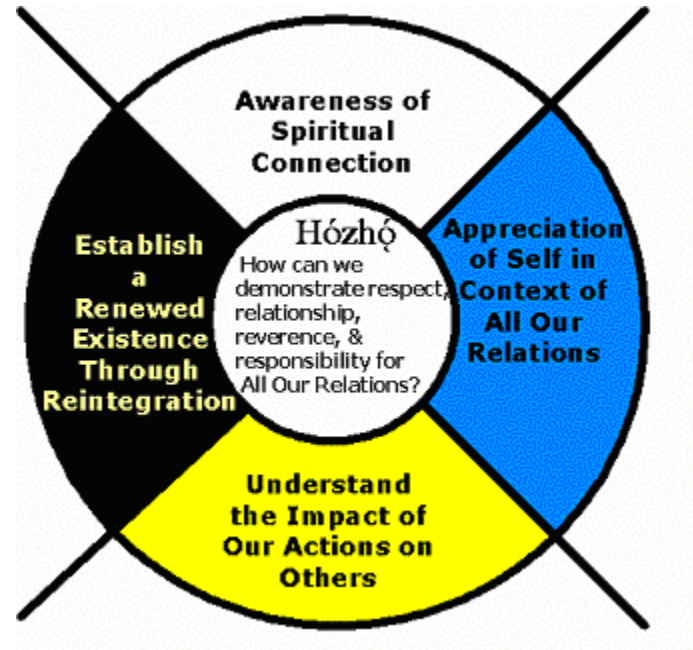


The Navajo Peacemaking Process



K'e bee lina' i' deniildzin

We gather together in Harmony through our relationships



A Comparison Study Between



Navajo Peacemaking
&
Standard School Policies



HAIDA

Standard School Policies are Characterized by:



HAIDA

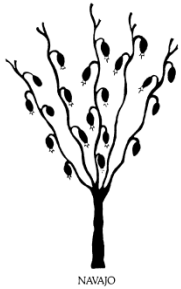
- ❖ **focusing student discipline on punishing or removing the offending student from company of students who are following the rules.**
- ❖ **sensitivity to a series of significant court cases involving disciplinary procedures versus student rights.**
- ❖ **removing the student progressively further away from the school community, eventually leading to removal of the student from the school.**

- ❖ **With ‘Progressive Removal’ the student receives potential suspension from school, and antagonistic situation between the student and the school is established.**
 - **Student is considered the offender,**
 - **Careful documentation is noted of his or her bad behavior,**
 - **Opportunity presented by the school for the student to tell his or her side of the story so he or she will be sent home and not allowed to return for an extended period of time if at all.**

- ❖ **‘Progressive Removal’ is guided by court decisions.**

- ❖ **Progressive removal will not focus on integrating the student into the school and community, but rather, it will determine that the student is no longer welcome to be part of the school, thereby allowing the remaining students to have peace.**

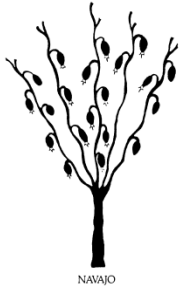
- ❖ **From a dominant cultural perspective, peace can be regained by excluding from our presence those who disturb our peace.**



Navajo Peacemaking



- ❖ **The Navajo Peacemaking process is built on different assumptions and oriented to a different goal.**
- ❖ **The goal for including peacemaking as an alternative is to allow for healing to take place.**
- ❖ **We seek healing and regaining harmony, not punishment or removal from society or clans.**
- ❖ **By feeling our relationship with one another, we can restore peace and harmony.**
- ❖ **From the Navajo cultural perspective, indeed, from the perspective of many indigenous cultures, the whole community is affected by lack of harmony, so the whole family and members of the community are involved in regaining harmony**
- ❖ **“Peace is the moment of transformation: the balancing of the male and female.” (Philmer Bluehouse, Peacemaker)**



Navajo Peacemaking

- ❖ Peace can be regained by finding a way to reintegrate into the group those who disturb the peace.
- ❖ The person who has disturbed our peace is not different from us; s/he is part of us. Thus, when s/he is re-integrated into our group, I feel more whole as well.
- ❖ Peacemaking is designed to show the student how s/he is imbedded in relationships: relatives, school staff who care, mental health workers who care, and law enforcement officers who care.
- ❖ The Peacemaker's approach would be to show the student that "I don't know you except through your relations" and to get him to recognize that "his relations are his medicine."

