

# Native Peoples' History and Culture

## A Training for the Infant-Toddler Court Program National Resource Center

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# Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Be familiar with terminology specific to American Indian and Alaska Native peoples and governments
- Learn about the major periods of Federal Indian policy and their impact on Native people and tribes
- Understand linear and relational worldviews and keys to effective cross-cultural communication



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# Agenda

- Terminology
- History of Federal Indian Policy
- Culture and worldview
- Linear and relational worldviews
- Associated values
- Theory of change



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# Terminology

- American Indian/Indian
- Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian
- Native American
- Native
- Indigenous
- Tribal affiliation



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# Tribal Governments Pre-Contact

- Sophisticated governance systems
- Varied bodies and organization to carry out governance responsibilities
- Provided for the needs of their citizens and engaged with other tribal nations



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# Recognition of Tribal Sovereignty

- Tribal nations are part of the American family of governments
  - Nations within a nation
  - Sovereign nations in the global community of nations



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# Tribal Nations

- 574 federally recognized tribes have a nation-to-nation relationship with the US
- 63 state-recognized tribes in 11 states
- 100+ tribes seeking federal acknowledgment
- 334 federally and state recognized Indian reservations



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# History of Federal Indian Policy





# 1819

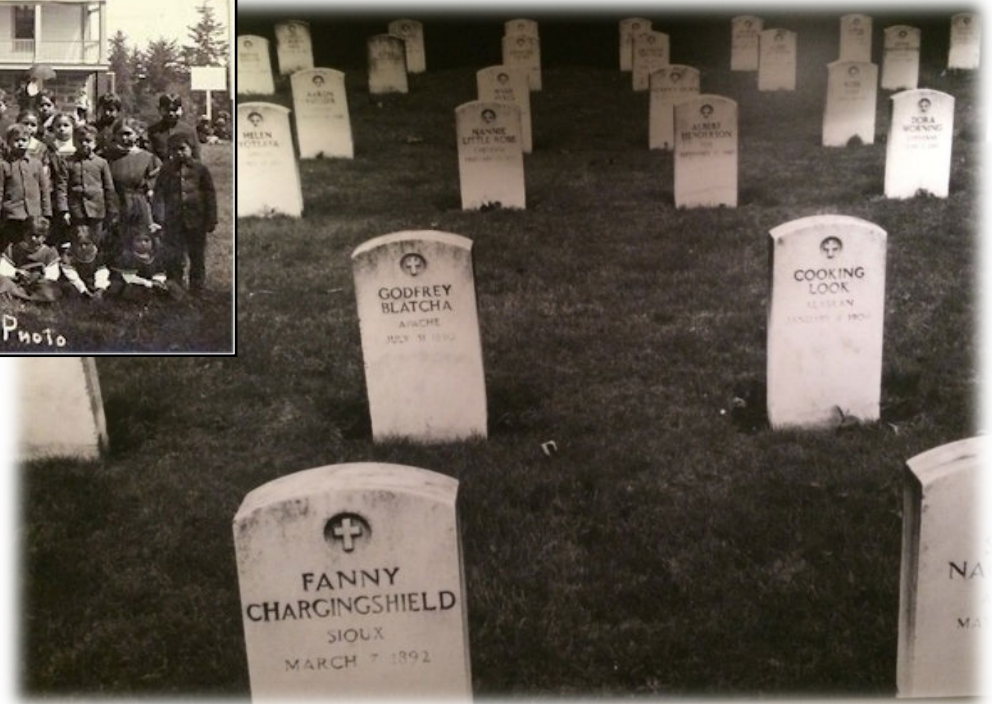
## The Civilization Act

- The act intended to “civilize” & “Christianize” Native people
- Funding went specifically to missionary schools that were supposed to provide for “moral education” to Native students



# 1861–1970

## Indian Boarding Schools



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# 1957–1968 Indian Adoption Project



- The BIA and CWLA actively sought to place Native children in non-Native homes
- This was an effort to “save” these children from life on the reservation
- Part of a larger effort to end race matching in adoption practice



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# 1940 – 1980

## Termination and Relocation Era



- Congress passed legislation that terminated the federal-tribal relationship for many tribes and provided states with expanded jurisdiction on tribal lands
- The federal government actively encouraged Indian people to leave tribal communities and relocate to urban areas (750,000)
- Separation of families from their culture continued the erosion of protections and supports



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# 1962–1980 Self-Determination Era

- Presidents Kennedy & Nixon supported tribal sovereignty and self-determination.
- Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975—contracting for services.



