

# Healing Words



## The healing power of interconnectedness

Hail The Great Spirit, my father  
without him no one could exist  
because there would be no will to live  
Hail The Earth, my mother  
without which no food could be grown  
and so cause the will to live to starve  
Hail the wind, my grandmother  
for she brings loving, lifegiving rain  
nourishing us as she nourishes our crops  
Hail the fire, my grandfather  
for the light, the warmth, the comfort he brings  
without which we be animals, not men  
—from *An Indian Prayer*, by H. Kent Craig



## Nature and Healing: A Wilderness Retreat Project

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT CULTURES AND WAY of life are rooted in a common spiritual value: the interconnectedness of all creation with its creator. As a part of the creator's gift, Mother Earth is naturally balanced, healthy, and perfectly suited to provide for the needs of all.

The cycles of disease and illness, destructive to human beings and to Mother Earth, have their source in the disconnection of people from this healing force. Aboriginal people have been forcibly disconnected from this healing and life-giving force by centuries of a dominant culture's oppression, cultural assimilation, and spiritual proscription.

Today, the interconnectedness of creation with its creator is at the centre of the healing movement in Aboriginal communities. Elders, who are the depositories of traditional knowledge and wisdom, are playing a major role in the re-establishment of this interconnectedness, harmony, balance and wellness.

The traditional Aboriginal belief that harmony with nature is the source of wellness has been appropriated by many branches of science and belief in the western world. Deep ecology, ecopsychology, wilderness therapy, and bioregionalism are some of the modern names given to traditional Aboriginal approaches to a balanced life.

Thus one of the principles of Ecopsychology, a branch of science described as being in its infancy, states that "The earth is a living system. Human beings are fundamentally interconnected with the Earth and with all life. Neither the earth's problems nor humanity's problems can be resolved without taking full account of this interconnection."



To help survivors of the residential schools reestablish this traditional connection with their creator and with each other, the Conseil des Montagnais de Natasquan have designed and implemented a wilderness therapy project.

Blending traditional and contemporary approaches, this pilot project gave a group of survivors and their descendants the opportunity to reconstruct their identity and heal some of their wounds through a week of intensive therapy in the wilderness.

On the shore of a lake 90 miles north of Natasquan and reachable only by plane, the retreat area chosen for the group was in the heart of a traditional hunting ground. Two adult couples (30-40 years), four young adults (18-25 years) and 3 teenagers made up the group of participants, who were accompanied by a healing team of four Elders (2 couples), one NNADAP agent, two psychologists, one social worker and one general helper. Pierre St-Arnaud, psychologist and project Director, was also part of the team.

The Elders participating as members of the healing team volunteered for this project from a group of about eight Elders interested in the program. It is expected that other Elders from this group will participate in other wilderness expeditions.

The group of participants was identified through a process of public invitation and selective referrals. Final selection was after an interview session, followed by a session to explain the project, present the healing team, and confirm the commitment of all participants.

The therapeutic model designed for this pilot project combines traditional healing approaches and contemporary professional psychotherapy.

According to the Director of the project, Pierre St. Arnaud, "The experience was extremely memorable for everyone on the team. I can say that we had on one occasion an extraordinary experience of deep communion between Elders and therapists."

This model designated two separate areas of authority: Elders were responsible for the spiritual component and the sharing of teachings, while the psychologists were responsible for the therapeutic process. Although their inputs were different, Elders and psychologists worked as a team, deepening their relationship through daily meetings and sharing. The participants' healing journey was facilitated each day by traditional spiritual activities and by therapy sessions individually or in groups. In the beginning, participants structured their day (except for group activities) in the way they wanted, but after a few days, they decided to eat lunch together in the cabin by the lake. The organizers of the project had brought enough food supplies to complement those brought by the participants. Each day there was an opportunity for participants to balance their interactions with others and their healing work. They had time to be alone and time to be together.

Healing through survival was not the purpose of this retreat, and weather conditions did not permit hunting for food. Some participants, however, went fishing on several occasions.

The project had an impact on the life of participants at several levels. Through this experience, participants were able to understand their need of a pause in their life to question the way they live, to look for the causes of their difficulties, and to readjust, so that they can find a way to understand their inner world. This pause gave them the time and the right to express their feelings in an environment where they are not judged, where they are free and accepted as they are. This enabled them to start a process of transformation. They now saw themselves differently after a year of feeling they were of little value. This is part of learning—to go beyond the trauma that was experienced and to dissociate the image of oneself from the image built as a result of this trauma. The experience also reverses the process of emotional repression participants used previously to protect themselves.

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## The AHF second funding announcement: highlights from a November 4, 1999 speech

ON BEHALF OF THE ABORIGINAL HEALING Foundation, I am pleased to present to you the new Program Handbook. In it, you will find information on funding criteria as well as details on the refined application and review processes. This revised Program Handbook is the result of feedback from many people over the past year.

I would like to thank all of those people who have participated in the work of the Foundation: Elders, Survivors, External Merit Review Panel Members, past Board Members, and Staff. Your dedication is appreciated, and your hard work is reflected in the revised Program Handbook.

We also acknowledge the officials of the various Canadian Government departments who were instrumental in helping us to establish the Foundation.

As we launch our second Call for Proposals and our revised Program Handbook, it is appropriate both to review what we have done right as well as what we have set out to improve. We have learned a good deal in our first round of funding, and we remember also what Survivors have told us.

The mission of the Foundation is to encourage and support Aboriginal people in building and reinforcing sustainable healing processes that address the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in the residential school system, including intergenerational impacts.

Now is a time for us to renew this mission. Survivors have told us to get funds flowing to the communities as quickly as possible. They have also insisted that we commit the money entrusted to us to quality projects with the best chance of success.

This has meant that we have had to say 'no' more often than we have been able to say 'yes.'

With our new Program Handbook, we are concentrating our efforts on helping communities and organizations develop strong, well-planned project proposals that ensure Survivors of Residential Schools are well-served.

To date, the Foundation's Board of Directors have recommended just over \$50 million in funding under all themes for the first call.

Looking back on this first round, we hope that the partnerships and links that have been formed as a result of project funding will carry on into the future.

Looking forward, we will keep talking to Aboriginal people in our effort to find the best ways to use the Foundation's funds in the healing process.

We have learned several lessons in our first round of funding. People have told us that our deadlines are troublesome to them. They have told us that we need to increase staff-applicant interaction. We know that we must target high-need and under-served areas.

Above all, we must be accountable and transparent in all that we do. That is why we have reported, and will continue to report, to National Aboriginal organizations, the Canadian Government and the public. We have held gatherings across Canada. We have also released an annual report which presents a detailed overview of the Foundation, a financial audit, and a summary of funded projects.

I want to assure you that we have heard your concerns and frustrations, and that we are taking steps to address them. We are learning how to make our funding process more accessible.

I want to stress that applicants whose proposals have been returned should not be discouraged. We will work with you to refine your proposals so you can resubmit them.

Please keep in mind that there will be several rounds of funding over the life of the Foundation. We are giving everyone the opportunity to submit a proposal. And we are helping those who resubmit, so that they will have a greater likelihood of receiving funding.

I would now like to mention a few of the things you will find in this Program Handbook:

- The application deadlines for the year 2000 are February 25 and August 25. The application deadlines for 2001 are February 23 and August 31.
- The Foundation will hold 2-day workshops to help applicants develop their proposals. These will be held across Canada, starting in late 1999. To find out about a workshop close to where you live, you can phone the Foundation toll-free at 1-888-725-8886 or go to our website at [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca). Or you can watch for a notice in your local media.
- Community Support Coordinators are meeting with Aboriginal people in their communities to support you in setting up partnerships and give you information on services and programs. They can also tell you about program materials or research results that will help you to write your proposal.
- The Board of Directors have changed the Healing Centre Program theme to better meet the needs of survivors, their families, and descendants.

The Foundation is obtaining expert opinions to develop a broad model for Healing Centre programs. When the model is complete, the Board will ask for proposals from communities and organizations where the need is greatest. The model will then serve as a basis for proposals.

This change is intended to provide safety measures that will protect everyone involved in healing. Also, proposals funded will likely be from regions which do not have healing centres.

Some people have expressed worries that we have tried to 'reinvent the wheel' in our new Handbook. This is not the case. We have made refinements of the funding process as a result of what Aboriginal people have told us.

To speed up the review and evaluation process, we will begin to assess proposals as they arrive in our offices, rather than wait until after our deadlines.

We will provide more resources to the grassroots through our Community Support Coordinators.

We have tried to be as clear as possible in the new Program Handbook. Our proposal review process and mandatory funding criteria are clearly laid out.

If you have questions, you can call the Aboriginal Healing Foundation's Information staff toll-free at any time. Their job is to provide you with the information you need to prepare a proposal.

In closing, I would like to say again that we are committed to making strategic investments of the limited resources entrusted to us. We will continue to improve our ability to help Aboriginal people help themselves. We will promote knowledge of the legacy of the residential school system. We will work to gain public support from Canadians, encouraging them to walk with us on the path of reconciliation.

Our vision is one where those affected by the legacy of physical abuse and sexual abuse experienced in the residential school system have addressed the effects of unresolved trauma in meaningful terms, have broken the cycle of abuse, and have enhanced their capacity as individuals, families, communities and nations to sustain their well being and the well being of future generations.

Masi (Thank-you).



Georges Erasmus, AHF Chairman



Mike DeGagné, Executive Director

### From the Executive Director

**H**ealing Words allows me the opportunity to look back on the accomplishments of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation this past year and to look forward to new and better ways of assisting survivors of residential schools and their children.

The funding agreement which guides the AHF gives the organization one year to set up its operations and four years to spend or commit the money which has been entrusted to us. In our first year, starting in April of 1998, the founding Board of Directors worked to set the organization on solid ground. They organized a residential school survivors conference, which generated advice and wisdom that direct the AHF today. Our first year was also a time to establish an office, hire staff, and begin the process of calling for proposals. At the end of our preparatory year, the AHF had a small core staff ready to respond to the first round of proposals.

I can now look back on the progress of our second year. Beginning as a post office box in year one, we are now a staff of 50, answering your calls, processing and negotiating funding, communicating our progress, and providing research to determine best practices for healing.

We have concentrated on giving applicants clear feedback in order to help them refine their proposals. We hope as a consequence to fund even more projects in the coming year than we did in the last.

We received a thousand proposals this year from Aboriginal communities across Canada, and we funded 231 at a total of \$50 million. We have gone out to four regional gatherings to hear concerns about how we operate, and we have changed our funding process and modified the way we do business, in accordance with your advice.

For those who did not receive funding, we have focused our efforts on making our application process more accessible. We have contacted past applicants to ensure that they reapply. We have modified our Program Handbook to make it clearer, producing a plain language version and encouraging video or audio cassette applications from those best served in these ways. Perhaps most important, we have concentrated on giving applicants clear feedback in order to help them refine their proposals. We hope as a consequence to fund even more projects in the coming year than we did in the last.

