

A Storytelling Approach to Second-Generations Survivors of Residential School: The
Impact and Effects

by

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B.S.W, Thompson Rivers University, 2004

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

This thesis looks at the stories of second-generation survivors of residential school. Storytelling is the methodology utilized in this research. The practice of Indigenous storytelling is a way to transfer knowledge to the younger generations. It is also a way to ensure history is not lost. Using a storytelling methodology is a healing method for the writer and the storyteller. A storytelling approach to methodology honours the words of the one sharing their story within this thesis. Included is an overview of the oppressive policies that forced Indigenous children to residential schools, how survivors of residential school were impacted with an overview of research on the intergenerational effects. The research identifies how these storytellers were impacted by their parents' attendance at residential school and the themes are shared.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my mom Brenda McDonald and my dad Dennis Eustache. You two have instilled in me the importance of education and hard work and you two are the reason why I was able to complete this.

I dedicate this to my family that has passed on. My grandfathers James and Hector; aunts Karen, Jacqueline and Debbie; uncles Tutsie, William, Punky and Dave; and cousins Dennis, Clarke, Shane, Jordan, Randall, Mackenzie, Robert Jr., Misty, Neil, Rosie and Kyle, who have all passed on to the spirit world. I dedicate this to my best friend Bernadette who recently passed on. I have thought of you all throughout this process. Thank you all for being my strength to complete this work. As I was having trying times I thought of you all.

I dedicate this to anyone who is struggling as an Indigenous person. I pray that these stories help you to share your story. I pray that there is healing in those suffering the ongoing intergenerational effects of residential school. I pray to those who have passed on and now have become our ancestors.

Chapter One: Introduction:

In the process of choosing my research topic I kept telling myself that I wanted to be true to myself regardless of what the topic was. In the back of my mind I have always thought about how the residential school story has to continue for Indigenous¹ people because the full and true story is not yet fully understood. Many stories of residential school survivors have been shared. Through the report *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015a) survivors from all across Canada were given the opportunity to share their stories and experiences of attending the residential schools. For Indigenous people our history, our story does not stop there. The reality of our people is that our lives have forever changed due to the residential school and the government's policies regarding Indigenous peoples. One way our lives have been forever changed is through our language and culture. Our traditions were banned by the government and forbidden in the residential schools. Our ways of knowing and being has been altered due to the Canadian governmental policies and practices that were implemented through the Church run schools. I am not suggesting that we do not have any of our languages and traditions I am saying that it is a struggle to keep them alive.

As Indigenous peoples we had our own laws, traditions and way of living. When the European people decided to settle in 'Canada,' the Canadian government began to create Indian policy in order to 'protect' Indigenous people. "Until confederation, protection of the Indian and his land was the paramount goal. Civilization of the Indian

¹ For the purpose of this paper I will use the terms Aboriginal, Indigenous, Native, First Nations and Indian as they are quoted in the references. For the majority of the paper I will use the terms Aboriginal and Indigenous interchangeably to identify Canadian Aboriginal people.

was gaining in importance but was regarded as a gradual and long-term process. Assimilation was the long-range goal” (Tobias 1991, p.131). The Canadian government didn’t protect Indigenous people but instead controlled us while at the same time imposing their domination. Our way of life has changed forever. It will never go back to the days of pre-contact with the Europeans.

Being ‘Indian’ in a society that has tried to eradicate every aspect of my being is a struggle. I am reviving my St’at’imc and Secwepemc language that is in my blood. I am constantly relearning my traditions and customs which are within my heart. I scream loudly that I am an úcwalmicw (St’at’imc word for Indigenous, people of the land). I try to regain that inner peace that was beaten and tortured out of my family. There are no words to speak that can express the deep sorrow within as I have not lived what they went through at the residential school yet I feel the effects because I was not raised with my first languages, St’at’imc and Secwepemc. In fact, I was raised away from my family and community and with only a small portion of my traditional way of life. As a young person, because I was displaced I had a lot of questions that I didn’t get the answers to.

I remember being young and asking my mom “how do you pray”? I was curious and wanted to know how to pray. I wasn’t raised with these teachings. I didn’t see this in my home growing up. I thought my mom was the right person to ask. When I asked, she made a joke about praying and I didn’t get an answer. To this day I still struggle to pray out loud.

The stories of second-generation survivors are starting to be told. This is the purpose of my thesis, to help share those stories of the intergenerational effects of residential school. A part of this thesis is also sharing my own story. The way that I was

raised and the struggles that I went through are a result of my parents' and grandparents' being forced to attend residential schools. I will share my life experiences, my upbringing and my struggles, including the struggle to learn my ways (my language, traditions and family connections). These struggles are a direct result of the residential schools.

In my research, *A storytelling approach to second-generations survivors of residential school: The impacts and effects*, I share the stories of four woman whose parents attended residential school. I asked them these six questions (I needed to edit the questions when I expanded the scope of my research):

- Tell me your story?
- Which of your parents attended Kamloops Indian Residential School?
 - o Which of your parents attended an Indian Residential School within British Columbia?
- Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Kamloops Indian Residential School?
 - o Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Indian Residential School?
- What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?
 - o What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?
- How do you define resilience and what contributed to your sense of resilience growing up?
- What type of cultural or traditional teachings did you learn about growing up? Are you currently involved in cultural traditions?

I was honoured these four woman shared their story with me. I also shared my own experiences of being a second-generation survivor.

In order for me to research this topic I needed to take care of myself because I was dealing with such a sensitive topic. Throughout this process, it is important for me to acknowledge how I feel. I have read a lot on my people and the history of Indigenous

people. I read Robina Thomas's work *Storytelling in the Spirit of Wise Woman: Experiences of Kuper Island Residential School* (2000) and I see the words "dumb Indian" (p.18). For me, I too have internalized the feeling of being or believing that I am too a dumb Indian. Those that attended the residential schools were made to feel this way and although I haven't attended, I see how this has impacted me inter-generationally.

As an educated Indigenous woman, I have felt as though I am less than when it comes to my non-Indigenous colleagues/classmates. Why is that? I was raised not to trust non-Indigenous people. I grew up feeling that I had something to prove to anyone who doubted me like the teachers that taught me in high school. I grew up hating the many negative stereotypes about Indigenous people. I always said that I would not become another Indigenous statistic. I always said that I would not become a statistic about committing suicide, dropping out of school or the many other quantifiable socioeconomic statistics. All of these things I said I wouldn't do were because I didn't want to be a 'dumb Indian' or a 'drunken Indian'. I hated the stereotypes. I worked hard not to be what society seen my people as. Isn't it sad how much society can impact one person such as myself? Now think, how many other Indigenous people feel this way?

Why was I so hard on myself? Why did society's view of me matter? Why were those statistics so maddening when it came to Indigenous peoples? Why did I not want to be a statistic? The only reason I am where I am is because of the support of my mom, my family and my role models. I am who I am because of my mom teaching me through her life experiences. She shared her life experiences in hopes that I would understand my struggles as a child.

Growing up I was aware of the many traumas that my mom had to endure. I knew about her being sexually abused. I knew about the trauma of physical and emotional abuse that she went through. I knew about her struggles with alcoholism, being a single mother and living in poverty. I lived this with her and I remember many times her telling me about her childhood and it was as though I felt her pain and hurt like I lived it myself. I carried that pain with me as a child and into my adult years.

In order for us as Indigenous people to move forward I believe that we have to deal with our hurts. For me, the fact that my mom and dad went to residential school has affected the way I was raised. But I also have to acknowledge how my parents too were affected by my grandparents' attendance at the residential schools. I will get into more of my life when I share my story in chapter three. I will also share a bit of my story throughout the other chapters as it fits.

The process of writing my thesis has not been an easy one. I had to really look within myself to work on completing the writing. I too went through my own healing as I worked on completing this. It was not easy. I wanted to give up but deep down I knew that this topic came to me for a reason. These stories had to be shared and here they are.

There is a need for this study. The stories for second-generation survivors need to be told. If it wasn't for the work on first-generation survivors I would not have been able to discuss this with my father. This has provided me an opportunity to ask him a few questions about his attendance at a residential school. It is my hope that in writing this thesis it will allow second-generation and third-generation survivors the opportunity to start asking questions as well and for it to help them to share their stories.

This work needs to be alongside what is written about the survivors of residential school. This is a part of our history and our present-day realities as Indigenous people. For me, this information is important as well because society too needs to learn to understand Indigenous people.

The second chapter is my literature review on the residential school. Here I will discuss the the Canadian government and how the Indian Act was introduced. I will then cover the introduction of the residential schools and how the Indian Act forced parents to send their children to these schools. I will discuss some of the research on the effects of residential school.

The third chapter is on my methodology, Indigenous storytelling. While deciding to do my thesis on second-generation survivors I decided to use a storytelling approach as my methodology. Storytelling is a traditional practice for Indigenous people. Storytelling was a way to share legends, history or life lessons. It seemed fitting to use this approach in my research.

I sought First Nations² people who were interested in sharing their stories. I used a word of mouth method of recruitment in order to find my participants. In order to fit into the scope of my research, potential participants had to have one parent attend the Kamloops Indian Residential School. I found participants who wanted to share their story. Once I was approved to go ahead with my research I provided them with the six interview questions. I interviewed the storytellers and audio recorded them. I transcribed the work and formatted it to cover my questions but used the participants own words

² For the purpose of this thesis, I will be focusing on First Nations people in residential school. It is important to acknowledge that Metis and Inuit peoples also attended residential school (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a). As the Metis and Inuit have unique histories it would be important that they have writing specific to how they were impacted.

throughout and not altering their story in order to keep their stories true to the original as possible. I also share my own story.

Chapters four to seven are the stories of the participants that I interviewed Deanne, Lenora, Crystal and Cheryl. Three of the storytellers are all second-generation survivors who have parents that attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School. The fourth storyteller, Cheryl, her parents attended the Mission Indian residential school. Originally, I wanted to interview second-generation survivors of the Kamloops Indian Residential School but I could not find four storytellers that matched that criteria. I expanded my research scope to include second-generation survivors of residential schools with British Columbia. The eighth chapter is my story.

Chapter nine covers the themes generated from the stories of the second-generation survivors. In the analysis of the four participants' stories and my story, I was able to see the intergenerational impacts of residential school on Indigenous people. Throughout this process I took time to reflect on my story and those of the other participants and it was so difficult to realize and write about the struggle that the stories presented.

In chapter 10 is the conclusion I discuss other possible research topics. I share my own healing and my Calls to Action. I also share my hopes for the future. My hopes are simple.

I hope for a better future for Indigenous peoples.
I hope for easier childhoods for future generations.
I hope for healing of Indigenous people.

Chapter Two: Literature review

Indigenous peoples have also mounted a critique of the way history is told from the perspective of the colonizers. At the same time, however, indigenous groups have argued that history is a critical and essential aspect of decolonization (Smith, 2012, p. 31).

The truth behind the residential schools was never told within Canadian history books. It also omitted the stories of the horrific treatment of Indigenous people. Today some of that history is being documented through the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC)*. The TRC was mandated to:

Reveal to Canadians the complex truth about the history and the ongoing legacy of the church-run residential schools, in a manner that fully documents the individual and collective harms perpetuated against Aboriginal peoples, and honours the resilience and courage of former students, their families, and communities; and guide and inspire a process of truth and healing, leading towards reconciliation within Aboriginal communities, churches, governments, and Canadians generally. The process was to work to renew relationship on a basis of inclusion, mutual understanding, and respect (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a, p. 23).

The public has access to the stories of the residential schools through the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's* work and today we have the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba. Prior to the Commission's work very little information on the residential schools was available to the public. One had to have an interest and research the topic on their own or take a First Nations history class in order to learn about the residential school. However, from my own experience even the First Nations history classes provided little teaching on the residential schools at a university level. Although First Nations studies classes are sometimes offered in high school it is not mandatory. More often than not the class is cancelled due to not having

enough students enrolled in it showing First Nations students that their history doesn't matter.

In the past, the majority of the information on Indigenous peoples' history was written from a non-Indigenous perspective. Today, there is a vast amount of information on the residential schools in Canada written by Indigenous scholars. In this chapter I will review some of the literature on the residential school and the documented effects on residential school survivors after the schools were closed.

Leading up to the residential school

The first passenger trains began to operate in 1886 in British Columbia. Indian people were entirely self-sufficient, by fishing, hunting and resource-gathering, farming, ranching, mining, trapping, packing, guiding, cannery work, migrant labor, logging, and wood-cutting. But this balance began to change when greater numbers of new arrivals were granted tribal lands and resources by the provincial government (Drake-Terry, 1989, p. xvi).

Indigenous people in British Columbia had their own way of knowing and being prior to residential schools. There is documentation regarding the earlier time of contact with non-Indigenous peoples written by anthropologists (Teit, 1912; Teit & Boas, 1975). This work illustrates that life for Indigenous peoples was based on traditional systems of gathering/preserving food and a communal/egalitarian life-style.

There are many things that happened in Indigenous people's history prior to the residential schools in Canada. In British Columbia there were several events and policies regarding Indians that lead up to the residential schools.

By 1910 most Indian people had seen their usual means of self-support eroded all over British Columbia. The Indian nations had in effect been denied everything but wardship on reserve lands governed by the Indian Act. Barred from provincial schools and hospitals, denied ordinary government benefits such as pensions, prohibited from voting in federal or provincial elections, Indian people were at the mercy of Indian agents and

missionaries who wanted to “civilize” them as prerequisite for assimilation (Drake-Terry, 1989, p. xvii).

All of this was implemented at the time of the fur trade, the gold rush and the settlement of non-Aboriginal people and the railway across Canada. Indigenous people were suffering due to overly restrictive resource policies that were limiting our ability to hunt and fish, causing hunger and starvation. “Regulations controlling fishing, hunting, logging, mining and trapping took more resources from Indian people” (Drake-Terry, 1989, p. xvii). Indigenous peoples were also introduced to diseases through infested blankets. The self-sufficient and egalitarian way of life for Indigenous people was being taken away. As Indigenous people, their way of life was stripped away through Indian Act policies. Ultimately, for Indigenous people, their way of knowing and being (their identity) were being affected.

