady quarter note pulses– one/two, two three, four, one/two, two three four, one/two, two, three, four...
- This continues and fades out in a natural way as a group
- The group sits in silence

### 4. Heartbeat/What is in your heart?

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat – two steady eighth notes followed by a quarter beat of silence – one/two, rest – one/two, rest – one/two, rest
- In the silence between the eighth notes individuals are given the opportunity to chant one word that is currently in their heart

### 5. Rhythm of My Heart

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat
- Building off of the word that each individual expressed, one at a time each girl creates a unique rhythm that expresses the voice of the inner spirit

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

- The group joins in and plays her rhythm
- This is repeated for each individual

### 6. Rhythmic Journey - The Eagle Feather

- Individuals are encouraged to play both the rhythms and emotions of the story character (eagle)

A long time ago, the Anishinaabek had forgotten the ways of the Creator and no longer offered their Semma during prayer so that the Creator could hear them. The Creator grew sad that her children no longer remembered how to use their first gift, Semma. It was decided that it was time for her children to leave the earth and return to her so she called out for the great spirit in the west to bring his children home.

The animals heard this news as they can hear the ways of the Creator. They became very distraught and began to panic. The animals did not want to see the departure of their brothers and sisters of the Anishinaabeg, so they called a meeting among themselves.

At the meeting of the animals, the eagle volunteered to fly to the creator and vouch for his brothers and sisters of the Anishinaabeg, for the Eagle was the strongest in flight and would be able to reach the Creator high in the sky. So, upon agreement the Eagle flew to the Creator.

The Creator greeted the Eagle and heard his plight. With a heavy heart the Creator gave the Eagle four days to prove that the Anishinaabeg did forget about her and their first gift. On the fourth day, the great spirit of the west will have arrived and it will be too late to send the spirit away. It was the task of the Eagle to prove that the Anishinaabeg still offered their Semma in prayer to their creator. So, the Eagle flew away with great speed in search of that wisp of smoke that the Anishinaabeg produced while offering their Semma to the Creator through their sacred fires.

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

On the first day, the Eagle flew all across Turtle Island and did not find any evidence of the Anishinaabeg prayers. At the end of the day, the Eagle needed to rest but he remained optimistic that tomorrow was another day and he still had time to save his brothers and sisters.

On the second day, the Eagle circled Turtle Island as he had the day before and as the day before he did not find the evidence he was looking for. When it was time rest, the eagle still remained optimistic that tomorrow was another day and he still had time.

On the third day, the eagle flew faster and circled around Turtle Island very thoroughly. Still he came upon no evidence that would save his brothers and sisters. He went to rest with a heavy heart and decided to get up early, before sunrise to give his brothers and sisters one last chance before he returned to the creator with what he has found.

On the fourth day, the eagle rose well before sunrise to circle Turtle Island one last time. As the dawn approached in the East, there was nothing more the Eagle could do so he began his flight to the Creator.

Just then, out of the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of smoke coming from the trees. It was so faint, and so small that he would have missed it very easily on the days before. He flew with all his might to the small wisp of smoke.

The Eagle circled above the small clearing where the smoke was coming from. What he saw was a Grandmother and Grandfather standing over a small fire offering their tobacco to the creator in their morning prayer. Between them stood their small granddaughter. In their poverty, the small family could only afford a small fire and a small offering, but that was all that was needed.

Elated and joyous, the Eagle quickly gathered up a portion of the wisp of smoke and flew with all his might and the greatest speed back to the Creator. Racing against time to make it there



## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

before dawn broke the sky.

The Eagle returned to the Creator in time of the breaking day, just before the sun rose, as the world stands still in anticipation of the coming day.

As dawn broke the sky the Creator called out to the great spirit of the West and gently told him that he was no longer needed to do this duty and he would not be called upon to provide such a service again.

The Anishinaabeg were able to take their place once again among the plants and animals of the Earth. They began practicing their morning prayers once again in abundance and never forgot the dedication of the great Eagle that did not give up on his brothers and sister of the Anishinaabeg.

This is why the Anishinaabeg hold the Eagle feather in such high regard. The Eagle has stood for the people, he protects, serves and watches over his brothers and sisters. The Eagle flies closest to the Creator so through his feather, our ceremonies have greater meaning, for his feathers guide our prayers to the Creators ears.

### 7. Silence

- With both hands on the middle of the drum, we sit in silence

### 8. Talking Circle

- the following questions are posed and each girl is given the opportunity to answer any/all;
- What is the first word that comes to mind to describe yourself?
- How has your spirit evolved throughout the years?
- Can you frame your spirit as positive?
- How important is how others see you to your sense of self/spirit?
- Can other people diminish your spirit/fire?

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

- How can we support each other to avoid this?

### 9. Closing Blessing

- Drums are returned to the middle of the circle and covered
- One individual leads the group in the final blessing;

*With beauty before me, I walk  
With beauty behind me, I walk  
With beauty above me, I walk  
With beauty below me, I walk  
From the East beauty, has been restored  
From the South beauty has been restored  
From the West beauty has been restored  
From the North beauty has been restored  
From the zenith in the sky beauty has been restored  
From all around me beauty has been restored*

### *Session Three – South/Emotions*

#### Room Set Up:

- chairs in a circle

#### Music Therapists Sits Facing:

- the south

#### Drum Placement:

- in the middle of the circle, covered individually

#### 1. Smudging/Sharing Circle

Light your smudge and call upon the spirits of the smudge to cleanse and protect you, saying: “Sacred smudge (sage or incense), drive away all negativity from my heart; take away everything unworthy and impure.”

First waft the smoke toward your heart. Hold the smudge stick (or incense) away from you and use the feather to waft the smoke toward you. Then take the smudge

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

smoke over your head, down your arms and down the front of your body. Imagine the smoke lifting away all negative thoughts, emotions and energies that have become attached to you.

Breathe in the smudge, visualizing the smoke purifying your body from within.

(Note, be careful if you suffer from respiratory difficulties).

Now bring the smoke down the back of your body toward the ground. Visualize the last vestiges of negativity being taken back into the earth and up away into the air.

Repeat your smudging once again, this time calling on the sacred spirit of smudge in this way “Sacred smudge (sweet grass or incense) bring me the positive energy I need to do this work. Help me to become balanced and purify my soul.” As you smudge, imagine yourself being surrounded by a gentle, loving energy – breathe in positivity, courage and love.

Then you can ask “Mother Earth, keep me safe and grounded throughout this day, stretch yourself up toward the sky and say “Father Sky give me the confidence to fly like an eagle today”, Move feet slightly apart and stretch arms out above shoulders and say “May the elements balance within me to give me strength, wisdom, peace and joy this day.” Visualize a warm glow in the area of your solar plexus.

