PILOT PROJECT
AUGUST 3-4-5, 2027





INTRODUCTION

Police officers serving First Nations and Inuit communities often work in complex environments where cultural competence, trauma-informed practice, and personal wellness are essential to building trust and delivering effective services. To address these unique realities, this pilot project proposes a one-week Training and Wellness Program that combines professional development, Indigenous cultural learning, and personal wellness.

By integrating Indigenous teachings, practical workshops, and meaningful cultural experiences, the program aims to strengthen participants' knowledge, resilience, and professional competencies while supporting their mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being. Through this holistic approach, police officers will be better equipped to provide culturally safe, compassionate, and effective services while maintaining their own health and wellness.

TRAINING AND WELLNESS WEEK

for Police Officers Working with First Nations and Inuit

	Monday 2	Tuesday 3	Wednesday 4	Thursday 5	Friday 6
8:30 12:00	Travel Day	• Opening Fire • Introduction circle and week expectations • Introduction of the week program	Sharing Circle Blanket Exercise	Cultural Day Sharing Circle Preparing the Sweat Lodge	• Brunch • Week evaluations and certificates presentation
12:00 13:30	Lunch				
13:30 16:00		Workshops: • 7 Grandfather Teachings • Medicine Wheel Teachings	Workshops: • The Strength of Working Together • Wellness Plan	Ceremony: Sweat Lodge	
17:00 18:00	Dinner				
18:00 20:00		Activity: Drum Making	Free Time	Free Time	


PROGRAM
OVERVIEW

THE SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS

This workshop introduces participants to the Seven Grandfather Teachings, foundational values that guide many First Nations cultures. Through storytelling, guided discussions, and personal reflection, participants explore each teaching represented by an animal: Humility (Wolf), Honesty (Sabe), Respect (Moose), Courage (Bear), Wisdom (Beaver), Truth (Turtle), and Love (Eagle).

The workshop encourages participants to strengthen self-awareness, personal accountability, and respectful relationships by applying these teachings to both their professional and personal lives. It promotes balance, healing, and a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives and values.



THE MEDICINE WHEEL

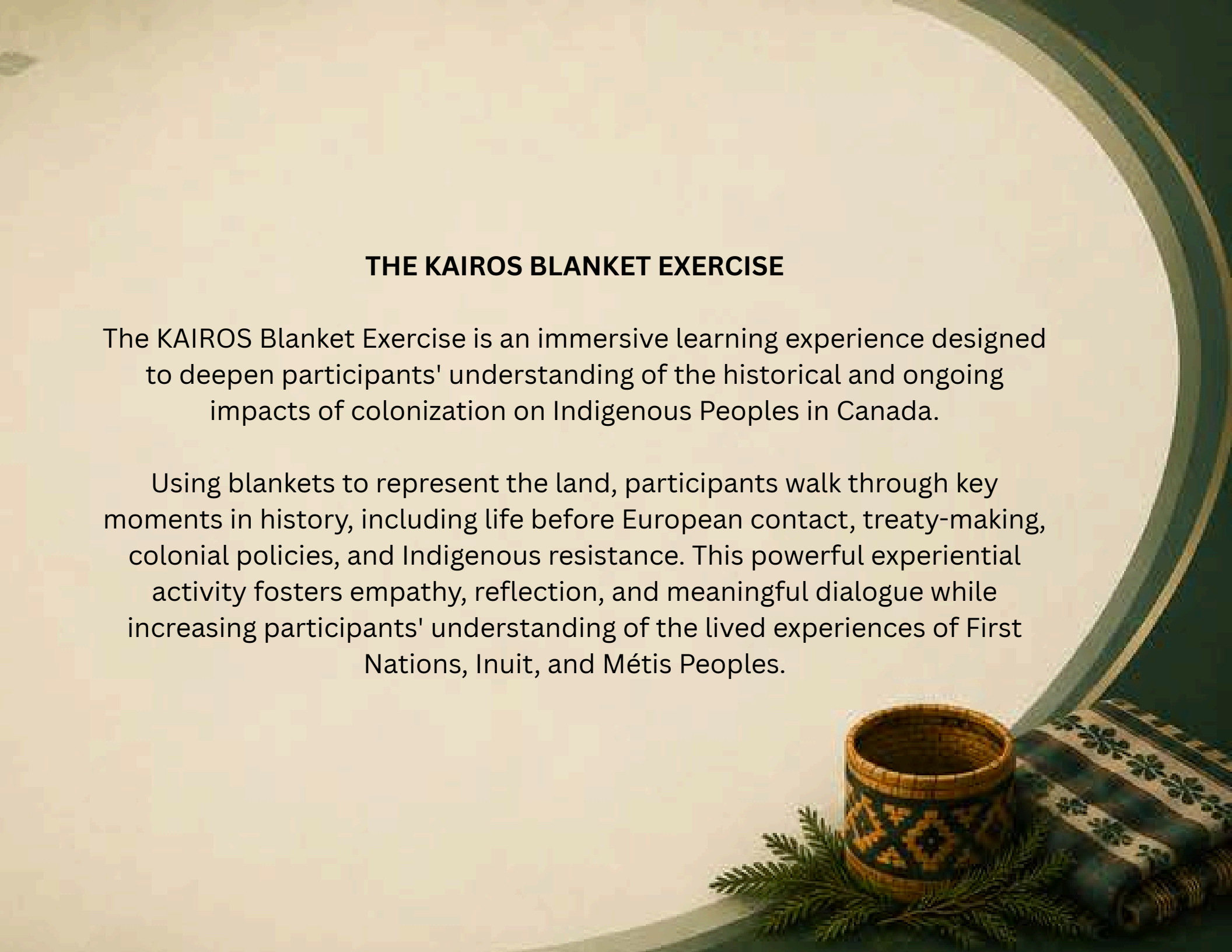
This workshop introduces the Medicine Wheel, a foundational Indigenous teaching that illustrates the interconnectedness of all aspects of life. Participants explore the significance of the four directions, the seasons, the elements, the four sacred medicines—Tobacco, Sweetgrass, Sage, and Cedar—and the importance of maintaining balance among the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical dimensions of wellness.