In 1876 the first consolidated Indian Act was developed (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a). This version of the Indian Act defined who was an “Indian” under Canadian Law. “The Act also defined a process through which a person could lose [their] status as an Indian. Women, for example, could lose status simply by marrying a man who did not have status. Men could lose status in a number of ways including graduating from a university” (pg. 53-54). The Indian Act was so restrictive that it completely changed Indigenous people’s way of life.

The Indian Act prohibited Aboriginal people from practicing ceremonies such as the Potlatch and Sun Dance. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015a) claims “The Indian Act was a piece of colonial legislation by which, in the name of ‘protection,’ one group of people rule and controlled another” (pg. 55). Essentially, Indigenous people became wards of the government.

The Government of Canada introduced policies under the Indian Act that were restrictive and controlled every aspect of our lives. For Indigenous people in Canada, their way of life also started to change with the introduction of missionaries. Muckle (2014) states that “unlike the fur traders, gold seekers, and settlers, missionaries had deliberate plans to change the traditional lifeways of First Nations. Their intent was to alter First Nations cultures completely, encouraging agrarian settlements and abandonment of traditional ceremonies and beliefs” (p. 81-82). Missionaries became a useful tool for the Government of Canada to use against Indigenous peoples.

The Government of Canada developed the residential school policy and partnered with the Churches to run the program.

The Canadian government made and enforced the rules, such as mandatory attendance, and providing most of the funding, while the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and United Churches operated the schools. The policy of most residential schools was first to break all children’s cultural ties to language, family and traditional lifeways, and then to re-educate them in Christian and Euro-Canadian ways (Muckle, 2014, p. 82-83).

The two forces worked together in order to assimilate Indigenous children into the new non-Indigenous society in hopes that this would be the start of Indigenous children abandoning their traditional ways of living and being. “Jointly, the Churches and the Government launched a plan of cultural genocide. With assimilation as the goal of the residential schools, it was believed that the staff needed to be very authoritarian in order to break down First Nations children’s ‘way of knowing’”(Thomas, 2000, p. 02). The joining of these two institutions have created multi-generational trauma on the Indigenous people of Canada.

Not many parents volunteered to send their children to the residential schools when they first opened. “Initially attendance at these schools was voluntary, but when parents refused to send their children, legislation was passed to enforce attendance. By the 1920’s parents were forced to send their children to residential schools” (Jack, 2000, pg. 08). Realizing that compulsory attendance was the only way, the government enacted legislation under the Indian Act to force attendance at the residential schools.

[I]n 1920 in the House of Commons discussion of changes to the Indian Act, Deputy Superintendent General Duncan Campbell Scott stated clearly the idea that Indian cultures as such were to be eliminated. ‘...Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian department, that is the whole object of this Bill’ (Miller cited in Haig-Brown, 1998, p. 31-32).

Through policy such as the one stated above and all the other policies within the Indian Act the whole objective was to get rid of any ‘Indian problem’ or ‘Indian question’. The intent of the government of this time was to do everything in its power to take over what is now called Canada and erase anything that would have been a part of the Indigenous people’s way of life.

Kamloops Indian Residential School

Originally I wanted to focus solely on the Kamloops Indian Residential School, however because of low participation, I expanded my scope. Despite this, the primary focus of this thesis is on the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Because of the narrow focus on my work, very little is written that focuses specifically on this school. The Kamloops Indian Residential School was open from 1893-1977. Agnes Jack (2000), editor of *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from Kamloops Indian Residential School*, shares the stories of thirty-two survivors of that residential school. “The stories are told, in the

storyteller's own words, edited for brevity, and are told with honesty and humor. Many of the stories tell of oppression, abuse and cruelty, but they are told without malice" (p. 09). The stories within the book provide clear examples of the lifelong effects of the residential school, as well as how it impacts the generations after. Robert Simon shares in his story,

Alcoholism is such a rampant issue and still is in our communities but it is clearly rooted in the residential school system. All the abuses are there, sexual abuse, physical abuse. Those things pass on, not only generational but intergenerational and the residential school was the major contributor. It took away people's ability to be parents. My mother didn't understand how to be a parent, so I never understood how to be a parent to my children or to be a spouse (Jack, 2000, p. 108).

Simon's story illustrates both the impact on survivors as well as the intergenerational effects of the Kamloops Indian Residential School. It speaks to the abuse and how the school affected his life as a parent and spouse.

The other main source of information on the Kamloops Indian Residential School is in the book *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School* (Haig-Brown, 1998). In her book, Haig-Brown (1998) provides a clear description of the history leading up to the Kamloops Indian Residential School and how Aboriginal children were forced to attend. This book also uses a storytelling approach combined with reviewing written material on those who ran the schools, the government and the churches. Through thirteen interviews, Celia Haig-Brown tells their stories of school life, resistance and the effects it has had on their families. These two books describe some of the secrets and dark history that occurred within the walls of the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

Having a conversation about residential school with a survivor is never easy. There are still many survivors who have not shared their story and that is understandable. This is their story and it can be very traumatic to talk about so some find it be easier to not talk about their experiences at residential school. This is a painful memory for many and this is why a lot of second-generation survivors do not know about their parents' attendance and how it has impacted their family. This is a sensitive topic that needs to be approached gently, respectfully and with an understanding that the survivor, even if they are family, may not want to share their story due to it being too painful.

For the purpose of this paper, first-generation survivors are the students that attended residential school. There were multiple generations that went to residential school. For instance, in my family my grandparents and my parents went to the residential school and are first-generation survivors of residential school. Second-generation survivors are the children of residential school survivors. Second-generation survivors did not attend residential school. I am a second-generation survivor because I did not attend. The impacts of residential school are felt by second-generation survivors but many times, second-generation survivors may not understand their parent's struggles and in turn how they are affected. As well, the general public does not always understand the intergenerational impact of the residential school experience.

First-generation survivors and their stories

As a result of these schools, many first-generation survivors returned home with emotional, physical, mental and spiritual wounds. In order to deal with the painful memories and wounds many turned to alcoholism, suicide, physical, mental, and emotional abuse. Peter Cole (2006) states:

...because of genocidal policies of the federal and provincial governments including residential schooling and legislation making it illegal for us to practice our cultures and making it illegal to raise money to fight in court for our rights and for our land over the past 150 years some of us have developed serious problems with alcohol and abuse of other substances drugs gasoline sniffing there is violence towards others and many suicides especially among the young there are accidents that are not accidents (p. 16).

The effects of residential school are having a continual impact on many Indigenous people because the effects get passed on from generation to generation. Many survivors of residential school did not know how to parent or how to be in an intimate relationship. The residential school instilled a sense of self-hatred, loneliness and abandonment (Haig-Brown, 1998; Jack, 2000). These feelings were directly and indirectly passed on to second-generation survivors.

Through the time of the residential school there are many horrible stories of the treatment such as abuse and neglect by the hands of the church staff. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) provided the opportunity for survivors to share their stories. Other authors also provided that opportunity for survivors of residential school to share their stories. In her thesis, Robina Thomas (2000) shares stories from survivors of Kuper Island Residential School. The following are excerpts from two of the survivors:

This Sister came into my class and was asking questions. She asked me a question but I didn't know the answer. She said, 'there you go already, you're nothing but boy crazy now just because you're growing up and everything you think you're pretty hot or something like that. All you're going to end up is to be a dirty drunken Indian living on the reserve with lots of dirty kids.' I started to cry (Thomas, 2000, p. 53-54).

Delmar Johnnie stated:

I want the Catholic Church and the government to apologize to my children for them being born to this father that is an alcoholic. I was a

violent, mean, obnoxious alcoholic that drove their mothers to leaving me. To apologize for the hard and angry feelings that their mothers feel towards me and to any other families that I affected (Thomas, 2000, p. 71).

Similarly, Agnes Jack (2000) has documented stories of students from Kamloops Indian Residential School. One student shares their story:

There was a lot of alcohol related deaths in my family. I went to Round Lake Treatment Centre in 1980. We did what you call a collage and writing why people died, then you had to put a cross beside it and a bottle with a cross and a skull. I could see there was a cross, bones and skull and a bottle on, by every grave. I didn't think that would have happened if I would have stayed in Skeetchestn, went to school here instead of going to school over there (Jack, 2000, p. 81).

Shirley Leon remembers:

[S]eeing the cattle trucks come onto the reserve, and scoop up the kids to go, and seeing my cousins cry, and then, and they were put on these trucks, and hauled off, and we didn't know where, and my grandmother and mother hiding us under the bed. And when the, the federal health nurse or the Indian agent would try to come into the house, my grandmother would club them with her cane (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, in p. 24).

For the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, stories were key. Julianna Alexander shares the humiliation she experienced at the Kamloops Indian Residential School:

...they made us strip down naked, and I felt embarrassed, you know. They didn't, you know I just thought it was inappropriate, you know, people standing there, watching us, scrubbing us and everything, and then powdering us down with whatever it was that they powdered us with, and, and our hairs were covered, you know, really scrubbed out, and then they poured, I guess what they call now coal oil, or whatever that was, like, some kind of turpentine, I'm not sure what it was, but anyway, it really stunk (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, p. 41).

These stories demonstrate the many feelings around residential school; the shame and humiliation that the survivors felt. These stories also show how the residential school had lasting effects after they left the schools. It affected their mental health and many

became alcoholics and then it subsequently affected relationships with one's spouse and children. Alcoholism also led to the deaths of many survivors of residential school.

These stories also show how families didn't just let their children go, they tried to protect them. Unfortunately, many of the children had to attend and from the time that they arrived the students' lives were altered and this left lifelong imprints on who they would become as adults. Many lost their lives to suicide, many hid their memories behind alcoholism, drug addiction, abuse and shame! This legacy was also passed on to their children, and this is the reason for this paper; to look at how attendance at a residential school effected the children of survivors of residential school.

Second-generation survivors and the documented effects of the residential school

Second-generation survivors are the children of residential school survivors.

They are the first generation that did not attend the residential school. It has been stated in the previous section that survivors of residential school have been undeniably impacted by their attendance at residential school. This is well documented within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015). What is starting to be documented is how it is having lasting impacts on the generations of people who did not attend, the children and grandchildren of survivors. In this section I will discuss how the residential school impacted parenting skills and this created involvement with the child welfare system. I will then discuss how the cycle of residential school and the child welfare system have impacted Indigenous people in the areas of domestic violence, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, sexual offending, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, suicide and homelessness.

Parenting and Child Welfare

We have heard how some survivors were treated in the residential school; the abuse, shame, humiliation and neglect. The neglect is a significant factor that turned into the lack of parenting skills as adults. The survivors of residential school were not nurtured and loved as children and this resulted in them becoming parents without the loving and nurturing skills necessary to raise their children. Demonstrating how lack of parenting skills impacts the next generations (Smith, Varcoe, & Edward, 2005; Lafrance & Collins 2003). Growing up in an institution where there was no nurturing and love compounded by trauma has impacted Indigenous parenting skills across Canada.

Along with the neglect and trauma, there were negative views of Aboriginal way of life. Within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) it is identified that the government and churches saw Aboriginal people as inferior.

Since government and the churches believed that Aboriginal parents were inferior when it came to raising children, and could not be relied upon to raise them to ‘proper’ Canadians, a central objective of the residential schools was to separate Aboriginal children from their parents and communities to ‘civilize’ and Christianize them” (p. 11).

These views impacted Aboriginal people’s ability to parent. In *Canada’s Residential Schools: The Legacy* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), they speak to the introduction of the child welfare system and the continuation of assimilative practices. Some Indian Residential School students were in residential school and the child welfare system. Many involved in the ‘60’s Scoop’ spoke to the struggles of being removed from their parents, community and culture, and placed into non-Aboriginal homes. “They suffered from identity confusion, low self-esteem, addictions, lower levels of educational achievement, and unemployment. They sometimes experienced disparagement and almost always suffered from dislocation and denial of their Aboriginal

identity” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 15). These are many of the same effects felt by the Indian Residential School survivors.

Lafrance and Collins’ (2003) article, *Residential Schools & Aboriginal Parenting: Voices of Parenting* conducted research regarding residential school and parenting. Lafrance and Collins (2003) also discuss children being forced to residential school and the effects of the residential school on parenting practices.

The practice separating children from their parents and their way of life had a drastic impact on almost all Aboriginal families. The structural, cohesion and quality of family life suffered. Parenting skills diminished as succeeding generations became more and more institutionalized and experienced little nurturing (p. 106).

Lafrance and Collins (2003) talk about traditional parenting practices, which include the extended family, and how the residential school took this away from families.

Traditional parenting practices included extended family assisting in raising children, it wasn’t just dependent on the mother and the father.

They also share how residential schools were used in place of child welfare services. “We were talking about the residential school being a place for kids in need. Something was going on in their families so then the group home took over that role” (Lafrance & Collins, 2003, p. 111). The residential school has broken down parenting practices. There is a lot of change that needs to occur to help heal the children and grandchildren of survivors of residential school. “The current generation of young Aboriginal people is the first generation that did not attend residential school. Nevertheless, because their parents and grandparents attended residential schools, they are deeply affected by the wounds and bitter, memories of early childhood experiences” (Lafrance & Collins, 2003, p. 112). Addictions, neglect, poverty and abuse are a few of

the reasons why social workers become involved in families' lives and these are often a result of attending residential school and the intergenerational effects on families.

Smith et al (2005) is another source on Aboriginal parenting, pregnancy and the intergenerational impact from the residential school experience. One participant shares,

It's so intergenerational. You have generations of people who have been affected by the trauma.... I have talked to people who have got five generations of trauma coming down. So you have four or five generations of people who haven't been able to connect, who haven't had a sense of spirituality, who haven't been able to make firm attachments with their caregivers. It is a direct result of residential school violence (Smith, Varcoe, & Edward, 2005, p. 46).

