

WORKING TOGETHER:
Words of Welcome And Wisdom
From Alaska's Village-Based Counselors



Rural Human Services Program
Interior Aleutians Campus
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INTRODUCTION

It's no secret that turnover in many rural professions is extremely high. In an effort to provide more stability in the human services field, the Rural Human Services (RHS) Program trains local people to work in their own communities. RHS training blends traditional Native values and principles with standard Western counseling practices. Working closely with clinically trained supervisors, village based counselors provide a variety of mental health and substance abuse services in their home communities.

RHS students experience the toll of constant supervisor turnover as well as see the negative effects on the community. Consequently, they are eager for their new colleagues to succeed and enjoy their new jobs. In an effort to help, they wrote the following essays as an assignment in the "Cross-cultural Bridging Skills" class. They addressed the question: "What does someone need to know when they come to work in your community?" They cover a wide range of topics, everything from the weather (don't bring a snow machine to Southeast) to professional conduct, and community protocol. All the authors gave permission for their work to be printed although a few did not want their names published.

It's been an honor for me to work with the RHS students as I hope you will enjoy reading these essays as much as I did.

Janet Schichnes
Assistant Professor, RHS

WELCOME TO “THE ROCK”!
Harry W. Bradley

Dear Counselor,

Welcome to Sitka by the sea, an island community of 9,000 people -- jokingly referred to by the local population as “The Rock.” Sitka has approximately 14 miles of road so having a car isn’t a necessity. There are only two ways to get in and out of Sitka -- by airplane or boat; but I wouldn’t worry about it because the most common complaint I hear about Sitka is the rain; sometimes it rains here for a hundred days in a row or more. Of course the people that have been here awhile hardly notice it and don’t consider it rain until it bounces up off the ground and hits you in the chin.

For a small community Sitka has a lot to offer. I think we have some of the best schools in the country, three high schools and two colleges. If you have children or are pursuing your own education, this would be definite plus for both of you. The local paper has a community calendar that announces events before they happen, such as the Sitka Summer Music Festival, The Monthly Grind, and various cultural events. Someone new to the area will be pleasantly surprised by how much there is to do in the community. For a small community Sitka has many support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, and Adult Children of Alcoholics. If you are an active member of a church there’s more than likely a church here of your religious denomination. For someone in our line of work, it’s important to take care of ourselves.

So I would encourage you to use these resources or any others that you have been practicing before you got here.

As a counselor in a small town, how you conduct yourself on and off the job is important. As you'll find out, you cannot go anywhere in town (or southeast Alaska for that matter) and not run into a former client. As a counselor you will be required to sign a code of ethics. To be effective in a small community such as Sitka, these are the most important rules of conduct you will have to follow. At times it will seem extremely difficult to set boundaries. The best suggestion I can give is to practice self-protective behavior. Don't be alone with a client off the job site. This can be a setup for gossip, and could have a negative reflection on you and your co-workers. Always have your client come to your work place if they need to talk, or call you there to set up an appointment. Be an example to those you serve by doing things that you feel are healthy for you, and encourage your clients to do the same.

This is Tlingit country and has been for 9,000 years, or "since time immemorial", as the elders say. The Tlingit people are divided into two clans -- the Raven and the Eagle. The Tlingit are a matriarchal society meaning that belong to your mother's lineage. To the Tlingit it's very important to know where you come from. When the Tlingit introduces him or herself, they acknowledge their mother's lineage first, then their father's lineage, going back as far as they are able. Protocol is very important to the Tlingit people. When attending a cultural event it is important to know what you are doing so you don't inadvertently insult someone by not following protocol.

You will notice during these cultural events that the Tlingit people are very good orators and it can sometimes take hours before speakers actually get to what they are

there to address. My best advice if you are in this situation is to observe closely what's going on and ask about things you don't understand. One of the best ways I can help you to avoid possible embarrassment is to introduce you to Traditional Southeast Alaska Native Values, written by Dr. Walter Soboleff and adopted by Healthy Nations. These are examples: Be obedient; the wise never test a rule. Respect elders, parents, property, and the world of nature. Respect yourself so that other may respect you. Be considerate and patient. Be careful of how you speak, for words can be either pleasing or like a club. Traditionally, when you speak, those listening can imagine your clan or family line. Your food comes from the land and the sea; to abuse either may diminish their generosity. Use only what is needed. Pride in family, clan, and tradition is found in love, loyalty, and generosity. Share burdens and support each other. This is caring. Don't trespass on the rights of others, or offer royalty and /or restitution. Parents and relatives are responsible for the family and clan. In peace living is better. Through famine, ice age, sickness, war, and other obstacles, unity and self-determination are essential to survival. Good conduct is encouraged to please the Spirit we believe to be near. Have a sense of humor.

Attitude is the most important thing that you can take wherever you go. Try to think positively about what you are doing, regardless of the situation or the negative people we all have to deal with sometimes. If you think positively, you have won the battle before it's even begun. It's also important to realize that sometimes you are just not going to be on right side of the line. The difficulty then becomes a valuable learning experience. My best advice is to be open, honest, and patient with yourself and others.

A lot of what you already may have learned about helping others applies here in Sitka as well. This is not a different country, and the people here are, for the most part, good people. The problems we have here are likely to be very similar to the ones you've experienced in your part of the country. But just like any other place, we do have certain things we do that are unique to this area. To point them all out would take away from these new experiences and I couldn't possibly do them justice until you can either taste, feel, hear, or see what I'd be trying to explain. I wish you were here right now, so you could see what the rain in Sitka is really like!

Just recently, in an exercise called *Bafa-Bafa*, I learned something new about myself. I am not as open-minded or non-judgmental as I thought I was. The exercise called for two groups of people, each group having their own values and beliefs, to try and interact with the other group on an individual basis. What was surprising to me was how the group I was in took on an attitude of superiority and used any and all breaches of protocol to exclude the people who were not from our group. We even devised ways to confuse the outsiders to further separate us from them. But when someone came into the group and followed our protocol, we were more open to letting them in. This exercise helped me to identify some behaviors that I believe are human nature and are important to mention to anyone coming into a new area. It's good to know that some of my values and beliefs just aren't going to fit in with every group of people that I deal with. So it would be very important to try and understand the standards of people I would serve before I make judgments. Do not force your values and beliefs on a person or group. Be aware that some feedback you hear may not be true. People, being people, could exclude you or even try to undermine your position just because you are from a different place. It

will do you credit if you can roll with it and laugh about -- but not ignore it. Learn from it and talk about it if you feel this behavior is hurtful or just plain mean. This would be a good time to set boundaries and confront the person/group on the behavior. It's never easy to be new on the block. I hope this letter will help you make the move a little easier.

