

## Reclaiming indigenous healing legacies

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The work of partnering with community members and healers to co-create and reimagine syncretic models of care, which adapt the ritualistic modes of healing from home countries, and respond to the differing cultural practices; Reclaiming Indigenous Healing Practices. In 2017, immigration and access to healthcare are two of the biggest challenges we'll face as a people. Often families migrate to new lands and abandon ancestral medicines to assimilate. In this process, accessibility to traditional plant medicines, community healers, and support is lost. Surviving the Western medical industrial complex has proven challenging to many immigrant families. Distrust of medical practitioners, lack of cultural competency among practitioners, and poor cross-cultural communication contribute to the difficulty immigrants face navigating

healthcare systems. Practitioners often use language that disenfranchises patients seeking care. Many indigenous healing traditions have been shared orally; a system of knowledge-sharing devalued in the West. Additionally, many Western practitioners have colonized many of our traditions and exploited indigenous resources and modalities, yet are often unwilling to engage in a reciprocal knowledge exchange with immigrant practitioners. This devaluation and appropriation of immigrants' traditional practices result in further marginalization. Many immigrant grandmothers who provide their family and communities with life-saving ancestral medicine. These medicine holders are also the artists of their community: facilitating ritual, storytelling, healing songs, and laying of hands to maintain their community's health, in mind, body and spirit. They hold the wisdom from their home countries, where many practiced as midwives, spiritual healers, and medicine women.

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