

Tips for Working in the Community

Adapted from C Dobson, Healing with the Carrier Nation, 2016

- Commit yourself to lifelong learning
- Strive to understand your own biases, and the function of oppression and stereotypes in our society
- Work to understand the traditional world view of the Nation first. Once you understand the world view, you can then work to choose approaches that are most suited to help address the presenting issue which are reflective of traditional ways of healing or being healthy.
- Consider the family and community in your practice. The community needs to be considered when any capacity building activities aimed at improving overall wellness is involved.
- Offer to use the natural environment in your practice wherever possible. Just being in a forest, near water or around mountains can be very powerful in someone's health and wellness.
- Ask clients about his or her spiritual beliefs and keep an open mind in respect to this subject, as spirituality is a part of holistic wellness for many.
- Understand that professionals must be endorsed by the individual as well as the community. Building authentic and trusting relationships on an individual basis as well as a community basis is central to any holistic wellness endeavor with Carrier people.
- Seek out resources and knowledge holders to help you understand protocols. Don't guess when it comes to cultural practices and protocols; do your homework.
- Consider combining western interventions with Carrier practices wherever possible and in collaboration with knowledge holders.

Tips for Establishing a Trusting Relationship with Carrier People

By Sarah Hein

- Be yourself & genuine, avoid putting on a face that will suit the environment
- Respect the span of silence when communicating with Carrier people
- Laugh with them, our people love humor
- Use visual arts and visual teaching tools, we love to learn with demonstration
- If there is a language barrier, ask for a translator
- Simplify technical terminology and limit use of acronyms; use words that are easy to understand
- Always remember that as First Nation peoples; we are at different stages in our healing, are still in transition and are dealing with our historical fallouts
- Familiarize yourself with some of our traditional teachings and culture
- Be aware of differences in our cultures and develop values around diversity
- Take individual responsibility to address and create an empowering work practice
- Help others to understand our diverse culture
- Embrace practicing cultural humility
- Listen to hear, do not interrupt when others are speaking
- Share intentions and wishes for meetings by opening with a prayer
- Close meetings with a prayer to honor the work you have done and send good wishes for participants.
- Be aware that First Nations people are very observant; they pay close attention to verbal & nonverbal cues