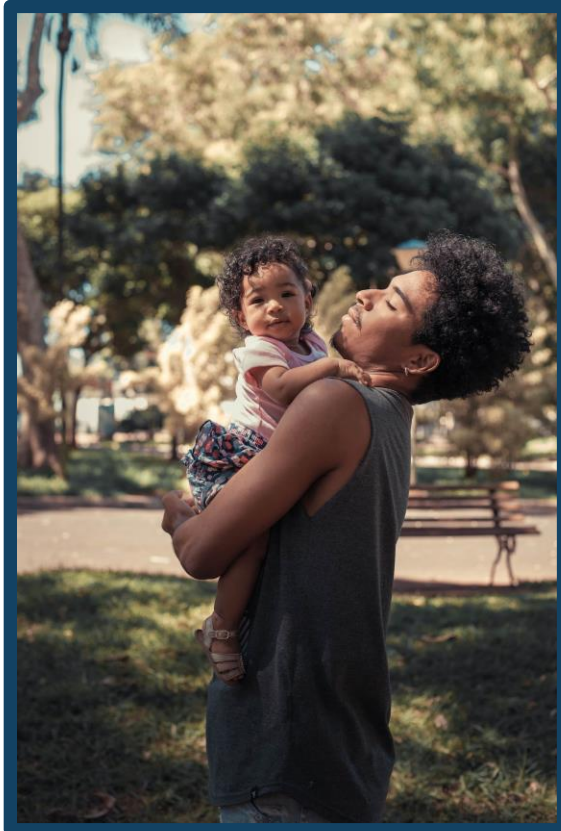




## Taíno Psychology Offers Different Ways of Thinking and Engaging in Academic Research

*Submitted by: Desirée Gonzalez*

Colonization has lost, erased, co-opted, and excluded much of Taíno history in the psychological literature. This is not exclusive to just Taíno culture but is true for all indigenous cultures & psychologies. Despite colonization and globalization, Taíno culture has prevailed through the cracks. Their influence and ancestry shows up in modern day Puerto Rican



*Figure 1 Photograph by Orione Conceição:  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/man-carrying-baby-in-his-arms-2983451/>. CCO.*

culture. Discussing Taíno knowledges, worldview, origin stories, practices and rituals can help combat epistemicide or the intentional silencing of Indigenous ways of knowing.

"Centering Taíno beliefs, values, psychology, cosmology, spirituality, religion, origin stories, ways of knowing and being, and worldview is just one-way Indigenous epistemologies continue on."

### Highlights

**Indigenous Taíno psychology is not usually centered in mainstream western thought.**

**My own Taíno lineage has been the "fertile ground" that has informed the spirituality that I practice.**

## **Methods**

1. Indigenous Research Methods
2. Autoethnography/ethnography
3. Indigenous Psychology(s)

## **Results**

Tainos had/have a distinct worldview, and they also share similarities with many other indigenous cultures and epistemologies.

### **What Does This Mean For?**

**Research and Evaluation:** Focusing on Taíno peoples and ways of knowing offers insight into the psychology of western academic research and how it's usually done. People of Color feel pressure to perform academics in mainstream ways. Taíno discourse centers a culture and psychology that has been systemically excluded and erased from the mainstream discourse. It opens further opportunities for Taíno & Puerto Rican scholars to be included where they otherwise are not.

**Practice:** Centering the Taíno culture, peoples, and psychology, can help in working with peoples who have this background, heritage, lineage or ancestry or identities outside of the Eurocentric mainstream.

**Social Action:** Centering Indigenous cultures calls us to question our western-dominated research, research methods, academia, and our own critical self-reflexivity. We can do research in a different way than what we are either used to or what is expected of us. Incorporating Indigenous knowledges gives us an opening to do the work differently.

*Original Citation: Gonzalez, D. (2023) Taíno Indigenous Psychology: The contemporary & historical issue of the colonization of Taíno peoples & a re-centering of their knowledges in academia. Santa Barbara, CA: Pacifica Graduate Institute.*

*Terms of use: This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/) It is attributed to the authors and the original version can be found here: <https://www.communitypsychology.com/taino-psychology/>*