In order to effectively work with Aboriginal people there must be an understanding of the intergenerational impacts of residential schools. It takes time to build relationships with the families. It could take time for them to trust you. In the residential schools the students were programmed to think negatively of themselves. The schools taught the students how to feel ashamed about being Aboriginal. Their traditional teachings and values were spoken about negatively. As Aboriginal people they were taught to devalue themselves and their ways of knowing and being. "Because these experiences occurred during a formative period of emotional and moral development, they became encoded into identity, beliefs and behavior patterns... *You are good for nothing. You are just an Indian. You will never amount to anything*" (Smith et al, 2005, p.47). They left the residential school with a lot of internalized hatred and shame and then they became parents.

Smith et al (2005) goes on to explain the survivors pass on their 'teachings' to their children. "As emotional, spiritual, and social well-being were compromised by IGIRS [intergenerational impacts of residential school] and people became caught in a *downward spiral of addiction, violence, and poverty*, their strength and ability to

successfully manage life's challenges diminished" (p. 48). In dealing with IGIRS the family is in constant survival mode in dealing with on-going trauma and dysfunction.

Participants explain that if things are going to be different for their children and grandchildren, if the cycle is to be broken, then they have to face their own trauma resulting from the IGIRS and the intergenerational transmission of residential school teachings in order to stop the downward spiral of behaviors, cope with life's challenges, and find ways of healing (Smith, 2005, p. 48).

Finding ways to address the intergenerational impacts is key in helping the families struggling with the effects of residential school.

Smith et al (2005) go on to talk about ways to change impacts of residential school. They focused on *turning around* the intergenerational impacts of residential school as pivotal to care of pregnant and parenting women. They identify three sub-themes of *turning around* the impacts which were: *understanding the IGIRS, healing* and *building strength and capacity*. The final sub-theme of *rebuilding our cultures into contemporary contexts* was incorporated throughout the first three sub-themes (p. 46-47).

In order to provide services to fit within Aboriginal communities there needs to be an understanding of how residential school impacted Aboriginal people directly for first-generation survivors and through socialization and internalization of subsequent generations. There needs to be cultural practices brought back to the community as well as teachings to service providers. Smith et al (2005) states this "perspective will enable health policy, organizations, and providers to work in closer harmony with Aboriginal people to achieve their vision, instead of reinforcing the colonizing relations that are a legacy of the past and a feature of everyday practice" (p.55). A new way of working together is needed in order to change the current view of Aboriginal issues that will allow pregnant moms and parents to trust those in the health and helping professions.

This resource has spoken about the importance of turning around the intergenerational impacts of residential school. Along with this communities need to work on *building strength* within families. Communities can work on *building capacity* within communities and finding role models and mentors for families. It is vital that professionals within the community are educated on the histories and culture of the community in order to provide cultural safety. All of these aspects are what participants believe would help *heal* their communities.

This system of the government taking children away has continued with the provincial child welfare system. Fournier and Crey (2000) make the link between the residential school and the child welfare system. “The vast majority of children in care are there because of neglect. Neglect is a function of poverty and the fact that parenting skills skipped a generation or two with the residential school and foster care” (p. 325). The treatment of children within residential schools was not caring and nurturing. The schools were abusive and neglectful towards the children who attended and today the children and grandchildren are the ones suffering. They are the ones who are still dealing with government institutions such as the provincial child welfare systems.

This is an example of the ongoing colonization of Indigenous people, a further attempt of genocide similar to residential school, because it is legislated, it is identified as working in the best interests of the child. I have been working within the child welfare system for over 10 years and have witnessed how detrimental this system is to Indigenous children and families. So much work is needed within this system in order to make changes for the better of our people.

This opinion is also held by advocates such as Turpel-Lafond (2012) who states that “the legacy of harm is far from over or distant. Aboriginal children today bear the legacy of poor government decisions, policies and practices, and the resulting negative experiences of their parents, grandparents and great grandparents” (p. 22). The intergenerational effects of residential school are visible in the children’s lives when they come into contact with the child welfare systems.

Although there is not specific research pertaining to second-generation survivors of residential school and the involvement with the child welfare system, it can be seen that there is a current over representation of First Nations children in care. Blackstock (2007) states “there are more First Nations children in child welfare care today than at the height of residential schools by a factor of three” (p. 74). Blackstock (2007) claims that the reasons for the overrepresentation of First Nations children coming into care are based primarily on neglect (poverty, poor housing and substance misuse). We could argue that the reason for neglect is a direct result of colonization. Blackstock has presented evidence that highlights the inequitable funding between on/off reserve child welfare services and notes that on-reserve services receive less funding. This inequality is also evident in the level of funds available for prevention services.

Further research is needed to determine whether or not many of the children in care are third-generation survivors of residential school and/or if their parents also were involved with the child welfare system as children. If this was the case, then this would mean, minimally, three-generations of children being raised in the government systems. Increased prevention services and supports are needed within First Nations community to help support keeping children in their home, extended family or community.

In order for this to change there needs to be the opportunity to provide better service for children and families within their communities. Until there is change, Indigenous peoples will continue to be in this cycle of trauma, or we will continue to see issues of domestic violence, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, sexual abuse, addiction, homelessness and the missing and murdered Indigenous women.

To assist in the literature review, I branched out to the foundation that has documentation on the residential schools. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF, 2014) reported:

Our mission is to provide resources which will promote reconciliation and encourage and support Aboriginal people and their communities in building and reinforcing sustainable healing processes that address the legacy of physical, sexual, mental, cultural, and spiritual abuses in the residential school system, including intergenerational impacts (AFN, Vision, Mission, Values section, para.2).

From this resource I have collected the following information on: domestic violence, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, sexual offendings, missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, and suicide.

Domestic Violence

The AHF book series provides in-depth analysis of the research pertaining to the effects of the residential school. Bopp, Bopp and Lane, (2003) look at the problem of domestic violence in Aboriginal families. They define the problem of domestic violence as well as come up with an intervention that could work for Aboriginal communities.

In identifying the problem of domestic violence, it has to be clearly looking at both the offender and the victim and how both are affected. In looking at the offender you see how they have caused trauma on their family.

The man who comes before the court on a charge of domestic assault is almost certainly not only guilty of a single incident, but of orchestrating a regime of terror, abuse and domination that has caused enormous post-traumatic stress related damage to his victims, as well as ‘collateral damage’ to the children who have witnessed the abuse (Bopp, Bopp & Lane, 2003, p. 47).

As well, you have to see how he [or she] has been a victim though their own childhood experiences. “Merely punishing him for wrongdoing will not end the cycle of abuse”

(Bopp, Bopp & Lane, 2003, p. 47-48). They continue on to state,

Unless the present generation of parents are helped to see the roots of their own pain and to learn how to stop the cycle of abuse, and unless the children now living within abusive relationships receive focused therapeutic care to help them to heal from the trauma they have already experienced, the next generation will carry the abuse forward within a few short years, and the pain will go on and on (p. 92).

In order to stop the cycle, there needs to be healing for the whole family.

Within Richardson and Wade’s (2010) *Island of Safety: Restoring dignity in violence-prevention work with Indigenous families* they discuss their model of helping families in violent relationships. Using a model similar to Family Group Conferencing, Island of Safety is based on the “understanding that people resist violence and prefer respect” (p. 137). This model was created by Métis family therapists Cathy Richardson and Allan Wade, the developer of response-based therapy. In this process, they identify key topics using a structured format. They acknowledge Canada’s colonial history and work towards restoring dignity. “Dignity is the practice of treating others with respect, as defined in traditional teachings. Attending to dignity in the Island of Safety process includes promoting freedom and autonomy” (Richardson & Wade, 2010, p. 138). In this process, the child is safe if the mother is safe. They state that offenders choose to be violent and safety plans work “when professionals work consciously to restore dignity to

the parents” (Richardson & Wade, 2010, p.138). In many situations, workers are involved because parents inability to ‘protect their children’. This process takes that shaming away from the work being done.

Residential school survivors have been impacted by the abuse that they went through while attending these schools. In order to make a change in the intergenerational effects of residential school there has to be healing within families. The survivors of residential school and their children and grandchildren have been affected. If the hurts of abuse and violence are not healed within communities, then these impacts will continue for generations to come.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Some more of the AHF research was on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum (FAS).

Alcoholism is one possible way that first-generation survivors of residential school dealt with their painful memories of residential school. Unfortunately, this coping mechanism has had lifelong impacts on their children if they drank while pregnant. In *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Among Aboriginal People in Canada: Review and Analysis of the Intergenerational Links to Residential School*, Tait, (2003) states,

Links to the residential school system are also relatively straightforward, given the level of trauma experienced by former students, particularly sexual and physical abuse, and when combined with other social and cultural upheavals being experienced by Aboriginal people during this period and afterwards has, without a doubt, influenced the abuse of alcohol by many individuals, including pregnant women (p. 250).

It is stated within this research that prevention is based on reducing the numbers of pregnant women from consuming alcohol. However, what about when women don’t know that they are pregnant immediately and, being pregnant, despite the risks of FAS, does not take away the trauma of the residential schools.

As an adult I have had discussions with my mom about her alcohol use while she was pregnant with me. I have learned that my mom drank alcohol prior to her knowing she was pregnant. I know that she did nothing intentionally to hurt me. I am not sure if my struggles academically as a child had to do with possible FAS or whether it had to do with what was going on at home? Whatever was the reasoning, I am where I am because of hard work and good role models (like my mom).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions has two Call to Action regarding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Number 33 and 34. Number 33 states:

33) We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to recognize as a high priority the need to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and to develop, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, FASD prevention programs that can be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015, p. 282).

Since the Calls to Action have been released, there is new research regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and how to prevent it. Schwartz, Laukkanen and Smith's (2017) research *A prevention strategy: Eliminating FASD in Indigenous communities*, states,

Women who drink alcohol during pregnancy are often dealing with issues of poverty, abuse, and mental health issues, thus interventions must take a comprehensive approach. By viewing FASD prevention through an entire-community lens, a prevention strategy will create and nurture collaborative partnerships whose functions transcend single issues (p. 153).

In this research, they discuss the components that would create an effective prevention strategy. These include: nutrition, education, screening, brief interventions, case management/monitoring, midwifery, treatment centres and, partner targeting and

education. With these components it is important that the communities are able to create strategies that are led by the communities.

For those that are living with FASD, there are Calls to Action that discuss reform in the Criminal Justice system.

- 34) We call upon the governments of Canada, the provinces, and territories to undertake reforms to the criminal justice system to better address the needs of offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), including,
- i. Providing increased community resources and powers for courts to ensure that FASD is properly diagnosed, and that appropriate community supports are in place for those with FASD,
 - ii. Enacting statutory exemptions for mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment for offenders affected by FASD,
 - iii. Providing community, correctional, and parole resources to maximize the ability of people with FASD to live in the community,
 - iv. Adopting appropriate evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of such programs and ensure community safety (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 282).

As a result of the residential school system, there are many women who struggle with drinking alcohol prior and after they know they are pregnant. Discussing women's drinking is not to stigmatize them. It is important to have these discussions in order to allow mothers to share their stories and heal their hurts caused by the residential school system. Intergenerational trauma is being passed down and, in this case, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is a direct effect of residential school. The Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action need to be implemented in order to help deal with the ongoing intergenerational effects of residential school.

Sexual Offending

Residential school survivors have started to open up about the sexual abuse that was inflicted on them by the residential school staff. Hylton (2002) writes about Aboriginal sex offenders in the AHF series. It is clearly stated that this issue has only

recently started to be discussed. “The main challenges still often involve moving beyond myths and denial; yet the problems are serious. If Aboriginal communities and nations are to achieve their vision for the future, these problems must be addressed” (p. vi).

Hylton (2002) shared:

Statements before the Commission [Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples] by former residential students also attest to some of the horrific sexual assaults. Most notable were the reports of sexual abuse by nuns and priests, including: forced sexual intercourse and sexual touching, forced oral-genital contact, and the arranging or inducing of abortions in female children impregnated by men in authority (p.16).

The assaults the students experienced in schools have had lifelong impacts. “[T]he exposure to sexual abuse and violence resulting from colonization has allowed abusive patterns to be accepted and perpetuated” (p. 18). Hylton (2002) states the assaults along with the breakdown of cultural teachings and values have impacted Aboriginal communities because there has been a breakdown in the teachings of things such as sexuality.

Traditional Indigenous society’s views on sexuality is discussed as well as how colonization has changed these views. It is not denied that sexual abuse occurred prior to colonization; however, it is stated,

The Aboriginal perspective on sexual abuse holds that the abuser is unhealthy and has lost touch with spiritual and cultural roots and teachings. While abuse is seen as a serious threat to the victim’s well-being, the community’s well-being is also affected. Abuse is seen as interfering with the victim’s development, but it is also seen as undermining traditional cultural and social dynamics within families and communities (Hylton, 2002, p. 07).

It is vital to stop the silence of sexual abuse in order for there to be change. Our communities need to be able to have conversations about healthy sexuality. In discussing

programs, it states that not all communities have the same issues and that programming to address the issue needs to be community-based.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) also discuss treatment programming,

There is a need to help those who suffered sexual abuse to overcome that experience and not to abuse others. There is also a need for culturally appropriate forms of treatment that recognize the widespread sexual abuse that occurred in residential school and now unfortunately continues in Aboriginal communities (p. 230).

The residential school caused the intergenerational effect of sexual abuse. In order for there to be change, there needs to be programming to address the issue using cultural teachings and acknowledging the colonial systems that create the silence.

Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls

Jacobs and Williams (2011) discuss the tragedy of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in their chapter *Legacy of residential school; Missing and murdered Aboriginal women*. They review the many discriminatory policies created by the Canadian government that broke down traditional roles for Aboriginal women. The systemic displacement of Aboriginal women's roles has impacted cultural teachings and traditional ways of life for Aboriginal people, specifically speaking to the many matriarchal systems. It stated that like European beliefs, the Indian Act imposed beliefs that women and children were "subject[s] to their fathers and husbands" (Jacobs & Williams, 2011, p.123). These changes in beliefs along with the breakdown of culture, language and traditional teachings through the residential school system have had devastating impacts on Aboriginal women.