### 2. Awakening the Drum/Dedication of Drum

Walk around the room, wafting smoke into each corner. Call on the spirit of sage to drive away all negativity from the room. Then ask the spirit of sweet grass to bring harmony and balance into the room. Move to the center of the room and briefly stand still. Turn to the East of the room and fan smudge out into that direction four times, saying: “Spirit of the East, great Spirit of Air, cleanse and inspire this drum.” Turn to the

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

South and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the South, great spirit of Water, strengthen and bring peace to this drum.” Turn to the West and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the West, great Spirit of Fire, energize and protect this drum.” Turn to the North and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the North, great Spirit of Earth, ground and cleanse this drum.” Return to your original position and look up toward the heavens, this time sending smudge upwards four times, saying: “Great Father sky, guard this drum from above.” Finally, squat toward the floor and send smudge down to the earth four times, saying: “Great Mother Earth nurture this drum from below.” Put down your smudge stick and stand quietly with your eyes shut. Visualize the great spirits you have summoned standing guard around your room. You could imagine them as the great archangels or the four Spirit Animals of Native North American tradition (North – Buffalo, East –eagle, South – Coyote and West – Grizzly Bear). Visualize the loving energy of the mother and father spirits above and below you. Give thanks to all of them. Move to the center of the circle and remove your drum from its covering. Carry it back to your chair.

### 3. Heartbeat

- The music therapist begins a traditional Tsimshian heartbeat and individuals are invited to join in their own time
- Tsimshian: Two eighth note pulses followed by three steady quarter note pulses— one/two, two three, four, one/two, two three four, one/two, two, three, four...
- This continues and fades out in a natural way as a group

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

- The group sits in silence

### 4. Heartbeat/What is in your heart?

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat – two steady eighth notes followed by a quarter beat of silence – one/two, rest – one/two, rest – one/two, rest
- In the silence between the eighth notes individuals are given the opportunity to chant one word that is currently in their heart

### 5. Contrasting Emotions

- one of the girls play their future rhythm on the drum and encourages the group to join in with the same rhythm
- one of the emotions that was chanted earlier is identified and the group is encouraged to play the rhythm emulating that rhythm
- another emotion is chosen and the same rhythm is played
- each individual who it interested, gets a turn

### 6. Rhythmic Journey – The Story of Jumping Mouse

- girls are encouraged to play both the rhythms and emotions of the story character (mouse)

<http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Legends/TheStoryofJumpingMouse-Unknown.html>

### 7. Silence

- With both hands on the middle of the drum, we sit in silence

### 8. Talking Circle

- How did it feel to express different feelings as a group on your rhythm?
- What are some ways you get control of your feelings?

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

- What are the consequences of letting your feelings rule your behavior?

### 9. Closing Blessing

- Drums are returned to the middle of the circle and covered
- One individual leads the group in the final blessing;

*With beauty before me, I walk  
With beauty behind me, I walk  
With beauty above me, I walk  
With beauty below me, I walk  
From the East beauty has been restored  
From the South beauty has been restored  
From the West beauty has been restored  
From the North beauty has been restored  
From the zenith in the sky beauty has been restored  
From all around me beauty has been restored*

### *Session Four – Stability/Earth*

#### Room Set Up:

- chairs in a circle

#### Music Therapists Sits Facing:

- the west
- drums are in the middle of the circle, covered individually

#### 1. Smudging/Sharing Circle

Light your smudge and call upon the spirits of the smudge to cleanse and protect you, saying: “Sacred smudge (sage or incense), drive away all negativity from my heart; take away everything unworthy and impure.”

First waft the smoke toward your heart. Hold the smudge stick (or incense) away from you and use the feather to waft the smoke toward you. Then take the smudge smoke over your head, down your arms and down the front of your body. Imagine the

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

smoke lifting away all negative thoughts, emotions and energies that have become attached to you.

Breathe in the smudge, visualizing the smoke purifying your body from within. (Note, be careful if you suffer from respiratory difficulties).

Now bring the smoke down the back of your body toward the ground. Visualize the last vestiges of negativity being taken back into the earth and up away into the air.

Repeat your smudging once again, this time calling on the sacred spirit of smudge in this way “Sacred smudge (sweet grass or incense) bring me the positive energy I need to do this work. Help me to become balanced and purify my soul.” As you smudge, imagine yourself being surrounded by a gentle, loving energy – breathe in positivity, courage and love.

Then you can ask “Mother Earth, keep me safe and grounded throughout this day, stretch yourself up toward the sky and say “Father Sky give me the confidence to fly like an eagle today”, Move feet slightly apart and stretch arms out above shoulders and say “May the elements balance within me to give me strength, wisdom, peace and joy this day.” Visualize a warm glow in the area of your solar plexus.

### 2. Awakening the Drum/Dedication of Drum

Walk around the room, wafting smoke into each corner. Call on the spirit of sage to drive away all negativity from the room. Then ask the spirit of sweet grass to bring harmony and balance into the room. Move to the center of the room and briefly stand still. Turn to the East of the room and fan smudge out into that direction four times, saying: “Spirit of the East, great Spirit of Air, cleanse and inspire this drum.” Turn to the South and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the South, great spirit of Water,

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

strengthen and bring peace to this drum.” Turn to the West and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the West, great Spirit of Fire, energize and protect this drum.” Turn to the North and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the North, great Spirit of Earth, ground and cleanse this drum.” Return to your original position and look up toward the heavens, this time sending smudge upwards four times, saying: “Great Father sky, guard this drum from above.” Finally, squat toward the floor and send smudge down to the earth four times, saying: “Great Mother Earth nurture this drum from below.” Put down your smudge stick and stand quietly with your eyes shut. Visualize the great spirits you have summoned standing guard around your room. You could imagine them as the great archangels or the four Spirit Animals of Native North American tradition (North – Buffalo, East –eagle, South – Coyote and West – Grizzly Bear). Visualize the loving energy of the mother and father spirits above and below you. Give thanks to all of them. Move to the center of the circle and remove your drum from its covering. Carry it back to your chair.

### 3. Heartbeat

- music therapist begins a traditional Tsimshian heartbeat and individuals are invited to join in their own time
- Tsimshian: Two eighth note pulses followed by three steady quarter note pulses— one/two, two three, four, one/two, two three four, one/two, two, three, four...
- This continues and fades out in a natural way as a group
- The group sits in silence



## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

### 4. Heartbeat/What is in your heart?

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat – two steady eighth notes followed by a quarter beat of silence – one/two, rest – one/two, rest – one/two, rest
- In the silence between the eighth notes individuals are given the opportunity to chant one word that is currently in their heart

### 5. Heartbeat/What makes your spirit stable?

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat – two rhythmic beats – one/two – one/two – one/two
- In the empty two beats between the bass notes individuals are given the opportunity to chant one word that identifies one word that grounds/holds them spirit

### 6. Mood Induction – My Sitting Down Place

*If you feel comfortable, please close your eyes. Begin to focus inwards, and draw your attention towards your breath.*

*- make the space ours - where you can sit/lie comfortably, burning an incense stick or cone to neutralize the atmosphere and set it apart from mundane activity - use a candle as a power switch, so that when the candle is lit at the beginning of the induction it indicates to the subconscious mind that the space is switched 'on' for induction and when there is no candle light, the space is switched 'off' and assigned to any mundane activity*

