



Indigenous Wellness: Helping Our Veterans Heal

Indigenous Wellness Facts

- American Indians and Alaska Natives have served with distinction in every major conflict for over 200 years.
- According to the 2010 Census it is estimated that over 150,000 veterans identified as American Indian/Alaska Native alone.
- The US Department of Defense estimates that there are currently over 24,000 active Native service members in the US Armed Forces.
- American Indians and Alaska Natives serve in the Armed forces at 5 times the national average.
- American Indian have a higher concentration of women servicemembers than other racial groups.
- About 19 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native veterans had a service-connected disability rating in 2010.
<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/>

Cultural Challenges

Cultural humility is a reflective process of understanding one's biases and privileges, managing power imbalances, and maintaining a stance that is open to others in relation to aspects of their cultural identity that are most important to them. Strategies for practicing cultural humility include:

- Practicing self-reflection, including awareness of your beliefs, values
- Recognizing what you don't know and being open to learning as much as you can.
- Being open to other people's identities and empathizing with their life experiences
- Acknowledging that the patient is their own best authority, not yours.
- Learning and growing from people whose beliefs, values, and worldviews differ from yours.

A developmental process in which one achieves increasing levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills along a continuum, improving one's capacity to work and communicate effectively in crosscultural situations. Strategies for practicing cultural competency include:

- Learning about your own and others' cultural identities
- Combating bias and stereotypes
- Respecting others' beliefs, values, and communication preferences
- Adapting your services to each patient's unique needs

The Operation Angel Wing

- To request a seat in one of their trainings or schedule your own workshops, contact at: operationangelwing@gmail.com
- You can also find them at: www.operationangelwing.org

