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Research on Social Work Practice 2007; 17; 296

DOI: 10.1177/1049731506296161

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Developing Spiritual Lifemaps as a Culture-Centered Pictorial Instrument for Spiritual Assessments With Native American Clients

Gordon E. Limb

Brigham Young University

David R. Hodge

Arizona State University, West Campus

This study represents an initial step at giving social work practitioners an important assessment tool as they seek to provide culturally competent services to Native American clients. For the current study, a spiritual lifemap assessment tool was modified by the authors for a Native American cultural context. To determine the relevancy and consistency of utilizing the modified assessment tool with Native American clients, 50 Native American experts reviewed, rated, and gave feedback on its use. Results showed that spiritual lifemaps were generally consistent with Native American culture and, if used properly, could be very beneficial in working with Native Americans.

Keywords: spirituality; Native Americans; cultural competence; lifemaps; American Indians

Spirituality and religion are important dimensions of existence for many people and can be powerful resources in helping them achieve well-being and deal with life's challenges (Cross, 2001; Frame, 2003; Thayne, 1998). Furthermore, many clients desire to have their spiritual belief systems integrated into the therapeutic process (Richards & Bergin, 2005). Reviews of studies on spirituality and religion have found a generally positive association between the two on a number of positive mental health outcomes (Johnson, 2002; Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001; Pargament, 1997).

As a result, an increasing number of social workers have called for the reintegration of spirituality into the therapeutic dialogue (Bullis, 1996; Hodge, 2005; Jacobs, 1997; Rey, 1997; Van Hook, Hugen, & Aguilar, 2001). For example, the National Association of Social Workers's (2001) standards for cultural competence in social work practice has stressed the role of spiritual competence in effective practice, and spiritual assessments are now required in many hospitals, home care organizations, addiction programs, and other mental health organizations

(Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, 2001).

Although there has been progress in this area recently, studies continue to find that most social workers have received little training on how to assess or tap into their clients' spiritual strengths (Canda & Furman, 1999; Murdock, 2004). Although Derezotes (1995) found that most social workers expressed a desire to learn more about spirituality, Sheridan and Amato-von Hemert (1999) reported that two thirds of students, more than 80% of faculty, and almost 90% of current practitioners were never or rarely exposed to content on spirituality or religion in their graduate programs.

Although the lack of training in addressing spirituality is problematic to the social work profession generally, it is even more pronounced when dealing with specific racial/ethnic and religious subgroups—the populations for whom spirituality typically is most critical (Gallup & Castelli, 1989). Of particular interest for this article is how to incorporate spirituality into therapeutic settings with Native Americans. Because specific spiritual beliefs, practices, and ceremonies vary among Native Americans, few studies have attempted to tap into this vital resource—or what Cross (2001) calls the cornerstone of existence for Native people.

Although a number of works stress the importance of spirituality when working with Native Americans (e.g., Brave Heart, 2001; Cross, 2001; Trujillo, 2000;

Authors' Note: Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Gordon E. Limb, PhD, School of Social Work, Brigham Young University, 2173 JFSB, Provo, UT 84602; e-mail: Gordon_limb@byu.edu.

Research on Social Work Practice, Vol. 17 No. 2, March 2007 296-304
DOI: 10.1177/1049731506296161
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Weaver, 2005), our review of the social work literature found very few articles specifically devoted to spirituality and none that helped practitioners actually conduct spiritual assessments with Native Americans. Given that practitioners are being required to work with Native spirituality, a study devoted to the topic is warranted.

Currently in the United States, there are 4.3 million people who self-identify as American Indian or Alaska Native (U.S. Census, 2000). There are also more than 550 American Indian or Alaska Native tribes that are recognized by the federal government. At one level, every Native American tribe, and indeed every person, has a unique understanding and perspective of spirituality. On another level, however, a number of commonalities exist among many Native traditions (Cross, 1997; Jackson & Turner, 2004).

Therefore, the primary goal of developing and utilizing spiritual assessments is to help practitioners incorporate spirituality into their practice with Native Americans. Consequently, spiritual assessments and interventions are necessary to obtain the "balance" required for mental health. Ignoring the spiritual can be detrimental to Native American clients' well-being. For example, focusing exclusively on emotional, physical, or biological problems may actually foster increased negative affect when clients believe that such problems are caused by unbalanced spiritual relationships. Accordingly, helping Native clients achieve balance (or wellness) cannot be achieved without the spiritual. Given the role spirituality is perceived to play in wellness, it is helpful to have some awareness of Native American spiritual beliefs and practices. Sincerely inquiring about spiritual beliefs and practices sends the unspoken message that their spirituality is respected and important in the intervention process. One way to do this is by utilizing a spiritual lifemap assessment tool.