Peacemaking Procedure to Follow in Student Discipline Situations



There are these Primary Steps within the Peacemaking Procedure:

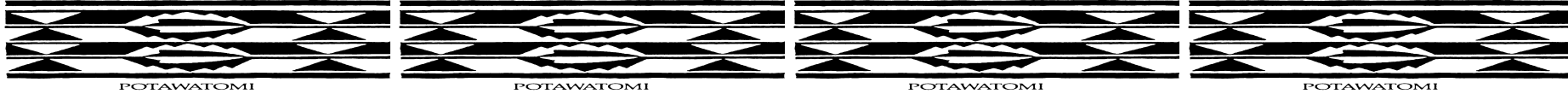
- Step 1. Start with a petition for spiritual assistance.
- Step 2. Encourage participants to introduce themselves, say why they have an interest, & how they are all related.
- Step 3. Outline the rules of interaction in the Peacemaking session and the problem being addressed.
- Step 4. Define the problem.
- Step 5. Guide the negotiation to agreement.
- Step 6. Clarify the proposed settlement.
- Step 7. End with a giving thanks.

Step 1. Start with petition for spiritual assistance.



Method: The student or the family involved in the discipline situation would be encouraged to ask for spiritual help in their own way, but it is permissible for anyone to volunteer to petition. If no one volunteers, then the Peacemaker offers a prayer, a moment of silence or a song that asks for strength and wisdom from the divine in dealing with the situation. If the family refuses to participate in a prayer, the Peacemaker may call for a moment of silence in which all those present seek guidance and strength.

Some possible explanations for starting with a petition for spiritual assistance:



A petition for spiritual assistance...

...articulates the problem.

...focuses not on casting blame, but rather on seeking a humble solution.

...recognizes that the solution is bigger than any one person.

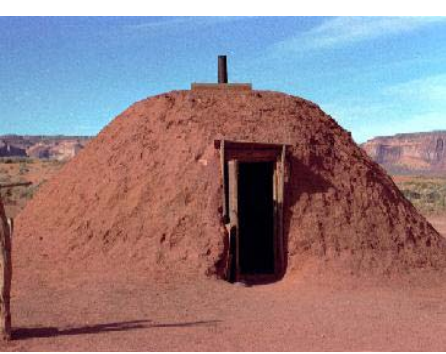
... reminds us that we are all related.

...creates a serious atmosphere.

...creates an expectation that good will be the outcome.

...recognizes that each person has gift to share in the solution.

...establishes parameters within which all things to be discussed can be placed.



Our Home & Families

Ties to our Land



Our Traditions

Our Elders the Wisdom Keepers



Dine' people, like most Native people, live in ways that recognize that our spiritual health is one of the key ingredients of a good life. Native American prayers generally focus on relationships among the natural world, family, life, health, prosperity and the community.



Sharing Tradition

Our Community



Accomplishments

Our Health



Step 2. Encourage participants to introduce themselves and say why they have an interest in this person and their situation.





PUEBLO

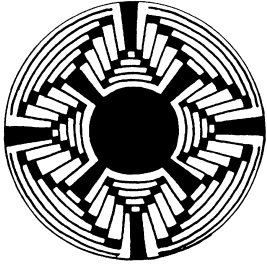
Method:



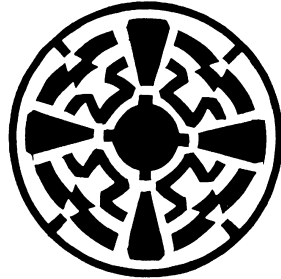
PUEBLO

- ❖ The Peacemaker asks participants to each give an introduction of their background, their clan (if applicable), their relationship to everyone in the room, and their reasons for wanting to be present at the Peacemaking session.
- ❖ The Peacemaker begins this step by introducing himself in this manner, and then asking others to introduce themselves in a similar way starting with the student who is the requestor of the session and his or her family members.
- ❖ Then the Peacemaker asks the school personnel to introduce themselves in this way followed by the mental health worker or law enforcement officer. If the Peacemaker finds it necessary, he can educate the group of the value of recognizing kinship or relationship ties at this point.
- ❖ The Peacemaker may seek to arrange all the participants in a particular manner (like a circle) in order to facilitate communication so that all speakers can be seen by everyone.