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# 1960–1970

## Indian Country Child Welfare Findings

- 25–35% of all Native children removed from their homes—85% placed in non-Native homes.
- Native children brought up in non-Native homes suffered due to isolation from their families and culture.
- In many Native adoptions, birth mothers were pressured and coerced into “voluntarily” relinquishing their parental rights.



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# Historical Trauma

“The cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma”

—*Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (1985)*



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# 1978

# Indian Child Welfare Act

Congress passed ICWA acknowledging:

- Sovereignty:** Tribe's right to protect their families and children
- Self-determination:** That tribes best know the needs of their families and children
- The Trust Relationship:** Congress has a responsibility to right the wrongs of their past actions and ensure the well-being of Native children



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# What Does ICWA Do?

- Establishes minimum federal standards for state removal of Native children from their families
- Recognizes tribes' inherent tribal jurisdiction over child custody proceedings
- Provides tribal funding for the operation of child and family programs



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# Questions?



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# Culture and Worldview



# What comes to mind when we think of “culture”?

- Spirituality, religion, beliefs, values
- Ceremonies, customs, rituals
- Art, music, dance
- Language, stories, traditions, literature
- **Worldview**, identity, shared history
- Social activities, affinity groups
- Family, kinship, marriage, parenting
- Institutions, laws, governance
- Social rules/manners, norms, help seeking
- Clothing, shelter, food



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# What is “culture”?

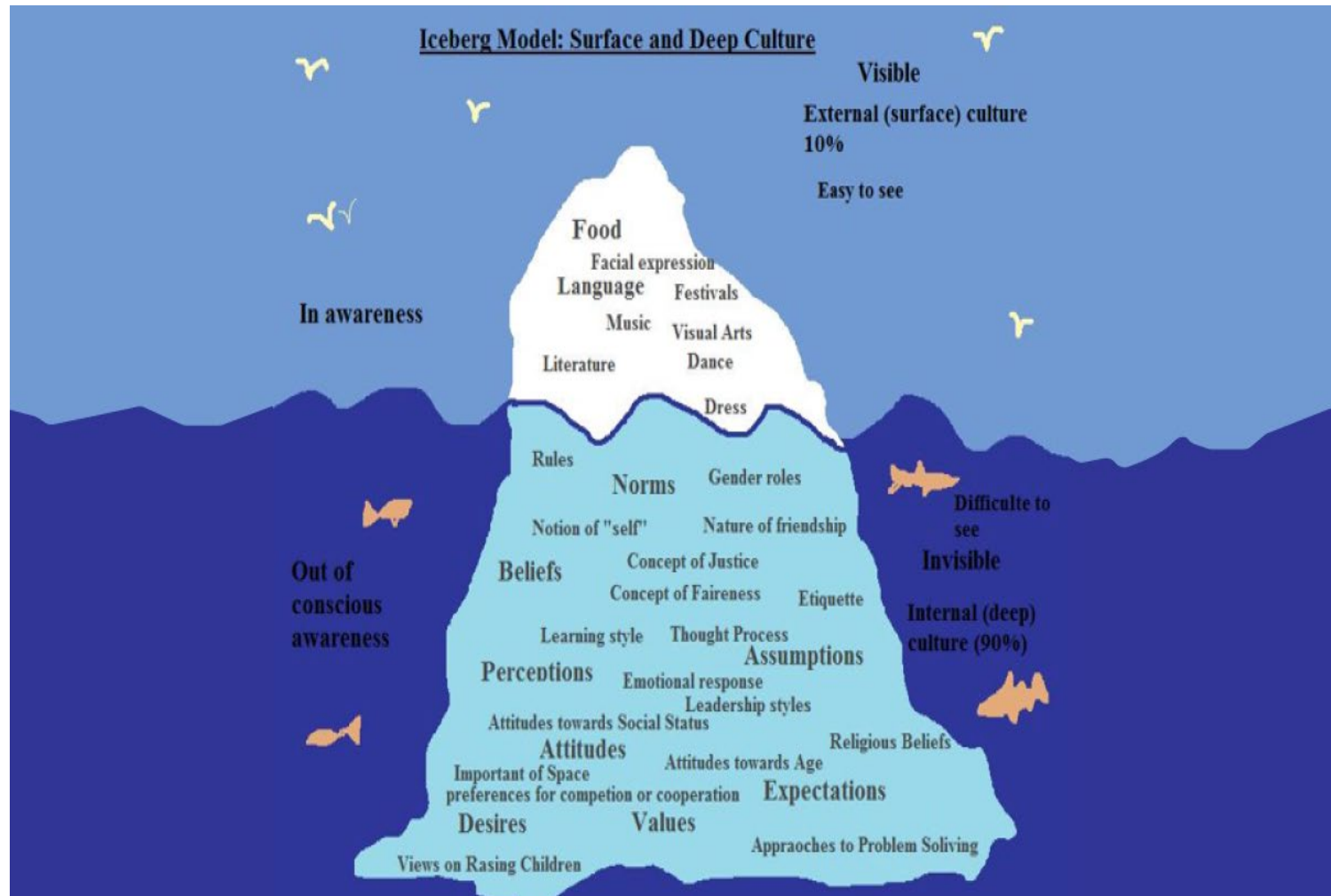
- The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior.
- The customary beliefs, social norms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group.