The most common assessment approach used in social work settings to address spirituality is a verbally based spiritual history (Hodge, 2001). Because this approach focuses on direct, verbal communication, it has oftentimes been problematic for Native American clients who prefer an indirect style that involves nonverbal communication (Paniagua, 2005). First developed by Hodge (2005), spiritual lifemaps represent a diagrammatic alternative to the more traditional, verbally based spiritual histories. Congruent with Native beliefs and culture and client driven, spiritual lifemaps are an illustrated account of Native American clients' relationship with a Higher Power over time—a map of their spiritual life. Furthermore, following a traditionally Native approach, spiritually significant events are typically depicted on a roadway, path, circle, or direction

that represents the clients' spiritual sojourn. Elements of nature, important in the Native American worldview, can also be incorporated as trials or difficulties are portrayed as hills, clouds, animals, symbols, and so on. Successful spiritual strengths or strategies can be listed on the lifemap as well. Although each lifemap will look different, Figure 1 illustrates how a spiritual lifemap might be drawn for one person.

In addition to drawing the spiritual lifemap, the assessment tool comes with a question set, broken down into four areas, to help the practitioner operationalize clients' spiritual information. The four areas include a relationship with a Higher Power, spiritual beliefs, spiritual rituals, and social support. After reviewing the literature and current theory and consulting with Native American tribal organizations and individuals, the spiritual lifemap assessment tool was adapted by the authors to make it more consistent with Native American culture. As a result, the authors now believe the tool to be congruent with Native American culture but want to test its congruency and improve its relevancy with Native American culture. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the relevancy and consistency of utilizing spiritual lifemaps with Native Americans.

METHOD

Instrument Development

For the current study, the spiritual lifemap assessment tool was modified for a Native American cultural context by the authors; one of the authors is Native American. The purpose in modifying the assessment tool was to make it more consistent, relevant, and useable with Native American culture. The survey instrument was then pretested with 5 participants who attended the American Indian/Alaska Native Social Work Educators Association Meeting. Participants were asked to review the survey instrument's content and design for clarity and to assess its face validity. The instrument was updated based on the feedback received.

In this study, in addition to demographic questions, the survey instrument was broken up into two major sections. The first section included a brief general conceptual overview of spiritual lifemaps. Then study participants were shown a diagrammatic example of one individual's spiritual lifemap and were asked to assess the cultural consistency of this area. The second section, designed to operationalize the drawing of the spiritual lifemap, outlined a number of example questions, broken down into four subareas, to help practitioners tap into the Native

TABLE 1: Demographic Characteristics of Native American Experts

Characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Female	32	64.0
Male	18	36.0
Age		
26-35	7	14.0
36-45	11	22.0
46-55	16	32.0
56 or older	16	32.0
Tribal nation		
Lakota	4	8.0
Navajo or Dine	4	8.0
Chippewa or Ojibwa	6	12.0
Cherokee	5	10.0
Other tribal affiliation listed	17	34.0
Mixed blood or American Indian	6	12.0
Non-Native	8	16.0
Area of country currently residing		
Northwest	7	14.0
Southwest	9	18.0
West	14	28.0
Midwest	14	28.0
East	6	12.0
Spiritual or religious background		
Traditional (Native)	22	44.0
Christian	17	34.0
Other	9	18.0
None	2	4.0
Have a social work degree	45	90.0
Years experience in profession	<i>M</i> = 18.0	<i>SD</i> = 9.97

NOTE: *N* = 50.

result, 67 Native American experts were identified and asked to participate, with 50 completing the online survey instrument (resulting in a 74.6% response rate). All 50 participants either had expertise in directly working with Native American populations or had a strong research background with Native Americans. Table 1 gives a brief demographic background of the Native American experts.

As can be seen, the Native American experts come from a wide range of tribes, diverse geographic regions of the country, and various spiritual/religious backgrounds. Almost two thirds are female and between the ages of 46 and 74. As a group, 90% have a social work degree with 18 years of experience in the social work profession.