This session encourages participants to reflect on their own well-being while gaining a deeper appreciation for Indigenous worldviews and holistic approaches to health.

THE KAIROS BLANKET EXERCISE

The KAIROS Blanket Exercise is an immersive learning experience designed to deepen participants' understanding of the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization on Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Using blankets to represent the land, participants walk through key moments in history, including life before European contact, treaty-making, colonial policies, and Indigenous resistance. This powerful experiential activity fosters empathy, reflection, and meaningful dialogue while increasing participants' understanding of the lived experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

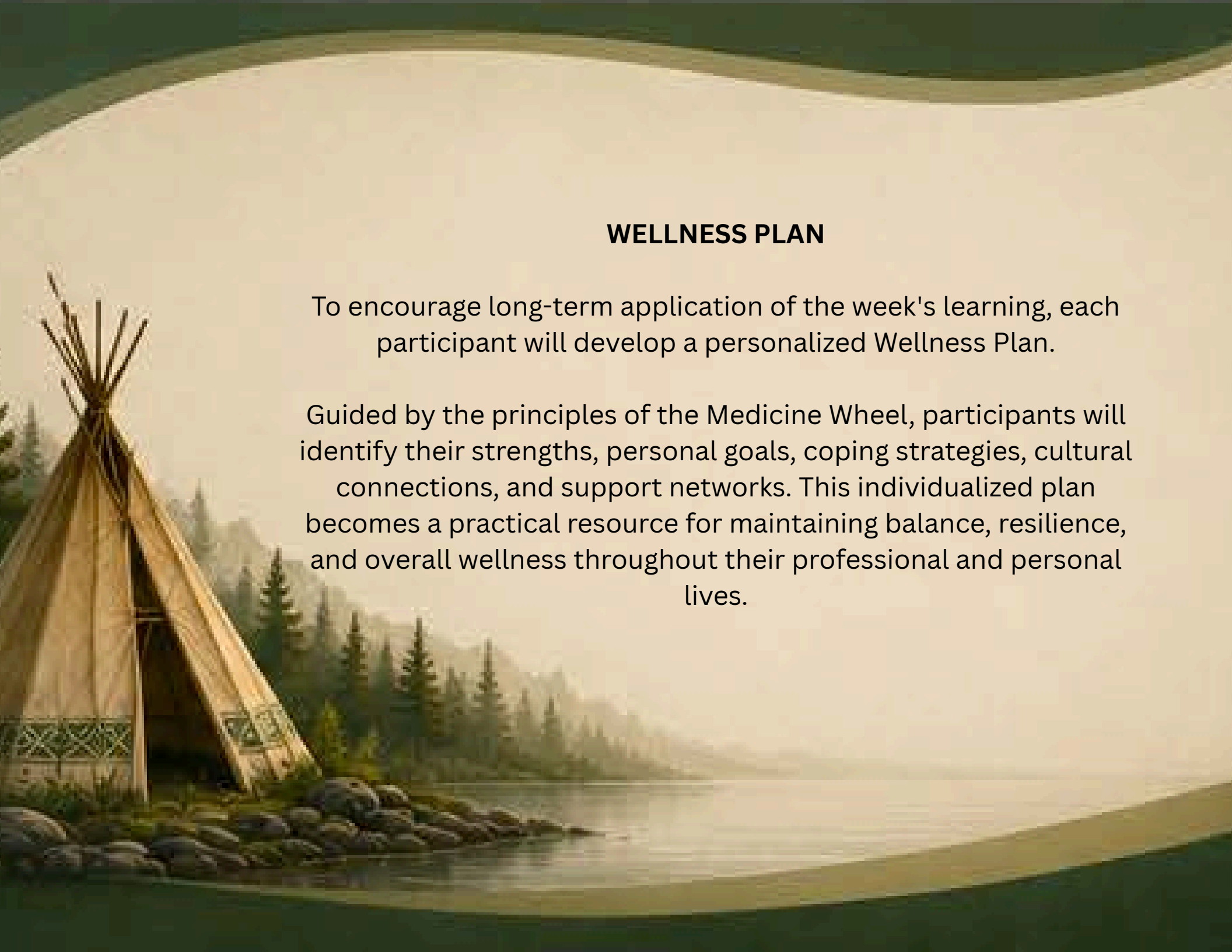


THE STRENGTH OF WORKING TOGETHER

Supporting individuals who have experienced trauma presents unique challenges for helping professionals. This workshop focuses on fostering healthy workplace relationships, teamwork, and personal wellness.

Drawing upon Indigenous teachings and the concept of the circle, participants examine how colonization, intergenerational trauma, and lateral violence can affect communication, trust, and team dynamics. The workshop also addresses topics such as burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and moral distress.

