



Warrior Down

A Relapse Prevention and Recovery Support Program for Native Americans



Over the next five years, White Bison and the Wellbiety Movement for Prisons will be working with prisons, local courts, law enforcement and tribal agencies in the state of Idaho and in a number of Urban Indian Centers to implement the Warrior Down Relapse and Recidivism Prevention program.



Purpose: Provide a relapse and recidivism prevention and recovery support program for Native Americans who are: (1) incarcerated; (2) completing treatment; (3) returning to the community from incarceration; or (4) working on their recovery journey using traditional method or 12 Step methods. This peer led program also creates an opportunity to provide support to others experiencing the same issues. The program is also structured to provide support for the healthy re-integration of this individual into his or her family. The program supports healthy marriages, effective parenting, sober lifestyles, responsible fatherhood, connection with cultural traditions and spiritual practices.

What is Warrior Down?

Warrior Down is the cry used to signify that a warrior has been wounded or incapacitated in some way and needs help. The Warrior Down program creates the response team that provides the support and finds the resources to get that warrior back into their recovery process. This is a peer to peer program that is designed to equip Native Americans in recovery to provide recovery support, prevent recidivism and provide community referrals for those re-entering the community from treatment or from various forms of incarceration.



Significance of Warrior Down

The goal of the Warrior Down program is to build a continuous support network from prison to parole to tribal community for Native Americans fathers who are returning from prison, other forms of detention, or treatment to help them prevent relapse and recidivism. Fathers are a particular focus of this project, given that there are many challenges for fathers who have been absent for a long time. They need to learn how to relate to their children, how to relate to their wives in a partnering relationships, how to manage and resolve conflict, how to maintain a job, and create responsible lifestyle. These Native American men also have to deal with issues of intergenerational trauma, their own history as children of alcoholics, their cultural identities and acceptance within their family group. The peers within the Warrior Down program at each level, connect individuals with local emotional and social support networks, spiritual support, and provide them with referrals to community and social service resources. This “web” of support provided by the person’s own peers, family and community has the potential to accelerate the person’s healthy reentry and recovery.



Importance of Preventing Relapse and Recidivism

The first 90 days following release from detention or treatment can be the most important time for preventing recidivism or relapse. The Warrior Down support and referral network can prevent newly released Native American men and women from becoming one of the following statistics:



- Native Americans experienced violence at a rate 2 times the rate for Americans of other races
- 14% of Native American arrested for violent offences were under age 18
- 2001 arrest rates for DUIs for Native Americans was double that for other races
- The total number of Native Americans arrested for violent crimes increased 1.7% from 2000- 2001.
- In 2001, 1662 Native American were sent to federal prison; 54.9% for violent crimes
- Recidivism: Within 6 months of release from prison, 26% were arrested for a new crime; within 1 year, 45%; within 3 years, 60%.*

Three Parts to the Proposed program:

1) Fathers in prison will be invited to attend (and eventually facilitate The Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Men and Fathers of Tradition. They will also be trained to create a network of social, emotional, practical and spiritual support designed to assist them in maintaining their recovery from alcohol and substance abuse, to develop positive and responsible parenting approaches and relationship skills so that when they are released they can re-enter successfully into their families. Individuals that participate in this program will develop a Wellbriety Plan that they will implement prior to,, during, and after release.



2) In the city, a Native American Wellbriety Center is being established that will provide services to wives and family members of fathers in prisons, provide recovery support and recidivism prevention services to those released from prison and to those released from treatment centers. Individuals can take part in the Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Men, Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Women, Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps for Friends and Family; Fathers of Tradition, Families of Tradition, Daughters of Tradition and Sons of Tradition. Participants can also receive referrals for social services, mental health services, employment services, and learn how to complete job applications, how to apply for a driver's license, how to obtain car insurance and how to find appropriate housing and appropriate spiritual support. The center is also designed to help individuals and their family members reconnect with each other and with their cultural traditions. Family members may also create a Wellbriety Plan that will help them readjust to the father returning to the family. This center is run by peers in the Native American recovery movement who act as recovery support/recidivism prevention coaches.

3) In local tribal communities, Family Circles (Families of Tradition), Recovery Circles (Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps) and Fatherhood Circles (Fathers of Tradition) will be established by peers in the recovery movement who have been trained to facilitate the various curriculum. These Tribal Community Wellbriety Centers will provide the same type of support as provided in the city.