We understand the broad responsibility of the Foundation to take a leadership role in addressing the legacy of residential schools. Both new and existing research, which includes information from AHF-funded healing projects, are casting more light on residential school experiences and the effects they have had on Aboriginal people. We accept our responsibility to develop a fuller and clearer scope of the problems rooted in the residential school system, considering both the human and economic costs to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples. We must also develop our understanding of how the residential school system has affected women, children, northern regions, and other target groups. By the end of our mandate, we will be able to understand and communicate the real costs of residential schools.

As we enter year three, with the next funding cycle set to begin, I am grateful for the continual advice and feedback we have received from residential school survivors—in person, by phone, and in writing. And I am proud of the staff who work with us to offer compassionate assistance to the survivors we serve.



Information on the Aboriginal Healing Foundation is available from our regularly-updated website: <http://www.ahf.ca>

**CODE OF ETHICS  
of the Aboriginal Healing  
Foundation**

*As a general rule:*

I will practice active **listening**.  
I will be **compassionate** and **understanding**.  
I will **not discriminate** against anyone in any way.  
I will dress in attire that is appropriate to my level of interaction with the public.

*In my relationships with Foundation personnel:*

I will treat all my co-workers with **respect, courtesy, fairness** and **good faith**.  
I commit to working as a **team** member.  
I commit to transferring skills and knowledge to my colleagues.  
I commit to assist colleagues in positively **transforming** their attitudes and behaviours when requested.  
I will **honour** all **commitments** made. I will make amends for falling short of any commitments and prior agreements.  
I commit to being on time for work, appointments and meetings with individuals or groups.  
I will **not exploit** relationships with colleagues for personal gain or the personal gain of friends and relatives.  
I will **cooperate** with colleagues to promote the interests of the Foundation and the individuals and communities we serve.  
I will **respect** confidences shared in working relationships and activities, and refuse to participate in gossiping of any kind.  
I will not breach **confidentiality** except in the case of potential suicide, homicide or a report of child abuse.

I support and promise to work towards the goals and objectives of the Foundation, including dealing with issues as they come up, through a **positive approach** focused on problem solving.  
If a dispute arises between me and a co-worker I will use best my efforts to:

1. **work things out** between us;
2. work things out with the help of our supervisor(s);
3. resort to a dispute resolution process agreeable to me and my co-worker.

*I agree to respect the facility as a sacred place and our relationships with each other as sacred.*

I am a role model. As such I will conduct myself so as to avoid bringing myself and the Foundation into disrepute. I should set a **good example** with respect to the responsible consumption of alcohol. I will not consume alcohol on Foundation time in a manner that may have an adverse affect on my ability to effectively carry out my duties.

I will not **smoke** in the offices of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

I promise to use the **resources** of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation for the purposes established by the Foundation.

I promise to be **honest** in describing my professional skills, abilities and background.

I will **adhere** to the policies established by the Foundation.

I commit to regular self-evaluation of my own strengths, limitations, biases, or levels of effectiveness. I will always **strive** for self-improvement, and seek professional and personal development by means of further **education, training** and **healing**.

While in the full time, salaried employ of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, I will not engage in any contract work for my personal benefit without written permission from the Executive Director.

*In my relationships with Survivors, the families and descendants:*

I shall practice active **listening**.

It is my obligation to provide good **quality** services, without discrimination, to all survivors, their families and descendants in a confidential manner.

I will ensure that my personal values and/or unresolved **issues** do not interfere with the service offered to any person or community. This means I will not exercise any abuse of power or influence over anyone.

Any relationship between me and a survivor or relative of the survivor shall not **prejudice** the quality of the service provided.

I will act to ensure that the difference between professional and personal **relationships** with survivors is understood and respected.

I will not take **advantage** of relationships with survivors for personal or financial gain, or the personal or financial gain of relatives, friends or co-workers.

I will not take part in any action that violates or diminishes the Aboriginal, civil, legal or human **rights** of survivors or co-workers.

I will not breach **confidentiality** except in the case of potential suicide, homicide or a report of child abuse.

I accept the responsibility to uphold the **standards** of the Foundation and will undertake to use healing and facilitation methods in which the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience have been acquired.

I will ensure that the marketing and promotion of the programs, services and individual staff will be **honest** and positive, in keeping with the Foundation's commitment to traditional values.

I will strive to uphold the **healthy, positive** and **professional** image of the Foundation by maintaining a high standard of behaviour in public. I also understand that Foundation personnel must have a higher standard of behaviour due to the importance of role modelling in healing and training.

I agree and commit to **sharing** skills in order to help others develop more skills and increase individual and community capacity to do their own work and to solve their own problems.

I commit to communicating with individuals and communities in a direct, honest and **forthright** way. I will not speak to the media (interviews) on topics related to the work of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation unless I am asked to by an authorized representative of the Foundation.

WE KNOW THAT HEALING STARTS WITH ONE PERSON AND SPREADS OUT TO TOUCH MANY OTHERS

## WORKING FOR YOU...

### AHF PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

The AHF Programs Department mandate is to work with Aboriginal communities in Canada to ensure that they are able to develop their healing needs into quality healing projects. In order to achieve this goal and serve you better, the AHF has put in place three teams, each with specific responsibilities.



**Yvonne Marie Boyer, Director of Programs**

Yvonne is a Métis who has lived most of her life in Saskatchewan. With a background in nursing and sociology, she attended the University of Saskatchewan Summer Program for Native Students in 1991, Dalhousie University and the University of Saskatchewan, where she graduated in 1996 with an LL.B. in Law. Following graduation she was nationally recognized through the Harvey Bell Memorial Prize for academic achievement and probable contribution, as a lawyer, in establishing the rights and solving problems faced by Native Canadians and their communities within the Canadian Legal system. Her articling year was spent under the guidance of the now Honorable Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond. In 1997 she became a member of the Law Society of Saskatchewan and a Mediator as well as an active member of the Indigenous Bar Association as well as the Canadian Bar Association.

Previous to her position with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Ms. Boyer was employed as Director of Justice for Saskatoon Tribal Council Inc. During this time she developed the community based justice programming for the seven member bands of the Tribal Council as well as the urban community based justice initiatives. While in Saskatoon she was an active volunteer and member of several committees and boards including the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations First Nations Justice Council; Clarence Campeau Development Fund; Aboriginal Women and Violence Working Group; Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Justice Working Group; Ecumenical Body of Christian Churches advisor on First Nation and Metis Issues; Saskatoon Tribal Council Committee on Alternatives to Litigation by Residential School Survivors; Justice 2001- Saskatoon City Advisory Committee on Restorative Justice; and Saskatoon City Police Services Chief of Police Advisory Committee on First Nations and Métis Issues. She was recently awarded a Certificate of Achievement from the Clarence Campeau Development Fund for her contribution to the Métis people of Saskatchewan in the economic development area. Recently moving to Ottawa, Yvonne enjoys being active in all aspects of the lives of her four children and is an active volunteer at the schools the children attend.



**Pamela Lussier, Executive Assistant**

Pamela joined the Foundation in April 1999. She was born in Mattawa, Ontario and moved to Ottawa in 1989. She has a Diploma as a Laboratory Technologist and worked for Dynacare Laboratories. She also worked as Regional District Manager of a large inventory company.

# Proposal Review The Team

### **Virginia Toulouse, Proposal Review Manager**

Virginia Toulouse is a member of Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation located in Ontario. She has been with the Foundation since May 1998. Prior to working with the Foundation, she was employed as Research Officer for the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Social Development and Health, Public Affairs Officer for the Assembly of First Nations Health Commission, and Regional Consultant of Community Health Programs for Medical Services Branch, Ontario Regional Office.



- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Gene Ouellette       | Programs Review Officer     |
| Dolly Creighton      | Proposal Review Coordinator |
| Alexia Fruin         | Proposal Review Assistant   |
| Yancy Craig          | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Sandra Greene        | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Karen Campbell       | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Marguerite Sanderson | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Marilyn Brauner      | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Michelle Kowalski    | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Teresa Chovaz        | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Suzanne Danis        | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Dave Tellier         | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Pierrette Tessier    | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Christina Leblanc    | Proposal Assessment Officer |
| Marie West           | Proposal Assessment Officer |



*Above: Gene Ouellette, Programs Review Officer. See his article on page 10*

# Community Support The Team

- To liaise with your community to support access to Foundation Funding
- To assist you in strengthening your submissions

## Community Coordinators

- Putting you in touch with communities that are doing the same kind of work you want to do
- Supporting you in setting up links and partnerships
- Giving you information on services and programs that are already in place
- Telling you about other funding sources
- Letting you know about program materials or research results that will help you write your proposal



**Sharon Clarke, Community Support Manager**

Sharon Clarke is a Cree from the James Smith Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. She holds a post-secondary degree from the University of Regina, and certificates in community development and other subjects. She enjoys learning and considers it a necessary on-going part of personal and professional development. Currently, she is working towards improving her French language skills as well as finishing off a second degree in Biology. Ms. Clarke says she is personally, and through family, impacted by Residential school issues, and is committed to the process of healing. She has worked with many communities in the development of community wellness and healing projects. She says her experience in working with communities, with Medical Services Branch regionally, and internationally with the World Health Organization Program on Substance Abuse has influenced her perspective and challenged her to develop new skills.

*Below: Mary Debassige, Administrative assistant*



Administrative Assistant, Mary Debassige.  
 Alberta Coordinator, Margaret Kappo.  
 BC Coordinator, Candidate to be selected on 16<sup>th</sup> February.  
 Manitoba Coordinator, Candidate to be selected on 16<sup>th</sup> February.  
 Saskatchewan Coordinator, Joanne Langan.  
 Ontario Coordinator, Wanda Gabriel.  
 Atlantic Coordinator, Kevin Barlow.  
 Northern Coordinator, Candidate to be selected on 16<sup>th</sup> February.  
 Yukon/NWT Coordinator, Frank Hope.  
 Nunavut Coordinator, Lena Autut.  
 Métis Coordinator, Yvonne Vezina.

