

# Understanding Native American Culture:

Insights for Recovery Professionals  
and Other Wellness Practitioners

**Second Edition**

by Don L. Coyhis

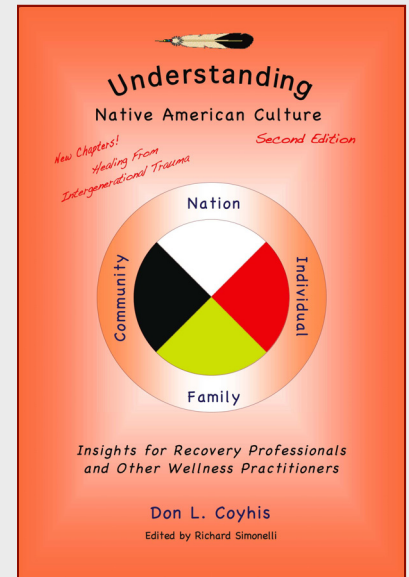


Don Coyhis

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## *About the book*

The original *Understanding Native American Culture: Insights for Recovery Professionals* by Don Coyhis, is a booklet that hundreds have read since it was published as a First Edition in 1999. It is a short book that teaches about Native cultural issues, but from the point of view of addictions recovery and healing. The First Edition of *Understanding Native American Culture* came out just as the Wellbriety Movement was gathering strength and getting under way. It appeared just as the first cross-country Hoop Journey took place in the spring of 1999.

The First Edition talked about 1) Substance abuse and cultural issues in Indian Country; 2) The Teachings of the Medicine Wheel; 3) Native American Values and Behaviors; and, 4) an Overview of the 12 Steps expressed in the Native way. There was also an anonymous case study describing a successful use of the principles of the book, plus a comprehensive list of references in the field of culture-appropriate recovery. But a lot has happened in Native American, Alaska Native and First Nations healing and wellness in the ten years since this booklet came out.

**Now, at the start of 2009, we are excited and proud to bring our healing story up to date with a new, Second Edition of the 1999 book.**

*Understanding Native American Culture: Insights for Recovery Professionals and Other Wellness Practitioners, Second Edition, by Don L. Coyhis*, is twice as long as the original. It contains the entire original book, plus a new Preface and three brand new chapters making up the 2009 edition. These three new chapters go into depth about the boarding or residential school experience that Native people in both the US and Canada went through from 1879 to about 1970. It presents a capsule history of the boarding school era, some details about what happened in the schools, and perhaps most importantly, *how intergenerational trauma can become intergenerational healing*.

We feel that healing from intergenerational and historic trauma is, for some, the next step in the healing journey. We think that such knowledge and the *heart-healing* it represents is one of the things that puts the “Well” into Wellbriety.



This new book is for anyone who wants to know what happened in the boarding school era. It discusses how we are now approaching an *era of thriving* for the First Nations people of North America. It will find readers among *counselors, healers of all sorts, treatment center staff members, students of Native Studies courses and programs, high school students, teachers at all levels of education, libraries, and those in leadership positions of any type*. It may be one of the only books of its kind that talks about First Nations culture from a recovery, healing and wellness point-of-view.