*- remove shoes*

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

*- sit comfortably, back straight, legs slightly apart, and feet firmly in contact with the floor*

*- rest the palms of your hands on the lower thighs*

*- relax the body*

*- relax the mind*

*- close your eyes and picture a peaceful, beautiful spot. If you have a peaceful spot where you always feel at ease - a deserted beach by the sea on a warm, sunny day perhaps, or a cool glade in a forest, or by a gently flowing stream, or in an open meadow*

*- just call it to mind. Be there in your imagination, now.*

*Listen for the sounds of Nature all around you - the gentle lapping of waves on the sand, the song of birds in the trees, the soft dance of flowing water*

*Smell the tang of sea air, the musky freshness of trees, the clear fragrance of grass and heather and wild flowers.*

*Feel the soft sand under your feet, or the springiness of grass.*

*Let your imagination activate your inner sense in this way and you will be creating for yourself a beautiful, relaxing mind-space where you can go anytime and be secure, safe and tranquil.*

### 7. Rhythmic Journey – The Ripple Effect

*- remain in the place that you found yourself after the mood induction*

*- place one hand in the middle of your drum and one hand somewhere resting on your body*

*- with your eyes closed, breath in and find an aroma/scent that is in the air where you are*

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- when your body is ready, breath out and play your drum once, making a low tone and being aware of the ripple of vibration that moves from your heart, through your body and out through your toes, fingers, and top of your head

- continue this pattern as it begins to entrain into a groove and the chosen aroma/scent smell enters into your body, vibrates inside and then disperses through your skin

### 8. Silence

- With both hands on the middle of the drum, we sit in silence

### 9. Talking Circle

- Does the scent/aroma that was in the air in your mood induction inspire you?

- How did the sensation of the drums vibrations enter and leaving your body leave you feeling now?

### 10. Closing Blessing

- Drums are returned to the middle of the circle and covered
- One individual leads the group in the final blessing;

*With beauty before me, I walk  
With beauty behind me, I walk  
With beauty above me, I walk  
With beauty below me, I walk  
From the East beauty has been restored  
From the South beauty has been restored  
From the West beauty has been restored  
From the North beauty has been restored  
From the zenith in the sky beauty has been restored  
From all around me beauty has been restored*

### *Session Five – Air/Wind/Mental*

#### Room Set Up:

- chairs in a circle

#### Music Therapist Sits Facing:

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

- the north

Drum Placement:

- in the middle of the circle, covered individually

### 1. Smudging/Sharing Circle

Light your smudge and call upon the spirits of the smudge to cleanse and protect you, saying: “Sacred smudge (sage or incense), drive away all negativity from my heart; take away everything unworthy and impure.”

First waft the smoke toward your heart. Hold the smudge stick (or incense) away from you and use the feather to waft the smoke toward you. Then take the smudge smoke over your head, down your arms and down the front of your body. Imagine the smoke lifting away all negative thoughts, emotions and energies that have become attached to you.

Breathe in the smudge, visualizing the smoke purifying your body from within. (Note, be careful if you suffer from respiratory difficulties).

Now bring the smoke down the back of your body toward the ground. Visualize the last vestiges of negativity being taken back into the earth and up away into the air.

Repeat your smudging once again, this time calling on the sacred spirit of smudge in this way “Sacred smudge (sweet grass or incense) bring me the positive energy I need to do this work. Help me to become balanced and purify my soul.” As you smudge, imagine yourself being surrounded by a gentle, loving energy – breathe in positivity, courage and love.

Then you can ask “Mother Earth, keep me safe and grounded throughout this day, stretch yourself up toward the sky and say “Father Sky give me the confidence to fly

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like and eagle today”, Move feet slightly apart and stretch arms out above shoulders and say “May the elements balance within me to give me strength, wisdom, peace and joy this day.” Visualize a warm glow in the area of your solar plexus.

### 2. Awakening the Drum/Dedication of Drum

Walk around the room, wafting smoke into each corner. Call on the spirit of sage to drive away all negativity from the room. Then ask the spirit of sweet grass to bring harmony and balance into the room. Move to the center of the room and briefly stand still. Turn to the East of the room and fan smudge out into that direction four times, saying: “Spirit of the East, great Spirit of Air, cleanse and inspire this drum.” Turn to the South and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the South, great spirit of Water, strengthen and bring peace to this drum.” Turn to the West and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the West, great Spirit of Fire, energize and protect this drum.” Turn to the North and smudge four times, saying: “Spirit of the North, great Spirit of Earth, ground and cleanse this drum.” Return to your original position and look up toward the heavens, this time sending smudge upwards four times, saying: “Great Father sky, guard this drum from above.” Finally, squat toward the floor and send smudge down to the earth four times, saying: “Great Mother Earth nurture this drum from below.” Put down your smudge stick and stand quietly with your eyes shut. Visualize the great spirits you have summoned standing guard around your room. You could imagine them as the great archangels or the four Spirit Animals of Native North American tradition (North – Buffalo, East –eagle, South – Coyote and West – Grizzly Bear). Visualize the loving energy of the mother and father spirits above and below you. Give thanks to all of them. Move to the center of the circle and remove your drum from its covering. Carry it back

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

to your chair.

### 3. Heartbeat

- music therapist begins a traditional Tsimshian heartbeat and individuals are invited to join in their own time
- Tsimshian: Two eighth note pulses followed by three steady quarter note pulses—  
one/two, two three, four, one/two, two three four, one/two, two, three, four...
- This continues and fades out in a natural way as a group
- The group sits in silence

### 4. Heartbeat/What is in your heart?

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat – two steady eighth notes followed by a quarter beat of silence – one/two, rest – one/two, rest – one/two, rest
- In the silence between the eighth notes individuals are given the opportunity to chant one word that is currently in their heart

### 5. Heartbeat/What makes your spirit stable?

- The music therapist begins the traditional Anishinabe heartbeat – two rhythmic beats – one/two – one/two – one/two
- In the empty two beats between the bass notes individuals are given the opportunity to chant one word that identifies one word that grounds/holds them  
spirit

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### 6. Rhythmic Journey – The Girl & the Chenoo

One autumn, a Passamaquoddy girl and her three older brothers went to the forest to hunt for a game over the winter. They found a good place to make camp and built a wigwam. Since she was the youngest, each morning after her three older brothers went hunting, the girl took care of the camp, gathered fresh firewood, repaired holes in their wigwam, and prepared dinner. Before nightfall the brothers would return carrying the game they captured, and over dinner they would all share stories of the day's adventures.

One night at dinner the brothers were silent. "Why are you all so quiet?" said their sister. "Today I saw strange footprints to the north," said her eldest brother, "like those of a man, but much larger." "So did I," said the brother who ventured south. The third brother, who hunted toward in the west, nodded in agreement. No one needed to say anything else because they were all thinking the same thing: a Chenoo must be nearby, the cruel, brutal giant cannibal from the far icy north.