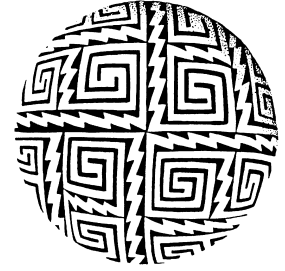
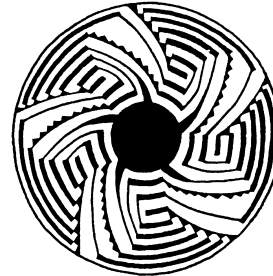
Some possible explanations for introductions and establishing relationships :



PIMA



PIMA



PUEBLO

- A. Introductions allow all participants to discover how they may be related.
- B. It is customary in most Native cultures to do this to show respect.
- C. Showing respect for one another leads to honor.
- D. Disclosing kinship – a personal side of you – makes one more willing to share.
- E. This can be a good time to assess social cooperation on everyone's part.
- F. Through recognition of K'e (kinship or interrelatedness), life-long relationships can be formed.
- G. Through sharing relationships, the Peacemaker becomes a part of the group and the issue.

Step 3. Outline the rules of interaction in the Peacemaking session and the problem being addressed.

- ❖ The Peacemaker emphasizes to the entire group that all interactions are expected to be characterized by respect, relationship, reverence, and responsibility.
- ❖ The Peacemaker is the main model of this behavior to the rest of the group. In Peacemaking, one must apply these rules and expectations to the group and to one's own behavior in the group.
- ❖ In addition to the basic guidelines of **respect, relationship, and responsibility, and reasoning** (the 4R's), the following rules apply:



Outlining the Rules of Interaction:

- ❖ One person talks at a time, everyone else listens.
- ❖ Everyone needs to get to the point and speak to the issue without lengthy speeches or irrelevant statements.
- ❖ Everyone has an opportunity to speak without using blame or discredit or punishment.
- ❖ The purpose of everything said and done in the session is to regain peace and harmony among all concerned (the students, the school personnel, and the parents).
- ❖ School regulations and laws requiring confidentiality to student records will be maintained.



Step 4. Define the problem.

- ❖ Parties (requestor) who requested Peacemaking speak first and summarize the problem.
- ❖ Peacemaker may add to or question or redirect requestor's story to make it more clear.
- ❖ Main respondent (parties) give their side of the story to make it more clear.
- ❖ Peacemaker may add to or question or redirect requestor's story to make it more clear.
- ❖ Source documents (if any) from any of the parties are reviewed by the Peacemaker to determine which are relevant.
- ❖ Peacemaker encourages participants to comment on relevant documents.
- ❖ Participants can ask each other to clarify their statements and feelings.



At this stage the Peacemaker should have a good understanding of the situation and the issues involved. The Peacemaker restates the problem and begins to negotiate with parties towards a resolution (presenting a possible solution).

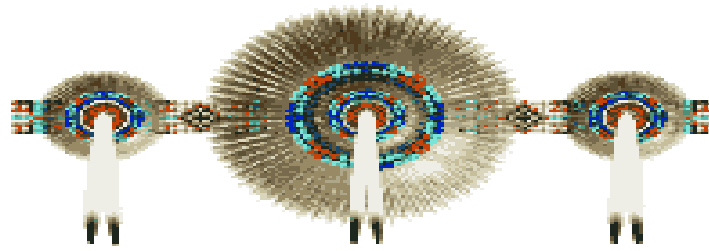
Step 5. Guide the negotiation to agreement.

- ❖ Peacemaker guides the negotiation reminding everyone of the rules.
- ❖ Peacemaker may bring in relevant rules (e.g. truancy laws) from larger society and how they might apply to this situation.
- ❖ Peacemaker may question the student to determine the student's understanding of the charges, acceptance of responsibility, and degree of remorse for wrongdoing.
- ❖ Peacemaker may draw out feelings of participants in order to discover the gifts of each person that might contribute to the solution.
- ❖ Peacemaker can state what he thinks is a reasonable solution.
- ❖ Peacemaker requests consensus or modifications from the participants in order to reach consensus.
- ❖ Peacemaker asks how everyone feels about the proposed settlement; is the proposed settlement really what everyone is willing to commit to.
- ❖ Peacemaker asks the student how he or she is willing to change his or her behavior (especially if the student is willing to request forgiveness).





