

# House of the Moon

## *Indigenous Women and Girls Empowerment and Self-Defense Program*

### **Presenter Proposal**

#### **Mission**

To empower and instill agency amongst Indigenous Women, girls and communities, forever changing the trajectory of the **MMIWG\*** crisis, saving lives one relative at a time.

**House of the Moon** is a holistic empowerment and self-defense program designed for Native women and girls to directly reduce the incidents of rape, murder and kidnapping for trafficking on reservations and in urban areas with large Indigenous populations.

#### **Description**

This breakthrough facilitator training program is a “train the trainers” course, offering Indigenous women knowledge, support and resources to empower their innate leadership abilities and inherent strength and courage. Our Four-Directions holistic model to training includes Emotional, Physical, Mental and Spiritual empowerment and self-defense tools and practices.

Following completion of the training program, facilitators who get trained in the curriculum will have the opportunity to create their own lesson plans based on the program's core framework, and have access to all curriculum content. They will then be able to bring the **House of the Moon** program to their respective Native communities. They will learn how to facilitate either online or in-person gatherings (when circumstances permit) and lead **House of the Moon** community gatherings with their unique skill set and gifts.

*(\* **MMIWG** stands for **Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls** and is not a new phenomena. It has been happening since Euro-contact, however the methods behind it have changed over time. Currently, there are four main sets of complex circumstances that lead to extremely high incidents of Indigenous women and girls becoming **MMIWG** victims.*

*1) Fracking, oil drilling, mining and other extractive industries often set up on or near Reservations, bringing with them transient worker camps or “Man-Camps” that create a market for the sexual exploitation of trafficked women and children. Many of these migrant workers are not exposed to thorough background checks by the companies that employ them. This results in registered sex-offenders entering this workforce.*

*They can commit crimes on reservation lands with virtual impunity due to the outdated and unjust laws set up by the Federal government and reinforced by the U.S. Supreme Court related to Tribal Law Enforcement's inability to arrest and prosecute non-natives who commit major crimes on their lands. Thus it gives these workers a “free for all” setting where laws are not enforced and many take advantage of this.*

2) *Cartels infiltrating Reservations and impoverished urban areas to sell Methamphetamine, and to sell women and girls to buyers which is the 2nd largest criminal enterprise in U.S.*

3) *Jurisdictional issues that permit predators or serial predators to act with virtual impunity on Reservation lands, racist/misogynistic systems that make prosecuting a “White man” for a major crime perpetrated on a Native woman extremely difficult.*

4) *Multi-level systemic impacts of extreme poverty including:*

- *Lack of cell phone and broadband service in many areas which leads to inability to report crimes expeditiously, put information out to the public or call for help*
- *Indigenous populations with the lowest life expectancy in US and equivalent to “third world” statistics*
- *Environmental racism leading to deadly pollution of the air, water and soil*
- *Highest rate of teen suicide of any other demographic, 1 in 7 for girls and 1 in 3 for boys*
- *Levels of disease 7-12 times the national average*
- *Alcohol and substance addiction*
- *Lack of food, housing and transportation*
- *Multi-generational, historical and present day spiritual and emotional trauma*

*MMIWG numbers in 2016 from the Department of Justice were approximately 6,000 victims and numbers are growing. We can estimate that since 2016 over 26,000 Native women and girls have become victims of MMIWG in the United States alone and numbers are comparable in Canada. There are many loopholes in data reporting, hence the published estimates are conservative. One example is that many coroner reports have no identifiers for “Native/Indigenous”, rather only Caucasian, Black, Asian and Other.*

*While this information is daunting and one might be tempted to feel like solutions are impossible when faced with these challenges, **House of the Moon** believes that IT IS POSSIBLE to reduce and stop MMIWG. We know that with many hands joining together, with the focus on empowering our Indigenous women and girls, change is possible even with these odds.*

***Indigenous women are the most resilient, resourceful and creative people in the world. By reminding women of their inherent power as life-givers and by giving them necessary support structures, change can and will happen!)***

### **The Ask**

We are asking for you to offer your knowledge, unique gifts and experience and to create/design content and curriculum to be used to launch a pilot training program. We need content/curriculum in all areas of our Four Directions Model; Emotional, Mental, Physical and

Spiritual Empowerment and Self Defense. Given the first round is a pilot, anything can be tweaked along the way to improve delivery and outcomes. (A list of potential topics is attached.)

