ŁÁU, NOȽET SXEDQIȽEŁ - Healing House Post (Totem Pole): Addressing Indigenous specific systemic racism with ancestral knowledge and matriarchal wisdom

by

Tracy Underwood

B.A., University of Victoria, 2001

M.A., University of Victoria, 2010

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the School of Child and Youth Care

University of Victoria

As a W̱SÁNEĆ Matriarch I welcome you to the territory of the land of my Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ Ancestors. I hold in high regard my Lekwungen SĆÁLEĆE as before contact we were not separated on small sections of our island … we all lived together. Every day I have Matriarchal duties to protect our children, land, culture and language. Every day I pray that my people are upheld, understood and respected for their resiliency, strength and courage facing the day-to-day colonial impacts that continue to be inflicted on us. All My Relations, HÍSW̱ḴE SI,IEM.

ŁÁU, NOȻET SXEDQIȻEŁ - Healing House Post (Totem Pole): Addressing Indigenous specific systemic racism with ancestral knowledge and matriarchal wisdom

by

Tracy Underwood

B.A., University of Victoria, 2001

M.A., University of Victoria, 2010

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Sarah Wright Cardinal, Supervisor

School of Public Health and Social Policy

Dr. Sandrina Carere, Departmental, member

School of Child and Youth Care

Dr. Billie Allan, External member

School of Social Work

Abstract

My doctoral project, ŁÁU,NOŅET SXEDQIŅEŁ - Healing House Post (Totem Pole): Addressing Indigenous specific systemic racism with ancestral knowledge and matriarchal wisdom, consists of an Indigenous Healing Framework which finds expression in the raised form of a W̲SÁNEĆ Healing House Post/Totem. My overall research question is: How do QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI W̲SÁNEĆ heal from systemic anti-Indigenous racism? ŁÁU,NOŅET SXEDQIŅEŁ (Healing House Post) responds both conceptually and practically to the ongoing damage inflicted on our peoples through prejudice, dehumanization, and systemic racism – all too familiar to survivors of colonization. The house post is comprised of four sections: KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: *Life before europeans*; SPÁ¸EŦ Bear: *To give and receive acknowledgement*; WEXES Frogs: Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory; and QELEŅSEN Eagle: *Healing vision*. Each section has stories that frame my epistemology embedded with my Matriarchal roots in W̲SÁNEĆ. All are connected to the QELEŅSEN Healing Vison of Eagle at the top of the House Post, which will speak healing pathways in response to the anti-Indigenous racism in the systems we live and work within that were not created for us. The Healing House post transitions from theory to practice through its material representation of both decolonizing resistance and culturally specific W̲SÁNEĆ pathways to healing. The result is storytelling from my Matriarchal teachings, which came from traditional ways of knowing and being that are the reasons why we are still here. It does this by addressing Indigenous-specific systemic racism with Ancestral knowledge and *QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI* (Matriarch) teachings that speak to Matriarchal wisdom derived from my advocacy for and protection of my children, family, and community members.

Summary

My doctoral project, ŁÁU,NOȽET SXEDQIȽEŁ - Healing House Post (Totem Pole): Addressing Indigenous specific systemic racism with ancestral knowledge and matriarchal wisdom, consists of an Indigenous Healing Framework which finds expression in the raised form of a WSÁNEĆ Healing House Pole/Totem. ŁÁU,NOȽET SXEDQIȽEŁ (Healing House Post) is similar to what many know as a totem pole but is at the front of our Coast Salish homes in the past. This house post is comprised of four sections, whale, bear, frog and eagle. Each section has stories that frame my epistemology embedded with my Matriarchal roots in WSÁNEĆ. My PhD journey is created as pathways of healing written to help my people with the day-to-day harms inflicted since the arrival of settler-colonialism. Throughout my writing I have kept my children and grandchildren in mind, and they can use my work as a method of recalling some of our ways. My experience of recent and ongoing direct systemic harm, and challenging the system and writing about it, has shaped this house post.

My overall research question is: How do QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI W̱SÁNEĆ heal from systemic anti-Indigenous racism? To address this question, my Healing House Post transitions from theory to actual practice through its material representation of both decolonizing resistance and culturally specific WSÁNEĆ pathways to healing and storytelling from my Matriarchal teachings.

My dissertation begins with W̱SÁNEĆ TŦE NE ÁLEȽENEȻ or Self Location. The purpose of this is to situate myself within my family, recognizing both our strength and the colonial experience we are healing from, the cultural genocide aimed at getting rid of us through such strategies as the residential and church-run school systems, loss of language, loss of culture and loss of land in addition to ongoing Indigenous-specific systemic racism. ŁÁU,NOȽET

SXEDQIŊEŁ embodies a healing framework, resulting in pathways and strategies to help W̱SÁNEĆ recover from systemic harms. To this day, the destructive tools of colonization remain embedded in the systems we navigate in daily life. These include the health care, education, children and family services, and (in)justice systems because all of these are based upon colonial policies and procedures that don't normally account for Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Instead, they often end up inflicting harmful trauma on my people through the delivery of their "services" that stem from their policies and procedures.

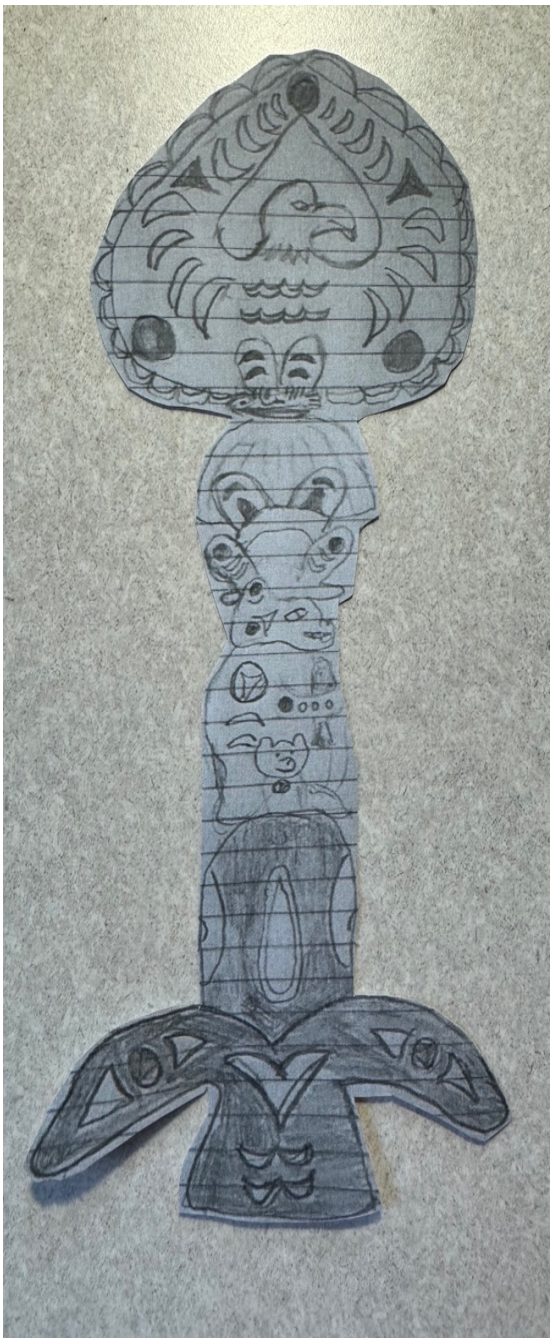
ŁÁU,NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post - is the practical expression of my conceptual framework. To this end, it includes four sections, each with its own stories and teachings: KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: "Life Before europeans"; SPÁ¸EŦ Bear: JÁEŁNOŊET "To Give and Receive Acknowledgement"; WEXES Frogs: Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory and Healing is the overall theme that threads through each section and together all are connected to the QELEŊSEN "Healing Vison" of Eagle at the top of the House Post which reveals pathways to recovery in response to anti-Indigenous racism in these systems that were not created for us. After experiencing assimilation tactics over and over again, my Matriarchal response every time is "We're still here!"

In addition to being an expression of resistance, the embodiment of wisdom, and a tool for healing, ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post also serves as a response to one of the many current challenges within academia, to Indigenize our methodologies, "to articulate [our] own research paradigms, [our] own approaches to research and [our] own data collection methods" (Wilson, 2008, p. 54). My land-based work for my PhD emerged as an art form, and the Healing House Post was created. While there are times I still fight being the tokenized, noble

savage, I try to think of my reasons for pursuing my doctorate, which is to help create a better world for my children and grandchildren, for future generations of our community.

With my family and people in mind, the description of my Indigenous Framework includes one section written in SENĆOŦEN, our W̱SÁNEĆ dialect. Only those who can read SENĆOŦEN can benefit from these teachings. I do this purposefully because this part of the dissertation is written for my children, family and community. The KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: "Life Before europeans" is based on teachings from Elders' ways of knowing and being before european arrival. This section was gifted to me from Dr. Victor Underwood who gathered these stories with W̱SÁNEĆ Old Ones in the 1970s. He shares frequently that "These words come from my people and are for my people."

Finally, I hope the results of this work will be made widely available to encourage other Indigenous nations and communities that wish to develop their own water, land, language and cultural connections and strategies for healing from systemic anti-Indigenous racism. More details and sources to come. *HÍSW̱ḴE SI, IEM*



QELE̲NSEN Eagle: "Healing Vision"

WEXES Frogs: "Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory"

SPÁ̓ET Bear: JÁEŁNO̲NET "To Give and Receive Acknowledgement"

KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: "Life Before europeans"

Figure 1: ŁÁU, NO̲NET SXEDQI̲NEŁ - Healing House Post

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Dedication

I dedicate this PhD to my late Daddy who taught me how to be; he allowed me to think outside the box and stand up for myself. This work is also dedicated to my family who have been there for me through it all and are the reason I do what I do. I also dedicate this to all my Ancestors who made it that we are still here.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my husband Romaine Underwood for standing with me in all the battles I have had to endure. I acknowledge my eight children: Joshua, Brett, Jewelia, Savannah, Ruth, Abigail, Romaine Jr and Victor for being who you are and gifts from the Creator; my Mom for always helping me with my children and grandchildren; and my eleven grandchildren: Kaiea, Lavina, Joshua Jr., Kenneth, Bryton, Alexander, Baptiste, Carter, Gabriel, Tyson and Ellen for bringing pride, joy and laughter to hard days.

I would also like to in general thank all my family and friends who have been there for me. I feel very fortunate to have a great network that I do not want to leave anyone out. I am forever grateful for those the Creator allowed our paths to cross.

Chapter 1: *W̱SÁNEĆ TŦE NE ÁLEN̲ENEȻ - Self Location*

ÍY SȻÁĆEL, my name is ESKISELW̲ET. I live on STÁUTW̲ First Nation, located in W̲SÁNEĆ Nation, Coast Salish territory. I attended the University of Victoria for my undergraduate degree (2001) and MA (2010), both in the School of Child and Youth Care. I am married to Romaine Underwood, and we have three children who still live at home: Abigail, Romaine Jr., and Victor. I have five adult children who live on their own: Joshua, Brett, Jewelia, Savannah, and Ruth. From my four older children I have eleven grandchildren: Kaiea, Lavina, Joshua, Kenneth, Bryton, Alexander, Baptiste, Carter, Gabriel, Tyson, and Ellen.

On my Daddy Alfred Wilson's side, I am from W̲SÁNEĆ, a descendant from his Great-Grandmother Matriarch ZIȻOT. I am part Scottish, as his maternal great-grandfather Peter Bartleman was from Scotland. ZIȻOT had five children with Peter Bartleman, one of whom was my great-grandfather, Joseph Bartleman. Joseph married my Great-Grandmother (Genefia) Genevieve Nelson (paternal) and from this I have Hawaiian heritage as she was half Hawaiian. Together they had 12 children, one being my Grandmother Virginia Joe, née Bartleman. My great-great-Grandmother Isabelle Dick is Nuu-chah-nulth from Tseshaht which is beside Port Alberni; she married my great-great-grandfather Albert Wilson, and they had their son Ernest Wilson, who is my Dad's father. My Dad died from alcoholism a month before I turned 16 years old. He attended Kuper and Kamloops residential schools from ages seven to fourteen.

My mom Lavina Olsen (née Johnnie) lives in W̲SÁNEĆ. She grew up in Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) with her father Norman Johnnie[1] and her mom Louise (née Joe) who is from Qw'umiyiqun (within Cowichan Tribes). My grandfather Norman's mother was Agnes Wyse; she had seven sisters and two brothers, and my family extends from Nanoose to Songhees on her

[1] In order to avoid confusion between another family who were given the same last name, one branch of my family used the spelling "Johnnie", and another used the spelling "Johnny".

side of our family. My grandfather's father Matice Johnny[2] was from Shell Beach. He went to Kuper Island residential school with his two brothers, and cousin, when they left residential school, they were given three different last names, Johnnie, Mitchell and Louis. My Grandmother's mother was named Annie Joe (née Pinuts); she married William Joe. My older brother Charles Johnnie grew up with my mom's parents in Nanaimo. My younger brother Blaine Wilson and younger sister Genevieve Elliott (née Wilson) grew up with me in W̲SÁNEĆ. My parents took in two cousins (my Dad's sister's sons) who grew up in our home and were raised as my brothers: Todd Wilson (Dool) and Brandon Wilson.

I begin with locating myself. Within our W̲SÁNEĆ community, we learn to introduce ourselves, as well as explain who our families are, at a young age. As McGuire (2010) points out, "The ability to say who you are is critical in generating meaningful and needed Indigenous-based histories that can transform how we, as Aboriginal peoples, think about ourselves and our location within this place called Canada" (p. 119). In our community, if you don't introduce who your family is, you will be asked about this by several people later. Where I landed is where I am meant to be: W̲SÁNEĆ is home. Our land holds me like a magnet, our language rings within my soul, our culture is always present to sustain me despite all that cultural genocide has tried to take away.

After saying how I landed (grew up/live) in W̲SÁNEĆ, I acknowledge there were possibilities of growing up in Duncan B.C., Nanaimo B.C., Port Alberni B.C. and Port Angeles WA (USA). My family's roots stem from Duncan, Nanaimo, and Port Alberni; Port Angeles is where my late Dad logged for a living. I often think about what life would have been like if he

[2] See previous footnote.

had stayed in Port Angeles, Washington, USA, which he might have if he hadn't been threatened with losing his land in W̱JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip First Nation).

After my Dad's Dad died when my father was seven years old, the government Indian Agents took him and his siblings to Kuper Island residential school. Their uncle (their late Dad's brother) and his wife offered to take the children to live with them in Port Alberni, B.C., but the Indian Agent said that they could not stay with family and had to go to residential school. If the decision by the Indian Agent had been a "yes", my Dad and his siblings could have lived with their uncle, and we might have landed in Port Alberni. I was born in Duncan, B.C. where we have lots of family and friends. If the logging economy had been sustainable, we might have stayed there and grown up there. I landed in W̱JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip First Nation) when I was five years old, when my late Dad was told by W̱JOŁEŁP that if he didn't move home from Port Angeles, he would lose his inherent land willed to him by his mom's Dad, his Grandfather Joe Bartleman. Of course, as a child I had to be with my parents, but as time has gone on, each year I am grateful and feel fortunate to have landed in W̱JOŁEŁP, my ÁLEṈENEȻ (Homeland).

It is hard to write about a very big family tree. In my description of my relations from my parents to my great-great-grandparents, I have named them specifically, but there are many siblings of my parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents that I could not name as the list would be very long. There are also many stories that could be told, but again, they would take very long to tell. Many Indigenous scholars write about the importance of self-location and identifying your connection to the community (Archibald, 2008; Hart, 2010; McGuire, 2010; Wilson 2008). For this reason, my dissertation includes Self-Location as part of my Indigenous methodology.

The purpose of using W̱SÁNEĆ TŦE NE ÁLEN̲ENEȻ (Self Location) in this dissertation is to situate myself within my family, recognizing both our strengths and the colonial experiences we are healing from: the cultural genocide aimed at getting rid of us, specifically through the impacts of residential school, loss of language, loss of culture, and loss of land. Colonization has caused so much harm. Kathleen Absolon (2005) writes,

> The legacy of colonizing knowledge has created a disconnection of people from their traditional teachings, people, family, community, spiritual leaders, medicine people, land, and so on. The oppressive silencing of Aboriginal knowledge has perpetrated oppression and threatens the ultimate extinction of cultures whose epistemologies, philosophies, worldviews and theories have sustained both the earth and its inhabitants for centuries. (p. 27)

Here in our ancestral territories, the impact of colonization has been ongoing for the last 250 years.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the invader james cook[3] was one of the first W̱ENITEM (white people) to dehumanize and oppress many Indigenous communities. Initially, it was the catholic spanish explorer admiral quadra who laid claim to european control of trading rights and Indigenous traditional territories on and around what is now known as Vancouver Island ("Chief Maquinna," 2024). quadra did this acting under the authority of the "doctrine of discovery" (Indigenous Corporate Training, Inc., 2023), a papal bull dating back to 1492 that gave him power to take land that was perceived as inhabited by non-christian savages.[4]

---

[3] I use the lower case here intentionally, to take the power away from his name as a purposeful gesture of taking back control over what he has done to Indigenous Peoples and the intergenerational impact of this on my family. Throughout this dissertation, the lower case is used to disempower colonial institutions and individuals who have harmed Indigenous Peoples. Also, in turn all relationships that are important to me are capitalized.

[4] A papal bull is a type of public decree or charter issued by a pope of the catholic church. Since our people were supposedly not christians (I use a small c, as an act of resistance), quadra assumed that our lands were available for the taking since only "savages" were on our traditional territories.

captain cook, the first English explorer in our territories, encountered Mowachat Chief Joseph Maquinna while charting the geography of the Pacific Northwest as a cartographer for the British Navy. He reported back to king george III of england who granted more people (like captain george vancouver who had originally sailed as a midshipman with cook), permission to travel the seas and to take land in what they called a "new world". While cook was among the first of many colonizers to dehumanize our people, captain george vancouver, who had served under him, competed with Spanish admiral quadra for rights to trade and settlement in negotiations with Mowachaht Chief Joseph Maquinna. Eventually, the british dominated european claims to the benefits of our traditional territories. Each time invaders arrived, they needed a place to settle, and those places were our spaces, our ancestral homelands. Throughout this ongoing land theft from the 19th-century until the present, many circumstances in our lives and livelihoods got progressively worse. This caused the death of so many of our people. The sad part is that we ARE human. Question: What would have happened if these explorers approached our lands with a broader understanding of "civilization" and traditional ways of knowing and being, and really saw us as humans? I wonder if our histories and livelihoods would have been different.

To address the harms of colonization, I am proposing a W̱SÁNEĆ ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ Indigenous Healing Framework, grounded in our Ancestors' wisdom and my own work as a Matriarch, resulting in pathways and strategies to help W̱SÁNEĆ heal from systemic harms. Our Ancestors had to endure so much for us to still be here. In *Decolonizing Methodologies,* 3rd Edition (2021), Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes:

> For many communities, there were waves of different sorts of Europeans: Dutch, Portuguese, British, French, whoever had political ascendancy over a region. And, in each

> place, after figures such as Columbus and Cook had long departed, there came a vast array of military personnel, imperial administrators, priests, explorers, missionaries, colonial officials, artists, entrepreneurs and Settlers, who cut a devastating swathe, and left a permanent wound, on the societies and communities who occupied the lands named and claimed under imperialism. (p. 23)

This permanent wound still exists through the systems we navigate in daily life, including the health care, education, children and family, and (in)justice systems because these were established through colonial policies and procedures that don't normally account for Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

My overall research question is: How do QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI W̱SÁNEĆ heal from systemic anti-Indigenous racism? In response, I have developed a W̱SÁNEĆ framework which I have named ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ - Healing House Post. This is a framework for healing from the ongoing colonial experience we endure on Turtle Island, specifically through a W̲SÁNEĆ lens. Old One Victor Underwood gifted me with his research interviews with W̱SÁNEĆ Old Ones in the 1970s. The stories of *Life Before europeans* are the foundation of my framework and guided my PhD studies. With this framework I will describe some old ways of knowing that helped our people endure through the invasion of Settlers[5]. I will explain how we are currently surviving and healing from the harm of Indigenous-specific racism within institutional systems. I will also talk about how Land, Language and Culture will triumph over the trauma and provide healing for future generations, explaining how Healing House Post will turn historical harms into recovery and regeneration.

[5] I capitalize the term "Settler" to denote the importance of this term as a land standpoint identifier. This term is connected to "place" for Canadians with non-Indigenous (Settler) ancestry who come from somewhere else and occupy Indigenous land.

1.1. ŁÁU, NOȽET SXEDQIȽEŁ - Healing House Post Introduction

My writing is connected to my place, embedded in my Homeland of WSÁNEĆ, and interwoven with culture through my active use of our SENĆOŦEN language, the artwork and images on the Post itself, and the stories and teachings connected to each section of the House Post. I write for my children and grandchildren; they demonstrate resilience and revitalization on their educational journeys while discovering and recovering our Ancestors' ways of healing. In turn they will create their own strategies for recovery from the intergenerational impact of colonization. It has been said that it will take seven generations to heal from the effects of residential schools. Since my Dad went to residential school, I am a first-generation survivor. I did not have to go to residential school, but the school I attended was a day school run by the roman catholic church. My children are second-generation survivors, and my grandchildren are third-generation survivors. On many levels the intention of this residential and church-based school system - cultural genocide - has devastated our lives. Yet droplets of hope have surfaced through me as a mom to eight children and the realization of my Matriarchal duties within my community. I have seen and felt miracles that show why we are still here.

What are we healing from? Sometimes I wonder if my children, as second-generation survivors, can really understand what their grandfather went through at residential school, when they didn't even get to meet him. I have told stories about him and shared the teachings that he gifted to us. My Dad taught us all kinds of things, from the difference between right and wrong, to the traditional process from gaffing fish to smoking fish. He encouraged our speaking SENĆOŦEN by proudly recording us counting to 100. My Dad trained us like boxers with push-ups, sit-ups, medicine ball exercises and workouts. He told us we needed to jog and when we did, he would walk along with us at the same time. When we were in trouble, he would talk to us

for two or three hours. He would celebrate our birthdays and Christmas although after he passed we learned that he very highly likely did not get to enjoy these special occasions himself when he was in residential school. Personally, I did my best to heal from the damage to our family even though I often felt I wasn't making any progress. Looking back, I now realize that I was merely surviving, but survival itself was a form of decolonization. At the time I did not know that many of my late Dad's teachings were his way of decolonizing and resisting everything he endured during his approximately seven years of having to live his school years at Kuper Island and Kamloops residential schools.

My Dad told a few stories of his experiences in these institutions, but they were very brief and mainly on the positive side, like how he learned to box and play basketball. The most negative experience he spoke of described physical punishment, being hit on the hand with a ruler by nuns. After he died, I knew that he did the best he could raising us. The teachings he gave us carried us a long way and helped us to heal with the assistance of all the family that he held close. In reflection, I realize he was not only mending his own connections with our ways after the serious effort these horrible schools made to rip his culture away from him; he was doing this for us, his children, as well. Karen Stote (2015) writes:

> For over one hundred years, Canada forcefully removed Aboriginal children from their communities and sent them to these church-run institutions. These schools were never intended to educate, but to separate Aboriginal children from their way of life and to indoctrinate them in European ways. These also aimed to Christianize Aboriginal children, to inculcate within them clear roles for men and women within a nuclear family and to instruct them to become a subservient class of workers within the Canadian political economy. (p. 34)

What my Dad was able to work through after his experiences at residential school allowed us, as his children, to have a stronger cultural fabric in our lives. We still had much to mend ourselves, but we had the foundation that he created for us.

This was our family decolonizing; it involved visceral, nitty gritty stuff, yet we just did what was needed to survive and keep going . . . because we had to. As my Dad's oldest child, I feel like he gave me a large dose of resistance. He wanted me to be able to stand up for myself. He didn't allow us to do wrong and physical discipline was often the consequence when we did. Clearly the behavioural pattern he learned through physical punishment in residential school stayed with him and was passed on to us. When I had my children, I thought this was the way to discipline them, but after spanking them, I had extreme guilt. I would always be saying sorry to my children, especially to my oldest. I read books, went to a parenting group, went to church, and talked to Old Ones (Elders) and other parents. When I had two sons, I was still a raging physical disciplinarian as a parent. I would think to myself, I LOVE them so much: why did I hurt them? I kept reading; *Dr. Mom* which was my go-to book. I also watched their Dad in his fits of anger and remembered that his Dad was also a victim of residential school. I then decided to try counselling. Counsellors in 1993 were not ready to work on residential school issues. Counsellors didn't really begin to do solid work in this area of trauma until after 2008 when the government thought that they should apologize for what was done to our children. I stopped spanking as a means of discipline after I had my third child. It wasn't that I was healed, or that I knew better, or that I was the best parent in the world, I still made a lot of mistakes and was learning on my journey as a parent. This life learning continues to this day.

Another intergenerational effect on my parenting was my memory of my father's inability to put his love for us into words. Even though I never really heard the words "I love you, Tracy",

my Dad would say “I love you kids” about once a year, if that. The result was that I ended up doing the opposite. I always told my children I loved them every day; seeing them happy was my goal, but sometimes I overcompensated in expressing these feelings because I did not know balance. When we were young, we got one birthday present and one Christmas present, which was likely better than my Dad’s experience had been in residential school. By contrast, when I had my children, I went all out and overcompensated on special occasions: I decorated, invited family to celebrate, at one time hired a clown. There were never less than 4-5 presents, including one big one. Thinking of this overcompensation, again I’m forced to ask, “So what are we healing from?” Again, I am a first-generation residential school survivor; my children are second-generation survivors, and my grandchildren are third-generation survivors. My prayers are that each generation will have love, healing and protection from the effects of residential school and cultural genocide. Healing is the overall theme that ties each section together of my ŁÁU, NON̲ET SXEDQIN̲EŁ - Healing House Post framework. It explores a concrete way in which I, as an Indigenous survivor, might respond to and heal from the historic injustices I endured.

1.2. Dealing with Systemic Injustice: Another Kind of Educational Journey

I think back to the beginning of my post-secondary educational journey while doing the 300 level courses of my undergrad in 1999. I was told that writing about Indigenous topics offered endless opportunities because there was not a lot of helpful research directly related to our Indigenous communities. It felt like the world was my oyster when it comes to research. I researched boys and depression. I had two young sons and two daughters at the time, and I was worried about one of my sons. Of course, I had to research boys and depression within mainstream Settler society and then utilize these ways of knowing and being, then adjust this

information by adapting it to an Indigenous context. At the time, I did not know that I was Indigenizing current scholarship. I wanted to learn more and find ways to help my family and my people. In hindsight, I believe that I Indigenized my research just by putting my hands on it and looking at it from my point of view. I also believe my educational journey arrived at the cusp of Indigenous research, at a time when I could explore what Indigenization actually meant to me.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith wrote her first book titled *Decolonizing Methodologies* in 1999, a seminal book on Indigenous research, and I first came across her work when I began my graduate studies in 2003. To decolonize, change and erase what is colonized, Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes:

> It angers you when practices linked to the last century, and the centuries before that, are still employed to deny validity of indigenous peoples' claim to existence, to land and territories, to the right of self-determination, to the survival of our languages and forms of cultural knowledge, to our natural resources and systems for living within our environments. (p. 1)

Her writing made me think of my elementary school years attending Tsartlip Day School which eventually transitioned to a self-determining tribal school in 1990. This process took many years, yet now we have a language immersion program and our first cohort of students from nursery are now in grade eleven. They walk with strength due to language and culture. I think about how many generations have passed since our Indigenous education systems were intact, how many generations were punished for using their language and culture, and how many generations it will take to rebuild our strength in our language. I'm from the generation that didn't know the difference between attending a day school as opposed to a residential school: we simply went home at the end of the school day. I had both positive and negative experiences. On the one

hand, I attended school with friends and family who looked like me. On the other hand, the goal was for us to be colonized and assimilated. I attended Tsartlip Day School from kindergarten to grade seven.