**Please call 1-888-725-8886 and ask to speak to the AHF Community Support Manager.**



# PROGRAMS INFORMATION The Team

*The Programs Information team is here to answer your questions and provide you with the information you need to prepare a proposal.*

## **Karen (Konwawihon) Jacobs-Williams, Information Services Manager**

*Karen is a Mohawk from the Kahnawake Reserve. Prior to completing her graduate studies in history at the University of Ottawa, Karen held government positions in a number of Aboriginal-specific programs such as the Native Courtworker Program, the Legal Studies for Aboriginal Peoples Program, and the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program. She also worked at the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) as a research analyst on women's issues. More recently, she has done contract work with the University of Ottawa, the Department of Justice, and facilitated awareness workshops with the Public Service Commission. She also served in executive positions with the Native Women's Association of Canada and the Quebec Native Women's Association. She is active in the Aboriginal community in Ottawa and sits on the Aboriginal Women's Council, the Aboriginal Women's Action Circle, and on the Aboriginal Child and Family Services Board. Karen also served on the Board of Directors for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa, the Regional Coordinating Committee to End Violence Against Women (RCCEVAW), and on the Steering and Integration Committees for RCCEVAW.*

Janice Kicknosway  
 Janet Brewster  
 Miche Jetté  
 Edward Martin

Programs Information Officer  
 Programs Information Officer  
 Programs Information Officer  
 Programs Information Officer

**Please call 1-888-725-8886 and ask to speak to the AHF Programs Information Officers.**



# Questions & Answers

Q

*CAN I OBTAIN FUNDING FROM THE AHF IF I ALSO HAVE FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES?*

A

The AHF believes that healing can be more effective when healing projects take place in partnerships. A funding partnership is when one or more funders provide funding for the same project. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation is very keen to support proposals that involve funding partnerships.

Q

*HAVE THERE BEEN ANY CHANGES MADE IN THE FUNDING PROCESS IN THIS NEW CYCLE?*

A

Yes, there have been several changes. We have 2 funding intakes instead of one. Applicants no longer have to present their proposals under specific themes. Applications for Healing Centres are not ready yet, but there will be a special call for proposals under this area. The application form is clearer, the way questions are posed is simpler and easier to understand.

Q

*HOW LONG CAN I EXPECT THE REVIEW OF MY APPLICATION FOR FUNDING TO TAKE ?*

A

The Review process will take at least 8 months. This is to make sure we have enough time to review the work you have put into your proposal.

Q

*WHAT EXACTLY IS BEING CHECKED WHEN THE PROPOSAL IS RECEIVED?*

A

When the Foundation receives your proposal, AHF staff will check it carefully before it goes any further. The staff doing the basic review and assessment will look at the following things :

- Was the proposal received by mail, by the deadline date and time? Proposals received by fax or e-mail directly to the Foundation's office will NOT be reviewed.
- Did you send **ALL** the needed papers (such as letters of support)?
- Have you answered **ALL** the questions on the application form?

- Have you met **ALL** the rules on incorporation or sponsorship?
- Are **ALL** the needed signatures where they should be?
- Is the proposal in the proper format?
- Did you send **5 copies** of the proposal?
- Does your proposal meet the 4 mandatory criteria?
- Does your proposal meet a level of quality needed to continue? (It will be assessed and scored to determine its level of quality).
- Does your proposal need to be assessed by a specialist (for example, a traditional healer or psychologist)? AHF staff will decide if your proposal needs to be assessed by a specialist based on what you propose to do and what the expected results might be.

Q

*HOW SOON WILL I GET MY DRAFT PROPOSAL BACK?*

A

4 weeks.

Q

*WHO WILL BE DOING THE ASSESSMENT?*

A

There is a designated person who is solely responsible for assessments.

Q

*MAY I SPEAK TO THE ASSESSOR?*

A

Yes, You can put your questions in writing and send them either by mail or fax to the attention of the AHF proposal evaluators.

Q

*IF I FAIL THE PRE-ASSESSMENT, CAN I STILL SUBMIT FOR THE DEADLINE?*

A

There is no such thing as failing a pre-assessment. A person may re-submit a proposal after the concerns and issues raised by the assessor are addressed. Failing to do so may be a guarantee that the proposal will not make it through the proposal process successfully. •

# THE RELEVANCE OF CULTURE IN RECOVERY

by Holly Gallant, C.D.S.C & Grief Counsellor.  
Chawathil First Nations

...Laws and practices which, with the purpose of eliminating indigenous cultures, promoted the removal of indigenous children for rearing in non-aboriginal institutions and households were in breach of the international prohibition of genocide.

-from *Bringing them Home—The Report*  
Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, Australia

**T**o understand the relevance of culture within the process of recovery, we first have to address and understand what we have lost in our native culture through colonization and what it is we are trying so hard to reclaim. We need to take a look at who we were before COLONIZATION. Traditionally, when we made a mistake in our lives, no matter how severe, our entire community was there as a group. They helped us to look at all components of an issue and guided us to progress in our lives in a positive and constructive way. We were nurtured. There was an ultimate respect for our Elders and we knew how to listen to them. We have lost this sense of leadership and the wisdom of belonging to a greater whole. The family system was strong. All the members had clear and defined roles and a natural healthy regard for the other members' boundaries. Parents had the knowledge of how to be positive and effective in the raising of their children. They were whole and balanced, a people with pride in themselves and with a strong understanding of who they were and where their roots originated.

Many of us have lost these natural family skills and the simple knowing of who we are and how to be proud of being native.

Many of us have lost these natural family skills and the simple knowing of who we are and how to be proud of being native. The connection to the Creator and all things created in our world was a distinctive and powerful component of our everyday lives. I believe for too many of us there is an insatiable thirst to fill this emptiness that lives where our connection to the creator used to be. In trying to fill this insatiable void, without our cultural guidance, we develop behaviours that end up being destructive to ourselves and our children. Through colonization, we lost a sense of ourselves, our own form of spirituality, our parenting skills, traditional and community structure, respect for our Elders, our natural diet, our Pride of who we are, our language, arts, stories and dances.

When we say we have lost our culture, many people do not really know what we really lost. They only know our culture to be the regalia and dancing, our wonderful artwork, our spiritual ways, whether it be smokehouse or sweatlodge. They don't realize how profoundly our traditional culture cascades to every aspect of our lives, creating a wholeness of spirit, mind, body and emotion.

We, as a people, are recovering from more than drugs, alcohol, sexual abuse and family violence. We are recovering from an annihilation of a whole self, including mind (Education), Body (Diet and Boundaries), Spirit (our connection to the Creator) and emotions (our integrity and self-esteem). Our individual character and our identity as a group are defined by our traditional culture.

I have personally experienced the changes that come from learning and living traditional methods of Healing. In that respect I encourage people to regain their inherent wisdom and I share my knowledge in a good way. I recognize where culture is needed and how crucial it is to include our cultural values and traditions as an essential role in the recovery of our people.

I thank you for this opportunity to share my personal beliefs and perspective regarding the relevance of culture in recovery.

All my relations,

Holly Grant



## Armand Garnet Ruffo

Armand Garnet Ruffo was born in Northern Ontario. He holds a Master's degree in literature and creative writing from the University of Windsor and an Honours degree in English from the University of Ottawa. He now makes his home in Ottawa, where he teaches Native literature at Carleton University and is associate director of the Centre for Aboriginal Education, Research and Culture. He has previously taught creative writing at both the Banff Centre for the Arts and the En'owkin International School of Writing in Penticton, British Columbia.

Strongly influenced by his Ojibway heritage, his first collection of poetry, *Opening in the Sky*, reveals an abiding interest in the complexities of aboriginal identity in a multicultural society. His second book, *Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney*, further raises difficult questions about voice and identity, aboriginal culture, human rights and the environment. In addition, he has written plays, stories and essays, which continue to appear in literary periodicals, including *Dandelion*, *CVII*, and *absinthe*, and anthologies in both Canada and the United States.

### How

It starts slow,  
a little kindness.  
The kind that begins  
in the shelter of your arm,  
a basket made into a bed,  
a bit of food. Trust  
takes time. It's  
a luminous bird  
slowly descending from the stars  
to the tip of your fingers.  
The process of naming  
stamps personality,  
tells and seals,  
and there is no longer dependence  
but interdependence.  
Some ask to buy,  
but there's no way  
you can think of cash  
for indentured bondage,  
zoo slavery.  
In their eyes you see  
your own capacity,  
as fathomless as the wilderness.  
But through two tiny animals  
how is it possible?  
Then one night they don't show  
and you search for weeks,  
follow trails that deadend.  
Until finally, exhausted,  
you have to stop  
and admit love.

From *Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney*, Coteau Books



## Chawathil First Nation HEALING THROUGH ART

"The portal of healing and creativity always takes us into the realm of the spirit"

-Angeles Arrien, Anthropologist and Author of *The Four-fold Way: Walking the Paths of the Warrior, Teacher, Healer, and Visionary*.

"ART THERAPY IS AN EXCELLENT METHOD OF TREATMENT OF TRAUMA SURVIVORS. IF YOUR feelings, such as anger, grief, fear and/or aggression are overwhelming and are affecting your ability to concentrate and function on a daily basis, Art Therapy may be useful to you," says Allen Bunjun, Project administrator for the Chawathil First Nations Healing Project funded by the AHF, confirming the positive impact on residential school survivors and their family of this innovative approach to healing.

Through education, the participants become aware of the source of many of their feelings of anger and low self-esteem, and how these feelings are affecting their lives today.

The Chawathil First Nation project runs a variety of group programs to help residential school victims and their family members proceed with healing the wounds caused by being physically and sexually abused while attending residential school. They chose the Art therapy approach as an effective tool to help people express what they are often not able to share verbally. They designed and carried out two Art therapy programs, one for a residential school survivor group, the other as part of their sexual offender program. These specialized therapy groups are designed as educational and therapeutic support groups. Through education, the participants become aware of the source of many of their feelings of anger and low self-esteem, and how these feelings are affecting their lives today. Through art therapy, they are able to recognize and express their thoughts and feelings through the art process. All group sessions start with a smudge and talking circle and end with a prayer. Most close with a sweatlodge ceremony.

Art therapy is also offered as an individual therapy option to their clients by the two counsellors working in the project, Martha Drennan, B.A. & R.C.C., and Holly Gallant, C.D.S.C. & grief counsellor. The assessment procedure includes completing a standardized form and usually reveals current functioning and present concerns and conflicts. Reasonable treatment goals are then set, which are achievable within a short period of time. Clients work on implementing a wellness plan in their daily lives and begin the process of reclaiming their self identity.

So what is art therapy? As Holly Gallant underlines, "this form of expression does not require special artistic or previous art experience and is not meant to be used and analyzed by the therapist." The point is that the artwork produced by the clients helps them to discover the meaning for themselves. It provides insight into the experience, ego strength, methods of coping and past and present family history and dynamics. The art is used as a means of non-verbal communication. Often the feelings and memories connected to trauma are difficult to verbalize and can be more easily recognized and expressed through images. In art therapy the artwork produced by the participant is used as the focal point. The therapist and participant process the art, by talking about the artwork and its contents.

The therapist intervenes through questions, clarifications, confrontations and interpretation. This procedure allows the participant to understand and to gain insight and control over maladaptive patterns of thought and behaviour. Through various art processes (drawing, collage, painting, sculpture) art therapy clients may experience and express emotions or conflicts or recall memories. During an art therapy session, clients often verbally explore the symbolism and meaning of their imagery with the art therapist.

