

## Healing through Tradition: Reclaiming Culture, Identity, and Spirituality

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### Day 1 – Understanding Trauma & Spirituality

- **Welcome & Land Acknowledgment:** Acknowledge Syilx/Okanagan Nation; opening words honoring land and ancestors.
- **Workshop Purpose & Guidelines:** Shared agreements for cultural safety and trust.
- **Defining Trauma & Intergenerational Trauma:** Impact of boarding schools, forced assimilation, family separation.
- **Historical Roots:** Context on colonization, treaties, loss of land and language.

- **Impact on Identity, Culture, Well-Being:** Link to mental health, substance misuse, community healing needs.

- **Neuroscience: ACE Study, Brain & Stress: ACE Study findings, toxic stress, hippocampus/amygdala effects.**

- **Polyvagal Theory: Safety, connection, co-regulation through cultural activities.**

- **Indigenous Spiritual Practices: Sweat lodges, ceremonies, rituals for resilience.**

- **Storytelling: Elders' stories preserving language and healing identity.**

## **Day 2 – Trauma-Responsive Care & Community Empowerment**

- **Morning Reflection:** Guided mindfulness or gratitude practice to start the day grounded.

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- **Trauma Treatment in ACTION:** Using Dr. Lyons’ principles to build safety and trust. Example: Safe rooms in schools, trauma-informed staff.

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- **Integrating Indigenous Healing:** Partnerships with elders, integrating ceremonies into care plans.

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- **Culturally Responsive Care:** Signs in Indigenous languages, cultural liaisons in clinics.

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- **Communal Healing Practices:** Feasts, wellness circles, community grief ceremonies.

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- **Reclaiming Language & Identity:** Youth language programs, culture camps.

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- **Youth Mentorship & Leadership:** Elder-youth storytelling projects. Example: Youth digital storytelling.

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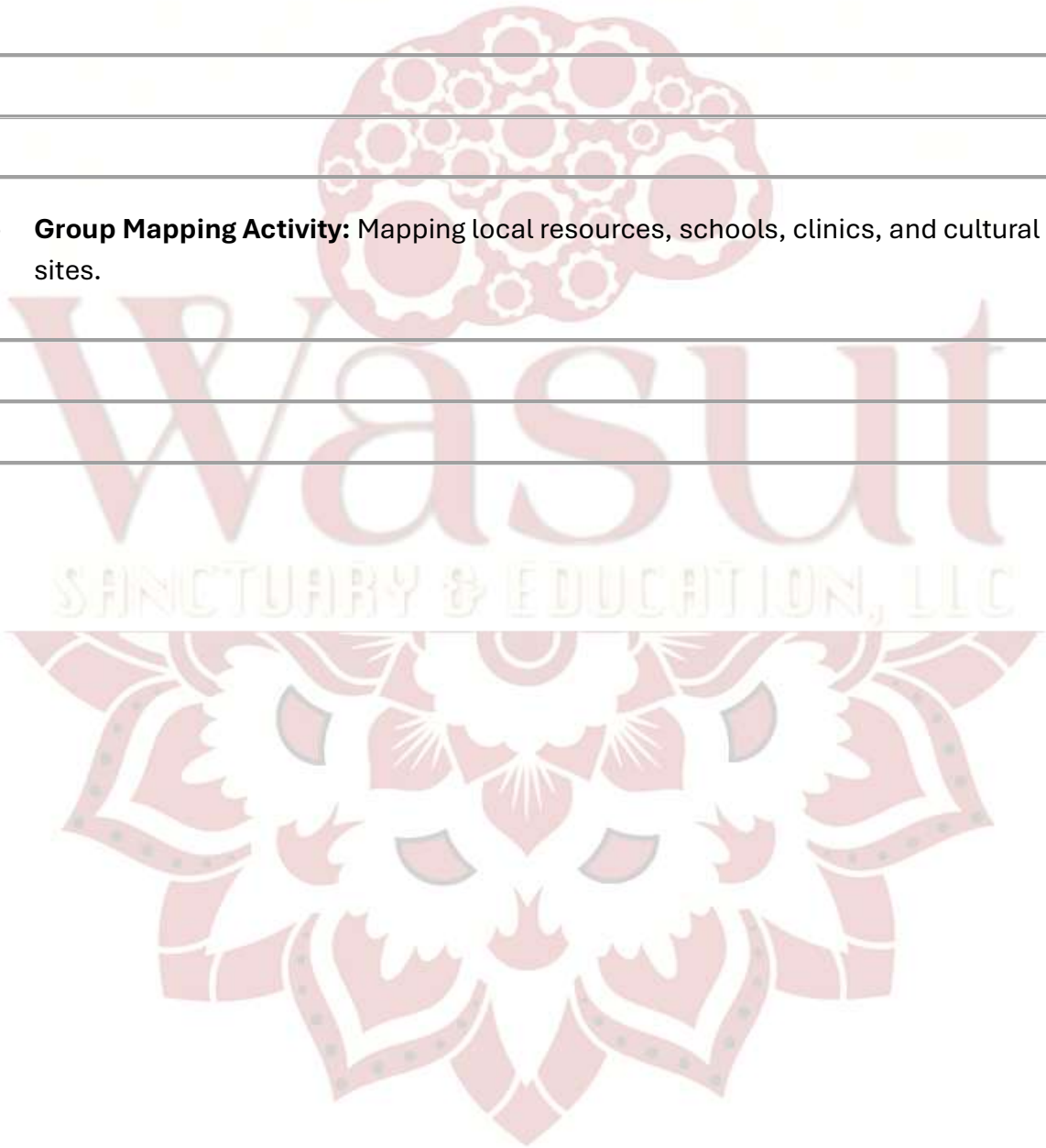
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- **Group Mapping Activity:** Mapping local resources, schools, clinics, and cultural sites.

