



The Effects of Auricular Therapy and Traditional Mexican Healing Modalities on Bipolar Disorder

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Bipolar disorder is a mental disorder which includes wide mood swings from high manic moods to low depressed moods. Periods of high moods are called manic episodes. The individual becomes active, but in an unfocused, unproductive way, sometimes with uncomfortable and embarrassing consequences. A manic episode can include irritability, insomnia, imagining grand plans that can't be carried out. There can be psychotic symptoms, delusions, or hallucinations. If a person has mild symptoms of mania which do not include psychotic symptoms it is referred to as a "hypo-manic episode".

Bipolar disorder appears to be in a state of evolution as understanding continues to grow with the collection of data. Bipolar disorder is now commonly divided into two types, bipolar I and bipolar II. Bipolar disorder I is the classic form where a person has had at least one lifetime manic or mixed episode. Bipolar disorder II is defined by at least one lifetime hypomanic episode, along with at least one episode of major depression. Hypomania includes the same symptoms as mania but lasts for shorter periods, and although it may be noticeable to others, is not associated with functional impairment. This includes milder symptoms of mania which do not include psychotic symptoms. Episodes of major depression are defined by two or more weeks of intense sadness, loss of interests, fatigue, insomnia, psychomotor agitation or retardation, weight gain or loss, cognitive dysfunction, feelings of worthlessness, and suicidal ideation.

Bipolar disorder statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO), indicate bipolar disorder is the 6th leading cause of disability. In an article by David J Miklowitz and Sheri Johnson, they review research on the diagnosis, course, etiology, and pharmacological and psychosocial treatments. Their data shows that Bipolar disorder is highly recurrent, with high rates of suicidality and functional impairment. It involves the dopamine and serotonin systems as well as brain systems that regulate emotion. Psychosocial stressors, notably life events and familial expressed emotion, significantly influence the course of the illness in the context of these vulnerabilities. The article also states the importance of psychosocial interventions.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of Auricular Therapies and Traditional Mexican Healing Modalities in supporting focusing strategies, self-directed learning, and self-regulation in individuals with bipolar disorder. The intention was to find out if these applied methods promoted internal responses, and in turn if those personal individualized responses could help the individual control stress, impulses and regulate emotions. Could individuals with bipolar disorder benefit from the therapies, learn to observe themselves to differentiate between thought processes and experiences and makes necessary changes to improve and maintain a stable mood.

Research shows that education which allows an individual to understand their condition is beneficial for

understanding the necessity of daily practices of self-care. Jeffrey L. Susman MD wrote an article published in *Primary Care Companion Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* 2010; 12 (suppl 1): 30-34, *Improving Outcomes in Patients with Bipolar Disorder Through Establishing an Effective Treatment Team*. Dr. Susman discusses the element of patient psychoeducation as an important component to facilitate patient outcomes. It is also beneficial for individuals to recognize the inclusion of a support system, such as family members, friends or a network of individuals that are invested and demonstrate deep caring which provides psychosocial support as well as opportunities to practice daily mindfulness in observing themselves and others in their environments to make the necessary adjustments to stay well and balanced.

Data from a study by S.J. Russell and J.L. Brown illustrated the roles of personal, social, and environmental factors in helping people with bipolar disorder to stay well. The subcategories of acceptance of diagnosis, mindfulness, education, identifying triggers, recognizing warning signs, managing sleep and stress, making lifestyle changes, treatment, access to support and having stay well plans are important.

This holistic and integrative approach parallels ancestral and Indigenous teachings regarding mental health. This study examined the role that ancestral folk medicine could play in helping individuals with bipolar mood disorder to stay healthy, and to investigate if individuals diagnosed with bipolar disorder could improve self-awareness and self-regulation by being guided into a meditative state using an indigenous mind-body perspective combined with ancestral modalities that have re-emerged and are commonly used in modern Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM).

A 2011, US News & World Report, article states nearly 40 percent of American adults swear by some form of complementary and alternative medicine and a growing number of medical school's report that interest has exploded in teaching alternative approaches. Health professionals are now looking at underlying systemic imbalances as a cause of illness rather than focusing on the treatment of symptoms and when possible educate their patients to make lifestyle changes and include mind-body techniques. The Consortium of Academic Health

Centers for Integrative Medicine, which encourages the spread of CAM education, was founded in 2000 after an initiative by eight academic medical centers, now has more than 60 medical school members.

There are complexities in treating bipolar disorder, which include multiple facets of an individual's illness, and the methodology issues because indigenous modalities are tailored to address the symptoms that the individual presents on the day of treatment, and use of dietary supplements and herbs with their complex constituents. Folk or cultural medicine includes the connection of mind, body and spirit which influences the physiological systems, along with the neurochemical pathways. With technology, we can see the effects of an altered state of consciousness, the role of neurotransmitters and brain mechanisms. Folk and cultural medicine consider the important role consciousness has in health, this was previously associated with religion and spirituality, but now with technology is becoming scientific.

Each treatment began with a Platica which is a verbal check-in and is described in more detail within the modality of Cognitive Support. This allows the patient to share in a therapeutic conversation, and examine thoughts and emotions. After the platica, the patient lays supine on a massage table. A sound system plays relaxing music and instruments such as drum, rattles, bells, etc. are included in the therapy to promote psychophysiological responses.

The patient is fully dressed and shoes are removed. (Individuals are asked to wear loose fitting comfortable clothes so that meridian acupuncture points on the body may be stimulated easily). A small soft cloth or bandana is folded and placed over the individual's eyes. The purpose for the eye cover is to block out the light and helps the patient focus on internal awareness of the body. The guided meditation begins and the individual is encouraged to relax, notice their breath, observe their thoughts, and feel the sensations and responses to the modalities being offered.