Art therapy, therefore, is a form of psychotherapy that allows for emotional expression and healing through nonverbal means. Adults may use words to intellectualize and distance themselves from their emotions. Art therapy enables the client to break through these cumbersome barriers to self expression using simple art material. •

This article was adapted from Chawathil project information and internet sources. To learn more about art therapy, contact *Healing Words* at (613) 237-4441 or 1-888-725-8886. To contact Allan Bunjun—First Nation Band Administrator, Chawathil First Nation: P.O. Box 1659, Hope, BC VOX 1L0 (604) 869-9994.

# HEALING, JUSTICE, OFFENDERS AND VICTIMS

extracts from

## *Defining Traditional Healing*

by Gloria Lee, Research and Curriculum Developer,  
Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. Ms Lee is  
of Cree ancestry and is from the Pelican Lake Area.

The full text can be found at the following URL: [http://usask.ca/  
nativelaw/jaw\\_lee.html](http://usask.ca/nativelaw/jaw_lee.html)

The four elements of the person are the Spiritual, Emotional, Physical and Mental. The physical manifestations of a weakness are seen as disease or a bodily ailment. The disease is traditionally seen as a symptom of the weakness. The weakness may be derived within the spiritual, emotional or psychological aspects of the person. When a person is inflicted with a disease, the traditional view is that it is an offering of a teaching to the individual. The teaching will ultimately be of oneself but the person may choose to deal only with the symptom of physical manifestation of the weakness and not address the root of the disease itself. If the person chooses to treat only the disease and ignores the teaching which it is offered, then the disease will return.

### *The purpose of a justice system in an Aboriginal society is to restore the peace and equilibrium within the community*

The weaknesses are caused by being out of balance or off centre. There are many reasons why an individual is out of balance. The reasons range from working too much in one area or over-working at a job, being too greedy, wanting too much, and not paying attention to the other parts of ones' self or ones' life and family. If we do not pay attention to all of our parts then we will become unbalanced and an illness may come forward to remind us of the fact that we have not paid attention to other parts of ourselves. Being out of balance may also be caused by not receiving the appropriate teachings from our Elders because First Nations culture was hidden to protect it from total loss.

There are traditional ways of dealing with illnesses. With the support of Elders and the assistance of Healers and Elder Apprentices we can find the right healing for the illness and an explanation for why the illness happened in the first place. Inevitably the illness is said to be caused because the person is out of balance. Being out of balance happens because one has not lived a "careful" life.

When speaking to a traditional healer, one will discover that much of what a healer does is sorting out the jumble of disorder found in and around the patient. The disorder has many causes but primarily is caused by not living life in a good way.

Because traditional healing is within each of us, we are all

capable of healing ourselves, sometimes with the assistance or support of others such as Elders, Healers, and Helpers. Healing begins at one's own centre; this is the ultimate responsibility for one's own well being. This traditional approach to healing is found in discussions on the meaning of justice. For example, the meaning of 'justice' found in the *Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba* states

*"The dominant society tries to control actions it considers potentially or actually harmful to society as a whole, to individuals or to the wrongdoers themselves by interdiction, enforcement or apprehension. The emphasis is on the punishment of the deviant as a means of making that person conform, or as a means of protecting other members of society."*

*"The purpose of a justice system in an Aboriginal society is to restore the peace and equilibrium within the community, and to reconcile the accused with his or her own conscience and with the individual or family who has been wronged. This is a primary difference. It is a difference that significantly challenges the appropriateness of the present legal system for Aboriginal people in the resolution of conflict, the reconciliation and the maintenance of community harmony and good orders."*

The First Nations' philosophy of justice is really an expanded understanding which, in the end, does not even mean 'justice' anymore. There is not an English word for the First Nations' Wholistic meaning. Aboriginal people have inherently a higher standard or a fuller concept of what is required to make things right. This understanding is guided by the spiritual realm and the teachings of the Creator.

*"If one chooses to accept or acknowledge this concept, one can easily see that our culture, customs and traditions were also provided to us by the Creator. We are told that our culture is based on the natural law and that the natural law is connected to the natural universe."*

In James Dumont's article, *Justice and Aboriginal People*, found in *The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: Aboriginal People and the Justice System* the Aboriginal concept of justice is described in the following way.

*"The Anishinabe way of expressing the concept of justice is gwaik/minodjiwi/dibaakonagwin (literally, "right, and respectful judgement)."*

*"Justice is the pursuit of a true judgement required to re-establish equilibrium and harmony in relationship, family and society – a judgement which is gwaik: straight and honest, while at the same time being minidjiwin: respectful of the integrity of all persons, both the wronged and the wrong-doer"*

*"The Anishinabe justice system is one that leans toward wise counsel, compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, reconciliation and balance, rather than obligatory correction, retribution, punishment, penance and confinement."*

There is a direct connection between the principles of Aboriginal justice and the legacy of physical and sexual abuse left by the residential school system. These principles are appropriate because they make offenders responsible without criminalizing them. They recognize that offenders are themselves victims. They also provide support and healing to victims.

Physical and sexual abuse affect the victim's mind, spirit, body and heart. The effects of these traumas can also have an impact on the person's family and community, and they move from one generation to the next.

### **Breaking the cycle of abuse that was started in residential schools is essential if aboriginal communities are to be healthy places for children to be raised with love.**

Intergenerational or multi-generational trauma happens when the effects of trauma are not resolved in one generation. What we learn to see as normal when we are children, we pass on to our own children. Children who learn that physical and sexual abuse is normal, and who have never dealt with the feelings that come from this, may inflict physical and sexual abuse on their children. This is the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in residential schools.

Breaking the cycle of abuse that was started in residential schools is essential if aboriginal communities are to be healthy places for children to be raised with love.

The historical, philosophical and social perspectives of the concept of justice are extremely diverse and complex. But it is clear that the principles at the basis of Aboriginal justice are connected to the broader issues of healing as reconciliation with oneself, with others, and with the community, which is what the AHF is mandated to promote. There are many ways to bring this process of reconciliation about. Many healing projects that are submitted to the Foundation demonstrate ways in which Aboriginal communities are, as James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson says, "attempting to grasp the wisdom of our elders, to define ourselves, and to articulate a certain way of healing and apply it to our traumatic experiences. Many Aboriginal people are attempting to construct many forms of healing themselves based on their awareness of their knowledge, traditions and values. This will create many methods of healing and views of justice. This reflects our cultural diversity. While there is no single theory of Aboriginal justice, the common theme remains the necessity of our knowledge of our people and ourselves. The goal of healing is not to assimilate to the other, but rather to allow ourselves to live in a world as Aboriginal people who feel connected with our unique shared culture. We do not desire to be healed in a manner that we feel disconnected from our identities or feel that our identities are better suited to other societies."

Today, Aboriginal communities can draw on many resources to integrate healing approaches that are based on Aboriginal principles of justice. These approaches, rooted in aboriginal spirituality, culture and tradition, are more and more being integrated in western justice systems and practices. In fact, it should be a matter of pride for Aboriginal people the world over that the values and practices of Aboriginal law and conflict resolution are being adopted as alternatives to the principles of retributive laws that have underpinned western societies and that are proving to be ineffective and costly. •

# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Innu people do not look at punishment as appropriate.

For them, justice is rather seen as healing than punishment. All Aboriginals have their own morals, but not all have a formalized system. Even if Innu don't want punishment, they recognize the need for acknowledgment and accountability for crimes.

-Bart Jack Sr., Innu Nation, *Justice and Healing in Sheshatshit and Davis Inlet* <http://www.igc.apc.org>.

The principles of restorative justice have been derived from indigenous cultures.

**M**ANY FIRST NATIONS TRADITIONALLY APPLIED, AND IN SOME CASES continue to apply, a restorative justice philosophy in dealing with community problems.

Restorative justice is intended to support all community members and First Nations people to develop justice programming which is community-driven and focused on healing. It is a way of thinking about conflict and crime. Restorative justice affects all areas of the criminal justice system and can be summarized as a philosophy that recognizes crimes are committed against people and not just committed against the state.

Lastly, restorative justice emphasizes the resolution of conflict over punishment.

Restorative justice is a value-based approach to criminal justice, with a balanced focus on the offender, victim, and community. The foundation of restorative justice is to determine the harm resulting from a crime, what needs to be done to repair the crime, and who is responsible for repairing the harm. The dominant approach to criminal justice is sometimes called retributive justice and is focused on determining what law was broken, who broke it, and how they should be punished.

One of the most important values of restorative justice is that all individuals are entitled to be treated with dignity.

-Tom Cavanagh, <http://www.restorativejustice>

## IDEAS, TOOLS, METHODS

Restorative justice covers a wide variety of alternative approaches, tools and methods. This issue of *Healing Words* explores three restorative justice approaches which can be modified and adapted to other types of healing projects or programs: Conferencing, Victim Impact Panels, and Youth Diversion programs. We hope this overview will help individuals and communities in exploring and generating new ideas, and in encouraging them to look at partnership possibilities.

## CONFERENCING

Real justice conferences (also called family group conferences, restorative justice conferences, and community accountability conferences) originated as a response to juvenile crime. Conferencing is a new victim-sensitive approach to addressing wrongdoing in various settings in a variety of ways. It lends itself to a variety of uses, for example by schools in response to truancy and disciplinary incidents (including violence), or as a prevention strategy in the form of role plays of conferences with primary and elementary school students.

## REPAIRING THE HARM

A conference is a structured meeting between offenders, victims and both parties' family and friends in which they deal with the consequences of the crime and decide how best to repair the harm. Neither a counselling nor a mediation process, conferencing is a straightforward problem-solving method that demonstrates how citizens can resolve their own problems when provided with a constructive forum to do so. Conferences provide victims and others an opportunity

to confront the offender, express their feelings, ask questions and have a say in the outcome. Offenders hear firsthand how their behaviour has affected people. They may begin to repair the harm by apologizing, making amends, and agreeing to financial restitution or personal or community service work. Conferences hold offenders accountable while providing them an opportunity to discard the "offender" label and be reintegrated into their community, school, or workplace.

## VICTIM IMPACT AND EMPATHY PANELS

Victim impact panels provide a forum for crime or abuse victims to tell a group of offenders about the impact of the abuse on their lives and on the lives of their families, friends, and neighbours. Panels typically involve three or four victim speakers, each of whom spends about 15 minutes telling their story in a non-judgmental, non-blaming manner. While some time is usually dedicated to questions and answers, the purpose of the panel is for the victims to speak, rather than for the victims and offenders to engage in a dialogue.

Victim impact panels were first initiated in 1982 by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). In light of the devastating consequences of drunk driving on its victims and on society (causing over 17,000 deaths and more than one million injuries in 1995 alone), MADD felt that it was critical to change the generally accepted attitude that these incidents were "accidents" rather than crimes. They believed that a key component of changing attitudes was to confront drunk drivers with first-hand testimony from the victims of drunk driving crashes.