Jacobs and Williams (2011) speak about the Sisters In Spirit Initiative that looked closely at the Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada. Through their research, they were able to identify the government, media and Canadian society's lack of acknowledgement of this problem (p.131). Through the information gathered Jacobs and Williams (2011) found that,

In most cases, parents and grandparents of women had attended residential school. Many spoke of the resulting family dysfunction or disconnect as impacting their lives and placing women in a vulnerable situation. Many of the Aboriginal women had been displaced from their community due to the impacts of genocidal policies of the Indian Act (p. 132).

They stated that Aboriginal women and children are the poorest in the country and they are more likely to have involvement with the child welfare system or the justice system.

The police and the Canadian government did not do enough to protect Aboriginal women.

Canada has often failed to provide an adequate standard of protection to Aboriginal women. This has become readily apparent as more Aboriginal women go missing, more are found murdered, missing women are not found, and murders are not solved... The failure to respond quickly and appropriately to threats to Aboriginal women's lives means that Canadian officials have failed to live up to their responsibility to prevent violations of Aboriginal women's fundamental human rights (Jacobs & Williams, 2011, p.134).

There is a general belief by Canadian society that Aboriginal women's lives don't matter. "Families who are grieving murdered and disappeared members may be reluctant to even consider reconciling with a society whose institutions have failed them so profoundly" (Jacobs & Williams, 2011, p.135). There is a lot of work to do in order for the Canadian government to be trusted by Aboriginal families. This work has started through the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Inquiry. This Inquiry has started out across Canada.

In response to calls for action from Indigenous families, communities and organizations, as well as non-governmental and international organizations, the Government of Canada launched an independent National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in September 2016.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which is composed of five Commissioners from across the country, is entirely independent from federal, provincial and territorial governments and crown corporations. The Commissioners' mandate is to examine and report on the systemic causes of all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada by looking at patterns and underlying factors (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2017).

One issue that hasn't been brought up are the missing and murdered Indigenous men.

Many family members who have their brothers, fathers, uncles or grandfathers missing may feel left out as the men are not a part of the Inquiry. Within the website there is no mention of the missing Indigenous men. I have to mention this because I have an uncle who has been missing for 10 years. My uncle left his home one evening and never returned. He left behind his wife and his children. His immediate and extended family are left with unanswered questions. What about my uncle? What about all the other Indigenous men in Canada who have gone missing?

Suicide

Kirmayer et al, (2007) focus on suicide. They discuss the social issues involved in many Indigenous people and families. What stood out for me was the correlation between residential school and suicide. "Suicide is associated with a history of separations, losses, and emotional deprivation early in life. The residential school experience was characterized by early separation of children from their parents and all that was familiar to them" (Kirmayer et al, 2007, p. 71). For those after the residential school, there may have been the child welfare experience that may have created the

feelings of loneliness and others that are described above. Nonetheless, the social issues that describe the intergenerational effects of residential school had devastating impacts on many Indigenous peoples' lives.

For those who died due to suicide, the pain and trauma that was caused by the residential schools has stopped. However, these feelings of separation, losses and emotional turmoil are continuing and is being passed on to second and third generation survivors of residential school. For myself, I think of the story that my mom told me about her thoughts of suicide. She also told me that if it wasn't for my older brother Jason that she wouldn't be alive today, he gave her a reason to live and for this he is my hero.

The feelings of abandonment, hurt from abuse and neglect are all intergeneration impacts until something is done to help the communities in need of healing.

...when communities have a strong sense of their own historical continuity and identity; resources are able to provide vulnerable youth with a bridge or buffer to help them get through periods of struggling with feelings of identity confusion and discontinuity. Where cultural transmission has been disrupted, vulnerable youth will have no such buffer and their risk of suicide may increase (Kirmayer et al, 2007 p. 76).

It is up to communities to work on going back to traditional teachings and help the younger generations understand the history and identity to help them during times of struggle.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation/ and Truth and Reconciliation Commission have worked on researching the many intergenerational effects of residential school. This is the first step in documenting the history and impacts of residential school that shows an accurate portrayal of the Government of Canada's history in dealing with Indigenous peoples.

Homelessness

Homelessness is a problem for a lot of Indigenous people. Many Indigenous people struggle with poverty, addiction or mental illness also may have to deal with being homeless. Menzies (2009) states:

The data provided have identified how external social policies have corroded the links between critical elements within Aboriginal culture. Individual, family, community, and nation now exist in isolation of one another. Social policies including the Indian Act, the residential school system, and the child welfare legislation, have systematically negated Aboriginal culture and imposed values that are contradictory to our traditional ways of relating to one another (p. 15).

As a result of these social policies inflicted upon Aboriginal people, there are more symptoms of mental health issues and addictions than those in the general populations (Menzies, 2009, p. 4). Menzies states there is more needed for the homeless other than housing. “For Aboriginal peoples, the solution to homelessness is not necessarily the construction of housing; rather, the response also requires a holistic approach that reconstructs the links between the individual, family, community, and Aboriginal nation” (Menzies, 2009, p. 21). The intergenerational trauma that Indigenous people are suffering has to be dealt with on a micro and macro approach in order to stop social issues such as housing.

Menzies goes on to state that there needs to be long-term holistic programs. These programs need to incorporate family and community and there is no ‘quick fix’ as the intergenerational effects have been passed down generations and it will take long term solutions and changes to public policy in order for there to be change.

Conclusion

The intent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was to work towards reconciliation between Indigenous communities, churches, government and

general Canadian society. Reconciliation could help the many Indigenous peoples who are intergenerational survivors of residential school. The multitude of issues that have been described above are all systemic issues that have started with policies made by both the provincial and federal government. The Indian Act and provincial child welfare legislation are two examples of policies that have eradicated Indigenous traditional ways of being and knowing. Reconciliation is about trying to repair that damage caused by governmental policies.

I have provided an overview of the history of Indigenous people from the time of contact and the introduction of residential schools. I have highlighted the effects on first-generation survivors and subsequent generations. I reviewed the research pertaining to effects of residential school and how it has impacted Indigenous peoples in regards to: parenting, child welfare involvement, domestic violence, fetal alcohol spectrum, suicide, sexual abuse, homelessness and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. With this information I am able to display my understanding of the development and implementation of the residential school system and the effects on survivors and the second-generation survivors.

Chapter Three: Honouring the Storytellers

Growing up I always remember my mom telling me stories about her life. She was my first storyteller. These stories taught me about why I was growing up in Kamloops as opposed to growing up in my community with our family. I learned about the effects of colonization, racism and the struggles of being a Native woman in a city through my mom.

At the time when my mom would share her stories I didn't fully understand the importance of them. I remember wondering why she would tell this story or that story whenever we would be doing certain things, like fishing. But now that I reflect on it, she was sharing something that she had to let out. This is how I feel about this work being done right now. I have to get it out, so here it is.

I learned through my mom's stories that as Indigenous people we had to endure a lot of pain throughout our history. She was able to be real with me about her life circumstances growing up on the reserve. Alcoholism, extreme poverty, abuse, suicide and her parents not being around are some of the themes of her story. She told me about her being sexually abused. For these reasons and others, she chose to raise me in Kamloops. Other reasons were for her to get her education. Education came with its struggles but she never did hide anything from me. Her story was the most important story that I heard because I am a part of that story. This is the reason I want to share my own story of being a second-generation survivor of residential school. She has taught me that it is okay to share my story. She continuously tells me that her story is my story.

I grew up in Kamloops with my mom although our community was only an hour and a half away. At one time, I went to Sk'el'ep Elementary School, the Kamloops

Indian Band school located right beside the Kamloops Indian Residential School. I did not understand what this building was about at the time. I didn't know that both my parents went to that school. I didn't know that three of my four grandparents went there either. Other than that half year at Sk'el'ep, I went to the public schools in Kamloops.

My mom's experiences growing up were difficult. When she was 15 years old she had my brother Jason. This was also when she went to the residential school. She told me that she was not there for long because every weekend she would run away home to Pavilion and see my brother. He was being cared for by my Granny Harriet. She told me she was kicked out of the residential school for running away.

She also told me about seeing her brother William at the residential school. She remembers getting ready to get on the school bus to go to school in town and she saw him. She said he was hiding on the side of the residential school and he called her over. He told her "I don't like it here. I want to go home". She told me she thought he was getting bullied. She told me that he was kicked out of the residential school later on as well. She stated that later on he started lifting weights and 'he was solid'. She talked about him having seizures and how it affected him. He lost his job because of his seizures and he also lost his driver's license. She told me he lost his girlfriend. He ended up shooting himself and taking his life. I share this story because when I ask my mom about her time at the residential school she always brings up William. I never met him but I bet he would have been a great uncle.

I remember in high school I was in a social studies class and I wanted to do a paper on the residential school. I remember I didn't get a good mark, maybe a C- because I didn't cite my work. I thought I used the best possible reference, my mom.

The mark included comments that indicated that because I did not include any citation I received a low grade. He didn't mention that I written a good paper only that I needed "academic sources". The only information I remember I read for that assignment was one of my mom's textbooks *Knots in a String: An Introduction to Native Studies in Canada* (Brizinski, 1989). I still remember that teacher and that paper and to this day it still bothers me. That teacher made me feel as though my history was not valid because it was not written in one of our classroom textbooks.

Why our voices need to be heard

As Indigenous people we need to continue to share our stories regarding our history. The traditional practice of storytelling is the way that we pass on knowledge to our younger generations. It is important that we share our stories. As I have learned through my high school experience that I shared above our history has been omitted from printed text and it needs to be shared. Our history has started to be written by Indigenous scholars.

Our histories have been inaccurately published within the world of academia (Archibald, 2008, p. 85). Curriculum has now been developed with the help of scholars such as Jo-Ann Archibald. She shared that she didn't want children to experience the humiliation caused by teachers inaccurately portraying Indigenous people as "simplistic and primitive....tending to reinforce stereotypes" (p. 85). She continues to talk about how she assisted in the development of Sto:lo curriculum. The committee assisted in sharing stories in the curriculum development. This is one way that Indigenous scholars are assisting in taking back their knowledge so it isn't inaccurately taught.

Robina Thomas (2000) made an important point about the use of storytelling in research. She stated “In the past, life stories have been viewed as supplementary material to support other forms of research” (p. 22). Indigenous scholars have had to fight to use the Indigenous storytelling as their primary methodology. Thomas (2000) also states “Storytelling allows for the ‘other’, or those voices that have been erased, to be included in the dominant discourse. Storytelling has the ability to fill the gaps in the present documentation of the lives of First Nations people” (p. 22-23). Thomas’ research is filling in that gap for the survivors of Kuper Island Residential School. My work will fill in the gap for second-generation survivors of residential school.

As this research is about Indigenous people, it is fitting to use an Indigenous methodology. My epistemology is from an Indigenous perspective. “Indigenous epistemology is our cultures, our worldviews, our times, our languages, our histories, our spiritualities and our places in the cosmos. Indigenous epistemology is our systems of knowledge in their context, or in relationships” (Wilson, 2008, p. 74). This thesis is written from my perspective as an Indigenous storyteller and includes my story as well as the stories of four Indigenous participants; all of us are second-generation survivors of residential school.

We are a part of the first generation of Indigenous people who did not attend a residential school! We didn’t go to the schools but we saw what it did to our parents, families and community. We saw the first-hand effects. We saw the hurt, the pain, the anger and the sadness. As Indigenous people we are forever impacted by the residential schools. More importantly, the residential schools did not defeat us. We are still here. As Indigenous people our ancestors have fought against disease, colonization and

genocide. We can overcome by bringing back our traditions such as storytelling and pass the teachings onto the younger generation.

So our children can understand

For myself, I want to share these stories for the children growing up confused and not knowing why some Indigenous people are struggling within Canadian society.

Many Aboriginal people have said that to understand ourselves and our situation today, we must know where we come from and know what has influenced us. The historical and intergenerational effects of colonization and assimilation still affect our people and communities today. Elders' life stories can show how we can keep our cultural knowledges intact. Their stories depict resilience and resistance to colonization. (Archibald, 2008, p. 42-43)

I don't want Indigenous children to believe the stereotypes that society and media try to portray our people as. I want the children to have an answer as to why our people are struggling. I want them to hear the stories of resistance and resiliency.

[N]ot only do I share these stories but also I now understand that they are vital to the survival of First Nations peoples. As with the voice of my Grandmother, these stories leave us with a sense of purpose, pride and give us guidance and direction-these are stories of survival and resistance (Thomas, 2005, p. 238).

It is important that children can learn the stories and history of their family from their parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents. Traditionally, this was a key part of a child's upbringing. Our legends are the same. They need to be shared. Our history needs to be told by the knowledge keepers so when they attend school they know who they are. They will not have books telling them who they are. They will already know.

Many times I think of children who grow up in foster care and who do not hear the stories from their parents or grandparents about residential school. This is a part of who they are. This could give them answers as to why their family is struggling. Why

they are where they are. Why they are in care. This is just one of many examples of how these stories can assist the younger generation. Maybe they are the third generation and they are the ones who are not fully aware of the history.

Indigenous storytelling research

As an Indigenous researcher it is vital to me to use Indigenous knowledge transmission through the use of a storytelling methodology. “Story as methodology is decolonizing research. Stories of resistance inspire generations about the strength of the culture” (Kovach, 2009, p. 103). As time goes on, these stories that are shared could help Indigenous people work through their own struggles regarding intergenerational trauma caused by colonization and residential schools.

Through this process it has always been important to remember all those that came before me. Within *Storytelling in the Spirit of Wise Woman: Experiences of Kuper Island Residential School*, Thomas (2000) states “I feel that my methodology forces me to remember my Ancestors, traditions and culture throughout the entire process of this research” (p. 21). In this work I always remembered to keep true to who I am as an Indigenous person and maintain this focus.

It is important for me to provide a space for stories to be shared that have not yet been told. Some stories of first generation survivors have been told through the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. This is a powerful moment in our history as it is providing healing for many of the first-generation survivors of residential school. Now is the time for second-generation survivors to share their stories. It is time for our voices to be heard. “Story, then, is a means to give voice to the marginalized and assist in creating outcomes from research that are in line with the needs of the community”

(Kovach 2009, p. 100). From what I have been hearing while discussing my research with others, these stories are needed in the community for our own people to understand why we have been struggling as a people. Stories such as these can illustrate how our people have been affected by the residential schools, provide some information to many who have not heard about the residential schools and how it is still impacting us today. As well, there are people who have heard about the residential schools but do not understand what happened within them.