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# The Cultural Iceberg



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# What is a “worldview”?

A collective (or shared) thought process of a group of people

- Thoughts are organized into ideas
- Ideas are organized into concepts
- Concepts are organized into constructs
- Constructs are organized into paradigms
- Paradigms are organized into worldview



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# What's the big idea? "Worldview"



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# Worldview

Collective thought process of a group of people

- Linear Worldview
- Relational Worldview



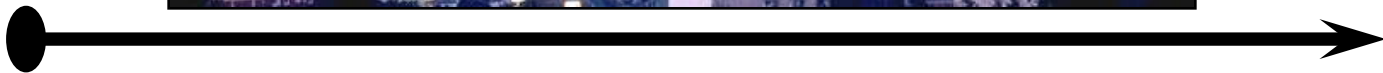
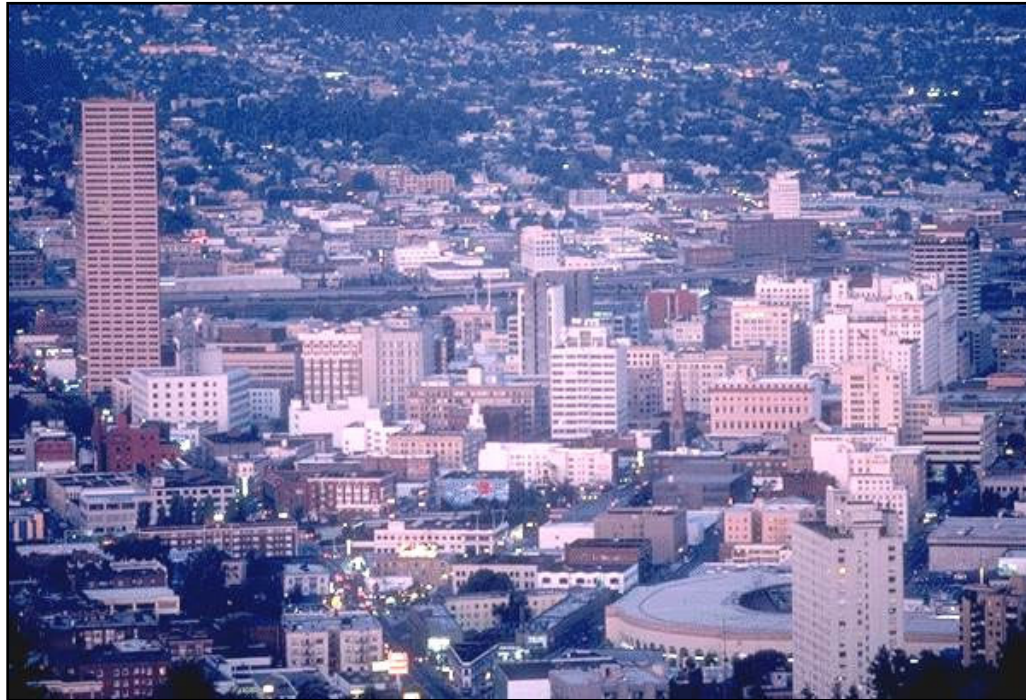
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# Linear Worldview