My late Daddy attended residential school but did not talk much about it. He guided us through our elementary school years, and the main message to us children was that we needed to finish grade twelve. I had three older cousins graduate before me, with about eight other older cousins who should have finished before me. Graduating grade twelve was one of the first times I was an exception. Being a first-generation residential school survivor, I did not realize the significance of this at the time. Years later I looked at a class photograph of my kindergarten year: out of approximately 25 of us, only three of us graduated when we were supposed to; 4 or 5 students finished a few years later. Five others died young, and it saddened me. I saw this as a reflection of the mortality of my people and the effects of colonization. I didn't know about the low graduation rates of our people at the time. Now I think of Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) words:

> In talking with people in the community I became interested in the questions which they were asking of health which were not being addressed by research. "We know we are dying", someone said, "but tell me why we are living?" "Our health will not improve unless we address the fact that we have no sovereignty", "We're sick of hearing what's wrong with us, tell us something good for a change", "Why do they always think by looking at us they will find the answers to our problems, why don't they look at themselves?" The same questions were being asked of education and justice. (p. 198)

These questions about the lack of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination in health, education and justice reflected my own lived experience.

The summer after grade two our day school burnt down; it was believed to be the result of arson, but there were no leads on who the arsonist was. They never caught who set the school on fire. Around the same time, the Tsawout Big House was also set on fire. The community suspected this was done by the same arsonist. In September, when it was time to go back to school, I had to attend a public school called Brentwood Elementary. I was the only Indigenous girl in my class. Many of my friends and cousins from the Tribal Day School went to school at a small church on West Saanich Road, not far from our school which had burned down. My best friend (cousin) who lived across the street asked me to ask my Dad if I could go to school with them. I went home and made my request "Daddy? Can I go to school at the church up the road with father terry macnamara?" He instantly replied: "NO, and don't you ever call him father; I'm your father. You are not going to school there." He didn't seem mad, but for sure he was very firm in his statement. I then went to my friend and told her my Dad said no. Five months later large portable buildings were brought into the site of our former school and as soon as they were ready, there were no questions: we went back to our school.

Years later, my oldest son who was 2 years old and my only child at the time lost his paternal grandfather; my ex-husband's father who was also a residential school survivor. I was telling my uncle, my Dad's brother, about when prayers would be happening. I told him they were asking terry macnamara to officiate and that my Dad said we were never to call him "father". My uncle's response was, "I hate him; he was one of the worst brothers in residential school." Shawn Wilson (2008) describes the racist paternalistic intentions behind the creation of church-run residential schools and day schools:

> Assimilation research had its roots in government policy. Taking on a guardianship role, both Australia and Canada had legislation that imposed regulations to control movement,

> marriage, schooling, employment, indeed every aspect of Aboriginal life. The official stance was that this "protection" would equip Aboriginal people to live in the dominant society by assimilating them into society. Children were removed from their families (most often by force) and placed into residential schools. It was believed that if children were removed from the cultural influences, customs, language and practices of their parents, they would soon adopt mainstream (i.e. Euro-dominant) practices. (p. 49)

Generations of Indigenous children in Canada had no choice but to be placed in schools where the adults did not look after them and, in fact, abused them; this must have been so hard. Many children were forced to attend, by Indian agents and royal canadian mounted police (rcmp). My own memories flooded my mind of how my Dad instantly said "no" to our going to church school with my friends and how he didn't talk about residential school but communicated a few things in small messages. He was taken to residential school when he was seven years old after his Dad died and indian agents did not believe his Mom could care for eight children on her own.

Our Tribal Day School only went up to grade seven. Afterwards we had to go to public school. When we were almost done grade seven, there was a visit to Mt. Newton Middle School to transition to grade eight. While there I started to hear rumours and whispers from other students about our education being sub-standard. We heard that "Tsartlip School education is less than / not as good as / easier / or not equivalent to public school", and "once native children go from Tsartlip School to public school, they will fail." Upon hearing these comments at age twelve and a half, I went home and told my Daddy what I heard. He told me, "Don't you believe them. If you go to school every day and do your work, you will not fail." I went to Mt. Newton, and did not fail, I passed grade eight. I did fail one class in grade nine and spent the next summer in summer school, missing out on some of the student work program. In grades ten and eleven I

didn't want to miss out on making money in the student employment program, so I worked hard at passing. In grade eleven I learned that I needed a certain number of classes to complete high school, so I spent a lot of time going to visit the student counsellors to ensure I had the credits to finish grade twelve.

1.3. The Reality of Assimilation.

When I finished grade twelve, I was allowed to invite a certain number of guests to attend my celebration ceremony. After inviting my mom and siblings, I had one more ticket to invite someone else. I couldn't invite my aunts because it seemed unfair to invite one and not the other; I would have needed more tickets because I didn't want to exclude anyone. So, I invited my favourite teacher from grades one to twelve: who was my grade two teacher. She was so happy. She attended and had a card in her hand. I opened the card after she left, and it had a $100 dollar bill in it. That was a lot of money in the late 1980s and an unexpected gift in addition to her attendance, so I was very surprised. She died in the early 1990s and I decided I would attend her funeral. I was the only Indigenous person there. I did not know until 2018 that she was a nun and so were three of my other teachers in elementary school. This left me feeling a bit sickened, not so great, and with an "oh no" feeling. I'd felt it before, but not so much as that day. I felt that I went through my elementary years fairly unscathed because I was the teachable, cute, smart lil Indian girl that was on the "good" road to assimilation.

The other time I felt this way was when "Sister Noel" was my grade three teacher. She was the only one I knew was a nun because everyone called her sister. My Mom taught me cursive handwriting and I wrote a three-page, double spaced story. I took it to school and Sister Noel was amazed. She took it to the chalk board and got the attention of the class; she said, "Everyone, look what Tracy has done. I am going to hang her story up on the board and if

anyone wants to read her handwritten story they can." I was always shy, and I was so embarrassed that if I had a shell, I would have crawled into it. I think I realized what I needed to do was NOT stand out. I felt that the other students were not too impressed with me, that I was a "goody two shoes" . . . it was not a good age to come to this realization as a pre-teen shaping my identity. Shawn Wilson (2008) comments on how assimilation can result in different racist assumptions about Indigenous ways of being and degrees of cultural "authenticity":

> As researchers strove to categorize Indian people into typologies, judgements were placed on those who were less, or more, traditional (as defined by the researcher). Spindler (1971), in his study of the Menominee, *Dreamers Without Power*, categorizes the Menominee into groups according to how acculturated, how bicultural, how assimilated or how traditional he deems them to be. This era of traditionalization produced the concept of the "noble savage" – one that was romanticized and has been carried forward through the "hippie" movement of the 1970's and the new age movements of the 1980's through to today. (p. 48)

I reflect deeply on the assimilation tactics I've experienced. Later I heard that sister Noel was one of the meanest nuns. I thought maybe she had simmered down by the time I got to her class. I witnessed other children get in trouble in my elementary years: their ears were pulled, they were yelled at and brought to the principal's office. I later heard of other very negative punitive actions used on students such as being put in the corner, restrained, and hurt and embarrassed to the point that they didn't even want to go to school anymore. I did see some pulled by the ear while being told they are going to the principal's office. I was saddened and wondered, "How did I miss her meanness?" Was it because I was teachable? I don't know, but that thought made me feel like I should not stand out.

Tsartlip school

Grade 2 – teacher Alice Darras (nun) circled in blue, me in green.
Grade 1- Flo Faux (nun). **Grade 3** – Sister Noel (nun), whom we all called Sister Noel.
Grade 5 – Gil Blaze (priest).

Figure 2: Tsartlip Day School, Personal Class Photos

1.4. Being a Statistic.

I was born a statistic, with the date and time of my birth recorded in provincial health records, and then my parents took my birth certificate to Indian Affairs Canada to register me as an Indian. One of the times that stands out most in terms of my being a statistic was when my son stole my van, crashed it and ended up with ten charges against him in court. On the day of his hearing, we sat and waited our turn. While waiting, we saw three other Indigenous men waiting for their time before the judge. I was saddened when I realized we were then being counted as statistics not only because of my son's youth, gender, and presence in court, but also as part of the over representation of Indigenous people within the judicial system. I was saddened for my scared son who was worried about possible jail time and that we were now among the Indigenous population statistically categorized within the criminal justice system.

We would hear the judge out; then he ended up remanding my son to another court date. We would be back again several times until the judge gave my son his sentence. Each time, we found ourselves sitting with at least 3-5 Indigenous people. Describing research about Indigenous people and the systemic challenges they faced, Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes, "It told us things already known, suggested things that would not work, and made careers for people who already had jobs. 'We are the most researched people in the world' is a comment I have heard frequently from several different Indigenous communities" (p. 3). During my son's ordeal in court, I was very aware of the impact of being a statistic where all our negative experiences were gathered and written into someone's research. Sitting in the courthouse made me think of that, and it was not just one day in court; because of my son's involvement with the courts, we had to learn the justice system and become good at navigating it. I was upset that I had to learn to do

this, but later, as a social worker, these skills came in handy when helping clients. Yet while I mastered theses survival skills, I knew that navigating colonial systems is not our lives' purpose.

1.5. *Language and Land, Land and Language.*

I think of SENĆOŦEN and when I was learning to speak it in Elementary Day School. I remember how proud my Daddy was about this because in residential school they took his language from him. When he heard that we could count to 100 in SENĆOŦEN, he pulled out his tape recorder and recorded us. Language use (Indigenous language/English language) within Indigenous communities has always been a barrier to research, education, and in dealing with the many systems our people encounter in mainstream society. I think of how English is my first language, but I am still not good at it. I learned the basics of SENĆOŦEN at a young age, yet I was not good at it either (I remember the sounds from the one hour a day instruction). This makes me think about how much of our culture we have lost. There is a delicate balance between cultural identity and practice: if we view language as culture and culture as language, bringing back our language will also bring back our culture. The National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH) (2016) supports this belief:

> Culture and language have been, and continue to be, profoundly disrupted by colonial systems and structures. Many words, songs, practices, knowledge, and traditions have been lost or silenced along the way. This has burdened present generations of Aboriginal people with cultural confusion, shame in not being able to voice one's mother language, and poorer health outcomes. Because we know that cultural identity and practice are both protective and remedial, the urgency to revitalize and restore the well-being of culture and languages is now more than ever a critical endeavor. (p. 7)

This makes me wonder how close we may be to losing our language and culture as each one of our fluent speakers pass. My late Grandmother spoke SENĆOŦEN and Hul'q'umi'num', and her children knew and understood her before they left for residential school. Residential school stole their language from them. She died in her early sixties because of liver problems related to alcohol. I believe this was related to a broken heart and soul … the residual effects of the many cruelties of cultural genocide. My Grandmother still provided me with knowledge that included ways of healing; she gave me what she could. David Elliott (1983) writes about W̱SÁNEĆ ways of being:

> Our people lived as part of everything. We were so much a part of nature, we were just like the birds, the animals, the fish. We were like the mountains. Our people lived that way. We knew there was an intelligence, a strength, a power, far beyond ourselves. We knew that everything here didn't just happen by accident. We believed there was a reason for it being here. There was a force, a strength, a power somewhere that was responsible for it. That is the way our people lived. They lived according to that belief, according that knowledge. The universe lies before you . . . . (p. 7)

My Grandmother was powerful this way. She did the best she could in a world that continually aimed to destroy her. After her husband died, it must have hurt to be told she was not capable of looking after her children and to have them taken to live far away.

I believe what saved my family was the land, coming home to a land that belonged to their maternal grandfather, to land that he farmed. As time went on, her children had to heal in their own ways. Five out of her eight children died violent deaths related to alcohol in adulthood which also can be attributed to death by broken heart and soul. After experiencing residential

school, how could they forget what they had experienced and live on their own terms? Karen Stote (2015) writes:

> The fact remains that Aboriginal communities today face problems of epidemic proportions that are the direct or indirect result of the history of colonialism in Canada, a history which continues to include the mass theft of Aboriginal lands and resources and the undermining of Aboriginal peoples' abilities to exist on their own terms. (p. 155)

I have heard my own family members who didn't go to residential school say, "I think it's time they stop talking about it and just get over it." This made me sad because after the death of my Dad (he was forty-two years old, I was 16 years old) and the loss of four of his siblings, I have realized the damage was too deep; they just couldn't get over it. They did the best they could. I am grateful my Ancestors, my family members walked through the wreckage of colonization and still made a way for us, the future generation. David Elliott (1983) explains:

> I think our people have to realize that they've become lost somewhere. We have come through a great disaster and we are like people in shock. We were almost destroyed. We are living in the wreckage of what was once our way of life. We have to look at this and try to do something about it. Now we are very much like the people who we say brought this upon us. This is a state of shock really – our memories have left us. Many of the young people don't know where they're coming from and where they are going. It's their future. We need to give them their past by telling them our history and we need to give them a future. (p. 82)

My work is for the future as well.

Chapter 2*: ŁÁU, NOŲET SXEDQIŲEŁ as Methodology – Creating a W̱SÁNEĆ Theoretical Framework*

ŁÁU, NOŲET SXEDQIŲEŁ - Healing House Post serves as my response to one of the many current challenges within academia, to Indigenize our methodologies, "to articulate [our] own research paradigms, [our] own approaches to research and [our] own data collection methods" (Wilson, 2008, p. 54). As my Healing House Post framework was being developed, I thought of the stories of the past, the colonial harm that many Indigenous Peoples have faced. Many Indigenous scholars talk about Land, Language and Culture as an interconnected way forward. In each section of ŁÁU, NOŲET SXEDQIŲEŁ, my family history encompasses many stories of how genocide created havoc that caused so many hardships. Yet, QELEŲSEN (Eagle) "Healing Vision" at the top of the Healing House Post also supports the creation of ways of healing knowledge and practice for both today's generation and future generations. As Leanne Betasamosake Simpson writes in *Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation*:

> The way we are taught to access that knowledge is by being open to that kind of knowledge and by being engaged in a way of living that generates a close, personal relationship with our Ancestors and relations in the spirit world through ceremony, dreams, visions and stories. The implicate order does not discriminate by gender, by age, by ability, or any of those things. The implicate order only cares if you believe; if you're living your life in an engaged way. If we are open to this, then knowledge will flow through us based on our own actions, our name, clan, and helpers and our own self-actualization, as long as we uphold these responsibilities. (p. 12)

Healing is a journey, healing from systemic harm can take a long time, QELEŲSEN or Eagle is there to listen and carry the harm away from us and up to XÁLS our Creator.

Because Indigenous scholars are encouraged to articulate frameworks from their respective nations, I specifically developed a W̱SÁNEĆ framework. Within this paradigm, not only does ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ - the Healing House Post represent resistance and healing, but the section WEXES Frogs: Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory centers on PDTT/R as a new theoretical response to Indigenous-specific racism which I have incorporated into my work. It draws on my consultation with my colleague Dr. Laurie Harding, from the research she has done in this field, and from my lived experience of continually facing systemic harm. It offers ways forward to spark change to make things better for future generations.

2.1. *ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ (Healing House Post) – Description and Purpose*

My ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ (Healing House Post) includes four sections: KELŁOLEMEĆEN, SPÁ˛EŦ, WEXES, and QELEṈSEN, and each tells a story. These sections correspond to the different carvings shown below in Figure 1. Healing House Post. This House Post is a visual representation of acknowledging W̱SÁNEĆ past, present and future ways of knowing. These stories are messages of healing and hope, W̱SÁNEĆ resilience, the resurgence of the SENĆOŦEN Language and W̱SÁNEĆ Culture, and they provide an outlook that leads towards decolonization through embracing our Natural Laws and a natural Indigenous circular way of thinking and being. Foremost, I have our people in mind as I write about this House Post, not only my Coast Salish family, but all Indigenous People of Turtle Island (North America). I believe we need to stand strong together as Indigenous People and strategize to navigate our way through decolonization. We have been through a lot over the past centuries since contact. It would be ideal to work as one to make the future better for our children. Through the Healing House Post, I would like to present an example of Indigenous resistance to the cultural violence

we have been exposed to and put a call out to Indigenous People to explore ways of working together harmoniously while continually fighting the ongoing battle against cultural genocide across Turtle Island.

As previously stated, ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post includes four sections; KELŁOLEMEĆEN, SPÁ¸EŦ, WEXES, and QELEŊSEN, and each tells a story. My framework also includes parts written in SENĆOŦEN, our W̱SÁNEĆ language. I do this purposefully because these sections of the dissertation are written for my children, family and community. The KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: "Life Before europeans" section is based on interviews Dr. Victor Underwood conducted with our Old Ones in the 1970s and transcribed into SENĆOŦEN. If you look at the organization of my description of ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ as well as the photo of the House Post on page vii you will notice that the order starts from the figure/carving at the bottom of the post and works upwards. This is intentional to show the sequence of the healing theme that threads throughout each section, with QELEŊSEN, Eagle at the top, who filters healing throughout the house post.

Figure 3: ŁÁU, NOȽET SXEDQIȽEŁ - Healing House Post

2.2. *ŁÁU, NOE̲NET SXEDQIE̲NEŁ - Healing House Post Conceptual Framework Outline*

KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: "Life Before europeans"

- Method: Storywork – oral stories from Old Ones gifted to Dr. Victor Underwood
- Topics: Importance of Old Ones' stories to know who we are and Indigenous Language Revitalization to understand our worldviews

SPÁ,EŦ Bear: JÁEŁNOE̲NET "To give and receive acknowledgement"

- Methods: Storywork & Indigenous autoethnography method – my story
- Topics within W̲SÁNEĆ TŦE NE ÁLE̲NENEȻ - Self Location: impacts of genocide, residential school, within my family story
- Topics within JÁEŁNOE̲NET presentation: reconstruction, resurgence through my children

WEXES Frogs: "Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory"

- Method: Propose a theory PDTT/PDTR based on my lived experience and working paper with Dr. Laurie Harding
- Topics: anti-Indigenous systemic racism, healing and call to action

QELE̲NSEN Eagle: "Healing Vision"

- Methods: Healing, Prayer, Ceremony and QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI - Matriarchal Duties. QELENSEN brings healing through each of the three house posts through arts-based method/activities. Healing through our ways that sustained our people over the centuries: Land/Water Based ways of being and knowing; Healing rocks; SENĆOŦEN meditation; Song and Dance; water-based ceremony
- Topics: Healing from colonial harms, racism

2.3. *Healing House Post Conceptual Framework*

Since Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission process began in 2008, I have observed that the discussions of reconciliation and making amends have always been described in mainstream Westernized contexts. These discussions used linear historic timelines that reflected a euro-western understanding of our historical experiences. It also seemed as if our people assumed a role in the process of assisting white/non-Indigenous people who needed to learn more about the history of colonization and the past actions of Settler culture. We can teach, but that leaves less time for our own people to heal and work together. Many Indigenous people realize that real change will not happen in our lifetimes.

In addition to embodying an expression of Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response resistance and healing, my doctoral work uses an Indigenous conceptual framework, Indigenous ways of knowing and being which can further bring about reconciliation within our own Turtle Island. This involves a circular understanding of time as always linking past, present and future to bring us together. This means that Indigenous Reconstruction (reconciliation) is connected, reciprocal, a journey; it includes the good and the bad, the easy and the hard; it contains every part of existence, and we are every part. In many Indigenous ways of knowing, "everything is connected". As Nick Xumthoult Claxton (2008) writes, "The W̱SÁNEĆ people believe that all living things were once people, and they are respected as such. The Salmon are our relatives. All things on earth are to be respected, since it is the earth that we all share. This is the teaching of the W̱SÁNEĆ". (p. 55). It is because of our beliefs connected to the land and water that sustained our ways and why we are still here.

2.4. ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ.

Healing House Post is the practical illustration of my Indigenous theoretical framework.

It is both an expression of resistance and a tool for healing. In *Research is Ceremony, Indigenous Research Methods,* Shawn Wilson (2008) discusses Steinhauer's (2001) four stages of development that led to creating an Indigenous research paradigm by Indigenous scholars. In following Steinhauer's process, these scholars learned about the Western Euro-centric knowledge systems they resisted, ones that ignored Indigenous ways of knowing and being. In the fourth stage of this process, the Indigenous Research Phase, Indigenous scholars were challenged "to articulate their own research paradigms, their own approaches to research and their own data collection methods". (p. 54). Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017) also reminds us about doing things on our own terms to dismantle colonial domination:

> Indigenous scholarship has recently experienced crucial interventions into how we account, frame, and tell the truths of the political and cultural lives of Indigenous peoples that move away from constriction of our intelligence within the confines of Western thought and the dumbing down of the issues for the non-Indigenous outside to a meticulous, critical, robust, and layered approach that accurately contextualizes and reflects the lives and the thinking of Indigenous peoples on our own terms, with the clear purpose of dismantling colonial domination. (p. 175)

I really like the direction in which Indigenous research is heading. I was unsure of what I would be working on for my doctorate in Child and Youth Care and what it would look like. When applying for the program, I entered my studies with about eight community projects and research ideas that would help my people. Like art, my doctoral project took form, resulting in the Healing House Post.

I am grateful for the groundwork laid by Indigenous scholars who have been frontrunners through their educational experiences in university by blazing forward through all the challenges,

racism and judgements. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes about Western researchers:

> It galls us that Western researchers and intellectuals can assume to know all that it is possible to know of us, on the basis of their brief encounters with some of us. It appals us that the West can desire, extract and claim ownership of our ways of knowing, our imagery, the things we create and produce, and then simultaneously reject the people who created and developed those ideas and seek to deny them further opportunities to be creators of their own culture and own nations. (p. 1)

There are times I still fight being the tokenized, noble savage. I then think of my reasons for pursuing my PhD, which is to help create a better world for my children, my grandchildren, and my community. I look to Indigenous scholarship rooted in Ancestral wisdom (Absolon, 2005, 2011, 2021; Archibald, 2008; Kovach 2010; Thomas, 2018; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, 2021; Wilson, 2008). This is why I developed a specifically W̱SÁNEĆ framework for my dissertation.

2.5. *Methods.*

The development of an Indigenous Framework to compile the findings of my research through Indigenous and specifically W̱SÁNEĆ ways of knowing and being and ultimately express this knowledge in the material form of ŁÁU, NOW̱ET SXEDQIW̱EŁ has involved a variety of methods. These include Self-Location, Storywork, Autoethnography, Matriarchal experience and responsibilities, language, land-based learning, and cultural traditions including prayer, ceremony, spirituality, artistic vision and expression.

2.5.1. *W̱SÁNEĆ TŦE NE ÁLEW̱ENEȻ - Self Location.*

As explained at the beginning of this dissertation, the purpose of W̱SÁNEĆ TŦE NE ÁLEW̱ENEȻ (Self Location) is to situate myself within both my family and my larger community. Within our W̱SÁNEĆ community, this is a traditional practice. We learn to

introduce ourselves, as well as explain who our families are, at a young age. In "Exploring Resilience and Indigenous Ways of Knowing", McGuire (2010) points out, "The ability to say who you are is critical in generating meaningful and needed Indigenous-based histories that can transform how we, as Aboriginal peoples, think about ourselves and our location within this place called Canada" (p. 119). My geo-political situation is vital to my identity and a significant part of to the historical reality of what my people have endured under european colonization.

2.5.2. *Storywork.*

For my study, I will draw from Jo-Ann Archibald's Storywork (2008) in which she describes both oral history and life story interviews. Oral histories are passed down by those who are entrusted with these stories of governance, education, health, and family systems. (Wright Cardinal, 2017) This study will include an oral history of our people, as shared by one of our Old Ones. Each animal on my Healing House Post/Totem tells a story. As in many communities that raise totems, these House Posts or Poles are erected to reflect the past, present and future of what happens in our communities. Describing the practice of *Storywork,* Jo-Ann Archibald (2008) writes, "Many First Nations storytellers use their personal life experiences as teaching stories in a manner similar to how they use traditional stories. These storytellers help to carry on the oral tradition's obligation of educational reciprocity" (p. 112). The Healing Post/Totem that came to me represents many of the stories that happened in my own life; it also reflects the stories I heard from my Daddy and my Grandmother, along with the stories entrusted to me by W̱SÁNEĆ Old One Victor Underwood. I share them to create knowledge and to educate future generations.

These stories also enable us to acknowledge our spiritual connections to ways that sustained our people and enabled them to survive. *SḴÁU ŁTE – An Exploration of W̱SÁNEĆ Law* (2019) explains the W̱SÁNEĆ concept of En SḴÁU: "This concept of giving and receiving

is known to the W̱SÁNEĆ people as En SḴÁU. It can also be understood in English as 'reciprocity.' It is a concept that recurs in W̱SÁNEĆ laws and teachings" (Morgerman & Twa, p. 15). The key here is understanding the concept of "giving and receiving" and how our Old Ones taught us to share knowledge; these are linked in the KELŁOLEMEĆEN section. As Kathleen E. Absolon (2011) writes, "Maintaining a balanced life and living in accordance with natural and spiritual laws ensure its survival. Indigenous methodologies are similar in that they call for the recognition and understanding of the natural and spiritual laws that govern their existence and survival" (p. 48). This is reflected in our W̱SÁNEĆ natural law SḴÁU ŁTE that governs W̱SÁNEĆ existence and balances our ways. In her master's thesis, Janice C. Gaudet (2009) reflects on the purpose of this practice within her own culture:

> The Omushkegowuk people continue to draw strength from their evolving culture —going back to the land, to ceremonies, to language, to songs, and to the teachings of their Ancestors. Land-based initiatives strive to reawaken this knowledge from within, and to carry it forward. (p. 25)

This is the case with W̱SÁNEĆ, like many Indigenous cultures whose stories are connected to the land and embedded in our Indigenous ways of being. Margaret Kovach (2010) also explains the power of storytelling and interviews as forms of research:

> The conversational method evokes stories, our own and others. As Lynne Davis states (2004), "Stories cement together generations of collective memory, embodying the historical, spiritual, social, and spatial" (p. 3). Stories have the power to holistically engage. Allowing time to process stories is a way of respecting self and others. It is respectful and ethical. (p. 47)

The stories Old One Dr. Victor Underwood entrusted to me were shared with him in the 1970s

when he was one of the first Indigenous Band Managers under the Indian Act in canada. He held conversational interviews with W̱SÁNEĆ Old Ones to record and remember our ways prior to the disruptions of colonization. Fifty years later, we are still facing these challenges, and I was instructed and guided to share this knowledge in my dissertation.

