



# Colonization, Trauma, and Learning the Risks that Lead to Sex Trafficking and Sex Assault.

Plus Why We do What We Do

# Learning Objectives

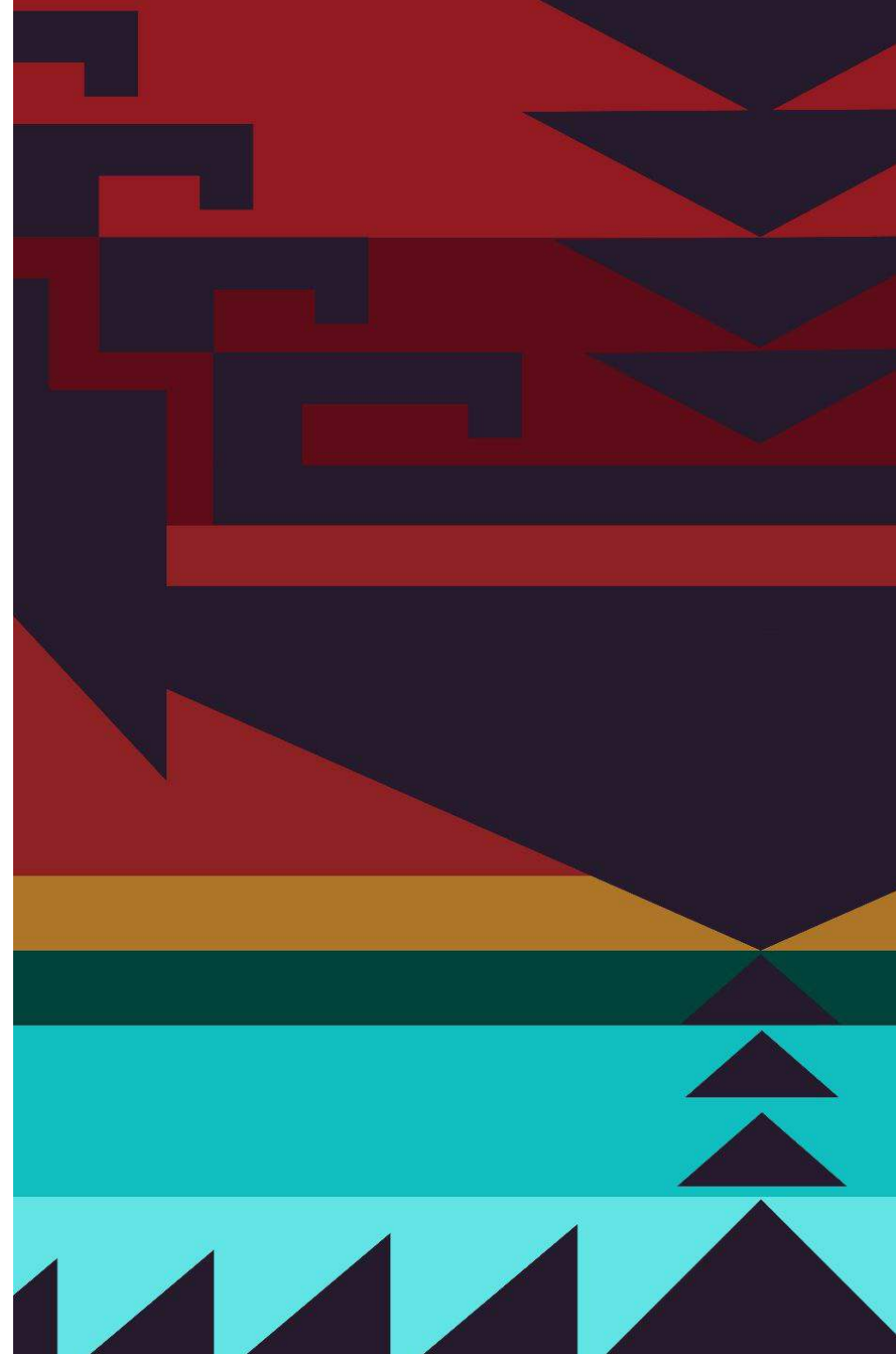
Understanding Why Colonization Makes Indigenous Populations More at Risk for Sex Crimes