### **Request**

- To develop curriculum for the above mentioned topic, or for one of the 4-Directions topic
- To be a faculty presenter and to teach the developed curriculum content when the program launches (estimated launch, Fall 2020)

### **Logistics**

The curriculum and content should be designed to provide education, information, inspiration and resources to adequately train Indigenous facilitators based on your topic of expertise and interest. The initial presentation should be no longer than 2 hours.\* Simplicity equals understanding.

\* Plan on holding up to a 1 hour additional FUP meeting to answer any further questions related to the material you present, if there is not enough time to answer questions in the initial 2 hour presentation period.

\* Keep in mind that Facilitators will need to be able to contact you in some way with questions and concerns. This can be managed by a **House of the Moon** program director, however it will likely be necessary since this is an online format and questions will inevitably arise once folks get out in the field with the materials.

\* Exceptions to accommodate the need for extra time and/or materials may be made in consultation between you and the program director.

If you choose to be a presenter, you will be one of 6-12 Presenters in an online video conference format that will take place over a 4 month period. Your 2-3 hour presentation will be delivered at some point during the 4 month period in any of the following individual or combined formats:

- 1) Be pre-recorded and will become an ongoing resource of content curriculum for future **House of the Moon** program training sessions
- 2) Have portions of your presentation recorded to be shown for reference during your live presentation or as work to give outside of presentation time
- 3) Give a Live presentation teaching your material directly to Facilitators in a pre-scheduled video conference meeting.

Depending on the subject matter and content of a presenter's topic, formats may need supplemental materials such as:

- Powerpoint, Handouts
- Written notes PDF/Word format
- Summary of Theory/Overview of topic

- Activities to practice
- Questions to ask in discussion format
- Examples for discussion
- Additional references
- How to apply the material/Application recommendations

**Please allow the following statements to inform you as you design your content and curriculum:**

*For Indigenous women and girls who have already been victims of MMIWG, what curriculum would contribute to healing their trauma and future prevention in terms of their beliefs, knowledge, and practical and emotional skill-sets.*

*For Indigenous women and girls who have not been victims of MMIWG, what content would empower them in terms of beliefs, knowledge, and practical and emotional skill-sets in the face of increased risk of violence.*

As presenters, please aim to keep three markers in mind when developing your curricula to ensure content is clear and focused, as well as to increase the likelihood that the program is eligible for future grant funding:

- 1) Overarching Goal
- 2) Objectives
- 3) Think about ways the effectiveness of your content may be measured

The presentation of your created content should offer tools, information, practices and/or resources for Facilitators to learn and then be able to use themselves when they are out in the community teaching/facilitating gatherings. You should be prepared to offer written materials that are simple and easy to understand and teach. Facilitators should be able to take ownership of the material and modify along the way to best suit their needs and their communities' needs. You can also consider, but non necessary, to have a "give-away" that accompanies your presentation. **The Facilitators who you will be training should leave with a minimum of 3 take-aways. They will need to understand your topic and most importantly, they will need to be able to deliver the topic to their community.**

You will be introduced to the Native women facilitator trainees by Chief Judy Wilson from the Neskonlith Indian Band, and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. During the live portion of the presentation, she will hold an opening prayer and welcome you to the group, introduce the facilitator trainees and you will then present your agreed upon presentation.