Indigenous research has a purpose which is connected to the land and to making life better for future generations, values which are also expressed in my Healing House Post/Totem. In Indigenous connection to our land, Richard Wagamese (2011) explains this tradition:

> The Land spoke to all of us then, it whispered. It told stories, and those who came to it most often learned to hear that voice through the closed skin of their eyes, the soles of their feet, the palms of their hands as they rested upon stone and tree and earth and water: the storytellers. They brought us the secrets of the world we call our home. Taught us to invent, to create, to imagine the space around us. They are the ones who showed us that the earth is alive, and we are joined to her by breath. The storytellers culled teachings from her mysteries. They discerned the truth that the planet we live on is but one small part of a greater, more marvellous creative energy that we are all part of as well. When we touch the earth, we touch ourselves, and the rhythms we discern are those of our own heartbeats, sounding in the context of the whole. Belonging. The articulation of who we are as a human family. (p. 2)

ŁÁU, NOW̱ET SXEDQIW̱EŁ, the healing house post that I have created, includes language, *Storywork,* and strategies for healing that are connected to our land and the geopolitical place of our people within the human family. Therefore Land is both our connection to place and the healing that emanates from this connection and a return to land-based practices. Matriarch duties include assuring Land, Language and Culture all are together and inseparable.

The Storywork method also shaped how I conducted my review and integration of literature. I decided not to include a formal western literature review in my dissertation to center the ebb and flow of my storytelling approach. I chose to sprinkle the literature throughout my work as opposed to a linear literature review because it fits more with my style of writing as a storyteller. While I did write a literature review in my PhD comprehensive exam process, I resisted a formal literature review in the dissertation since in my mind the formality did not align with my storytelling and felt like I was conforming to the formality of the typical PhD work of past. When telling friends and family about my work, they would be very interested and want to hear more, know more, and want to know when I am done. When reading Indigenous literature there were times, I understood Indigenous ontology and methodology and such, but there were times I did not want to source it because it was close to what I wanted to say, but different. It felt somewhat like appropriating, and there were only so many times that I could relate teachings from other Indigenous cultures to our ways and try and translate. In my own good conscience when I could only truly relate to scholars then I would utilize them as a source in my writing. I found myself in search of local scholars and the radius got smaller and smaller. Coast Salish writing made more sense in relation to what I was writing. For example, when re-reading ÁLEN̲ENEȻ (2008), in which the stories were told by my people, I felt the content felt more relatable and aligned with W̲SÁNEĆ ways of knowing.

2.5.3. *Autoethnography: Telling My Story.*

In their article, Autoethnography: an Overview, Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) describe this research methodology as follows:

> Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience. This

> approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a political, socially-just and socially-conscious act. A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product. (Abstract)

The construction of ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post is written from my life experiences adapted to create ways of helping others whose experiences are similar. The vision for the Healing House Post came to me in pieces and was formed from stories (see *Figure 3)*. ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ is the name of both my theoretical framework as well as the Healing Post itself. It contains my narrative stories woven into life lessons that moved me into warrior mode to fight systemic oppression in times I never thought I would have to. I also was inspired in many instances to work within my Matriarchal responsibilities, QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI. In fulfilling these duties, I turn into "Mama bear" mode. This motivated me to stand against the systemic racism of institutions like the medical and social services systems as described in the WEXES section of my framework.

Before experiencing systemic harm, Indigenous people often deal with some kind of stressor. These can include sickness/injury (hospital/medical personnel in health system), child endangerment or harm (Child Protection Social Workers in social services system), assignment/presentation criteria and deadlines (teachers/professors in education system), or police involvement (court system/jail). Often these situations occur under circumstances in which the institutions have Mission Statements, mandates, policies and procedures, or acts and regulations which threaten Indigenous well-being. Even institutional buildings themselves and their locations can clash with Indigenous ways of being and knowing. Venida Chenault (2011) writes about systems as structures of oppression:

> Colonization – or the process phase of colonialism – describes the ongoing means by which the oppression of people, cultures, and nations is accomplished and maintained. Socialization or assimilation into the new structure and the ideology of domination and superiority inherent to structures of oppression are transmitted through the social systems of that society, as people and cultures are hierarchically marginalized and socialized into powerlessness. (p. 20)

Frequently, Indigenous experience turns into trauma when people are hospitalized or incarcerated, children are removed from their families, or young people end up quitting school. In many cases, these harmful stresses stem from racism, discrimination, profiling, judgment, misjudgment and the like from employees within the system who are following their workplace Mission Statements, mandates, policies, procedures, acts and regulations. Our people have been trying to de-escalate these types of conflicts, create true healing paths and find ways to lessen and minimize systemic harm. Venida Chenault (2011) goes on to say:

> Multiple levels of domination and exploitation ensure the maintenance of a matrix of structures, systems, policies, and practices justifying oppressive conditions, including discrimination, dehumanization, injustice, violence and abuse. These structures solidify national and global systems of oppression, as well as an ideology of oppression throughout systems functioning within societies. Ongoing exposure to these processes of layered oppression produces a wide range of interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts and trauma as those socialized and subjected to colonialism internalize negative images, worldviews, beliefs, and practices. (Albert, Catan, Chomsky, et al. (1986); Duran Duran (1995); Mikaere (1999); Mullaly (1997). (p. 21)

At the root of all the conflict resulting from the clash in cultural approaches to dealing with these

life challenges lie trauma, stress, and deep hurt - all of which relate directly to Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Response [PDTR] Theory, a theory I developed in consultation with Dr. Laurie Harding. These clashes and conflicts are a significant part of what we are healing from. When I was a child, I was very shy when I attended elementary school at Tsartlip Day School. Later, when I had to go to public school, I was even more timid. In high school I was still reserved, but I had a few opportunities to "break out" of my shell. After having children and wanting to make the world a better place for them, I used my voice even more. I am saying this because I never thought that I was or would be a storyteller. Even when I was telling stories, I did not think of myself as a "storyteller". It was during my first year of core coursework in the PhD that I came to terms with my Matriarchy and being an actual storyteller.

Now I realize that my personal journey has prepared me to be a Matriarch who tells stories. My lived experience as a daughter, granddaughter, and great-granddaughter of residential school survivors, as well as my being a mother to eight children and a Grandmother to eleven grandchildren have brought me to this synergistic space to tell stories. In Indigenous Storytelling as Research, Judy Iseke (2013) writes: "Indigenous stories and pedagogies offer the possibility of Indigenous peoples in communities presenting and re-presenting Indigenous knowledges (Iseke, 2010, 2011; King, 2003; Kovach, 2009)" (p. 573). Storytelling is a means to share knowledge, lived experience, and to teach important lessons. Iseke (2013) further observes that storytelling is also, a tool for empowerment: "Indigenous peoples are engaging in research that is developed by and for our own communities and reflects Indigenous knowledges and empowers ourselves (Absolon, 2011; Dei, 2011; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Kovach, 2009)" (p. 560).

I remember hearing stories that helped our people, stories that were passed down from Old Ones. Often when we were young, we were told, "These are not my words; they were words

shared with me." I also remember as a teen being told that people's negative actions and choices reflected on their grandparents and raised questions about whether they had received good teachings. As well we were taught that our successes are reflected on our family. There are times when lines can be grey, but by hearing this over and over again, many in my generation tried hard to do things that would do right by our grandparents. We learned many of these teachings in repetitive ways, at family dinners, through Old Ones, school and such. My Daddy would lecture us for 3-4 hours when we got into any kind of trouble. The hardest part of the genocide enacted on our people for my older children (and many others), was that they did not get to know their grandfathers (both went to residential schools), nor did they get to hear their stories, as each died before they were born. Joyce Green (2014) describes the impact of these schools in *Indivisible – Indigenous human rights*:

> The government delegated this civilizing project of the residential school system to religious organizations and churches which were given the task of transforming Aboriginal children from "savages" into "citizens" by inculcating the values of Christianity and industry so the youngsters could take up positions as "functioning" members of the emerging capitalist society. By the 1930's eighty residential schools were spread across the country, with children registered from every Aboriginal nation (RCAP 1996: vol, chap.2). Eventually a total of 139 residential schools were in operation in Canada. Some 150,000 Aboriginal children – including First Nation, Inuit and Metis – were forced to attend the schools. (p. 64)

The government-imposed residential schools caused early death for my Daddy; he never talked about it: why would he? Some of the films made about residential schools were moderate in describing the critical incidents that happened, but even the more explicit ones left out the

horrific realities of these institutions. My father-in-law who attended Kamloops residential (Industrial) school says that "The film *Indian horse* (2018) is the closest story to what residential school was likes" (V. Underwood, personal communication, 2019). I had to watch this film twice to understand that the priest was a rapist: that's how understated they were in dealing with such a controversial topic. I have seen other movies where women get raped, and I still hear the explicit screaming of these victims. The sad part about sexual abuse at residential schools was that these children were far from home and unsafe, and there was not a thing their parents could do. As Joyce Green also writes, "In addition, federal legislation passed in 1894 allowed for the arrest and conveyance to school of truant Aboriginal children, and for fines or jail terms for parents who resisted (Hamilton and Sinclair 1991)" (p. 64). The threat of arrest was one of the unfair cruelties: not only was it inhumane to separate innocent children from their parents, but it was also, an intentional military tactic devised in Europe centuries ago. This systemic genocide directly affected me and my children not getting to know our respective grandfathers.

It has been quite the journey for my family through all the trauma-infused genocidal war tactics beginning from the first step of european contact on our shores. How many times could just one decision either lead to a path of genocide or to surviving another day? In their article "Aboriginal peoples and historic trauma: The processes of intergenerational transmission*"* Aguiar and Halseth (2015) observe*:*

> Given the complexity of Historic Trauma for Aboriginal peoples, it is clear that disrupting the intergenerational transmission of trauma will require holistic and multi-faceted approaches to improving health and well-being. The deep shame that is felt by many Aboriginal people is rooted first and foremost in the processes of colonialism, which denigrated Aboriginal culture and values leaving many with a poor sense of self-worth.

> The effects of this are acutely felt by individuals, families, communities and nations, and play out through all facets of life. As a result, interrupting the intergenerational transmission of trauma will require approaches aimed not only at treating the symptoms of this trauma, but will require the healing and rebuilding of individuals, families and communities. A central component of this will be re-establishing pride and sense of individual and collective identity through 'culture as treatment' activities (Gone, 2013). These approaches must involve not only the health domain, but other domains like education as well. (p. 23)

Clearly, storytelling is a central part of the process of using "'culture as treatment'" for Indigenous people (Gone, as cited in Aguiar & Halseth, 2015, p.23). This method of sharing healing knowledge is embedded in Indigenous ways of knowing and being. For many, it is part of our inherent responsibility to help our people.

After I completed my master's degree, I started to come to terms with the fact that I am a storyteller. I noticed that often when I spoke, people heard me, something which is huge because traditionally I have been a shy person. In 2017, I started doing my *JÁEŁNOṈET – to give and receive acknowledgement* presentation for new faculty and staff at the University of Victoria. Other people heard about this work and asked if I could present to their groups. After a couple of years of giving my presentation in various spaces within and outside of the University of Victoria, in 2019 I decided to enroll in the PhD in Child and Youth Care program. This was when I realized that in my presentations, I was actually storytelling. I was shocked because even though I wrote four children's books to complete my master's degree, I didn't think of myself as a storyteller. I took some time to let that sink in and realized again that just like being trained to be a Matriarch, the story telling had always been a part of me in many ways as well.

Jennifer Leason and Julie Sutherland (2022) write about the importance of storytelling as part of sharing Matriarchal wisdom,

> As we keep telling our stories so that our children understand our traditional ways of being and the ways they were disrupted, we must also continue to speak out about how colonial practices have resulted in inequities in education, income, food, security, safe housing, and access to/confidence in healthcare, among other social determinants of health". (p. 55)

It was amazing to me that my stories often turn my hardships into various forms of righting injustice: speaking truth to power. It is challenging because I cannot really be happy that I experienced tough stuff, but at the same time the outcome would not have been the same if I hadn't. This is explained in my WEXES chapter and how I co-created PDTR theory as a result. When I reflect on my lived experience, I observe that sometimes I get justice, sometimes I get just enough to call it justice, and most of all I see that the results are Creator's knowing what I needed at the time.

Sprinkled into my storytelling is the healing through sparkling handfuls of humour and laughter. I am a stand-up comedian, and I can make people laugh. It was in the midst of my darkest days dealing with the MCFD that I knew I was in a bad place. I didn't want to leave my room, see people, or look after myself. I saw a flyer: "learn how to be an Indigenous comedian." These classes were offered on Sundays at the Center for Indigenous Research and Community Led Engagement (CIRCLE) at the University of Victoria, so I went. I needed the change, I needed something, I needed to break out of the darkness.

My husband Romaine thought that he was only driving me in to these comedy classes. When we arrived at CIRCLE, I asked him to go into the building with me. He learned to become a comedian as well, and he is so funny. After five Sunday sessions it was time to go on stage.

Since then, we have been on stage several times and consider ourselves stand-up comedians. Once again, I found myself storytelling, using comedy to lighten the darkness, as a relief from the waves of colonial trauma. In her article “In a good way: Reflecting on humour in Indigenous education” Shannon Leddy (2018) writes:

> It gives us time to relax a little bit and to nurture our humanity in the face of an otherwise nearly constantly enraging and disappointing existential experience. At least for Indigenous peoples. It also gives us a way of introducing ourselves to others, inviting them in until they can share the joke too. (p. 15)

Comedy and laughing definitely carried me through dark times.

2.5.4. *Prayer and Ceremony.*

Just as humour brings light to the darkness of colonization, prayer is another light shining on the ugly truth of the intergenerational harm and trauma resulting from the attempted genocide of our people. I believe the power of prayers is why our people are still here. I find it so relatable when Carole Lévesque, Denise Geoffroy and Genevieve Polèse (1999) write about how prayer is used by the Naskapi Women of Quebec,

> As plants have healing powers, the person having knowledge of the healing plants also has the power to heal. Naskapi elders explained, however, that merely knowing how to use a medicine or remedy is not enough to cure someone. The person providing the care also has to demonstrate the appropriate mental attitudes. You have to respect the plants when you pick them up. The person who receives the medicine has to fully accept it; otherwise, it will not work. Also, you have to pray. You have to speak to the medicine, tell the medicine what you want it to do, especially if it is beaver or bear. (p.77)

I think of when my second oldest had eczema and my maternal Grandmother saw the inflammation on my son's cheeks; she told me that when I went to the doctor, I should pray that the doctor would help my son. She taught me that when you get a prescription, you pray, you speak to it, you ask for help from the pharmacist so that you will get good medicine that will help heal. She then told me to pray for the medicine as I applied it to my son's skin so that it would work. My Grandmother was describing the old ways but applying them to today's medical treatment.

I also recall growing up hearing that our medicine gatherers, cedar gatherers, and hunters say a prayer before they start. Many Indigenous gatherings say a prayer before and after having food together. Many prayers are also offered when we have a death in our community. When my Dad died, there were three denominations present to pray for him, our family and our community. Our community has suffered so much loss, we have become very proficient at burying our loved ones so that we have a protocol that helps the family that is mourning. This involves structural, spiritual, and financial concerns so that after the funeral, many families don't have to worry about much but can mourn and heal. Healing is deeply embedded in W̱SÁNEĆ culture and prayer is central to this process.

Throughout the trauma of colonization our Ancestors utilized the power of prayer and ceremony as tools for survival, the fragments of prayers and ceremony that were nearly robbed from us because they were considered pagan. Prayers and ceremony sustained my people and breathed life back into our language and culture, but these were illegal under Canadian law until only recently. Between 1885 and 1951 we were arrested for our cultural practices. We are warriors because we have to be - even my youngest grandchild is a Warrior born and registered

under the *Indian Act*. The reason why I have done this work is to remind our people that we are Warriors whose Ancestors did their part in battle and are still behind us.

With all that I have been through I find myself always wanting to rebel, to stick it to "the man", proving that I am still Indigenous and not an apple (red on the outside, white on the inside). I reflect on what Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes about centuries of colonial research practices that deny Indigenous voices. I like the idea that our people will continue with our "claim to existence, to land and territories, to the right of self-determination, to the survival of our languages and forms of cultural knowledge, to our natural resources and systems for living within our environments" (p.1). This makes me think of a song that came to me in the summer of 2019, which I shared for the first time in one of my Ph.D. courses.

I'll Tell You a Story

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

Walk gently, live longly, be strong,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

CENQELES, CENQALES, CENITETONSET, CENTOTEN,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

Learn your language, learn your culture, learn who you are,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell,

I'll tell you a story, a story I'll tell.

In the first verse "Walk gently, live longly, be strong" speaks to a way of being connected to W̱SÁNEĆ natural law SḴÁU ŁTE, which means "your pay in life whether good or bad". The second verse ends with the four seasons and is about change, showing that things do change, just like the seasons. The last verse, "Learn your language, learn your culture, learn who you are" is a continuation of the story, making it circular and leaving it up to the individual to keep the circle strong. It would be powerful for all Indigenous people to work together to keep the circle strong, to tell their stories and to uphold their homelands. Leanne Betamasoke Simpson (2017) reminds us:

> Reserves are colonial constructs, as are urban communities. Urban Indigenous communities are often sites of tremendous opportunity and action in terms of political, alliance building, governance (because urban Indigenous collectives and organizations are not under the thumb of the Indian Act), language revitalization, local Indigenous economic and food initiatives, urban education, and community organizing, as are reserve communities, and I believe many Indigenous peoples are attached and in love with our homelands regardless of where we live. (p. 195)

This love for our ÁLEṈENEȻ (homeland) drives my doctoral research. In this dissertation I talk about past trauma for a reason, to speak about past strength. This is how this song came to me, after I experienced trauma. Just as our Ancestors experienced so much, it was prayer and ceremony that created resistance and resilience.

2.5.5. *QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI - Matriarchal Duties.*

QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI: QENÁŁ means responsibility; LÁ,ET, the root word for LÁ,ETEN, refers to being ready/prepared. SŁÁNI means woman, and it also means a "knitting

stitch". This additional translation was provided through discussion with Tiffany Joseph when we talked about the meaning of LÁ,ET SŁÁNI (Personal communication, 2023). In further discussion with my husband Romaine, we added the word QENÁŁ because when I tell people about what my Matriarchal duties are, it's clear they are wide-ranging. These responsibilities are to ensure children are safe, to look after and ensure the land and water are safe, also to ensure that language and culture are there in the future for our children, our children's children and that all these things are intact and ready for them. Robina Thomas (2018) writes,

> Traditionally Indigenous women were revered for their specific role they carried. For example, women were held in high regard because of roles as givers of life, carriers of culture and tradition, caretakers of the land, healers, and carriers of the language. (p. 20)

Coming to terms with who I am as a Matriarch has involved knowing what my Matriarchal duties are, upholding them, staying true to our ways, and sharing and passing on W̱SÁNEĆ ways of being and knowing. It's all pretty simple but necessary. W̱SÁNEĆ women have been doing this forever. At my oral defence, my relative and UVic Elder-in-Residence May Sam reminded me to acknowledge my late great grandmother Genefia (Genevieve named on page 1) who embodied our teaching of matriarchal love. Auntie May encouraged me to practice this teaching when I walk forward as a professor and in my daily life.

As my Healing House Post framework developed during my doctoral coursework, I have come to terms with some very important parts of my life that made me understand who I am in terms of my resilience and my ability to heal. At many points I felt like I was struck down when I encountered trauma through racism, discrimination, and all the effects of ongoing genocide, but I had to get up, dust myself off, and move forward, often having to appear like nothing had even happened.

It was during my first year of my Ph.D. core coursework when I accepted and aligned with who I am as a QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI Matriarch. I was just starting to heal from systemic harm, and a family incident happened at the same time as I was experiencing lateral violence. It felt like I was barely keeping it together. When I was able to function (using all the strength I had), I realized I was tapping into my QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI, my Matriarchal strength. In the past I always thought of the QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI Matriarchs like my Grandmothers and Great-Grandmothers. QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI Matriarchal duties include taking action on Indigenous (Earth, Land, Air, Water, Justice and Human) rights; standing up to systemic wrongs, ensuring that the land is a good place for my children, grandchildren and beyond; and assuring our language stays alive. In her book *Becoming a Matriarch*, Helen Knott shared an Elder's words about Matriarchy:

> So we as women had to fill two roles in a lot of cases. We had to hold the role of the man and the woman at the same time. We protected, we provided and we nurtured. Women from all these nations in Indian country had to learn how to be strong. We became leaders, we fought for justice, and we held our families and communities together. We became what we were because we had to, because we had no other choice. (p. 166)

I found that often my decisions were made because I wanted the future to be better for my children and grandchildren, but also, I did not want anyone else to experience what I did. As an Indigenous Matriarch, daughter, granddaughter, sister, spouse, mom and grandmother, I carry specific responsibilities. The ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ means Healing House Post in SENCOTEN; it is written for my children, and it represents my Matriarchal duties in action. During my PhD, I started to recognize the QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI Matriarch work that I was already doing. Jennifer Leason and Julie Sutherland's (2022) chapter titled "Matriarchal

Wisdom: Indigenous Women's and Perinatal Health" discusses Matriarchal power in a health context. Jennifer Leason explains how Matriarchal power and wisdom generate inspiration for healing:

> I (Jennifer Leason) am also reminded of their strength, beauty, and **resilience.** Despite violence, injustice, adversity, and inequalities, Indigenous women are surviving, thriving and resurging. They are asserting their Matriarchal power and wisdom. I am reminded of my mother's inspirational words, "Just keep going." I come from a generation of Indigenous women who refuse to sit on our hands-who refuse to accept the unfair and disproportionate burden of women's and perinatal health disparities. I urge you to question and challenge Indigenous health disparities for all women and their children and work to ensure health and well-being for all in this generation and for generations to come. (p. 64)

I also started to see flashes of our ways of being and knowing from years past, and I understood that I have been trained to do the QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI Matriarch work set out before me despite all the violence, injustice, adversity and inequalities. It also seemed like the Creator knew that I could do this vital work and was orchestrating my path.

When I was twelve years old, I said, "Daddy, I want an Indian name." His response was, "You do? Okay we will send you to see your Nanny." "Indian name" was a term used in an era when we knew who was an "Indian" in our lands at the time, even though it was a european label that mislabeled us as the same people as those who were native to India. "Nanny" was what we called my Grandmother, my Dad's mom. My oldest cousin could not say "Grandmother", so he called her Nanny and the rest of us did too.

When I was fifteen years old, I said "Daddy, I want to go on a canoe." He said, "You do? Okay, I'll find a way." He went to see the owner of the Geronimo Canoe Club who told my Dad

to bring us anytime; the canoes were there for us to use. So, my brother and I would go down at seven in the morning and paddle. My Daddy taught me that it was possible to share our knowledge and way of life. Receiving my "Indian name" and sharing our traditional ways of living were part of my early matriarchal training.

I often think of some of the old people I knew when I was young and how fortunate I was to know them and learn from them. There were so many who shared their wisdom and experience: my Grandmothers Virginia Joe and Louise Johnnie; my Grandfathers Norman Johnnie and Elmer Joe, and many other Old Ones who are no longer with us. These included Victor and Ethel Underwood, Uncle Gabe Bartleman, Auntie Beatrice Bartleman, Auntie Laura Olsen, Auntie Kath Smith, Henry Smith, Edna Henry, Stella Wright, Louie Charlie, Marie Cooper, Manson Pelkey, Gabe and Doreen Pelkey, Gary Joseph, Auntie Mary Underwood, Harry and Molly Underwood, Ethel Wilson, Anne Jimmy, Irvin Jimmy, Walter Jimmy. I remember hearing their words and sharing the teachings of all these Old Ones that have passed on. I know that my Dad instinctively took us to visit many of these family/community Old Ones so that we would remember them. Ruby Peter speaks to her training, which was similar, in her book *What was said to me: the life of Sti'tum'atul'wut, a Cowichan woman*:

> I was trained right from nine, ten years old, young, to understand, to know, to hear, to listen, to watch and to study people, to know what is happening. It was very strict. The young people must remember their background, their roots, where they come from, who their ancestry was, their family tree. Their family tree is most important thing to remember, to follow up and make sure you have it at all times and to give it to your children and grandchildren. That's the rule that has existed in our Native People: to know their family tree. To be able to say who you come from or the place where you came from. Know about

> your background. What you hold, what you have and the name, descendants of that name. (p. 4)

Visiting with Old Ones was how my Dad did this for us when we were children; he would stop and introduce us to family and community. I find myself repeating so many of their words: hearing myself, I think about what was shared by our Old Ones and how I never thought it would be me saying these words. One common way of showing that this knowledge is passed on, from one generation to another, is by saying, "These are not my words." For me, I often say "These are my Dad's words…." This is one example of the way our people share inter-generational knowledge, but there are many others.

I have told all eight of my children I want them to be better than me. Like many parents, I pray they will have a better life than me. I want them to be better than me as people, not do my work. My educational journey has been just that, a journey. I was fortunate to get a living allowance for most of my journey from the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board to support nearly all of my schooling. By the end of my master's and now for my doctoral work, I only receive a certain number of months' funding; even with this, only my tuition is paid. I made getting an education my job much like when I was a family service social worker for seven years. For the past three years my studies have also been funded as a doctoral trainee on my supervisor Sarah Wright Cardinal's CIHR grant "Sharing Medicine Bundles & Pathways to Community Wellness" with four nations. The W̱SÁNEĆ matriarchal women's wellness work of this grant informs and affirms my dissertation, as well as our collective work as Indigenous women professors and students, and additional supports have been provided through this grant and my committee to complete my PhD. I want my children to be happy on their journeys, whatever they chose to do. I have asked all of them, "When you get a job, who do you work for?" The answer to these

questions was at the root of my Grandpa Norman Johnnie's advice on work ethics. He said that when you get a job, it's because the Creator allowed you to get that job. When the manager/boss who hired you steps away, you keep working. Why? Because guess who is still watching? I point up: the Creator.

As a parent to eight children, I can say that in many ways it was them who taught me. Our Old Ones tell us this, but until you experience it, it's hard to explain. My eyes have held tears of amazement so many times at how my children have taught me about life, spirituality, real joy, peace, miracles, laughter and even resilience when afraid, sad and hurt. In my personal story I talk about how when my two oldest were young, I was also young and still learning to be a parent. I took parenting courses and carried around a book called *Dr. Mom*. I learned in one class there are four parenting styles. One was "neglectful" which speaks for itself. A second was "permissive"; an example of speaking permissively is saying, "Oh sweety, that is not what we do" in a soft kind voice. The next parenting style was "authoritative", which seemed to have the goal of stating clear boundaries in a calm tone, using great communication and allowing for natural consequences. The last method of parenting was "authoritarian", with strict rules, punishment and tight parental control over children. I wanted to be "authoritative", but shortly after learning this, I caught my oldest son doing something he shouldn't. I asked him to stop, and he turned to me and said, "Mam, yes mam" and saluted me. He likely saw this military form of behaviour on the television, but I paused and really thought about my parenting style. I also knew that I had to do the best I could to show them the world, just as my parents did for us in order to help us navigate through the world.