## Western European/American thought



**Cause → Effect → New Cause → New Effect**

# Linear Worldview

## Social Work/Medical Model



**Cause → Effect → New Cause → New Effect**

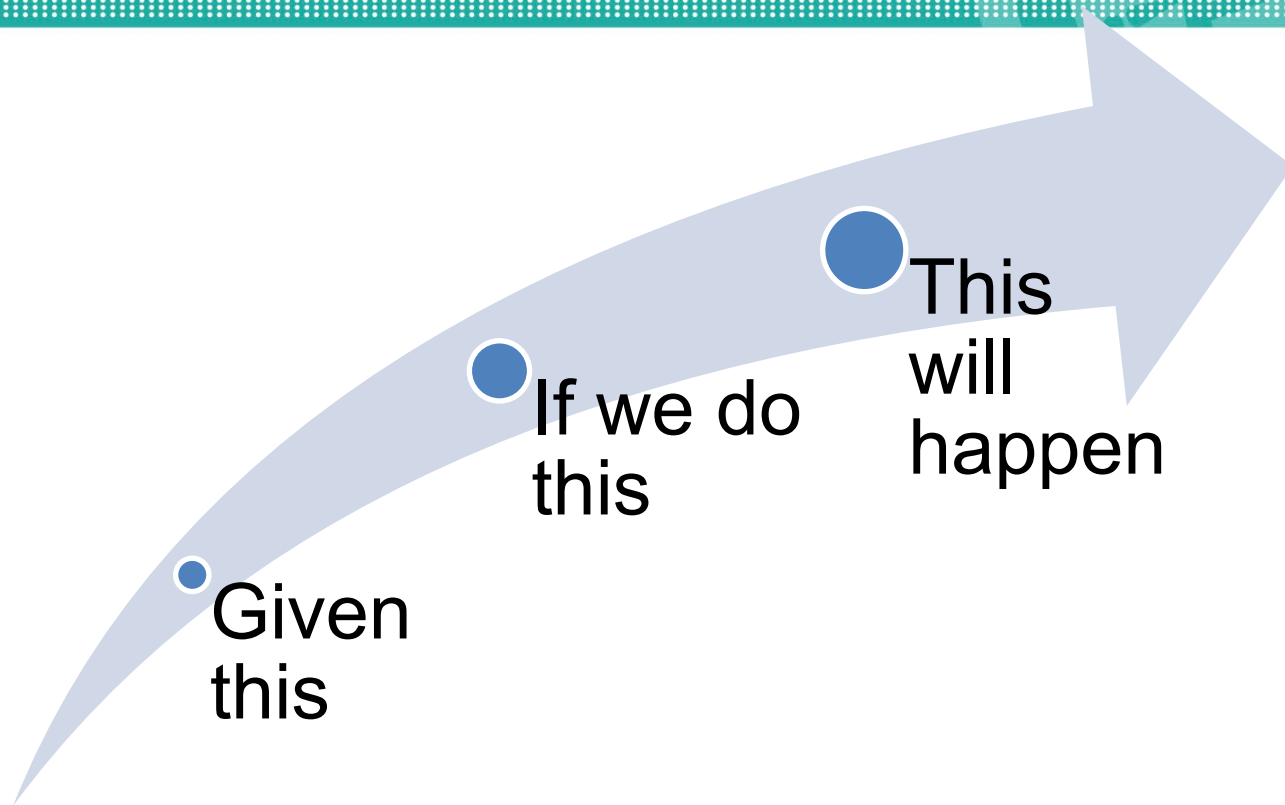
**Social History → Presenting Problem → Assessment → Treatment → Outcome**