First is aromatherapy, the practitioner applies frankincense to her hands and holds her hands approximately 2-3 inches over the patients face as they are encouraged to take several deep relaxing breaths. Water is placed on the crown of the head, prepared during a specific lunar cycle

for mental health. The waters are applied to the crown as the cosmic forces of the Four Sacred Directions are being honored and asked for their participation, assistance and intervention in the treatment. The patient is guided through spiritual meditation into the Four Directions and connected with each of their four health supporting dynamics, Mental Health-Wind, Spiritual Health-Fire, Emotional Health-Water, and Physical Health-Earth. Many Traditional Healers include the Four Directions, they are considered a component of the essence of All and are the four supporting pillars of consciousness. This is not about religion, so the meditation can be tailored to fit the spiritual or non-spiritual needs of an individual. Next, follows the Auricular therapy, followed by the 13 Ghost Protocol. The session is closed by mindfully giving gratitude while connecting with specific sounds.

Traditional Mexican Folk Medicine of Curanderismo comes from the word “curar” which means to heal. It is indigenous to the Americas. This folk medicine continues to be practiced in the United States. Some modalities may include more of a Mexican, Native American, Cuban, or African perspective. Although growing numbers of individuals living in the United States include these ancestral methods of healing in their self-care, more studies and research are needed to demonstrate efficacy.

Catharsis is a term used in dramatic art, often describing a tragedy. In Curanderismo and Shamanism, the healer is working with the “drama of life”, it is the art of slowly and safely assisting someone to release the emotional pain or tragedy that haunts them. It is a type of mental purification that allows for intellectual clarification of repressed emotions and leads to wellness and growth. If you have ever been angry and went outside and yelled or got a pillow and banged up a wall, some psychologists call this catharsis. In a therapy session, catharsis is more than just venting anger. It’s a re-experience of an event and expressing the strong emotions associated with the event. Curanderismo is a loving gentle nurturing therapy which may include the layering of several modalities, such as hands on healing, reiki, song, humming, acupressure, massage, acupuncture. The focus for the practitioner is to be a “good hollow bone” a conduit for healing and to remind the individual that they are a child of the universal light and love. Often this tenderness

propels the individual into a state of catharsis and they can experience an emotional release with understanding and intellectual clarification which provides opportunity for growth. Indigenous psychology considers understanding of memories and stress, the theory is that we have conscious memory within the structure of the brain and body memory held in the physical structures of the body, which also have their connection to the brain. Traumatic events especially if pre-verbal and predates memory, can get trapped and fragmented in the brain’s memory system. When the memory is provoked, you can experience panic attacks and anxiety that you cannot understand, this is because the memories have never been integrated into the waking consciousness. Indigenous modalities can slowly and gently allow the feelings associated with the memories to be observed by the individual. This must be a slow process, avoiding overstimulation by managing stress related to traumatic memories. Memories should be allowed to arise in their own time, this allows the individual to feel the emotional pain of the release but it should be within the individual’s capability to manage and handle this new insight.

Occasionally, the universal forces have a different plan and the individual is propelled into an intense emotional space and they experience an episode of “Conversion Disorder”. This happens when the spiritual and psychological energies of consciousness experience a conflict which the individual’s personality cannot bear to acknowledge and resolve. It’s usually a deep-seated anxiety or trauma in the subconscious that is trying to reveal itself to the waking consciousness. On occasion an individual can have an episode of “Conversion Disorder”, a less used term is “Hysterical Neurosis”. This is a mental condition in which a person is psychologically stressed beyond what their consciousness can manage, and the psychological stress “converts” to a physical expression.

It can be some type of anxiety, or trauma that triggers paralysis, blindness, or some other neurological condition that cannot be explained by medical evaluation. The symptoms occur because of a psychological conflict. The symptoms are thought to be an attempt to resolve the conflict the person feels inside. For example, a person may not be able to see, open their eyes, speak, to move their arms, etc. Diagnostic testing does not find any

physical cause for the symptoms. The affected body part may need physical or occupational therapy until the symptoms resolve. For example, a paralyzed arm must be exercised to keep the muscles strong. Symptoms may go away quickly, or can last for days or weeks. If this happens during a treatment, the intensity of the physical response is frightening for everyone, but the practitioner must remain calm and use their psychotherapy training to help the individual regain stability.

It is important to know the meridian points to regain consciousness, have smelling salts and ice water available to rub on the individual to address the shock. Because these types of reactions are misunderstood, it is often mistaken for "black magic" or something "evil". Professional, and competent practitioners should avoid these types of intense reactions when possible. When it does happen, the therapist needs to respond quickly to stabilize the person with firm loving support to avoid long lasting Conversion Symptoms.

Catharsis may occur during a modality that allows for releasing depressive and suicidal thoughts which affect individuals with bipolar disorder. Directly addressing an experience of trauma may not always be possible or safe. The intention is to release repressed emotions slowly and safely. In most treatments, this release is acknowledged and the emotional pain is safely processed and dealt with. One must use care not to re-traumatize an individual, and try to avoid an episode of Conversion Disorder. Many traditional healers believe the disorder can happen because of a "shock", a memory or feeling may be too intense for the psychology or brought on because the Higher Self presents the waking consciousness with something to process.

Cognitive Support includes the "Platica", a socially therapeutic conversation, is the verbal check in at the start of every session. It works like a thread to weave the cognitive component into the other modalities. The practitioner's role is to intuitively support the conversation in a way that is meaningful and therapeutic to the individual.

"Platica", or "Telling and listening to stories is one way to make sense of our lives". Traditional Mexican Healing includes this type of Cultural Psychotherapy because it is believed to have the potential to change

our behavior in positive ways which improves our life. Ethnic Psychology reflects and parallels much of what Traditional Healers are taught. This type of psychotherapy provides an opportunity for personal growth, Individuals will recognize that life is unjust and unfair at times, they recognize and verbalize that no matter how close they get to other people, they still could face many life situations alone, they recognize there is no escape from one's pain, and that painful experiences may repeat themselves. They ultimately should take responsibility for the way they live and learn to be consistent in daily strategies for staying well no matter how much support and guidance they receive from others. Hope and a positive attitude can be learned.