Ruby Peters also speaks to showing and sharing as a way of teaching. I was honored to have met her during my diploma program. We had an Old Ones visit every Tuesday for two

years of this program, and Ruby frequently taught us. Ruby is definitely a Matriarch that I admire. I still hear her voice in the advice in her book when she shares about raising children:

> Raising children is hard. You have to watch them, listen to them, study them. How they talk, how they laugh and how you know when they are hurt, sad, when they are disturbed. That's how you study children. That's how I was with my children, if they were hurt or having problems. Even with education, going to school, I used to help them, and it really works to help them. (p. 2)

I knew the Creator gave me my children for a reason, I watched and saw how my parents worked hard to get us what we needed and wanted, so I always wanted to do the best I could as a parent for my own children.

All I have accomplished in the past is possible because of who I am as a QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI Matriarch: having children, working, going to school. All the work I have done for my doctoral degree is because of who I am as a daughter, sister, mother, day school survivor, with a parent, grandparent, and great-grand parents who attended residential schools and suffered through the genocide attempts on our people, including living under the *Indian Act* on reservation lands. I was fortunate to inherit and connect with our ways, having my Grand Aunt Kay step up when my Daddy died. She continued his practice of teaching us our people's traditional ways of knowing and being. I was lucky to have my Dad as long as I did, along with many family members who shared the fragmented teachings that survived as best they could. I say "fragmented" because through Settler arrival and the related genocidal attempts to erase our ways of life our cultural practices were devastated. Forced schooling and *Indian Act* rules tried to steal our ways, each time gouging holes in our culture, forcing our people to hide, to keep our ways a secret, so we would not be beaten or jailed. All my Ancestors did the best they could in a

time where turmoil and trauma were forced upon them. As a Matriarch, it is my place to preserve what they saved and passed on to me, and to enrich it for our people's healing, wellbeing, and pass on to future generations.

Chapter 3: KELŁOLEMEĆEN: "Life before europeans"

I would like to start by describing each segment of the Healing House Post/Totem Pole. At the base of the House Post is a KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale. The KELŁOLEMEĆEN represents the section titled "Life Before europeans".

Figure 4: ŁÁU, NON̲ET SXEDQIN̲EŁ Healing House Post

The teachings in this section are a gift I received from Old One, Victor Underwood. Victor interviewed Old Ones in the 1970s about life before europeans. This gift describes W̲SÁNEĆ ways before contact, explains the four posts of our "Longhouse" homes, and shows how our traditional ways are what sustained our way of living. In these interviews, Victor was able to

write about these teachings that might otherwise have been lost and present them in a visual representation to preserve the Longhouse ways of living, being and knowing. The four Longhouse corner posts are very old trees, very large, and are held in high regard. They are our Ancestors who gave up their lives to help us, and we rely on them: they help to keep the roof over us. These pages (pp. 56-67) include our governance system, natural laws, and social order, followed by the Indian Act and what we lost under that system. I am very thankful that Victor trusted me with his work with Old Ones who are no longer with us. Jo-Ann Archibald (2008) speaks to our responsibility to Old Ones/Elders, to respect their role and authority as teachers (p. 61). In her book *Indigenous Storywork,* she demonstrates that oral histories and life story interviews contain a wealth of knowledge. The strength within these teachings continues to help our people to survive. KELŁOLEMEĆEN represents this wisdom along with the traits of the Orca family: ways of staying together, looking after each other, and surviving colonization: in this respect, the Orcas are just like our Indigenous Peoples.

Our Old Ones' teachings are translated into SENĆOŦEN in this section of "Life Before europeans" to emphasize the truth that language is culture and culture is language connected to our land. Presenting this section in our language was an intentional link to Dr.Victor Underwood's strong reminders to speak our language whenever we can. He received these teachings from Old Ones fifty years ago and in spite of many efforts we are still living within these systems of discrimination and oppression, yet in recent years we have a resurgence of our language: such as, an immersion tribal school, a SENĆOŦEN dictionary, and university Indigenous Language Revitalization (ILR) programs. To honour our current immersive approach in W̱SÁNEĆ and the importance of connection to culture and language to understand the teachings, this decision was made. This is not to exclude those who don't read our language but

to offer other Indigenous scholars at this time in history a suggested pathway when including a nation's worldview. With this section written in SENĆOŦEN it captures the sacred laws and ancient knowledges in a deep and profound way that is most useful to W̱SÁNEĆ, ways in which the University (and other institutions) cannot totally understand. I ask: who benefits from reading this? Whose birthright is this knowledge? In the book titled ÁLEṈENEȻ Learning from Homeland (Saanich Indian School Board, 2008), TELAXTEN (Paul Sam Sr.) writes:

> The language and culture go hand and hand; one is no good without the other! Why we do things as families, the ceremony that we carry out, are examples of who we are. Only those doing the ceremony are authorized to do so. Every family has a purpose. They have a responsibility to pass on what they carry. We have a responsibility as a nation, not only to revitalize SENĆOŦEN but to teach our culture as it was. ÁLEṈENEȻ would be starting point for this. (p. 86)

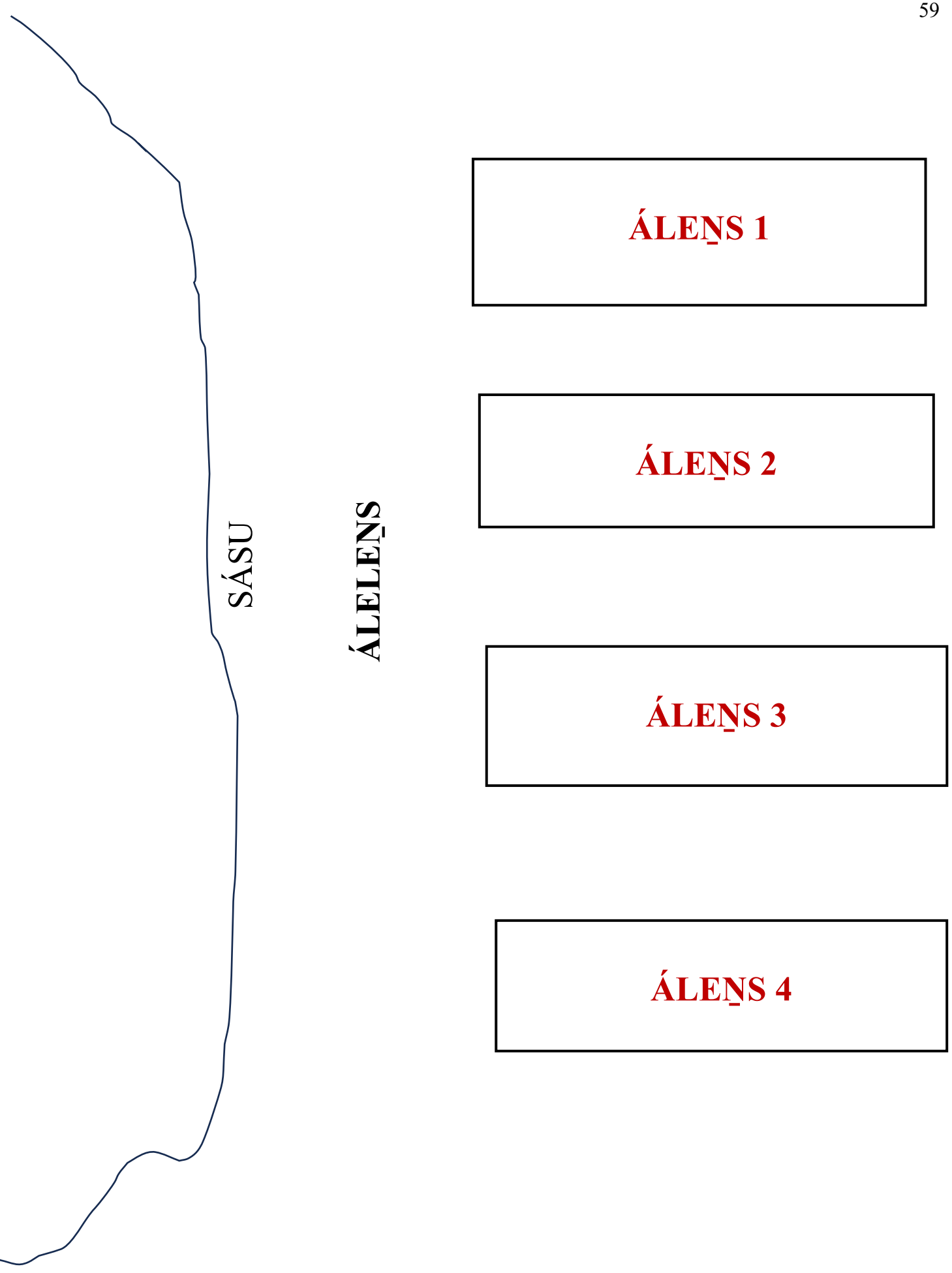
TELAXTEN also emphasizes the importance of language being connected to land, nature and the elements. The definition of ÁLEṈENEȻ is "homeland" or the "villages" where we lived. Going back to our homelands is the way to revitalize SENĆOŦEN, our language, and teach our culture. The bottom three beings of the Healing House Post tell stories of the past to the QELEṈSEN (Eagle), who hears of the harm and suffering of our people and carries them up to XÁLS; just QELEṈSEN's presence provides the "Healing". This is why the Eagle is at the top of the house post.

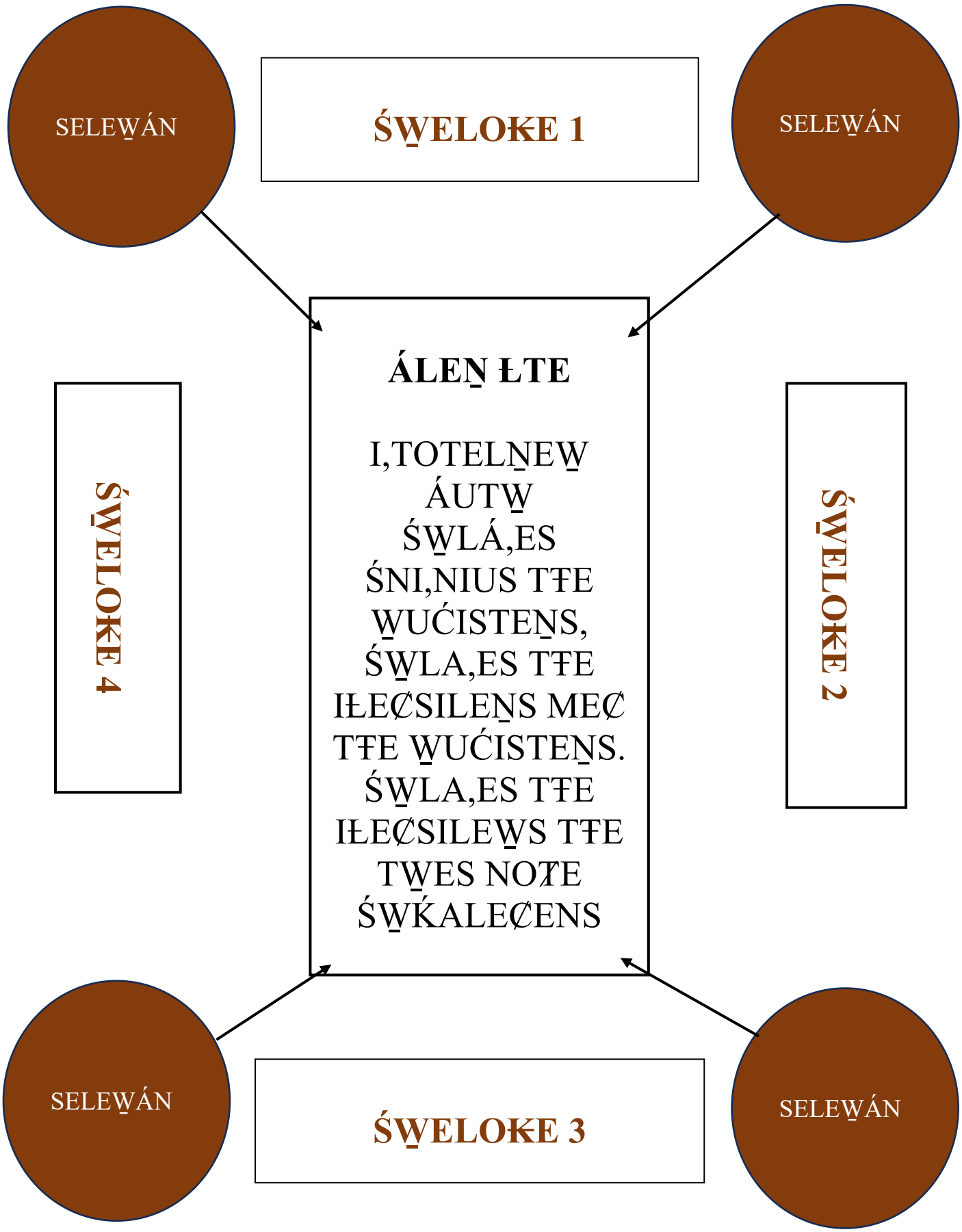
Continuing to use Jo-Ann Archibald's Storywork as a research methodology, in this section is the ***Life Before europeans*** framework gifted to me by Dr. Victor Underwood. He spoke to old people about what life was like before contact of the european people who arrived on ships to our lands. What Victor wrote about after speaking to them was a framework of teachings,

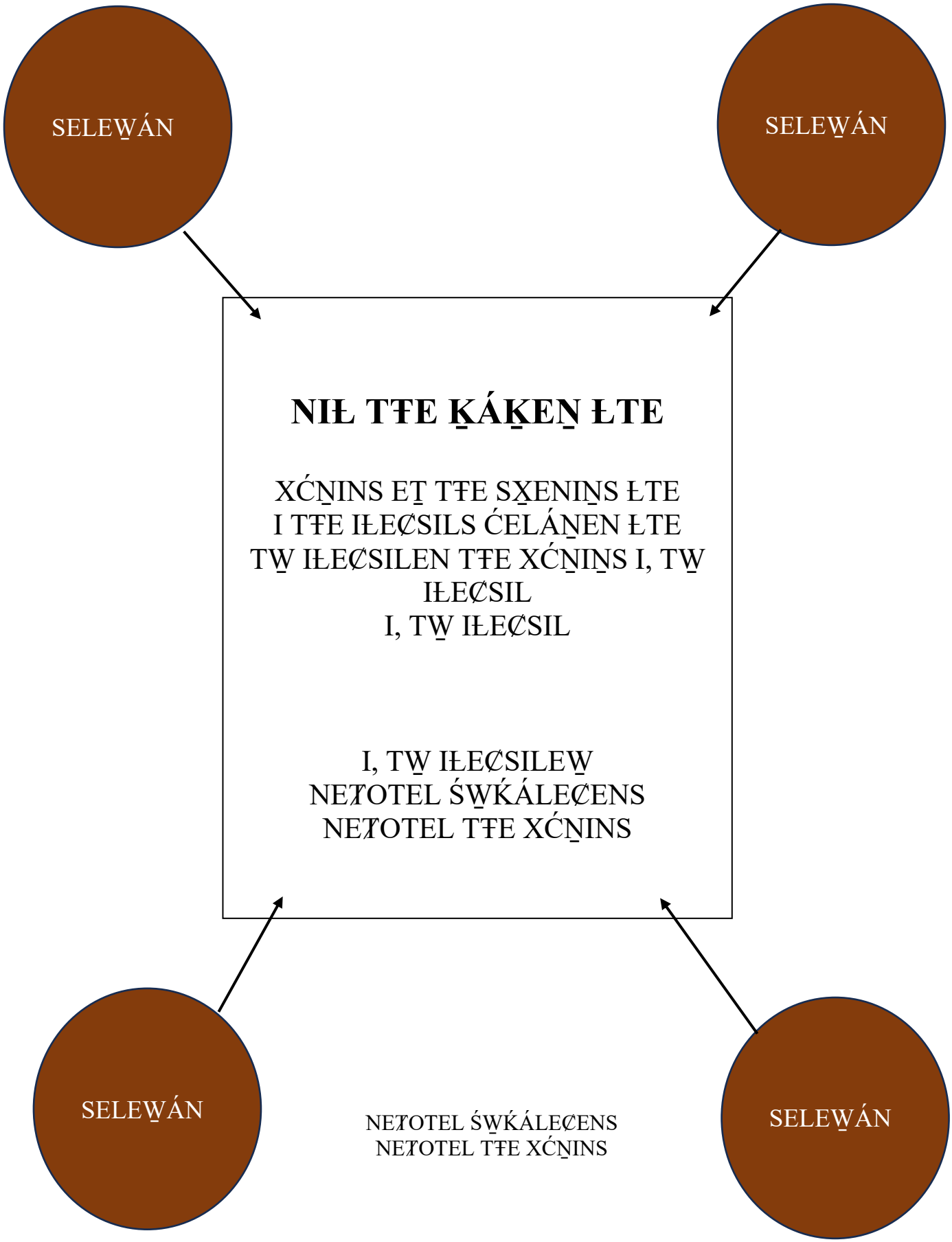
responsibilities and blood memory knowledge of ways that sustain who we are. Victor gifted this knowledge to me in english, this reflects the impacts of colonization at that time. To reclaim this knowledge in my doctoral work, I believe Victor knew I would share this with our children and children of the future. He would always encourage his grandchildren to speak to each other in our language as much as they can. Victor would hear them speak and sing in SENĆOŦEN and talk about how his generation do not understand because of residential school. He would say that we did not understand our parents when we got home and now we can't understand our grandchildren. Our sons Romaine Jr and Victor, his grandchildren, are SENĆOŦEN Immersion students, so it seemed ideal to translate this section into our language SENĆOŦEN for the future of assuring our language stays alive. I thank James Elliot and Romaine Underwood for this translation and the Sharing Medicine Bundles project for the funding. Reclaiming our languages and uplifting these knowledges for the generations to come is a healing pathway and a response to the UVic Indigenous Plan. I envision a time when students have reclaimed fluency, such as our W̱SÁNEĆ youth currently in grade eleven immersion (Romaine Jr was in this first co-hort of SENĆOŦEN immersion at 3 years old), to present their entire work in their languages and for institutional policies to support this. The title page starts on page 58. As stated above, this framework was created by Dr. Victor Underwood when he held conversational interviews with W̱SÁNEĆ Old Ones in the 1970s about Life Before europeans. The framework is held up by our Longhouse posts and includes our governance system, natural laws, and social order that sustained our people for thousands of years. It then describes the Indian Act and the negative impacts to our way of life. In turn demonstrating that going back to our natural laws that sustained us is why we are still here. This work was translated by James Elliot and Romaine Underwood. I then discuss in Chapter 4 who we are within our homelands and today's colonial

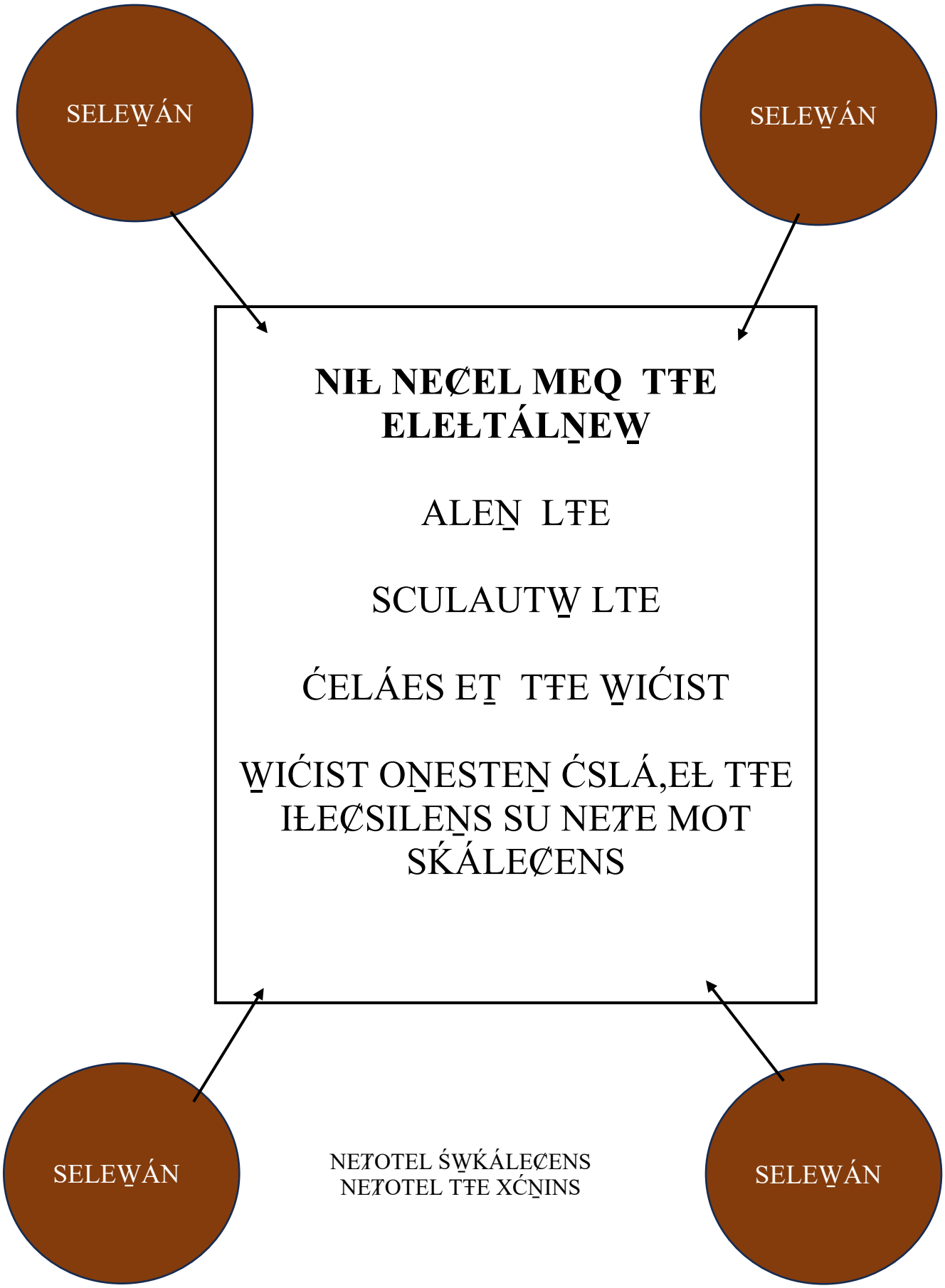
context followed by Chapter 5 where I discuss the impacts of the Indian Act in the form of Indigenous specific racism and present a theory to name this ongoing experience of racism; followed by healing pathways in Chapter 6. This framework was gifted to me to be used in my PhD, to empower the next generations, and provide essential knowledge in our language. I invite visitors to look through this section and absorb what you can as a visitor who is passing by and not taking anything away. I ask that W̱SÁNEĆ educators and language keepers include my story of where and how this framework came to be when sharing it.

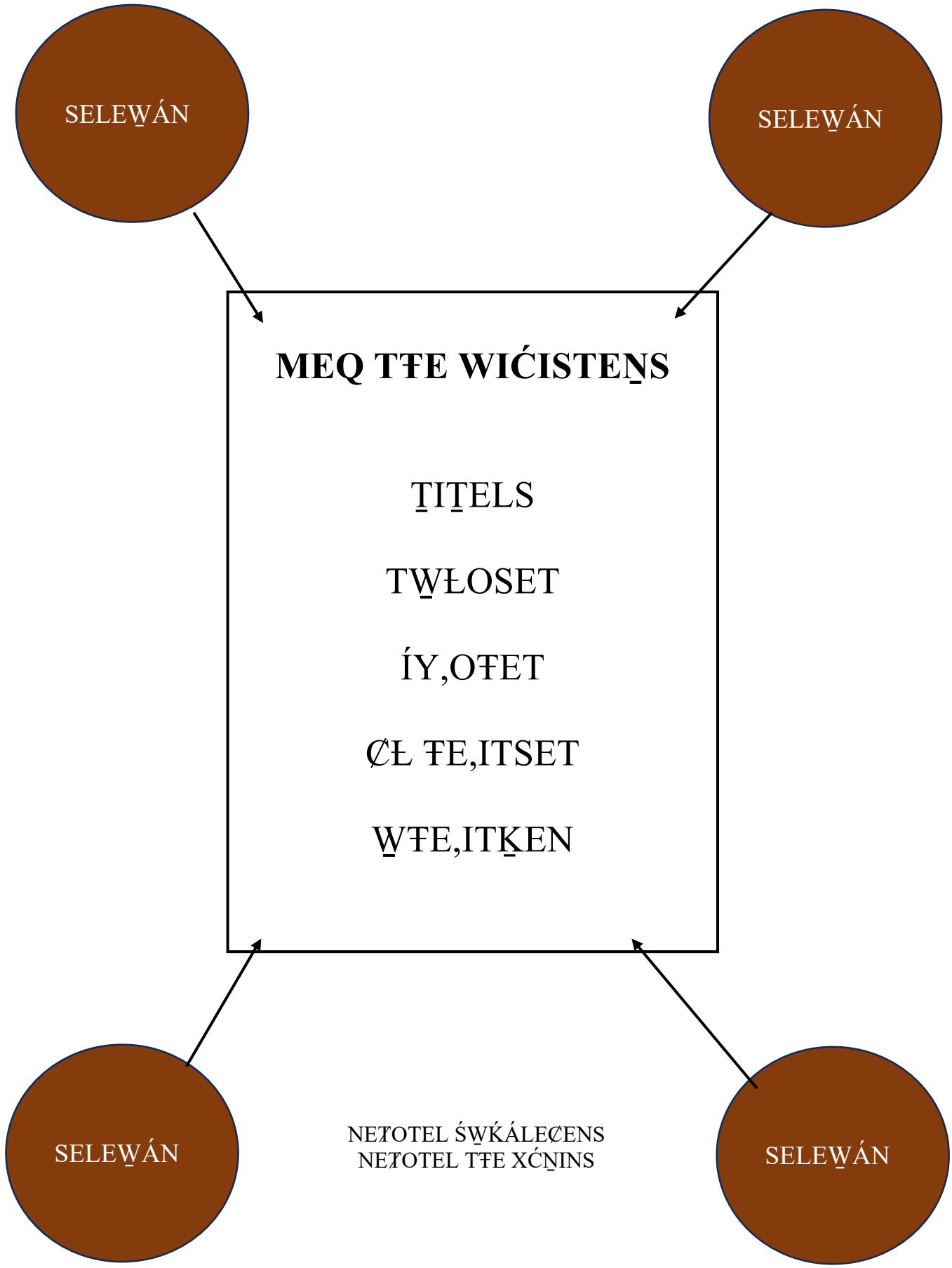
IŁ ĆALES TŦE W̱ELENITEM
NIŁ TŦE SW̱ELNIW̱EŁS
NI TŦE SW̱ELNIW̱EŁS
DXEṈEŁŚÁ I₡S DXEṈ ŁTE
TŦE ÁLEṈS TŦE SW̱ELNIW̱EŁS
ELEŁTÁLṈEW̱ ĆS LIL TW̱ YEX̱ELTOX̱
ENE₡ OX̱ ₡S LIL TW̱ EṮ ELEḴENENE₡
19 ₡SÁIYE U, NIŁS HELI,S TENWEQS TŦE ĆEḴṮÁĆES