Sincerely,

Harry Bradley

SIT BACK AND WATCH

Anonymous

My advice for an outsider entering a village or rural community is to sit back and be an observer of the community before jumping in. I moved to the village almost 4 years ago; I too was once was an outsider, but I was lucky in the fact that my husband is from the community and a big part of the village is related to him. My brother and my niece also lived here at that time and that also was helpful to me in making my adjustment from a big city to a very small community. Because I know what it feels like to be an outsider, I have some experience from which to write this paper. I am writing it for anyone who is going into the rural setting as a counselor or any other helping profession.

The most important thing to do, and I can't emphasize this enough, is to sit back and watch the inner structure of the community. The last thing you want to do when you are new is to step on someone's toes. If you offend one person in the community it tends to spread like wildfire. I have watched this happen on numerous occasions. It easy is to offend a member the community even when the newcomer has only the best intentions. People in small communities take pride in their jobs and the community, and if they feel their role in that community is in jeopardy, due indirectly or directly to the outsider, they will protect themselves with all their heart. My advice is to introduce yourself to people in the community to get yourself seen, but at the same time try to be as little intrusive as possible.

Explain what you are in the community to do. Meet with the ICWA worker, health aid, CHR (community health representative), VRT (village response team), tribal council, suicide prevention coordinator, VPSO, and any other workers in the community that you feel your job may or may not affect (and keep in mind that in a small community it will affect everyone). Find out how you can best work together instead of against each other. Also, it is important to work with these entities so that you can avoid duplicating certain services within the community.

Another thing you can do is to find someone who you can pair up with and who will take you around and introduce you to people. This is very helpful for an outsider. My job description states that as one of my job responsibilities I will help show visiting employees from my agency, and other agencies that are associated with my department, around the community and introduce them to people that can help them do their jobs better. A lot of times I end up driving people around showing them the community and taking them to the tribal council office, school, senior center, and stores to meet people. I also help them to get in touch with the people they are here to see in the first place. Basically, I am the welcoming committee. It is really hard to come into a rural community to do a job when you don't know anybody. The smallest details become very important as you wonder, for example, who is going to pick you up from the airstrip and drive you to where you need to go. We have had visitors come to the community who have not taken care of this small detail in advance. And they end up stranded at the airstrip because they did not think ahead to call someone to let them know that they were

coming and needed a ride. Most people are willing to help if you let them know what you need, and what you expect of them.

When you go to visit someone at his or her home, be courteous and conscious of what is going on in the home. Follow others' examples. Make sure you take off your shoes when entering someone's home. For example, we had a guy fishing for us a few years ago and he never took his shoes off when he came to our house. It drove me nuts! It was almost as if he thought he was so important that he was above taking his shoes off. He caused me extra cleaning that I was struggling to get done anyway. I finally told my husband that it was a privilege for his crew to come to our home and that if this man could not respect my house he was not welcome in it. Another thing that you can do is making sure you take time to talk to the kids. If you win them over, the adults are often more willing to talk with you about why you are there in the first place. It has always seemed to me that the adults have an easier time accepting you if they see that their children do. Also, if you are offered something to eat or drink don't say no; people want to make you feel comfortable.

If you are going to talk the talk, walk the walk. Don't go into the village and try to preach to the people there about what is good and bad and what they should be doing and then go do the same thing yourself that you are telling them not to do. Acknowledge that everyone is human, including you. You have to be very conscientious of where you are going and whom you are going with even in your so-called time off (which you never get in a small community). No matter if you

are on the clock or not you are always held up to the same standards that you would be if you were at work. For an example, this means that if you suspect a person is being abusive to their children you have a responsibility to report that, even if they are related. I feel that being “on” all the time is the hardest part of having a job in the helping profession.

You have to prove yourself to the community; you can't please everyone all the time but you can please some of the people some of the time. This sounds unfair and in a big way it is unfair. People, especially in small communities, are very skeptical of outsiders no matter how good their intentions are.

If you are going to live in a small community and work in the helping profession you will be living your life under a microscope. Every single thing you do or say is going to be watched and talked about no matter if you are doing good things or bad things. People will always criticize you for something you're doing or not doing; what you should be doing or what you shouldn't be doing. Everything that you once held private in your life will be that way no longer. People will talk about who comes and goes from your house at what time, etc.

Someone will always be able to do your job better. This goes with the whole criticism thing. In my experience, in every single job that I have held in the village, some people always thought someone else could always have done better, no matter how good I was doing. People can expect too much from you. I have had people tell me that I should do this activity or that activity for the kids, and although I do value their advice and they have some great ideas, I finally had to

tell these well-meaning people that if they wanted that sort of program started they were going to have to do it themselves. I told them that although I would not mind helping, it was unfair for them to expect me to do everything all the time. I noticed that in the village people will “let” you do everything if you allow them to. That is what causes burn out.

In a small community it is very important to follow the tradition of respecting elders, more so than it is in westernized civilization. When I first moved to the community I noticed that people here respect all of the elders in the community by making sure that they gather enough subsistence foods for the elders who are not able to do so themselves. People also take time to visit their elders and listen to them. I grew up in Seattle and of course I was respectful to my elders, but I never thought much else of it. Here it is different: people make a very conscious and public effort to make sure that the elders are taken care of and respected.

Be available and ready to talk to clients anywhere, at anytime. Most of the clients that I have, or people who just turn to me to listen, either come and see me at home or approach me in the store or on the street or wherever, but it is very rarely in my office or during working hours. I never complain as I figure that if they feel more comfortable doing it that way then it is okay. You do have to set your boundaries, though so if you don't feel comfortable or safe with that you need to let that person know.

I honestly feel the best thing to do when going into a small rural

community is to respect the people that live there and to remember that you are not going to “save” the community. If you are lucky you will make a positive difference in one person’s life. That is my personal goal-- to touch someone’s life in a positive way and to encourage positive change.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

Elizabeth Dalton

Dear “Tom”,

Welcome to Kenai! Since you are new to the area, I thought I would write a letter to you to let you know some things about this area and working with some Native people. Western society teaches to put yourself first. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) also teaches that it is a “selfish” program, meaning the individual shouldn’t let anything get in the way of their sobriety. One of the Native values is family. Many Natives are taught to put family first.