The Traditional Healer encourages the individual to be flexible and to persevere by providing a healthy therapeutic environment characterized by offering holistic modalities, meditations, boundaries, consistency, and support. Many Traditional Healers believe that our modern society communicates fear of disappointment, and excessive pressure to perform and gain great wealth, which may create feelings of hopelessness which negatively influences all, but especially those with Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and other mental conditions.

Ancestral Biofeedback may include guided meditation, imagery, and sound therapy. The information from the therapeutic conversation or platica, is applied to specific life issues. The patient hears positive statements that are focused on potential instead of worry. These self-development skills are used to improve focus, change perspective, and can help the individual work through limiting beliefs. This modality can support the development of self-awareness, feelings of connectedness, happiness, and satisfaction with one's life. During the Platica, the practitioner notes what is important to the individual. When the individual is on the massage table in a relaxed state they are often more receptive to hearing loving and supportive words that are empowering, that help to reframe thoughts, self-talk and are of social value. The Patient is "linked in" offering the modalities in the same order for every treatment, which allows them to recognize there are

defined meditative steps and they can include them in their self-care in the future. The consistency of these steps creates a foundation a “floor”, to provide solid ground upon which a dynamic scaffolding will be build. In a safe and professional therapeutic environment, this type of cognitive scaffolding allows the individual to observe thoughts, emotions, and feelings and how they relate to each other.

This Biofeedback includes mantras and positive affirmations to heal, they help counteract negative thoughts and with repetition these positive statements and affirmations sink into the sub consciousness and eventually creates positive changes in how the person views themselves and the world around them.

Affirmations are two unique ways to promote selfcare of mind and body. Examples of mantras include a single word such as love, peace, harmony, Om. Examples of positive affirmations are phrases such as “I open my arms to receive all the goodness of this world” and “I sit in circles of people who honor me, respect me and want the best for me”, and “there is always enough money in my life, I don’t know what enough is, but I manage to keep moving forward”. In Lillian Comas-Diaz’s, 2006 article, *Latino Healing: The Integration of Ethnic Psychology into Psychotherapy* mentions “dichos” These are sayings and phrases which include Spanish proverbs and are used as communication tools which validate, and support positive thought processes. It is common for many Mexican, Latinos and Native Americans to include proverbs into daily conversations.

During therapy the words are often said with a vibrational quality; the Four Directions are part of the essence of consciousness. As the individual is guided into the Four Directions, East-Air, South-Fire, West-Water, North-Earth, they have an opportunity to observe their thoughts and sensations that their thoughts might provoke in the body. The strings in the loom or matrix of life are vibrating, and the individual also has a personal vibrational pattern. Most of us have heard the saying “energy follows thought”. Our thoughts are vibrating within a high and low range. Sound held in love can change the long-held patterns to give properties to particles in the subtle realms that influence the strings within the web of consciousness.

Differentiation based models of mental health may be defined as the measure of one’s emotional maturity. One’s emotional maturity is not always related to one’s chronological age, we learn to recognize our personal level of stress vulnerability and its many variables. Psychological differentiation using the Curanderismo perspective includes the development of self and learning to live in a world of subtle energies in nature and our environments that influence humanity, especially those that are “sensitive”. Dr. Robert Firestone has written a book that discusses psychological differentiation and how it can refer to the struggle that all people face in striving to develop a sense of themselves in this world. One’s identity is continually influenced by our daily experiences that are either beneficial or damaging to the development of our personality. Differentiation in the indigenous culture includes concepts and theories of the different states of consciousness. If these archetypal forces, concepts, and ideas that exist in one level of our consciousness cannot be differentiated from what we refer to as our normal awake consciousness, one could become overwhelmed and labeled as having psychosis.

Data from an article by Gerben J. Westerhof and Corey L.M. Keyes on *Mental Illness and Mental Health: The Two Continua Model Across the Lifespan* discussed that mental health has long been defined as the absence of psychopathologies such as depression and anxiety. They bring up an interesting view that the absence of mental illness, however is a minimal outcome from a psychological perspective on life and development. Their article focuses on mental illness as well as on the three core components of positive mental health: feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life as “emotional well-being”, positive individual functioning in terms of self-realization as “psychological well-being”, positive societal functioning in terms of being of social value as “social well-being”.

Self-affirmation is when the individual is doing the act of personally affirming their self-worth, safety, self-competence, etc. Many individuals who have lived with depression for years require that the nurturing self-worth statements be said to and for them by the practitioner with love and compassion. It may take some time before the individual embodies the affirmations. Over time weaving the Ancestral Biofeedback with the other

modalities empowers the individual with a “new view” of themselves. Lillian Comas Diaz’s article, also mentions safe therapeutic space, when an individual experiences regression because of illness, healing frequently requires mothering and nurturing, which Traditional Mexican Healing modalities facilitate by providing a cultural holding embrace within a professional space.

Some individuals have a world view which allows them to place themselves within a larger environment which includes the cosmos and divine, which is the base of indigenous healing. Offering the modalities with defined steps allows the individual to slowly learn that they can depend on the techniques to lead them into an altered state of consciousness that is peaceful, safe, supportive and encourages “re-member-ing” oneself. It is thought that disconnection from self, nature, culture, and community results in illness. Christopher Cascio, Matthew Brook O’Donnell, Francis Tinney, Matthew Lieberman, Shelley Taylor, Victor Strecher and Emily Falk wrote an article on Self-affirmation Theory, published in the *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, November 5, 2015. They examined the neural mechanisms of self-affirmation with a task developed for use in a functional magnetic resonance imaging environment. The results demonstrated that participants who were affirmed as compared to unaffirmed participants showed increased activity in key regions of the brain’s self-processing. The goal of the ancestral biofeedback with guided meditation and positive affirmations is to broaden a person’s overall perspective and reduce the effects of negative emotions and to generate the energy necessary to motivate behavioral changes.