Understanding the Link Between Memory and Emotions

Emotions as a Trigger and the Cycle of Enduring Repeat Abuse

Truth in Reporting to Law Enforcement

Why We Do What We Do and How it's Healed Us

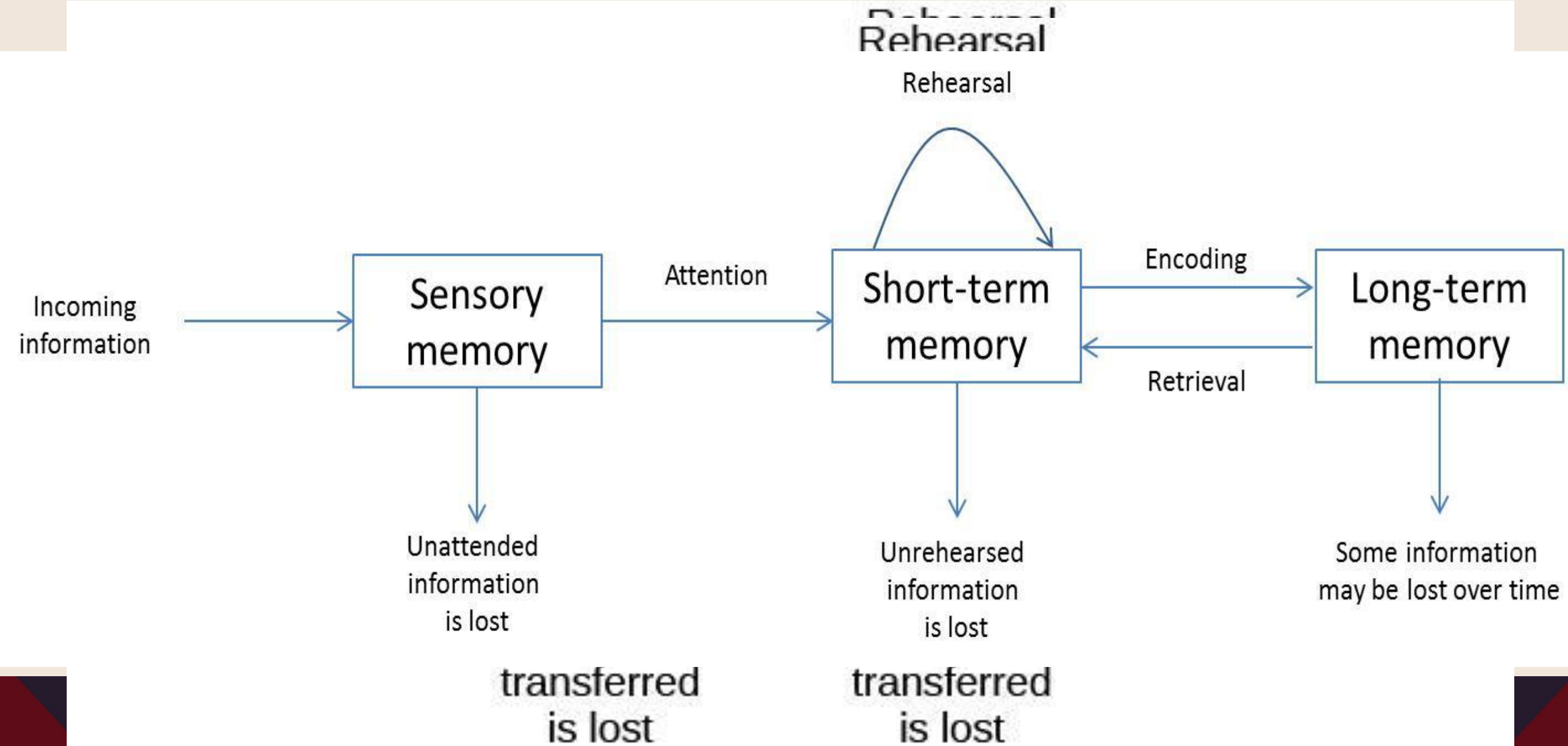


# Steady Yourself For a Brain Exercise





# Multi-Model Memory



# LONG TERM MEMORY

## IMPLICIT MEMORY

UNCONSCIOUS  
RETRIEVAL

NON-VERBAL

PROCEDURAL  
(learned skills & tasks)

EMOTIONALLY &  
SOMATICALLY BASED

PRIMING (exposure to stimulus  
affects future responses)

