



Open Letter to Native Youth

Content Warning: Mentions of Suicide

Dear Native Youth:

You are worthy. Not when you pass that test, or graduate from school, or get that job. You are worthy right now. Simply because you exist.

To be worthy means that regardless of who you are, what you own, or where you are; you belong. To be worthy means deserving care, respect, support, and love. Worthiness lives within all of us, it never leaves, and nobody can take it from us; it's inherent.

We know that embracing your worthiness can be harder than it sounds. Events with our families, communities, work, and school can influence how we feel about ourselves, causing highs, and at times, lows. Life can be complicated, and challenges and hardships may arise that make us feel less valuable to those around us. There are times when we may feel that we have lost our worthiness. In those moments please remember, you deserve the world and the world deserves you.

October 10, 2023 is World Mental Health Day. Today is a time for us at the Center for Native American Youth to dig deep and reflect on the mental health of our own team, our communities, and our relatives. We invite you to join us in this reflection and in outreach to one another. Like you, we are all too familiar with how suicide has plagued our families and our People. We honor and remember our communities and loved ones we have lost and we pray for each one of our Relatives who are struggling.

We are here to remind you of your inherent worth each and every day, no matter where you are in your personal journey.

Native Youth, your worthiness is a birthright. You are worthy of care. You are worthy of respect. You are worthy of love.

Please be gentle and kind with yourself. Remember, you are a home to the most beautiful life.

With admiration always,

Your Auntys Nikki, Cheyenne, Tahnee, Katy, Maria, Sam & Uncle Anthony at CNAY

The Center for Native American Youth was founded to address Native American youth suicide, to empower young leaders, and to work with communities to address this important and pressing issue.