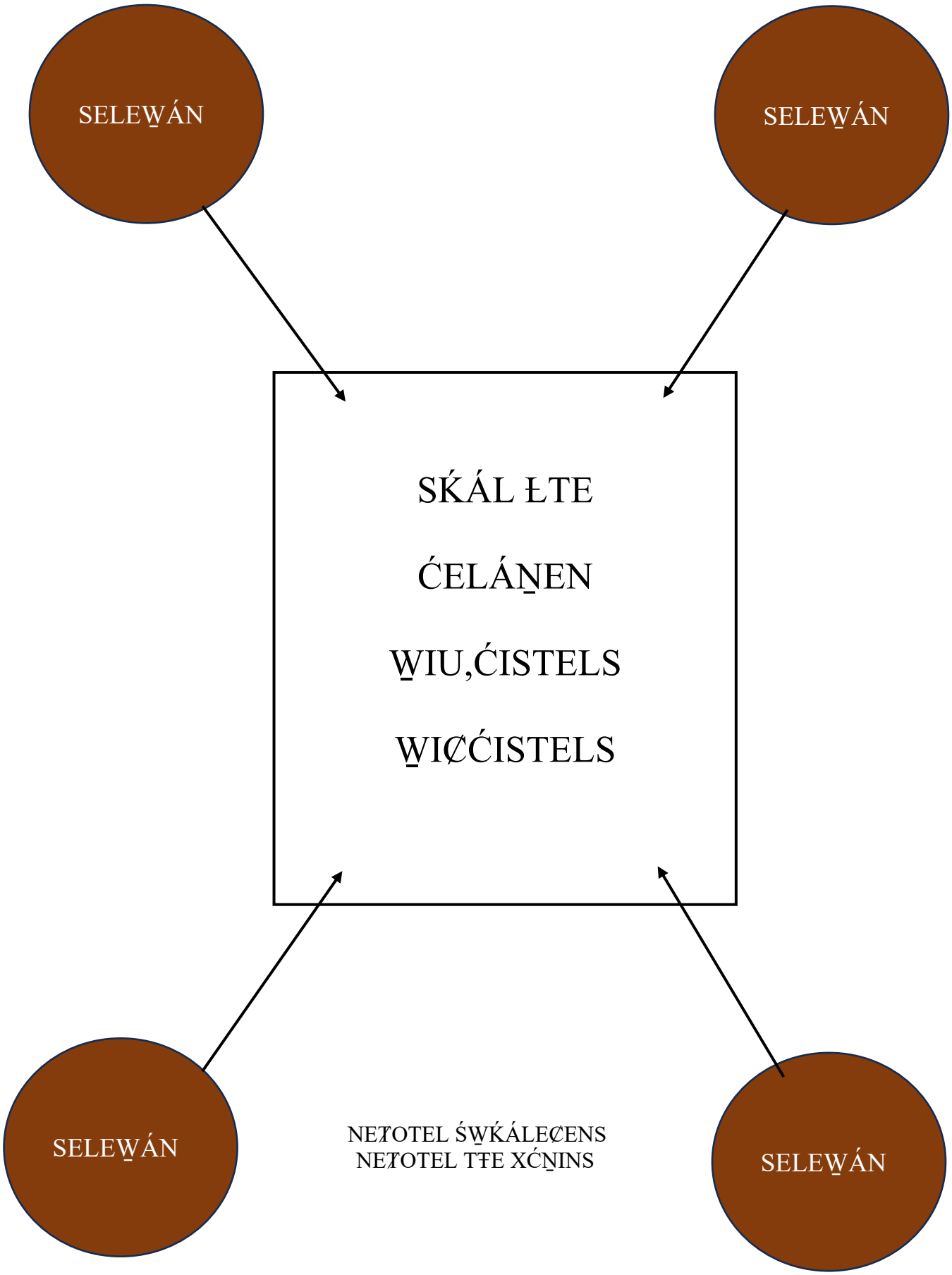

SÁSU
ĀLEŅS
ĀLEŅS 1
ĀLEŅS 2
ĀLEŅS 3
ĀLEŅS 4

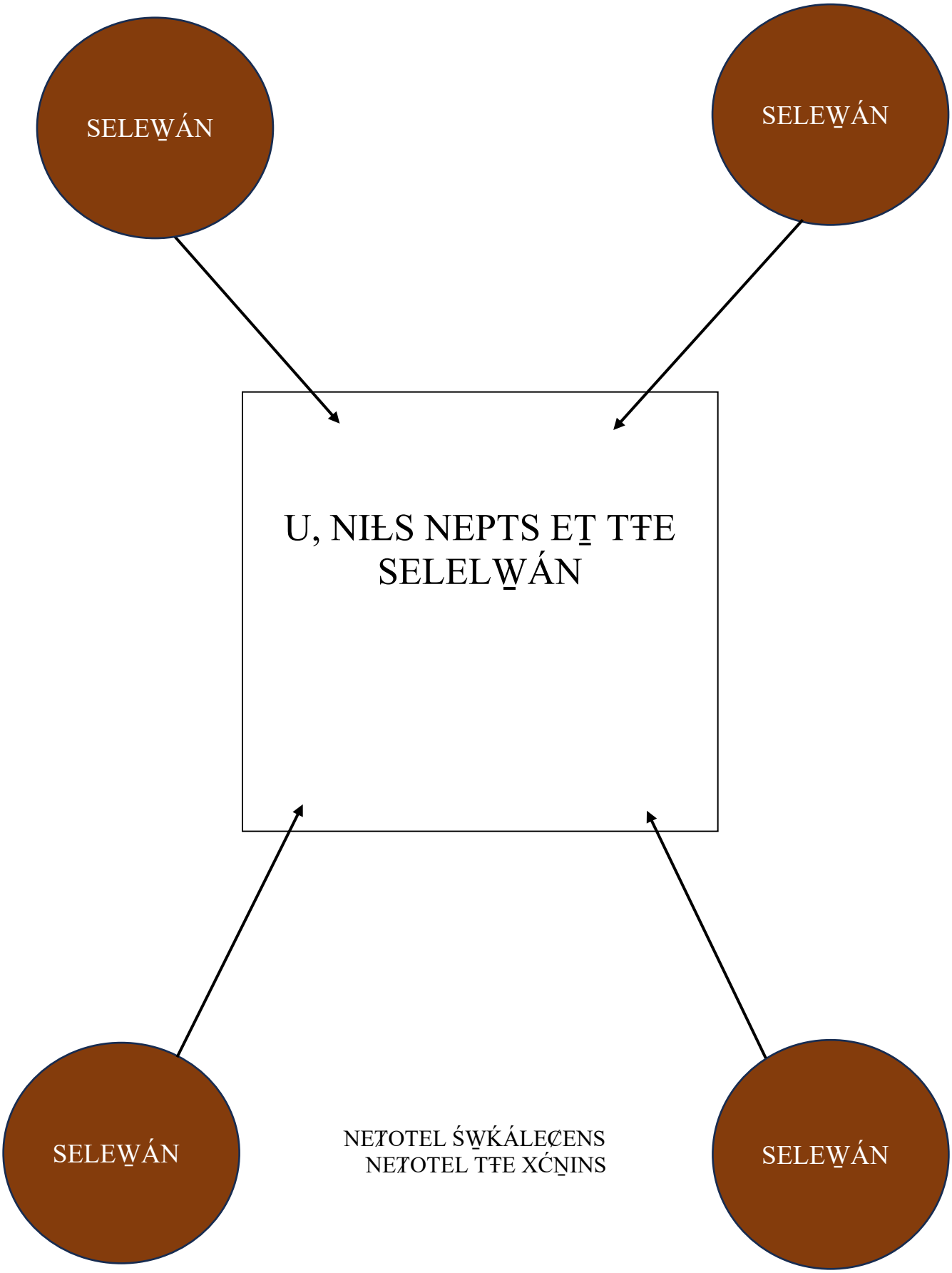

SELEW̱ÁN
ŚW̱ELOKE 1
SELEW̱ÁN
ÁLEN̲ ŁTE
I,TOTELN̲EW̱
ÁUTW̱
ŚW̱LÁ,ES
ŚNI,NIUS TŦE
W̱UĆISTEN̲S,
ŚW̱LA,ES TŦE
IŁEĆSILEN̲S MEĆ
TŦE W̱UĆISTEN̲S.
ŚW̱LA,ES TŦE
IŁEĆSILEW̱S TŦE
TW̱ES NOƵE
ŚW̱ḰALEĆENS
ŚW̱ELOKE 4
ŚW̱ELOKE 2
SELEW̱ÁN
ŚW̱ELOKE 3
SELEW̱ÁN

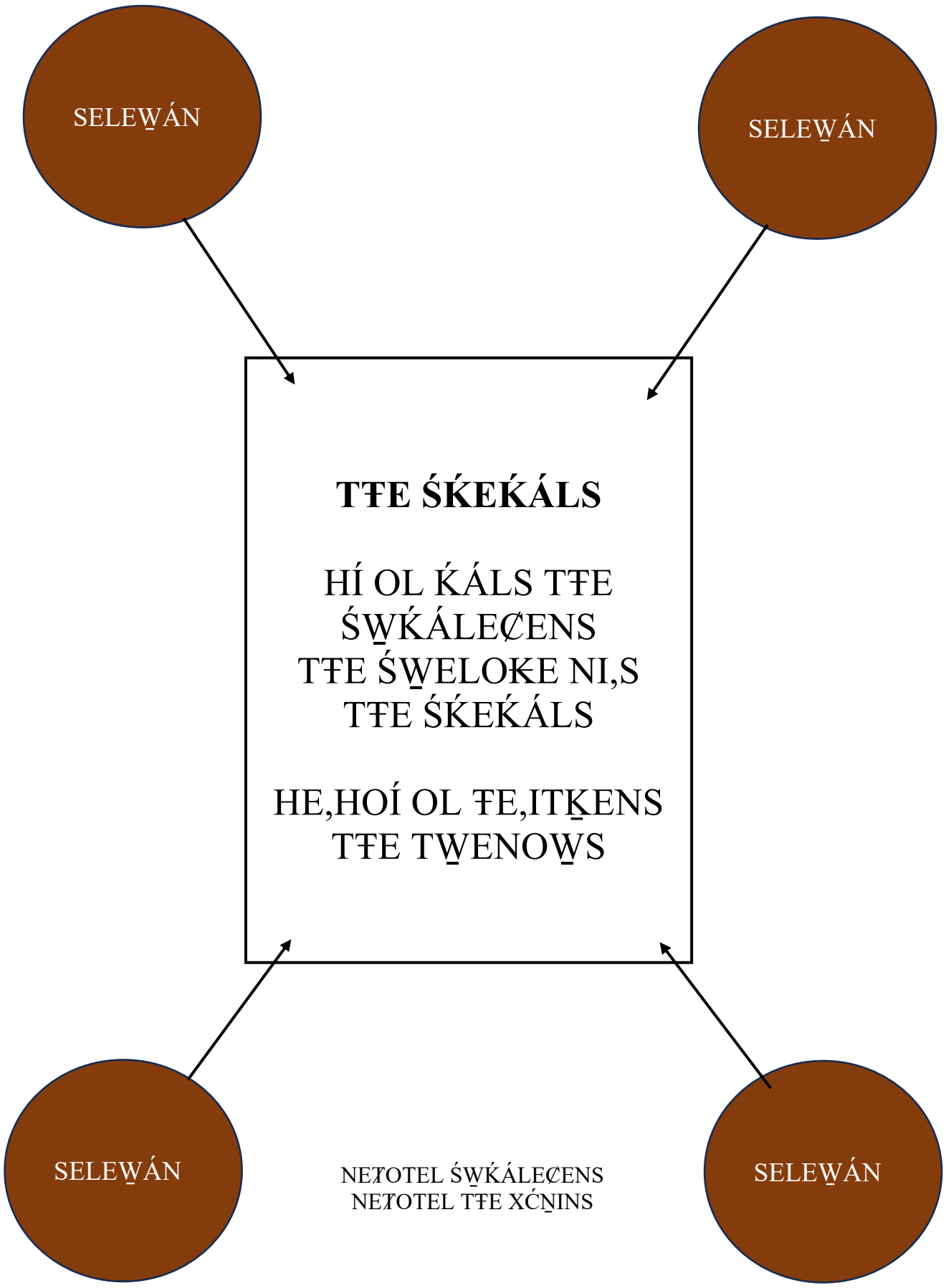

SELEW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
NIŁ TŦE K̲ÁK̲EN̲ ŁTE
XĆN̲INS EŢ TŦE SX̲ENIN̲S ŁTE
I TŦE IŁEȻSILS ĆELÁN̲EN ŁTE
TW̱ IŁEȻSILEN TŦE XĆN̲IN̲S I, TW̱
IŁEȻSIL
I, TW̱ IŁEȻSIL
I, TW̱ IŁEȻSILEW̱
NEɎOTEL ŚW̱ḰÁLEȻENS
NEɎOTEL TŦE XĆN̲INS
SELEW̱ÁN
NEɎOTEL ŚW̱ḰÁLEȻENS
NEɎOTEL TŦE XĆN̲INS
SELEW̱ÁN


SELEW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
NIŁ NEĆEL MEQ TŦE ELEŁTÁLN̲EW̱
ALEN̲ LŦE
SCULAUTW̱ LTE
ĆELÁES ET̲ TŦE W̱IĆIST
W̱IĆIST ON̲ESTEN̲ ĆSLÁ,EŁ TŦE IŁEĆSILEN̲S SU NEƮE MOT SḰÁLEĆENS
SELEW̱ÁN
NEƮOTEL ŚW̱ḰÁLEĆENS
NEƮOTEL TŦE XĆN̲INS
SELEW̱ÁN


SELEW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
MEQ TŦE WIĆISTEṈS
ṮIṮELS
TW̱ŁOSET
ÍY,OŦET
ĆŁ ŦE,ITSET
W̱ŦE,IṮKEN
SELEW̱ÁN
NEƗOTEL ŚW̱ḰÁLEĆENS
NEƗOTEL TŦE XĆṈINS
SELEW̱ÁN


SELEW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
SKÁL ŁTE
ĆELÁṈEN
W̱IU,ĆISTELS
W̱IC̓ĆISTELS
SELEW̱ÁN
NEȾOTEL ŚW̱KÁLEC̓ENS
NEȾOTEL TŦE XĆṈINS
SELEW̱ÁN


SELEW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
U, NIŁS NEPTS EṮ TŦE SELELW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
NEȾOTEL ŚW̱ḰÁLEȻENS NEȾOTEL TŦE XĆṈINS
SELEW̱ÁN


SELEW̱ÁN
SELEW̱ÁN
TŦE ŚḰEḰÁLS
HÍ OL ḰÁLS TŦE
ŚW̱ḰÁLEȻENS
TŦE ŚW̱ELOKE NI,S
TŦE ŚḰEḰÁLS
HE,HOÍ OL ŦE,ITK̲ENS
TŦE TW̱ENOW̱S
SELEW̱ÁN
NEƮOTEL ŚW̱ḰÁLEȻENS
NEƮOTEL TŦE XĆN̲INS
SELEW̱ÁN

EN,ÁNES TŦE W̱ELENITEM,

The Indian Act

SXENÁNS SḴAKETEN̲ ŁTE SNÁ,
TEN̲ INDIAN RESERVATIONS

SḴÁNS TŦE ÁLEN̲ENEC̓ ŁTE

ḴAKETEN̲ ŁTE NI,TW̲ SE C̓Ł ĆEUES
TŦE ĆELÁN̲EN ŁTE

ḴAKETEN̲ TŦE ST̲ELIT̲EŁḴEŁ
ŁTE S,NÁ,ETS Residential School.

TU ḴELILETS TŦE SJISENENEC̓SX̱ENÁNEN̲S
SḴENEW̱

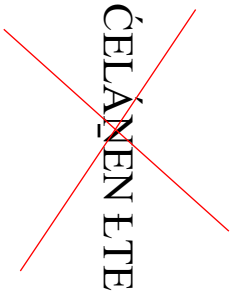
KEKITEN̲S ŁTE ET̲ TŦE GOVERNMENT

W̱UĆISTEN̲S E T̲ TŦE W̱EL W̱IL N̲EW

SELEŁW̱ÁN

TŦE SḰEḰÁLS

Their Government TŦE W̱ELENITEM MEQ U, NIŁSETW̱



W̱UĆISTEN̲S TŦE QEŁ W̱IL N̲EW
W̱UĆISTEN̲S TŦE ŚW̱ELOḴE

Chapter 4: SPÁ¸EŦ: JÁEŁNOŅET "To give and receive acknowledgement"

The next segment of the House Post is SPÁ¸EŦ , which means Bear. This section is connected to the work I have done around Land Acknowledgement and tells the story of my power point presentation, JÁEŁNOŅET (To give and receive acknowledgement to more than one person).

Figure 5: ŁÁU, NOŅET SXEDQIŅEŁ Healing House Post

I originally developed this presentation for faculty & staff at the University of Victoria to support decolonization and promote understanding of the land the university sits on. I created it as a response to the Land Acknowledgement used by a sincere settler who really understood

whose land they were on. This led to other settlers wanting to express the same sentiment, but admittedly they did not know who the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ people are. The beginning of my presentation explains who we are in our Indigenous communities, where we are located, which languages we speak (from my perspective) and shares some of the teachings I received while growing up in W̱SÁNEĆ. SPÁ,EŦ represents matriarchal protection, for me, just the way a momma bear protects her young. Also illustrated by SPÁ,EŦ is that she is the provider and teacher, thinking of how young bears are taught to fish. The matriarchal themes from my presentation – protection, provision, teaching - guide this section.

SPÁ,EŦ holds a SĆÁNEW̱ (Salmon), which is ĆÁNEW̱ - XÁLS (Creator's) gift to W̱SÁNEĆ. SĆÁNEW̱ on the Healing House Post symbolizes riches, hope for the future, and goodness. I start my presentation with my introduction and an explanation of JÁEŁNOṈET and its root word JIET. I also share the SENĆOŦEN alphabet and some of the distinct sounds within it. During my presentation I refer to Dave Elliott's writing in *Saltwater People* (1983). I learned many place names and their significance to our territory from the late Dave Elliott as he was a frequent guest speaker in my high school First Nations Studies class. I illustrate how SENĆOŦEN place names describe the land, water, fields, creeks, hills and valleys – our territorial geography - and explain our relational connection to them. I also explain our spiritual relationship with the land. My comments share the urgency and importance of what all these place names are to W̱SÁNEĆ. In *Saltwater People* Elliott (1983) writes,

> We have a rich heritage. With our knowledge of it we have much to offer. It is still beautiful on our Saanich Peninsula, but we must all learn to follow the ways of our Ancestors. If we bring back a deep respect for nature we can be an example to everyone and prevent our beautiful land from being destroyed. (p. 17)

I am grateful that Dave Elliott recorded so many of our place names, preserving and gifting them to future generations.

As my discussion of JÁEŁNOṈET continues, I describe the populations of our four W̱SÁNEĆ communities, and explain how lack of housing is an issue for us. The core stories within the presentation stay the same, but as often happens in storytelling, the emphasis on some parts shifts and changes depending on who is in the audience, something Jo-Ann Archibald (2008) points out in *Indigenous Storywork* (p. 8). Also, over time I have added some information to the stories, such as the statistics about Lekwungen (Lək̓ʷəŋən) population decline, information on the SENĆOŦEN alphabet, and discussions of the populations of W̱SÁNEĆ communities. These details make the presentation relevant to today's reality. I have never recorded my presentations: all are given in person using Power Point technology. One professor who calls on me every year to speak to her students about Land Acknowledgement has seen my presentation several times; she observes "I have seen your presentation many times and I learn something every time" (L. Kelly, personal communication, January 7, 2022). When another colleague from a different school within the university saw my presentation, he said that what I share needs to go straight to the top, meaning to Kevin Hall, the President of the University of Victoria (P. Whitinui, personal communication, October, 2018). This has not happened yet.

The next part of my JÁEŁNOṈET presentation is about my friends and relatives from Lək̓ʷəŋən and Esquimalt. The information I share is from the Songhees nation's website and what I obtained by speaking to one of their language teachers. A significant statistic shows how by 1914, the Lək̓ʷəŋən population went from 8500 people (in 1859), to fewer than 200 in 50 years. When this is compared to the decline in the W̱SÁNEĆ population from 10,000 to less than 400 during the same period, it clearly demonstrates the genocide of Indigenous People from a

geographical area extending from what is currently known as “Mile Zero” on the trans-Canada highway out through the Saanich peninsula. Sadly, Indigenous People on the southern tip of Vancouver Island went from a population of 18,500 to less than 600 in two generations.

My presentation then goes on to discuss the issue of traditional protocol. Describing the annual ceremony of Tribal Journeys, an Old One explains that our ways have an established precedent because our Tribal Journeys, revitalized in the 1980s, show what our protocol is for guests arriving in our territories: the one who is visiting is the first one to acknowledge that they are a visitor on our lands. Tribal Journeys take place every summer for anywhere from one to three weeks, depending on where the host location is and where you are paddling from. This is done using ocean-going canoes, and many nations join to paddle to one host destination. There is a sequential protocol that when visitors approach an Indigenous territory, they acknowledge that they are visitors of good intention. This expression of good intentions starts while they are still in canoes on the water through songs and drumming. Sometimes, depending on the circumstances or situation, the protocol might shift, and our ways adapt as well, yet they still remain consistent with our traditions. An incoming visitor would stand in their canoe and make a statement, often including who they are, who they belong to, where they paddled from, where they were going and why they were requesting to come ashore. The ones who were on their homeland would respond by saying, “You are welcome to come ashore, come feast, celebrate with song and dance, come rest and camp on our homeland.” Often, they both would speak similar words in their Indigenous languages and translate them. The hosting tribe would tell visitors where they could camp, arrange a feast and space to dance, utilize our cultural ways of knowing and being, and provide guests with gifts. These journeys are often life changing and many find ways to participate in them each summer. As part of this discussion, I also talk about our war canoe ways

of being and knowing and what kinds of canoes we have. We use the 11-man canoe, so I show a race between two canoes that was featured in a 1964 *National Geographic* photo that my late Dad clipped and saved because he is in the photo along with his younger brother. I speak about how there are 6-man, double and single canoes because these were our main forms of transportation. In fact, there are stories of our old ladies in their eighties still going out in canoes to help harvest seafood and plants for the winter.

I then go into my personal story. I show a photo of my Dad, mom, uncle (Dad's brother), and cousins. I talk about how my Dad had 7 siblings and they had to go to residential school because their father died. My aunt stayed home one year because she was only four years old, but she had to attend residential school the next year when she turned 5. I speak about two of my Dad's siblings who are still with us today, but 5 of them died violent deaths related to drugs and alcohol. I share what my Dad used to tell us when we were young, "Go out, get an education, come back, and help your people." This leads into the focus of the next slide.

I speak about my educational journey and how the University of Victoria (UVic) wasn't meant for Indigenous students like me. I talk about how my father could not attend college or university because if he had tried to, he could very well have been disenfranchised as an "Indian" through *the Indian Act*, a long-standing piece of legislation that still governs Indigenous Peoples in Canada. I share about part of my late Dad's life as someone who went to Kuper Island and Kamloops residential schools. UVic was definitely not made for me either; it was very hard work to be an Indigenous student up until I did my master's degree. There was no First People's House when I was doing my undergraduate work. The First People's House didn't open until 2010, the year I finished my master's degree in Child and Youth Care (CYC). In my CYC classes I had to Indigenize my own course content. I also speak to my Grade Two class photo, pointing out those

who are no longer with us and showing that the genocide had continued in my own generation, with Indigenous people having more chance of dying a violent death than graduating from high school. I explain that our teacher was a nun without a smock because Tsartlip School (now known as ŁÁU, WELN̲EW̲ Tribal School) was still a day school until 1989. I went there from 1973-1981.

Next, I show a picture of my younger two sons who now sing in our language at the First People's House. I point out who they are and share that they both have been in SENĆOŦEN immersion since they were four years old, then I explain how old they are now. I talk about when I first saw the photo I have just shared and how I got a lump in my throat because I saw the university's "Indigenous Plan" was literally on the wall right behind them, in bold letters on a poster. This recognition that they embody the goals of an Indigenous education plan gave me hope. An institution like UVic definitely wasn't accessible to my Dad; it sure wasn't made for me, but now that there is an "Indigenous Plan" in place, it feels like a promise that my sons can choose to be whatever they want to be when they grow up and actually be supported in their choice. The chance to get a good education wasn't given to my Dad who was taught menial labor, if that, at residential schools. Today my sons have a choice that wasn't really available to me and my generation either, as our main focus was just to get to Grade Twelve.

The last slide in the JÁEŁNON̲ET presentation shows a quote by Dave Elliott (1983):

> If you can understand this and feel a little better about us maybe we won't just look like lazy people. We won't look like people that don't know or don't care what we are doing or where we're going. We lived through hell and we survived it. I believe we're over the hill. (p. 68)

I inform participants that I spoke to an Elder-in-Residence about my presentation, and he said

“Uh huh, you make sure to let them know that we are not asking for special privileges …. We are only asking to be treated fair” (V. Underwood, personal communication, October 3, 2017). I told him I would pass on this message. At the top of the slide I leave a chapter called “Explorers, Gold and Guns and Diseases” out of the Saltwater People book on purpose, I explain that james cook was the first dehumanizer whose exploration was the beginning of the genocide of so many Indigenous peoples. I point out that in more recent times, many have also forgotten about the early gold rush miners who passed through Victoria on their way to find gold in British Columbia, the Yukon, and Alaska. Often these miners killed our people for supplies to get to the mines. We did not have guns, so we were at a disadvantage because of this. Ultimately, guns and incarceration contributed hugely to the genocide of our people. The diseases colonizers brought were also bad, bad, bad. I tell stories of two Indigenous communities that never got to become government-made reservations because every single person died from diseases brought over on european ships. Explorers, gold, guns and diseases are just part of the reason our pre-contact population has severely declined to those of us who are left.

Chapter 5: WEXES: Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory

The next carving on the Healing House Post portrays Frogs or WEXES. In SENĆOŦEN one frog is an SXE̓ÁNEW̱; many frogs are WEXES.

Figure 6: ŁÁU, NOQ̱ET SXEDQIṈEŁ Healing House Post

This section of the Healing House Post shows our people as WEXES on our journey towards rebuilding, recreating, and exploring healing ways of being and knowing when continually encountering persistent dehumanization. After personally experiencing systemic racism myself from the local hospital and an additional attack from the ministry of children and family development (mcfd) and having closely considered the violence and pain inflicted

through this process, I recognized that a clinical Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) diagnosis did not accurately identify the psychological impacts of generational systemic racism that Indigenous people experience. PTSD individualizes systemic harm as occurring as isolated instances rather than recognizing the ongoing build-up of persistent dehumanization of Indigenous people that started with contact, colonization, and land appropriation. PTSD focuses on the individual instances of crisis rather than on the cumulative impact of systemically ingrained causes of suffering.