As a result of positive feedback from both victims and offenders who have participated in drunk driving panels, this strategy has been used with other crimes such as property crimes, physical assault, domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and homicide (the survivors serve as panelists).

## GOALS

The goals of victim impact panels are to:

- Help offenders understand the impact of their crimes on victims and communities.
- Provide victims with a structured, positive outlet to share their personal experiences and to educate offenders, justice professionals, and others about the physical, emotional, and financial consequences of crime.
- Build a partnership among victim service providers and justice agencies that can raise the individual and community awareness of the short- and long-term impacts of crime.

## YOUTH DIVERSION PROGRAM

The purpose is to divert people from the justice system to more appropriate community services. The primary goal of the diversion program is to reduce the rate at which the diverted youth commit subsequent offences, thereby reducing the costs borne by victims, police, and courts associated with those future offences. It is also hoped that the program would increase the victim's satisfaction with the justice process and increase the offender's sense of community belonging by offering an opportunity for atonement.

## HEALING PROJECT PROGRAMS POSSIBILITIES

A Diversion Agreement is not a conviction; the record is not available to the public and can be both sealed and destroyed. The agreement/contract may require the juvenile to complete one or more of the following conditions: attend counselling/education classes, perform community service, pay restitution and fines, attend school and observe home curfews.

The Juvenile Court Diversion program is designed to divert juveniles from commitment to the formal justice system through **early intervention and by working with less-serious offenders at home.**

The programs are designed and implemented at the local level through different means such as family therapy and group counselling. Through juvenile court diversion, many local communities can provide services. •

# EXPLORING JUSTICE AS HEALING

*Extracted from James (Sakéj) Youngblood Henderson's article of the same title. James is Research Director at the Native Law Centre of Canada.*

JUSTICE AS HEALING IS AN OLD TRADITION IN ABORIGINAL THOUGHT AND SOCIETY. Yet, after our experiences with colonialism, racism, domination and oppression, we have returned to this tradition as a foundation for contemporary remedies. Systematic deprivation of the Aboriginal ownership of land and resources, wealth, income, as well as our culture, human dignity and social position has placed difficult demands on the traditional values and rituals. We need to explore in their totality our visions of justice as healing. We need to evaluate whether existing therapeutic treatments are tools of assimilation or cultural integrity. We need to ponder why the justice system refuses to treat our people as fully human, choosing instead to dehumanize us as deviant organisms or sick minds that need rehabilitation. We have to consider the relationship of punishment to human rights. We need to think seriously about replacing criminal law with tort and restitutionary remedies familiar to Aboriginal values. We need to rethink justice from our traditions.

Our visions of justice as healing are concerned more with equitable processes or ceremonies to resolve conflicts rather than with substantive rules. When Aboriginals say a certain behaviour or rule is wrong, they are constructing a cultural vision of justice. Our vision of justice as healing recognizes that when an appropriate healing process is clear and is not taken, expressions of abhorrence at the wrong and a demand for justice are often subtle ways of tolerating wrongs. When we look for visions of justice, we should look at the best in our traditions of raising children, rather than Eurocentric books on justice. While we should be willing to dialogue about these grand systematic European theories of justice in the modern society, we should also clarify their failures and how they are different from our visions.

We need to acknowledge and affirm our worldview, language, consciousness and order. Our vision of justice as healing requires us to understand the importance of worldviews or landscapes rather than validate a social ontology of individualism. Our traditions and values emphasize the beauty of distinct consciousness and orders. We should not repress them for formal equality with our oppressor's values. We must acknowledge that equal treatment under the law arose from the idea of fairness, an idea that presupposes differences. If everything were the same, fairness would be a moot point. Contemporary notions of equality have a difficult time acknowledging and affirming the right of Aboriginal people to be different, since it attempts to suppress all differences for universal pretence of equality. Pretence is no substitute for knowing who we are; only the value of having an authentic identity and learning how our traditional values can begin the process of healing us is more important than validating alien ideas of justice. •

The offender is not born in the Indian—the Indian is born into a system which offends....The justice system thrives in this country, and the commodity that provides the fuel is Indian people.”

-Chief Louis Stevenson, Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, 1988.

Below: the first 2 funding cheques issued by the AHF



# My Story

by Gene Ouellette

THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL IS AN INTERESTING ISSUE PARTICULARLY FOR ME SINCE IT HAS had such an impact not only on my life but on everyone that I care about. My mother had gone to residential school in Saskatchewan. Up until last Christmas she disclosed to me a small portion of the suffering she endured while attending school in her primary years. We were driving back from town after Christmas shopping in the afternoon, when she asked me, "Gene, you work in justice, don't you?" I responded, "Yeah," then immediately she asked me how to file for a claim. I was totally shocked but not surprised. Right then and there I wanted to say, HAH I knew it all along. But I bit my tongue and told her that I knew people that would be able to assist her in her healing journey. I have seen too much, having witnessed my mother in ways a kid should not. All my life I wondered why she did what she did and why she was the way she was. I knew that I was not the one to blame and figured that she has to work on her own feelings and issues.

After her brief disclosure, the car kind of went back to silence. I was too overwhelmed to go any further. I was thinking to myself, What can I do to assist my own mother? Before I went to Alberta for the Christmas holidays my brothers and sisters were telling me that my mom had started to drink again rather heavily. Prior to this she would tie one on maybe once or twice a year, which wasn't too bad. I could handle that. However they said that almost every other day she had been drinking. Well, when we were all kids there was not much that we could do. But now that we are all adults and somewhat professional people, what was stopping us now? When my mother and I got home I told her that she had to get some professional help as soon as possible. It didn't make any sense to me to cut a wound open, throw salt on it, and then walk away. I made a few calls to reliable sources back in Saskatchewan and in a matter of an hour we had come up with a game plan.

There was a small group of people that my mother felt that she could confide in and use as a support group. This was the start of her healing journey. Within the next couple of months my mother would phone me when she was intoxicated, sobbing over the telephone. It made me feel rather helpless that there was nothing that I could do since I was in Saskatoon and she was in Alberta. So I started to think again that she needed to go to a treatment centre where they would focus on the real underlying issues why people drink. She had checked herself into an Edmonton treatment centre with the assistance of counsellors only after her drinking was getting way out of hand. Before she had checked herself in she had phoned me one night rather intoxicated and I could not even recognize the voice. It was as if I was talking to a total stranger. Within the next couple of days she had been admitted. It is a standard procedure that at a treatment centre no phone calls are allowed for the first 10-14 days, and such was this centre. After two weeks in there my mother had phoned me and again I could not even recognize her voice. She had sounded so relaxed and content with herself and the world that surrounds her. I was rather exuberant that my mother was going to be "healed." She had completed her 28 day treatment and had returned home. Talking with my brothers and sisters it had appeared to me that they were looking forward to my mother's return. My mother had been doing all right for about three weeks and then she had started drinking again. I realized that there are no overnight miracles, or even twenty-eight day miracles. But the most important thing I realized was that my mother had started her journey.

Today she is still drinking, but she has been taking initiatives on her own to try to come to terms with her issues. It is not an overnight reality but a journey that requires lifetime attention. The one thing that I told her is that I want her to stick around to see her grandchildren growing up. I know how important it is for grandchildren to know and learn from their grandparents.

I felt that I had to tell my own story before I could start talking about other issues regarding residential schools. The dilemma that I had witnessed is both negative and positive feedback coming from residential schools. For both my Granny and Mooshoom had attended the very same school that my mother had attended. Now for them it was a total positive experience. I remember my Granny telling me what

it was like. When she turned 16 she had cried because she had to leave the school. She would tell me what the nuns had taught her about everything that she needed to know to become a good devoted Roman Catholic for the rest of her life. How to sew, knit, tend to gardens, cook, clean, and look after a family. My Mooshoom would remember the hard work ethics that were passed on to him which would be passed on to his adult years. For him as well the entire experience was something positive. I felt a real honour when my Granny and Mooshoom would tell me stories. For example each time when I was staying at their place and there was a real good lightning storm, my Granny would go for the Holy Water and my Mooshoom would go for the braid of Sweetgrass as they made their way around the house smudging and sprinkling around the doorways and windows. I had a real hard time trying to comprehend their rationale for performing as such. But in the bigger scheme of life it all makes sense to me in my world.

**If the problem is never addressed the cycle will continue, and we as a society will never be able to empower ourselves to the same extent as prior to colonization.**

The path that I have chosen for myself has been an interesting one in the sense that I feel I have been exposed to all good and bad. It is what I do with that knowledge that will make me into a complete person. Up until the last two years prior to working for the Foundation I had pretty much gone to school. I had the fortunate experience of working with an organization where I was responsible to facilitate what we had called Youth Circles. A lot of people had asked me, What are these Youth Circles? My response is that they are healing circles; we would focus on the real, underlying issues of why people do what they do. They could be described as talking circles as well, since we had both the victim and accused sitting within the circle talking about the incident and why we were having such a circle. Some might even describe it as being a sentencing circle, because there would be conditions imposed on the youth. The participants sitting in would be the facilitator, victim and their support group, the accused and their support group, a community representative, and observers. The foundation of the circle would be the Elder. Even at an early age I could see the impact of inter-generational abuse stemming from Indian residential schools. Within the circle the support group for the accused would usually be their family, and more times than not the youth would be raised within a single-parent family with the mother being the primary caregiver. The abuse is still passed on to the generations today at no fault of their own. A lot of times the youth would assume the responsibility of child rearing. The fault stems back to residential schools, where our grandmothers and grandfathers were stripped of their parenting skills. They were not loved, cared for, nurtured, or shown emotion. They were told to be quiet, not to cry, what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. This stripped away all of our values and beliefs as aboriginal people. The community would help raise one child and these days we are to fend for ourselves.

If the problem is never addressed the cycle will continue and be passed on and we as a society will never be able to empower ourselves to the same extent as we were empowered prior to colonization. When we were still roaming the plains living a carefree life, it was a good way of life. Unlike today, there was no jealousy, cheating, hurting, or abusing. Then the missionaries came along and decided that it all should be changed and that we should live the way they want us to. Everything that we were ever taught could be thrown out the window, for it went against everything that the church had believed in. Stealing children away from their parents, sending them miles away to boarding schools, cutting their sacred hair, cutting up all of their belongings – these were not ways of our people.

