



Oaye Luta Okolakiciye
(Moving Forward in a Sacred Way)
10 E. Mall Drive
Rapid City, SD 57709
oayeluta.org/

Oaye Luta Okolakiciye (OLO) **12-Week Healing Program Syllabus**

Culturally Grounded Cohort Programming for Incarcerated Participants at Rapid City Minimum Center

Program Length	12 weeks
Cohort Size	Up to 20 incarcerated participants per cohort
Service Site	Rapid City Minimum Center (RCMC) and Women's Prison
Program Provider	Oaye Luta Okolakiciye (OLO)
Program Format	Weekly group-based cohort sessions, culturally grounded teaching, discussion, reflection, and supportive learning activities, inipi-(sweatlodge ceremony) 4 times within the 12 weeks of services
Primary Focus	Healing, cultural identity, wellness, accountability, sobriety support, independent living skills, family connection, financial literacy, workforce development, and reentry readiness

Program Overview

Oaye Luta Okolakiciye (OLO), meaning “**Moving Forward in a Sacred Way**,” is a Lakota-led organization that provides substance use disorder treatment and culturally supportive services to relatives in the Rapid City and Pine Ridge areas. OLO’s 12-Week Healing Program was developed to address the root causes of illness, including loss of identity, colonized mindsets, spiritual disconnection, grief, trauma, and disconnection from Lakota ways of life.

This syllabus describes the 12-week cohort model adapted for delivery within the Rapid City Minimum Center. The program is designed to provide incarcerated participants with a respectful, structured, culturally grounded learning environment that supports personal healing, accountability, wellness, and preparation for successful reentry.

Program Purpose

The purpose of the 12-Week Healing Program is to support incarcerated participants in reconnecting with cultural identity, strengthening personal accountability, learning healthier coping strategies, and building a foundation for sobriety, family restoration, and community reintegration. The program emphasizes Lakota values, healing-centered reflection, life skills, and the development of a personal wellness and reentry plan.



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Program Objectives

- Provide a culturally grounded space where participants can learn about Lakota values, identity, kinship, spirituality, and healing practices.
- Support participants in understanding the relationship between historical trauma, transgenerational trauma, grief, substance use, and justice-system involvement.
- Strengthen participants' ability to reflect on personal choices, accountability, responsibility, and the impact of their actions on family and community.
- Increase knowledge of healthy coping strategies, sobriety supports, emotional regulation, and wellness practices.
- Encourage participants to identify personal strengths, cultural supports, mentors, and community resources that can support reentry.
- Support participants in developing an individualized healing, wellness, and reentry readiness plan.

Participant Learning Outcomes

By the end of the 12-week program, incarcerated participants will be able to:

- Describe core Lakota values and explain how those values can support healing, sobriety, and accountability.
- Recognize how colonization, historical trauma, grief, and loss of identity can affect wellness, behavior, and substance use.
- Identify personal triggers, stressors, and coping patterns that may contribute to substance use, conflict, or justice-system involvement.
- Demonstrate increased understanding of personal accountability, responsibility, and the importance of repairing relationships where possible.
- Identify at least three healthy coping strategies or cultural supports they can use during incarceration and after release.
- Develop a personal wellness and reentry readiness plan that includes goals, supports, challenges, and next steps.
- Reflect on the importance of family, community, cultural connection, and ongoing support in maintaining sobriety and wellness.

Learning Approach

- Cultural teachings and values-based discussion;
- Group reflection and respectful talking-circle style dialogue, as allowed by facility rules;
- Guided worksheets, journaling, and personal reflection activities;
- Peer support and mentorship-oriented discussion;
- Life skills, accountability, and reentry planning activities;
- Participant feedback and end-of-program reflection.

Participant Expectations

- Attend sessions consistently and arrive on time, subject to facility schedules and approvals.



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- Participate respectfully in discussion and activities.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal stories shared by other participants, consistent with facility policy and safety requirements.
- Engage in self-reflection, accountability, and group learning.
- Follow all DOC rules, staff instructions, and security procedures during programming.
- Complete weekly reflection activities and the final wellness/reentry readiness plan.

Weekly Course Schedule – (Draft: due to change with time and opportunity)

Oko Wanji (Week One) –

Day One- Who am I and why am I here? / Exploring Lakota Beliefs and Values (Tipi Concept)

Objective: Students will understand and reflect upon the Lakota beliefs and values regarding the purpose and meaning of human existence.

Day Two- *Day 2 Prompt to think about: Wamakaskan Oyate: living in peace and harmony with all living beings & entities.*

How are the ceremonies we have going to help our relatives?

Prayer:

7-red: Wolakota ki lena unspemiciya wacin – General prayers

11-white: woyunge hena bluha - respectfully ask questions

17 yellow: Lakol eyapi omaspe kte ye – language clarification

Cultural Orientation/ Historical Context of why we are in this situation today. What happened in history? Recognizing and understanding genocide techniques to assimilate Indigenous people: the boarding school era- when we were punished severely and killed for being who we are. We will provide education and solutions to adjusting behavior. Our intentions are to reconnect our ancestral spirit and enhance awareness of our traditional values. Our unique ceremonial approach is common-sense techniques to us. However, to the non-native population and many of our own native population, many are convinced the dominant societal way is the only way to address substance abuse addiction, mental health management, and health issues. Oaye Luta is demonstrating an alternative way assist our own caught up in a dysfunctional environment due to alcohol and drug addiction.

