Multicultural work, PMADs and Native American Women
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• You don’t know what you don’t know. Watch out for assumptions.
• Know that “PPD” as western medicine understands it may not be a meaningful concept to a Native American person. More research, especially tribe-specific research and information if needed.
• Create circles of support for Native American mothers; increase connections to each other and to traditional practices.
• Native American women many not seek help for themselves. Home visitation to screen for adjustment problems and PPD might be effective.
• Watch for problems: mothers (biological and social) may not self-report problems.
• Be aware that cultural definition of motherhood is fluid.
• Know resources to make appropriate referrals.
• More diversity training regarding working with Native American people is needed.
• Tribes and community mental health providers can work together to teach caregivers how to best work with tribal members.
• Adjust to tribal culture instead of expecting Native American people to adjust to the dominant culture regarding treatment. Learn about tribal culture.
• Connect clients to traditional resources if they want them.
• Monitor oneself for the Dominant Culture Filter.
• Focus on relationships; slow down. What does client want? Be a “real” person. Talk story, self-disclose. Use a soft handshake.
• Become an advocate.