Open the Door: Traditional Latino Folk Medicine for Today

A steady stream of Latino immigrants are fueling the demand for curanderismo - a holistic, spiritual approach to medicine that uses the natural world to heal the mind, body and soul. Curanderos, sobadores, santeros, and yerberos use rituals, massage, teas, creams and tinctures from herbs and plants to treat a variety of physical, psychological, and spiritual ailments. Western and indigenous religious practice also plays a key role in preventing and alleviating health problems. One of the major appeals of curanderismo is that it's inexpensive, accessible, and reinforces Latino cultural values.

The objectives for this seminar are:
1. Understand the origins and applications of Hispanic folk medicine
2. Identify common Hispanic folk illnesses and their remedies
3. Describe folk illnesses that may be acute emergencies
4. Recognize the four types of traditional healers used by Latinos
5. Identify four cultural values that are critical in teaching or providing services to Latinos

Instructor Michael Caudill is a former RN and Mobil Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) at Los Angeles County Hospital and George Washington University Hospital in Washington DC. His consulting business, InterCultural Advantage, was the first in North Carolina to be listed with the Georgetown University’s National Center for Cultural Competency. Mr. Caudill earned a Master's degree in Intercultural Communication from the American University’s School of International Service, and a certificate in Traditional Mexican Folk Medicine from the University of New Mexico. He has worked internationally for the American Red Cross, the Pan American Health Organization/WHO, and the United Nations/Organization of American States. Mr. Caudill is an instructor in intercultural communication at Western Carolina University.