## EXPLICIT MEMORY

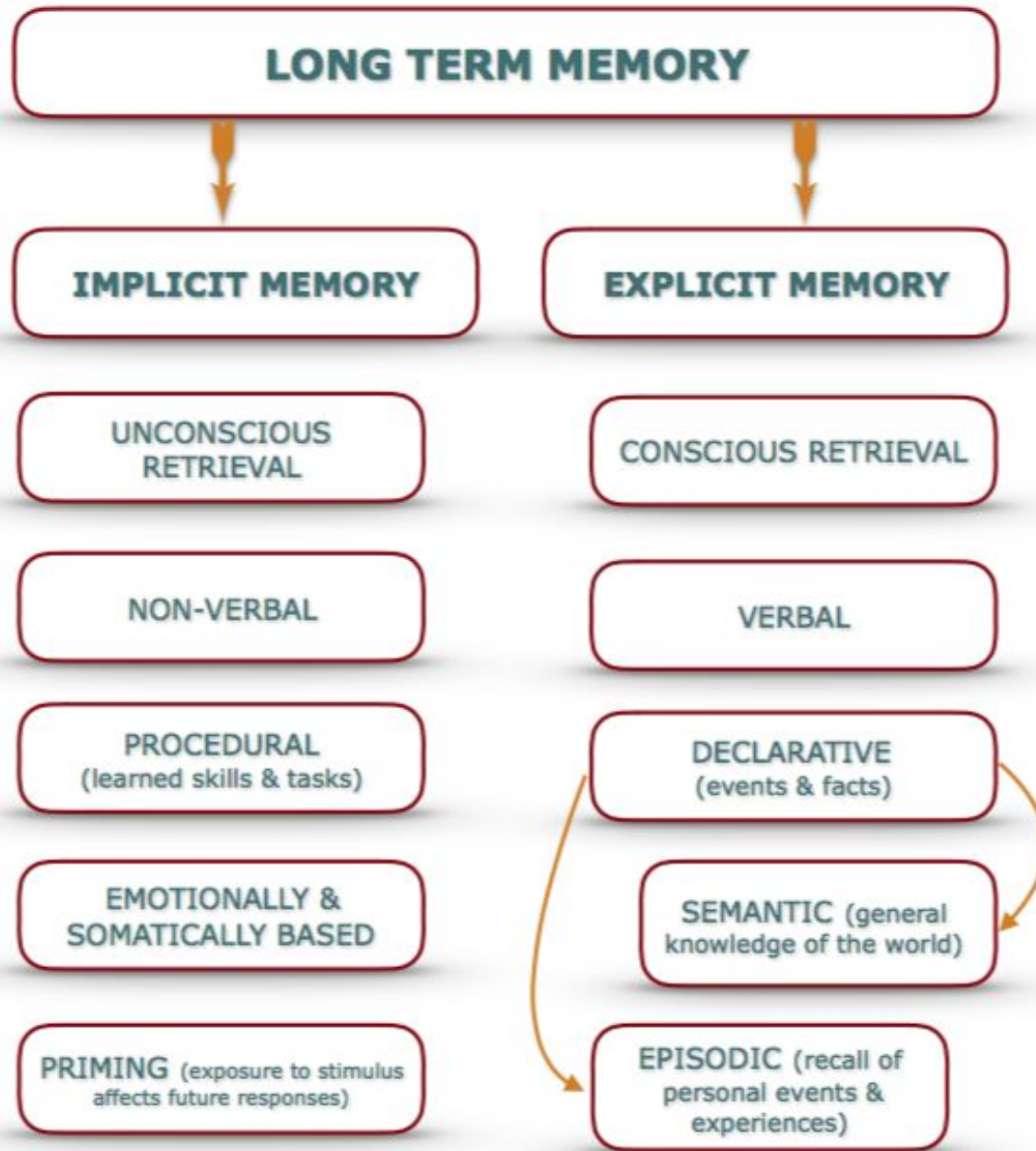
CONSCIOUS RETRIEVAL

VERBAL

DECLARATIVE  
(events & facts)

SEMANTIC (general  
knowledge of the world)

EPISODIC (recall of  
personal events &  
experiences)



# Can We Talk About the Link

Let's Consider how Historic Trauma, Colonization, and PTSD symptoms might impact how our community might make us more susceptible to sex crimes, and domestic violence.

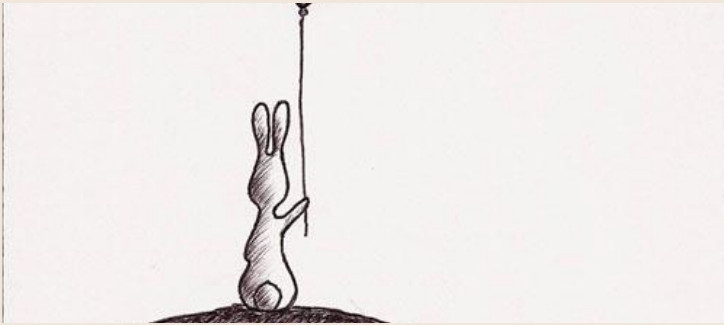


# Colonization's Impact on Risk Factors

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# Risks Factors as a precursor to trafficking