Talking circles and AA meetings are different and but also similar. Generally, AA meetings are one hour or an hour and a half long (“a good meeting starts on time and ends on time”). Talking circles, however, go on until everyone is done talking. This could go on for hours. In “Indian time” it is done when it is done.

Communicating with Native people can also be different. Most (not all) Native people are introverts; they think before they talk. It is more common in Western societies to talk as they think. A lot of Native people are quiet, and for some Native cultures, being quiet is a way of showing respect. If English is a second language, speakers may be a pause between sentences. The speaker may be using this pause to translate from their language to English--so please talk slowly and leave time for pauses. If you jump in and talk too soon, you may be interrupting them. Also, there may be little eye contact with a Native person, because direct eye contact does not feel comfortable for some people.

A good way to start a conversation is “Where are you from?” Not, “ Are you Eskimo, or

Indian? As a Native person, I have made this mistake and have offended people if they are not Eskimo or Indian. Some are also offended if they are called Eskimo. Stick to using Yupik (Chupik) or Inupiat.

Respect is a universal value in all Native cultures. Respect for family, elders, earth, etc. is a way of life. Always let the elders go first in whatever you are doing. Respect yourself, others and the earth.

There are many resources available to help you learn. There are too many books to list, but here are a few suggestions:

Interethnic Communication by Ron Scollon and Suzanne B. K. Scollon

Our Stories, Our Lives by A. J. McClanahan

In the Spirit of the Family developed by the National Native Association of Treatment Directors.

A Gathering of Wisdoms, Tribal Mental Health: A Cultural Perspective by Swinomish Tribal Mental Health Project

If you are interested in a certain topic, please let me know, I will do what I can to help. There are some very knowledgeable people in the area also. If you have questions, Alan Brass Ph.D. at the Kenai Peninsula College is a great resource for information about Alaska Native cultures. There are also very respected elders who are usually happy to share their knowledge about the Dena'ina culture. I also have information available if you would like to look through it.

Sincerely,

Liz

NOT AN EASY JOB
(Anonymous)

I started my job with SEARHC as a community family service worker June 6, 2000, and have found it difficult to work in a small community. I have worked in Ketchikan and Anchorage, with most of my career as a drug and alcohol counselor in Anchorage. What I found at the small town of "Seaview," and the whole Prince of Whales Island is a beautiful place and awesome people. My office is small with no room for much. My clients come to me through assessments for courts, DFYS, and medical referrals. One or two are self-referred. Most of my clients are assessed with alcohol and/or drug abuse to some extent. I offer 12-hour AIS classes for education. I am able to offer outpatient, aftercare treatment and also refer clients to residential treatment when appropriate. We do follow-ups with clients that were discharged after completion and also the ones that didn't complete the program at one month, six months, and one year.

I have been working with my supervisor on each case and I am glad for his support and expertise. I have worked inpatient and aftercare, but have done little assessment in the past. I have to start from the beginning with each client that comes into my office. I do a contact visit and a follow-up assessment. The time it takes to assess/set up new patients is long and in some cases discourages them from their appointments. For a small community with the service free for Natives, I have noticed that the clients are not motivated to continue unless there is some pay-off for them such as getting their license back or completing court requirements. Once in a while I see the difference in the

outpatient client, but very few. But then again, it is too soon to tell where they are because I see them once a week for one hour and then they go home.

Living on this island and in the community of “Seaview,” I know there is little for clients to do as far as sober fun activities that don’t cost a lot of money. There are volleyball games, wrestling, and basketball in the winter, with some bake sales and fundraisers for the kids involved in athletic activities. There is open gym night at the school for the community.

The economy is difficult for families. Jobs are limited and with the logging shutting down there are even fewer jobs. The commercial fishing is suffering; it’s not what it used to be when I lived here when I was 8 years old. The job market is mostly male dominated, with very few women in the job market.

I have found it harder to do referrals than when I worked in Anchorage because there are not a lot of services here. I have used Tlingit and Haida services, churches, and health promotions. The limited resources in the smaller communities make it harder to be creative with helping the population I work with. When I work with the young population it is even more challenging to be creative in drawing up positive and fun things for them to do in the community. I am looking at other alternatives I can use to support sober and drug-free lifestyles.

Most of my clients have grown up here and have lifetime connections, which can be good and bad for each client. The smaller the circle of friends they have the harder it is for the education portion of the counseling session. I work at getting them to understand a new language of healing and to look at a bigger picture of a life than that of drugs and alcohol.

Some of my clients come from dysfunctional family systems that are toxic and don't support growth of any kind. When I make a treatment plan, I try to help the client see them self making healthier choices in regards to each area of their lives in their community. This can mean a change in environment, friends, family, employment, social, community, or recreational activities,

The Prince of Whales is a lovely place, where in the summer months there is a lot of berry picking, fishing and boating; also families come to visit and some go on vacations. There are caves to explore, as well as trails to hike. More outdoor activities are done this time of year.

The island is a good place to learn how to put up fish and greens, and make jams and jellies. Families help each other out here: if you want to, you can learn how to prepare foods that are gathered here in the summer and early fall. If you have a boat or know someone that does who will take you out fishing or just to get out on the water, it is great place to be.

The totems are beautiful, the scenery is wonderful, and there are roads for taking drives to other communities on the Prince of Whale Island. People are friendly and great to get to know, but this is a small place and I find that people either like counselors or they don't. This could be a challenge as it's a strain on the counselor-client relationship even before it begins. I feel that the counselor for drug and alcohol clients is on the front line in a small community because the word of mouth is spread so rapidly here. When dealing with people you have to have the support of other counselors and professionals such as supervisors that you can bounce off ideas or viewpoints when looking at patient

issues and treatment plans. The feedback helps when you have a supervisor who is familiar with the case from the beginning and throughout the entire process.

I do have new respect for those who don't have their immediate supervisor in the same town and building because it can get to be overwhelming without support and guidance on some of the new cases that a counselor is presented with. The chart work is, as you in the field know, always changing, up dating to new and more effective information gathering, and paper-work processes. Client charting is a constant process.

I do find that people in the clinic are friendly and helpful. There is a lot to do for recreation and a social life if you have connections in the communities. My family is very connected in these communities on Prince William Island, so it has been easy for me to meet people and renew acquaintances with family friends.