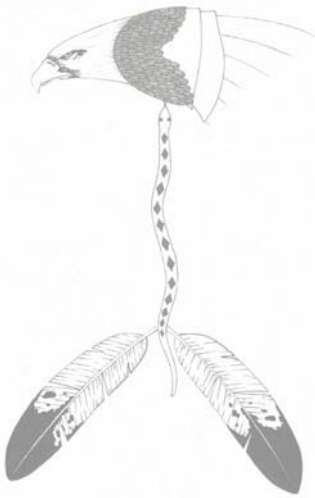
*<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pubalp2.htm#aic>

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719-548-1000(v) 719-548-9407(f) www.whitebison.org



Why is Warrior Down Important?

Recovery is not just staying sober. It is a way of experiencing life through new eyes, new thoughts, and a new spirit. Re-establishing one's life following treatment for alcohol or substance abuse, or following incarceration requires a community effort. Without the support of a knowledgeable family and community, many who try return to healthy, productive lives find themselves frustrated by the need for job, training, education, housing, transportation, mental health care or medical support, social services, spiritual and cultural support or connections with others who value sobriety and healthy life ways. Warrior Down provides the opportunity for participants to develop life skills, learn to work through conflict in positive ways, rebuild family connections, learn to develop healthy parenting approaches.



Cultural and Spiritual Support for Recovery and Re-Entry

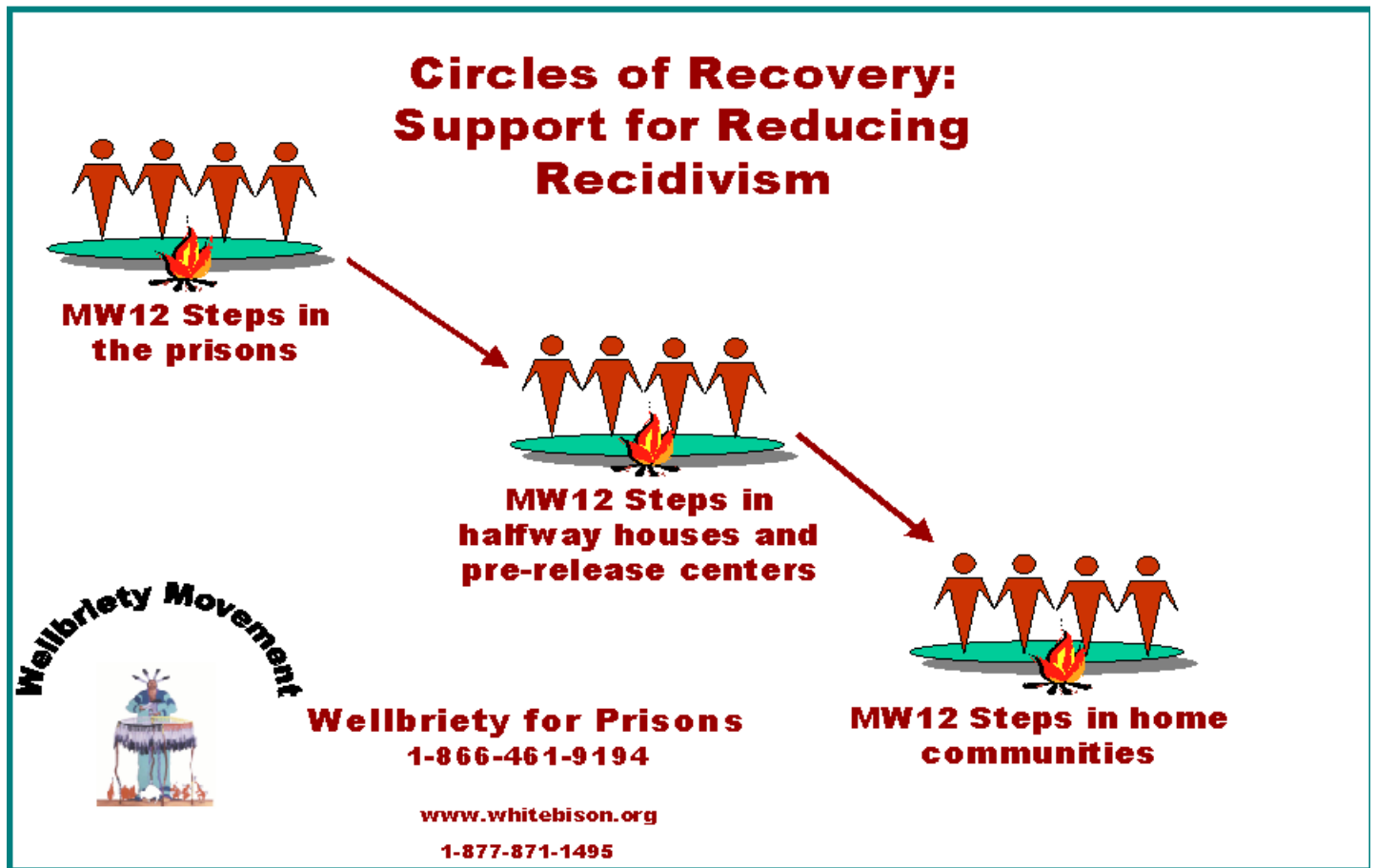
For many Native American people the path to healing is found through traditional cultural and spiritual practices. Healing processes might include talking circles, healing circles and traditional ceremonies. Ceremonial activities have a distinctly spiritual focus, and the incorporation of intergenerational activities that include both elders and children in the healing process are essential for the well-being of men and women in Native communities. The teachings of the Elders and the Clan Mothers provide wisdom and guidance. The spiritual practices provide pathways to meaning and purpose in life, and the cultural activities create a social and emotional foundation for reconnecting and reestablishing a sense of belonging and identity. In addition, for those who have come to understand and who have learned to live a joyfilled life of recovery have a strong desire to share what