Storytelling is used in various ways within the Indigenous community. According to Thomas (2000) “Traditionally stories and storytellers were used for the same reasons, to teach values, beliefs, morals, history, and life skills” (p. 21). This definition provides a thorough picture of the many situations that a story is used. For myself I have seen storytelling used by elders to share creation stories that were also considered a form of entertainment. I have seen stories used by my mom to help me learn life lessons through her own experiences.

For the most part, non-Indigenous peoples have written the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. “[O]ur history is only 160 years old because before that nobody in british columbia¹ could read or write white or spell though we have always written on stone we have been here tens of millennia” (Cole, 2006, p. 54). As Indigenous people were not writing the history books, the majority of Indigenous peoples’ history is omitted. All of the discriminatory actions by the Canadian Government are excluded from these books. For these reasons, the work that I have undertaken, to document the

¹ “Cole eschews punctuation and capitalization, chooses not to cite “Eurotheorists,” and uses a poetic, lyrical style that draws on word play, stories, humour, and blunt honesty. Transcending most recognizable Western academic traditions, Cole welcomes readers into conversation with him (Westlund, S. 2008, p. 311).

stories of second-generation survivors of the residential school system is critical. This work is adding these formerly excluded stories.

There have been many times throughout my life where I have had that urge inside me to speak up about different topics. My heart starts to race; my hands start to clam up. I feel a sudden need to say something. Whether I was at work, school or anywhere else, I find myself feeling the need to speak up regarding different Indigenous issues. I had the same feelings when I was asked ‘what is your research topic?’ I would reply, “My research topic is a storytelling approach on the impacts/effects of the residential school on second-generation survivors. Those were the people whose parents attended an Indian Residential School, like myself. I interviewed four participants who are second-generation survivors and I asked them to share their story. I have also included my own story as a second-generation survivor”.

The need for this study

The major focus of my research is on the Kamloops Indian Residential School because this is the school that my parents and grandparents had to attend. I wanted all the storytellers to be linked to the Kamloops Indian Residential School, but I had to open up my call for participants because I needed more storytellers. The history of the Kamloops Indian Residential School is documented by authors such as Celia Haig-Brown (1988) and Agnes Jack (2006). The stories of some of the survivors of the Kamloops Indian Residential School have also been documented. These stories continue through their children who did not attend the residential schools and they too have been impacted by the residential school system and these are important stories to share.

This research is a part of me. As an Indigenous woman, I have lived the impacts/effects of the residential school. Growing up, I did not know what a residential school was until my mom taught me about it. Yet she didn't tell me she attended. Residential schools were not something that I was taught in elementary or high school. I learned about all the different countries and their people, and about how they 'discovered' Canada. However, I did not learn about *úcwalmicw* (Indigenous people, people of the land).

I feel that I needed to share these stories for three reasons: for myself, my community and for society at large. I say that this research is for myself because I am a second-generation survivor and I feel that my story may benefit someone who has grown up with unanswered questions like me. For myself, I had questions such as: why weren't my parents together to raise me? Why did my siblings live elsewhere? Why did my parents have to drink all the time? Why did I always feel like I didn't fit in either with my family in Pavilion or when I lived in Kamloops? I always seemed like an outsider.

These stories are also for the community whether it is the St'at'imc or Secwepemc Nations or for the Indigenous community in general. Our stories are important and I feel that they need to be shared within our communities to start and/or continue this dialogue. I am always thinking of the next generation and how they need to learn about these stories because it is a part of their story as well.

I also share these stories for society at large who may not understand why Indigenous people are struggling or why we keep talking about residential school. My issue is when I hear people make snide comments like 'get over it', 'it happened so long ago' and/or 'our tax dollars keep going to you people'. If one of these stories are read by

the general public and they better understand our history and our struggle than that makes all this worth it. There needs to be an understanding from society that Indigenous history and the current struggles are the result of 150 years of genocidal Canadian policies.

This was a personal, healing and life changing journey for me. Wilson (2008) believes that “Indigenous research *is* a life changing ceremony” (p.61). I really do understand this now.

This research was much more than just a paper on something I was interested in researching, this research is my life and my family’s life. Through sharing my story, the most intimate details of my life and those of my family were written for everyone to read, but because this work is healing, I am open to this process.

Preparing for my research

Once I completed my coursework I couldn’t just start my research. There were a couple important steps that I had to complete prior to seeking out and interviewing participants. I had to complete my thesis proposal and an ethics application. These both needed to get completed and approved prior to me being able to start data collection.

The thesis proposal was my first step. I had come up with my topic to research the impact and effects of residential school on second-generation survivors of residential school. I completed a literature review and I looked at the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and specifically looked at the introduction of the residential schools, the Indian Act and the effects of the residential school that had been documented up to this point. Completing this work allowed me to see what information was out there on residential school and the intergenerational effects.

Throughout the process of taking my courses storytelling stood out as a methodology I wanted to use in my research. I pulled out all the work I had read on storytelling. I was also introduced to the writing of Robina Thomas in her thesis *Storytelling in the Spirit of Wise Woman: Experiences of Kuper Island Residential School*. Her thesis stood out for me as the methodology and the topic were similar to what I planned on writing. Her research was on first-generation survivors and I was doing mine on second-generation survivors. She was using storytelling methodology and so was I.

For my ethics application I had to complete the *Human Research Ethics Board Application for Research Ethics Approval for Human Participant Research* form. Within this document I had to include my supervisor, title for my thesis and state that I was working with Aboriginal participants. The portions that took a little more work were receiving approvals with the Lillooet Tribal Council as I was incorporating some of the St'at'imc traditions. I also had to write a description of my research project, my questions and my recruitment plan.

I formulated six research questions as guides for the discussions when I met with the participants. These questions were designed so I could make links between struggle, resilience and cultural teachings. The questions were:

1. Tell me your story?
2. Which of your parents attended Kamloops Indian Residential School?
3. Have you been affected by your parents attendance at the Kamloops Indian Residential School.
4. What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Kamloops Indian Residential School?
5. How do you define resilience and what contributed to your sense of resilience growing up?
6. What type of cultural or traditional teachings did you learn about growing up? Are you currently involved in cultural traditions?

For questions 3, 4 and 5 I changed the questions to fit one participant whose parents attended St. Mary's Indian Residential School. The changes to the questions were as followed:

1. Which of your parents attended an Indian Residential School within British Columbia?
2. Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Indian Residential School?
3. What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?

In my recruitment plan it stated:

I will be using a word of mouth method of recruitment. I will also use a snowball sampling method if I am not able to find enough participants through word of mouth.

I live in a relatively small community. As time goes by I have been sharing my research topic, there have been family, friends and colleagues (through work and school) who have said that when it comes time for me to begin interviewing participants they would be interested in sharing their stories as second-generation survivors of Indian residential school. After I have received approval from the ethics board I will return to those individuals and ask them if they still want to be participants. I have had a number of people come forward who are volunteering to participate. If this process does not provide enough participants then I will use a snowballing method of recruiting. In my recruitment script, I will inform the participants that if they know an individual who fits the study, to share my contact information with the individual.

I then discussed some of the ethical considerations while conducting this research such as confidentiality, full informed consent and informing that they can withdraw their interview at any time throughout the process. I also wanted it to be clear that the participants would be a part of creating their story to ensure its accuracy.

Throughout the proposal and ethics application process I was able to see the process that was involved in writing a thesis. It had been clearly laid out in all the details within these two steps. Once my thesis proposal was approved by my committee and I

had received Human Research Ethics Board approval I was able to begin my research and gathering the stories.

Data collection

After receiving approval from the Human Research Ethics Board at the University of Victoria I started seeking out participants. I informally shared my research topic and was able to identify people who were interested in being interviewed. If they hesitated I did not continue to pursue them as participants. I let them know this and stated that if they would like to be a volunteer they can let me know.

Prior to receiving approval from the Human Research Ethics Board at UVIC I had participants wanting to volunteer when I spoke about my research topic. I let them know that when I received approval for my research I would reconnect with them. I returned to those individuals who agreed to be participants and asked them if they still were interested in being interviewed. I asked them if they wanted to share their story as a second-generation survivor of the Kamloops Indian residential school. I started my interviews with them as long as they had a parent that attended the Kamloops Indian residential school.

I provided all the participants with my interview questions (see Appendix 1) and allowed them to choose the time and location for the interviews. When we decided where to conduct the interviews I made sure that it was a quiet location where we would be undisturbed. This would allow all the participants to be fully focused on the interviews taking place.

On the day of the interviews, I connected with the participants to confirm their attendance, the location and time. There were three interviews conducted at my office. I

arrived at the location early to prepare. The interviews occurred after work hours and on weekends. In order for me to start off the interviews in a good way, following cultural practices and being mindful of the stories that might be shared I began by smudging the room.

I have learned that sage is used to cleanse oneself. I light the sage and to use it in prayer. I use sage and smudge myself and ask for protection and to help in my own healing. As the sage burns I fan it over my body and throughout the room to protect those in the space. Smudging is a ceremony that I use to keep me connected to my ancestors. When I smudge and pray, that is when I feel closest to my ancestors.

At work, I smudged the room that I was using because I work at an agency that does child protection and I felt that the room should be cleansed prior to the interviewees arriving. At the same time, I prepared myself emotionally, spiritually and make sure that I am fully present while the participant shares their story. As well, the sage was available if the participants wanted to smudge prior to the interview. For the interview that occurred at my home, I did the same.

I travelled to Merritt for one interview and this took place in the participant's home. I arrived as their family was leaving the home. I brought my sage in case they wanted to smudge and informed the participant that it was there if they wanted to use it before or after the interview. She chose not to smudge and we met at her kitchen table and conducted the interview. Of the four stories that were documented in this work, two completed their interview in one meeting, and two were completed in two meetings. As well, I must note that I interviewed five participants but only four are shared. There is more explanation further on in this chapter.

Prior to starting the interviews, I went over the informed consent form (see Appendix 2) with the participants and asked if they had any questions. In regards to confidentiality I thought it was important to share that they can be anonymous. In the consent form it stated,

In terms of protecting your identity if you choose to remain anonymous, I will change your names within the written results. I will also change any identifying information pertaining to your family, age, community, current employment or any other information that may identify who you are. However, if you choose to have names in the document I will honour your request.

None of the participants had questions and the consent form was signed. When the interview started I began audio-recording and I started off the interview by saying,

This was an informal interview process. We have just gone over the consent form and you have signed it. I am interviewing you on being a second-generation survivor of residential school and I am asking you to share your story on how you were impacted by your parent's attendance. You have a copy of the interview questions. You can look at those as a guide in answering the questions. If there are any questions missed, I will go back to them. We can start now. Tell me your story.

They then shared their stories.

The interviews were guided by the list of questions (Appendix 1) that I provided to the participant after we reviewed the consent form. All of the participants answered all six questions and we didn't have to return to any of them afterwards. It was important for me to hold space as they shared their story. They used the questions as their guide in telling their story. I noticed many similarities as I heard their stories. This validated for me that I was asking the right questions.

I came across some challenges in seeking out participants. I had five potential participants that fell through and one that I interviewed but was not written into my thesis. I had an opportunity to interview Potential Participant one (PP1) who I thought

would be a great storyteller, a story of struggle and of growth. This participant (PP1) later withdrew from my project. At the last minute we came across a roadblock. There was a family member who didn't want participant (PP1) to share their story. I was not prepared for this. I focused on preparing the participant but I didn't think about the family whose story would be told during this process. What I did come to realize in the bigger picture is that the residential school has instilled so much shame and guilt into our communities. Today people are still afraid to share their story, or for their story to be shared and some of our family members have the same fears as well. This is the reality of our experiences as Indigenous people. There are those who do not want their story shared and I accept that and I believe that it takes courage to admit that and to identify that. Thank you to that family member for that lesson.

I also had the opportunity to spend some time with an individual who went to Kamloops Indian Residential School and they encouraged me to speak to their children and ask them to share their story of being a second-generation survivor. This person was pointing me in the direction of their children. For that I was humbled because this came within a month after participant (PP1) withdrew due to a family member asking them not to share their story. This prepared me to keep going and not to take the previous experience personally or to see it as a block in my research. I ended up asking this person's daughters and one of them agreed to be interviewed. Thank you to that individual for helping this learning process to come full circle.

I also came across a person who agreed to participate (PP2) but I did not hear back from them. I had one close family member agree to participate (PP3) as well but then prior to us deciding on a date she decided not to be interviewed. She stated that she

wasn't ready to share her story and I understood that. I also had a participant (PP4) who was open to being interviewed but due to her location I was unable to meet with her. I had one participant interview and suggest another participant (PP5) however due to their struggles at the moment I did not feel that ethically I could ask them to participate. I interviewed one participant (PP6) who received their transcript and I did not get it back. The individual said they wanted to write their own story and did not provide me with it. I gave a deadline and I did not get the transcript back.

As a result of all these challenges in finding participants I expanded my scope of my participants. In order for me to gather enough participants, I changed my criteria to include all British Columbia residential schools not just the Kamloops Indian Residential School and I had one more participant. I edited my interview questions (Appendix 1(a)), and my consent form (Appendix 2(a)) to accommodate the changes to my call for participants. I ended up getting my final participant. She mentioned that she was interested initially when she heard about my research however her parents attended a different residential school than the Kamloops Indian residential school. I received approval to modify my scope and I was able to interview her. For this I am thankful, as I was able to learn a lot from this participant's story.

There are many reasons why storytellers are not ready to share. Although these stories were not shared, I have it documented that there are people who are in the process of dealing with how they are impacted/affected by being second-generation survivors of

residential school. They showed an interest in wanting to be interviewed as well and for this there needs to be mention of their efforts/attempts.

I interviewed three second-generation survivors whose parent(s) attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School. I also shared my own story as both my parents attended the Kamloops Indian residential school. I interviewed one second-generation survivor whose parents went to St. Mary's Indian Residential School, located in Mission BC.