Data Collection and Procedures

The survey instrument was placed online in a format that facilitated easy access for Native American experts and allowed them to enter their responses or reviews directly on the computer. On agreeing to participate, individuals were then e-mailed a URL link to access the

assessment tool for review. Because of the length of time required to complete the survey instrument, respondents were given \$50.00 after completing the review. Quantitative responses were entered directly into an SPSS database. After receiving the qualitative responses, transcriptions were analyzed to facilitate summaries across individual questions. In addition, direct quotes have been selected from the transcriptions to highlight themes and individual responses.

RESULTS

General Conceptual Overview of Spiritual Lifemaps With Native Americans

When our Native American experts were given a brief general conceptual overview of spiritual lifemaps and shown a diagrammatic example, they were then asked to rate how consistent spiritual lifemaps were with Native American culture. Of the 50 participants, there was considerable variance in the rating of consistency. One Native American expert rated spiritual lifemaps at a 0 (indicating complete absence of consistency with Native American culture), whereas 5 experts rated spiritual lifemaps at a 10 (completely consistent with Native American culture). The overall mean was 6.58 (*SD* = 2.67), which indicates a slightly general overall consistency with Native American culture (see Table 2).

When asked about the strengths of spiritual lifemaps in terms of working with Native Americans, general themes that emerged were that spiritual lifemaps were more visual, allowed creativity, and were less intrusive. For example, one Native American expert noted, "Drawing pictures has been a cultural tradition for centuries," whereas another suggested, "The concept of 'journey' is very consistent with Native thinking and visualization." Another expert stated, "[Spiritual lifemaps] allow the person to tell his/her story in a creative way. It also allows the person to define what events have shaped his/her experiences, rather than having someone pathologize him/her and saying what's wrong."

Experts were also asked about the limitations of spiritual lifemaps when working with Native Americans. The general themes of this area included that it could take a lot of time, that they could be seen as more linear as compared to the more culturally appropriate cyclic, medicine wheel, or circular, and that some clients may not like the drawing or artistic aspect of this approach. One Native American expert responded, "I would hope you could have an example that is more 'cyclic or spiral' in nature and not so linear." Similarly, another expert

TABLE 2: Expert Perceptions of Consistency With Native American Culture

Consistency	M	SD	Min	Max
Conceptual overview				
Spiritual lifemaps in general	6.58	2.67	0	10
Operationalizing spiritual lifemaps				
Relationship with God or the Creator	5.86	2.83	0	10
Spiritual beliefs	5.18	2.80	0	10
Spiritual rituals	6.62	2.47	0	10
Social support	6.68	2.50	0	10

NOTE: $N = 50$. These mean scores were derived from responses to Likert-type scales ranging from 0 (*completely absent of consistency with Native American culture*) to 10 (*completely consistent with Native American culture*).

reported that a spiritual lifemap was “linear in a sense. Seems that there [are] no circle or depiction of inner working of complex and integrated factors that impact spirituality.” Another expert noted, “For those who are not artistic or visual, one may struggle in drawing a spiritual lifemap.” The expert who rated spiritual lifemaps completely absent of consistency with Native American culture stated, “[Spiritual lifemaps] could be of benefit, but we have never done or had any thing like that in our cultures or traditions.”

Operationalizing Spiritual Lifemaps With Native Americans

Relationship with God or the Creator. In this first section, our Native American experts were given a number of example questions that allowed the practitioner to go deeper into the discussion with the client. Here, the terminology used by the practitioner, relating to the Higher Power, would be contingent on the specific term or terms used by the client. Example questions included, “How did your relationship with God (or the Creator) help you to address that problem?” “What did God teach you about that situation?” “Have you been able to apply those lessons in other situations?” “How has God supported you in times of crises?” “What are the spiritual strengths of your relationship with God?” and “How does God view you/feel about you?”

After reviewing these example questions, our Native American experts were asked to rate on an 11-point scale how consistent these questions were with Native American culture. Of the 50 responses, the range was from 0 (*completely absent of consistency with Native American culture*) to 10 (*completely consistent with Native American culture*). The overall mean was 5.86 ($SD = 2.83$; see Table 2).