The National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy states that aromatherapy is also referred to as Essential Oil Therapy and that it is an art and science of utilizing naturally extracted aromatic essences from plants to balance, harmonize and promote the health of body mind and spirit. Essential Oils are used for physiological, psychological, and spiritual processes to enhance an individual’s innate healing process. In a clinical setting, it is defined as the controlled use of essential oils for physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

In Traditional modalities and the Bible, essential oils are linked to nature and Creator. There is a ceremonial

experience or communication with intention and energy will follow thought. If applied by a caring, compassionate practitioner, the electromagnetic frequencies are elevated.

I created and trademarked “Indigenous Reiki” A form of energy work, which includes working with the layers of consciousness, cosmic forces and meridian energy body, in combination with sound and other Curanderismo modalities. Raspada Modality was included which is a technique like Chinese Guasha, where the meridians used in acupuncture are rubbed which has both an energetic and physiological effect on the individual.

Auricular Therapy is a therapeutic intervention in which stimulation is applied to the auricle of the external ear. This can be done using needles for acupuncture or acupressure using a metal or stone stylus. This therapy is utilized for health conditions which include symptoms of the psychology and the body. Auricular Therapy is based upon ancient Chinese and ancient Mayan practices of acupuncture. The somato-topic correspondences of specific parts of the body to specific parts of the ear has long been recognized by indigenous cultures and researched in modern healthcare settings.

Auricular therapy studies usually include the Traditional Chinese Model as it is the most recognized. For over 2500 years’ people have used auricular therapy for healing diseases. In 1957, the international scientific community became aware that the map of the ear resembled an inverted fetus, these investigations led to auricular therapy becoming a more systematic approach, following the identification and standardization of precise points, Auricular Therapies began to be offered in more clinical settings. The mechanisms of Auricular Acupuncture are related to the Autonomic Nervous System, the neuroendocrine system, neuro-immunological factors, neuroinflammation, neural reflex and anti-oxidation.

Auriculo-therapy Manual: Chinese and Western Systems of Ear Acupuncture 2nd Edition by Terry Oleson, Ph.D. states that ear acupuncture and pathological areas of the body are more greatly represented by acupuncture points on the same side of the body. The auricular therapy manual explains that body acupuncture is based upon a

system of twelve meridians, which are lines of energy force that run throughout the surface of the body. Illness is due to imbalance in the flow of energy. Although ear acupuncture is related to the meridians, it is a self-contained microsystem that affects the whole body. For this study, a metal stylus was used to apply pressure to the auricular points. Specifics used in this study will be discussed in more detail in the section of methodology and procedure.

The 13 Ghost Point protocol using needle acupuncture was created by a Healer, Sun Si Miao in the 7th century to treat mental imbalances and to help cultivate a sense of self over a life time. For this study, an obsidian stone stylus was used to apply acupressure to the points. Sun Si Miao, was known as the Medicine Buddha or King of Medicine. The 13 Ghost Therapy is a protocol used to balance the mind and emotions. It is recommended that the protocol be offered to individuals who are receiving psychological therapy or have a strong support system. Traditional Chinese Medicine utilizes theories and groups of acupuncture points based on their relationships and how they influence the body and health. Sun Si Miao is thought to have developed the concepts of how the initial accumulation of phlegm might create the environment for sore throat and psychological dysfunction to take hold, followed by disorientation towards the world. He was aware of psychological illness becoming more common in society and began a systematic approach for the treatment of mental imbalance. The ancestral healer believed that sore throat and its infectious influence could be a causal pathway for mental imbalance.

Erica Westly wrote an article in Scientific American called "From Throat to Mind; Strep Today, Anxiety Later"? Her article questions if a case of strep throat can lead to a mental disorder? Some children seem to acquire behaviors associated with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) after being infected with the Streptococcus bacterium. For many decades' skeptics, have claimed the connection was a coincidence, but new studies in mice offer compelling evidence that strep can indeed affect the mind.

In a Science News article dated August 25, 2015, George Washington University states that Microbiomes of the human throat may be linked to schizophrenia. It states that the study is the most comprehensive to date and that researchers have identified a potential link between microbes (viruses, bacteria, and fungi) in the throat and

schizophrenia. This link may offer a way to identify causes and that studying microbiomes in the throat may help identify causes and treatments of brain disorder.

There is a contradiction in this study, research is a systematic investigation or exploration to establish facts. It is about methods and collection of data in a precise way. Traditional and Indigenous Healing Modalities are meant to be dynamic communications and interactions with the creative forces of mind, body, and spirit. The focus is on application and response to determine the next application. As a Practitioner of Curanderismo, one makes an agreement to work with Intuitive Self, I had to adjust each of the therapies. My thoughts and feelings influenced my actions. My intuition should not be separated from my professional standards and spiritual creation of sacred space and the person receiving the therapy. For example, if I felt prompted to include an essential oil of lavender or eucalyptus, etc. I had to do this. If I felt an additional meridian point needed to be stimulated on the ear or body, I had to do this. If I am prompted to place my hand on a part of the body, etc. The tools, especially the stone stylus and essential oils are directly linked to the essence of nature and there is a ceremonial experience or communication that is taking place within the loom of consciousness. This ritual or ceremonial communication is conveying messages to the practitioner and the individual receiving the therapy. Both individuals are being influenced and its recognized that the components of the therapy are not enough, they must be brought together with love and intuition to create a holistic therapy, that vibrationally engages the cosmic strings in the loom of creation.