However, the family systems are closed for the most part; families stick together and look after each other in any hardship. When I first arrived here there was a trailer fire and a little girl died as a result. The communities formed a fundraiser and quickly raised a lot of money for the family. It touched my heart to watch it happen. The whole community came together for this. I had never seen this before in any other community that I had lived in.

I have respect for the communities on the Prince of Whales Island because of the hardship they go through due to the economy, and the difficulties the families go through to put up food for the winter months. I find this way of life a great experience. I also see that the young generations are not so interested in gathering food and helping put up food. This all takes time and patience.

The client load lessens in the summer months due to most of the jobs opening up in the spring and lasting into the early fall months. So when scheduling clients for appointments you have to be creative and flexible and work with each client. The client caseload is mainly from district court and DFYS. Clients' ages are from 15 on up. Meeting the magistrate and DFYS case worker helps for court referrals. We do have another program for drugs and alcohol on the Island; it is located in Craig the name of the agency is COHO, and I have in the past referred clients to them and have gotten referrals from them.

If you are new to the field, I would recommend that you work closely with your supervisor and get a lot of training. It is not an easy to work in a small community where there is little in the way of resources and challenges with confidentiality. Negotiating a working relationship with your client is an on going process. Sometimes the client is not making any progress in the Outpatient setting and needs a referral to a residential program.

The local extended family systems have been here since time immemorial and it is imperative to acknowledge their importance in the counseling process. In respecting each individual that walks through the door, you have to do a good assessment and make the right treatment recommendations based on the information gathered.

In ending I would like to stress that each counselor who wants to work in a small community should know their own culture, beliefs, and values. It is always good to start at where the client is in his/her understand of where they see themselves, and acknowledge and growth in each client going through the healing process

ONE STEP AT A TIME

Alice Flood

Well, people coming to work as a counselor in our village would be very interesting because as a community we find it very challenging to accept a newcomer. I know it may be scary for new person because they would not know what to expect or whether or not they will be accepted as part of the community.

The number one rule is to be yourself. Introduce yourself and be kind, but never push yourself on anyone. It takes time and effort in a village where everyone else already knows everyone. Even after people know your name, we don't know you personally. My advice would be to make sure you know what you are doing. You should never get involved with anyone's family affairs. In other words, you as a counselor need to mind your own business. Let the community get to see how you handle yourself -- not to prove yourself, but to let them realize who they are dealing with.

Someone should take you around and introduce you to everyone. Show respect for how each one lives. Have respect for each one's privacy. You need to have lots of patience. Remember you are new to everyone. They will expect you to give up or give in. Some of the people may accept you or they may be prejudiced. Things may look good but then again, things get bad too at times. It's like teaching a baby to crawl or walk. Take it one step at a time.

There will be some sober and some intoxicated people, even teenagers and small children. You need to recognize who they are but let it be because you need to let them come to you. You can never come to them. They will be in denial. Never talk to a drunk person; they will never let up. People on drugs are even harder to talk to. Their minds

are numb and they cannot think straight. Make yourself available when someone is ready to talk to you as a counselor. Get to know how it all works. The community will watch your every move.

As for me it isn't easy for me to be a counselor in my own community. The people have known me all their lives. I do have to make myself aware of how they accept me. It's very challenging, but all it takes is one day at a time.

Thanks,

Alice Flood

STAY AND VISIT

Marsha Jerue

Dear “Dan”,

I want to welcome you to our village of Anvik. About one hundred people live here. We have two stores, a post office, a school, and a city building where we have upstairs and downstairs area we use for gatherings such as potluck and the Thanksgiving feast. Upstairs there are also four offices for our secretary, the VPO, and myself. I will be working with you.

We are mainly Athabaskan in our village. We don't have many elders left that speak our language so it's not being passed down to our children. Our most important cultural value is our subsistence way of living. We go out by boat or snow machine to hunt moose, geese, and ducks. We also go by boat to get fish to cut and dry or put in freezers for the winter. We also gather berries to freeze or to make jam for winter.

If you come when someone dies we will want you to be with the family and friends. We keep the body one night at the family's home. Stay as long as you can and leave when you get tired. There is always someone cooking, and they may have low music on. We move the body down to the city building for two more days. People from other villages come. There's always food, and people play cards and visit with each other. There are prayers, singing gospel songs, and on the last night there is a big potluck when people cook. The grieving family is the first one to bring their food and the things they will give away to people, such as socks, gloves, candy, and gum. The next day they bring the body to the church and have the funeral.

When you travel here, we would like you to stay for four or five days and visit the people. Most of the people don't ever see an outside counselor in their homes. The counselors come and stay for one or two nights at the school or the tribal building. They only see who they have to see and then leave. You are welcome to visit the homes; most will give you coffee or tea and invite you to eat. The people here are open and like to get to know a new person who comes to the village.

It's good to go to the school and get to know the children too. As for self-care, you can go for walks, read, or watch TV and we also have a library at the school where you can borrow books. Don't be shy about asking a person what he is doing and how they do it because they will tell you. For support, people will give you a ride to the store or wherever you want to go. You can call my husband or me to visit you.

Sincerely,

Marsha Jerue

‘VALUE-ABLE’ ADVISE
Lorraine Kasko

Even though Haines is a diverse community, I believe that these Native values apply to most people that live in this area. These are some of the important values: Respect self and others; be considerate. Be careful how you speak (not harmful); do not abuse land or sea (it feeds us), use only what you need. Take pride in family, clan, and traditions. Share burdens and give support. Do not trespass on others’ rights. Parents and relatives are responsible for teaching children. Care and good health are important for the success of person and clan. Do not take property of others. Good conduct is encouraged. Live in peace together. Have a sense of humor.

Haines has hired from “Outside” before, so this is not new to the community. To be successful you need to become part of the community and to know some of its history. This may be helpful in working with clients.

Historically, Chilkat Valley is Tlingit territory. The people here are known for their trading. In 1879 the Natives invited the Presbyterian Church to pick an area for a mission. The area they picked was known as “Dei Shu”, which means “end of the trail”. In 1880 a trading post was added on to the mission. The Russians and the Hudson Bay people were not permitted to set up trading posts in this area. In 1881 the arrival of the minister and his teacher wife marked the beginning of the town that developed around it. In 1903 Fort Wm. H. Seward was built. In 1921 the mission became an orphanage. Commercial fishing is still done in the area, though the fish cannery is no longer operating. The logging industry used to keep the valley going, but now very little is done

and the mills have closed. Subsistence hunting and fishing is still a way of life for many of the residents. The tourism industry is growing in the area, bringing in work, at least seasonally, to the valley. Today, there are many churches in the area. Though the fort has some original buildings it is not, at this time, an army post.