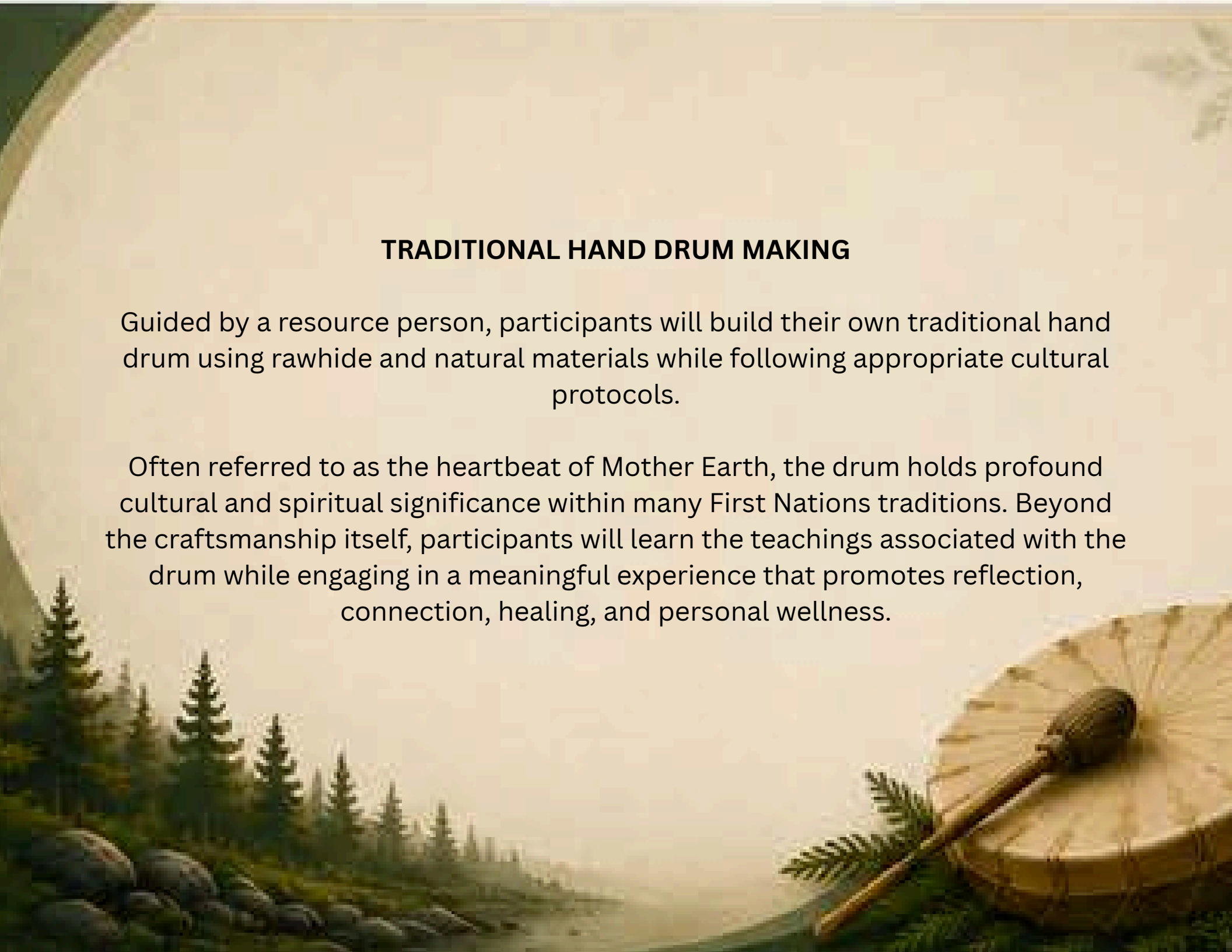
Participants leave with practical strategies to strengthen communication, resolve conflict, support one another, and create healthier workplace environments built on respect, accountability, and collaboration.



WELLNESS PLAN

To encourage long-term application of the week's learning, each participant will develop a personalized Wellness Plan.

Guided by the principles of the Medicine Wheel, participants will identify their strengths, personal goals, coping strategies, cultural connections, and support networks. This individualized plan becomes a practical resource for maintaining balance, resilience, and overall wellness throughout their professional and personal lives.



TRADITIONAL HAND DRUM MAKING

Guided by a resource person, participants will build their own traditional hand drum using rawhide and natural materials while following appropriate cultural protocols.

Often referred to as the heartbeat of Mother Earth, the drum holds profound cultural and spiritual significance within many First Nations traditions. Beyond the craftsmanship itself, participants will learn the teachings associated with the drum while engaging in a meaningful experience that promotes reflection, connection, healing, and personal wellness.

SWEAT LODGE CEREMONY

Participants will have the opportunity to take part in a traditional Sweat Lodge Ceremony, facilitated by an experienced Elder or Indigenous Knowledge Keeper.

The Sweat Lodge is a sacred ceremony of purification, healing, and renewal practiced by many First Nations. Through prayer, sacred medicines, songs, and traditional teachings, participants are invited to reconnect with themselves, one another, and the natural world in a respectful and culturally grounded environment.

Participation is entirely voluntary and conducted in accordance with cultural protocols to ensure safety, respect, and a meaningful learning experience.

CONCLUSION

This pilot project recognizes that professional excellence and personal wellness are inseparable when serving First Nations and Inuit communities. By integrating specialized training, Indigenous cultural teachings, and opportunities for personal renewal, the program equips police officers with practical tools to enhance cultural competence, strengthen resilience, and deliver services with greater confidence, compassion, and effectiveness.

Beyond individual professional development, this initiative has the potential to strengthen relationships between police officers and the communities they serve, fostering trust, mutual understanding, and reconciliation. As a pilot project, it will also provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of this holistic approach and support the development of a sustainable model for training and wellness that can benefit public safety organizations and Indigenous communities across Canada.

MÌGWECH

WANAKI