To address these gaps, I created ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post as a practical exercise in a theory that I and Dr. Laurie Harding have co-created, called Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory [PDTT]. PDTT explores a concrete way in which Indigenous survivors might respond to and heal from the historic injustices we endured. In lengthy discussions with colleague Dr. Laurie Harding about my experiences, as well as the uniqueness of normalized Indigenous stereotypes and their impact, we recognized the limitations of western mental health theory and the resulting inaccuracies in mental health diagnosis. We saw the need for a new critical theory that looks upstream to the source of harm that influences service providers and the systems they work in, colonial constructs which have power over how Indigenous peoples are seen, understood and treated. Western systems and service providers consistently stereotype Indigenous people and fail to recognize the unique nature of the persistent dehumanizing trauma of Indigenous-specific racism. To more accurately describe this, together Dr. Harding and I developed the theoretical model of Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory or (PDTT). In my Healing House Post, WEXES illustrates how Indigenous knowing is required to accurately describe the reality of our experience and link ongoing attempts at genocide and assimilation to what we are healing from today. PDTT not only focuses on the

source of Indigenous trauma through systemic racism, but through ŁÁU, NOȽET SXEDQIȽEŁ - the Healing House Post, we move from theory to practice, using art and the image of WEXES to represent one of our healing paths: bringing change through speaking truth to power.

5.1. *Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory – Some background*

Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory is the theory that stems from my experience with layered Trauma within two institutions, the hospital and the BC ministry for children and family development, which examines, among other things, the intersections of racism, prejudice and dehumanization. Dehumanization has been the result of all that oppresses humans, which happens, has happened to my people since the beginning of contact with european explorers. Viewing dehumanization as a consequence rather than a cause of "state sanctioned violence" (Bustamante et al., 2019, p.1), it forces us to examine the roots of both individual and institutional abuse, demanding widespread systemic change to reverse the historic wrongs inflicted through the "othering" resulting from institutionalized cultural genocide, particularly through such forms of oppression as the church-run residential school system, the colonial health care system, the social services systems, and the (in)justice system which have caused devastating ongoing trauma for my people across Canada. In "The Developmental Origins of Dehumanization" McLoughlin and Ove (2018) observe,

> The negative effects of undermining a person's humanity (dehumanization) have been documented in historical literature (Allport, 1954; Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990; O'Brien, 2003; Tirrell, 2012) and continue to be relevant today. Dehumanization is an integral aspect of racism and other forms of prejudice (Jahoda, 1999; Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, & Cotterill, 2015; Smith, 2012). (p. 153)

As an Indigenous scholar, I know only too well through first-hand experience what the outcomes

of such traumatization are. My research question asks, how can W̱SÁNEĆ heal from systemic anti-Indigenous racism? My response has been to create what I refer to as Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory [PDTT] in collaboration with Dr. Laurie Harding; this explores the physical, psychological, and psycho/social impacts of dehumanization, stereotyping, racial prejudice and other forms of denigration on both a personal and systemic level. Nanky Rai (2017) writes:

> In addition to accurately naming the problem, building an anti-oppressive practice requires us to uncover the mechanisms through which dominant groups in society including medicine unjustly exercise power and to unlearn the explicit ideologies oppressive systems use to justify oppression. (p. 20)

My theory is that through the combination of language, culture, traditional W̱SÁNEĆ knowledge, and Matriarchal wisdom, we can give voice to our historical truth, the harm done to our people. But perhaps what is most important about PDTT is that it acknowledges the impact of intergenerational trauma due to anti-Indigenous racism and envisions healing strategies through responses to racialized oppression. These responses become a form of resistance in and of themselves, shifting from theoretical abstraction to practical tools for recovery from the horrors of attempted cultural genocide and systemic racism.

Initially, my doctoral work on ŁÁU, NOȻET SXEDQIȻEŁ - Healing House Post first came to me in a power dream, the gift of a vision of what an actual Healing House Post might embody and how it could express a distinctly W̱SÁNEĆ form of response, resistance, and healing. To illustrate the possibilities of both Indigenized theory and practice, I created the Healing House Post, a response to the impact of colonization.

In this section of the post, I address how colonial systems such as mcfd, hospitals,

educational and corrections systems are interconnected and create an oppressive barrier to accessing health and wellness for Indigenous peoples. For example, Indigenous child and family services have been consistently under funded, inhibiting access to services that support family/community connections. Dr. Cindy Blackstock and the Assembly of First Nations filed a human rights case against Canada, and the Supreme Court has found the government of Canada guilty of discrimination for underfunding Indigenous Child and Family Services. Denying access to equitable care leads to health challenges and the cycles of harm continue. These barriers to safe and supported services and the persistence of dehumanizing systemic racism have been clearly outlined in research by Harding (2018), then echoed in the findings from an independent investigation into Indigenous-specific discrimination in B.C. health care In Plain Sight (2020). The evidence of our collective experiences of harm is overwhelming. Absolon (2011) in *Kaandossiwin, this is how we come to know: Indigenous worldviews* and Wilson (2008) in *Research is Ceremony* write about Indigenous ways of being and knowing steeped in the Land, Language and Culture that will help our people heal from institutional harm.

WEXES is the third moon around the beginning of March, and for our people the voices of WEXES have been the natural indicator of the change of season since time immemorial. What we create in our arts-based gatherings can include recommendations with the vision of Indigenous voices to help, guide, direct, and create a better path for our children as they navigate systems. The purpose is to "nourish the learning spirit" (Battiste, 2013) of the next generations; to align our youth and arm them with our ways to create journey paths to move forward in good ways… Indigenous strong. For many of our Indigenous families across Turtle Island our Natural Laws are connected to the Land. WEXES reminds us to stay within our laws and to be a force of strength, healing, and resistance.

In *The Saanich Moons*, Claxton and Elliott (1983) elaborate on the meaning of the WEXES moon:

> This moon in particular is significant because the frog acts as a witness and a messenger to the Saanich people. He announces the Sacred Season of Plenty and SXEÁNEW̱ (frog) interprets the "Sacred Season." Because the frog was honored as the Keeper of the Sacred Seasons, it was often present on totem poles and in artwork to show that an important event had occurred. Once again, the wonders of nature repeat an amazing process. Mother Earth warms up and the hibernating frogs wake up from their winter sleep. The frogs announce to the world the coming of spring. (p. 3)

Using WEXES for symbolism, "the frog acts as a witness and a messenger to the Saanich people" (Claxton & Elliott, 1983, p.3); this indicates the importance of W̱SÁNEĆ ways of utilizing a witness in carrying forward through change. The frog's message is the announcement to the world of the coming of Spring, the growth and healing of our Earth. Through speaking truth to power, we will bring about healing for our people. Another significant part from this quotation about the WEXES moon is that "it was often present on totem poles and in artwork to show that an important event had occurred" (Claxton & Elliott, 1983, p. 3), and for events to occur, plans are often made. This is the case with developing new theoretical approaches to Indigenous mental health diagnosis and challenging systemic anti-Indigenous racism. The next significant part of the teachings related to the WEXES moon is the belief that new ways will come into being, as in the frog's announcement of seasonal change, Spring being the representation of rebuilding. It is with the WEXES that we create our own "Calls to Action" including recommendations to the leadership of institutions to understand Indigenous ways of knowing and being, recommendations to suggest changes to result in a possible journey towards

dismantling and rebuilding existing colonial sites of systemic racism. WEXES is a part of this Healing House Post as a reminder to our people that the best gift we can pass on to our children is healing. Kathleen Absolon' s (2005) writing reinforces this truth:

> Colonization has impacted all of us profoundly and we all have a role to play and work to do to restore inclusion and humanity to the world without harm. Understanding how we've been impacted and finding our truths, healing and humanity in the process is a life journey. (p. 54)

My experiences with systemic racism over the past few years were, in one sense, unexpected. Even though I knew better, I had hoped for better treatment. By telling my story I hope that change can happen to stop systemic racism in health care and other institutions. I hope that I can eliminate harm, or at the very least soften the blow of institutional harm for my children, grandchildren and future generations. Our Indigenous people have felt the impact of being "othered" and "less than human" for far too many years. I hope that our people will be understood and receive humane and equitable treatment when utilizing hospitals, schools, social services, courts and all other systems. Ultimately, I hope that by returning to our land and language, our own cultural knowledge and practices, eventually we will not have to utilize colonial systems, but I also hope that for now, when we do have to enter these institutional systems, we can have trust of some kind. There is still lots of work to be done. In the story which follows, I share the experiences of my family's entanglement within two government-funded systems - the british columbia ministry of children and family development (mcfd) and an emergency hospital facility - because I want services provided to Indigenous people to be better. I also want access to these services to be safer for my children and my grandchildren.

5.2. *Speaking Truth to Power: A Confrontation with mcfd and the SPH*

My story begins when a ministry of children and family development (mcfd) worker left a business card at my door, an indicator for any Indigenous parent that my life was about to be deeply scrutinized. Seeing that card sent me into instant panic mode. I slipped into a state of having what I believed to be Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms: hypervigilance, uncontrollable crying, and an inability to sleep (Merriam Webster, 2022). mcfd's presence in any parent's life poses an immediate feeling of threat/danger and disruption to family. This is a very scary time – traumatic – even when a family has nothing to hide. This trauma response for Indigenous families is directly related to multiple generations' experience of colonial violence, and anxiety is a natural response to a real threat. Given the lengthy history of children being separated from their families, the experience of fear is especially true and well warranted for many Indigenous families. In 2018, the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates commented on concerns regarding Indigenous child welfare: "Federal Ministers and others have stated the over-representation of Indigenous children and youth in care in Canada has reached 'crisis' proportions. We acknowledge that it presents a significant challenge for our country, compounded by the legacy of colonization, residential schools, racism and extreme poverty" (n.p.). Many Indigenous people in our communities observe that the "Sixties Scoop", a period of intensive apprehension of Indigenous children by the Canadian state during the last decades of residential schools and day schools, has never ended, and in fact, there are more Indigenous children in state care today (Wright Cardinal, 2017).

After seeing the social worker's card on my door, I called the number on the card and the social worker said that she needed to meet with me with regards to my son. She gave his name and the date of the complaint that had been filed, and my mind raced with worry, trying to think about why she could possibly be calling me. The child protection social worker (cpsw) would not

say what the problem was, just that she needed to meet with me. She tried to schedule a meeting at a later date. I told her, “It has to be today; otherwise, I will not be able to sleep.” She set our meeting for 12:30 pm that day at a Tim Hortons’ coffee shop. My mind was already racing. I called my husband Romaine and told him what the social worker had said. After hearing the dates of the incident mentioned in the complaint, he said “Isn’t that when Junior stepped on a nail?” I responded, “Is it? That’s not a reason for a child protection concern; how can that be?”

He was right. When we met, the social worker talked about the day my 23-year-old daughter took my son to the Saanich Peninsula Hospital’s (SPH) emergency department after he accidentally stepped on a nail that went into the base of his heel. The social worker said that we were reported to mcfd because my 11-year-old son wouldn’t talk to the doctor. My worry intensified throughout the conversation because she said that because of a previous investigation that was just as traumatic, also unfounded and now closed, she needed to come into my home. I stated that I would not let her into my home because my son stepped on a nail at my Mom’s home in Brentwood. The social worker insisted that a home visit was required as directed by her supervisor.

My worst fears were coming true. Given my previous experience working within the child welfare system, I knew the power of mcfd protocols and mandates, and I was also familiar with the intensity of a child protection investigation. I knew that a cpsw was going to immerse herself in our lives and relentlessly scrutinize our family. I knew that a child protection report could not be reversed and would remain on file forever, even if the case was determined to be unfounded and closed. I had education, knowledge, and skills, but I still faced systemic racism. I began to distrust everyone; everything seemed dark. My mental health response was immediate, and the impact was overwhelming. When you experience a high intensity threat to your safety, a

protective circuit between the brain and body activates. The body tells the brain there's danger, and the brain responds with a boost of adrenaline and cortisol. If there's no discharge or resolution, how does the brain get the message that the threat is over? It doesn't, as J. Woodcock (2022) writes:

> If we pay attention, our body can teach us a lot about how to respond healthily to the stresses that follow trauma. Because body and brain are so interlinked traumatic events kick off a conjoined mental and physical response and after the extreme event our brain continues to instruct the body to kick into high alert when we are triggered by cues that remind us of the trauma. (p. 33)

The persistent layering of colonial trauma was set in motion.

I asked the cpsw to explain how my son's accident was a child protection concern and told her that I did not agree that an investigation was warranted. I did not get an answer, only her focused intent to set up a time to come into my home. I wanted to know who was with her when she left her card at my door. She said a co-worker was with her. I then asked her why she was at my home without NIŁ,TUO[6], the Delegated Aboriginal Agency for my community, or someone from Tsawout First Nation. She said that my file stated that I did not want NIŁ,TUO involvement. I told her that this was the case many years before because I used to work for them, but nobody had asked me if I would like to utilize their services now. I then asked about my band, the Tsawout First Nation, stating that our family are members living on reserve. She said that she had talked to one of the band councillors, and they gave her permission to go ahead and come to my house on her own. I was instantly hurt. I felt violated again by a manipulation of the system, knowing that people who were supposed to be there for me, were not. I was in shock and

[6] NIŁ,TUO agency in to support local families, see: https://niltuo.ca/.

could not compose myself.

I knew that I probably should not have met with a cpsw by myself that day (which was the advice I would give others when I was a Family Service social worker), but I was thinking that an accident like the one that happened to my son did not warrant a child protection concern, so I should have nothing to worry about. In hindsight, I was wrong, and I should have had someone attend this meeting with me given her power and the gravity of the decisions that could be made. I looked up and I saw my cousin walk into Tim Hortons. I told the social worker that I no longer felt safe, that my cousin had just walked in, and I wanted her to be my support. The cpsw "allowed" it. We updated my cousin regarding what was going on, and I still could not gain any kind of composure. I was so glad my cousin was there, so I could get through the meeting. The social worker said we could talk on the phone about the next steps in the process.

After this meeting I was so upset I should have gone home, but I didn't. I went back to work and tried to be as strong as I could. On my break I looked up the phone number for the Saanich Peninsula Hospital and called to tell them that I was never going back there again. I left a message for someone to call me back, then contacted a lawyer and spoke to some advocates to explore my options. The power that mcfd has seemed immense. The judgement and stereotype that "I was not a good parent" had an overwhelming emotionally traumatic impact on my mind, body and soul. I was traumatized even though I knew I was innocent and had my own knowledge, professional experience, validation from colleagues, friends and loved ones to support our family during this intrusive process. Many Indigenous people do not have advocates or may not speak up because it can be too risky to complain, especially when they are vulnerable and in need of support. In the article "All children are equal, but some are more equal than others: Minoritization, structural inequities, and social justice praxis in residential care," de

Finney and her co-authors (2011) remind us that "rather than operating simply at an individual level, structural inequities take hold as social reality with deep-seated, systemic effects on minoritized groups" (p. 354).

The traumatic reality ingrained in me as an Indigenous woman was that anything I said could be used against me, and my actions could be screened through dehumanizing racist stereotypes (Harding, 2018). As de Finney and her co-authors (2011) also explain,

> Canadian society is dominated by normative social values and practices that have systematically, over many generations, positioned Indigenous cultural and social norms as inferior (Downe, 2005; Lawrence, 2004). Centuries of colonial policies have included: forcefully removing entire communities from their homelands to allow European immigrants to access desired territories; forced sterilizations; conducting scientific experiments on children without consent; deliberately infecting entire communities with lethal diseases such as smallpox; barring Indigenous people from voting, studying, travelling, meeting in groups, practicing their culture, and participating in business; and incarcerating thousands of children in residential schools where they were subjected to multiple physical, spiritual, sexual, emotional, and cultural abuses (Downe, 2005; Lawrence, 2004; Smith, 2004). (p. 369)

Having experienced being stereotyped, especially from a cp worker, created trust issues with the system. My experience also confirmed what I knew from my social work practice and education: the child welfare, medical, education and justice systems all work together in an orchestrated concert to create a crushing pile up of traumatic harm for Indigenous families. This persistent harm has long term impacts; as Galeski (2021) notes, "Trauma that is embedded is not just in our head but leaves an imprint in our bodies, disabling our memory and transforming our brain" (p.

5). All of which is true for me, there were many days I did not want to see anyone when I was in that traumatic state.

The day after my meeting with the cpsw, a friend asked me how I was doing. With everything still weighing so heavily on me, I told her what was going on and she replied, “I know that this is a very hard place to be in, but when the Saanich Peninsula Hospital (SPH) calls you back, I encourage you to tell them what happened and that when you go back there, they better do better.” Wise words. I did get a call back from the Indigenous Liaison Nurse at SPH, and at first, she did not know how to deal with my complaint. Things did not seem to fall into place until I told the Liaison Nurse that I would like a meeting with the Emergency Department doctor who had reported us to mcfd.

These events happened in April 2019 and triggered a flood of PTSD symptoms of hypervigilance and fear; I was terrified that the mcfd worker could show up at any given time. I experienced a lack of sleep, hopelessness, and detachment. I was consumed by worry, including having suicidal thoughts, engaging in emotional eating, and crying any time of the day. It was an incredibly hard month, and I still had to go to work and act like nothing had happened for fear I would face the discriminatory stereotype of being seen as “less than” others and “not capable” of doing my job (Harding, 2018).

Throughout the process of addressing this experience of systemic racism, I was kept in the dark by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA), which led to deeper feelings of frustration, confusion and fear. There seemed to be a lot of unknowns regarding the next steps for moving forward with my complaint against the Saanich Peninsula Hospital (SPH). Finally, I heard that a meeting would be scheduled. I asked for the meeting to be held just a month later, in June rather than three months later, to ensure that those I wanted to be involved could attend. I

also decided to file my complaint as a “Racism as a Critical Incident” to the Patient Quality Care Office and let the hospital know that their report to mcfd was unwarranted. I read the BC government protocol report “Critical Incident Response – Protocol for Organizing against Racism and Hate” regarding how government offices deal with racism. In their preamble, they state that “Racist, homo/transphobic and hate-based behaviours, actions and incidents undermine the very core of what it means to be a community. They threaten the health and safety of communities” (p. 5). This report also discusses how to respond to these incidents:

> Such incidents require a response from the community that asserts community beliefs in democratic freedoms, individual rights, and community responsibility. On the one hand, an ineffective response to such incidents suggests public acceptance of those underlying views and may even encourage subsequent “copy-cat” incidents by others holding similar beliefs. On the other hand, when such incidents are effectively responded to, and those involved receive the support and assistance needed to overcome the causes and effects, it sends a clear message to the community that such behaviour is not acceptable. . . . It also proclaims the message that this community is prepared to help the individuals involved to transform those feelings and actions into something positive that contributes to a healthy community for all. (p. 5)

A protocol report provides a record of racist incidents right away and enhances community safety: “They embody the flexibility needed to overcome the many challenges that arise and strain the relationships among, between and within the various sectors of the community. The strength that comes from diversity enhances the lived experience of community for everyone” (BC government, 2020, p. 5). The need for equity and a safer community service for all

Indigenous people compelled me to gather enough strength to file my complaint with the Island Health Patient Care Quality Office.

Mobilizing these protocols, I called the meeting a “Victim Impact Statement” meeting to use terms that are linked to potential legal charges to get the attention of those in positions of authority, to encourage and enforce attention and action. It was hard to know what I should expect at this meeting. In communications I received from the VIHA, it seemed as if our meeting was going to be strictly limited to the one hour that they had allotted. I knew the Head Doctor of Emergency and the Patient Quality worker were to be in attendance. I wanted to read my impact statement to them, but I was worried that it would not be heard or make a difference. I was concerned that I would be misunderstood and that they would not listen to me or care about what I had been through. On the day of our meeting, I made sure we arrived at least 10 minutes early, just in case there was only one hour allowed. I was worried that I would express the violence I felt about the doctor’s report to mcfd and that this would be met with self righteousness, defensiveness and defiance, or that there would be attempts to placate me with no substantive changes made. I felt like a commodity to be scrutinized for my merit of my complaint and that my concerns were at risk of being tossed out as unworthy of attention.

Speaking to the commodification of race, specifically blackness, African American scholar bell hooks (1994) discusses how it can be manipulated in ways that make it seem as though “one can partake of the ‘good’ of intent without any commitment to transformative politics and practice” (p. 72). In later work, hooks (2014) extends the discussion about racism from commodification to exploitation in making the point that, “Certainly from the standpoint of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, the hope is that desires for the ‘primitive’ or fantasies about the Other can be continually exploited, and that such exploitation will occur in a manner that re-

inscribes and maintains the status quo" (p.22). As an Indigenous person, daughter, mother, grandmother, and partner, my greatest fear has always been the health services' "status quo" of racist harm inflicted against Indigenous people. I imagined that the disinterested response to my complaint would be treated like my complaining at the McDonalds fast-food restaurant about cold fries, that in a similar way the hospital would say, "We're so sorry about your cold fries; here are some hot fries; please come again." Like the potential for cold fries, the risk of racism would still be there, waiting for the next Indigenous person who came to the service counter/admissions desk seeking care. I was so fortunate to have support with me.

The doctor who had initiated the unwarranted investigation attended, as the Head of the Emergency Department, in addition to several other leaders of the Vancouver Island Health Authority. The site director for the hospital, their supervisor, and another doctor were also at the meeting. The Indigenous Liaison Nurse and the Indigenous Social Worker who worked for the SPH were there as well. My support team who attended the "victim impact" meeting included my husband, his father who is a respected Old One/Elder of our community, and three of my very close friends who work in helping professions. There were over fourteen people listening as I read my Victim Impact Statement. I felt that the more witnesses I had in exposing my experience of racism, the more accountable the SPH had to be. I hoped that what I said would matter and there might be a positive outcome for my community that day. It all depended on how they heard my story. It was like I was on trial and was required to give evidence in my defence, rather than speaking as the victim of a racist incident.

When I was finished, I gave the doctor who initiated the traumatic experience an Eagle feather that I had wrapped in yarn, to which I also attached a mini canoe paddle. I had written the names of our four communities of WSÁNEĆ on one side of the paddle – Tsawout, Tsartlip,

Pauquachin and Tseycum – and told the doctor what WSÁNEĆ means: we are the people who have risen. When we go to the Saanich Peninsula Emergency Room, we are only asking for help. I made myself strong enough to come face to face with the system's leaders and the person who had violated my rights and somehow, I was able to say those words and speak my truth.

We then spoke in a circle, making space for each person to talk. My father-in-law was in attendance as an Elder, and he re-emphasised the length of time our people have been facing racism and inequities. He recounted a story of facing racism in this same hospital when his children were young. My husband Romaine also voiced his thoughts about the systems we continue to be trapped in, his words vividly describing our ongoing experience. He told them that "dealing with mcfd was like having our hands tied," and he held up his left arm, "like being trapped in a web; you try and try to work at getting loose, and just when you feel you are getting it loose, your other hand is tied." He then held up both his arms and talked about how awful this kind of entanglement is. The stress this incident caused and what the systems of mcfd and SPH put us through was violent and traumatic. Racism caused long lasting stress that my husband feels was directly related to a mild stroke he experienced the month before this meeting.

As hard as it was, I had to choose making better relationships between WSÁNEĆ and the Saanich Peninsula Hospital, for my family and Indigenous people's survival. I had to stand up because I wanted to be assured that my children and grandchildren who live in the WSÁNEĆ community five minutes from the hospital would be safe in the future. The hospital administrative staff met with me and my family and made a promise to make things better for our people and to work towards good relations with our communities. The Head Doctor said that he did not realize that a chain of chaos (his words) would be unleashed by filing a report to mcfd. Many people do not realize that mcfd is fundamentally geared to look for parenting risks,

especially with Indigenous parents, given the normalized and accepted stereotypes about Indigenous people being “bad parents” (Harding, 2018; Wright Cardinal, 2017). In fact, the former practice of automatically notifying mcfd to alert them to an Indigenous woman in labour (aka “birth alerts”) has been found to be illegal and is now banned in BC (Plummer, 2019). Through my report and Victim Impact Statement about a critical incident of racism, the hospital realized that they did not have a process or protocol for filing a child protection report with either mcfd or with NIŁ,TUO, the Delegated Aboriginal Agency for WSÁNEĆ. It had never occurred to them to consider the impact or the significant trauma that a report like this could cause Indigenous people, families and communities. It is well known that bias is an integral part of such “social service” systems and can trigger unfounded Child Protection reports and often removals are justified by stereotypes which ignore the truth/reality of what is going on (Lavallee and Harding, 2022).

At the end of my victim impact meeting, the SPH leadership decided to retract their report to mcfd. They promised that they would work at following the Vancouver Island Health Authority’s cultural safety guidelines, which include collaboration and cooperation with Indigenous people accessing their services. The point needs to be continually reinforced that bias and stereotypes about Indigenous parents are unique and have resulted in disproportionate numbers of Indigenous children in care.

Telling my story was not easy; it was soul-wrenchingly tiresome. I was emotionally exhausted and had to seek mental health support. I was drained, and the PTSD symptom of hypervigilance kicked in because of the racist mcfd report incident, requiring me to take several deep breaths to make it through the Victim Impact Statement meeting. About half an hour after the meeting, we drove to my father-in-law Victor’s home, and after he got out of the car, I asked

my husband Romaine, “Was that worth it?” He reassuringly said, “Yes honey, that was worth it.” I needed to hear that. Recently my relationship with the doctor in charge of the Emergency Department at the SPH has improved, and community members have reported that this has also positively impacted their experiences in going to the SPH. The doctor has since met other members of my family and has been incredibly helpful.

All it took was medical staff taking the time to communicate with my family, to hear our concerns and reach some common recognition of the impact of the hospital’s initial actions regarding my son. Part of our core WSÁNEĆ teachings is to keep all our relationships in the best place that we can, and we know that this will take time, effort and work. Our community’s relationship with the SPH continues to mend and grow. This change is long overdue for our community. The health care system needs to be accountable. My hope in all of this is that my children and grandchildren will be safe when asking for help – at any hospital.

Stories like mine are too common and usually get swept under the rug. I have heard from peers in university that these stories need to be heard and shared. Through my work, education, and experiences as an Indigenous woman, mother and grandmother, I learned about the reputation and long history of harm inflicted by the ministry of children and family development. I now have a visceral trigger response to this as an Indigenous Matriarch studying a colonial system that has oppressed our families and, specifically, my own.

Social services (mcfd), health, mental health, educational and corrections systems are interconnected and create a sizable barrier to accessing health and wellness for Indigenous peoples. I have education and experience working in child welfare and can speak to how this has affected me directly. A trauma response is a natural response to a traumatic experience, and it does not mean that I am less than human. It is hard to be a part of a group that the government set

out to annihilate. We are still healing and recovering. What we are really asking for goes back to what our Old One Victor Underwood has said many times, “We are not asking for special privileges; we just want to be treated fair.” For me, healing requires our human rights being recognized and the ability to access services without discrimination and racism. Victor, as a residential school survivor, has given me a lot of perspective on healing and survival. Kathy Absolon (2010) also writes about Indigenous ways of knowing and healing,

> Understanding and learning Indigenous wholistic theory is simultaneously simple and complex. It is both fluid and concrete. B’maadisiwin is the good life we strive for, and the Creator gave us all that we need to heal ourselves holistically. Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing have worked for our Ancestors and strength of knowledge theory that has a capability to heal ourselves, our families, our communities, nations and the earth. (p. 85).

Looking back on my experience with mcfd and the SPH, I see the connection between racism and harm is far from new and far from over. It has been a long time since the arrival of Settlers on our lands; it seems like our need for healing has been amplified and compounded over time.