The residential school system had impacted our culture more than anything had before, and my guess is more than anything will in the future. For over a hundred years they have tried and tried to make us become like them, but we can't. No matter how hard they have tried it seems that we are only getting stronger as a distinct and separate culture. During the 60s the residential schools were still going strong and not much had changed over that course of time. The government knew they had to try something else, even to the point of passing "White Paper" legislation to make all Indians become regular productive

members of society. However this had an adverse affect on the entire country. The night before it was to be introduced it was leaked out and First Nations across the country had to become united and make a strong stand. That is exactly what had happened; it made us become more organized. During the 60s the Department of Social Services started literally to sell off Indian children to the U.S. and throughout the world. Literally hundreds of kids have been exported out to different parts of the country and the world. During the 70s the government started to introduce the judicial system, coming down hard on Aboriginal people. The current judicial system that is found here in Canada is taking the place of what residential schools were trying to accomplish in the previous 100 years or so. They are taking away our brothers, sons, fathers, uncles, and even grandfathers. It is hard to function as families when such an instrumental part of the community is gone. Traditionally the men were the ones responsible for protection over the community and especially their children. However it seems like the women are starting to become the true warriors of this day and age, raising large families on their own on a very stretched income. Which brings another conspiracy that I believe the government has formed – making we First Nations people dependent on handouts, much the way the Indian Act made us dependent and restricted us in so many ways. Some have accepted the challenge of overcoming these things and have surpassed expectations, but far too many still rely on their family allowance and monthly welfare cheque to provide for their families' bare essentials.

One analogy I like to use comes from the Linn Report, which was released in 1994. This report states that an aboriginal person is more likely to go to jail than to graduate from high school. And so, the young offender facilities are becoming like elementary schools, the correctional centres are becoming like high schools, and the penitentiaries are becoming like universities. Another quote from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Bellegarde is that we as aboriginal people have to use education as our "white buffalo." To me this is very significant, since it was told by our Ancestors that when a white buffalo is born it will be time for the Red Nation throughout the world to make a strong reemergence.

During the 80s the adoptions were happening at rather alarming rates, even though it didn't make sense that Aboriginal children would be put into non-aboriginal peoples' homes. Once again we were seen as a cash surplus for a lot of these homes. The more kids they had within their homes the more money they would receive from the government. Nowhere in the agreements did it stipulate that these foster homes could do whatever they desired to these kids that were less fortunate. The government has tried to implement so many different ways to assimilate, acculturate, and make us like them, but we have resisted. It is only a matter of time before we make a strong stance again and rise above. •

*Gene Ouellette is a Programs Review Officer at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation*

A Poem, Author unknown,

I cannot ease your aching heart,  
Nor take your pain away,  
But let me stay and take your hand  
and walk with you today!

I'll listen when you need to talk;  
I'll wipe away your tears  
I'll share your worries when they come;  
I'll help you face your fears.

I'm here and I will stand by you,  
Each hill you have to climb,  
So take my hand, let's face the world;  
Live one day at a time!

You're not alone, for I'm still here.  
I'll go the extra mile,  
And when your grief is easier,  
I'll help you learn to smile!

– submitted by Natasha Martin, *Aboriginal Healing Foundation*

# Building a Nation Life Skills Training Inc.

*"Healing yourself, family, community and nation"*

**B**UILDING A NATION PROVIDES ACCESS TO TRADITIONAL HEALING practices for Aboriginal people living in the city. Our people make available both traditional healing practices and mainstream counselling methods. Building a Nation puts the traditional medicine wheel back into practice again, in the lives of First Nations People.

Building a Nation Inc. is a non-profit agency offering counselling, life skills and healing as part of its services. As part of its mandate to support Urban youth and community healing initiatives, Building a Nation forged a partnership with Circles of Voices, an Aboriginal Youth Theatre program developed by the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company.

*The Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company*

Our mission is to develop and produce performing arts initiatives and activities that educate and promote the richness and diversity of Aboriginal culture.

The Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company uses theatre as a healing tool that provides a non-threatening environment by which our stories of truth can be told. The healing force is empowering participants in the program, and those who have had the opportunity to view "The truth hurts" production leave with a sense of amazement and comfort that their story is not unique to them, but is part of all our stories. The experience is truly a part of the healing process.

The SNTC recently completed the first Circle of Voices – Aboriginal Youth Theatre Program in Saskatoon. The Circle of Voices is a unique cultural and theatrical experience that takes aboriginal youth through eight weeks of intense theatrical training workshops and cultural experiences. Aboriginal professionals in theatre and film shared their expertise, skills and knowledge in areas such as acting, directing, script writing, voice, movement, music and marketing and promotions.

*The objectives of Circle of Voices are to:*

- Provide a meaningful and culturally appropriate process so that Aboriginal Youth may be convened to be creative within the healing process.
- To create a safe and comfortable atmosphere that will allow open discussion and interaction in expressing one's thoughts, feelings, ideas and concerns as part of their individual healing path.
- To build one's self-esteem through dramatic arts.
- To introduce professional Aboriginal role models as educators who will encourage and teach the required skills and knowledge in all areas of theatre production.
- To produce and perform a staged rendition of their cooperative efforts.
- To provide Aboriginal Youth with the tools and knowledge

needed to express themselves in a respectful and creative way.

*Cultural identity and the multi-generational effects of residential schools.*

The culmination of Circle of Voices' 8-week program included a one-week theatre run of "The Truth Hurts." The 8 performances were viewed by family, friends, community members and interested groups. The script was written by Deanne Kasokeo, a First Nation writer from Poundmaker reserve, and was based on the real life stories of the participants. The stories relayed messages of physical and sexual abuse, loss of language and culture, loss of identity, racism, abandonment and foster home experiences. The theme of the program was cultural identity and the multi-generational effects of residential schools.

**I learned and discovered things that have helped me grow spiritually, mentally and physically. I am more culturally aware of who I am and what our people have experienced.**



*The Truth Hurts*

"The Truth Hurts" tells the stories of fourteen Aboriginal youth aged 12 to 23 in coping with issues of family, love, identity, racism and abuse in relation to the multigenerational effects of residential schools. "The Truth Hurts" is based on the historical cycle of dysfunctional families, the effect on youth today, and the vision for future generations. The play was written by Poundmaker First Nation Writer Deanne Kasokeo and directed by Floyd Favel of Poundmaker First Nation and Kenneth Charlette of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation.

*Theatre, a vehicle for healing*

"What I enjoyed about the Circle of Voices Program is leaving it feeling confident and better about myself. I also had fun in the actual drama part of it, although the opportunity to grow in so many ways was given to us. I learned and discovered things that have helped me grow spiritually, mentally and physically. I am more culturally aware of who I am and what our people have experienced.

Through the Talking Circles, Smudging and Praying, Professional

Aboriginal Guest Speakers and Workshops and theatre games and exercises, I was able to look deep into myself and bring out talents I never knew I had.

I will always be connected to the friends I have made in this program. We all shared our own stories with each other, some sad, some funny and some angry. I have also learned the true meaning of teamwork, discipline, punctuality, consequences and, more importantly, respect.

I am thankful that our "Young" voices were not only heard but respected.

I left the Circle of Voices program with a better understanding of myself, and hope to pursue an acting career with the skills I have learned."

*Daleen Kay Muskego  
Circle of Voices 1999*

## *Saskatchewan Community Tour 2000*

The SNTC is bringing *The Truth Hurts* to several communities and is looking for sponsors to provide support in bringing the production to other communities.

At present the Tour is scheduled for February 26<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> to include 7 communities that are accessible by a majority of the Aboriginal communities in Saskatchewan:

**Saskatoon** on February 26<sup>th</sup> through March 4<sup>th</sup> **Prince Albert, North Battleford, Regina, La Ronge, Meadow Lake and Yorkton** between March 8<sup>th</sup> and April 29<sup>th</sup>, inclusive.

**A video tape of *The Truth Hurts* is available from:**

**V-Tapes  
401 Richmond Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 3A8**



# PORTRAIT OF A PROJECT

## MINWAASHIN LODGE

In 1991, a mainstream shelter for abused women and children hired a woman from the Algonquin Nation. Within that year, the number of Aboriginal women who sought help increased. It became clear that Aboriginal women felt more comfortable with services when another Aboriginal woman was available to provide support.

Today, Minwaashin Lodge Aboriginal Women's Support Centre is in full operation and provides direct services to promote the empowerment and well-being of Aboriginal Women and children who are survivors of family violence, by offering culturally appropriate services.

The Aboriginal Women's Support Centre is a centre of Aboriginal women of many different nations working within our urban community. Through these different nations, we are able to draw on positive cultural strengths carried by each individual, in order to provide the best service to our community.

Minwaashin Lodge Aboriginal Women's Support Centre is a grassroots organisation which is staffed by survivors of family violence and volunteers from diverse cultures and backgrounds. It is located within the Centre and has been created for Aboriginal Women and children who wish to use the Lodge to reclaim Aboriginal Identity as taught by their Elders and through their traditional healing practices. Minwaashin Lodge is also a place for celebration of Aboriginal culture and survival.

### A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

*Our partnership has enabled us to pool our expertise and resources, to offer improved services while cutting our costs. Because as partners we do not have to compete, to resent each other, to judge each other, clients feel free to come to any of us. This has been a real key to help our urban community to start working together more closely.*

*The main focus I like to highlight is that by working together as partners we are in fact preventing lateral violence, which I think can not only destroy our clients and our communities but also our organisations. Our partnership allows us to make progress on our healing journey and to be totally focused on our clients.*

-Colleen Whiteduck, Executive Director, Minwaashin Lodge Aboriginal Women's Support Centre.

### STRENGTHENING OUR CIRCLE

*Strengthening our circle* is a collaborative approach to trauma recovery from three partnering organisations: Minwaashin Lodge (the Aboriginal Women's Support Centre, or AWSC, which serves women and children), the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Healing (which services families), and the Pinganodin Men's Lodge. These three organisations have a combined total of 12 years of experience in providing front line and direct intervention and healing services to women and youth who are direct or intergenerational survivors of residential school abuse.

The project team consists of a partnering steering committee including the Youth Service Bureau, Rape Crisis Centre, and Wabano Health Centre, and a Healing team composed of Elders, grandmothers, trained therapists, and facilitators, whose responsibilities are as follow:

Steering Committee: To insure the holistic integrity, community and participants accountability and successful implementation of the holistic trauma recovery project.

Healing Team: To support and facilitate the healing, wellness and holistic health of workshop participants.

### MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

The project was developed as a direct response to the urgent need expressed by Aboriginal women and youth for a sustainable and proven Aboriginal-specific healing program. To this extent, the three partnering organisations have identified an immediate need for a proven holistic healing program which not only addresses the legacy of residential school abuse and the resulting intergenerational impact, but which also addresses the current realities of Aboriginal women and youth in Ottawa-Carleton and the surrounding region. Currently, the region of Ottawa-Carleton has

the fastest growing urban population of Aboriginal people in the country. In addition, there are five reserves in the area at Akwesasne, Kahnawake, Golden Lake, Maniwaki, and Kahnasatake. Geographically, our community is composed of Aboriginal women, children and families from urban, semi-remote and remote communities. Historically, Aboriginal-specific healing programs in the region have been limited and offered in isolation. This isolation has contributed to a complete lack of service accessibility for many members of the Aboriginal community.