I attempt to interpret and shed light on the ancestral relevance to each modality. The modalities listed are intricately woven into the human therapeutic experience. In ancestral teachings, it is believed that the consciousness has many levels with patterns which include heavens and underworlds which create the frame of consciousness. Life Force makes the strings within the loom frame vibrate. The goal is to utilize the life force of love and compassion so the energetic particles that make up the human body vibrate with the frequency of health and wellness.

I have prior experience with traditional folk medicine and participated in two research projects that contributed to this study. In 2010, I participated as the Lead Curandera in a Pilot study. The partnership came together

to facilitate integration of Traditional Curanderismo into Primary Care and included addressing the dearth of culturally relevant and appropriate self-management interventions for Latinos.

The Pilot Study noted the disparities in access to a clinic for primary care, and recognized that Curanderismo treatments could be accepted as more credible and trustworthy if practices that have strong evidence for efficacy are endorsed by trusted medical providers. Desired Outcomes included National Institute of Health funding to explore integration of Cuanderismo practices such as massage, counseling, and herbal remedies into primary care activities and to identify at least five clinic sites in Denver, Colorado with the intention to pilot test the integration of selected Curanderismo practices into allopathic primary care. I continue to work toward this intended goal.

In 2012, I established a partnership with Denver Health and participated in a Case Study offering complimentary Curanderismo treatments during scheduled pain clinics. In this Case Study, the Researchers mentioned that Hispanic patients may seek out a curandero for his/her Spanish literacy, affordability, spiritual counsel, or cultural connection.

Traditional Medicine may include components of ancestral shamanic practices, it is a world phenomenon, where the dominant culture has devalued and created fear around the topic. It is time to erase the stigma around folk medicine, shamanism, and some other alternative therapies.

If we only consider the biomedical and pharmacological approach to Bipolar Disorder and other mental imbalances, we may fall short and offer insufficient care for individuals that would benefit from a holistic integrative treatment plan. Traditional Indigenous Psychology is based on a belief that thought involves a variety of components such as language, cognitive, neurological, chemical, energetic, electromagnetic fields, karmic, ancestral patterns as well as subtle nature energies.

Motivation is also important in folk medicine for the treatment to be effective. The individual's autonomy needs to be respected and is grounded differently in indigenouness therapeutic alliance. It is said that ethnic psychology provides resources for rescuing and grounding identity into a collective self. The goal

is to restore connectedness and foster feelings that "one matters" as part of the whole, and to facilitate creation of a new fortified and balanced identity. The Platica conversation includes personal and professional contact. The Practitioner gently and professionally guides the conversation. There is interconnectedness and permeability, but with boundaries and held in a professional container. Some psychotherapists frequently label indigenous, Latino, Mexican, and Native American family's interdependence as enmeshment. Many individuals have collectivistic ideals of self and the world around them and require therapeutic techniques that honor this connection to mind, body, spirit, the world, and cosmos. Some individuals thrive in an independent self-reliant environment, others require a more interdependent environment and there are many degrees in between.

The motivational approach is to "empower" the individual to give them the skills, tools, and equipment for the journey so they can recognize and integrate what is happening so that life experience is not terrifying. By providing knowledge, skills, and assistance a bridge is built. It is thought that blocking the emergence of a new experience of consciousness can create a problem of energy flow in the meridian acupuncture body. The loud acting out of mania, or the lack of motivation seen in depression is a response to the extraneous foreign energies in the person's energy body and indigenous healing modalities are a type of "barrida" or sweeping that clears the mind with psychotherapy, sweeping the physical body with auricular, acupuncture, massage, tapping, using sound, aroma, herbals, etc. This helps the individual so they are no longer picked up by the flood of information which can carry them away. Stephanie Marohn, speaks to this in her books, *The Natural Medicine Guide to Schizophrenia* and *The Natural Medicine Guide to Bipolar Disorder*.

Dr. Susman's, 2010, article on *Improving Outcomes in Patients with Bipolar Disorder Through Establishing an Effective Treatment Team*, discusses how patients with bipolar disorder pose a challenge for primary care and specialty care physicians alike. He discusses how bipolar disorder can be difficult to diagnose due to often confusing presentation of the condition and then further complicated by patient denial, because of the perceived stigma associated with psychiatric diagnosis. The use of the word "denial" is complicated. In modern society and healthcare, we give structure through diagnosis

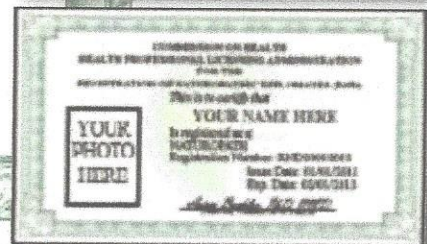
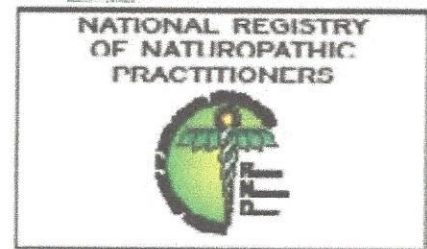
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The National Registry of Naturopathic Practitioners encourages you to become a Registered Naturopath. Upon registering with the NRNP you will be awarded the Registered Naturopathic Diplomate title, RND™. Below you will find examples of the registration certificate (actual size 8.5" x 11") and registration card (standard business card size) issued by NRNP.



and labeling and it is necessary for insurance, financial and economic reasons. In indigenous cultures, bipolar disorder, depression, psychosis, schizophrenia, and other mental conditions are a stage on the path of human development which will offer a significant opportunity for transformation. The Shaman or Healer also recognizes the person can “drown” in the ocean of consciousness. Western Medicine focuses on the symptoms and condition as something that must be stopped immediately. This is in opposition to indigenous culture view, which is to help the individual recognize they are not in balance and understand the variables involved. In the indigenous culture these individuals are expanding their minds, learning to swim in “new waters” and they need to have support systems in place, like psychotherapy, bodywork, dietary support, herbs and often pharmaceuticals so they do not drown on their journey. Many Traditional Healers see pharmaceuticals as part of a short-term treatment plan in stabilization, with a goal of reducing medication if possible and teaching life skills that strengthen the self and stabilize mood.