they have learned and provide support for those who continue to struggle. Culturally appropriate aftercare and re-entry programs provide opportunities for Native Americans to reconnect to their communities and to create a healthy life that reflects a balance emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. We call this a life of Wellbriety. The Warrior Down program is one of the resources that can be used to assist those reentering the community from treatment or incarceration to achieve Wellbriety.

Practical and Informational Support

The Warrior Down program also provides information and educational materials about domestic violence prevention, health issues such as HIV/AIDS, diabetes, suicide prevention, and deterrence of gang activity. Recovery support coaches are all peers, meaning that they have been in prison or in treatment and are now in the process of rebuilding their own lives. Their roles are as mentors and guides. They know what the new person is experiencing and they know how to help that person through the dark times. The recovery support coaches can help the newly released father implement their Wellbriety Plan. They can serve as resources for finding appropriate teachers, spiritual guides, and how to take care of legal tasks and making appointments for specific types of services and for getting to recovery support and relapse prevention meetings.





Reentry Begins in the Prison Environment:

Warrior Down is designed to provide a continuous recovery support system for people who are in prison, those who are transitioning back to community life and those who have returned home. The consistency of the program, the cultural and spiritual foundations and the social support that is built into the program will enable individuals to develop and maintain healthy new thinking patterns.



Phase I: Programs for Re-Entry within the Prison Setting

Medicine Wheel and 12 Step curriculum:

A 12 Step recovery program designed to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of Native Americans



Warrior Down Relapse Prevention

A comprehensive system of peer support and referral to assist those in recovery to maintain their sobriety and to continue moving toward a healthy lifeway.



Fathers of Tradition: A traditional approach to learning principles and strategies for effective fathering for Native American men who have been separated from their families by prison or treatment.



Phase II: Re-Entry Continues in the Pre-Release and Half-way House Environment



Sweat lodge at the Prison

Medicine Wheel and 12 Step (Circles of Recovery):

A 12 Step recovery program designed to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of Native Americans, facilitated by Firestarters who are peers in the Native American recovery community.

Warrior Down: A community support program for relapse prevention that helps individuals find work, get back into school, connect with emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual resources. Peers in the Native American recovery community provide support as recovery coaches to help the individual find the resources needed while gaining confidence in the recovery process.



Families of Tradition: A facilitated support program to help families learn to work together following the incarceration or treatment of one of its members. Many of these programs are sponsored by family and social services agencies to help reunite families and reintegrate children who have been in foster care.

Phase III: Returning to the Home Community

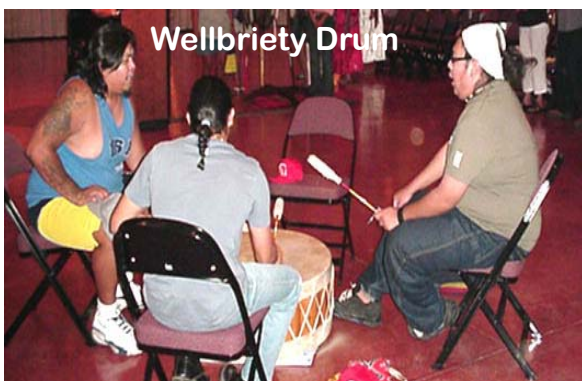
Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps (Circles of Recovery):

Firestarters in local communities have set up Circles of Recovery that are available to those returning from prison or treatment centers. Native American recovery community.