Isolation

- **Homelessness**
- Poverty
- Lack of Economic Power



Emotional Distress

- Family Dysfunction
- Substance Abuse
- Domestic Violence



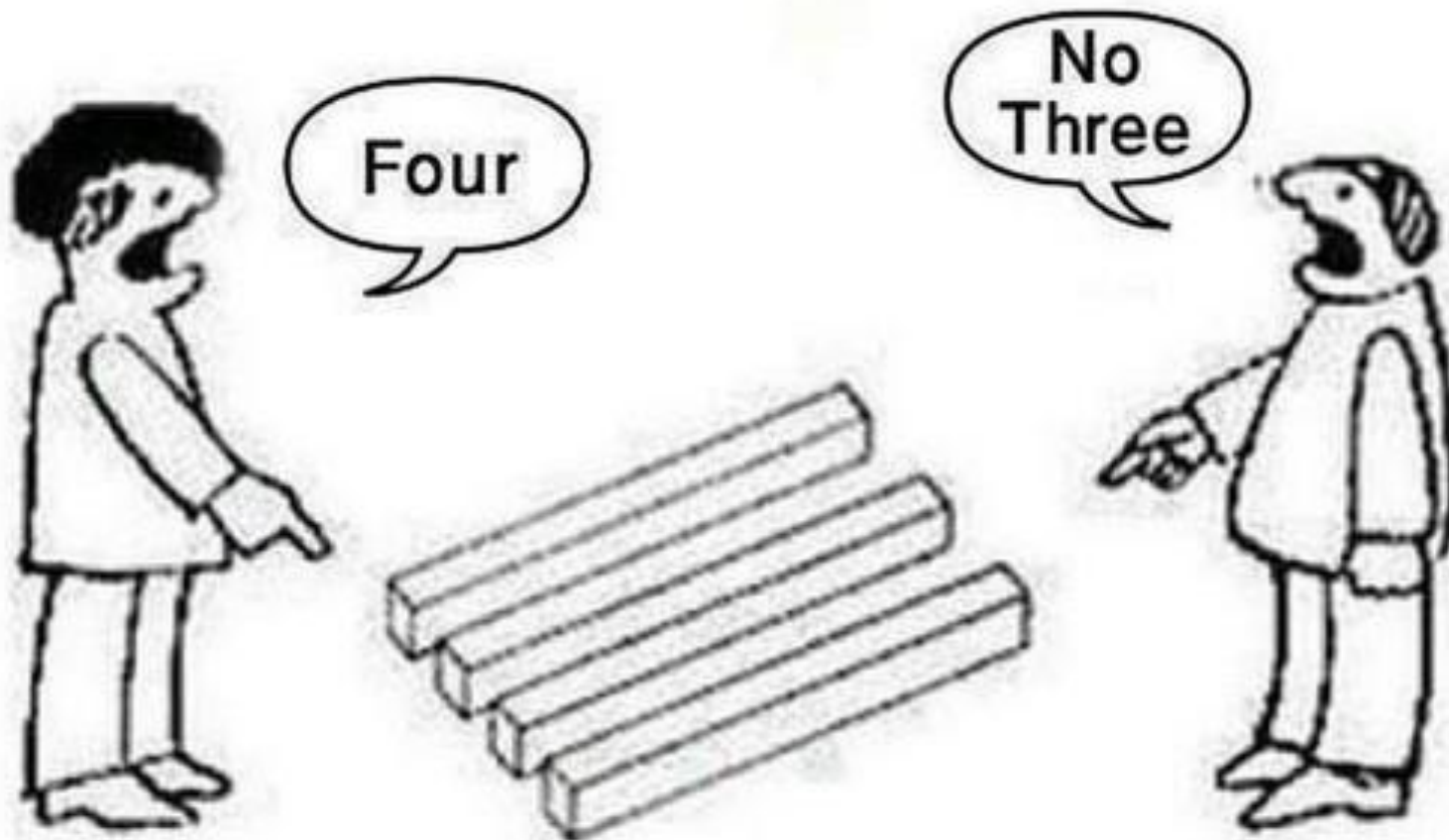
Vulnerable

Sex Abuse

- Mental Illness
- Lack of Social Support

# Interpreting Risk Factors

**It is really confusing!!!**



# Evaluating Risk Factors and MMIW

There is no standard assessment for risk factors in Oklahoma that indicates when to raise the threat level for a missing person. In fact risk factors for trafficking are generally seen as factors that EXPLAIN away a missing person episode.

For example- well do they use drugs becomes a reason for saying that a person just left of their own accord. However, even drug users have habits that families can identify as significant.

Additionally many in the Native community have a predisposed idea about how interaction with cops will turn out. This winds up in families delaying reporting, or trying to avoid it all together. (The history of ICWA alone gives us an in depth look at why we choose not to pursue interactions with police.)

These failed responses leave a woman or girl in the world longer which escalates the chances homicide, trafficking, weather exposure deaths, suicides etc.



# Why risk factors, colonization, and trauma create more risks

Grooming- at the heart of trafficking is this phenomenon. Grooming, or seasoning as it is also called, occurs when a healthy individual is broken down mentally to the point in which they can be controlled so much so that a person can sell them with no resistance.

Grooming preys on vulnerable, needy people who often lack the basic necessities such as love, food, housing, and economic bargaining power.