An important point of clarification needs to be made. Haines and Klukwan are two separate communities and need to be acknowledged as such. Skagway residents also benefit from the SEARHC-CFSW Substance Abuse Program in Haines.

The Haines community is familiar with Mental Health (MH) and Substance Abuse (SA) counseling. Two different agencies are available. SEARHC provides both types of services, and Lynn Canal Counseling (LCC) provides MH for the Haines and Skagway areas. Although Klukwan is close to Haines, they have their own counselor through SEARHC.

These are some barriers to effective counseling in the area. There are non-verbal signals. When speaking with Native elders do not expect to make direct eye contact; this is considered rude. The language itself should not be a problem, as most speak English as their main language. (Tlingit language classes are sometimes available to the public.) Another non-verbal barrier is silence. Do not feel you have to fill the void. If you ask a question, make sure you give people time to formulate an answer before moving on! If you don't, they will think you really don't want to listen.

A suggestion that I have for a new counselor or supervisor is to meet people that we come in contact with through referrals and client care. These are the magistrate, the city police (Haines and Skagway), state troopers, Department of Family and Youth Services, the medical clinic (also a SEARHC agency), Tlingit and Haida Social Services,

the Chilkoot Indian Association (CIA) and the Chilkat Indian Village (CIV)(especially Tribal Services), Skaqua Traditional Council (STC), the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) and Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANS) in both communities, school principals and counselors, the public health nurse, and the LCC counselor. It is important to know what is available for support (for self and clients) in all communities.

It is important to be “seen” in the community, so it may be important to participate in some activities. It may be a good idea, however, to avoid the local politics. Remember, Haines is a diverse society! Because of the Native population in all three communities, it will be important to know the values and traditions. An example would be that a Native funeral is not like most “Outside”. When a person dies, a whole series of events happen throughout the following year. The funeral itself usually has two separate services, one at the church and then the ANB or ANS service. It is important for you to know if you lose a Native client and want to pay your respect.

Practicing self-care is important in our work. You need to know yourself, what things help you rejuvenate, what relaxes you, what drains you. There are many things available in the community. If you like to exercise, there is open gym at the high school and some exercise equipment at the medical clinic basement. Sports are also available; i.e., cross-country skiing in the winter, and basketball. There are lots of roads and paths if you are into walking or jogging. If you do crafts, there are different groups available. There are also support groups available i.e., talking circles, AA meetings, parent support groups, and a singles support group. There are also game groups that play chess and “hand and foot”!

COUNSELING ETIQUETTE

Sonny Gardiner

As counselor you might be thinking about what might be different or the same in new job in Dillingham. You might be wondering if the work etiquette is the same as in larger cities. Knowing mistakes to avoid, teaching the taught, and giving advice are all things Dillingham counselors should know.

Larger cities are known for being up to speed on work etiquette, but are we in Dillingham? Movies that you watch tell of big city counselors with perfect manners, but have you seen a small city or even a village in one of the movies? How about a big city phonebook with pages of counselors just for your picking, and not just the one or two in Dillingham ordered by the court. Dillingham is a town of about three thousand people in the wintertime, which can seem quite small if you are used to a larger city. You might think that the etiquette would be the same as in a bigger place, but in Dillingham it is actually quite different. You know everyone so you're on more of a personal basis instead of a professional basis. Can it be changed? I would hope not. If you ever just need to talk to your mom to get over a problem, or even to your best friend, that's what it's like in Dillingham. The thing is, the best friend or mom has a little bit of a handle on just how to help you get over your problem. Who would you rather be telling your life story to, a total stranger who swears confidentiality or your best friend who already has an idea of what's going on?

There are many mistakes that can be made in the field of counseling, and you should know what these mistakes are and how can you avoid them. Do you ever want someone to just to listen to you -- your husband or wife or even your children?

Sometimes that's all a person really needs or wants. Listening is the main key of counseling. Do you learn about your client and then assist them with their problem or do you interrupt them by answering your phone, making yourself a cup of coffee, or being more intent on your notes than on your listening skills? How about looking at the clock every few minutes? These are things that really need to be avoided in any counseling situation. You may want to learn shorthand note taking, keep your phone or beeper turned off, have your coffee already beside you or do not drink it at all, and be attentive at all times.

If you move into a village and want to be counselor, you need to know their culture. Learn it because you will have to know traditions. It helps to learn the language because not only English-speaking people need help with their problems. In Dillingham and surrounding villages, there are some people who only speak Yupik. Some understand English but most do not and will not learn it because of the belief of the ancestors. You may be able to team up with a Yupik speaker.

Have you ever gone through a crisis in life and started telling a friend or an acquaintance what happened; you are really upset and crying, your life seems to be going around in circles, and all that person has to say is "I understand it happened to me once". You want to just strangle them, because there is no way they could have just gone through what you went through. They're just saying it to shut you up or try to make you feel better. That is a very big mistake that anyone could make. Avoiding it is just as easy. Let yourself or even a friend know when they come to you with a crisis or problem that nobody else has ever been through what another person has gone through. Each person reacts differently to a problem. One person can be driving down the road, hit a piece of

ice, and start crying and not want to drive ever again, while a second person could hit the same piece of ice, shrug his shoulders, and be on his way like nothing ever happened. Here were two people in the same situation but with different reactions. Now, can you really say you went through the same thing? No, you were just in the same situation.

When you walk into a hospital, bank, or even a counseling office, what do you expect them to look like -- prim and proper, rags and holes, or even jeans and a T-shirt? Should they dress professionally out of work as well as in work? I believe not. At work dress professionally but once you are clocked out, you can dress in a more casual manner. However, you are in a field where you are highly respected by your clients and they may lose some of that respect if they see you in rags and holes.

Imagine I'm your boss and that I see some of the mistakes mentioned above being made. How could I teach you not to make that mistake again? Can an old dog be taught new tricks or is the saying true? First off, I would try talking to you, to explain the surrounding culture if you did not know it already, and then if you didn't try to change, I would get you together with some of the English-speaking and to have them explain in detail what you might want to do to fix the mistakes. Of course, I would be open to any kind of suggestions that you have to offer.