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# Linear Theory of Change



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# Culture Matters

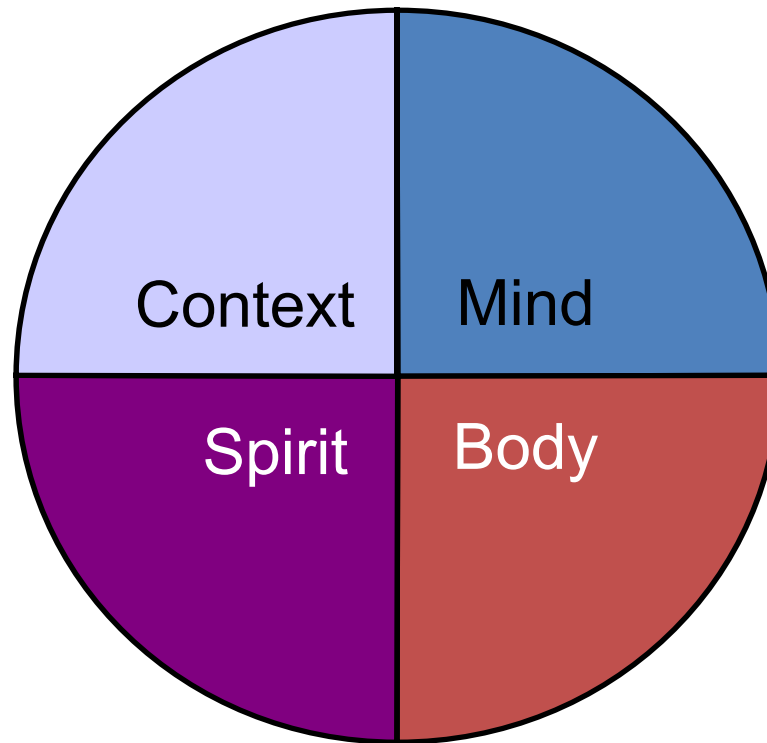


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# Relational Worldview

## Native and Tribal Thought



**BALANCE**

# Relational Worldview

## Native and Tribal Thought

- Fluid, cyclical view of time
- Each aspect of life is related
- Services aim to restore balance
- Interventions may not be directed at “symptoms”
- Underlying question is “how?”