Domestic Violence- pimping can involve some of the most violent forms of domestic violence there is

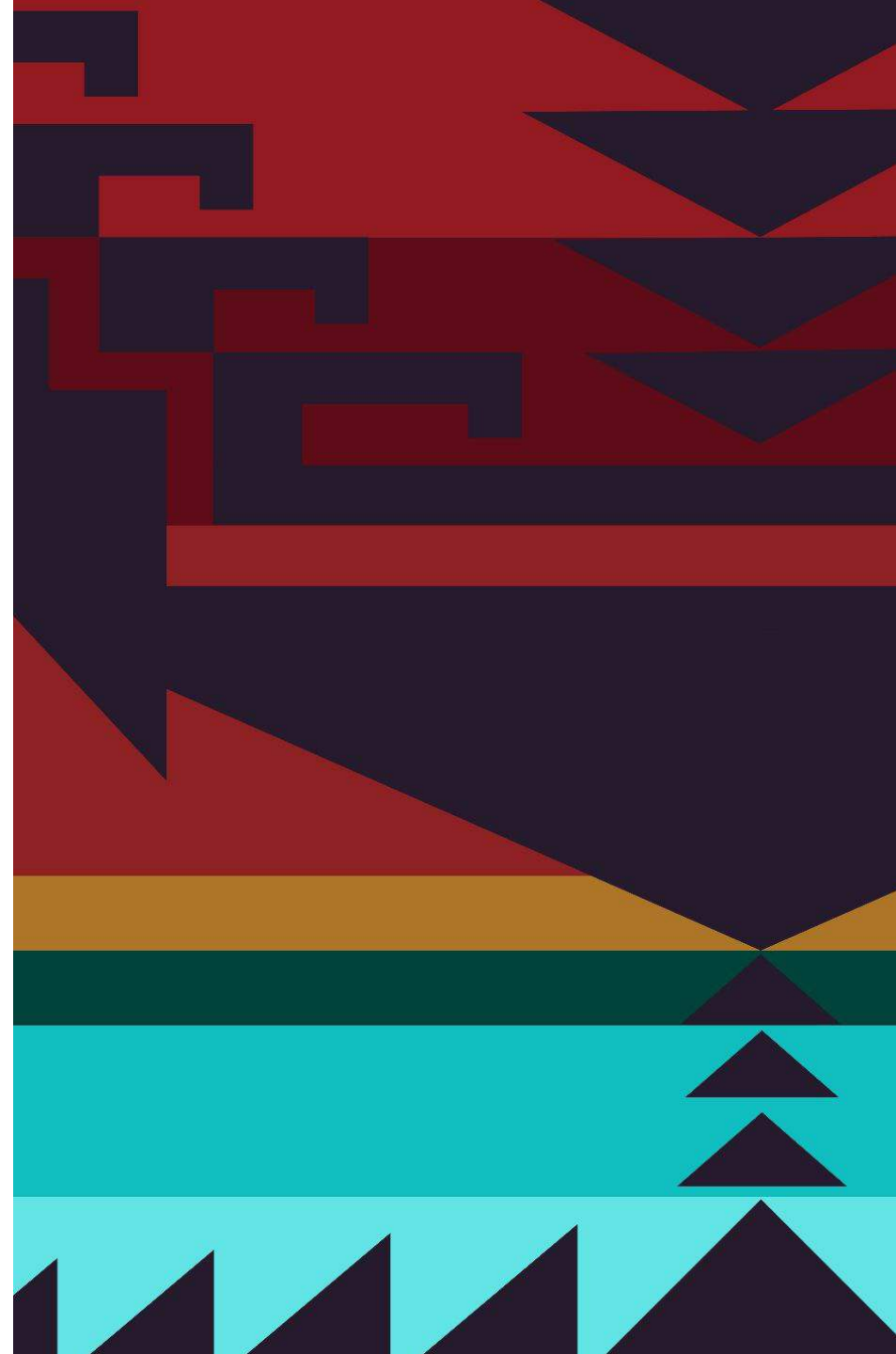
Both of these behaviors create emotional conditioning in the long term memory system making victims unaware of how they respond to these behaviors. One type of grooming looks no different to a victim so they respond the same to another abuser.



## Substance Abuse in Tribal Communities

### Why substance abuse in a home is a risk factor

- Substance abuse and colonization
- Can be any substance abuse in the home
- The victim can also use substance as an increased risk factor
- Lowered inhibitions and inability to process safety concerns
- Addicts frequently blame those around them for their problem, and reason that if they were doing a better job taking care of them their problem wouldn't exist.