*Please see attached for list of possible topics/curricula the program hopes to embody. These are general ideas and can be used as a guide. Or do you have your own that fits into the 4 Directions holistic approach? (Emotional, Mental, Physical and Spiritual Empowerment and Self-Defense) Please discuss your ideas for content and your presentation with the program director.*

1. Food Sovereignty: Food as a source of strength instead of disease
2. Reclaiming the power and recognition of the Life-givers, All things of the Feminine, all things of the Earth
3. Physical Self-Defense: simple protocols for empowerment and protection (TJ Hammond)
4. Understanding “the Predator”: Learn how to Identify People, Places and Situations to try to avoid (Detective Guy Baker)
5. Personal and Ancestral Trauma: Cultivate Post-Traumatic Growth and Recovery
6. Body's Natural Rhythms: Cultivating Healthy Habits, Sleep cycles and movement that is in alignment with your genetic memory
7. Sacred Web of Sisterhood: How Lateral Violence Undermines Our Greatest Strength, Identify Self-Sabotaging ways and ignite powerful relationships and a web of support for self and others
8. Care for the Care-Givers: How to tend to yourself so you can be a powerful source of healing for others
9. Relationship Harmony, Healthy and balanced Partnerships/Relationships - Communication, Self-care, Establishing and respecting boundaries
10. An exploration of traditional Sacred Masculine and Sacred Feminine principles
11. Calming the Nervous System: healing practices adopted from ancient wisdom traditions all over the world to help with Trauma and PTSD (Liana Brooks-Rubin)
12. The Toxic Power behind Negative Self-Talk and how to Break the Habit
13. Traditional Ceremony, Prayer and Ritual practices
14. Reclaiming Connection to Land and Nature, Indigenous ways.
15. Connecting to Spirit within an overwhelm of Colonial and “Religious” culture
16. Historical Context of MMIWG and how it directly relates to contemporary crisis (Rain Bear Stands Last)
17. Understanding Environmental Racism and its direct impacts on MMIWG (Mikase Camp Horinek unconfirmed)
18. How to's:
  - a. Organize an online meeting on Zoom or other platforms
  - b. Get people in your community to come to your gatherings
  - c. Social media to spread the word of your **House of the Moon** gatherings: strengths and weaknesses (Sunny Red Bear unconfirmed)

## **Non-Native Presenters**

If you are invited to be a presenter in the **House of the Moon** Indigenous Women and Girls Empowerment and Self-Defense Program and you are not Indigenous, the most important part to designing content and curriculum for the program is your commitment to helping create a safe and sacred container for our Native sisters. As a presenter it will be critical to obtain the utmost respect for the women and girls with whom you work. I invite you to enter a relationship with the age-old indigenous wisdom of reciprocity, that as much as the program may need you, you need the program. Our work as non-Native participants is not to save, control or force our ideas upon peoples who have been robbed of their sovereignty. Rather let us come with an open heart, a willingness to share, and most of all, a readiness to learn valuable lessons ourselves.

We also need to be aware of the Western paradigm that is often associated in teacher/student relationships. There is an implicit hierarchy and power structure of expert vs. novice, or smarter than, or us vs. them in that typical dynamic. I welcome you to acknowledge within yourself anywhere these constructs might exist, consciously or unconsciously, and let them go to invite a very heart-centered and shared approach that is conducted in humility, service and love. In indigenous cultures the teacher/student relationship is held in high regard. It's not only the teacher's duty to share wisdom, but it's their honor to serve the student. Likewise the student honors the teacher yet also takes responsibility and care in obtaining wisdom, which they deem to be sacred. It truly is a sacred exchange. Now more than ever, with a coalition of conscience emerging for social and racial justice, your engagement ensures that this tragedy will be included in the discussion and be part of the solution.

## **Reason for Distinction: Non-Native vs. Native Presenters**

**House of the Moon** is a growing circle that includes any person or organization devoted to ending the MMIWG crisis, one relative at a time. We believe that it will be to the mission's advantage to unify efforts and use the diverse skill set and wisdom from Native and non-Native allies alike. The goal is to foster cross-cultural networks, knowing there is power in relationships. Our intention is to revive the traditional ways of being responsible to each other and believe real change happens with acknowledgement, awareness and togetherness. Ultimately First Nations, Tribal Nations, Tribal Organizations and peoples are uniting with allies and Indigenous advocacy groups and individuals who stand to bring an end to this tragedy happening right here in our own backyards.