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| **Participating, Protecting, and Promoting a New Food Security/Food Sovereignty Infrastructure: A Strengths-Based** **Systems Approach for Garnering High Levels of Community Involvement in a North American Tribal Setting** |
| A Native American health program is tackling the dual challenges of food scarcity and diabetes by quickly building food-to-school-to-community infrastructure which consists of 5 geodesic greenhouses and a dozen classroom grow-towers, accompanying curricula, projects and events. Threats include vandalism, and reluctance among educators to partake in new programs. The strength-based-systems approach brings three key strategies and measurable outcomes offering safe spaces that are inclusive, and resilient for sustaining this nascent food ecology.  **Objectives**  **First**, to identify the strength-based systems approach, its strategies, processes and measured outcomes through the food initiative. **Second**, to train participants on the practical aspects of participatory growing through the alignment of purpose paradigm. **Third**, to share the application of theory-based models that honour Native American traditions as resilient, central and inclusive to the program initiative.  **Format**  Overview of the strengths-based systems approach (10-minutes). Video of the successful restoration of the pure American Bison to the tribal lands as addressing historical trauma, colonization, displacement, captivity, mass starvation, federal food dependence, and the contemporary peril of “food deserts”. (5-minute video clip/ 10-minutes for questions/discussion).  Workshop breaks into groups that rotate through three separate case studies presented by youth tribal leaders A) Practical troubleshooting of infrastructure. B) Youth documentation processes and visual inquiry. C) School-based participatory tasting, cooking and Native recipe community collaborative. (20-minute repeated, simultaneous intervals with discussions).  **Learning goals**  Like many populations, this community faces the notoriously challenging behavioural features of encouraging tastes for healthier food, and permanently reintroducing healthful, native foods to replace less healthy choices. Learning goals include:   1. Participants gain knowledge of a strengths-based systems approach to a unique Native food sovereignty program. 2. Participants receive practical training for building a food infrastructure of geodesic greenhouses, grow towers, and mobile kitchens. 3. Participants leave with specific tools to facilitate the participation of the community culture as central to improved nutrition and health belief models. |