# Sex Assault as a Risk Factor

Native American Females have the highest rates of sex assault than any other race. Some estimates place native women as 2.5 times more likely to experience assault.

Although most abusers target their own race, native American females are the only race in which sex offenders will offend across racial boundaries. Most sexual assaults on Native Women are committed by non-natives.

1 in 3 women of color experience sex assault in their lifetime. New studies indicate 87 percent in Indigenous women and girls

More than any other risk factors a combination of episodic homelessness and sex assaults (in my experience) are the two strongest risk factors that result in human trafficking.

Sex assault victims often have an unhealthy view and intimate relationships resulting to “promiscuous” behavior or risky sexual encounters after the assault. This typically creates preconceived notions about a victim when they become missing. Grooming these victims is easier.



A decorative vertical panel on the left side of the slide. It features a central light blue horizontal band containing several dark blue geometric shapes: a diamond in the center, and triangles pointing left and right on either side. Above and below this band are horizontal stripes in dark blue, teal, and gold, with dark blue triangles pointing towards the center of the stripes.

# Episodic Home Instability

This leads to a necessity for basic essentials and is often referred to as survival prostitution.

Survival prostitution leads girls to a pimp very quickly. Pimps troll escort sites, and other areas looking for victims. They also pay money to people providing necessities to sell them to the pimp.

This is another area that is often interpreted as a reason for a person to be missing rather than evaluating the risk that a person will run into a pimp, or drug dealer who extracts sex favors for a place to stay.

# Foster Care

In 1976 the federal government mandated through the Indian child welfare act that tribes have control over the future of their own children when state child welfare entities become involved in the lives of native children. Prior to this native children were taken into state custody for minor infractions comparative to their white counterparts. Native children were taken into custody at almost 5 times the rate of non-natives. These children were sold via the adoption industry to white families. Prior to this the federal government used boarding schools to gain control over the rearing of native youth.

At one point in the last four years native children represented almost 40 percent of foster care while representing just 9 percent of the population. (This was the Oklahoma state percentages.)



# History of Trauma in Home and Colonization

Domestic violence once upon a time was met with the severest of reproofs in most tribal communities. The onset of domestic violence in tribal communities is most often linked to boarding school attendance where native youth experienced corporal punishment for the first time. These practices along with isolation of our youth from their tribe and the inability to communicate as their tribal language was stripped from them led to what we now see as domestic violence in tribal homes.

We are living in the age of boarding school grandparents. Boarding school participants experienced violence so traumatic that the stories often aren't believed by society because of the graphic nature of the violence.

The violence was often committed by Christian organizations or military members. They included rape, torture, isolation, starvation, and other forms of maltreatment.

The boarding school environment breeds submission which most groomers require in order to traffic a woman or child.



# Indigenous and Invisibility

It's rare that people know about the violence, poor education, and low socioeconomic opportunities, hits natives families more than any other race.

Until we reduce the risks factors plaguing native communities that are in a large part as a result of colonization, we will never reduce the risk of being trafficked, assaulted, beat, humiliated, marginalized....

Attempts to educate the communities on the destruction colonization had on our lives is generally met with the "get over it" mentality even though the events were not so long ago. This creates a larger systematic process in which Native victims are marginalized.

We often have the highest suicide rate, the lowest testing and graduation rates, high teen pregnancy rates, lowest economic bargaining power, but that information is rarely spoken about publicly even in talks about diversity, and under served communities.



# Food Trauma and Colonization

Food Sovereignty vs Subsisting on land with loss of mobility being used to food programs like USDA  
Commodities Program  
Food Trauma in its role in sex crimes, and domestic violence



# Our **STORIES**

This segment will contain a personal expression of MMIP State Chapter's Board and how they've used the MMIP movement to help heal themselves.

# Review and Questions