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### ✦ Day 3 – Guided Practices & Cultural Revitalization

- **Mindfulness & Meditation:** Nature walks, 5-senses grounding, outdoor reflection.

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- **Nature & Land Connection:** Rivers, sacred sites, land-based ceremonies.

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- **Sociology Insights:** Environmental racism, redlining, policy trauma.

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- **Resilience Stories:** Case examples: Haliwa-Saponi powwow revitalization.

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- **Story Circle Method:** Each person shares, group reflects back. Builds trust.

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- **Spiritual Rituals & Ancestral Wisdom:** Pipe ceremonies, naming ceremonies, vision quests.

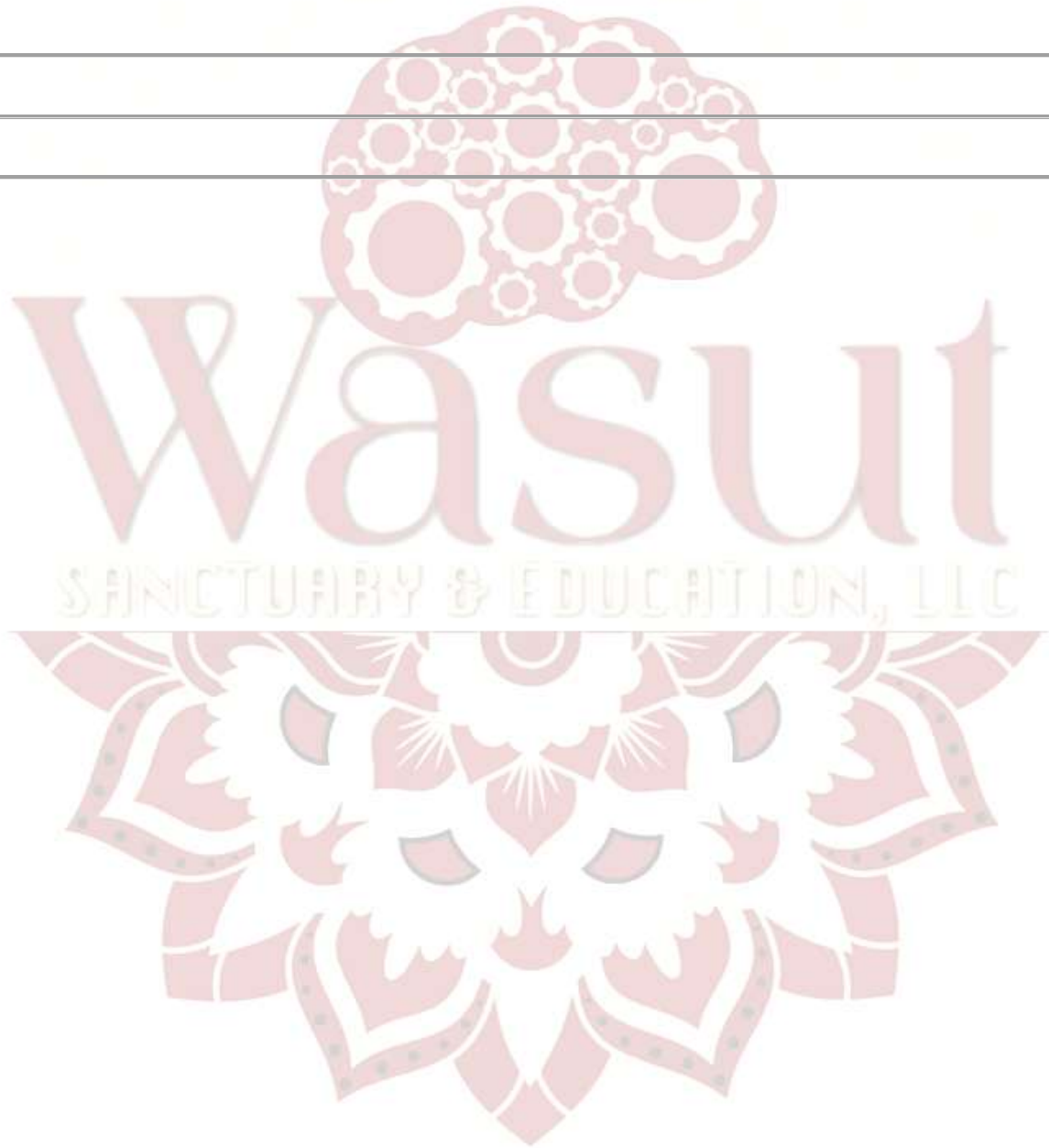
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- **Designing Mentorship Plans:** Youth councils, youth teaching elders tech for cultural storytelling.

- **Discussion & Sharing:** Group breakouts, personal journaling.



## Day 4 – Collaboration, Action & Celebration

- **Opening Circle:** Gratitude circle, intention setting.

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- **Applying Lessons:** Bringing knowledge back to community.

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- **Collaborative Project Design:** Design storytelling festivals, language days.

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- **Indigenous Leadership:** Supporting youth-led cultural teams.

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- **Commitment Circle:** Speaking commitments, passing a talking stick.

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- **Communal Healing Celebration:** Feast, songs, drumming.

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- **Next Steps:** Staying connected, forming support circles.

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**Additional space for notes:**

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# Dr. Varleisha Lyons - Medicine Wheel Healing Reflection Worksheet

## **EAST (Air - Spring - Mental - Yellow)**

Symbolizes new beginnings, clarity, sunrise, and inspiration.

*What thoughts or ideas are emerging for you?*

## **SOUTH (Fire - Summer - Emotional - Red)**

Symbolizes youth, passion, emotions, and growth.

*What emotions are you currently experiencing?*

## **WEST (Water - Autumn - Physical - Black/Blue)**

Symbolizes reflection, maturity, physical embodiment, and healing.

*What are you ready to release?*

## **NORTH (Earth - Winter - Spiritual - White)**

Symbolizes wisdom, stillness, elders, and spiritual connection.

*What spiritual wisdom is guiding you?*

## **CENTER (Self / Creator / Balance)**

Represents your whole self and connection to all life.