*Strengthening our circle* is a demonstrated approach to holistic trauma recovery which offers prevention, intervention, post-vention and individual living sessions to both direct and intergenerational survivors of residential school abuse. The project is offered in accordance to a traditional healing model which encompasses and balances contemporary and traditional therapeutic healing practices. Specifically, *Strengthening our circle* will provide two one-week healing workshops to be followed by a 12-week aftercare program. One-to-one counselling sessions are offered during the life of the project.

### Five-day trauma recovery workshop for women

About 30 First nations (status and non status), Métis and Inuit grandmothers and women who are direct or intergenerational survivors of the residential experience are able to participate in each of the trauma recovery workshops.

Applicants that are referred to the Centre are assessed according to established criteria, and are interviewed for selection and intake. Before each workshop the Centre organizes sharing circles for support and information, as well as one-on-one counselling sessions to prepare for workshops. The cost of the workshop is established according to a sliding scale depending on income.

The workshops themselves are in the form of an intensive 5-day retreat in a lodge which provides 24-hour accommodation, with meals, childcare, transportation, etc. This way, participants can focus only on their healing issues. The healing team is composed of seven support and resources persons: one Elder, one Grandmother, three trained therapists/counsellors and two facilitators. All members of the team are fully qualified and have gone through the trauma recovery workshop. The end of the workshop is marked by a graduation ceremony, during which participants are given a certificate, followed by a feast celebration, to which participants' family and friends are encouraged to attend.

*All our workshops are attended by our Grandmothers. Our Grandmothers have successfully completed years of training with Elders and professionals to acquire the skills that they are called to use here. Beside the role they play in facilitating workshops, they conduct sweats and ceremonies, they open and close ceremonies, coming out ceremonies, full moon ceremonies, pipe ceremonies. They have become residential Abuse survivors Advocates and Elder Abuse advocates. AWSC is very proud of our Grandmothers, who are very empowering and gentle in the way they carry their wisdom.*

### Extract from the Report of the 5<sup>th</sup> assembly, Minwaashin Lodge

Each workshop is delivered in accordance to a demonstrated Aboriginal-specific healing model which balances traditional healing practices and contemporary therapeutic practices. AWSC trauma recovery facilitators use the focusing therapeutic approach.

*"I am very proud of the work we have done –and are doing– here. We received funding from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to facilitate workshops on Trauma recovery. We managed to use this funding to do not two workshops, but three. This was made possible because we spend money very sparingly, nothing fancy here. Clients feel at home, this is the most important thing. They need to feel welcome and at ease. Safety is a big part, and we do offer aftercare."*

-Colleen Whiteduck.

Minwaashin Lodge  
Aboriginal Women's Support Centre  
Box 79105 262 Montreal Road  
Vanier, Ontario K1L 1A1  
Contact: Colleen Whiteduck

Colleen Whiteduck is an Algonquin from the Quebec Region. She is a graduate of the Prairie Region Focusing Centre and the Focusing Institute of New York. She holds a B.S.W. and a Family Violence Intervention Certificate.

Colleen began working within the social work practice in 1992. In 1993 she founded the Aboriginal Women's Support Centre (AWSC) of Ottawa-Carleton. In 1993-94 she developed an aboriginal-specific curriculum for family violence counsellors which was accredited by CEGEP Heritage College of Ottawa-Carleton. Colleen spearheaded this project and approximately 40 students graduated with certificates and accreditation to enter into university.

Colleen is presently the Executive Director of the Aboriginal Women's Support Centre (AWSC) and continues to develop and implement programs. She works at the grassroots and offers counselling and workshops that meet the needs of aboriginal clients. She has assisted many Native and Non-Native women along their healing journey. She is committed to holistic healing and continues revitalisation of Native culture.



Colleen Whiteduck, ED, Minwaashin Lodge Aboriginal Women's Support Centre



# HEALING WORLDS

## *Connecting Aboriginal communities – North, South, East and West.*

The world over, from the North, South, East and West, Aboriginal peoples have begun their journey towards healing and wellness and are, through this process, at the forefront of the world societies healing and renewal movement. Beginning with this issue, *Healing Words* will present healing ideas and share facts, stories and views about common issues affecting Aboriginal people as the result of residential school systems implemented in other parts of the world.

The wealth of information from Aboriginal individuals, organisations, community projects and programs from every part of the world is unimaginable. In this first presentation, *Healing Words* features healing ideas from LaceWeb, a family and community healing movement from Australia and the South East Asia Pacific Region.

*“The communal wellbeing action spread throughout this material has been thousands of years in the making – passed down by indigenous, small minority and intercultural from far spread cultures. New stuff merges. Living in essential harmony with natural process, tribal people lived for thousands of years with balance. Eco-destruction by Homo Rampant calls forth a cry for a return to balance. Healing action IS taking place. Look for kindred spirits. Link with them. Share what works. Let us know what you are doing and what works for you. This resource may provide a rich field of possibilities for you to play a part together with others.”*  
-LaceWeb

### WHAT IS LaceWeb?

Journeying into a wealth of nurturing healing ways  
Tapping into ancient wisdoms  
Discovering the latest understandings of the mindbody  
Evolving healing network  
Enabling Community ways for healing the World

Laceweb is an informal network of indigenous and intercultural people who use self help action to heal aspects of their wellbeing. This informal network has been evolving throughout the SE Asia Pacific region since the mid 1940's. A background and historical timeline is contained in the Laceweb Internet Page called 'Communal Ways for Healing the World'.

### CULTURAL HEALING ACTION

Cultural Healing Action has emerged from Vanuatu and other Pacific Cultures as well from Australian Aboriginal people. Contexts are set up where people can explore aspects of the own wellbeing together with others towards enriching wellbeing in family and community life. Throughout remote areas of Northern Australia and the SE Asia Pacific region, indigenous, small minority, and intercultural people have a long history of using Cultural Healing Action towards fostering and maintaining all aspects of wellbeing

As well, it is a movement for intercultural reconciliation and wellbeing. It fosters the development of **Quick Response Healing Teams** to resolve local community and international conflict. It provides scope for people to actively engender and promote values, language, practices, modes of action, arts and other aspects of a way of life (culture). These in turn facilitate social emancipation, intercultural healing, cultural justice, as well as social and environmental wellbeing.

Cultural healing action may run for less than an hour to several days (or weeks). People may be involved in energetic and not so energetic games and activities. Cultural healing action tends to be 'wellbeing' based rather than 'issue' based, although issues may both emerge and be resolved.

The arts and other elements of culture provide opportunities to reflect on everyday social structures and practices. A description of some of the games and exercises commonly used will perhaps present a more concrete idea of the issue-posing and issue-resolving process that characterizes people's cultural healing action.

Participants of all ages may explore creative and artistic ways of examining local cultural wellbeing matters that concern the participants and their communities. Generative wellbeing acts may result in many issues ceasing to be.

### EXAMPLES of GENERATIVE WELLBEING ACTS:

being well    being flexible    assuring habitat  
assuring food    assuring land    assuring clean  
water    good housing    playful healing ways    having  
choice    fun    playfulness    sharing joy    giving  
recognition,    mutual supporting    sharing what  
works    increasing flexibility    resolving issues such  
as: loneliness    fatigue    boredom    purposelessness  
violence    powerlessness    trauma    grief    sexual  
abuse    suicide    alcohol abuse    drug abuse

Participants may create short plays, songs and rhythms, poems, stories, dances, murals and postcards, and other materials about these things. A strong sense of group and community bonding may develop or be strengthened. Often others - friends and relatives - may join in towards the finish of the gatherings to experience performances, games, and perhaps an exhibition of artistic products. Typically, participants have rarely, if ever, participated in artistic expression before.

### SOME OF THE PROCESSES

**Social Mapping.** Participants may explore the function of personal and community maps and their significant features. They may construct social maps, or maps of their community's or their individual concerns; detailing points of origin, the destination, the landmarks and signposts, etc. –using cut-outs, drawings, and found objects. The creation of social maps may focus on producing graphic and directional representations of individual and community wellbeing aspirations, ideal situations, and possible courses to take.

**Conflict Studies.** Conflict may be a motive force for art –as in life. Recognising this, in some contexts, games and exercises exploring the various kinds of conflict may make up a significant portion of the early life of some cultural healing action. Physical conflict may be explored through such games which illustrate the tension that may evolve if force is used, particularly to oppose. The value of unified action, cooperative teamwork and therapeutic mediating ways in conflict resolving situations may be highlighted. Contexts may be rich with possibilities to incorporate/embody any of the healing ways you know and those included in this page.

### IMAGE THEATRE AND FORUM THEATRE

The conflict resolving exercises may naturally progress to image theatre, a basic device used in enriching wellbeing for issue dissolving. Participants often divide into groups of at least five, and each group devises three tableaux (frozen postures, attitudes, images and dialogue) depicting:

- the present state, concern or conflict situation
- the transition phases - the dynamics of change evolving
- the desired, ideal or resolved state

**Forum theatre** builds from image theatre. The situations presented in the group in stages can now be developed into a more fluid dramatic piece, complete with movement, sound, etc. The participants (still divided into groups) develop the piece either completely (ie., an aspect of wellbeing is enriched –a concern is resolved) or up to a crisis point only. Pieces are then performed with others as observers. Members of this audience stop the performance any time a person has concerns about what is being presented. During the replay, people stopping the performance do not to talk about why they want to change something. Rather they assume the role of the actor concerned or simply add another actor in the drama. The process can go on until the audience agrees that the performance offers a rich representation of the wellbeing enriching process.

If the performance is one that stops at a crisis point, the audience supplies a resolution to the crisis. Actors, again from the audience, may rise to modify the piece. At the very end of these processes, a forum may be held with everybody present involved to further explore the presentations. Forum theatre thus becomes a process for dismantling the alienation between actors and audience typical of formal theatre. It also may serve as a rehearsal for action in the real conflict situations represented in the pieces. The healing cultural activities and dynamic 'group relating' may provide corrective, remedial and generative emotional experiences that may lead to personal and group concerns actually being healed/resolved during the process of exploring them. At the same time participants may be gaining competencies that they may use in the future.

Cultural healing action may enable healing potential within therapeutic space. It may create opportunities for exploring inner experience and outer reality, exploring the space between 'appears to be real' and 'experientially real' (ie. what is felt somatically, or in the body), enriching the capacity of 'individual self' and the 'collective self,' as healer/actor in experiencing 'safe abandon, surrendering to the unfolding moment and catching the flow, re-experiencing early childhood preplay processes of embodiment, projecting and role/dramatic play, exploring within the 'personal theatre' of the individual and community and creating the healing theatre of the group as a whole. The above processes may be used to enrich wellbeing while gaining the requisite skills in the process.

