The Tribal STAR Training Model

The Tribal STAR Training Model contains roles for three individuals:

- A Tribal member
- A non-Tribal member
- A Tribal Elder (an individual 55 years or older who is known in the Tribal community).

This team facilitates discussions, presents lecturettes, directs large and small group activities, and mediates challenging or sensitive discussions that end with positive closure. This team works together to create an atmosphere of openness and trust.

The team models **cross-cultural collaboration** by utilizing trainers who are both Tribal and non-Tribal, and intergenerational by including an Elder (a tribal elder that is respected and trusted in community). Modeling of cross-cultural collaboration includes:

- Visible cross-cultural trainers
- Cross-cultural welcome/opening (ideally with non-Tribal and Tribal representatives)
- Acknowledging contributions of both Tribal and non-Tribal parties
- Utilizing outreach efforts to obtain input from both Tribal and non-Tribal venues.

The team conducts the training as a **cultural immersion program**, by creating an environment that is governed by Tribal rather than western values. This is experienced by participants not only through the training format, but also by the etiquette they will observe during lunchtime. Functioning as an immersion program includes:

- Training format which includes cultural components through:
  - Opening and closing ceremonies
  - Etiquette and decorum that follows tribal protocols
- Sharing cultural history, music, stories, and art
- Integrating tribal spirituality

A **holistic approach** of integrating activities and discussions that touch upon the physical (body), mental (mind), emotional (heart), and spiritual (spirit) aspects of each participant is also an important component of the training. This approach is similar to the adult learning theory (ensuring a variety of sensory modalities), but is framed in the context of the American Indian belief system of “living in balance” with one’s body, mind, heart, and spirit. Utilizing a holistic approach includes integrating an American Indian belief system of living in balance with one’s body, mind, heart, and spirit, with adult learning theory.

**Tribal Youth** are intended to be the center of all discussions, and their best interest is remembered in all outcomes throughout each small and large group discussion. Placing youth at the center of all discussions and outcomes includes maintaining a common
interest and focus on the needs of Tribal foster youth during collaborative discussions that can lead to positive outcomes.