Some of the advice that I could give to the counselors in Dillingham or even surrounding areas is that they should counsel, as they would want to be counseled. I would let them know that one day they could be getting the help and would like the same things as the clients that they were just counseling wanted: the utmost respect in all aspects. I would also tell them that even if a client is just making your day worse or if you woke up on the wrong side of the bed, all personal emotions must still be kept out of

view of the client. They're having a rough time in their life, and seeing you act like their life is not important only makes the problem worse.

There are not very many supports for counselors in Dillingham that I know of. Your bosses, friends, or even co-workers can help support you. I believe a good day of rest and a short conversation with a friend or family member is all the support a person needs to get through a rough day at work. Dillingham and the surrounding communities should expect all counselors to be professional, to know their jobs, and to be able to help with any problems they may have or to at least find someone else that can help. Not all counselors can help in every problem. They can only try, and if they can't help, it doesn't hurt to refer clients to someone they think can do better in that situation. People should expect counselors to be kind in and out of work and to live their life as they are trying to help their clients do. You should never tell someone not to drink and drive and the next day be listed in the newspaper for DWI. Don't say smoking can cause cancer and after then the client leaves, light up a cigarette. The client will always find out and then the trust of the client and the community will be broken.

As a person trying to go into the field of counseling, I believe Dillingham would make a wonderful place to start. Mistakes can be made and apologies can be accepted; it's a place where I can learn from friends and go further into the field if I want to. Given the chance, I would step into the shoes of the client, wouldn't you?

COMMUNITY PROTOCOL

Sharon McIndoo, Angoon

Dear New Counselor,

First of all I would like to welcome you to our community and congratulate you on your new job. I thought it might be nice to clue you in on the protocol of the community.

Moving to another community can be a little scary, especially if you do not know anybody. It is my intention to give you a little insight into your town. Angoon is a Tlingit community although we do have quite a mix of people. There are Aleut, Athabascan, Japanese, and Mexican mix as well as non-Native and African American. There are two major tribes in the community, the Eagles and the Ravens. Opposite clans marry; one Raven is not supposed to marry another Raven because they are considered brothers or sisters. For the same reason, an Eagle should not marry an Eagle.

We are a matriarchal society; we belong to our mother's clan and tribe. For instance, my mother is of the Raven deity and her clan is the Beaver. All her children are Raven/Beaver. The Tlingit name for this is Deishitaan (Dei she tawn). This town is of the Deishitaan; it was the Deishitaan that founded this community. When you land at the airplane float there is a sign that says, "The Deishitaan welcome you to our community"

We have a subsistence type of lifestyle; during the summer you can usually see the waters outside our community scattered with fishing boats. As you walk alongside the road you might spot some women with coffee cans draped around their necks and wearing handkerchiefs on their heads picking berries. We have salmonberries, blueberries, and huckleberries.

We gather food for our own consumption and for fall “pay-off parties.” There are a couple types of parties that happen in our community. When there is a death in the community, depending on the tribe of the person who passed away, the opposite tribe takes care of the financial aspect. I’ll give you an example. If an Eagle person dies, the Ravens would set up the hall or the church where they were going to keep the body. They would also provide sandwiches, cookies, cake, and coffee for the people sitting up with the body. The body is never left alone -- the opposite tribe is constantly with the deceased. The pallbearers would be from the opposite tribe also.

This ensures that the grieving family will not have to be concerned about any minor details, and will have time to grieve. After the memorial and funeral services the Eagles would have a party for the Ravens to thank them for being with them in their time of need. This is called the “thank you party”.

The next party would be 40 days after the person has died. This party is given by the family, so the Eagles would be feeding the Ravens and paying them for all their assistance during their time of grief. These parties usually go all night long; they include of lots of Native food, and every table is set with pop, fruit, and candy. During the evening they usually have at least a couple of meals throughout the night. The Eagles would give money to the elders of the Ravens who sit on chairs around the room. They give as much money as they want, but it is usually a dollar to every Raven. The Ravens keep track of the names of the people who give money to them, and the amount, and at the end of the evening they stand up to thank all the Eagles who gave to them. At this time they say their English name and their Tlingit name. All the money is counted by the

bankers and distributed to the Ravens sitting at the tables. There are many stories told throughout the night, as well as singing and dancing and sometimes entertainment.

The 40 -day party is held because it is believed in our culture that the spirit of the deceased stays around for 40 days after they have passed on. It is our time to say goodbye to them as they go on to the spirit world. I find it interesting that in the Bible, Jesus was around for 40 days after he was resurrected. The elders have told me that this is where the 40 -day party originated from-- the Bible. That is something that I just learned myself!

A year after the person died we have a “pay off party”. During the year we gather food, blankets, towels and other gifts to give to the tribe that helped us in our time of need. We pay all from the opposite tribe who dug the grave, carried flowers, arranged services, and fed the people. This is usually the biggest party of all, and this is also when the elders can adopt other people into our tribe. At this party Tlingit names are given to the younger generation and the deceased Tlingit name is given to a family member of the same tribe. Fall is when a majority of these parties happen, so from August-December is busy with pay-off parties. These parties are usually arranged a year after the person has died, although it can be done at a later time if the family needs to gather more gifts.

Our community is really into basketball. If it has to do with basketball it’s important. We take a lot of pride in our high school basketball teams. Basketball games are usually packed.

We have what is called “Indian time”. If an event that is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., for example, you can be pretty sure that people will not arrive until an hour and half

later. (Unless it is a school-sponsored event; those run on time no matter what.) No one is quite sure how this phenomenon started; there are several stories if you ask the elders. I think it would be safe to say that if you are “in” with the elders you will be well on your way into being accepted in the community. Spending time with the elders is always a good idea. It shows that you not only have respect for the elders, but that you also cared enough about wanting to know about the community to consult the elders.

Another suggestion would be to go to as many parties as possible, because it shows that you are concerned about families as well as the community itself. It also shows that you care about the community.

Our people, especially the elders, like to tease and joke around a lot. Being able to take a joke or joke back is essential. I’ve heard it said that if they joke around a lot with you, they like you.

If you are expecting quick answers from anyone, especially our men, it will not happen. We take our time and think about what we are going to say before we say it. There may be some quiet time before an answer; it might take you some time before you are comfortable with this silence. Of course there are exceptions to this rule. Most of the older people are not so quick to answer as the younger generation.

We are all related to each other one way or another, whether it is through marriage or blood relation. I am still learning all my relatives and how we are related to each other. Just the other day I learned how I was related to one of our elders through my great-great-grandfather. My great-great-grandfather was a brother to their father.

