

# **Aboriginal Suicide and Trauma: Prevention & Intervention What Is Working, What Is Hopeful...**

~Facilitated by Dr. Darien Thira, PhD and Reg. Psych.

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**December 11 – 12, 2017**

The Hampton Inn and Suites by Hilton  
Moncton, New Brunswick

## **Presented By:**

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## Management Information

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*Due to circumstances beyond our control the program may have changed without notice. Everything possible has been done to provide equivalent speakers and sessions if a cancellation occurred. Neither W. Zarchikoff & Associates nor Stratcom Consulting assumes responsibility for such changes.*

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### **About this Workshop**

This workshop was developed for community health leaders, community health workers, educators, front-line staff, elders and others in First Nations and Aboriginal communities working in an area that touches on preventing and responding to suicide in their community.

The purpose of this workshop is to support community workers in planning and developing a community suicide prevention and intervention plan that can be implemented immediately and effectively.

Suicide can be stopped!

### **Facilitator: Darien Thira, Ph.D**

Dr. Darien Thira serves as a community development/mental health consultant for many Aboriginal communities across Canada and offers training workshops and clinical consultation related to a variety of communications, trauma, and crisis-related fields. He is an adjunct faculty member at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. His doctoral dissertation related to Aboriginal suicide resilience and social activism and he was involved in further resilience research at the University of British Columbia. He has previously served as a clinician with suicidal youth at Child and Youth Mental Health and as the Director of Community Education and Professional Development at the Vancouver Crisis Centre. In relation to suicide prevention, "Through the Pain", a culturally driven community-based program has been used in over 40 Aboriginal communities across the country and as a national program in Australia. His program called "Opening the Circle" is designed to assist communities to develop their own crisis response team. "Choices", his youth suicide awareness education video & seminar was used by more than 250 suicide prevention programs world-wide and he has collaborated on the production of a new version called "Reaching Out". Darien has presented workshops at many local, provincial, national conferences, and international conferences in: Canada, the United States, and Australia.

# Monday, December 11

<b>0830 – 0900</b>	REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS
	<b>WORKSHOP FACILITATOR:</b>  Dr. Darien Thira, PhD President Darien Thira Consulting Incorporated Vancouver, British Columbia
<b>0900 – 0915</b>	INTRODUCTIONS & OPENING REMARKS
<b>0915 - 1015</b>	<b>Session 1: Traditional Values and Colonization</b>  Trauma, criminal activity and suicide are often understood as a mental health problem with a medical/psychological solution. While this is true in some cases, these issues can be better understood as a community problem rooted in the insults of colonization. This interactive session will explore a “post-colonial” approach to mental health and conclude with an introduction to a traditional values-based “cure” for the impacts of colonization.
<b>1015 – 1030</b>	HEALTH & NUTRITION BREAK
<b>1030 – 1200</b>	<b>Session 2: Youth Resilience &amp; Wellness</b>  A culturally-rooted community-oriented approach to youth resilience and wellness will be offered. The 4 Keys to resilience will be explored in this session; namely caring connection, respectful empowerment, a meaningful role/identity, and culturally rooted vision. These can be combined into two branches of wellness: self-esteem and a well-lived life. These branches will be explored in terms that will assist youth to become more positively engaged in their lives, their families and their communities.
<b>1200 – 1315</b>	NO-HOST LUNCH
<b>1315 – 1430</b>	<b>Session 3: Balancing the Values of Care and Respect</b>  The importance of maintaining balance in the face of distress will be examined and tools to maintain boundaries will be discussed and practiced.
<b>1430 – 1445</b>	HEALTH & NUTRITION BREAK

1445 – 1600	<p><b>Session 4: Basic Suicide Intervention Skills</b></p> <p>Participants will understand the one cause of suicide, identify how a person becomes suicidal, recognize the 4 signals sent by person in suicidal crisis and learn the three steps of suicide intervention.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday, December 12</b></p>	
0900 – 1030	<p><b>Session 5: The Community is the Medicine, Part I</b></p> <p>This interactive workshop will offer an introduction to issues related to suicide prevention in Aboriginal communities. In the first part of the day, workshop participants will identify the “cure” for suicide (based upon four Traditional values) and apply this medicine in a resilience-oriented, community-based response to community issues that are the source of crisis and suicide. In part two, a Traditional view of the self will be identified which when combined with the four values, can be used as a tool for the development of personal and community wellness. As well, a community-based model of crisis/suicide response, called a Community Response Team (aka ASCIRT) will be discussed.</p>
1030 – 1045	HEALTH & NUTRITION BREAK
1045 – 1200	<p><b>Session 6: The Community is the Medicine, Part II</b></p> <p>Helping a suicidal person is painful. We often feel overwhelmed by our sense of responsibility and our fear. As a result we often “take over” their lives or avoid a suicidal person in need. This session will offer an approach to maintaining healthy boundaries rooted in traditional values. As well, a simple 3-step crisis intervention/trauma prevention tool will be introduced and practiced.</p>
1200 – 1315	NO-HOST LUNCH
1315 – 1430	<p><b>Session 7: Healing the Soul Wound – Responding to Grief and Trauma, Part I</b></p> <p>This interactive workshop will offer a brief introduction to issues related to grief and trauma healing in Aboriginal communities. In the first part, the four paths of Aboriginal healing will be explored, in both psychological and spiritual/cultural terms. A two-step trauma/grief intervention method and a four stage healing process will be brought to light, with an emphasis on how to assist people to leave behind the “victim” role. In part two, the four Traditional values that are the root of trauma resilience and a Traditional view of health will be identified as the basis for personal and community wellness.</p>
1430 - 1445	HEALTH & NUTRITION BREAK

**1445 – 1545**

**Session 8: Healing the Soul Wound – Responding to Grief and Trauma, Part II**

This session continues to explore ways to heal the soul in response to grief and trauma.

**1545 – 1600**

Closing & Evaluations