After a tense minute the eldest brother smiled and said, "Oh, it must have been tracks of a bear." And they all laughed with relief and joked how they had been fooled by mere bear tracks. But the girl did not laugh. She, too, had seen tracks when she gathered berries to the east, and knew they were not the tracks of a bear. They were from a Chenoo.

Before sunrise the next morning, the brothers left to hunt. But the girl did not tend to her usual tasks. She cleared the wigwam and piled each bearskin that she and her brothers

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slept upon in a single pile in the center. Beside the bearskin pile she laid baskets filled with berries and fruit. She gathered fresh firewood, then sat by the fire and waited.

While the sun was still low in the sky a very large shadow was cast over her fire. Out of the woods stepped the terrible Chenoo. Huge and horrible-looking, he looked fearsomely at her. The sister smiled pleasantly at him and said, "Grandfather, my heart is glad that at last you have come to see us. Where have you been for so long? I prepared a fire for your lunch. Or perhaps you would like to lay down inside first and rest. Your bed is made and there are baskets of fruit by it. You look tired from your travels."

The Chenoo was amazed beyond measure at such a greeting where he expected yells and prayers, and in mute wonder let himself be led into the wigwam.

The girl said she was sorry to see him so woe-begone, she pitied his sad state, she brought a suit she had stitched to fit him, she told him to dress himself and be cleaned. He did as she bade. He sat inside the wigwam on the bearskin bed. He did not lie down and looked surly and sad, but kept quiet.

She arose and went out. She kept gathering wood for the fire.

The Chenoo rose and followed her. She was in great fear. "Now," she thought, "my death is near; he will kill and devour me." The Chenoo said, "Give me the axe."

She gave it and he began to cut down the trees. She had never saw such chopping! The great pines fell right and left, like summer saplings; the boughs were hewed and split as if by a tempest. Soon the pile of wood was twice as high as the top of their wigwam. She



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cried out, "Grandfather, there is enough! You must be tired from all your cutting, please rest." So, the Chenoo laid down the axe, walked into the wigwam, sat down on the pile of

bearskin rugs, still in grim silence. The girl continued to gather wood and remained silent outside the lodge until he slept.

Before darkness fell her three brothers returned from their day's hunt. She walked quickly to them and with a fierce look said, "Brothers, you will be pleased to know our Grandfather is in the tent." Surprised, they started to object but she firmly held her hand outstretched and said, "I'm sure Grandfather will be glad to hear all about your adventures later, but first we must be silent and give him time to rest."

At that moment, the huge, hairy head of the Chenoo looked out of the wigwam. Before her brothers could cry out with alarm, the girl said with a smile, "Grandfather, you have awakened! I am glad, because now your grandsons have come back and we can all have dinner." Turning to her brothers, she said with a slight a voice as she could muster, "And how was it with the hunt today?" "Not so good," gulped one of the brothers, staring fixedly at the Chenoo, "all I have is this hare." "And I a goose," mumbled her second brother, also staring at the Chenoo. "I got a deer," offered her third brother.

The Chenoo spoke. "Granddaughter," he said, "have your brothers brought no other game?"

"Whatever your grandsons have hunted today I will cook for your dinner, Grandfather,"

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said the girl, "in honor of your visit."

The Chenoo said nothing but disappeared into the woods. When he returned, he carried three full-grown moose, one under each arm and a third wrapped around his shoulders.

That night they enjoyed a feast like no other since they had set up camp.

When it was time to sleep, the Chenoo filled the wigwam so the girl and her three brothers had to lay down on the dirt outside. But it was more than the roots and rocks underneath that disturbed their sleep; each one lay awake all night in terror.

In the days that followed they began to realize the Chenoo was useful to have around, as he could hunt better than twenty grown men. After a few days, he built his own wigwam nearby, and the brothers and their sister moved back into their own. He ate most of what he captured, but there was plenty of bear meat and venison leftover for the rest of them, and the pile of skins they had been saving for trading grew and grew so high that before long they began to worry it would take many trips to transport it all in their canoe. They stopped worrying that he would eat them, though the chances of dying by accident were quite high since he swung trees around like kindling, didn't watch where anything would smash, and the three brothers and their sister were far too polite and respectful to correct him about anything.

Eventually the winter days warmed into spring. One day the girl said, "Grandfather, soon it will be time for us to return to our village."

"I would like to come with you," said the Chenoo. "But your people would scream if

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they saw me. I need your help."

"Of course, Grandfather, anything at all," said the girl.

"Build me a sweat lodge and bring hot coals to it."

The girl was surprised he would ask for this since she knew the Chenoo was from the icy north and always sat far back from the camp fire. Still, they built the sweat lodge and when it was finished, and had brought in plenty of hot coals, the Chenoo went inside.

The sweat lodge pulsed with an orange hue from the heat of the burning coals, but the Chenoo called out, "Bring more hot coals." This they did, several times. The girl heard the Chenoo moan and cough, then she heard no more sounds. "Grandfather, are you all right?" she said.

"Yes," said the Chenoo in a voice they barely recognized. "Bring more coals."

So, they brought more hot coals to the sweat lodge and stood a great distance away, as it was searing with heat. After many long minutes the door creaked open. Out stepped what must have been the Chenoo, yet seemed much more like a normal, very old human man, hunched over and wrinkled, with a white beard that reached to his knees. His wounds had healed; his teeth no longer grinned wildly all the time. The expression on his face seemed gentle. He leaned over and coughed, and out came a piece of ice in the shape of a man.

The girl knew what this must be. It was well known that the heart of the Chenoo was made of ice and was shaped like a man. This icy heart is what made him so fierce.

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

"Throw it in the fire, Granddaughter," said he. And she picked it up and threw it into the campfire but it was so fiercely cold that it put out all the flames. So, she restarted the fire and her brothers chopped the icy heart into fragments with a hatchet until, bit by bit, they finally melted it.

The man who used to be the Chenoo then smiled. "Let's go," he said.

So, they hauled their piles of bear and deerskins, and baskets brimming with dried meat, back to their village, where they traded the skins for whatever they wanted and shared the dried meat with everyone. And they all lived happily together for many years.

And that is the story of how the kindness of the girl melted the heart of the savage Chenoo.

### 7. Silence

- With both hands on the middle of the drum, we sit in silence

### 8. Talking Circle

- Does the scent/aroma that was in the air in your mood induction inspire you?
- How did the sensation of the drums vibrations enter and leaving your body leave you feeling now?

