

# Integrating Indigenous Healing Practices into Clinical Mental Health Settings for American Indians



Joseph Gone

Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology

## CURRENT RESEARCH

Engaging with community partners to develop more relevant and effective programs and services

Today, many American Indians experience overwhelming social problems stemming from legacies of conquest and dispossession that have led to unremitting poverty. These problems include mental health inequities such as community epidemics of trauma, addiction, and suicide. And yet, conventional clinical approaches to helping individuals with psychological distress and disability are not well-tailored for American Indian communities. Dr. Joseph Gone, Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan, collaborates with American Indian community partners to develop groundbreaking healthcare interventions that promote psychological wellness and prevent dysfunction for these vulnerable populations in culturally consonant ways. Drawing on indigenous traditional knowledge—especially knowledge stemming from spiritual, ceremonial, and healing practices—Dr. Gone and his research team tackle a host of challenges associated with advancing American Indian well-being in the context of mental health programs and services. By engaging in participatory fashion with knowledgeable and resilient American Indian community partners, he harnesses a versatile interdisciplinary expertise toward the development of innovative, culturally alternative helping approaches that promise to serve these communities with greater relevance and effectiveness.

For example, mainstream mental health services frequently rely on "talk therapy," in which an educated and credentialed professional orchestrates a sequence of one-on-one interpersonal interactions with a vulnerable individual client. Typically the professional is a stranger to the client; the encounter is removed from the routines of everyday life; family and community members are absent...

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## AFFILIATION



University of Michigan

## EDUCATION

- PhD in Clinical-Community Psychology 2001, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## AWARDS

- Fellow of John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, New York, NY, 2014
- Fellow of Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, 2010
- Faculty Visitor as the Katz Family Endowed Chair in Native American Studies, Montana State University, 2014
- Fellow of Association for Psychological Science, 2015
- Fellow of American Psychological Association (Divs. 5, 9, 12, 24, 27, 32, 45), 2013
- and 2 more...

## RESEARCH AREAS

Humanities, Psychology, Poverty & Equality, Neurological / Cognitive

## FUNDING REQUEST

This groundbreaking research is difficult to fund through typical sources of scholarly support. Your contribution will actuate and enhance Dr. Gone's research to promote wellness within American Indian communities. Funds are needed for engaging community stakeholders, hiring local facilitators, recruiting research participants, implementing novel programs, and evaluating positive outcomes. Any amount will help: \$25K for small projects, \$100K for large projects, and \$50K/year for a research coordinator.