



Indigenous Relationship and Cultural Safety (IRCA) Courses: Interactivity Guide Answers

Module 6: Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Health

Note that the answers provided below are not exhaustive and merely provide relevant information/points to consider for each question.

Chapter 1 - Overview of Traditional Health

- Below are various descriptions of Traditional and Western medicine. Please list the descriptions below under the correct heading.

Wholistic: spiritual, physical emotional, intellectual	Collectivist orientation	Illness/disease focus
Dualism: Cartesian split	Humans against nature; hierarchical	Oneness with nature

Answer:

Traditional Medicine	Western Medicine
Wholistic: spiritual, physical emotional, intellectual	Humans against nature; hierarchical
Collectivist orientation	Illness/disease focus
Oneness with nature	Dualism: Cartesian split

Chapter 2 - Traditional Medicine and Health

- After learning about Traditional health practices for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in this chapter, please fill in the blanks below by using the words below:

Healing Circles	Sweat lodge	Tobacco
Sage	Smudging practices	Cedar
A pipe	Sweetgrass	Medicine Man/Woman

- A. The four sacred medicines are **Sweetgrass, Tobacco, Cedar, and Sage**.
- B. **Smudging practices** are used for ritual cleansing and is a ceremony traditionally practiced by some First Nations cultures to purify or cleanse negative energy, feelings or thoughts from a place or person.
- C. **A pipe** is used individually and in groups for prayer and ceremonial purposes. It is often used with tobacco, bearberry and wild herbs, or red willow shavings.
- D. A **sweat lodge** is a spiritual practice, and is used as a portal for communication with a Higher Power. This spiritual practice is used to purify of one's mind, body, spirit and heart for healing of the body, and for spiritual contemplation.
- E. **Healing circles** are practiced by some First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultures and can be held as meetings that help to heal physical, emotional and spiritual wounds. A symbolic object, often an eagle feather, may be given to a person who wishes to speak.

Medicine man/woman usually engages in ritual, ceremonial activity and prayer. They may possess sacred bundles, sacred pipes, sacred masks, and the rights to rituals, songs and medicines that have been inherited from their parents or grandparents or earned through apprenticeship.

Chapter 3 - Indigenous Knowledge and Health Care

1. Reflection: Reflect on the video from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons where Dr. Karen Hill describes Juddah's place. For First Nations, Inuit and Métis patients, how can Traditional perspectives be incorporated into healthcare practices?

Answer: Self-reflection question.

Chapter 4 - The Role of the Family and the Community

1. Reflection: How is family defined from a First Nations, Inuit or Métis perspective? How can health care settings reflect this definition?

Answer: Self-reflection question. Points to consider:

As described in this chapter, family and extended family are of fundamental importance to many First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. In addition to immediate family, the term may also include an extended network of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Adoption can also be quite common in First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. Therefore, it is important to be flexible about visiting times and visitor numbers where possible.

Chapter 5 - Effects of Colonization on Traditional Practices

1. Reflection: How do you feel about the Indian Act's effect on Traditional healers, ceremonies and practices?

Answer: Self-reflection question. Points to consider:

Through the legislation of the Indian Act, Traditional ceremonies, such as the sun dance, giveaways, potlatches and Traditional medicines and healing ceremonies, were made illegal. Spiritual leaders and healers were under surveillance by the government and police. Many were arrested when trying to perform Traditional medicines and healing. Without Traditional knowledge, communities lose the knowledge which gives life and meaning to economic, political, health and social systems and are moving away from language, culture, and ceremonies.

Hill, D.M. (2009). National Aboriginal Health Organization: Traditional Medicine and Restoration of Wellness Strategies. Retrieved from http://www.naho.ca/jah/english/jah05_01/V5_I1_Restoration_02.pdf