When asked how these questions could be improved to be more valid, relevant, and consistent with Native American culture, a number of common themes emerged. The most common response was using the term *God* may not be appropriate to many Native Americans. For example, one expert responded “change God to great spirit or creator,” whereas another expert reported, “Repeated reference to a singular, separate God. Couldn’t ‘relationship’ be emphasized more?” Another expert noted that regardless of the term used, “just make sure the questions use the term that the client uses to describe Great Spirit.” Finally, another comment from an expert reported that

these questions are generally based upon Christian beliefs. The assumption is that the client believes in God and only looks to God for help. Many Native Americans practice their traditional beliefs that also includes a connection with their extended family and community for help in times of crisis.

Spiritual beliefs. The second set of questions a practitioner may examine with a client are his or her spiritual beliefs. Example questions included, “What does your faith teach about trials?” “Is there a metaphysical reason for life’s challenges?” “What are your favorite scriptures?” “Are there certain scriptures or texts that really speak to you during times of stress?” and “What spiritual principles have you learned from life’s experiences?” The range of responses included 3 experts who listed these questions lowest (at a 0) to 3 experts who gave these example questions a 10 (suggesting complete consistency). Interestingly, this set of questions received the lowest overall mean score of the four sets ($M = 5.18$, $SD = 2.80$). To determine whether significant differences occurred between the four sets of mean scores, the ANOVA procedure was conducted. Although statistical assumptions regarding the normality and homogeneity of variances were met, the ANOVA procedure indicated the differences among mean scores on the four sets of questions were not significant, perhaps because of the relatively small sample size.

A number of experts noted two issues of concern with these types of questions. First was the use of the term *metaphysical*. One response was, “Don’t use the term ‘metaphysical’ (too academic),” and he or she suggested using the word *unexplainable* instead. Similarly, another expert asked, “What is a metaphysical reason?” Another term that was problematic as an example was *scripture*. A number of experts stated that this had a “Christian feel to it” and that “traditional Native religion is not written.” Another expert noted, “Since most Native Americans do not have texts of their religion, the above skews the issue to organized religion.” Finally, an expert suggested that “the term ‘life path’ or ‘journey’ fits more

closely to traditional beliefs. . . . Often the phrase 'walking the good or red road' is used to describe one's spiritual journey."

Spiritual rituals. The third area included spiritual rituals or ceremonies. Here, example questions Native American clients might be asked included, "Are there certain rituals, ceremonies, or regular spiritual practices that help you cope with life's trials?" "Are some rituals particularly effective in certain situations?" and "Are there particular rituals that strengthen your relationship with God?" In looking at consistency with Native American culture, this area had the second highest mean score of the four areas (see Table 2). Overall, a number of experts rated these example questions as being more consistent with Native American culture ($M = 6.62$, $SD = 2.47$).

An example from these experts included, "These are good because they allow for the respondents to be open about their traditional ceremonies. These are less skewed to the White man's religion." Another expert stated, "The questions appear to be effective in determining the role of rituals in a person's life." There were also a number of helpful suggestions made in this area by experts. Examples include, "Begin, 'While you may not be able to share the details of a ceremony or ritual'" and "Traditional people use the term 'medicine' to describe spiritual help, so I'd suggest adding this term to the list."

Social support. The final area examining spiritual assets included social support. Here, example questions included, "What role has your church or spiritual community played during the crisis?" "Are there relationships in your church or spiritual community that are particularly supportive?" "Has there been a spiritual mentor in your life that has been particularly significant?" and "How have these individuals assisted you in coping with trials?" Similar to the example questions on spiritual rituals, experts rated this area of questioning highest ($M = 6.68$, $SD = 2.50$). The range was from 0 to 10 (see Table 2), and a number of experts commented on the appropriateness of examining the social support of the Native client. For example, one expert responded, "Good question. We all have the need for spiritual mentors. Highly consistent with Native culture." Another expert reported that "some clients may rely on their church, clans, family, village, tribal community, government programs for support in crisis. I do not know if there are more appropriate words for 'your church or spiritual community' in question one."

Experts also offered a few suggestions on better wording of these example questions. One example included, "Please consider the implications of using the term church or spiritual community. For some that would work

well, for others tribal community or clan would be more appropriate." Similarly, an expert added, "I'd suggest adding 'extended family or extended relatives' to the types of social support," whereas another expert noted, "The notion of spiritual community is far broader than implied here."