All four of the interviews were audio-recorded. After the interviews took place I started transcribing. Transcribing the interviewed posed to be very difficult. It did take a lot of time. It seemed the words were magnified as I kept rewinding the audio-recording. There is something about hearing the stories over and over to write them down, then to make sure the transcript was accurate. I could rehear the many emotions throughout the process. Emotionally, I made sure to take care of myself throughout this process.

In order for me to take care of myself through this process I needed to keep checking in with myself. I took several breaks while transcribing. I also wrote in a journal throughout this process. I would ask myself, am I being triggered? Were any of the stories similar to mine? If so I would take more time transcribing the story.

After I completed the transcripts I sent the participants their transcripts. This was important to me because I had to ensure accuracy and make sure the storyteller was in control of their stories. I wanted to ensure they had the opportunity to add, edit or delete any part of their story. They were in control of this process.

When I sent the participants their transcripts of the interviews I stated in my email, "Please feel free to make any changes. Just bold anything you want to add and put

a strike through anything you want deleted”. I received minor changes when they returned them to me. If I had any questions about my transcribing I asked the participant. I got feedback stating they were happy they could help me with my education.

Once I had the transcripts approved, I started writing the stories. I wanted to keep it as much to their words as possible. I moved things around to allow the stories to flow. As I was reviewing the stories, I continued to see the themes come out. Seeing the themes showing up in the stories validated the work that I was doing.

Do no harm

In order to do no harm it was up to me to make sure there were no issues regarding power relations. I made sure that the one sharing their story directs the “place, timing and pace of the discussion” (Archibald, 2008, p. 109). This is their story and they are the ones guiding this process. As well, I discussed with the participants about confidentiality. I informed them that they were able to be anonymous if the preferred.

Within my consent form I also stated:

There is also a limit to confidentiality due to the Kamloops Residential School survivors and this community being small (the interior of British Columbia) but I will honour your confidentiality to the best of my ability.

In the end, all of my participants were open to using their identifying information.

I did not knowingly interview anyone who I perceived to have emotional trauma or serious personal issues. Because of the nature of the project and the concerns about re-traumatizing someone. As stated earlier, I had one participant suggested to me to interview who I had to decline due to their current instability.

That individual was a good example of how colonization, trauma and the effects of residential school have impacted a person but the family member identified was not in

a healthy place in their life. This individual identified was struggling with their own life on a personal level and I knew this. It would have been unethical for me to ask them to share their story as they were not in a healthy place. I thanked the participant for making the suggestion and respectfully explained why I was unable to proceed with asking that family member to be a participant.

For me, this research is connected to me on a personal level and I conducted thorough work with the participants. They were a part of sharing, editing and finalizing their stories to ensure the information was accurate. I made sure that all the storytellers saw all the final drafts of their story and my analysis to ensure that I did not misunderstand their story because I want to portray an accurate account of their story.

As my story was shared as well, I made sure to take care of myself throughout this writing process. For me when I think of the residential school, I think of my grandparents, my parents, my aunts and my uncles. I think of all the struggles they went through in the residential school. I think of the struggles they endured once they left and returned home. These struggles that led to the death of some of my family that created grief and loss for those that were still around. All of this was compounded by the struggles of being an Indigenous person in a non-Indigenous society. Feeling like outsiders on our own land and society making our people feel as inferior within our own nations. All of this I had to process while I listened to the stories being shared and as I wrote my own story.

I kept notes of any stories that I wanted to share and this is how I created my story that is included. I had to decide what stories I wrote and what stories I left out. For me, I based this on my own healing and what I felt comfortable sharing. I have omitted some

information from first drafts and changed some of what I wrote because of my comfort level in what I felt I was ready to share. Like the other participants, I gave myself the opportunity to add and omit parts of my story.

I have had a lot of dialogue with my mom about this process. It was always easier to talk to my mom. I have had limited dialogue with my dad due to the nature of the topic. This is a sensitive discussion that I explain more in my story.

As an Indigenous woman I take the responsibility of doing no harm when conducting my research. To the best of my knowledge and teachings, I did my best and walked in a good way and I did my research in a good way.

This work is a documentation of storytelling told from an Indigenous perspective. I am grateful for those who have allowed me to share their story. “[T]hose who shared their knowledge with me did so with great care and often said they spoke the truth as they knew it” (Archibald, 2008, p. 24). As stated earlier, our history has been either incorrectly portrayed or omitted from written text. This is my opportunity to work from an Indigenous perspective and start from a place of ‘knowing’ as this is my story as well. I am not an outsider looking in at the participants, I am a participant as well.

Another part of doing research in a good way is identifying that I used my traditional knowledge throughout this process. “I declare openly that I am arguing for my language, knowledge and culture and against reproducing colonizing forces in my research” (Kovach, 2009, p. 90). An example of showing my culture throughout this process was gifting the participants when we had completed the interview portion of the work. This is my way of thanking them for sharing with me. I have been taught that when you are requesting something from someone that you give them a gift. They had

participated in my learning and I wanted to thank them with offering them a basket that I had made for them of canned fruits, salmon, other canned goods and sage.

Once I am done my thesis, I plan on providing a dinner to honour the participants who allowed me to share their stories. I plan on making a feast for our families and to share a meal together. I have purchased and plan on honouring them each with a Pendleton blanket. I also plan on singing an honour song for these women whom I have been so humbled to share their story. I will provide them with a copy of this thesis for them to keep as this is their story as well.

In my view, the significance of this dinner is to complete the ceremony. As stated earlier in this chapter, I see my research as a ceremony, like what Wilson (2008) discusses. As an Indigenous woman, I was raised to thank those who have helped me along the way. They had trust in me to share their story in a good way. They made time for me to hear their stories. Their stories are documented to help Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to better understand the impacts and effects of residential school on the children of survivors. I could not have completed my Masters in Social Work without them. This is my way of giving back to them.

The Struggles

Throughout the process of completing my thesis I have had to come across many struggles. One big hurdle for me included the writing blocks. Another barrier was the fact that I was working. Finally, I had to deal with grief and loss that impacted my studies. In the end though, I completed the requirements of my thesis study.

Writer's block

There were many times throughout this process that I was unable to write. To me it felt like I was never going to get the work complete and then the anxiety of being a failure set in. I was being asked by community members if I had my Master's yet. Unbeknownst to them it almost brought me to tears when I had to say no. Throughout the time of reading I came across some validating statements.

Many of the social issues and challenges that confront marginalized communities will also be a part of the biography and social network of an insider indigenous researcher. Visiting relatives who are sick, looking after grandchildren or someone's teenager, writing submissions, being the breadwinner for more than one household, being in constant mourning, having to 'rush home' to deal with emergencies, and being at the constant call of a community are often a very normal part of life for indigenous researchers who are also trying to make their way in careers. While every researcher may claim to have similar responsibilities, and at some point to have taken on similar burdens, there is a qualitative difference between the conditions of people living in marginalized communities and those of the middle-class suburbia" (Smith, 2012, p. 207).

Throughout the process of researching, writing and transcribing I kept having things come up. I had my aunt connecting with me regularly asking "how's the writing"? and it was painful to answer that I have been very busy (not doing my thesis). Things seemed to always be coming up. I have to add that this aunt is a role model and helped my mom in parenting me. At times it felt as though I was letting her down, although I know she was just encouraging me.

I did my own journaling throughout this process. One example of my journaling was when I had a writer's block. I sought out advice from fellow students and my supervisors. I was advised that this is a part of the process, to start journaling to find out what is stopping me from writing. I came up with the following.

April 1, 2014

I have been going through a mental block which has been preventing me from writing/reading. I have been processing my story. What will I share? How personal will my story be? When will I tell my dad? That day came and he told me that he can sign over \$3000.00 for my education. This was the Personal Education Credits because he was a residential school survivor. How did this make me feel? I instantly came to tears! I told him I was doing my thesis on residential school. My dad now knows my thesis topic and he is thinking of me. He wants to help me. He acknowledges my work. My hard work and dedication. He never said that but that is what I got. He wants to help.

This excerpt of my journal reminds me of one of the stories of a residential school survivor within Thomas's (2000) work. It stated,

I started talking about some of the residential school experiences. I told them I couldn't even hold my child and tell them they were doing something really good. I couldn't say '*I'm really proud of you son. I'm proud of you daughter.*' I couldn't compliment them (p. 63).

My moment with my dad on the phone it meant so much and reading this person's perspective as a survivor of residential school struggling to show validation or acknowledgement towards their child. It also made me think of my Bachelor of Social Work university graduation. I was so happy and proud of myself. I had a lot of family there but the one person I wanted to see was my dad and he didn't show up. I was so heart broken. But now that I look back, and I read this excerpt from Robina Thomas's research I get it and I get all the times that he wasn't there to pick me up and those years when we didn't talk. I understand that now. He didn't do it to hurt me.

When I am writing my story, I don't want to hurt my dad. A part of my writers block was because I had not talked to my dad about my thesis topic. My journaling helped me understand that I needed to tell my dad about my topic in order to move forward in writing. My story is not just about me. It is about my dad as well. I have the open dialogue with my mom but I do not have it with my dad.

Working full-time

Through the process of getting my Master's in Social Work I kept working full time as a social worker. I work for an Aboriginal delegated agency and I work with children in foster care. Every day I was going to work and seeing the intergenerational impacts/effects of residential school. Some of those days were very trying and tiring. So did I have the energy to come home and continue this work on my thesis? No.

As I stated earlier it was hard for me to tell people that I was still working on my thesis. A lot of people were asking me if I was done my Master's yet and I would say no. In my mind I always wondered, can I actually finish this? I felt like it would never be possible but I did. Here it is.

Grief and Loss

Throughout the editing phase of my thesis I had to deal with three significant losses in a very short period of time. I had to see my Grandfather struggle with cancer which ultimately took his life. But I also had to deal with complex family dynamics that made this even more difficult. I spend too many years struggling with those dynamics. When I found out about his cancer, I made the decision to put those barriers aside and be a part of my grandfather's life for the little bit of time that I had left with him. I am grateful that I did. I knew I could never get those years back that I missed but I could take the little time that I had and tell him that I loved him.

I then lost my very close and dear friend due to a car accident. She had been there for me many times when I needed someone to talk to. She was there for a lot of people and it deeply impacted our family when she left. I had to learn to live without my best friend. I finally understood the amount of grief and loss that my parents must have felt when I

saw them lose a dear friend/family member. I have never experienced such a pain that I have to learn to live with. It may one day ease but it will never go away.

Lastly, I lost a client that I worked with for several years. I will not say any more than it was unexpected and that person is dearly missed by many. I had to take off time from work and school after these losses. I needed to take time for myself, in order to heal the hurt and be able to continue on with work and my schooling.

Conclusion

The process of writing a thesis took a lot of time and commitment. I had my topic and I had my methodology approach. The demands of everyday life and the struggles of being an Indigenous researcher made it difficult. I have dealt with death, illness and the demands of work while completing this work. Life doesn't stop because you are researching.

I had the majority of the work done and I couldn't finish. I had to take time for myself which was hard to admit. I had taken a leave from work and school. As an Indigenous person who struggles with a fear of failure, this was really hard to do. I had to get past my ego and realize that I needed to do this for me. I needed to heal myself in order to continue with work and with schooling. However, I needed to make sure that I didn't get stuck. I took one semester off and then I tried to get back to it. It took a little bit but here it is.

I constantly asked myself how I can relate to this information that I am writing. I am providing my own expertise to the subject of intergenerational effects of residential school as a second-generation survivor. Indigenous storytelling methodology is within my abilities to share as I have been raised to share my story. I was raised not to be

ashamed about who I am. I am a St'at'imc/Secwepemc woman. I share the intimate struggles of completing my studies so that hopefully, it shows someone else that they can do it if I can. I remember my mom telling me how she started going back to school. She said she wanted to show other Native women who had similar struggles in life that they can do it if she can. Well she did that. She helped me finish this research. She showed me that I can.

Chapter Four: Deanne's Story

Deanne is my cousin from my father's side. She agreed to be interviewed and share her story with me. She is one of my older sisters that helped raise me while I was out in my dad's community of Chu Chua. The information is gathered from interviews that took place on April 04th and April 07th, 2015.

I was born in Kamloops. I was raised by my mom in Kamloops, Vancouver and Chu Chua. My mom Debbie Eustache raised me, my older brother Pat, and my younger brother Shane. I was a middle child. We didn't have our dads involved in our upbringing. Well, we had Shane's dad there for a little bit until he passed away. Me and my brother's dads all passed away when we were young so my mom raised us all by herself. My father was murdered when I was a baby. So, I did not grow up with him. I saw some pictures of him but I don't own a picture of my dad.

We were taken away when I was young. I think kindergarten age so fairly young and we were moved to a foster home down the coast. So, we were moved around for a little bit. I'm not sure how many homes. Then we finally moved in with a family in Langley. We stayed with them for a year. I know my mom came to visit us a few times and I'm not sure I think we went to say with her once in Vancouver and after a year my mom sobered up. Oh, that's why we went into a foster home was because she was drinking and wasn't taking care of us properly. We moved back to Chu Chua where my mom was able to get a house and we grew up there, probably the rest of our lives there well until I went to NVIT.

I went to school in Barriere. I went to Barriere Elementary school and graduated from Barriere Secondary school. I grew up with the kids on reserve and made some close girlfriends. I went to summer camp and helped form a junior youth group. We would travel to workshops in communities and fundraised money to go to movies and travel to places like Vancouver and Edmonton. I grew up playing and watching baseball. Growing up all my younger cousins were usually with me. I babysat a lot especially during the summer months. We used to go swimming, probably every day at the river, creek or Dunn Lake.

After I graduated from Barriere I moved to Merritt and went to Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. I got my Forestry and Wildlife Diploma and a Business Diploma. I met my spouse Marcel in Merritt. In the summer months I would travel home to work summer student position jobs, we would still travel to powwows, go fishing, berry picking, and go down to Vancouver.

After I finished school we moved to Kamloops for a bit then back to Chu Chua where I worked. My niece stayed with us for a bit in Kamloops. We moved back to Chu Chua to take care of my younger brother as my mom was drinking. My older brother moved home with his younger daughter Cynthia. Marcel went to school in Surrey. I moved down there for about six months until moving back to Merritt to find work and then we've lived in Merritt ever since. I work in GIS, Geographical Information System. We have two boys and we live in Merritt now and we work in Merritt and are raising our boys. I play baseball and volleyball.