- ❖ **If agreement or consensus cannot be reached, Peacemaker could encourage parties to hold another Peacemaking session at the later date, or to refer the student disciplinary action back to the school personnel in order to pursue the recommended suspension or expulsion according to the school's standard disciplinary procedure.**
- ❖ **If agreement or consensus is reached, Peacemaker briefly summarizes the issue, clarifying how everyone feels about the proposed settlement, then states the proposed settlement.**



Step 6. Clarify the proposed settlement.

- ❖ **Peacemaker restates the settlement and makes sure that everyone knows what they are agreeing to, and discusses final questions and comments.**
- ❖ **Peacemaker writes down the main points of the agreement including apologies, referrals and/or individual assignments on which there is agreement (“The group expects you to...”).**
- ❖ **Peacemaker opens session up to requests for forgiveness and conciliatory statements.**
- ❖ **Peacemaker asks everyone to seal the agreement with a traditional handshake (as honored by Navajo common law) and to be willing to sign the written agreement when it is finalized.**

Step 7. End with humble gratitude .

- ❖ Peacemaker acknowledges thanksgiving and transformation:
 - Kodoo hozhoo go (From here there is beauty)
 - **Ah'hee' whiindzin** (Thanksgiving)
 - **Naas go** (Moving on)
 - **Hozhoo nahasdlii** (Beauty and harmony restored)

It is done in Hozhoo (Beauty).

**K'e bee iina' i' deeniildzin (We gather together
in harmony through our Relationships)**

Hozhoo Nahasdlii (It is finished In Beauty)



How we apply this approach with our Navajo Peacemaking and Safe Schools Project

- A Peacemaker, Family Therapist, and Law Enforcement Officer are assigned to each school.
- When a case is referred, the Peacemaker and Family Therapist confer and decide if they will approach the case jointly.
- The family is contacted and asked if they are willing to participate in a joint session.
- **School Site Coordinator receives referral from teachers or counselor on a child whose issue may be more of a family or community problem.**
- **School Site Coordinator confers with Peacemaker Liaison, Family Therapist, and Law Enforcement officer to determine if this is a problem that can addressed through Peacemaking.**

The Peacemaking Session

- If the session does not result in a resolution of the issue, the report goes back to the school to pursue traditional school disciplinary policies.
- The Peacemaking Session is held with the student, family members, and concerned staff either at the school or at the family's home.
- Depending on the results, the family may decide to pursue continued mental health services or an additional Peacemaking session,

What we do to encourage building strong relationships in schools

- All staff (including the principal) model the 4 R's (Respect, Responsibility, Relationship, and Reasoning) in interactions with one another and with all students.
- Build Social and Emotional Learning through Voices Reading and Native literature and engage students in their real life.
- Develop Peer Leadership programs and use of the 4 R's rubric to empower students to assess their own growth in building relationships.

Building Relationships in Schools

- Law enforcement Officers regularly come to the schools to interact with students by playing sports with them, taking walks, listening and telling them about stories of their experiences.
- Each school seeks to engage students in after school activities to promote social-emotional learning.
- Principals practice resolving conflicts focusing on quick version of Peacemaking

Playground Peacemaking

- Ask offended child to speak first describing the issue and ask the other child to listen.
- Ask second child to say if that is what happened and if they have anything to add about the facts.
- Gather together both students who are having a conflict.
- Pause for a moment for a peaceful heart
- Establish how students are connected (relatives, friends, in the same class, living near each other, etc)

Playground Peacemaking

- Look for an opportunity for each child to realize that what they have done to the other child is not how they would like to be treated.
- Ask each child how they feel when they are treated that way.
- Allow an opportunity for each child to apologize, shake hands and say what they will do differently next time.
- Look for common ground for each child's need for one of the 4R's (Respect, Relationship, Responsibility, and Reasoning)
- Example: "Now that I've heard you both talk, I can see that both of you just want to be respected by the other person. Is that true?"

End with Gratitude

- The Peacemaker can acknowledge how he or she feels grateful that the two who had a conflict are now smiling or shaking hands and that their getting along feels good.
- Acknowledge that if Peace is accomplished it is because each participant chose to recognize and act on the understanding that we are all connected
- Point out how even though each of us is unique, we all are similar in what we want and how we want to be treated.