❖ Oko Nunpa (Week Two) -

Day One- Lakol Wicohan Ta Wooke



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Objective: Review week 1; Students will gain an understanding of Lakota, Dakota, Nakota values, beliefs, songs, and ceremonies and their significance in Lakota culture. Discussion of inikaga of its roles and purpose

Day Two- Protocols and procedure- Inikaga/ Canupa/

Oceti Sakowin Seven Spiritual laws

Waunsila – Compassion

Wowacin Tanka - Fortitude

Woksape - Wisdom

Wocekiya - Prayer

Waohola - Respect

Wacante Ognaka – Generosity

Wotakuye - Kinship

❖ **Okó Yamni (Week Three)**

Day One - Western Concept of Identifying Defense in 4 areas (M/P/E/S) and Life Mapping

Objective: Students will understand the Western concept of identifying defense mechanisms in education/substance use, engage in small group work discussions, participate in role-playing activities, and learn coping skills.

Day Two – Four Stages of Life/ Coping skills/ Utilizing the Language/ Wopakinte

Teaching of doctoring ceremony, center on wellbeing and wiping away trauma

❖ **Okó Topa (Week Four) -**

Day One – Reclaiming of the inner child

Objective: Students will understand their life experiences, your pains and traumas experienced during childhood that took that child away and now they are working to call them back.

Day Two - Lakol Wica Caje / Nagi Ki Copi

Teaching and purpose of our naming and bringing back our Spirit ceremonies



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❖ **Okó Zaptan (Week Five)**

Day One -Western concept on healthy/unhealthy communication Disease concept/symptoms

Objective: Students will understand healthy and unhealthy communication, and their learned behaviors and how addiction and addiction recovery can affect communication.

Objective: Students will learn about addiction as a disease and its connection to depression, PTSD, anxiety, and FASD/FAE.

Day Two – Oihabkab Taku Sica Woakipa / Otah owoglahpi

Another doctoring Inipi-(Sweatlodge) ceremony- for wellbeing and understanding

❖ **Okó Sakpe (Week Six)**

Day One – Relapse

Objective: Students will gain an understanding of recognizing and understanding what triggers them. Making healing plans to help prevent relapse.

Day Two – Woapiye/ When and why we Aziliya with different Pejuta (sweet grass, sage, cedar)

The purpose of smudging ourselves, homes, families, environment, and understanding to keep in balance with our mother earth and our universe.

❖ **Okó Sakowin (Week Seven)**

Day One - Grief/Shame, types of grief, what is shame, assign winter count. Types of abuse, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual

Objective: Students will understand and explore the concepts of grief and shame as they relate to addiction and recovery. Students will also learn about the Lakota notion of the winter count and engage in a creative winter count activity. Students will learn about different types of abuse (spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental) and understand how addiction can be linked to these forms of abuse.

Day Two – Woapiya/ Four Stages of Life (Positive and Negative)

Objective:



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❖ **Okó Saklogán (Week Eight) -**

Day One – Independent Living - Meal Planning/household budget/recipes/healthy choices

Objective: Students will learn about the importance of meal planning, household budgeting, and making healthy choices in the context of addiction recovery. Students will also receive a presentation from a Nutritionist on household budgeting.

Day Two – Wopasi

The ceremony for addressing the root of our relatives issues, starting with art, writing, journaling, talking circle,

❖ **Okó Napciyunka (Week Nine)**

Day One – Addiction and health/ Boundaries

Objective: Students will understand the Lakota notion of tiwahe family systems and how a strong family contributes to effective addiction recovery. Students will also learn about co-dependency, adult children of alcoholics, and the importance of strategic sculpting for a stronger family system. Students will learn about boundaries, including their definition, types, and the importance of setting healthy boundaries in addiction recovery. Students will also explore the Lakota notion of cangleska in relation to boundaries.

Day Two – Taku sica ayapi/ isomichiye



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❖ **Oko Wikcemna (Week Ten)**

Day One - Financial Literacy BHCLF

Objective: Students will gain essential knowledge and skills related to financial literacy, including budgeting, opening bank accounts, paying bills on time, understanding credit scores, and evaluating the pros and cons of credit cards. Students will receive a presentation from Financial Advisor

Day Two – Review of Lakol Wicohan/ Ceremony Review

❖ **Oke Ake Wanji (Week Eleven)- FAMILY WEEK**

Day One – Tiwahe Anpetu/ Nunpa Anpetu/ Review of previous 10-weeks/ Issues they were carrying

Goal setting for life/

Objective: Students will understand the importance of goal setting in various areas of life, including physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects. Students will also learn about the power of positive affirmations and their impact on the psyche. Students will reflect on their tipi and where they are at now.

Day Two – Tawaci /Wopila

Giving thanks to creator and the our traditional healer for assisting with the process of recovery.



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❖ **Oko Ake Nunpa (Week Twelve) Graduation (Alicibleza)**

Day One – Aftercare plans, follow-up, care plans, selfcare

Objective: Students will understand the importance of after-care plans, follow-up plans, and self-care in maintaining long-term addiction recovery.

Day Two – Graduation

Additional Notes:

-Tanyan Ya Hepi -nurturing and comforting

-If they don't have week 1 cultural orientation, they can't start the ceremony cycle.

-Yoga and Meditation



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- Legal Advice

- **Independent living skills demonstration:** cleaning our homes-sweeping, mopping, emptying trash, washing dishes, laundry procedure, cooking and nutrition, etc...

-Nutritionist teaching

Workforce Development and aftercare support

-Mentors to review with Relatives on their aftercare plans