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Given that very little is known about conducting spiritual assessments with Native Americans, the purpose of this study was to add critical information to the profession's knowledge base on this topic. Furthermore, this study responds to the lack of research and includes one of the first evaluations of utilizing spiritual assessment tools with Native Americans. Results of this study point to a number of important themes. First, most of our experts reported that spiritual lifemaps were generally consistent with Native American culture and, if used properly (i.e., for clients who respond that spirituality is an important part of their lives), could be very beneficial in working with Native Americans. For example, a number of Native American experts specifically noted that spiritual lifemaps were client driven and allowed creativity and a more visual aspect of tapping into spirituality—all of which were very consistent with Native American culture.

When operationalizing the spiritual lifemaps, a number of example questions were evaluated on their consistency with Native American culture. One theme of the results that emerged from this study was the terminology used to describe a Creator or Higher Power. Although called by different names, most Native Americans believe in a Creator and in the existence of unseen spiritual powers (Cross, 2001; Trujillo, 2000). Additional terms commonly used to describe the Creator have included Higher Power, God, Great Spirit, Supreme Being, Great Father, and Grandfather, among others. Similarly, belief in unseen powers is also commonly affirmed. Although many of our Native American experts were uncomfortable with the use of *God* in our example questions, one expert summarized the most important element of this area by stating, "Just make sure the questions use the term that the client uses to describe Great Spirit." As such, a number of experts commented that the terminology used should be client driven and whatever term the Native client uses; that term should thereafter be used by the practitioner.

It is important to note that the purpose of including example questions was not to provide practitioners with exact questions to be used with every Native American

client in every situation. These questions were given as examples of ways to tap into specific areas of spirituality. It would therefore be expected that a culturally competent practitioner would tailor, change, add, or modify these questions based on what would be most beneficial to the Native American client. It appeared from this study that when participants rated the example questions, the rating was based on the actual questions given versus the conceptual idea behind the example questions—resulting in lower overall mean scores in the first two areas.

A second theme involved spiritual beliefs and practices. Within Native American clients' belief system, ceremonies, rituals, and other spiritual practices play an integral role in their spiritual life. Most tribes have regular ceremonies and celebrations throughout the year that reinforce the bond among the individual, the family, the community, nature, and the Creator. Spiritual specialists, such as traditional healers, medicine men, elders, and shamans, often play an important role in these ceremonies and in the general spiritual and social life of many tribal communities. These individuals are typically responsible for a number of functions that include teaching the Native American way of life, preserving sacred knowledge and language, and using oral tradition to pass on spiritual knowledge, ways, and practices to future generations.

Although most of our experts felt that tapping into spiritual beliefs and practices could be beneficial and very important in a practice setting, here again terminology of example questions was problematic for some. Specifically, the use of words such as *metaphysical* and *scriptures*, which may be unfamiliar to the client or have certain religious implications, needs to be avoided. The suggestion by our Native American experts was to make sure the practitioner uses terms the Native American client is familiar with and then avoids terms that may go against the client's value or belief system.

For example, for Native American clients who follow a specific religion (e.g., Catholic or Protestant), asking about God, scriptures, or religious symbols may be culturally appropriate. On the other hand, for a Native client who is more traditional in his or her spiritual beliefs, asking about church, scriptures, or God could be considered culturally inappropriate. A number of experts noted that many Native Americans follow oral-based traditions and do not have texts of their religion. Therefore, to be effective, the practitioner would, as one expert noted, "include stories as a way to 'get at' the important spiritual lessons." Similarly, a number of experts also suggested that secret or private rituals, ceremonies, and practices may not be appropriate for the client to discuss.

Following an understanding of many Native peoples' belief in a Creator and of other spiritual beliefs and practices, the final theme of results that was weaved within and throughout most of the responses made by the Native American experts was an understanding of Native American worldview. Worldview describes the collective thought process of a people or culture. Thoughts and ideas are organized into concepts, concepts are organized into constructs and paradigms, and constructs and paradigms are linked together to create a worldview (Cross, 1997, 1998). Some scholars (e.g., Cross, 1997, 1998; Red Horse, 1997; Voss, Douville, & Little Soldier, 1999) have suggested that in our society there are two predominating worldviews—linear and relational. Others have associated these terms with "individualistic" and "collectivistic" cultures.