### 9. Closing Blessing

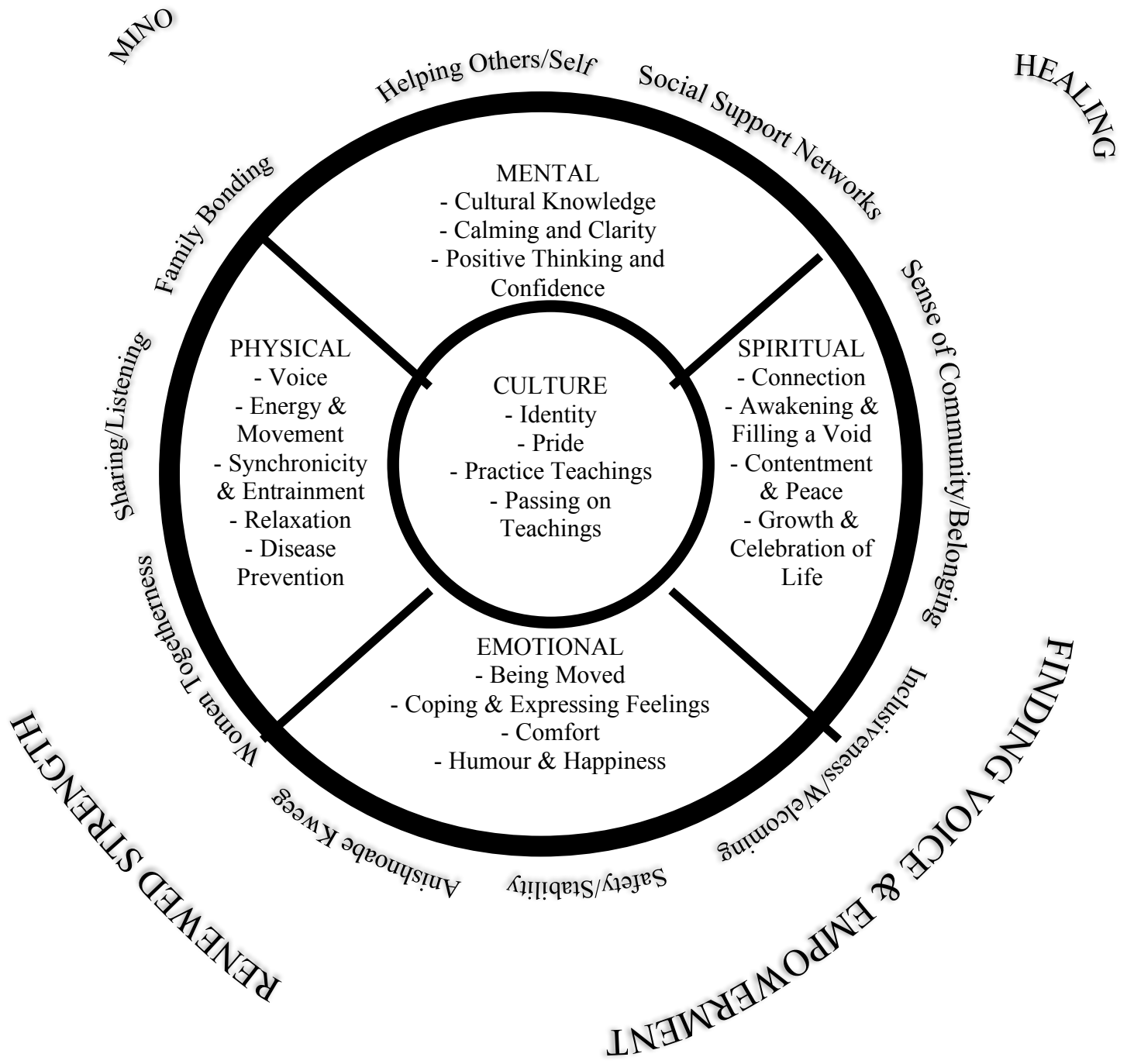
- Drums are returned to the middle of the circle and covered
- One individual leads the group in the final blessing;

*With beauty before me, I walk  
With beauty behind me, I walk  
With beauty above me, I walk  
With beauty below me, I walk*

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*From the East beauty has been restored  
From the South beauty has been restored  
From the West beauty has been restored  
From the North beauty has been restored  
From the zenith in the sky beauty has been restored  
From all around me beauty has been restored*

Appendix B



Appendix C

**HOW I FEEL ABOUT MYSELF**

Please tick the appropriate box that matches:  
**The way you usually feel about yourself most of the time**

1.

I feel like I don't know anything. ← half 'n' half → I am knowledgeable about things that are important to me.

2.

I feel like I don't know how to do much of anything. ← half 'n' half → I am skillful and able to do things that are important to me.

3.

I feel slack, like I can't be bothered to do things even when I want to. ← half 'n' half → I am strong and full of energy to do what is needed.

4.

I feel very unhappy with myself and my life. ← half 'n' half → I feel very happy in myself & with my life.

5.

I am held back from what I could do, there are no opportunities for me. ← half 'n' half → I am satisfied with my opportunities and what I'm doing.

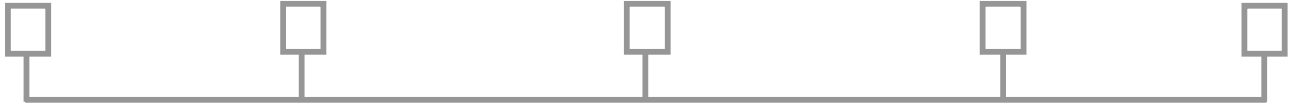
6.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

I feel that other people don't admire or value me.

I feel that other people admire me and value me.

← half 'n' half →



7. I have no voice. I can't express myself. Nobody listens to me.

I can speak out and explain my views. People listen.

← half 'n' half →



8. I feel isolated and alone, like I don't belong.

I belong in community, I feel connected.

← half 'n' half →



9. I am not hopeful that anything will change for me.

I am hopeful for a better future.

← half 'n' half →



10. Mostly I feel shame or embarrassed.

I have confidence in myself.

← half 'n' half →



11. I do things for other people all the time. I'm not looking after myself or my family well.

I am centered and focused on meeting the needs of myself and my family.

← half 'n' half →



12. I'm always worrying and

I feel calm and

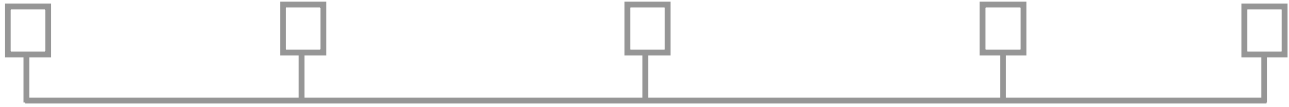
← half 'n' half →



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

nervous. I can't relax or slow down.

relaxed, even when I'm busy.

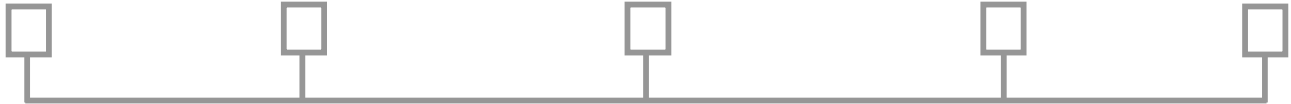


13.

I live in fear of what's ahead.

← half 'n' half →

I feel safe and secure; I can face whatever is ahead.