The last few years have been kind of difficult. I lost my mom and it's been pretty hard on me, hard on my brother, and hard on my nieces. My brother and my nieces have

been really struggling, really lost...The residential school has affected me. It effected how my mom raised us, it took away parenting skills from my family and that's the reason why we ended up in foster care. We were taken away from our community and raised in Langley with a white family.

My mom attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School and I'm pretty sure that my dad did too but I don't know too much about my dad. I have been affected by my mom being in attendance at the residential school. I guess her parenting skills really weren't the best (chuckles). So we grew up kind of without her there a lot, having her take off on us and leave us with babysitters. When I was left with babysitters, I guess I would be scared some of the time.

Struggles we had to go through as a child? I remember we would have no food in our house and we'd come home and there would be no power. Other things, we would be around parties. Residential school made my family alcoholics. See people drunk and well I guess most of our lives we grew up with alcoholics around us so it was kind of the norm. And then probably seeing stuff a child shouldn't. Things we seen while people were drinking, fights, people drinking, partying, my mom all beat up. Having a babysitter get mean with my little brother when he was a baby. Having my older brother have to take care of me when we were in Vancouver as a little girl. I took care of my younger brother quite a bit as my mom was in Kamloops working.

I know down Vancouver we used to live with some of my mom's friends and I don't know one time me and my brother were by ourselves and I remember him taking me. We were walking, I don't even know where we were walking from but we went into

this store to steal food. And my brother had me stealing food when I was just young. And I don't know if we needed food or what. I don't know the whole story there.

And I remember seeing, well my mom left us with one of her babysitters and she must have owed money for our rent or something, I'm not sure. But the landlord came from upstairs with a machete and like slammed it into the door jam and our babysitter got so scared he left so me and my brother by ourselves. But I don't know where Shane was if he was with us or not but I remember walking to another of my mom's friends late at night because of that. So that's one of the things that stand out as one of our crazy memories.

I know we were dropped off a lot when we moved back home back to Chu Chua. My mom would go to Kamloops and I knew we would be left and I remember staying with certain families like my friends' families. And we would be going to school with them. And one of them told us that we would be with them for like a week or over a week or longer before my aunty finally took us. So yah not having my mom around a lot.

Some of the places that she'd leave us were okay but then trust issues became a fact when she would drop us off. So I guess that is one of the struggles too is having to trust people you're around growing up...struggles... I know one of the struggles that I had growing up was abuse...it was through friends, family and acquaintances of the family I guess. I'm not going to say any names because I never really told, well I never pressed charges so I don't want to bring names forward. I've let...maybe three people know in my life. It seems like it was a shock but there was not push for anything to be done about it. So trusting when we would go to babysitters was difficult. Waking up in a grown man's arms and your screaming until he lets you go and you hide under a bed crying and

you don't know what to do is pretty scary being a little girl. That's where the low self-esteem, depression and stuff came in my teenage years and alcohol.

I used alcohol to help me mask, or I don't know if it would be mask, but I don't know. I drank anyhow until I was probably 24 before I settled down and quit having thoughts of suicide I guess. I always wonder what it would be like if my dad was around if I would have been more protected. Now I get so scared for my kids because I do not want them to go through the childhood that I went through.

I think my parenting skills are better but there are still things I know I have to work on. We were taken away again from my mom, we were placed with, I think we stayed with my aunty Sandy for a bit in Chu Chua. And then my mom went to treatment for I don't know how many times she went but we stayed with my aunty Sandy and another time we were removed we stayed with my cousin Pearl and I think that was, I don't know if that was a year, but it was a longer period of time. And I think after that my mom was able to quit drinking for 14 years so it wasn't too bad but even when she wasn't drinking she was never home. She would work late or she'd just stay in Kamloops and we'd just be by ourselves.

Resilience, I think it's how you make it through stuff I guess. My sense of resilience, I think my mom quitting drinking for 14 years helped a lot and having my aunty Sandy was a big role model for me and she was always there for us. My other aunts were there too. So I think that helped me. Oh other struggles I had were probably low self-esteem, depression, thoughts of suicide and that was more teenage years.

Cultural teachings, we didn't grow up with any. We were not raised with any traditional teachings. We were not raised with our language. We were not taught any cultural beliefs. We had a few like small words for language from my Granny but she wouldn't talk the language to us. I do want to learn some of the language. It's just a matter of time getting up to the college. And I do want to learn some other stuff but it's just a matter of finding someone to teach you around here I guess. I think I would like to make a drum, that's one thing. I would like to learn to do hides. Maybe fish nets. We're always; Marcel's always tinkering around the fish net so I think a home-made one would be neat. Today since I've moved to Merritt, now we go berry picking every year, we go mushroom picking every year, we go fishing. I don't really go hunting. Sometimes I will go for a drive but I don't shoot anything. That's all for my story.

Chapter Five: Lenora's Story

Lenora Starr is a good friend of mine. She is my sister. She is an adoptee and she wrote her thesis on her experiences of being adopted by a non-Aboriginal family and the process of reconnecting with her biological family. Her mother was a survivor of the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Lenora shared her story with me on April 09th, and 19th, 2015.

I'm St'at'imc and my mom was St'at'imc as well from Xaxl'ip. My dad was Swiss so he never went to the school (laughs). It was my mom Florence Billy that attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School. She ended up getting taken out to Kamloops Indian Residential School as a child. I don't know how old she was but she spent most of her school years at the residential school.

So much of what I am hearing about her experiences were negative. She was quite badly sexually abused at the school quite regularly. So, yeah it had a quite negative impact on her and on me and my siblings as well. There was a lot of abuses that occurred there for her. Being disconnected from her family, disconnected from her role as an Aunty, as a cousin, as a sister, all of those things changed who she was going to be and how she was going to be living her life. And so not only did those things impact her and how she was living her life but it was going to have impacts for generations to come. And, I was sitting dwelling on it because I remember my Uncle JD and aunt Ethel talking about some of the positive things that happened at residential school. And I'm sure that there must have been some of those that happened for my mom too but her experiences there at the school led her to trying to cope as a young adult and again as I had mentioned there was addictions mainly around alcohol.

Other people who would have been involved in my upbringing had they not gone to residential school would have been my Uncle JD, my Uncle Charlie, my Uncle Nelson, my Aunt Charlotte and my Aunt Irene. So those were all people who would have played a role in parenting me as I was growing up. I think about that because when I went back to meet with my Uncle JD as a returning adoptee and I had asked him, where were you? Where was my Aunt? Where was my Uncle? Like what was going on because those people also could have played a role as parents too.

Neglect was the biggest effect of the residential school because while we were with my mom she didn't have parenting skills. She was wrapped up in her addictions. I have heard stories from my brother Marcel about us being neglected for the short time that we were with her because I was only three months when I left her. So in these three months though my brother remembers stories of her neglect, stories of her drinking and stories of her being passed out and him being four years old and thinking that she had died. Stories of him...us being locked in the bathroom because she was having people over drinking and I guess she thought we were safe if we were locked in the bathroom. And he was four years old and he had to climb out of the bathroom window and go to the creek and fill up my bottle with water because there was no water running in the house and he crawled back in. I don't know how long we were in there for? But anyways, her neglect was definitely something that had an impact on us while we were with her and eventually led to the fact that we would end up in care and being adopted out. Abandonment as well, that's a part of, a following piece after the neglect was the feelings of abandonment from adoption.

At that time after residential school she ended up having a number of children and wasn't able to look after any of them for various reasons. I was her last child born and my brother before me, we ended up being adopted. We ended up in foster care for a short period and that led to our adoption. I think that when I look back in that moment in time for our family, like even just looking at my mom and her kids and her partners it was a pivotal moment for our family. She was a binge alcoholic. She was also a diabetic, so the combination was deadly. Eventually she basically drank herself to death, everything shut down and that was a big piece too. That was quite significant to me because of a premature death, I never got to reconnect with her when I reconnected with my family after the adoption. So her drinking and her lack of parenting skills were results of the Indian Residential School. Those things ended up leading to her not being able to parent well or safely and therefore led to all her kids being cared for by other people. So as I go through and I think about my two eldest brothers, who were raised by their dads. And then there was Marcel and his dad was, I can't remember, I think he was a French fellow. But I don't know the dynamics of their relationship but she didn't parent Marcel. He ended up being left with the other boys and their dad. And then when I was born my mom was with my dad who was actually a logger and couldn't look after us. Somehow me and my brother Marcel ended up with my birth dad and he couldn't care for us so that lead to us going into temporary care and later being adopted.

In terms of how I have been effected by her attendance I think too on a deeper level I think about the generational trauma and how it's passed down. You can call it blood memory or what have you but that's a really big one I think as I start to understand more about that it has definitely had an impact on me in terms of frustrations or

resentments and trying to work through those. It's almost like they're hers and I'm packing them but I have to deal with them so I'm not bitter and I can get through life in a healthy way and not have it impact my children again like the next generation.

My mom left me and Marcel with my dad and because he couldn't care for us he took us to our mom's friend's home and her family ended up turning into a fostering situation. Two years later my mom signed the adoption papers and we were adopted by the family that was fostering me and my brother. So, at the age of two I was adopted by this non-Aboriginal family. This definitely caused feelings of abandonment, confusion and you know trying to understand it because we did not have our parents there to raise us.

I look back and I think there wasn't a lot of clarity for us in terms of answers. You know, we were told we were Native, we were told to be proud of who we were but there was that other piece of us that got left behind. That's another kind of abandonment I guess. Like looking at the culture, the identity you know all those things that we had missed out on, disconnect is another word. Disconnect from culture, community and family. So not having those relationships it was a really big piece that as a child we didn't have the chance to develop those relationships. Whether they were with our cousins or as we got older with our nieces. It was not until my adulthood that I started to meet my nieces and my cousins, relationships that really should have formed while we were children and growing up but we didn't have that opportunity. So that's another loss.

Being raised, ending up in foster care and adopted because of her addictions there was always confusion about identity. We were raised in an Irish/Hungarian home so they were very blond haired, blue eyed and me and my brother didn't look like them.

Marcel's very Native looking too, dark hair, dark eyes and dark skin. We always knew we were different and we were told we were Native but when you don't have people to look to as role models in your life it makes it hard to know especially when you hear negative stereotypes about Native people as your growing up and you don't have other Native people to bounce that off of and sort through with them in a positive way. It's kind of like you get your white parents to help you deal with racism. They just don't know how, right. "Oh that wasn't fair" and "we'll talk to the teacher" you know whatever the situation is but they really can't understand the impacts of racism because they never have experienced it.

So in terms of other struggles we're going through as a child, growing up in my circumstances and knowing that I was different, my brother and I were different from the rest of my family; it impacted me. It impacted my brother as well to different levels. There was anger, hurt, confusion, fear, sadness and resentment. These are all things that I imagine that kids that are in care, they go through the same sort of feelings towards their parents or their foster parents or their adopted parents. I was just talking to Aunty Evelyn about this, about how you start to take that anger and those frustrations and resentment out on people who are around you. Even if it's your safeguard, your adoptive parents or what have you it's a safe place to let it go. So watching my brother as he got older and being more and more volatile and more and more angry and then having to think differently than the typical kid. And you know, having to watch my brother at a really young age and thinking I'm going to be a good kid, I'm not going to cause any more stress for this family because he is giving enough for the both of us and so at that

point, at that young of an age to make that decision based on somebody else's behaviors is like beyond what I should have had to worry about.

I think that as a kid who ended up in care because of the residential schools, I have to survive and come to terms with my realities differently and I think I just grew up so much faster. I just have a different reality than some other kids and I have to be able to wrap my head around things to get through the month, the week, the summer whatever it is. Like I already mentioned talking about my brother and some of the anger and it wasn't just about our situation but he also was impacted by alcohol prenatally not severely but enough to have impacts on his anger so that was something that he had to deal with as a result of addictions and everything that led to it.

It's funny I sat there and I was thinking first, I'm not going to look it up on google yet (laughs). I wanted to see what did I think of resilience and I couldn't wrap my head around it because my mind kept thinking about being able to adjust like when change comes and you adjust. And I'm like you're not really adjusting. It's not about adjusting because then I think about assimilation too right, and I'm like "No" that is not what resiliency is. So I looked it up and the one definition I liked was "the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties" and I thought yeah because how resilient are you? How quickly do you recover and how well do you recover I think is a really good word to look at when we are looking at second-generation survivors and the things that we had to go through and I think that's perfect.

What contributed to my sense of resiliency? Patience, it was the first thing that came to mind and I remember at a young age being in kind of a prayerful state and I knew church and I knew prayer and everything but it was a different way of praying and

hoping I guess. I think at an early age I knew I wasn't on my own. I think of my birth family and the ancestors before me or my mom or whoever like I knew that people were there and I wasn't totally alone. But the patience...that way of thinking is so different, being away from my family and coming to terms with that was crazy at a young age to be thinking okay if I'm really, really patient things will work out. I knew it was years, I knew it was...I'm going to get emotional...I think about, that story I shared with you before and I think for me the reason I get emotional now when I think of what I was told about my story. The idea that in that moment when I was at the Calgary Stampede and sitting in that teepee you know five or six year old girl trying to understand and waiting, hoping my mom would come and take me home. I was at the stampede in the Indian village waiting for my mom to come get me. That was a really paramount event because that was my moment of resiliency. That was where I knew I had to be patient and I just had to endure. And it was this one gentleman that said I think you know and I know your mom was with you when you were sitting in there. You were waiting for her and she came in one form or another. I think it's that belief, having that faith and hope and that things will get better and being open minded that really helped me through and coming to terms. To be that young and to be so open to my circumstances and to be like, okay this is the way it is and I can't change it. I'm just a kid and I'm safe. I'm being fed. I'm being looked after. The rest will fall into place and I just have to trust in it. So yeah, the open-mindedness, patience, faith, hope and all those things led to resiliency and create that resiliency to be able to get from that point to where I am now and understanding, I guess education too. I have to understand my circumstances and I have to understand why things have happened the way they have.

