



Small Steps on Your Journey to Self-Love

By Dr. Nikki Factor, BHWP Behavioral Health Specialist

When I am in a therapy session, I frequently ask individuals to identify three things they are grateful for in their lives. The typical responses are family, friends, and their job. There is absolutely nothing wrong with their responses, but I rarely hear the simple answer, “me.” Self-love should be a priority in everyone’s life. I commonly see individuals struggle with loving themselves and seeing their true value. When individuals find self-love, they can release self-doubt and decrease symptoms of anxiety and depression. There are many benefits of self-love, but the most prominent are becoming kinder to yourself, obtaining more healthy and meaningful relationships, and no longer being dependent on external measures of success to be “happy.”

Self-Love Exercises

If you feel like self-love has been a struggle for you, try this simple exercise, which can make a small positive change in your life.

1. Take five Post-It Notes and write one positive characteristic about yourself on each one. (If you struggle with identifying characteristics about yourself, have a loved one or a friend help you.)
2. After completing this, post the five Post-It Notes on your bathroom mirror where you can view easily.
3. Say these five characteristics about yourself aloud throughout the day.



For example, if I identified myself as “caring, a leader, loving, resilient, and strong,” then I say out loud, “*I am a caring person, a true leader, loving, resilient, and so strong.*” Through this small gesture of self-affirmation, and continued practice of this skill, this can be the beginning of your journey to building self-love.

Virtual Talking Circles in 2022

The BHWP continues to offer Virtual Talking Circles for any staff or employee working for a Bureau-operated school (BOS), Tribally-controlled school (TCS), Navajo K-12 school, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), Haskell Indian Nations University (HINU),

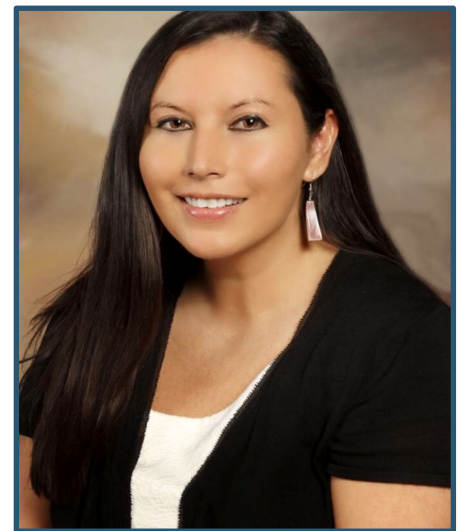


or any Tribal college and university (TCU), and employees within any Bureau of Indian Education department.

BHWP will offer two monthly Talking Circles in 2022. Our February Talking Circles will be held Tuesday, February 01, 2022, and Thursday, February 17, 2022, starting at **1:30 p.m. Pacific, 2:30 p.m. Mountain, 3:30 p.m. Central, and 4:30 p.m. Eastern**. Space is limited to ensure our team is aligned with best practices to keep group sizes small. To join our Talking Circles, please [register here](#). In addition, we invite you to watch our Talking Circle public service announcement, which is [available here](#) on our YouTube page.

Meet a member of our BHWP Counseling Team Dr. Nikki Factor, DSW, MSW, LCSW and BHWP Behavioral Health Specialist

“Hensci, my name is Dr. Nikki Factor. I am a Behavioral Health Specialist for the Bureau of Indian Education’s (BIE) Behavioral Health and Wellness Program (BHWP). I am blessed to be a part of this team and so excited to work with everyone throughout BIE. I practice self-care by journaling which allows me to vent and have a positive and healthy outlet. I understand the importance of not carrying stress or worry because it can lead to various health problems. Therefore, I believe everyone needs to have a self-care plan and prioritize it in their lives.”



Dr. Factor is an enrolled citizen of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and resides in the Oklahoma City area. She obtained her undergraduate degree at Haskell Indian Nations University, master’s degree at the University of Oklahoma, and doctorate degree at the University of Southern California. She is an Indian Health Service scholarship recipient, American Indian Graduate Center scholar, a Cobell scholar, and an Oklahoma Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Fellow.

Through the American Indian Graduate Center, she volunteers as an academic coach through the Rising Native Graduates Program. In addition, she has worked to provide services to Native children and families for the past 15 years. We are pleased to welcome Dr. Factor to the BHWP team.

We welcome your suggestions for the BHWP Messenger.
Contact us at biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com