The linear or individualistic worldview is rooted in mainstream American thought. It is the driving force behind many of the interventions and theories that focus on the individual. The relational worldview, sometimes called the cyclical, circular, or collectivistic worldview, finds its roots in indigenous cultures. Unlike the linear model, the relational worldview is intuitive, is non-time oriented, and sees life as harmonious, where health is achieved by maintaining balance among the spiritual, mental, physical, and contextual aspects in one's circle of life (Cross, 1998). In the relational worldview, the person is viewed through the balances and imbalances in his or her relational world. Here, interventions are often not targeted at a particular symptom but instead are focused on bringing the person back into balance. Because the person is simultaneously spiritual, mental, and physical, interventions at any one level will affect all other levels as well. Wellness occurs when the various facets of creation exist in harmonious relationships with one another. Therefore, understanding and working within a Native American worldview should be encouraged and utilized in practice settings with Native American clients.

As a result, based on findings from this study, Table 3 provides a new list of example questions that practitioners can use to operationalize the drawing of the spiritual lifemap. These example questions are not meant to be asked word for word or in any specific order. Rather, the practitioner should modify or adapt the questions and incorporate them into the conversation and exploration of key spiritual beliefs, strengths, and supports depicted on the lifemap.

There are several limitations in the current study that should be noted. Perhaps the most significant limitation is the somewhat small number of Native American experts surveyed. Although this number is not encompassing of

TABLE 3: Example Questions to Operationalize Spiritual Lifemaps With Native Americans

Relationship With the Creator
“How do you view your relationship with the Creator (or Higher Power, God, Great Spirit, Supreme Being, Great Father, Grandfather, etc.)?”
“What are the spiritual strengths and weaknesses in your relationship with the Creator?”
“What did the Creator teach you about that life experience?”
“How has the Creator given you medicine or power to overcome life’s challenges?”
“How has the Creator supported you in times of crises?”
“Have you been able to apply those spiritual lessons in other life experiences or journeys?”
“Do you think how Creator views you differs from how you view yourself? If so, in what ways?”
Spiritual Beliefs
“What does your spiritual belief teach about life’s challenging experiences?”
“Can you tell me a story from your own life or from your people that you use to help with this type of life challenge? Are there particular experiences that resulted in spiritual insights?”
“Are there certain spiritual traditions that really speak to you in times of stress? What kinds of spiritual strengths do you have that help you deal with times of stress?”
“What are your favorite spiritual quotes, sayings, stories, or symbols?”
“What spiritual teachings have influenced and motivated you most in your life? What spiritual lessons have you learned as you’ve walked through life’s journey?”
“How has your understanding of your tribal origins or emergence strengthened your spiritual journey?”
Spiritual Ceremonies ^a
“Are there certain ceremonies, medicines, customs, prayers, or spiritual practices that help you in life’s journey?”
“When you are having hard times, in your spiritual way, what do you do to help yourself go through this life experience?”
“Are there some ceremonies, medicines, customs, prayers, or spiritual practices that are particularly effective in certain situations?”
Social Support
“What role do family, relatives, friends, elders, community play during times of crisis?”
“How have these individuals assisted or strengthened you in your life experience or journey?”
“Are there relationships in your spiritual community that are particularly supportive?”
“Has there been a spiritual mentor in your life’s journey that has been particularly significant?”

a. Because of the secret or sacred nature of many traditional ceremonies, the practitioner should begin with, “While you may not be able to share the details of a ceremony, custom, or ritual”

all Native Americans in social work education, results of this study should be placed within the context that there are many unique cultural and spiritual issues that must be addressed when working with Native American clients. A larger sample size may have been beneficial to achieving this. As with any sampling approach, there are potential limitations associated with the method used. For this study, purposive sampling was used to identify participants. Although this approach was identified by the authors as the most appropriate, there are potentially a number of other Native American experts, from differing tribal and spiritual perspectives, that could have been involved and possibly given very different perspectives of the assessment tool. Another limitation of this study is that when participants were asked to review and respond to the assessment tool, no definitions of spirituality or religion were given. As a result, defining spirituality and religion was left up to the participants, who could interpret what these words meant and the context for which they would be used.

For more than a decade, the social work literature has reflected a demand for culturally competent services. Given that spirituality is considered a cornerstone of existence for many Native Americans, spiritual lifemaps offer

practitioners a number of ways to integrate spirituality into the therapeutic dialogue with their Native clients. Furthermore, the qualitative aspect of spiritual lifemaps allows practitioners to adapt this tool to a wide variety of clients and situations. Although further research is needed, the findings of this study represent an initial step at giving practitioners an important assessment tool as they seek to provide culturally competent services to Native American clients.

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