Our weather is usually pretty mild; we have a lot of rain. We do not usually have a lot of snow; so don’t plan on bringing your snowmobile or cross-country skis.

We live on an island called “Admiralty Island.” The Tlingit name of it is “Kootznoowoo” which means “Fortress of Bears.” We have a rather large bear population, so I encourage you to learn as much as you can about taking precautions.

The scenery is beautiful: we are surrounded by water and majestic mountains. Eagles are everywhere! A variety of whales can be seen in front of the community in the summer, and this usually includes killer whales and humpbacks. There are regular science boats that come out in the summer to study whales.

There is a web site on the Internet that will give you information about our community under “I Love Alaska.com”

If there are questions that you would like to ask, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely

Sharon A. McIndoo
Community Family Service Worker

A FEW THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE I LEAVE....
Norma Paranteau

Dear New Counselor,

Our personnel department has just notified me that you have been hired as my replacement. I welcome you to Kodiak Island and am looking forward to meeting you. I will be leaving the Island the day after you arrive, so our time together will be short. I thought that I might be able to give you some insight into what I have experienced in this position. This may make your job just a little bit easier.

I understand that this will be your first time working with Alaska Natives. It was mine also. When I accepted this position, it was my very first job as a counselor. It took a few months to discover that I had a lot to learn. The books do not cover everything. I found that the Natives on this Island are slow to accept strangers, so in order to be more knowledgeable about what goes on in the community; I've spent a lot of time at the library. I went back a year or two in the local newspaper to get an idea what type of social events are important here and who participates. I really had a hard time pronouncing the clients' names. Stephan Glutov, a Russian explorer, discovered the Kodiak Islands in 1763, and Kodiak became Russian Alaska's first capital. Because of the Russian influence, most of the last names have a lot of 'v' and 'f' sounds in them. Seeing the names in the newspapers gave me some idea of what they were saying when they told me their names!

In my research of the newspapers, I found that the Natives stay close to their immediate families. Their children and grandchildren are very special to them and they all turn out in mass for school events and community functions if they have a relative participating or being honored. I attend as many of the functions as I have time for. Also, attending the funerals of clients' families is a way to show that you care.

Be patient when you arrive here; you will soon learn that this trait is necessary in this line of work.. I was very nervous when I met my first few (more like a dozen!) clients. I would talk, then stop and give them a few seconds to respond, and when they didn't, I would start talking again. They never did get around to talking until they told me thank you and left. I discovered that I had to give them time. I learned to wait and then if

they wouldn't respond, rephrase the comment or question. I found they would respond if they understood what I had said and if I gave them time. I was talking too fast and not giving them time to process what I had said.

I developed a thought process for myself, where I would put myself in their shoes, and then speak in a way that would make me feel comfortable if it was the first time I was meeting with a counselor. I still need to be reminded to do this so I hung a plaque on my wall that says, "Oh, Great Spirit, help me always to remember that when my brother does not keep step with me, perhaps he steps to the beat of a different drummer." This also helps with tolerance.

Also (here comes patience again) if you interrupt your client when they have not finished speaking, they will be very offended and take it personally. I keep my radio playing very low so the silence isn't so noticeable (for me, the impatient one) while I wait for them to speak.

Confidentiality is a constant challenge here. You will soon learn that many of your clients and co-workers are related. I close my office door when I'm on the telephone with a client and also when they are in my office. When I see them in the building or at the market, I will acknowledge them but never set appointments or discuss anything that is related to the professional relationship I have with them. For example, my son attends a few classes at the community college with one of my clients. She freely discusses with him, her association with me, but he cannot tell her that I am his mother. I, in turn, cannot discuss anything about her with him.

I have developed a list of community resources that I use regularly, with the name of a contact person at each organization. I have gotten to know most of the people that work for these organizations and recommend that you try to do that when you have the time. In order to get to know them, I volunteered my time whenever they needed help. If you don't have time for that, just stopping by their office and introducing yourself will work. They are very receptive. Now, when I needed support or assistance with a client, I have contacts. In fact, some of them have become close personal friends.

You will probably find yourself spending a lot of time with clients that just drop by. I find that this open door policy is necessary and the clients are often more comfortable with you when they see that you will always take time to talk to them.

After a few months, some of your clients may bring you Native food. It is important to accept graciously. I have tried many of the Native dishes, and some are ok. Anything I can't identify, I will take home. I have learned to say thank you in the Native language, and also a few other words and phrases. Once the client is comfortable with you, they are more than happy to help you with pronunciation and proper usage of their language. If you make mistakes, they love it when you laugh at yourself. The Natives have a great sense of humor.

I hope this letter will be of some help to you. What I have discovered about being a counselor in this area is that if I begin each day with the understanding that I will face challenges, experience disappointments, and once in awhile, see the results of my work, I feel I have done ok. The "results," big or small, have made my days here worthwhile.

Sincerely,

Norma Paranteau

INTRODUCTION TO THE VILLAGE

Judy M. Simeonoff

Akhiok has had a sobriety movement here for thirteen years now. Each year or two there are a few more people who are sobering up. Some have to sober up due to court rulings. Others change because of the possibility of losing their children. So sometimes the movement towards sobriety isn't because they want it but because of court reasons. Most who have sobered up are still sober because they really want it. They struggle daily to stay sober. So, as a helping professional, when you are out here visiting the people of Akhiok, you might just check in with them to see how they really are doing. Most of the people who are sober are trusting. Those who aren't sober are silent, watchful, and very distrustful. When I see them sober I let them know how great it is to see them out and about.

Get to know the people better. Talk to them when you pass them on the street/roads. The people are very interested in who you are and what you might be doing in the community. By stopping and talking to them, you become better known to the people. They in turn get to know you as well. When your traveling to the village, find someone you know and have them introduce you to the community, and don't hesitate to introduce yourself. The people of our community like a change. Sometimes meeting employees new to the area is new and exciting to them. Express who you are and what you do, and they may want to come to you for help one day. Once the people get to know you better, they'll get used to your traveling to the village and will seek you out when they need you or your advice.