An essential component of a sociocultural environment is meaning. Each culture provides ways for individuals to satisfy their needs for positive affect, a good father, good mother, daughter, son, provider, employee, story teller, healer, etc. Whatever the size or complexity of the society, the members need a sense of meaning, purpose, and connection. In Traditional Medicine therapies, there is an interrelationship between patient and therapist which is a heart to heart connect of compassion. Indigenous Mental health is considered being deeply connected to Body and Spirit. Pathologies of depression, anxiety, disease, substance abuse, violence and other health problems can be interrelated to such an extent that it may be impossible to differentiate one problem from another. Comorbidity is a term used to describe the simultaneous presence of two or more chronic diseases or conditions in a patient and often makes treatment more difficult.

In the Book, “Wind In The Blood”, authors Hernan Garcia, Antonio Sierra and Gilberto Balam, shed light on how doctors and other professionals can read this study and recognize there are different routes a professional can take in addressing health needs with a supportive cultural perspective. This includes theories and philosophies of the indigenous mind. Health

care providers have their own conceptual framework, their life experiences, and their medical training. The understanding of consciousness is an expanding field of medicine. It is beneficial in a world that is dynamic with different cultures, refugees, and immigrants that providers understand cultural elements which would be useful for educational and clinical work.

We need to consider individuals who exist in the modern world, but also live in a world with a different logic, they may live in indigenous and or modern urban settings. Within these groups of individuals, there exists patterns of thinking which carry the roots of ancestry, and these individuals use an alternative logic to interpret and interact with their environment. The following are examples from the book, *Wind in The Blood*, and includes statements I might hear from community today. Many of these heartfelt statements are not shared with healthcare providers, because of fear of being hospitalized for mental illness.

- My sister was struck by a wind and her face swelled up. It is not a sickness of doctors, so I did not take her to you, I took her to see a curandero who cured her in a few hours.
- I tie a red bandanna on my son’s wrist to protect him from the evil eye.
- My wife is pregnant and she cannot eat the foods the doctor recommends because they are cold foods.
- I can’t wash my hands because I just came from working and I am feeling hot.
- This morning my two-year-old was almost kidnapped by spirits. She fell down a hill, when I reached her she was alright and told me about the children who carried her away.
- I saw of group of small black clouds that looked like bugs, one flew in my mouth and half of my face was paralyzed.
- I saw the wind like shiny silvery feathers and it picked me up and carried me several feet before dropping me and injuring my neck and arm.

These are statements from healthy, productive individuals that live with one foot in what we refer to as “reality” and one foot in the world of “ancestral logic”. Some

individuals are raised to recognize they can relate to more than one reality. Sometimes a trauma or secondary trauma hits an individual at their “core” the essence of who they are is jolted. It can often create a shift in consciousness so that the individual must hold on to the “roots” of their being. A tree with strong roots can remain standing, the belief is that the consciousness digs deep to hold on to self, but is also forced to go into deeper layers of consciousness where ancestral logic is accessed which can be confusing to the individual recovering from trauma because suddenly they are now perceiving two realities. The Traditional Healer will use indigenous modalities and often encourages the individual to see a psychiatrist and or psychologist to have the additional support of medication and therapy if needed to stabilize the individual. The goal is to empower the individual, help them develop skills of attention, differentiation and focus and not create dependence on medication if possible, or the belief of loss of self-control and the fear of a debilitating lifelong condition.

We must take into consideration the chemical pathways which influence conditions like bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, ancestral logic patterns, the lack of meaning in one’s life, and stressors that individuals are exposed to which result in mental imbalance disorders such as depression, anxiety, suicide, substance abuse and other behavioral problems. The book *Wind in The Blood* encourages a wider framework with a broad perspective from healthcare providers so that the needs of individuals are more holistically met.

The study included Meridian Point Acupuncture stimulation, which was included in the Auricular Therapy and 13 Ghost Point Therapy. According to Matt McMillen, in his article, *Acupuncture Goes Mainstream*, The Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) part of the National Institute of Health, reports In 2007, 3.1 million people tried acupuncture, a million more than in 2002.

The study included Light massage in the form of rubbing or “Raspada” and sweeping “Barrida” was applied, according to the American Massage Therapy Association, research estimates that massage therapy was a 12.1 billion industry in the United States in 2015. Guasha is a therapeutic method for pain management using tools to scrape or rub the surface of the body and relieves blood stagnation. Guasha and Reiki lack

sufficient evidence to show they are consistently effective and studies regularly suggest that methodological and quality of application should be improved.

For many individuals, especially those that identify with their Indigenous Roots, the self is intertwined with others, a family member, friends, or a co-worker. The belief is that everything is connected in a web of life, and because of this there can be permeable boundaries and this includes relationships with healthcare providers, they may be seen and accepted as extended family. Many Indigenous or Traditional Medicine Therapists also feel this permeability, it extends beyond death, we may send loving thoughts or prayers to our patients or individuals to whom we have provided service in the past.

We need tools of measurement that are acceptable to mainstream medicine and the Traditional Medicine Practitioner. The ceremonial, ritual and spiritual experiences need to be respected, honored, and regarded as profound and possibly volatile. Safe Practices and competencies in psychotherapy and bodywork are required. We must recognize that it can take months or years for an individual to accept their diagnosis and to learn consistency in selfcare. We often want to put the healing process on the “American Fast Track”, acceptance, compliance, motivation, and behavioral changes could be strengthened by a more holistic approach.

