Background and Introduction: La Cultura Cura (LCC) is under the guidance of Jerry Tello, the National Compadres Network (NCN) Director of Training and Technical Assistance. This health framework focuses on building on the natural opportunity factors and on what is healthy within an individual, family, community or culture. This indigenous based life view promotes what is right based on culturally-grounded, physical, emotional, mental and spiritual principles and practices. To date LCC has been implemented in various jurisdictions and highlighted within many philanthropic initiatives, nationally using a multi-tiered process focused on individual, community, organizational and systemic transformation.

Theoretical Framework: LCC acknowledges that within individuals, families and communities exist cultural values, traditions and indigenous practices that promote natural pathways, healthy development, community safety and life long well-being, using the following 5 point strategy P.R.I.D.E.

**Purpose/Destino:**

*Based on Individual, Family/Community Dignity (DIGNIDAD)*

A basic premise of the individual, family/community dignity acknowledges that within the ancestral wisdom of a people are the teachings and medicine necessary for growth and healing. It is understood that the teachings and healing elements inevitably come from the people themselves. Therefore, in order for true healing, or rebalancing to be sustained, although the initial incentive may come from an outside person (organization, funding source) the ongoing motivation for the individual, family/community growth and rebalancing must come from within the circle of those who desire or need growth or change.

**Responsibility:**

*Based on Respect (Respeto) for Family/Community Vision*

Individuals must have a vision that reflects the potential of their true self in reference to their family and community. If a person only as a negative view on himself and his culture then he has no avenue for growth, development or a healthy response-ability (ability to respond to life’s struggles). A person’s primary ethnicity is the root of that vision. It is necessary for the person to be guided to allow them to dream, reflect, and rediscover the life-enhancing values and gifts of his/her own indigenous culture. As part of this process it is necessary for him to know and understand his/her history in order to understand the process that created this situation. By this process, and with the proper guidance, a boy, man, girl, woman will be able to separate the pain and imbalance that they and their people are experiencing from the essence and strength of the positive aspects of their culture. As part of their indigenous heritage, all the people have traditions and customs for clarifying and rediscovering the vision of growth. These traditions and customs must be integrated and practiced in a balanced, consistent manner and guided by sanctioned elders that are committed to this process.

**Interdependence:**

*Based on Individual, Family/Community Trust (Confianza)*

The strengthening of a community, and the families within it, directly, enhances the development and healing of its individuals. As individuals heal and grow, they re-integrate with the positive vision of the community. Families/communities, and the individuals within them, must develop interdependently. If one is missing, then disharmonious growth occurs, which leads to false hope and development. It is essential to know the difference between co-dependence, individualism, and indigenous cultural interdependence (confianza). Through the redeveloped interconnectedness, cycles of generational destruction and pain are interrupted and a commitment to generational healing and development is initiated, individual by individual, family by family, community by community.
DEVELOPMENT:
Circular Learning Based on Love (Carino) for life
A love for life is the basis of a circular learning process. As times change, people must learn “new” ways (based on ancient teachings) to live in the world as individuals, families, and communities. There must be pride in one’s ethnicity, respect for those of all roots and a process for balancing differences. The new ways must be both life preserving and life-enhancing. In addition, organizations, institutions and dominant societal communities must learn to live in new ways, being willing to change their philosophy, policies, and procedures based on the evolving community. Elders from the community must gather in communion (Circulo) to give blessing and offer guidance to connected efforts focused on love an healing of the next seven generations.

ENTHUSIASM:
Living Life with a Sense of Hope (Spirituality/Esperanza)
Living life with a sense of spirit (spirituality) allows an individual, family/community to approach life with an element of enthusiasm (ganas). Instilling or re-instilling that sense of hope (spirituality) in an individual, family/community allows one to deal with the difficult, and sometimes overwhelming, day-to-day pressures with a sense of “greater spirit”. As part of this development it is important for a community to engage in ongoing and consistent community affirming celebrations and events to acknowledge the emerging leaders and the positive efforts that are taking place in order that they may take root and grow.

How: The National Compadres Network (NCN) is a 501 C-3 nonprofit organization founded in 1988 that brings together a culturally based cadre of recognized leaders to provide expertise and support in the areas of:

- cultural healing informed services
- capacity building
- training
- technical assistance
- collective impact building
- research
- leadership development
- and resource and material development

NCN works closely with organizational partners, community leaders and decision makers, locally and nationally, to create sustainable systems of change, and continuum of practice. NCN provides the necessary support and expertise. We provide the following options:

Community and Organizational Capacity Building: NCN works with organizations, staff and program leaders and offers culturally based training and technical assistance in the following areas:

- Organizational Capacity Building; and Strategic Planning consultation
- Community Engagement, Event Planning and Rites of Passage retreats;
- Program Development; and Inclusion of Healing and Trauma Informed Culturally Based Practices
- Culturally-Based Research and Evaluation toolkits

Policies and Services to Promote Systems Change: NCN works with community and system leaders to assess update and when necessary develop policies within systems of care that promote the health and well-being of community by:

- Identifying existing policy gaps that prevent the development of effective culturally based youth, family and community programs.
- Identifying policies and practices that are oppressive to the integrity of individuals, families and community and assisting in the elimination or modification of said policies.
- Developing positive culturally responsive trauma and healing informed policies and procedures that build on the cultural strengths of youth, families and community.

Culturally Based Curriculum and Overviews: NCN has a strong history of successful community based program development and implementation, which has resulted in model programs that have received formal recognition in many communities across the nation. NCN has developed effective and industry recognized training, technical assistance and curriculum models that are currently in place nationwide. The four base curriculums are Joven Noble Rites of Passage Character Development curriculum, Xinachtli Female Rites of Passage, Cara y Corazon Face and Heart Family Strengthening curriculum and the Circulos Healing and Support Circle systems.

Other curricula, articles, posters, research/evaluation resources, brochures and supplemental materials are also available.

“Within the collective Dignity, Respect, Trust and Love of all people, exists the wisdom, practices and resources for a healthy and harmonious wellbeing”

National Compadres Network  www.nlffi.org  (408) 657-8215