Healing-Centered Rehabilitation Practice

Beyond Trauma-Informed Care: Culturally Driven Healing for Complex Cases and Repeat Consumers

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Purpose

This worksheet is designed to help practitioners in Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs reflect on and reframe approaches to working with individuals who return repeatedly for services or who live with the layered impacts of trauma, disability, and systemic barriers.

Healing-centered practice invites us to see each person not as a "case" but as a *story in motion* — one connected to family, community, and land.

Seeing Beyond the Case File

Think of one person you serve who has returned for services multiple times.

Reflection	Notes
What stories or patterns do you notice in their journey?	
What systemic or historical factors might contribute to this cycle?	

How might labeling them as “resistant” or “non-compliant” limit healing?	

When we shift from ‘What’s wrong?’ to ‘What’s happened and what’s sacred?’ we open space for belonging.

The Four Dimensions of Healing-Centered Practice

Dimension	Description	Reflection / Example from My Work
Body	Regulation and safety. Supporting the nervous system through rhythm, movement, and breath.	
Mind	Meaning-making and reframing narratives. Seeing resilience beneath symptoms.	
Spirit	Ceremony, connection, language, and relationship to land.	
Community	Collective healing, peer support, and restoring belonging.	

Healing is not linear — it's relational.

Complex Case Mapping Tool

Use this circle to visualize influences around the person you serve.
Draw or imagine concentric rings representing:

- **Center:** The individual's *strengths and aspirations*
- **Ring 1:** Family, caregivers, helpers
- **Ring 2:** Systems of support (tribal VR, behavioral health, culture keepers, schools, employers)
- **Ring 3:** Environmental and historical context (colonization, economic hardship, intergenerational trauma, land displacement)

Now reflect:

- Where are the strengths already present?
- Where are disconnections or barriers?
- What relationships could support healing if activated?

Cultural Healing Strategies to Integrate

Circle or highlight those that resonate or that your program could implement:

Ceremonial practice (smudging, prayer, song, water ceremony)
Language inclusion (greetings, affirmations, naming practices)
Storywork and narrative reframing
Land-based activities (gardening, walks, sweat lodge, traditional harvesting)
Community co-regulation (talking circles, collective drumming, creative expression)

Healing-centered work doesn't "add culture" — it begins with it.

Supervision & Support Reflection

Question	My Reflection
How do I recognize signs of secondary or vicarious trauma in myself?	

What do I need from supervision or leadership to stay grounded and effective?	
What practices or teachings help me release what I carry from this work?	

Commitment to Practice

What is one change — internal or external — I can make to move toward healing-centered rehabilitation practice?

When we see each person as sacred, we restore their wholeness — and our own.