We see that the efficacy of the modalities needs to be systematically researched to support their use. Plain and simple, research is lacking. Time and money drives most of our environments, folk medicine is about relationships, body work involving compassionate touch and trust which take time and includes nutrition and dietary supplements to help support the chemical pathways. We see the statistics which include large numbers of individuals who pay billions of dollars for complementary and alternative medicine. What is it that they receive that they continue to go back to seek out alternative medicine therapy? What are these individuals receiving from complementary and alternative medicine that researchers are missing in their calculations?

In ancestral healing work practitioners are expected to be a positive stable force in a world that is constantly changing. They are expected to live in a compassionate and loving way, to provide service to those in need, to

strive to live in continuity of consciousness with Creator, keep their lives in order and be of good character. This allows one to be a “Good Hollow Bone”, a conduit or channel for the universal healing forces. This means that when one is offering a healing treatment, one simply needs to hold the line and the healing force will provide the experience that allows for the mind, body, and spirit of the individual to receive the stimulation necessary for psychological reversal into health.

The glue that keeps these therapies together are subtle threads of energies tied to mind, body, and spirit. The articles referenced in this study expressed the need for a holistic therapeutic approach which can support the various levels of consciousness and physical health. The articles that referenced indigenous or ethnic models of health communicated the importance of psychosocial health and an ancestral image of unity and community. Kindness and Caring are two important components in Curanderismo Folk Medicine, there is an understanding that we are cosmically connected to all, and influence each other, the modalities offered in this study were linked with ritual and ceremony which are purposeful activities capable of strengthening that connection and creating a protective psychological sanctuary.

The patient received treatment from March 2015 to March 2017. March 2015, when the patient started the study, he was receiving a maintenance daily dose of 1300 mg of lithium and received regularly scheduled blood tests to monitor lithium levels of toxicity. He was also on a daily dose of Geodon, an antipsychotic,

taking 80 mg twice a day for a total of 160 mg per day. The patient complained of feeling like a “zombie” with no emotions and wanted to decrease his medication. He said he wanted to cry or laugh and feel it, but he couldn’t. He also felt his sad depressive thoughts and the medication made him sleep too much. I stressed that what the study offered was a complementary approach to his current treatment plan and that he needed to work with his psychologist and or psychiatrist to safely make changes to his medication if we were to continue to work together. His psychologist was not in agreement with him so he started working solely with his psychiatrist. During the first 10 months, he slowly reduced his Geodon until he was no longer on the medication. During this time, he received weekly auricular and Traditional Healing treatments and stated he felt vulnerable, shaky and had cold sweats, but wanted to continue with his plan to reduce his medications. He also worked with his provider to decrease his Lithium, followed by a change to Limalal and is currently taking 300 mg of Limalal on 3/20/2017. Through the experience of the Platica and modalities the individual stated he wanted to manage his bipolar disorder symptoms and focus on his classes at university.

During the weekly platica conversations we discussed what was going on in his personal life and with his studies. We discussed what experiences were prompting learning and he would expand on what he observed in his environments and how he responded with new thoughts and behaviors. I asked him to explore the meaning of differentiation, levels of consciousness,



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grounding, centering and transformational learning. His self-awareness and self-care strategies were expanding. He was learning to manage different life situations. We talked about acceptance of his diagnosis. He said he accepted his diagnosis and understood the complications and the need to prevent a manic episode, when he approached his therapist about reducing his medication, he said he wanted to feel “normal” and not like a zombie. he felt he had turned a corner and his views of how he saw himself was changing, he no longer saw his bipolar disorder or autism diagnosis as fixed. He felt changing his medication was one piece of the puzzle, but he wanted to have better understanding of his diagnosis and around the subjects of spiritual matters. He shared that he had been thinking about his diagnosis of autism while in elementary school and how he remembered the behaviors of adults, teachers especially and how some could be erratic and inconsistent. He remembered using them as models for his own behaviors and getting into trouble. He also remembered his world view was split, some people like his parents were real and consistent and then there were those that were fake, behaving one way in public and having erratic, moody, mean behaviors when they were not in view. During the second year of treatment he shared he was learning about levels of consciousness, states of awareness and understanding how the spiritual highs during his mania could be transformed into meaningful experiences and integrated with differentiation to create a “New Sense of Self”.

The patient talked about his first manic episode. (The patient has experienced two manic episodes) Prior to his first episode, He was in a roll over car accident and thought he was going to die which left him with fear about his safety when traveling by motor vehicles. Shortly after that, he was in a band and making road trips, he remembers being hypervigilant, highly stressed, and anxious when traveling with repetitive thoughts about crashing. He also recognized the band members were not necessarily contentious or safe drivers on top of this his life style, self-care, diet, sleep etc. was out of balance. He feels this level of stress on top of the car accident was too much for his personal physical and psychological makeup which triggered his first manic episode. Slowly, over the next year, during the weekly platicas, he became more talkative, engaged, and shared about new experiences which included descriptions

of classes at university, workshops, social events, and shared about his emotional responses to individuals that provoked an attitude or “way of thinking” that was different from how he might have responded before. He communicated he was being more observant, and less emotionally influenced by personal interactions, such as meeting new people and being in new environments was becoming more comfortable. We talked about transformational healing and differentiation. He recognized he was processing his experiences in new ways and had terms to describe them. He is setting his own goals with personal autonomy. In Mezirow ‘s Theory of Transformation, there is a defining condition of being human in that we have to understand the meaning of our experiences and make interpretations and that this type of processing develops autonomous thinking.