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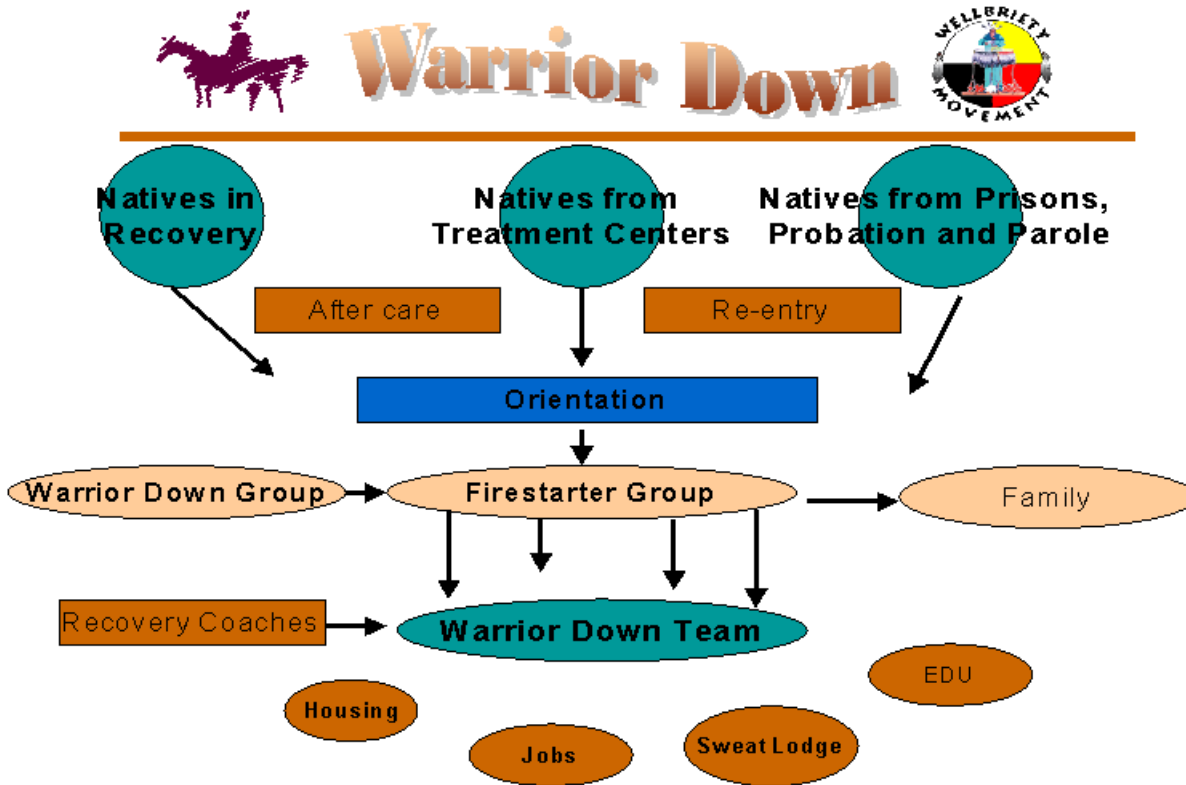
Community Circle of Recovery



Wellbriety Drum

Traditional Healing Approaches:

Communities are encouraged to invite the Elders and spiritual advisors to participate in the Recovery support and relapse prevention processes. In addition, many communities have instituted re-naming ceremonies to help reintegrate people into the community. Sweatlodge and pipe ceremonies are often used to support recovery and prevent relapse. Wellbriety Drums serve to inspire and help participants make the commitment to Wellbriety, a sober and healthy lifestyle that is balance emotional, mentally, physically, and spiritually.



Who Participates in Warrior Down?

The Warrior Down Program is designed to assist Native Americans already in recovery, those re-entering the community after treatment for alcohol or substance abuse, mental disorders or after incarceration. The Warrior Down program creates linkages to those community service, social and family service and law enforcement agencies who provide services to support Native Americans who are re-connecting with family and community after treatment or incarceration. Half way houses, work release centers, and other community after-care organizations are also included in the outreach. It is important to let Native Americans in recovery know that there is a culturally responsive recovery support system available for them in their community.

How Does Warrior Down Work?