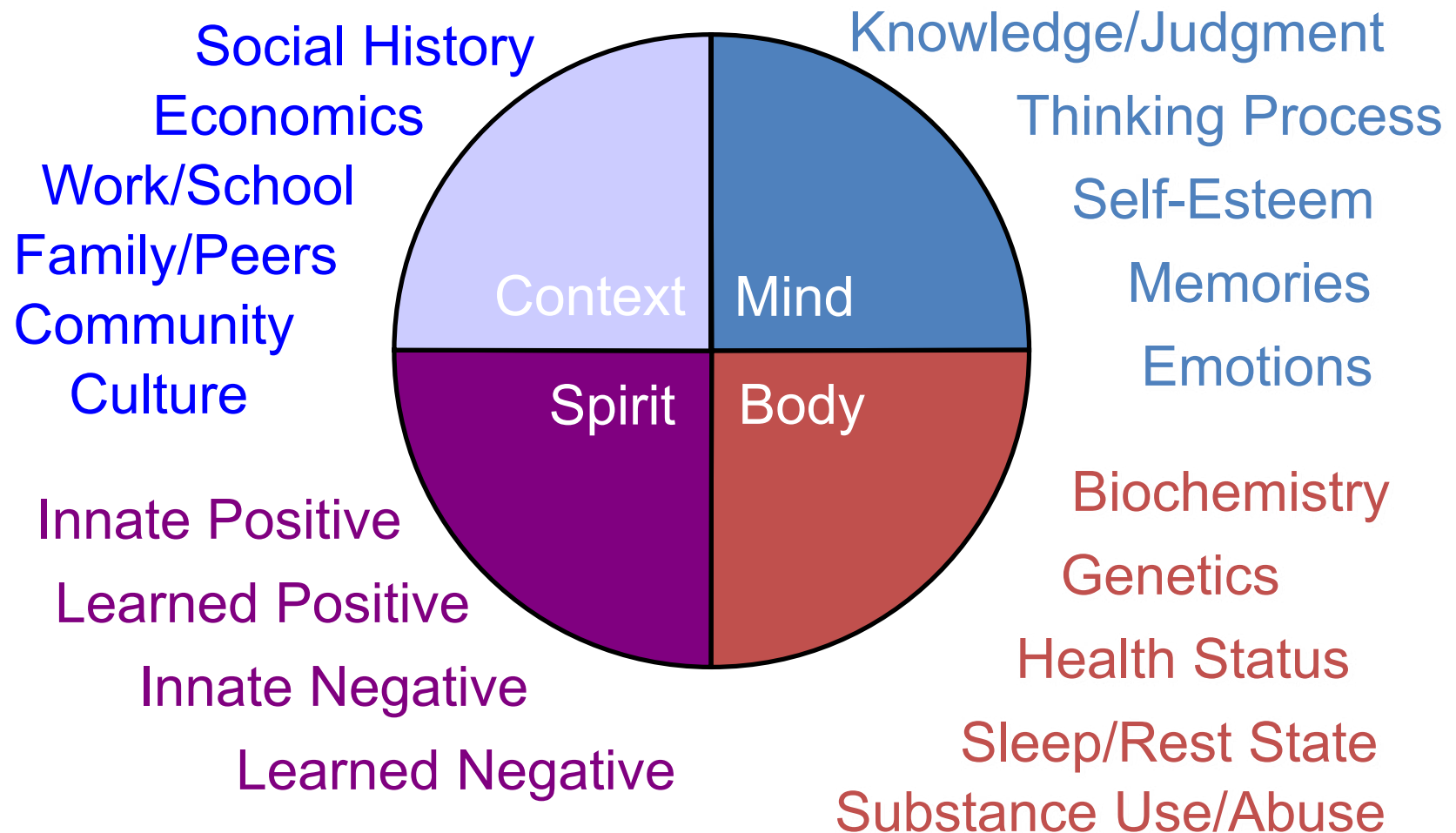


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# Relational Worldview

## Individual and Family Level





# Linear Model Values

Facts

Measuring

Knowledge (new)