While my family has begun to heal from my own traumatic experience accessing services at SPH, there have been other traumatic incidents that have influenced our community’s lack of confidence in this hospital. The In Plain Sight (2020) independent investigation into Indigenous-specific racism in health care in BC mirrors my experience. On the investigation website (2020) it states, “Our task is to address the specific incidents that have been reported, as well as to gauge the levels of systemic and individual racism that Indigenous people face when using the health care system in general.” It is also stated that the number of emails, calls, and stories received after the minister called for this independent investigation, emphasizes the need for this

investigation. This investigation parallels my story and was initiated almost a year after everything I went through. Reading the report “In Plain Sight” (Turpel-Lafond, 2020), I felt like I could still physically touch my soul and remember the hurt.

My wish after everything I experienced is for Indigenous families to know they are not alone in their experiences, and for Settler service providers to be aware of the harms they perpetuate and the chain of negative consequences to Indigenous families due to systemic anti-Indigenous racism. While my experience centres on the child welfare and health care systems, the same harms can be perpetuated in schools, mental health services, and any institutional organizations. My hope is that these systems will change the ways service providers see us and how incidents are reported and redressed. Accountability needs to be swift and efficient. My hope is for others to read my story, so they too know they have power, even when the system is set up to attempt to overpower their truth. While many others have written about racism experienced by Indigenous people, it needs to be further examined in the context of treatment needs for Indigenous people and Indigenous anti-racism interventions required for both service providers and institutional systems.

Clearly, more comprehensive services that will support Indigenous people and our specific needs are vital. My hope is that the WEXES – “Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory” segment of ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post will remind my people of their strength, decrease the chances of harm caused by racism, and create avenues for other Indigenous people to take back their own human rights when coming face to face with individual and institutional racism – to navigate their way through ominous and entrenched racist systems.

5.3. *The Layered Trauma of Indigenous-Specific Racism in Service Provision*

Many years of research and reporting clearly demonstrate how stereotyping of Indigenous peoples negatively impacts health service providers' attitudes, actions and services to Indigenous people (Harding, 2018). Racism results in layers of negative harms for our people. The hope is that this Storywork research can also assist Settler service providers to understand how unexamined stereotypes seriously harm and even kill Indigenous people. More specifically, in regard to treatment, I hope it demonstrates how the trauma of experiencing Indigenous-specific racism contributes to health outcomes and needs to be factored into practice (Lavallee, 2017). Institutions have immense power, as in my own experience demonstrates. The next steps for the person harmed are not always clear or easy. Near the end of the meeting the doctor asked me, "What do you want?" the service providers involved didn't seem to know how to proceed or have a process for resolution, even if the harm done to me was acknowledged. What is the resolution to racist harm? Is a simple "sorry" enough? How will change occur? As Harding (2018) notes:

> Unless mandates and policies are put into place with sanctions to hold individuals accountable for stereotyping and unsafe behavior, workplace culture won't change on any level. It is hoped that when people read these findings and vicariously witness the stereotype harms on Indigenous Peoples that they will see themselves in intervening and implementing systemic anti-Indigenous racism strategies. (p. 116)

It takes strength to intervene and implement strategies in the war against racism. It is a war because racism hurts and causes lots of harm (Loppie, 2015). There are power dynamics involved when an Indigenous person enters any institution. In a hospital, when an Indigenous person enters injured or sick, they are the one who may be vulnerable to harm from the very

system that is supposed to heal. The BC Government's Final report of the 2019 Think Tank on Anti-Indigenous Racism makes the case for creating an organizational strategy:

> One of the most salient themes that emerged during the Think Tank was the need for better and more consistent monitoring, evaluation, and accountability processes. How organizations respond when harm occurs is critically important. Participants cited complaints processes that often are unsatisfactory to patients and staff. Too often Indigenous patients and staff have reported that "no action was taken on reports of racism." (p. 8)

In my situation, I felt hopeful after taking control of the complaint process and creating a "Victim Impact Statement process" because it seemed that my words were heard and promises of action were made at the meeting with the Vancouver Island Health Authority. I think of the pain of violation, the hurt and anger connected to my experiences of racism. I think of how easy it is to run away, hide and try to avoid experiencing racism. Maybe it is because of experiencing this "no action" kind of hopelessness that many don't step forward to complain. It needs to be recognized that running away is not an act of cowardice, but a mechanism for survival when individuals are repeatedly faced with a constant threat of danger.

5.4. The Unique Impacts of Systemic Racism on Indigenous Families

I use the analogy of a "whirlwind of trauma" to explain how fast, how frequently and how persistently racism occurs for Indigenous people and people of colour. What is not always picked up by white Settler Mental Health or Health service providers is that race must always be the starting context for providing safe care. colonialism never takes a day off, nor rests from causing systemic harm. In *How to Be an Antiracist*, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi (2019) notes: "The only way to undo racism is to consistently identify it and describe it – and then dismantle it" (p.11). If

Indigenous anti-racism responses are not a part of the treatment plan, racist trauma can result. The persistently traumatic experience of dehumanizing racism is the context for a new theory, Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Response (PDTT/R), that I have developed with my colleague Dr. Laurie Harding. The trauma from racism for Indigenous people is linked, layered and uniquely connected to ongoing colonial control of our lives. For example, trauma lurks in the looming spectre of the child welfare system and through being in constant combat to ward off the challenges to simply being able to live without fear, to live in our communities and to parent our own children.

The underlying effects of racism include violence from the age-old story of colonization which required land theft and control through assimilative government policies and negative narratives that firmly hold oppression in place today. Daily trauma changes our brains, and our actions can be seen as disconnected from original trauma which is especially dangerous when there is persistent layering of dehumanizing violence. Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory becomes Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Response when an Indigenous person experiences layered systemic harm and have a response, and then can say they are having a response. Trauma is one of the results of compounded and persistent racism that is part of a visit to the hospital, for example, in a health emergency. Recognition of PDTR is especially relevant if an Indigenous person is injured or sick and trying to access help. Service providers must recognize the effects of cultural stereotyping and other forms of anti-Indigenous systemic racism in terms of the risks they pose to our people. Harding's research on Indigenous specific stereotyping (2018) elaborates:

> The frequency of these stereotypes means that an Indigenous person in dire need of medical care may be denied care due to racial discrimination and/or viewed as not

> deserving of the unconditional care that service providers are employed and trained to provide. (p. 114)

If racism reoccurs and the pain it causes repeatedly attack Indigenous people, we will naturally face the fear of being denied services. Many choose not to ask for help when they need it and may never know their rights.

5.5. The Need for a New Theory.

As previously stated, given that mistrust is the starting place for many Indigenous people accessing health care or any government-funded service, I continue to wonder what the Vancouver Island Health Authority will do to ensure our safety and how we can be confident that Indigenous specific racism will stop. The starting place for my story was my own mistrust and it was why I almost contacted SPH to say I was never going back. I was tempted to give up on hoping for change and not to ask for a meeting to speak, even when I knew that providing safe care is an ethical and moral responsibility for any provider. Ensuring Indigenous cultural safety, in any service, is a very specialized skill requiring specific knowledge and self-awareness. Several researchers assert that services must be delivered with trauma and Indigenous anti-racism informed interventions to interrupt normalized bias and socialized stereotypes about Indigenous people (Underwood et al., 2022). I also argue that Indigenous people should feel confident things will change when speaking back to experiences of systemic harm.

I have frequently experienced racism in my life, but the degree to which it occurs in the mcfd is on another level. It is an institution that has mandates, policies, and procedures that further entrap Indigenous people in systemic webs and presents endless hoops to jump through that cause nothing but dehumanizing trauma, severing our access to positive relationships and wellness. The PTSD symptoms I experienced during my experiences with the mcfd made things

dark; my soul hurt so much that when I put my hand to my chest, I could actually feel the pain. After a month or two, I would still feel it, like my heart and soul were bruised.

In discussing my experience at the SPH with colleague and friend Dr. Laurie Harding and using the words Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to describe the psychological effects of systemic racism on me, we decided this term did not quite fit. There was something missing in its definition as it failed to acknowledge the persistent onslaught and intergenerational impact of Indigenous-specific racism. We began to discuss empowering language. We decided that to label this as a "disorder" did not seem appropriate because what Indigenous people experience is not a persistently triggered response from *one* or even *several* traumatic incident(s) – but from persistent and consistent, even generational layering of dehumanizing incidents. Harding noted that this trauma is not "post" nor "disordered" but a naturally occurring adaptive response to inhumane, persistent harm. We discussed how my mental health response to dehumanization and racism is not so much a "disorder" as a cognitive attempt to cope and a struggle for relief and survival from the pain of racism. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a Western diagnostic term that can label a person as a victim without agency, someone with a negative condition resulting from one or several incident(s). A PTSD diagnosis can essentially create a focus on the person who is harmed, which is important. However, and this is vital, this focus can ignore examination of the source of the harm. We discussed how Indigenous people face persistent racism and that emotional and cognitive responses are triggered by layers of lifelong even multi-generational harm. Other trauma constructs have been created within our western systems with an aim to understand and increase dialogue recognizing the unique harms that Indigenous people face. In Nanky Rai's (2017) literature review, "Uprooting Medical Violence: Building an Integrated

Anti-Oppression Framework for Primary Health Care", she is on point about historical injustice and racial oppression:

> That these historical injustices centered around forced displacement and assimilation of Indigenous peoples and the ongoing pillaging of Indigenous lands helps us then better understand the current state of poor health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. The high poverty rates, food insecurity, homelessness, intergenerational trauma and substance use, disproportionately higher rates of suicide and depression, murder and gender violence against Indigenous women, mass incarceration through prisons, psychiatric facilities and child apprehension directly result from Canada's legacy of destroying Indigenous traditions, systems and cultures that continue to threaten the vision of a White, European, heteropatriarchal capitalist nation. (p.7)

Despite the growing awareness of this legacy of Canada's colonial policies, there remain clear gaps in training when it comes to preparing practitioners for service delivery across all social systems. There is a need for a new *whole health* theory to support better understanding in the service relationship with Indigenous people (Underwood et al., 2022). It is essential to recognize the negative stereotypes and colonial language which continue to pervade every aspect of society and all its systems. It is time to clearly name this colonial violence as the unique source of harm that is causing this serious oversight in training. For treatment to be effective, theory needs to step into that gap with full recognition of the unique trauma resulting from Indigenous-specific racism. PDTR speaks to repeated dehumanizing trauma, experienced in multiple sites and over generations.

5.6. *The Impacts of PDTR Theory on Competencies and Healing*

In discussing my physical, emotional and spiritual trauma response to racism at length with

Dr. Harding, we focused on understanding the source of the violence and what flipping the focus on the *source of harm* could do. In this process we redefined my trauma experience as a rational "response" to dehumanizing violence, rather than a diagnosis of PTSD that fell short of the full picture and left racism out as the source of harm. Changing the framing of my experience (diagnosis) from PTSD to viewing through the lens of our newly formulated PDTR theory externalized the symptoms and normalized my emotional health challenges as predictable human responses to inhumane treatment. The term Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory pivots the focus of pathology away from the Indigenous person and looks upstream to pathologize the source of harm. There is no denying that Settlers and settler systems cause harm and can normalize the spread of dehumanization and Indigenous-specific racism.

Since contact, Indigenous people's war for human rights has been ongoing; it has not ended. We are all still "in colonization"; as Indigenous people fighting for our rights, we are always in battle. After living with a parent who went to residential school and going to day school myself, I was born having to be a fighter…for survival. The reality of our need to draw upon incredible strength from engaging in a lifelong and intergenerational struggle for basic health and human rights against systemic racism needs to be considered in the helping relationship between service providers and clients. There are many wounds derived from various colonial weapons (systemic racism, cultural genocide, and all the "isms"). Like any warriors, we can only stand the violent assault for so long. I was down, a wounded warrior. What do you do when a warrior is down?

After all I went through there were many days that were dark, times when I felt so much hopelessness that things would never change. I had to go back to the basics of WSÁNEĆ healing, connect with our land, breathe deeply, eat and sleep well. In the Journal of Indigenous

Wellbeing- Te Mauri-Pimatisiwin authors Isbister-Bear, Hatala, and Sjoblom (2017) explain the impact of the growing awareness of the importance of traditional healing practices,

> [T]here are now movements towards greater understanding of traditional and cultural Indigenous ways of being, doing and knowing, in both the broader Canadian society in general and academia and health care in particular. While there are small changes occurring in health care, academic, and broader societal contexts in Canada, colonisation continues to have a significant impact on economic, social, cultural and spiritual lives of Canadian Indigenous peoples. (p. 79)

I recognized that through taking our Indigenous ways into battle we can combat colonization. I felt that after bouts of crying, wallowing, not eating, not sleeping, hypervigilance, depression, doubt and suicidal ideation, there was no other option but to rise and heal. I started to find my resilience and to heal myself with self care steps: I walked to our beach every day that I could, I practiced deep breathing through commercials and when our van stopped at red lights. I ate as healthy as I could, drank water, slept as long as I could (this one was the hardest thing to practice). I searched for a counselor and spent time with my family. However, authors Isbister-Bear et al. (2017) also argue that we should not have to be resilient,

> If economic conditions and the many social determinants of health at distal, intermediate, and proximal levels improved in Canada's northern communities, then the necessity for *Âhkamêyimo* among Indigenous youth would decline. Thus, we feel it is important to critically question and argue that Indigenous youth should not have to be resilient and such processes of *Âhkamêyimo* become a necessity only in unjust social contexts. The goal here may involve a shift from the need for *Âhkamêyimo*, to not give up or persevere through difficult circumstances and societal injustices, to the promotion of *sohkastwawin* another

> Plains Cree term often used to describe the act of being strong in all ways, including strong in body, strong in mind, and strong in heart. (p. 83)

This quote was written about Indigenous youth, yet this great message applies to all Indigenous people who persevere through difficult circumstances and societal injustices. In SENĆOŦEN the word "QEM QEM", to be strong, encompasses the meaning of *sohkastwawin.*

At the beginning of my healing journey, I attended Dr. Harding's research presentation at the Royal Jubilee Hospital on May 16th, 2019. In her presentation, "What's the Harm? Examining the Stereotyping of Indigenous Peoples" (2018), I witnessed her "Wordle" slide (see Figure 7: Sites of Harm and Healing Rocks, p. 107). The Sites of Harm listed on the slide are taken from her research into the harmful stereotyping that Indigenous people face while accessing health care systems. The word collage on the right at the top of the slide illustrates how often health care providers commented that they encountered these harmful stereotypes (also a form of racism) in the workplace. The size of each word on the slide represented how often stereotypes about Indigenous people were identified in health service providers' comments. Combined, the words demonstrate their overall meaning and power; Indigenous-specific racism is real and is seen as acceptable and even "normal" in health service provision (Harding, 2018).

Familiar with Harding's data, I borrowed her idea to speak back to racism and to reflect on what I needed to do for my own healing (again, see the photographs at the bottom of Figure 7). I have always collected rocks and often drawn symbols on them, but after seeing Dr. Harding's "Wordle" slide, I wrote words that would be a visual reminder of what I needed to hear and do for my healing because when a person is in trauma, it is easy to be stuck in the pain. I needed to see the words to speak back to injustice, and it was even more powerful seeing my healing words in our language. I held the rock and needed to see my strength in these words as daily reminders

of ways of healing. I then used a different rock and translated them into our SENĆOŦEN language (see Figure 7, bottom right photo, page 107). This seemed to add significance to the fact that the war we are fighting is connected to our people's life-long struggle against colonization. This rock, inscribed with our language, is full of powerful energy that helped in my healing. As part of my healing journey, I painted many rocks and shared them with those who helped me, with friends and family.

I have told the story of speaking my truth to the mcfd and the SPH to people who are close to me. A couple of friends let me know that since I gave my Victim Impact Statement, they have had a good experience when attending Saanich Peninsula Hospital and they thanked me for telling my story. As mentioned before, when the racist attack occurred, I almost did not seek a meeting and did not know if I had any options for next steps. My experience demonstrates that systems and non-Indigenous (Settler) service providers play a key role in addressing Indigenous-specific racism not only in healthcare but in all services, and it is their responsibility to do so. As Harding (2018) states:

> In addressing normalized stereotyping about Indigenous Peoples, action needs to be taken to teach and to learn in some depth about the truths of Canada's colonial history. Indigenous groups have made considerable efforts, and Settler cooperation and collaboration is required to integrate changes into education systems. (p. 115)

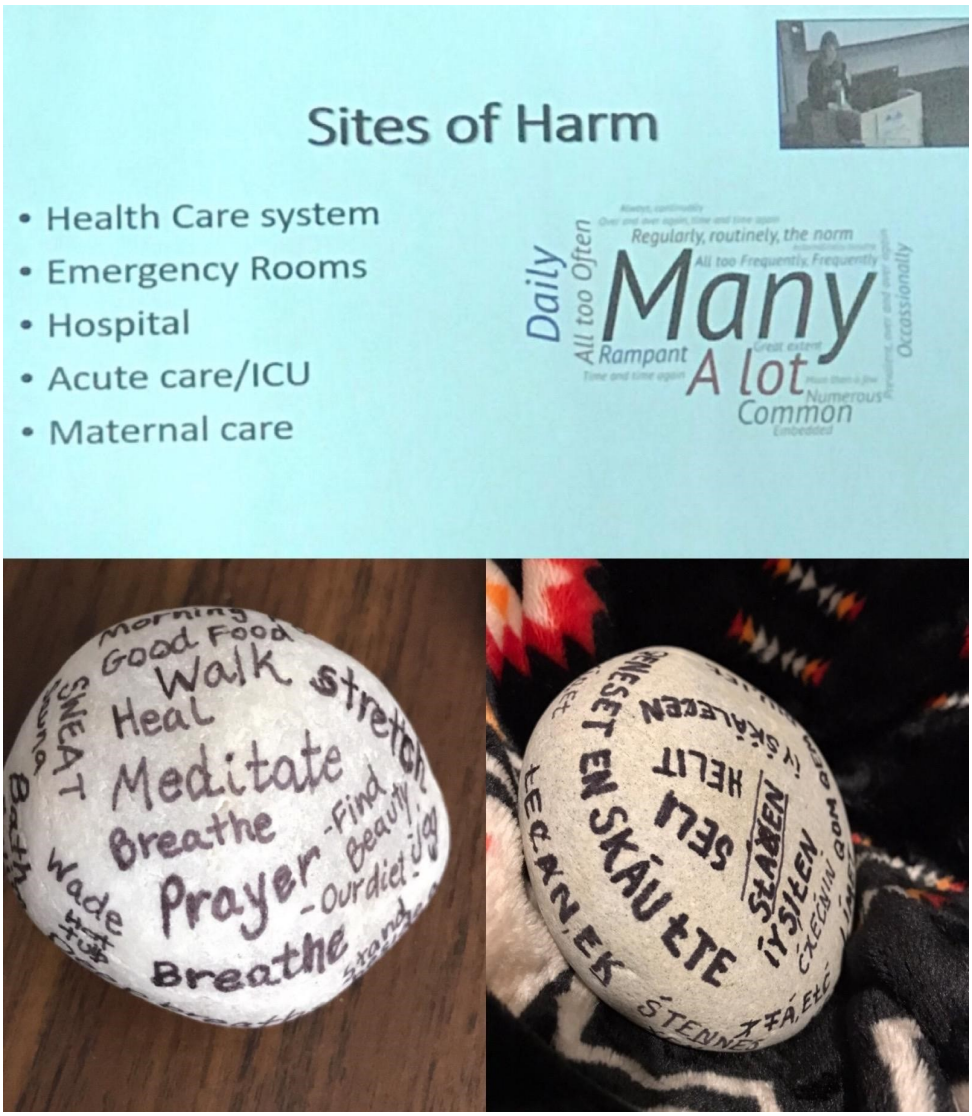


Figure 7: Sites of Harm and Healing Rocks

5.7. *Call to Action.*

In this case, my storytelling is a call to action – employing PDTT and critical race theory as imperative competencies for service providers is an intervention to current health and mental health practices in dealing with Indigenous patients. If knowledge is power, this awareness can really make a difference. It's essential if there is to be change in the provision of health care for Indigenous people. This call is based on a lifetime of experience and an extensive review of

relevant literature over many years of study in health and in social services.

5.8. *Guidance for Indigenous Families.*

Another outcome I hope for is that Indigenous people will be encouraged to feel empowered and reassured that while there will always be resistance to interrupting normalized racism, it can be safe to speak up about the harm they experience. My wish is that colonial systems and service providers might listen to our concerns, advocate on our behalf, and stop the harm. The healthcare system must develop an intervention strategy in collaboration with Indigenous people that is consistent and well defined, one with accountability measures that are activated every time a complaint is made. It must be recognized that there are times when Indigenous people may be justified in feeling fear and hopelessness, times when they question whether the effort and pain of reporting biased treatment and racial abuse is worth their time or will cause more harm. Systems must consistently demonstrate over time that trust needs to be earned, regardless of the time of day when services are provided. Even though Indigenous liaisons may be available from 9-5, evening incidents of racism can occur and fall through the cracks, never to be heard of, validated or investigated.

Indigenous families know they are at risk of encountering racism every time and at every point when accessing any system; therefore, advocacy is essential to ensure their safety. Steps to stop the persistent dehumanizing trauma of racism at the source of harm include providing Indigenous-specific support, such as an Indigenous liaison/navigator or social worker and teaching the community about complaint processes when they encounter racial abuse. In addition, clearly posted signage and contact numbers for assistance and advocacy should be visible throughout the community and at institutional sites as well. All staff at government services require Indigenous anti-racism response training to learn how to identify their own and

their colleagues' normalized stereotypes and biases in order to consistently interrupt racism when it occurs, to create a workplace culture of safety where everyone calls each other into the learning and healing process and calls them out (reports them) when required.

Families filing a report about racial abuse should ensure they have an advocate and know that they have the right to access a lawyer and/or legal aid when their human rights have been violated. They should use cell phones to film the harm and document the names of service providers, witnesses, locations and dates related to their complaint.

Another PDTT-informed strategy is for families to create a list of possible support people with advanced cultural safety and Indigenous anti-racism competencies, individuals that they know personally or professionally, as well as those in places of systemic power, to intervene for better treatment on their behalf. They should find out the names and contact information for people who are responsible for ensuring Indigenous Cultural Safety in all services. For support in my situation, I contacted a professor at the University of Victoria, staff at the Vancouver Island Health Authority, as well as an Elder, a politician, a friend with expertise in this area, and family members.

5.9. *Guidance for the health system.*

In September 2020, Joyce Echaquan tragically died in a Montreal hospital while filming her racist attackers. Her camera was her witness to validate racism as the cause of her death, and her act of courage captured on video the lethal result of racist violence. The Quebec coroner who presided over the inquiry into her death "[believed] the Atikamekw woman would still be alive today if she were white" (Nerestant, CBC News, 2021). When Indigenous people find themselves in the position of having no power, whether they are sick or injured or asking for help, and the hospital institution has all the power, doctors and nurses can choose to listen or not.

This is as true in BC as it was for Joyce Echaquan in Quebec. Buchholz (2011) states that, "The power structures that exist throughout the health care systems in BC are a major barrier to advancing Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) initiatives and anti-racism initiatives" (p. 26). An Indigenous Cultural Safety strategy that includes addressing Indigenous-specific racism response training is required to create a culturally safe environment that is free from racism. This type of strategy needs to be created in collaboration with the people who will be accessing services, informed by Indigenous antiracism specialists, and in relationship with system leaders to ensure accountability.

The health system must also improve the process for reporting racism. I recommend that the Vancouver Island Health Authority website develop a specialised reporting process specifically for Indigenous people. The present website directs complaints to the Patient Care Quality Office (PCQO), then to a tab titled "Compliments and Complaints" which leads to a faceless online message or the option to mail VIHA your compliment or complaint. Health systems need to hire and create an allied intervention team to collect and report on Indigenous-specific racism data. Their work must be grounded in an understanding of multiple issues: trauma and anti-Indigenous racism informed care, cultural safety, critical race theory, colonialism, white privilege and white fragility. The system for collecting, managing, and reporting Indigenous data must be led by Indigenous people and allies with critical Indigenous racism skills.

In developing a trauma and Indigenous anti-racism informed treatment plan, Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory (PDTT) is an emerging mental health tool focusing on the ongoing historical source of harm (systemic racism) rather than solely on the individual. PDTT needs to be examined and understood by service providers to obtain certification in their fields,

in the context of the therapist's tools, and in terms of meeting competencies for education and practice. Clearly, a knowledge of PDTT is required at the root of clinical analysis to better understand and include consideration of the unique colonial context within any diagnosis of Indigenous patients. PDTT also supports the development of further research to ensure the reflectivity, reflexivity, recognition, compassion and accurate treatment of Indigenous people as a vital complement to western diagnosis in mental health.

Applying a PDTT lens also requires systems to take practical steps to create safe spaces for Indigenous people. For example, a 24-hour Indigenous liaison is necessary not so much to help individuals navigate safely through a racist system, but to interrupt systemic racism immediately on site at each hospital. Health care institutions should include physical space touchstones for safety on site. For example, exploring options for signage for Indigenous people can be implemented to demonstrate zero tolerance for racism in specific areas and to provide information about Indigenous' rights and how to access the reporting system when they encounter racism. Leaders and service providers can make it clear that their organization knows that harmful stereotyping occurs in their institution, and that they will respond immediately to all complaints. A large visual map could be used to illustrate how the system will respond, including personnel roles, names and contacts, and the procedures in place to address the trauma of systemic racism.

Institutions must ensure that all staff have a baseline of Indigenous anti-racism response training as a starting place. There should also be integration of anti-racism response skills as part of all job requirements and annual recertification in this area should be attached to regular performance evaluations. One example of the positive results of this kind of educational intervention was my JÁEŁNOṈET Land Acknowledgment presentation for Saanich Peninsula

Hospital staff. I originally developed this talk as part of my work in the Faculty of Human and Social Development at the University of Victoria. I subsequently revised my comments, adapting them to the context of the issues I had experienced, and delivered my presentation to the leadership of Saanich Peninsula Hospital in October 2019 with Dr. Laurie Harding.

As noted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) calls to action and education about systemic racism need to be ongoing. Continuous learning and relationship protocol building are essential. The protocols and steps involved in documenting and responding to Indigenous-specific racism need to be developed in relationship with the local community. All staff must know specific organizational protocols for engagement with the local Indigenous community. Community members should also be aware that hospital staff are required to consider the potential risks of mcfd child protection reports on Indigenous children and families. This could be communicated in a community newsletter with a call line to inquire about how to access information and support for prompt resolution of complaints. Health care institutions could also contribute regularly to this community newsletter regarding Indigenous cultural safety initiatives and provide relationship building events with the community.

5.10. *Hope for the Future.*

We are still here. WEXES' position on ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post demonstrates both our resilience and our agency in bringing about change for Indigenous people by recognizing the legacy of intergenerational trauma we have endured through anti-Indigenous systemic racism. We have survived. Through the richness of our cultural traditions, through our connection to land, language, and culture we remain Indigenous strong by speaking truth to power; by calling out racist behavior and systemic injustice, we are creating new pathways to care for and provide humane and equitable treatment and services to our people.

Chapter 6: QELEN̲SEN: Healing Vision

The last figure on ŁÁU, NON̲ET SXEDQIN̲EŁ - Healing House Post is QELEN̲SEN, the Eagle.

