The Spider Story: Journey Webs

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Acknowledgement of Country
Background

Three Agencies (one local health district service, one local not-for-profit and one local Non-government organisation) work together to:

- Define “Gaps” with client
- Value and prioritise goals important to client and Social Emotional Wellbeing
- Help to develop individual capacity
Background

- Acknowledgement of impact and influence of Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) upon individual client health spectrums
- Collaborative, patient centred plan needed
- Recognise cultural differences and dissimilar approaches between First Nations and Western medicine.
Listening…

Within Western Cultures historically and currently:

- Speaking and using Voice = key method individuals contribute and participate in society (even though most people listen more!)
- Shift in technology often focuses on mechanics of communication rather than quality of interaction
Listening...

“Dadirri: A special quality, a unique gift of the Aboriginal people, is inner deep listening and quiet still awareness”

– quote by Judy Atkinson adapted from writings of Miriam Rose Ungunmerr Bauman
The Spider Story

- **The Spider is saying that you have a strong web.** To keep it strong you must be aware of it – all the time. Focus on keeping it stronger not weaker.

- **The reverse of Spider:** Your webs been hit by a storm - a spiritual storm and its hanging by a thread. Have you ever been blown from your path? The web now needs to be completely rewound thread by thread and then respun.

- **Call on the Spider to take away your confusion and respin your journeys’ web.**

Wiradjuri lore teacher, MinMia
Building Webs

- Journey Web construction ensures the individual is always at the centre of plans
- A holistic, cooperative individualised care “blueprint” is created
- A “Living” Document
- Performed and developed informally
Building Webs

Determine ‘common ground’ understanding and concepts between First Nations and Western models & concepts for:

SEWB

Physical Health

Other areas of need
(i.e. Legal Aid, Financial, Family and Community concerns/worries.)
Weaving Webs

For each client:

- Allow client to tell her or his story and talk about individual journey
- Introduce ‘Broken Web’ concept and how to repair it (Problem solving and process identification.)
- End goal of increased client capacity building to self weave and repair individual Web.
Weaving Webs

- Assist client to understand who and/or what service help weave each section of their web most effectively.

- Broaden ‘catchment’ for services by working together (soft referrals into service)
Weaving Webs

- Allows individuals to work cohesively with multiple organisations without duplication or feeling overwhelmed.
- Encourages goal setting while addressing concerns perceived as more immediate by client.
- Easily identifiable and understandable
What totem resonates?

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Example Webs
Charlie’s Story

- Ongoing SEWB and medical concerns
- Engaged with community and SEWB Coordinator
- Connected with Bungee Bidgeg Clinic
- Prioritised Surfing for SEWB
- Successfully completed complex treatments & now has regular GP visits

Journey Web Image used courtesy of NSLHD Aboriginal Health Service ©
Many Stories

Clients report:

- Improved SEWB
- Sense of achievement and independence
- Clarity around direction and provides focus
- Ability to help and advise other community members
- Increased level of confidence and understanding when engaging with service providers.

Journey Web Image used courtesy of NSLHD
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Conclusions

- Culturally relevant imagery & approach.
- Builds community connection between individuals and healthcare providers.
- Eases negotiation of own web repairs, improving independence and individual strength, both mentally and physically.
- Helps clients and clinicians to respond to issues rather than react.
Conclusions

- Elevates presence of First Nations wisdom and culture by incorporating into everyday healthcare processes.
- Matches model with community requirements
- Practical and Sustainable Implementation
- Use local totems (e.g. Gaimarigal)
- Journey Web template design being commissioned in consultation with local communities
Take Home Message

Learn from the story of the Spider to help spin and reweave stronger, more resilient Journey Webs.

Reframe the current standardised Western healthcare spectrum to a more culturally relevant and applicable story and a shift in client engagement will evolve.