Timelines

Scientific method

Materialism, wealth

Authority, hierarchy

Independence

Individuality

Direct communication

Written language

Steps and stages

Work to make a living

Compartmentalizing,  
reductionist

Credentials



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# Relational Model Values

Principles, values

Patterns

Wisdom

Things in their own  
time

Observation

Generosity, gifting

Interdependence

Collectivism

Autonomy

Indirect communication

Oral tradition

Cycles and phases

Work to live

Holistic thinking

Experience

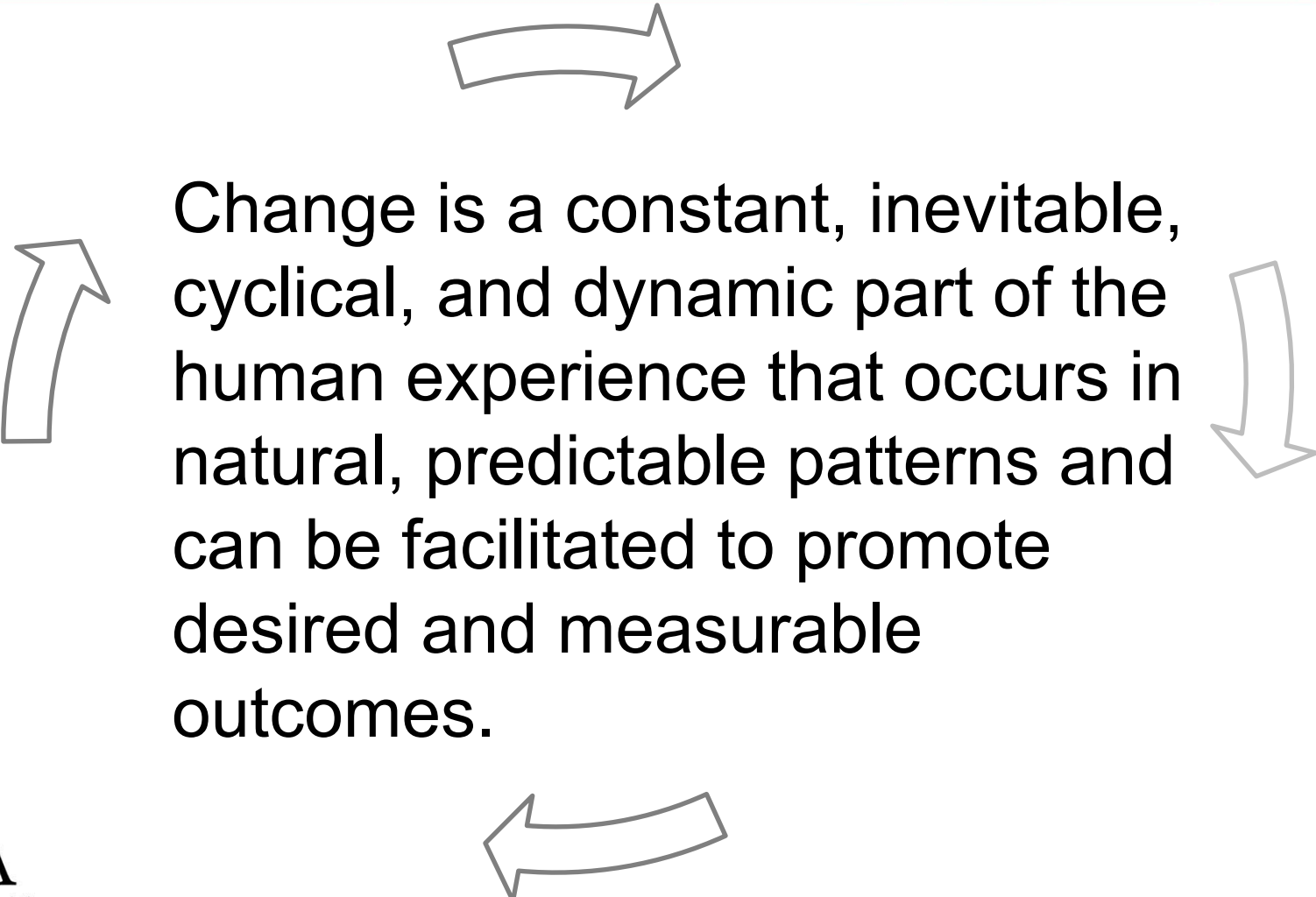


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# Relational Worldview Theory of Change



Change is a constant, inevitable, cyclical, and dynamic part of the human experience that occurs in natural, predictable patterns and can be facilitated to promote desired and measurable outcomes.



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# Questions?



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# Group Discussion

- What is one new learning you are taking away from this webinar?
- What implications does this have for your work?
- What do you want to learn more about? How will you do that?



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# Quyanaa! Thank you!



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