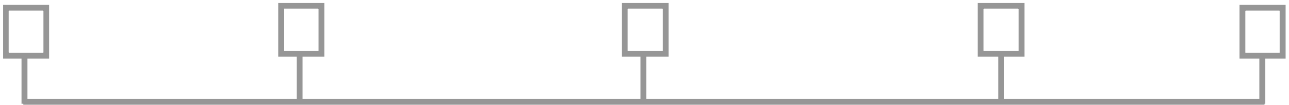


14.

I feel a lot of anger about the way my life is.

← half 'n' half →


I don't hold anger inside of me about bad things in my life.



Appendix D

**1. How do you deal with painful feelings and the bad things that have happened in your life?**

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.




So much pain, anger and bad feelings are **bottled up** inside me.

I **haven't begun** to address this.

It **stops me** from moving ahead.

Are you here? If so, please tick this Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →




I am **beginning to open up and talk** about myself.

I have **started to deal with** the feelings that are bottled up inside me.

Its painful, but I **can see the benefits.**

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →




I have been able to **work through some** of my feelings and emotions.

I am **beginning to move ahead** in my life.

I **still have some ways to go to deal** with what has happened to me and my community.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →



I can say that I have **worked through or moved on** from much of the bad experiences and struggles I've had.

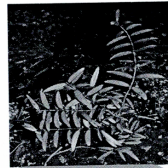
These **no longer hold me back** from moving ahead with others into a better future.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

7

## 2. How do you deal with safety for yourself and your family?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



I just **put up with things** that harm me. I **often get hurt** physically or emotionally. I haven't found a way to escape or stop this. I **feel too shame** to get help.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



When things get frightening, I **escape** in order to protect myself and my family. I find it hard to trust anyone. But I am **starting to be able to ask for help for physical safety** if I need it.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



I am learning to **take positive steps to protect** myself and family against physical and emotional harm. I am starting to **trust people to help me stay safe emotionally as well as physically.**

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

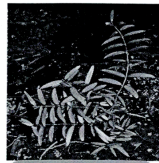


I have a **strong ability to protect** myself and my family from things that could harm us. I **feel emotionally and physically secure.** I don't have to run away. I am **able to trust** other people when appropriate.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

### 3. How do you respond when people ask you to do things that they should do themselves?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



People are always asking me to do things they should take responsibility for.

I **always say yes** even if it makes me angry or stressed.

I can't say no.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



I have learned how to **avoid situations** where I might get humbugged by somebody.

But I **usually say yes** when it happens even when I want to say no.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



I am starting to **gain the confidence** to set boundaries and **say no** when somebody is humbugging me for things.

I think that **people are starting to respect me** for that.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



I am **happy to help** people.

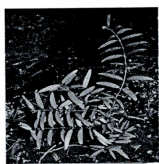
But, when somebody is humbugging me,

I can **gently but firmly tell the person no** and my 'no' is respected.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

#### 4. How do you feel about making changes in your life?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



There are things that I should change in my life to be Healthier and Happier.  
But it seems all too hard.  
**I don't think I can change anything** at this time.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I have **started to think** about some changes I'd like to make that would be good for me.  
But I **don't have skills or confidence** to make the changes.  
**I try but I usually fall back** to my old ways.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I have **thought a lot** about changes I'd like to make that will be good for me.  
I have **gained some skills & confidence** to make changes.  
I have had some **successes**, but I still **don't feel fully confident** about making change.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I have **gained skills and confidence and have succeeded in making many** important changes in my life.  
I feel **fully confident** about my ability to make changes.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

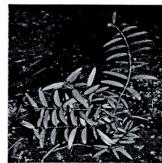
← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

### 5. Are you engaging in learning opportunities?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



I know that more people are taking courses and doing other kinds of training, but there's no way I could do that even if I wanted to.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I am starting to think through some kinds of training and education opportunities that I think I could do. But I haven't started anything yet.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I have started or completed training to increase my skills and knowledge. However, I haven't been able to use this yet in my work or my everyday life.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

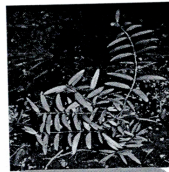


I have reached some educational / training goals that I set for myself. I use these skills in my work or everyday life. I actively encourage others to do the same as part of my work or in my personal life.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

### 6. How do you think about your own spirituality?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



I never think about 'spirituality'.  
It doesn't mean anything to me.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I have noticed spirituality in other people.  
I have thought about what spirituality means to me.  
But I don't focus on spirituality in my own life.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I have decided that spirituality is important for me.  
I have made some progress in developing my spirituality.  
I am gaining a spiritual focus in the things I do.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I feel that I am a deeply spiritual person.  
I recognise the power of spirit through my experiences and my connections with other people, my culture, the land and our past. This gives me strength and guides my actions.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

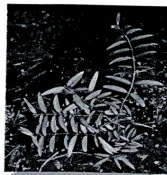
Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

### 7. Do you have a strong sense of knowing who you are?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



**I don't know** who I am.

I don't know where I am going in my life. Without this, I feel lost.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →

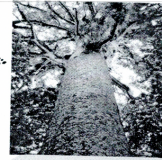


I have a **pretty good idea** of who I am, but people put labels on me and these affect me.

I am **struggling with being myself and pretending** to be what others expect of me.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →



I am **lifting off the labels** that other people have given me and other things about me that are not really who I am.

I've **stopped pretending**.

But I still have a long way to go to truly know and be myself.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →



**I'm very strong about who I am.**

I am proud of my cultural identity.

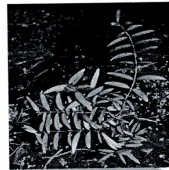
**I now fully understand** what that means to me.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



### 8. Are you able to speak out and be heard in your community?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



I am **too shy or shame to speak out** in this community.

I have **little or no say** in what happens here.

I have **no voice**.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I am beginning to speak out and have **some say on some issues**.

I have a **long way to go** to make sure my voice is heard and respected.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I am **able to speak out and be heard**.

My **views are considered** when decisions are made in this community.

But I **could be more involved** in how things are decided and done here.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box



I am **fully part of the decision-making process** in this community as an individual or a member of an active group. People **respect what I say** even when we disagree.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

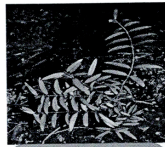
Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

## 10. What do you do when you feel like you're being judged?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



I either **take the criticism as truth without questioning it and feel worthless;**  
or  
**I immediately get angry and start reacting** and talking about that person.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



**I put up a protection around myself** and stop myself from thinking about what they said.  
  
Sometimes I get over it quickly; other times I avoid the person for a long time.  
  
I keep an angry feeling inside myself.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



**I think** about what the person said and try to understand why they said it. **I think about my response.**  
  
If they are being fully unfair I **'pull them up'** and tell them to stop.  
  
If there is some truth in what they say, **I take their comments on board even if it's painful.**

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box

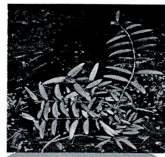


**I use traditional structures to address my conflicts.**  
  
I help others to do the same by making things clear for them.  
  