*What brings you into balance?*

## Dr. Varleisha Lyons - My Nature-Aligned Healing Plan

**My nature symbol today:**

**What part of your body is calling for attention?**

**What emotion is connected to this area?**

**What does this remind you of in nature?**

Nature Symbol	Emotion / Need	Body Focus	Healing Action

**One thing I will do daily to support my healing:**

**One weekly or seasonal ritual I can commit to:**

## Dr. Varleisha Lyons - My Nature-Aligned Healing Plan

A support system, ancestor, or natural element I will call on:

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Dr. Varleisha Lyons - Example: My Nature-Aligned Healing Plan

My nature symbol today:

A flowing river - constant, emotional, and connected to all things.

What part of your body is calling for attention?

My heart and chest - tightness and breath holding.

What emotion is connected to this area?

Grief and deep longing.

What does this remind you of in nature?

The ocean during a storm - deep and chaotic, yet cleansing.

Nature Symbol	Emotion / Need	Body Focus	Healing Action
River	Grief	Chest	Daily breathwork with ocean wave sound

One thing I will do daily to support my healing:

Spend 5 minutes grounding with breath and natural sounds.

One weekly or seasonal ritual I can commit to:

Walking by water on Sundays.

A support system, ancestor, or natural element I will call on:

The strength of my grandmothers and the energy of water.

# Dr. Varleisha Lyons: Expanded Community Healing Plan Workbook ©

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## Introduction

This expanded workbook equips educators, practitioners, and cultural leaders with detailed tools to facilitate healing within Indigenous communities. It blends Lyon's trauma-responsive ACT-ION framework, neuroscience, and traditional healing wisdom with actionable and culturally respectful worksheets.

## Section 1: Self-Healing Readiness Assessment

Reflect on each of the questions below and rate your confidence (1 = low, 5 = high).

1. I understand my own trauma triggers and coping tools.  
Rating: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I have access to personal or peer healing spaces.  
Rating: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I can offer cultural humility and hold space for others.  
Rating: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I understand intergenerational trauma in Indigenous communities.  
Rating: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I recognize when I need help and take steps to seek it.  
Rating: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

## Section 2: ACT-ION Planning Framework

Complete a worksheet for each stage below to tailor your plan.

### Acknowledge

Describe the trauma or challenge being addressed. What has been silenced or ignored?

[Write your reflections here]

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### Create Growth

What safe, culturally-rooted actions can help foster growth and restoration?

[Write your reflections here]

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### **Teach Neuroeducation**

How can brain-body knowledge be shared in a culturally accessible way?

[Write your reflections here]

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### **Intergenerational**

What patterns from past generations must be acknowledged or healed?

[Write your reflections here]

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### **Organizations**

How do current systems support or harm community healing?

[Write your reflections here]

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### **Now**

What small action can be taken immediately that moves toward collective healing?

[Write your reflections here]

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## **Section 3: Community Wellness Wheel**

For each dimension, reflect on current strengths and needed supports.

### **Emotional**

How do people express emotions and receive emotional care?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Physical**

What physical spaces or activities support health and connection?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Spiritual**

What ceremonies, beliefs, or rituals provide meaning and guidance?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Social**

How do relationships, roles, and community support healing?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Environmental/Occupational**

What roles do land, work, and surroundings play in wellness?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section 4: Engaging Reluctant Participants**

Use these strategies and worksheets to build safety and trust.

- Reflect on past harm. What has led to community reluctance?
- Plan a low-barrier entry activity (e.g., story circle, art, nature walk).
- Develop your listening posture: What does culturally respectful listening look like?

Activity Plan:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Steps:

- 1.
- 2.

3.

Follow-up Support: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 5: Weekly Healing Milestone Tracker

Track goals and emotional response each week over two months.

Week	Goal or Activity	Emotional Experience	Reflection / Notes
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			

### Section 6: Family & Community Genogram + Story Mapping

Use this section to sketch your genogram and reflect on relationship patterns.

- Mark trauma, strength, and roles.
- Include cultural or spiritual family connections.

[Draw or Describe Here]

Story Mapping Prompts:

- Who in your lineage showed resilience?
- What traditions helped in times of hardship?
- How does your story fit into the community's larger healing journey?