It may foster the development of Quick Response Healing Teams to resolve local community and international conflict. It may provide scope for people to actively engender and promote values, language, practices, modes of action, arts and other aspects of a way of life (culture). These in turn may enable social emancipation, intercultural healing, cultural justice, as well as social and environmental wellbeing.

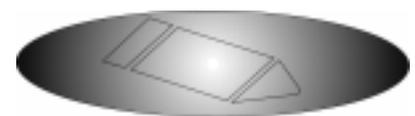
Every artistic aspect of a culture (a way of life) may be used for nurturing healing:

music    drumming, percussion and body  
percussion    dance    drama and spontaneous  
drama    chanting    play and games    clowning  
aromas    circus    singing, chanting, toning,  
humming and vocalising theatre    adventure  
challenges    spontaneous choir    visual arts  
sculpture    carving and moulding    story telling  
literature    creative writing    drawing    painting  
poetry    group dynamics

Healing Cultural Action in general terms involves actively fostering and sustaining cultural wellbeing. It fosters people extending their own culture as a balance to other cultures that may be dominant, elitist and oppressive.

**LaceWeb:** <http://www.green.net.au/laceweb>. For a list of other resources or references, or if you have ideas or questions, please contact **Healing Words**, Communications Department, AHF, at 1-888-725-8886. •

## Healing Words



*is interested in your articles, fiction, poetry, photographs, questions and comments. Please send any material to The Editors, Healing Words, The Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E7. We also accept faxes at (613) 237-4442 and email at [programs@ahf.ca](mailto:programs@ahf.ca).*

# Proposal Development Workshops

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) is facilitating Two-Day Proposal Development Workshops to assist those interested in developing and submitting proposals to the AHF. Participants will be given the opportunity to work on their proposals during the workshop.

The workshop will review and discuss the following components of the Application Process:

What the Foundation will fund  
How to complete an Application Form  
Deadline Dates and  
Application Review Process.

Workshops will be facilitated for multi-organization/Band/community groups. Single Bands/communities/organizations are not eligible. Where possible, partnerships will be developed with the Foundation to jointly share the coordination of the workshop. The Foundation will provide the documents (Handbook 2nd Edition, application forms, evaluation forms, etc.) and other materials for the workshops.

## To request a Proposal Development Workshop

If you are interested in this option, please fax, mail or email a letter of request to the Foundation that details a suggested date, location and an estimate of groups who may want to attend.

## Funded Project Evaluations

This is a reminder to funded Projects to review the reporting and evaluation requirements in their contribution agreements. Note that these requirements must be completed before submitting new proposals for year 2 funding. An Evaluation Framework will be provided to funded projects by the Foundation to ensure that all information requirements are met. All funded projects will receive this information by mail depending on when their project end date is.

If you would like to be in the AHF database, please fill in this form and return it to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Suite 801, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa Ontario, K1P 5E7. You may also fax it to (613) 237-4442.

Name:

Title:

Organisation:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

Language(s):

Affiliation(s) (please circle relevant item or items):

Métis Inuk Urban Non-status First Nation

Where did you hear about the Foundation?

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### COMMON QUESTIONS ON THE PROGRAM HANDBOOK For the Month of January 2000

The following common questions were received in Program Information on the Handbook:

- Clarify the difference between community support letters and linkage letters. **Support letters are from those community groups and agencies who have some awareness of the content of your application and who have general knowledge of your concerns and are willing to support your efforts.**

**Linkage letters may be from an organization or agency who will work with you to meet your project goals and objectives. Further explanations can be found in our Program Handbook on pages 6 and 7 of the application form and in Appendix A page A2 at the back of the Handbook.**

- Can we use last year's letters in our next application?  
No. The letters would now be stale-dated. All of the letters need to be written and dated no more than 3 months before the submission date for project funding. For example, if you are submitting your application for the February 25, 2000 deadline then your letters should be dated no earlier than November 25, 1999. **Please refer to Appendix A in the Program Handbook under 'Link' and 'Support'.**

- When is the next deadline?  
**The application deadlines for this year are February 25 and August 25, 2000. For next year they are February 23 and August 31, 2001. Please refer to pages 25 and 42 in our Program Handbook.**

- How can we get a Proposal Development Workshop in our area?  
**To request a workshop, or to obtain further workshop information, you can fax or send a letter of request to Sharon Clarke, the Community Support Manager. (The Program Information Team will then advise the caller of the nearest workshop from the list of workshops from Community Support.)**

- Clarifications requested on who should be the official sponsor for a community group or social service group?  
**If your group or organization has not been incorporated for a least a year then you will need to find a sponsor for your project. The sponsor can be, but is not limited to, your Chief and Council or your local Metis or Inuit authority. Further explanation on sponsorship can be found in Appendix 2 page 29 of the application for project funding at the back of our Program Handbook.**

*-Karen Jacobs-Williams, Programs Information Manager  
February 8, 2000*





### *REMEMBERING*

We all have childhood memories.

My grandfather wrote in his autobiography, *I, NULIGAK*:

“I, Nuligak, will tell you a story. It is the story of what has happened to me in my life, all my adventures, many of them forever graven in my memory.”

I am grateful to my late grandfather for writing his story.

I, too, Nuligak’s grandson, will tell you a story. It is a story of what happened to me at residential school.

This story is told in the image of the cover of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation handbook, 2nd Edition.

Although this is a personal rendition of my experience, I believe the image portrays the feeling of most who survived the residential school system.

There are no more residential schools. This does not mean they are forgotten. Like most who survived, I have memories: many of them forever graven in my memory.

*-Angus Cockney*

## SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS:

You may submit your articles or other contributions by fax, hard copy, or diskette (Wordperfect or MSWord).

**Fax:** 613-237-4442

**Address:** The Editor, *Healing Words*  
75 Albert Street Suite 801  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1P 5E7

**Email:** grobelin@ahf.ca or wspear@ahf.ca

Please send photos by email in JPEG or TIF format or by regular mail. Please note that the AHF is not responsible for the loss or damage of material sent by mail.

Include a very short biographical statement (your name, what you do) along with your full address (or the address of your organization), phone number, fax number, e-mail.

The AHF does not pay for articles published in *Healing Words* but provides authors/contributors with copies of the newsletter to reach target audiences.

The views and opinions expressed in articles submitted by authors do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the AHF.

There is no set length for manuscripts, but shorter is usually better. All submitted articles are subject to the approval of the editorial team for acceptance. The AHF reserves the right to edit accepted manuscript for length and editorial style.

Articles are accepted on a rolling basis for future issues. The AHF reserves its right to accept or refuse articles submitted for publication. We reserve the right to delete unacceptable language and edit for grammar, punctuation and spelling.

The purpose of *Healing Words* is to be an instrument for honouring the Foundation's commitments to survivors, their descendants, and to their communities. It is one of the means by which we demonstrate our respect for the agreements the Foundation has signed. It is also a vehicle for supporting the Mission, Vision and objectives of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation as well as the goals of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation's Communications Strategy.

### Use of the name "Aboriginal Healing Foundation"

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation is the only organization incorporated under this name in Canada. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation does not endorse or fund projects other than those submitted and approved in conformity with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation application process. If you have questions about someone who claims to represent or be endorsed by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, please contact the Foundation's office in Ottawa.



Lorraine de Repentigny and Natasha Martin in the Foundation's mailroom on the day of the first proposal deadline, 15 January 1999.

## HEALING CENTRES

The Board of Directors of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation have changed the Healing Centre program theme to better meet the needs of survivors, their families, and descendants.

The Foundation is obtaining expert opinions to develop a broad model for Healing Centre programs. When the model is complete, the Board will ask for proposals from communities and organizations where the need is greatest. The model will then serve as a basis for proposals.

This change is intended to provide safety measures that will protect everyone involved in healing. Also, proposals funded will likely be from regions which do not have healing centres.

We will shortly post information about Healing Centre proposals on our website ([www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca)). You can also contact our Information Officers at 1-888-725-8886.



## Healing Words

*A quarterly publication of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation*

75 Albert Street Suite 801,  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E7  
(613) 237-4441 (Ottawa)  
(888) 725-8886 (Toll-free)  
(613) 237-4442 (Fax)  
[programs@ahf.ca](mailto:programs@ahf.ca) (Email)  
[www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca) (Internet)

### Reaching Us

*The Foundation's staff members are here to help you. Please call if we can be of service.*

### Executive Offices

Mike DeGagné, Executive Director  
Linda Côté, Executive Assistant  
Extension 236

### Programs

Yvonne Boyer, Director  
Pamela Lussier, Assistant to Director  
Extension 223

### Finance

Ernie Daniels, Director  
Leanne Nagle, Assistant to Director  
Extension 261

### Research

Gail Valaskakis, Director  
Jackie Brennan, Assistant to Director  
Extension 306

### Communications

Kanatiio (Allen Gabriel), Director  
Marilyn McIvor, Assistant to Director  
Extension 245

## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

*Healing Words* will continue, with your help, to explore other aspects of the vast theme of Aboriginal justice and healing as it applies to Aboriginal healing projects and programs. In our next issue, we will explore other methods of restorative justice which can be useful for healing projects or program development. Your comments, ideas and suggestions are most welcome.

We will continue to highlight healing ideas and will look at some traditional approaches adopted by some of the AHF funded programs.

We cannot print all the references and resources material used for the articles, but we can provide them to you on demand.

We will connect with other Aboriginal People in other parts of the world, learn their stories and let them tell us how they are walking on the path of healing and reconciliation.

We will let Canadians tell us how they are walking with us on the path of reconciliation and how they are playing their part in reestablishing truth to history.

We have regrouped some references about the articles in the same place on the newsletter, to enable you to cut them out. Due to space constraints, this is a partial list only. We can provide a more comprehensive list to you on demand.

### References

#### ART THERAPY REFERENCES

The art and Healing Network: <http://www.artheals.org>  
Art therapy in Canada web page: <http://home.ican.net>  
American Art therapy Association Web Page: [www.arttherapy.org](http://www.arttherapy.org)  
Association des art-thérapeutes du Québec Inc. <http://www3.sympatico.ca/diane.ranger/aatqweb>

<http://www.artshaling.org>  
<http://www.zapcom.net>  
<http://www.talamasca.org>

#### DRAMA THERAPY REFERENCES

<http://www.nadt.org>

#### AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL HEALING NETWORK REFERENCES

**LaceWeb:** <http://www.green.net.au/lacweb>  
<http://www.paradigm4.com.au>

#### JUSTICE REFERENCES

<http://www.vorp.com>  
<http://www.usask.ca>  
<http://www.restorativejustice.org>  
<http://www.cerj.org>  
<http://www.sgc.gc.ca> Search for *Aboriginal programs*

#### WILDERNESS THERAPY REFERENCES

<http://www.csuhayward.edu>  
<http://www.forests.org>  
<http://www.turtleisland.org>  
<http://www.members.aol.com>  
<http://www.appstate.edu>