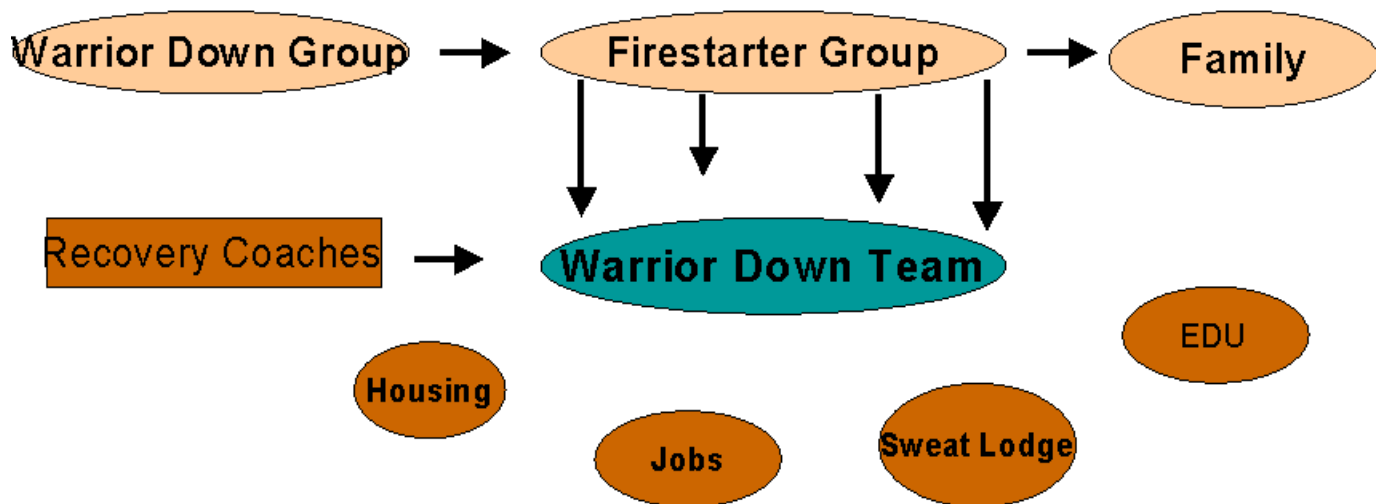
Orientations for new participants occur on a regular basis. At the orientation the individual will learn about the variety of services and support available to help with their recovery journey and re-entry process. Some of these include: the Four Laws of Change; cultural and spiritual practices used to help prevent relapse including talking circles and participation in sweat lodge experiences; educational experiences that promote personal growth, decision making, healing family and interpersonal relationships, and learning to apply Native American teachings and principles to personal recovery efforts. Participants will also learn about the referral resources and the role of the recovery coaches and the Warrior Down Team. Once the Orientation is complete the members of the Warrior Down Group are scheduled to participate in the Firestarter Training.

The Four Laws of Change

These laws were given to White Bison by Native American Elders.

1. Change comes from within.
2. In order for development to occur, it must be preceded by a vision.
3. A great learning must occur.
4. You must create a healing forest.





Warrior Down Team

Those who complete the Firestarter Training are invited to participate in the Warrior Down Team. These individuals receive additional training on how to provide recovery support and referral services as Recovery Coaches. They serve as a “ready response” to provide support for the individual who is “slipping” or who has relapsed, or who is in danger of relapsing.

Members of the Warrior Down Team learn to work with local community resource and service providers such as those who help with employment, housing, transportation, family services, mental health, medical care, education and training and spiritual support. These individuals make a commitment to “surround” the person in recovery with a continuum of care so that they can stay on or return to the recovery journey. The most important aspect of the Warrior Down Team role is to ensure that each person knows that they are not alone in their recovery and re-entry journey. The Warrior Down Team assists the individual in finding mentors, spiritual and cultural support and guidance, family services support, community and social services support and other resources to help them become self-sustaining and productive members of the community.

Warrior Down is a Developmental Program for Individuals and their Families

In the pre-release centers and in the community settings, the Warrior Down program reaches out to family members. They are invited to join the participant in the **Families of Tradition** program where as a “family group” they will learn to:

- Create a vision for a healthy family
- Learn how to create healthy roles for parents and children
- Learn to use family talking circles
- Apply traditional teachings about relationships and parenting to their own family life
- Manage conflict in a healthy and productive way
- Develop individual leadership skills within the family.

Another developmental opportunity is the **Living Skills** series that is available for participants and their family members. Ten half-hour self-paced videos assist individuals in developing intra-personal and interpersonal skills, goal setting, life planning, conflict resolution skills. These videos also provide traditional teachings to assist the individual in healing past hurts.





For more information about bringing
Warrior Down to your community, please contact
White Bison, Inc.
1-877-871-1495
or log onto our website at
<http://www.whitebison.org>



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