Most Native people have been taught not to have constant eye contact. This is considered very disrespectful, especially if done to the elders. You'll notice people will look at you but they won't have constant contact with their eyes. We have been taught at a very young age not to look at our elders while they are speaking. If we do, we are disrespecting them. Underlying this behavior is that when we do have constant contact, we are attracted to you. Watch the eyes. When they say "no", their eyes move from side to side. If they say "yes" the eyebrows will lift up and down more than once. This doesn't mean they're flirting with you. It means "yes" in Aleut. If you understand this from the

start, you will begin to gain new friends in the people around you. In the past, the elders brought all the people together to tell them stories about what they wanted them to learn at the time. The people brought projects they were working on to distract their eyes from the elders. If they hit a subject that affects certain people or it seemed like they were the ones being talked to, they had an outlet to keep others from seeing that they were the ones being talked to. I might have art projects planned and have talks during that time.

We are very smart people. So don't repeat yourself over and over again. People will get bored with you and you'll lose them. Have a well-thought-out subject you want to talk about with them. Watch the audience for any clues that a person might have something bothering them. Speak to them before you leave the village. Make a point to check on them or have the health aide check on them, or the community health representative to do a follow-up if you can not do so yourself. Remember to always respect the people. In doing so you might get the respect you need from them as well. If you are having a talk about a tough subject, make plans to stay longer if you find people need more time and attention as a result of the subject you have raised. Don't leave it all up to those of us who are here in the village, with an already full day's work ahead of us. When you have a special topic discussion with the community ask them what they might want the next time you come out to the village. In doing this you build the trust of the community that you will be coming back. If you are unable to return to the village, make sure you train the next person who's coming out so they will know what your last subject was and what your next subject would have been. Then they will have some idea what the community wants. When you start to build trust in a community try to keep it, even if you have to leave. Give the person who's taking your place a chance to keep that trust with the community. It is hard work to build trust where someone has disregarded it in the past.

As I stated in the beginning, Akhiok is a new community in alcohol recovery. The efforts that have been made are happening because people care about our community. They really want to help. There are a lot of sober hurting people here. Look at them, see their pain, help them to overcome that pain, and do it in a trusting way.

Be careful you are not talking to someone who is still using. Don't stay things like, "Did you see the Blue Ice, that got off the plane?" Who you are saying that to makes

a big difference, too. It might be their relative you are talking about. Don't assume we are all sober in our families because you might be the one to say something to trigger the reason for them to go back to drinking. If they hear you, you've hurt them even more. They wouldn't want to come to you for help in the future, as you've already hurt them. I'm an alcoholic in recovery. I didn't get sober because of the hurtful things said to or about me. I got sober because people loved me into the program. They were the ones who really saw that I had a disease and helped me to overcome that disease. They weren't the ones who kept me in my disease. They weren't the ones who said, "Look at all the Blue Ice that got off the plane." They were the ones who put an arm around me, hugged me, and said, "It's nice to see you out and about." They loved me into sobriety and I'm still here today because of that love. So love someone else into becoming sober. Don't make them feel any worse than they already do.

It bothers me that people who come out to the village all want to come at one time. They don't try to call you and tell you they plan to come out two or three weeks in advance they call you two days before arriving. Then I have to tell them it won't work for me as I'm already working with another group of people during that time and can't work with them. They're not too happy to hear this and sometimes want to argue. Why can't the employees who are traveling to the villages have a schedule for everyone else in the office to see so they don't travel the same days as someone else? Make sure you check in with me if you plan on seeing me when you come out as I might not be there or I am doing other projects in my community that will take up all of my time.

KAKE: THE SWEETEST TOWN IN ALASKA
Jada Katherine Smith

Dear Counselor;

Welcome to the Southeast Regional Health Corporation, where you will be working in Kake, the sweetest town in Alaska. We have been without a counselor for a long time and we are glad to have you in this position. I have been assigned not only to welcome you but to let you know the policies and procedures that are part of the job.

1. Our number one rule is to do NO HARM, physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually.
2. All our work is confidential. Clients need to sign a release if we are to share information with anyone. Not even families can get information unless the client says so. However, if the client informs us of intent to harm self or others, or we know of sexual abuse, then we are mandated to report to the proper authorities.
3. Native preference is desired, but there will be no discrimination. We serve all people. The main beneficiaries are the Native people of the village. Others are served also, but are charged on a sliding fee scale.
4. Our job description states that the mission of the Community Family Services worker is to provide quality, compassionate, and competent behavioral health services to all clients and their families, while maintaining respect, client confidentiality, and empowerment.
5. We also provide education, prevention, and intervention.
6. We provide mental health services and are also state-certified alcohol and drug counselors.
7. We act as keepers of the Peacemaking circle, do the facilitation, and keep the records up to date.
8. We work with Women, Infant and Children, WIC, state programs.
9. We provide information and do referrals for walk-in community members.
10. Be on call for suicide attempts. Respond with the EMS in the village. We are also certified Emergency Trained Technicians, which means we are first responders.
11. Work with the elders, shut-ins and the disabled people of the community.
12. Work with the other resource organizations in the community to be sure that all our clients are getting the best possible services.
13. Do referrals to the Kake clinic and Mt. Edgecumbe doctors as needed. Refer clients to treatment centers throughout the state.

We are known throughout the state and the community as providers who are

clean and sober. This is important to your work if you are to be respected and trusted by clients.

If you really want to validate your work in the community it is important for you to go out and make yourself known and get acquainted with the key people in the community as soon as possible. Get to know them. Be a part of their activities; be known as a willing volunteer, and attend their school activities, potlatches, and council meetings. You will know very soon who the leaders are, they are the prominent people in the community, such as the mayor, the city council, the staff at the school, the staff at the Organized Village of Kake, the elders, and the tribal corporation offices, as well as the pastors of the churches. The Peacemaking Circle's core group is known as the Healing Heart Committee. This is where you will meet the powerful leaders of the village. This will all be brand new and will be explained to you when you attend the meetings. You will meet many of these people as you get around town with your daily activities in this job. You will notice that our people have a choice between regular court or the Peacemaking Circle.

You will do all right in our community as long as you do not become a part of the groups that gossip. you will soon know who they are also. I will tell you right now that I do not have any particular groups of people who I am in a "clique" with, because I do not want people saying about me that "there she goes again, telling her best friends everything that goes on in her office." The only friends I have are outside of the community, or my family.

I wish you luck and hope that you will be happy in our village. Please come to me with any questions that you may have, as I am always willing to help you.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Each region has a wealth of specific materials, here are a few suggestions for general background.

Books

Authentic Alaska: Voices of Its Native Writers. Susan B. Andrews and John Creed, Eds. University of Nebraska Press. 1998

A Gathering of Wisdoms, Tribal Mental Health: A Cultural Perspective. Swinomish Tribal Mental Health Project. 1995

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