I have **earned cultural status** because of these skills. I work with others to **improve our social environment** and our ways of interacting with each other.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

### 11. How do you see your relationships with other people?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



**I feel completely trapped in my relationships.**

I am dealing with things like: kids out of control, anger and fighting, gossiping, bullying.

**Most of my relationships are harmful, not healthy.**

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →



**I am gaining an understanding of my difficult relationships.**

**I have started to think about how to make them better. I think more about what I'm saying.**

I still have a lot of work to do to improve my relationships.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →



**I have made a lot of progress in improving my relationships.**

I think a lot about listening and talking sensitively to people.

**I see improvement in the way people respond to me.**

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →



My life is now rich and happier because of many good relationships.

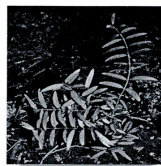
**My relationships give me peace and harmony in my heart.**

I am able to preserve this peace in my home and family, even when we disagree.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

## 12. How empowered do you think your community is?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the **community that you currently live in.**



In this community, there is **little harmony or safety.**

**People don't seem to know where to start to make things better.**

Mostly we just blame each other.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



People in this community are **becoming aware** that things could be different.

There is **more talk and hope** about making things better.

But we have a **long way to go** to address our problems effectively.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



Although it is early days, there is a **ripple effect** happening here.

Families and households are changing.

People are **working better together.** We share **common goals.**

Our confidence has increased.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box



In this community, we are **working together for the betterment of our people.**

People are working with services and organisations to **improve life here.** Healing has taken place at community level.

We can see the **fruits of change.**

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

# EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

## Appendix E



Veterans Affairs Canada Anciens Combattants Canada

### Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6)

Protected when completed.

Family name	Given Names		File No.
Address	Date of assessment (yyyy-mm-dd)	Date of birth (yyyy-mm-dd)	

The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6)<sup>1</sup> is a simple measure of psychological distress which involves 6 questions about a person's emotional state. Each question is scored from 0 (None of the time) to 4 (All of the time). Scores of the 6 questions are then summed, yielding a minimum score of 0 and a maximum score of 24. Low scores indicate low levels of psychological distress and high scores indicate high levels of psychological distress.

The following questions are about how you have been feeling during the <b>past 30 days</b> .	ALL	MOST	SOME	A LITTLE	NONE	(IF VOL) DON'T KNOW	(IF VOL) REFUSED
1. About how often during the past 30 days did you feel <b>nervous</b> - would you say <b>all</b> of the time, <b>most</b> of the time, <b>some</b> of the time, <b>a little</b> of the time, or <b>none</b> of the time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel <b>hopeless</b> - <b>all</b> of the time, <b>most</b> of the time, <b>some</b> of the time, <b>a little</b> of the time, or <b>none</b> of the time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel <b>restless or fidgety</b> ? (IF NEC: <b>all, most, some, a little, or none</b> of the time?)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. How often did you feel <b>so depressed that nothing could cheer you up</b> ? (IF NEC: <b>all, most, some, a little, or none</b> of the time?)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel that <b>everything was an effort</b> ? (IF NEC: <b>all, most, some, a little, or none</b> of the time?)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel <b>worthless</b> ? (IF NEC: <b>all, most, some, a little, or none</b> of the time?)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Kessler, R.C., Barker, P.R., Colpe, L.J., Epstein, J.F., Gfroerer, J.C., Hiripi, E., Howes, M.J., Normand, S.L.T., Manderscheid, R.W., Walters, E.E., Zaslavsky, A.M. (2003). Screening for serious mental illness in the general population. Archives of General Psychiatry, 60(2):184-9.

The client's personal information is collected under the authority of the *Veterans Health Care Regulations* for the purpose of administering benefits and services. Provision of the information is on a voluntary basis. Any personal information recorded on this form is accessible by the individual to whom it relates.

All personal information collected and used is protected from unauthorized disclosure by the *Privacy Act*. The *Privacy Act* provides the client with a right to access his or her own personal information which is under the control of the Department. The *Privacy Act* also affords the client the right to challenge the accuracy and completeness of his or her personal information and have it amended as appropriate.

The client may request a copy of this form by writing to the Access to Information and Privacy Coordinator's Office, Veterans Affairs Canada, PO Box 7700, Charlottetown, PE, C1A 8M9 and by quoting Personal Information Bank No. VAC PPU 020 and/or VAC PPU 030.

Name of assessor	Professional designation	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)
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Appendix F

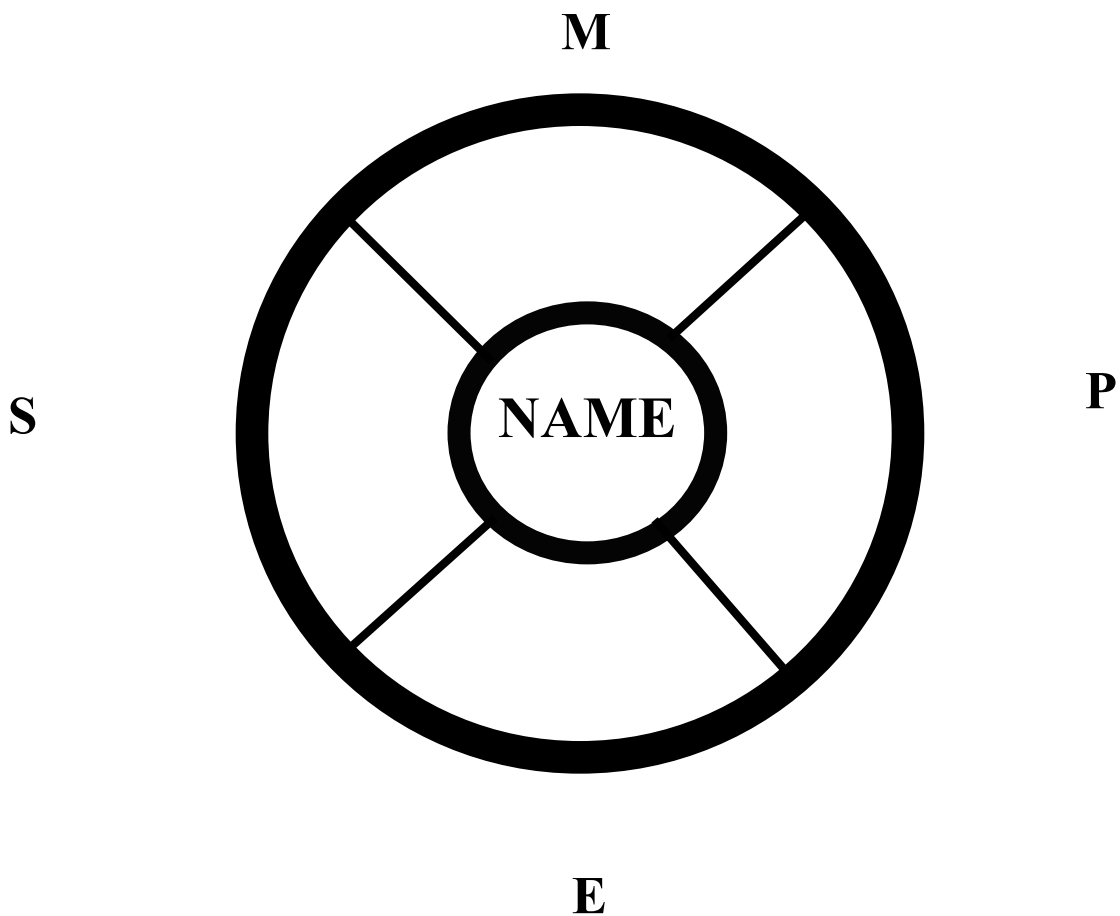
What am I doing presently to enhance my spiritual well-being?