QELEN̲SEN Eagle: "Healing Vision"

WEXES Frogs: "Reconstruction within Canadian Systems – Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Theory/Response Theory "

SPÁ˛EŦ Bear: JÁEŁNON̲ET

KELŁOLEMEĆEN Orca whale: "Life Before europeans"

Figure 8: ŁÁU, NON̲ET SXEDQIN̲EŁ Healing House Post

Each carving is intertwined with "Healing", the overall theme that threads throughout the entire Pole. Together, KELŁOLEMEĆEN "Orca Whale", SPÁ˛EŦ "Bear", and WEXES "Frogs" are connected to the QELEN̲SEN "Healing Vison" of Eagle at the top of the House Post. Eagle reminds us there are many healing pathways we can take in response to our experiences of anti-Indigenous racism in the health, social services, education and justice systems which were not created for our people. In life, a person has their own individual journey. Different parts of the

House Post address many powerful issues and experiences: the impacts of cultural genocide, residential school, loss of language, loss of culture, loss of land, and loss of sovereignty. So much loss and hurt has caused a tremendous amount of intergenerational trauma for our people. QELEN̲SEN hears us, has suffered these traumas with us, and QELEN̲SEN will help us heal.

QELEN̲SEN demonstrates how our people's ability to preserve many traditions and healing ways in the face of genocidal oppression has helped us to survive, to still be here. These include healing through Land-based and Water-based ways of being and knowing through stories, songs, and arts-based learning. QELEN̲SEN also reflects the vision that there are many paths to healing for WSÁNEĆ. These different trails of healing offer us a number of tools and teachings to choose from and explore. They even encourage us to create new ways of overcoming the legacy of devastation our people have faced. One of the main pathways to healing is where one returns to their homeland. I grew up in our homeland and just putting my feet on the ground where our Ancestors walked is powerful. These places - our home territories - can help us heal, learn, grow and keep us grounded, Matthew Wildcat, Mandee McDonald, Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox and Glen Coulthard (2014) write:

> Spiritual healing and grounding is an important benefit that comes with cultivating a strong relationship to land. This is more than a fortunate by-product of engaging in land-based practices. Teachings and practices based in spiritual values are critical components of learning and teaching on the land. (p. 10)

WSÁNEĆ culture, teachings and language are spiritually connected to the land. All are intertwined and inseparable. Indigenous connection to the land is intrinsically strong among our children and youth, and with all our people.

I know how cultural genocide has affected me directly, yet this doesn't mean I will allow it

to continue. It is hard to be a part of a group the government set out to annihilate. Many of us are still healing and recovering. We repeatedly come face to face with systematic violence; sometimes we "win", but because of anti-Indigenous racism, most times we "lose". This is because the system is set up like a gambling game – chances of losing are higher than winning. Progress is slow. While many institutions have hired staff to provide Indigenous support and advocacy, they often work mainly only during the day, so if something happens in the evening or early morning, no one is there to offer these essential services. We have a right to safe, humane, respectful treatment, especially when we face systemic challenges and are in crisis. It also goes back to what our Old One Victor Underwood (2018) says about being treated fairly and what Anishinaabe call B'maadisiwin "the good life we strive for" (Absolon, 2005). The good life we strive for by following WSÁNEĆ ways is SKÁU ŁTE, described earlier as our Natural Law, meaning "your pay in life whether good or bad". The hope is that one would deliberately choose to do good, and with access to our inherent knowledge system create a positive life cycle geared towards healing. Absolon (2011) continues to explain that:

> Indigenous knowledge is healing through the use of our own culture, traditions, language and knowledge. Methodological congruency with Indigenous history, peoples, culture, worldview and experiences is about healing and making whole what has been fragmented, severed and wounded. (p. 93)

Here I think of the Indigenous knowledge systems in place before the *Indian Act* and how important our ways of being and knowing are for our future.

I have a large family, and I want my children to know that healing does not necessarily involve a prescription. There are many ways to heal and not everyone's journey is the same. There may be similarities, but each person experiences trauma, hurt and pain differently, so

healing paths can differ significantly. One important tool I envision is a visual board that illustrates Indigenous ways of healing from trauma. Every family could create their own visual board as a healing resource. For example, at home I made a collage of inspiring, thought-provoking suggestions representing my own reflections that I would want my children to think about, knowledge they could carry with them to strengthen them on their own journeys. Also, a visual board could be located at a site within the community such as a healing center dedicated to providing support services for our people. I have also thought a lot about resistance and its relationship to healing. As a result, I have created "Survival Phrases"; these are communication phrases for Indigenous people to use when encountering assorted negativity such as racism and discrimination. Certainly, more voices and more paths to recovery could be added to ensure that healing can be easily accessed by second and third generation residential school survivors, as well as those recovering from the harsh effects of the cultural genocide aimed at getting rid of us. These kinds of processes, tools, and skills which illustrate many options for healing and pathways to wellness represent the central focus of QELE̲NSEN.

6.1. Healing House Post Summary

When you look at the photo of my Healing House Post in Figure 2 on page 54, I hope that you can feel, see, believe and trust that healing is possible. I want people to know that healing is a journey, and the framework embodied by ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ - Healing House Post represents a beginning for recovery, one which is filled with hope and possibilities. KELŁOLEMEĆEN reminds us that our Ancestors endured a lot for us to be here. SPÁ˛EŦ reminds us of who we are and where we are, and that we have hope for the future. WEXES is a plea for our people to be Indigenous strong. QELE̲NSEN will oversee, provide and help us all on our healing journey.

6.2. Closing the Circle: Journeying Forward, Healing the Future:

As mentioned in my chapter on Methodology, the ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ conceptual framework is storytelling created for QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI W̱SÁNEĆ. What I envision for the future of my doctoral Healing House Post is also directed at W̱SÁNEĆ community healing and wellness. In the future I would like to follow through with my late mother-in-law Joyce's wishes that W̱SÁNEĆ have a healing center. After she worked at many treatment centers as an Elder, Joyce saw that many attained a lot of skills and strategies to resist their addictions, but when they went home, it was hard for them to maintain these skills and strategies without support. At the time I was younger and just finishing my undergraduate degree. I wasn't confident in my ability to start a new healing center then. Many years later I wish I had been. Joyce had a great idea that the healing center would have running water that looked very much like our creeks for our traditional morning cold water bath. In the book *ÁLEŊENEȻ (*2008), I have written an insert entitled "Historical Uses of W̱SÁNEĆ Creeks and Streams" where I share the following beliefs:

> Since time immemorial, as a part of spiritual livelihood, the waters of our ÁLEŊENEȻ", have been crucial to W̱SÁNEĆ people. We are taught to believe creeks are alive just as the trees, land, and plants are alive. In the same way our people used plants and trees to live, so too do the creeks provide life. We believe our waters have cleansing power and are used for numerous cultural ceremonies. While visiting Elders and community members, my main inquiry was to know how many creeks were used in the past and find out what may have happened to them if they are no longer in use. (p. 126)

Along with the healing center being a place that continued using the skills and strategies learned at treatment centers, language and culture could also be incorporated on our homeland as means

of promoting health and well-being. Having a healing center would create the relationality and reciprocity that Absolon (2022) explains are essential to decolonization:

> Relationality is also regarded as the antithesis of ignorance. Anticolonial Indigenist research methodologies tend to be relationally focused, where isolation gets disrupted and where meaningful connections are generated. Reciprocity means that giving happens before receiving. Giving time, service, money, gifts, offerings, and respect are all examples of reciprocity in action. Dis-placement, dis-membering, dis-connecting and dis-appearing all seem to be characteristics of colonialism. Re-placement, re-membering, re-connecting and re-appearing are characteristics of healing from colonialism. (p. 93)

The healing centers I envision will be located in two places where meaningful connections are generated. The first place will be an office in W̱SÁNEĆ that offers various counselling services, anything that will provide some of those supports learned at treatment centers and that will help W̱SÁNEĆ. This center will regenerate W̱SÁNEĆ ways through the re-placement of the English language, re-membering our culture and traditions, re-connecting to our healing ways, and by enabling us to re-appear as ourselves as our Ancestors held out hope for. These are ways of healing from colonialism.

The second healing center location would be a land-based gathering space located on one of the islands in our traditional territories which would also have an indoor creek with running cold water. Some other features on this site would be a place like a gym to have ceremony and feasts, as well as sports. This gym would have a stage like some of the older school gyms, so there could also be live theater and other performances. The location of this Island Center could include a number of cabins that could be used for family, youth, and gendered camps with theme-based activities centered around the needs of different participants. Some examples of

these programs could include a land-based camp, a 5-day family language camp, a 3-day weekend couples' camp, a 5-day cedar hat weaving camp, 5-day S,ÁLEW̱, SWÍ,K̲E, SŁÁNI, KÁ,N̲I, SWIU,LES, TÁN I MÁN, QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI camps, a 7-day reef net fishing camp, a 3-week language immersion camp and other activities like ceremonies, gatherings, conferences, and the like. These are just some potential programs that could be offered through an Island Healing Centre. Most importantly, both locations would be shaped by W̱SÁNEĆ needs and requests. The idea would be to incorporate all aspects of W̱SÁNEĆ land and water connection, language revitalization, and arts and culture with the process of healing, whether it be through a camp, through course work, or any other creative way of re-establishing W̱SÁNEĆ ways.

Where the ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ framework fits in is that it will also influence how the healing center will be structured as a non-profit, Indigenous-led organization based on the circular foundation embedded within W̱SÁNEĆ Law. The Basic Principles of this kind of organizational structure are illustrated in the photo below, taken from *SK̲ÁU, An Exploration of W̱SÁNEĆ Law* (p.12).

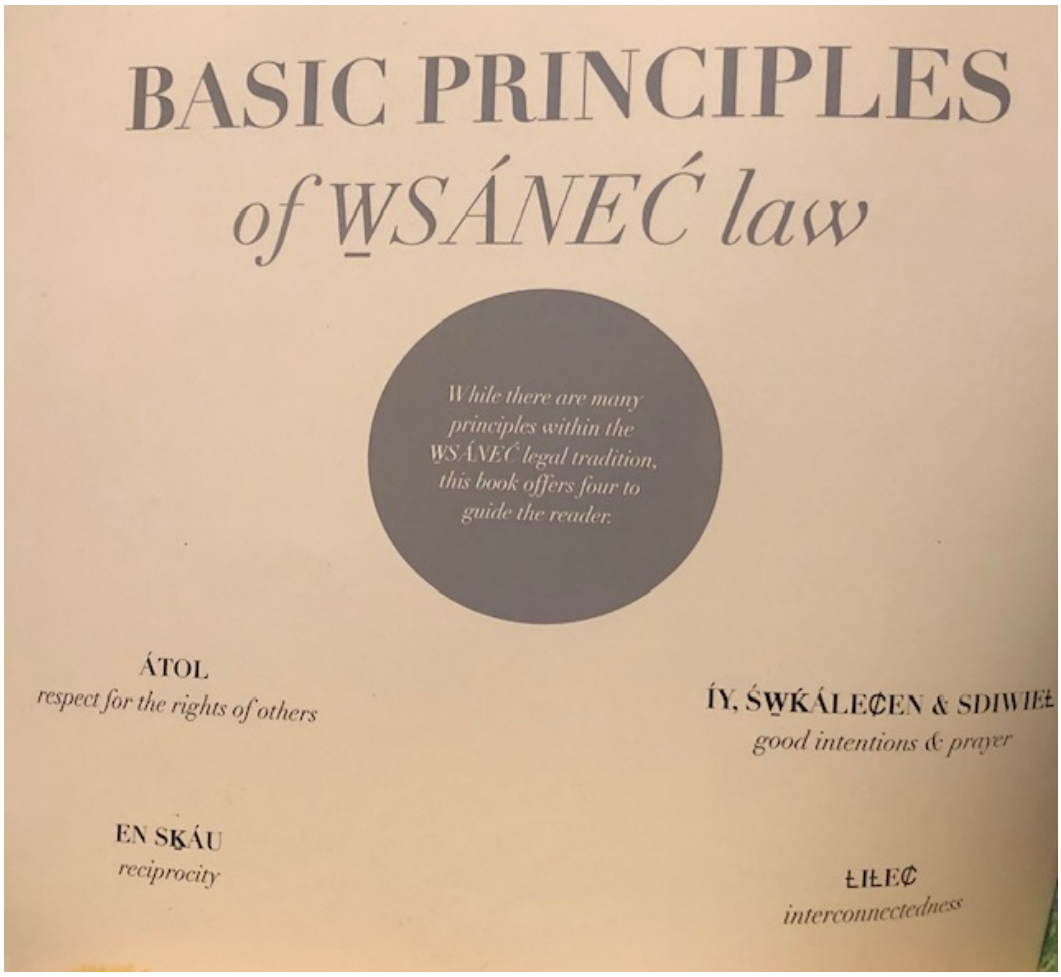


Figure 9: Basic Principles of W̱SÁNEĆ Law

These four guiding W̱SÁNEĆ principles will provide the circular outline of the Center's Indigenous organizational structure. Instead of the regular "Institutional – Policy and Procedures", there will be "Action, Achievement and Reconstruction", which will emphasize an Indigenous way of working together. Without operating along the lines of regular euro-western governments' organizational requirements, there would be more flexibility around how ŁÁU, NOṈET SXEDQIṈEŁ's four sections of KELŁOLEMEĆEN, SPÁ,ET̓, WEXES, and QELEṈSEN could provide the foundational guidelines of "Action, Achievement and Reconstruction" for a W̱SÁNEĆ Healing Centre.

Going to the land is crucial, Okanagan author Jeanette Armstrong (1997) describes the powerful land and language relationship:

> All my elders say that it is land that holds all knowledge of life and death and is a constant teacher. It is said in Okanagan that the land constantly speaks. It is constantly communicating. Not to learn its language is to die. We survived and thrived by listening intently to its teaching - to its language - and then inventing human words to retell its stories to our succeeding generations. It is N'silxchn, the old land/mother spirit of the Okanagan People, which surrounds me in its primal wordless state. (p. 146)

I believe that language, land, and culture are all connected; they are our biggest source of healing from colonial trauma. From the arts- and land-based gatherings, more voices and more pathways from diverse youth perspectives can be built into the healing framework. WSÁNEĆ culture, teachings and language are spiritually connected to the land (Elliott, 1983). All are intertwined and inseparable.

In conclusion, my doctoral work is very much a result of my life experiences as an Indigenous daughter, granddaughter, sister, spouse, mom and grandmother. I have personally felt the waves of cultural genocide which intermittently crash upon us through anti-Indigenous racism along with other "isms", eroding our sovereignty as a people. This work is partly in response to my personal experiences of compounded systemic racism in health care and social services and through my desire to provide youth opportunities to be immersed in W̱SÁNEĆ Land, Language and Culture. It is my life experiences that formed who I am, calm in most situations, deep rooted knowledge of who I am as a W̱SÁNEĆ woman*, QENÁŁ LÁ,ET SŁÁNI,* and as I move this way to help my people.

In my courses I teach, I utilize my W̱SÁNEĆ ways of knowing and being that are

represented in ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ, my Healing House Post. I utilize Indigenous arts- and land-based approaches (de Finney, 2017) and an Indigenous storytelling/conversational method (Archibald, 2008; Kovach 2010), by telling stories to my students am sharing healing ways that derive from QELEŊSEN healing framework and are uniquely WSÁNEĆ. ŁÁU, NOŊET SXEDQIŊEŁ, will be made available to encourage my people to develop our own land-based pathways of healing from systemic anti-Indigenous racism.

HÍSW̱K̲E SI, IEM

References

Absolon, K. (2005). Indigenous Wholistic Theory: A knowledge set for practice. *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, *5*(2), 74-87. Retrieved from https://fpcfr.com/index.php/FPCFR/article/view/95

Absolon, K. (2011). *Kaandossiwin, this is how we come to know: Indigenous worldviews and methodologies in search for knowledge*. Winnipeg: Fernwood. https://eduq.info/xmlui/handle/11515/35873

Absolon, K. (2021). Four Generations For Generations: A Pow Wow Story to Transform Academic Evaluation Criteria. *Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning*, *7*(1), 66–85. https://doi.org/10.15402/esj.v7i1.70054

Aguiar, W., & Halseth, R. (2015). *Aboriginal peoples and historic trauma: the processes of intergenerational transmission.* National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

Archibald, J. (2008). *Indigenous Storywork*. UBC Press.

Armstrong J, (1998). Land Speaking. In S. Ortiz (Ed.), *Speaking for the generations: Native writers on writing*. University of Arizona Press. (174-195).

Battiste, M. (2013). *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*. Purich Publishing.

BC Government, (2019). Dismantling anti-Indigenous racism within the health care system: Final report of the 2019 Think Tank on anti-Indigenous racism. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6058e2a898d12c5d270765b8/t/6081b519eb508c19be00a254/1619113249454/think_tank_on_anti_indigenous_racism_2019_v1.pdf

BC Government, (2020). Critical Incident Response – Protocol for Organizing against Racism and Hate. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/multiculturalism-anti-racism/anti-racism/oarh

BC Government, (2020). Turpel-Lafond Launches Independent Investigation into Indigenous Specific Racism in B.C. Health Care. https://engage.gov.bc.ca/addressingracism/turpel-lafond-launches-independentinvestigation-into-indigenous-specific-racism-in-b-c-health-care/

Betasamosake Simpson, L. (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society,* 3(3), 1-25. Sihttps://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22170?msclkid=140a0ae5ce7c11ecaecf0bf03ada66ab

Betasamosake Simpson, L. (2017). *As we have always done – Indigenous freedom through radical resistance,* University of Minnesota Press.

Buchholz, M. (2011). Developing a policy to address anti-Indigenous racism in health care. [Master's thesis, Simon Fraser University]. http://summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/19200/etd20166.pdf

Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates. (2018). Statement from Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates on Indigenous child welfare. https://rcybc.ca/reports-and-publications/statements-and-news-releases/statement-from-canadian-council-of-child-and-youth-advocates-on-indigenous-child-welfare/

Chenault, V.S. (2011). *Weaving Strength, Weaving Power-Violence and Abuse against Indigenous Women.* Carolina Academic Press, Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Public Data.

Claxton E., & Elliott J. (1993). *TŦE SĆELÁNEN ET ̱WSÁNEĆ - The Saanich Moons,* 3. Saanich School Board #63. ISBN 1-55036-2

Claxton, N. (2008). Lighting the Eighth Fire, ISTÁ SĆIÁNEW̱, ISTÁ SXOLE "To Fish as Formerly." In L. Simpson, (Ed.), *The Douglas Treaties and the W̱SÁNEĆ reef-net fi sheries.* Arbeiter Ring Publishing. (pp. 73-87).

de Finney, S., Dean, M., Loiselle, E., & Saraceno, J. (2011). All children are equal, but some are more equal than others: MINORITIZATION, structural inequities, and social justice praxis in residential care. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies*, *2*(3/4), 361-384. https://doi.org/10.18357/ijcyfs23/420117756

de Finney, S. (2017). Indigenous girls' resilience in Settler states: Honouring body and land sovereignty. *Agenda*, 31:(2), 10-21. https://doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2017.1366179

Diamond, J. (1997). *Guns, germs, and steel: The fates of human societies.* W.W. Norton.

Dolman, T., Haebler, C., & Devonshire, P. (Producers), & Campanelli, D., (Director). (2018). *Indian horse* [Film]. Elevation Pictures.

Elliott, D., & Poth, J. (1983). *Saltwater People as told by Dave Elliott Sr.* Native Education, School District 63 (Saanich).

Ellis, C., Adams, T.E., & Bochner, A.P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview [40 paragraphs]. *Form Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research,* 12:(1), Art 10. http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101108

Galeski, R., (2021). Trauma Informed Practice and Adult Literacy. CALP Portal Community Learning Program, Medicine Hat College. https://calp.ca/blog/traumainformed-practice-and-adult-literacy.htm

Gaudet, J.C. (2009). *Metis women and memory: Learning to live beyond the wounds of history*. [Unpublished master's thesis. Carleton University].

Gaudet, J. (2016). *An Indigenous Methodology for Coming to Know - Milo Pimatisiwin as Land-Based Initiatives for Indigenous Youth,* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Ottawa]. Institutional Repository http://hdl.handle.net/10393/35560 http://dx.doi.org/10.20381/ruor-518

Harding, L. (2018) What's the harm? Examining the stereotyping of Indigenous Peoples in health systems. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Simon Fraser University]. https://theses.lib.sfu.ca/file/thesis/4994?msclkid=410ba6bece7211ec93a3204e7e0bab4d

Hart, M. A. (2010). Indigenous worldviews, knowledge, and research: The development of an Indigenous research paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Voices in Social Work*, 1(1), 1-16.

hooks, b. (1994). Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom. Routledge.

hooks, b. (2014). Black looks: Race and representation. Routledge.

Indian Act, RSC 1985, c I-5, <https://canlii.ca/t/5439p>

Indigenous Corporate Training, Inc. (2023, March 30). Christopher Columbus and the Doctrine of Discovery – 5 Things to Know. Indigenous Corporate Training, Inc. Blog. https:www.ictinc.ca/blog/christopher-columbus-and-the-doctrine-of-discovery-5-things-to-know#:~:text=The%20Doctrine%20of%20Discovery%20was,now%20known%20as%20North%20America

Isbister-Bear, O., Hatala, A. & Sjoblom, E. (2017). Strengthening Âhkamêyimo among Indigenous youth: The social determinants of health, justice, and resilience in Canada's north. *Ta Mauri-Pimatisiwin. 2*(3), 76-89.

Iseke, J. (2013). Indigenous Storytelling as Research. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, *6*(4), 559–577. https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2013.6.4.559

Kendi, I.X. (2019). *How to be an Antiracist.* One World.

Knott, H. . (2023). *Becoming a Matriarch: a memoir*. Knopf Canada.

Kovach, M. (2010). Conversational Method in Indigenous Research. *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, *5*(1), 40-48.

Lavallee, B., & Mushquash, C. (2017). Making the Indigenous body human: One day at a time. ICS Collaborative Learning Series. http://www.icscollaborative.com/webinars/the-raced-body-reflecting-onclinicalencounters

Lavallee, B., & Harding L. (2022). How Indigenous-specific Racism is Coached into Health Systems. In A. Gebhard, S. McLean, & V. St. Denis (Eds.), *White benevolence: Racism and colonial violence in the helping professions,* Fernwood Press.

Leason, J., & Sutherland, J. (2022). Matriarchal Wisdom: Indigenous Women's and Perinatal Health. *Introduction to determinants of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples' health in Canada.* Canadian Scholar's Press. 51-67.

Leddy, S. (2018). In a good way: Reflecting on humour in Indigenous education. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies, 16*(2), 10-20. https://scholar.google.ca/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=en&user=TY1BNFgAAAAJ&citation_for_view=TY1BNFgAAAAJ:2osOgNQ5qMEC

Lévesque, C., Geoffroy, D., Polèse, G. with collaboration of the Elders of the Naskapis of Kawawachikamach. (2008). Les savoirs écologiques des Naskapis : caractérisation, utilisation, transmission – Projet de mobilisation des connaissances réalisé dans le cadre de l'initiative des Écosystèmes nordiques, Environnement Canada, 2004–2008. DIALOG, Institut National de Recherche Scientifique INRS, Montréal and Kawawachkamach, 5.

Loppie, C. (2015). Webinar: Anti-Aboriginal racism in Canada: A social determinant of health. https://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/495/Webinar__Anti-Aboriginal_Racism_in_Canada__A_Social_Determinant_of_Health.nccah?id=160

McGuire, P. (2010). Exploring Resilience and Indigenous Ways of Knowing. *Pimatisiwin: A journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health.* 8 (2), 117-13.

McLoughlin, N. & Over, H. (2018). The Developmental Origins of Dehumanization. *Advances in Child Development and Behaviour.* (54), 153-178.

Merriam-Webster's dictionary (2022). PTSD post-traumatic stress disorder noun. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/posttraumatic%20stress%20disorder

Morgerman, C., & Twa, K. (Eds.). (2019). *SḴÁU: an exploration of W̱SÁNEĆ Law.* W̱SÁNEĆ School Board.

Nabigon, H., Hagey, R., Webster, S., & MacKay, R. (1999). The learning circle as a research method: The trickster and windigo in research. *Native Social Work Journal*, 2(1), 113-137.

National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH). (2016). Culture and language as social determinants of First Nations, Inuit and Métis health. https://www.ccnsa-nccah.ca/docs/determinants/FS-CultureLanguage-SDOH-FNMI-EN.pdf

Nerestant, A. (2021, October 01). Racism, prejudice, contributed to Joyce Echaquan's death in hospital, Quebec's coroner's inquiry concludes. *CBC News.* https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/joyce-echaquan-systemic-racism-quebec-government-1.6196038

Niefert, M. (1987). *Dr. Mom*. New York: Signet Books.

Peter, R. (2021). *What was said to me: the life of Sti'tum'atul'wut, a Cowichan woman*. Royal BC Museum.

Plummer, E. (2019, September 19). Ministry pledges to end child welfare "birth alerts". *Ha-Shilth-Sa publication*. https://hashilthsa.com/news/2019-09-19/ministry-pledges-end-child-welfare-birth-alerts

Rai, N. (2017). Uprooting Medical Violence: Building an Integrated Anti-Oppression Framework for Primary Health Care. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fVkVw2vOSF_TowE3cmfo_wM4s6_Yp74Lzhz2sUUj4iA/mobilebasic

Saanich Indian School Board. (2008). *ÁLEN̲ENEĆ*. Published by Saanich Adult Education Centre: Brentwood Bay, B.C.

Steinhauer, P. (2001). Situating myself in research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 25*(2), 183-87.

Stote, K. (2015). *An act of genocide, Colonialism and the sterilization of Aboriginal women.* Fernwood Publishing.

Thomas, R. (2018). *Protecting The Sacred Cycle – Indigenous Woman And Leadership,* JCharlton Publishing Ltd.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). *Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to action*. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

Tuhiwai Smith, T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies, research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Tuhiwai Smith, T. (2021). *Decolonizing methodologies, research and Indigenous Peoples*. (3rd Ed.). Zed Books Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Turpel-Lafond, M. (2020). *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care [Data Report]*. [British Columbia Ministry of Health]. https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2021/02/In-Plain-Sight-Data-Report_Dec2020.pdf1_.pdf

Underwood T., Harding L., McDonald K. (2022). We are Still Here: Understanding Persistent Dehumanizing Trauma Response Theory (PDTR) and the Unique Mental Health Impacts of Indigenous Specific Systemic Racism. [Unpublished Manuscript].

Wagamese, R. (2011). *One story, one song.* Douglas & McIntyre.

Wildcat, M., MacDonald, M., Irlbacher-Fox, S., & Coulthard, G. (2014). Learning from the land: Indigenous land-based pedagogy and decolonization. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, *3*(3), I-XV. https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/download/22248/18062

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is Ceremony, Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood Publishing.

Woodcock, J. (2022). Families and Individuals Living with Trauma. Palgrave Texts in Counselling and Psychotherapy. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-79039-4_3

Wright Cardinal, S. (2017). Beyond the Sixties Scoop: Reclaiming Indigenous identity, reconnection to place, and reframing understandings of being Indigenous. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation) University of Victoria, Victoria, BC.