

"The Return to the Sacred Path: "Healing From the Historical Trauma and Historical Unresolved Grief among the Lakota" (1995)

To make no further recognition of distinct nationalities [Indians] by treating with tribes and bands . . . to make no further recognition of their right to the country over which they roam . . . and no further promise for payment to them of money, property, or annuities in any shape or form . . . they are to go upon said reservations to be there provided for, protected, and taught the arts of civilized life; and to make it further known and understood by said Indians that they are to have no alternative but to chose between this policy of the government and extermination . . . [Indians] shall be taken, placed, or kept on said reservations to be wards of the government, controlled and managed at its discretion. (*Senate Miscellaneous Document No.. 1, 40th Congress, 2nd Session, 1868*)

DEFINITIONS:

1. **HISTORICAL UNRESOLVED GRIEF.** Grief that is chronic, delayed, or impaired...and is unresolved. Incomplete mourning. Sx: prolonged signs of acute grief, depression, substance abuse, somatization. Disenfranchised grief—grief that is denied open acknowledgement and public expression... results from generations of devastating losses that have been disenfranchised through the prohibition of indigenous ceremonies as well as through the larger society's denial of the magnitude of genocide against American Indians.
2. **CUMULATIVE TRAUMA.** In this study, cumulative trauma is defined as collective and compounding emotional and psychic wounding over time, both over the life span and across generations.
3. **HISTORICAL TRAUMA . . .** is synonymous with cumulative trauma but emphasizes that the trauma is multi-generational and is not limited to the life span.
4. **INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF GRIEF AND TRAUMA.** The transfer of features or symptoms across generations, from the survivors to their descendants, is delineated as intergenerational transmission.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- *"Memorial Candles"* ... one [designated] child in a [Holocaust] survivor family as a 'memorial candle' who **a)** carries the burden of parental trauma, **b)** is the link to the past and to the lost relatives and ancestors, and **c)** participates in the parental emotional and psychic reality more than her or his siblings..."Memorial candles" are charged with the responsibilities to establish the Jewish nation...
- *Cultural pathology*
- *Survivor Guilt*
- "an unconscious notion that to stop hurting is tantamount to *abandoning or betraying the dead*"
- [Adult] *Children of Survivors*—The children of survivors assume the unresolved ancestral grief, living simultaneously in a world of the past and the present