What am I doing presently to enhance my emotional well-being?

What am I doing presently to enhance my physical well-being?

What am I doing presently to enhance my mental well-being?

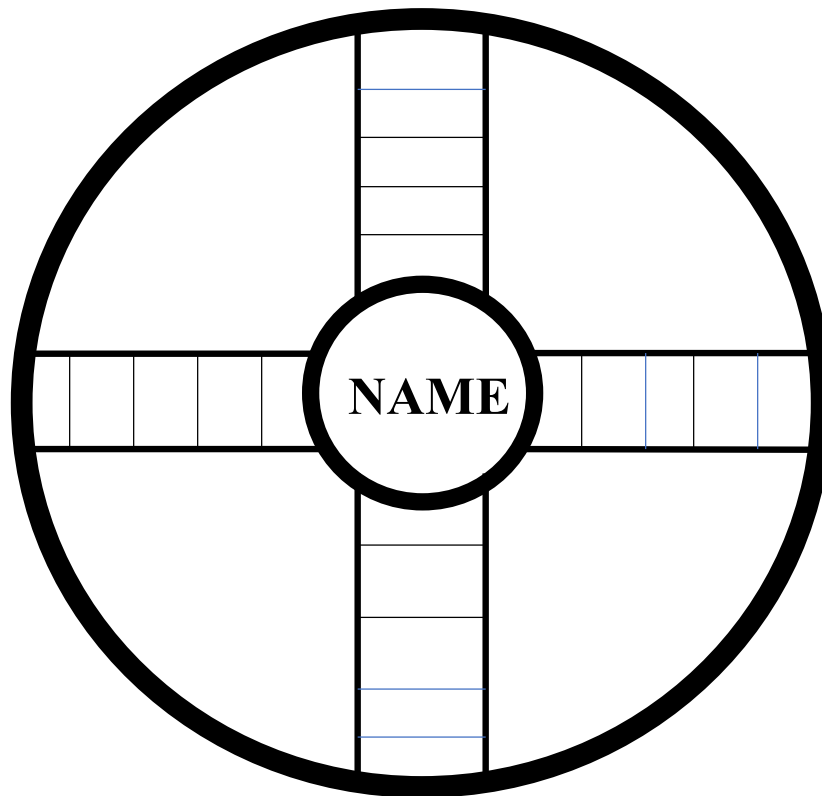
Place your name in the middle of the Medicine Wheel. List positive activities or positive things that you are doing in each quadrant of the circle.



## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

Place your name in the middle of the Medicine Wheel.

Beginning with the spiritual quadrant, start from the center of the circle (beside your name), and shade one square for each activity that is on your list from the first wheel (three activities, three squares shaded). Continue this process for the other three aspects of life, filling the number of squares corresponding to the positive activities listed in each quadrant. After each section is completed, join the outermost shaded boxes of the four sections by drawing a continuous line in a circular motion from the first to the last.



# EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

## Appendix G

### **LETTER OF INFORMATION / CONSENT** *TO BE SIGNED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN/CAREGIVER*

#### **The Effect of a Culturally-Centered Group Drum Protocol on Empowerment of Indigenous Female Adolescents Six Nation of the Grand in Canada**

##### **Principal Investigator:**

Amy Di Nino  
Music Therapy Department  
Berklee College of Music  
Boston, MA 02215 USA  
**(905) 466-3774**  
E-mail: adinino@berklee.edu

**Purpose of the Study:** To measure the effect of a culturally-centered group drum protocol on empowerment of Indigenous female adolescents Six Nation of the Grand in Brantford, ON, Canada. This is a pilot study using a board-certified music therapist developed protocol.

You are invited to take part in this six-week study from February 28<sup>th</sup> to April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. I am completing this research for my thesis.

##### **Procedures involved in the Research:**

You will be involved in a six-week protocol, taking place every Wednesday afternoon, beginning on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Each music therapy session will be one hour in length. The first session involves the making and personalizing of drums, so that you will have your own drum to use throughout the study and in your personal life at the completion. The next four session involves the use of your drums in music interventions that are inspired by the emotional, spiritual, mental and physical aspects of the Medicine Wheel. One-on-one interviews will be conducted during the final, sixth ceremony, in a talking circle format. You will be asked to independently complete the Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM), Kessler Scale and Medicine Wheel assessment at the beginning of the first session, at the completion of the third session, and at the completion of the final ceremony. All sessions will take place in a designated room in the community centre on the Six Nations on the Grand reserve in Brantford, ON.

##### **Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:**

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. You may feel uncomfortable with sharing thoughts and feelings verbally, and at these times I will encourage you to use your drum to communicate. You may worry about how others will react to what you say or play, but we are all in the group to support each other. You do not need to answer questions that you do not want to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable. Your participation will never be shared with anyone besides the Elder's and your parents/guardians/caregivers.

##### **Are there any benefits to doing this study?**

This study is measuring empowerment, and I hope that each of you will feel more empowered as an individual at the completion of the six ceremonies. This can not only strengthen and help you as an individual, but can also help to empower your friends, peers, families and community.

##### **Who will know what I said or did in the study?**



## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CULTURALLY-CENTRED PROTOCOL

You are participating in this study confidentially. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. No one but me will know whether you were in the study unless you choose to tell them. The information/data you provide will be kept in a locked cabinet where only I will have access to it. Information kept on a computer will be protected by a password.

Once the study is complete, an archive of the data, without identifying information, will be maintained on a computer, protected by a password.

### Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is your choice to be part of the study or not, and if you decide to be part of the study, you can stop (withdraw), from the study for whatever reason, even after signing the consent form or part-way through the study or up until **April 4, 2018**, when I expect to be submitting my thesis. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences to you. In cases of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless you indicate otherwise. If you do not want to answer some of the questions you do not have to, but you can still be in the study.

### Information about the Study Results:

I expect to have this study completed by approximately **May 7, 2018**. If you would like a brief summary of the results, please let me know how you would like it sent to you.

**Questions about the Study:** If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact me at:

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Amy Di Nino</i> <i>adinino@berklee.edu</i></p>
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### CONSENT

- I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Amy Di Nino of Berklee College
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested.
- I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time or up until **April 4, 2018**.
- I have been given a copy of this form.
- I agree to participate in the study.

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_