He is becoming more competent as the “teacher and student” with regards to his life experiences. This communicates a transformational shift, we discussed how he can recognize how his body and mind work, how to manage stress and change, his new coping abilities, strengths, and new perception. He now includes new concepts and beliefs and can modify the variables in his daily life for consistent selfcare, while staying connected to his personal support circles and healthcare network to balance his mood, manage stress, and stay well.

The study started in March of 2015, in May, he stated he had been diagnosed with H. pylori, Helicobacter Pylori and he had stomach pain. We included education on digestive health, added an herbal remedy of slippery elm and a supplement for Intestinal Repair. He started feeling relief from his stomach pain within two weeks, continued the protocol for six months and has learned how to manage his digestive health.

During the two-year period, he did not present with mania, therefore no mania auricular protocols were offered. Depression Protocol Auricular Therapy stimulation was offered using a mental stylus on the right auricle (patient is right hand dominant). Points consisted of Shen Men, Point Zero, Occiput, Antidepressant Point, Excitement Point, Anxious Point, Master Cerebral Point, Pineal Gland, Endocrine, Brain, Master Oscillation, External Genitals E, External Genitals C, and Sympathetic Autonomic Point. Each

point was stimulated with prayer for about ten seconds each. After his second treatment, he developed bumps on the stimulated sites that looked like an allergic reaction or bug bites, the ear looked normal after two days, but the auricular treatment caused this reaction for the next two treatments.

He often communicated that he had anxiety, so he would receive a "vaccaria" ear seed on the anxiety point, which is affixed to the surface of the ear, it does not puncture the skin and is held in place with tan colored tape for two to three days. After receiving the treatment for five months, or twenty treatments the patient had an intense emotional release, when the endocrine point was stimulated. He was very clear on which point had been stimulated, he felt a release which he described as a sensation of blood pouring out his ear, which also felt like a cloud of intense sadness left his body through his right ear. After that session, he often requested extra stimulation of the endocrine point.

During the months of May 2015 to November 2015, he often presented with digestive discomfort and received the Irritable Bowel Auricular Protocol on his left auricle or non-dominant hand side. This ear was treated per the need expressed by the patient. If the patient complained of abdominal pain. The Irritable Bowel Protocol was offered because it includes the stomach point for Helicobacter Pylori, Omega 1 Point for Digestive Disorders, Constipation Point, Rectum E., Rectum C., Point, Sympathetic Autonomic Point, Abdomen Point, Pancreas, Occiput, Large Intestine, Small intestine, and the San Jiao Point. The patient often communicated additional sensitivity to the San Jiao Point.

If the patient presented with anxiety, the left or non-dominant ear was treated using the Anxiety Protocol which includes Sympathetic Autonomic Point, Shen Men, Point Zero, Heart C, Occiput, Master Cerebral or Nervousness Point, Tranquilizer Point, Adrenal Gland C., Vagus Nerve Point. If he communicated that he was feeling stressed, he received the Stress Auricular Protocol on his left auricle, which consists of the following points, ACTH, Adrenal Gland C, Adrenal Gland E, Anxious Point, Be Happy-Posterior, Endocrine, Hypothalamus, Marvelous Point, Master cerebral, muscle relaxation, occiput, point zero, psychosomatic reactions 1, psychosomatic reactions 2, shen men, tranquilizer point.

After the first year of treatments, the patient said he was feeling balanced, so we developed a maintenance treatment plan. The treatments changed from weekly to two or three times a month depending on our schedules. He was also able to call and set an appointment if he felt he was in crisis or concerned about the stability of his mood. After 18 months, maintenance treatments were scheduled monthly. The right ear receives the Depression Protocol and the left ear receives the Stress Protocol.

In summary, of the procedures, modalities and measures, the outcomes show improved health and quality of life. The procedures and methods have been described in detail. March 2015, when the patient started the study, he was receiving a daily dose of 1300 mg of lithium and a daily dose of 160 mg of Geodon per day. He is now on 300 mg of Limital per day and no longer taking Geodon. He has learned and is applying daily self-care techniques, recognizes that significant life changes can create additional stress, and surrounds himself with supportive caring individuals. He communicates that he understands there are many variables that contribute to his wellbeing and that his self-care is a lifelong responsibility.

This study includes methods of indigenous healing which have been practiced for hundreds of years and are now included in complementary and alternative medicine. The outcome of this study demonstrates that Auricular and Traditional Medicine can be effectively combined with a treatment plan for Bipolar Disorder. The study utilized Auricular therapy and Traditional Indigenous Medicine within a Holistic Cognitive Model, working toward restoring feelings of "connectedness", mental stability and finding meaning in life. This approach included cognitive strategies of living each day mindfully, medication, Platica-talk therapy, herbals, meditation, exercise, and diet.

Some institutions and organizations within the dominant culture have devalued and created fear around the topic of holistic and traditional folk medicine. New studies on the Cultures of Medicine and Indigenous and Interdependent perspectives of healing are appearing as the current health care systems around the world recognize global health requires understanding and acceptance of differences. Populations are diverse, there are those that are raised using ancestral logic, those

who identify with their indigenous roots, immigrants, and refugees, all of which need to be understood in the context of interdependent variables. We need to consider philosophies of connection to nature, family, social networks, and spirituality. Patient Centered Care, is care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences and values with providers and clinicians actively working with their patients to produce the best health outcomes possible.

Providers and integrative health professionals worldwide can help bridge the three systems of modern medical knowledge, indigenous traditional medicine, and complementary alternative medicine. Currently there is an established healthcare power hold and it will take brave pioneers in the establishment to make room for the inclusion of different medical systems and traditions. Health care providers must modify their personal conceptual framework and beliefs around their medical training. The understanding of consciousness and medicine are expanding fields which offer opportunity to bring together new bodies of medical knowledge which can contribute to education, clinical work, and health outcomes.

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