Another story I think about and I'm sure I've shared this one before with you too but I was probably thirteen, twelve or thirteen and walking with my adopted mom downtown in Kamloops and we saw this Native lady walking down the street and she was quite intoxicated and I can't remember what my adopted mom said to her or about her but she was heartbroken for her. She felt so bad for her and there's nothing but love and empathy from her towards this woman. And I remember she just kind of kept walking and I stopped and I looked back at this woman and I thought Holy Crap is that what I'm destined for? Is that what it means to be a Native woman? Is that what I'm going to grow into? And I realize, and again this is one of those moments, I realized in that moment I have a choice. I don't have to do that do I (laughs)? Do I really? No I don't, I don't want to suffer like that. I don't want to, I don't want to be in her shoes. I don't want to feel that hurt and that pain and to suffer so much so I made a choice right there like, "No." No addictions, no getting carried away with any of it like there's other ways to deal with it. So all of those things, the awareness of your situation, you know, the trust, the faith, hoping things will get better. All those things led to resiliency because if I didn't, if I don't believe it's going to get better, it's not going to get better.

In terms of resiliency I also thought about our DNA our genetic memory or genetic coding you know as First Nations, Indigenous people, we are tough, we are resilient. Like right from the beginning fighting colonialism, fighting everything, small pox, residential schools, the sixties scoop all of those different things over the generations have built up resiliency in us. And there's other things that come with it and I know I can carry some of that sadness and hurt from my ancestors but there is also resiliency there

that tells me we are not going anywhere. We got to continue to fight for, you know for what we believe is right.

I went to a pow wow maybe once or twice. I shared about the Calgary Stampede's Indian village and we went there several times but always with my sáma7 (white people) family so it was, for them really doing their duty instead of living their life. And if I had been with a Native family or with my own family we would have just been living life, just being ourselves. But I knew it was like a duty for my mom to make sure I had some kind of cultural content that year (laughs).

So I knew that I was Native, I didn't know what kind of Indian I was. I didn't know about any kind of dress, ceremonies or anything. Like I had no idea. I think I was living in Vancouver so I had to be about 20, probably 20 because I met my Uncle JD when I was nineteen. I remember going to the library and looking up, trying to figure out what kind of Indian I was. I knew he was from Lillooet but I also knew I was from Adams Lake. I was registered with Adams Lake and I was learning all about the Secwepemc, well Shuswap Indians and I didn't really know what I was looking for or what it even meant. You know, it was from books, you know two paragraphs here and there and you try to put pieces together. So it's very different if I would have, if I had the opportunity to be in my community. I could have sat with an elder, I could have just I said, just lived life and had those experiences and I think often of your story.

I remember you telling me some story about when you were a kid and sitting in this huckleberry patch and just eating all these huckleberries. And I think geez I never had the chance to do that. But those were just, that was just you just living, that was just you experiencing. I mean there was a lot of negative things that likely went on but there were

those moments right that you had that created that sense of identity about who you were. I had the Indian village at the Calgary Stampede (laughs). So yeah I lost all of that while I was growing up because I wasn't around it as a result of being adopted.

So as a result of not having these opportunities growing up, now I take full advantage and I want to learn more all the time about what it means to be Indian and I chuckle because I've learned some of our St'at'imc culture and language and I knew before I moved to the Okanagan that I'd be bitter about it because I'm like, I'm learning all these Nsyilxcn (Okanagan) words and I'm learning a different but not so different culture but I keep reminding myself it's still good to learn, it's still the Indigenous ways, this is still good. But I know in my heart of hearts that I need to spend more time learning my own language and culture. But yeah, I guess it is just really difficult to reconnect is the other thing.

After being dislocated and I guess it's different because I've got connections there now but they are not like those lifelong kind of connections. And so the relationships that I do have, have taken a lot of work to make them exist really. Like you think about my one friend you know I didn't know her before but it's taken a lot of investment of time and energy and going out there and all of those things that we have connected with and it has taken a lot of time and energy to do that. Or my Uncles or my Sisters or even to get my Nieces or my Nephews to know that I am their Aunty like it is just ridiculous the amount of energy you put into relationships and trying to reconnect. So it's like okay focus on the relationships and try to do cultural things with them at the same time to kind of kill two birds with one stone, try to get to know them and have a cultural experience.

So yeah, that's tough and I think to know even too about the impacts all these things that I've talked about, things that I've gone through as a result of my mom going to the residential school have impacted on my children as well. So because of my disconnection from my birth family and birth community I struggle to maintain those relationships and to develop them and my kids are sitting there watching me do it. So it's not something natural that they are growing up in. There are still some feelings of disconnect that they pick up on and it's like well, I have this grandma who's an Irish/Catholic grandma, and I have these Aunties and Uncles who are Native like how does this work? And for them to try to balance two worlds as well, yeah so it's impacted me tremendously and I think of my siblings and I think of what they've gone through. But it's more than that, I think of my kids and them needing to reconnect with culture and family and what's that going to look like for their kids' right? So what role do I have to play? It puts a lot of responsibility on me. Okay do I move out to Lillooet and really make this known as home for my kids? And then it will just naturally happen for their kids or will it? Is it going to be totally awkward and uncomfortable for them and they are not going to want to play Indian (laughs) right?

Yeah, so it's generational. Its long term and you think of it I'm forty-three and I've just this year started connecting with my brothers. I was always connected with Marcel but with my other two brothers. My one brother sobering up so he's been able to reach out and connect a little bit more and I've been able to respond to that and my other brother he has struggled a lot with his addictions. So we have just started reconnecting and for my Nieces and Nephews not to know my kids well and I think of those relationships that you had growing up and these kids don't have it they are not as

connected. So yeah it's generational, and I think about it, so my mom was one person and this is kind of how her experience at residential school impacted me and my kids but then there's my brothers and all their stories and how for them being parented by my mom for periods of time or not being parented by her. How it impacted on them and their kids as well because she died quite early. So you know, they don't even know who she was. So it creates more disconnect between the families as siblings because we are all trying to put the pieces of the puzzle back together in our own lives and figure out how we got here and what's going to work for us and what are our responsibilities. What can we do? What are we able to do? And then we are still a part of this other sibling group so it's like okay I got to look after myself and do what I can do but then I have brothers who are trying to do the same thing too.

Yeah I think for me too one of the things that I find most ironic in my mom's experiences was when I was teaching at the university and I was trying to teach the students about the residential schools and I tried to make it personal for them so I would share pictures of my family and stuff and there's a picture of my mom standing I think on the east wing of the residential school and I had shown them that and then a few weeks later I took them out there on a field trip and my Aunt and Uncle were there and helped us with the field trip. And one of the students was like we need to take a picture of you and I'm like oh what do you mean? Like where? She said we are going back up to the main building, that's where your mom's picture was taken. So I want to get a picture for you standing there in the same spot. So I was like oh, okay yeah that's actually pretty cool and so we all hiked back up there and we took the picture and then one of the students is like okay that's great but now we have to have all of us in the picture because

from one generation to the next, your mom was a student at the school. And here we are one generation later and you are bringing your students here to teach them about what happened at the school in just one generation. So we need to have that kind of photo as well. So there we all were, it was really good. I mean it was good for me to have that experience and now to have those pictures and for my kids to have that too. But for them as students it's just that everything was so personal and so real. It wasn't something that they were just reading about in a book. It was actually something that they were seeing happen to someone that they knew. It was really good, it was really amazing. So I guess that's turning things around pretty quick from one generation. But there's still lots of struggles. There's still lots of issues to be sorted through and issues that you know because of the residential school that impact on me and my kids. I just keep reminding myself seven generations because I want to fix it all (laughs) but we have our limits too.

Currently I am involved in cultural activities and in fact they are a really important part of my life. And I do my best to try to pass those teachings on to my children. Anything that I have the opportunity to learn, I'm like a sponge. I said in the past and I have heard a number of other people who were brought up outside of the community say the same thing that they were like sponges when it came to culture because it helped to fill a void that we had when we were growing up away from the community and away from our family and culture. So the importance of culture has been extremely significant in my life and has played a huge role in my life. The way I see it now I don't know if I had said this before but I have been Indian longer than I have been white (laughs). And that basically just refers to the fact that I was nineteen when I started meeting my birth family and I am now forty-three. So more time has been spent living my life the way I

am today involved with my birth family and culture. And I think that's a purpose that a lot of us have that were raised away from the community, whether we had to be fostered out or adopted out because of our parent's lack of parenting skills and inability to care for us and the addictions and what not. But yeah, that's one of the purposes to come back and to really push for culture to really ask a lot of questions. And you know where you go into a community setting and people may know things and some people may not but nobody's really talking about it. Some are just doing it, and others don't know. Coming in with my experience or lack of experience and my interest in it my need for it, I ask questions, I want to know. I want to know how you say this in our language. Or how do we do this in our culture. And to compare different ways and get a good understanding of what it means to be úcwalmicw (First Nations, people of the land), what it means to be an Indian in today's society. And so I think there's a purpose to it and I know as hard as it was growing up without it, I think that now by verbalizing and asking those questions it's getting people to talk about things. Talk about culture, and explain things and other people are around to hear that and learn from it. I then carry that information and pass it on. Whether it's learning about picking sxúsum (soapberry), processing sxúsum I remember it wasn't that many years ago I didn't know how to do that. I didn't know what that looked like, I didn't know where to find them. And it was my one friend who took me out and showed me how to harvest sxúsum and how to process it. I have made a few adaptations myself as I saw different people do it and decided how I liked it then and now I can easily teach someone how to process sxúsum and I'm always eager to share that information. So that's one example of my reality when it comes to culture and my responsibilities when it comes to culture today.

**Lenora moved to her home community of Xaxl'ip September 2016.*

Chapter Six: Crystal's Story

I had the opportunity to interview Crystal Adolph. Crystal's mom let me know that she was a Kamloops Indian Residential School Survivor when she heard what I was doing my thesis on second-generation residential school survivors. She told me to ask one of her daughters to share their story. Crystal shared her story on May 30, 2015.

My mom Shirley Aleck attended residential school. I haven't been affected as much as my sisters were affected. Knowing and seeing everything that they went through and hearing how they were affected is pretty intense. Still to this day my mom is affected by a lot of the stuff that had happened to her in residential school. She doesn't like hot water on her head. She doesn't like when people touch her feet and for so many years we just thought that it was something that annoyed her but she finally shared the story with us. She does have a lot of work that she can do within herself but at the same time she is now becoming herself after so many years and she is more open with the reasons why she can be the way she is sometimes.

She is healthier in many ways after going through the process of court. My sisters and I were not able to be there for her court process. She didn't want us to know the truth of what really happened to her. The only person that was able to be there for her was my Uncle Rick. Piece by piece she's finally able to be open with us. We now have a better understanding of why she was the way she was and why she would react the way she did in a situation or towards certain people because of things that happened to her in residential school.

The reason that I say that my sisters were more affected is because when my sisters were teenagers they could be very ungrateful. But the way my mom chose to deal

with things was in a very unhealthy way. When my mom would discipline them it was physical. My belief on why she dealt with things the way she did was because she had so much anger in her as a person. She at that point hadn't dealt with what happened to her or didn't know how to deal with things.

My mom drank a lot or was out with my dad. She always left me with my sister and my sister looked after me. If it meant Fridays, this was when Pavilion school was still open, my mom would be gone and we would pack our stuff Thursday night and the bus driver always knew that we would catch a ride with him to Lillooet. The bus driver knew that we were home alone so he had no problem with letting us catch a ride (laughs) and we would stay at my sister's friend's house. We would be there for the weekend and Monday morning catch a ride back to Pavilion for school and stay at home for the week. Stacey always took me wherever she was going. If it meant me hanging out in town when I was between the ages of 6 and 9 and walking around with her and her friends (laughs). I was super young but she did it. If she was wanting to drink she would let Peggy know that I would be sleeping downstairs and they didn't have to look after me, I was able to look after myself. She always got me pop and chips. They'd always leave at nine o'clock. They always left through the window and I didn't understand why but she told me that she would tell Peggy that I was downstairs and I don't think they ever knew I was downstairs by myself. Stacey always came back. If it wasn't for Stacey when I was younger I probably would have been left home alone a lot more than I was. She would never let that happen.

Everybody has struggles in life and my mom is now starting to deal with, and is now able to see them in a clearer picture and be okay with the things that happened to her

and be open about it and not have so much anger in her. I'm really happy for her. My dad used to get the short end of the stick all the time because of the anger she had towards men. He never understood it and we never understood it but it's my mom. We would stand beside her through thick and thin and now that she is choosing to deal with this in a healthier way. That's where a lot of her core issues come from is the things that happened to her. She is now using our culture to give her a sense of direction. She's back to seeing things in a clearer perspective. It's not going to happen overnight but the work that she can put in is what is most important. It's helped in numerous of ways for her now being able to be open with us about everything that happened to her to an extent. Even with my dad she can now take a step back and be like it's not his fault. It's not my girls' fault. I don't have to bury things and I don't have to be embarrassed. I don't have to own the things that happened to me in residential school. When she was going to court for her residential school my sisters and I all wanted to be there for her but she always told us no, no, no, don't worry about me your Uncle Rick is going to be there. She is a very strong independent opinionated woman, she is strong with her words and all we could do was sit back and say okay. We understand, we never supported it (laughs) but we didn't know why she didn't want us to be there up until six to eight months ago when she was clear with us and told us when we went home. She hasn't told us each everything, but we just go with it as it comes. She's not open to speaking about it all the time, but when she is willing to share that's when one of us are there to listen.

The part with the hot water was if someone had bugs or something found in their head or sometimes even if they didn't even have it. They would get hot water poured on their head and then cold water to follow it. The way she explains it is she felt like it was

burning and then all of a sudden it went numb. To this day she doesn't like hot water she can have a hot shower but she doesn't like the hot water on her head and she doesn't like to get her head in the lakes because it's cold. It's a weird feeling for her that brings back too many hurtful memories. It takes a lot for her to go into where they used to have lunch at the residential school as that is where she was sexually abused. She buried it and buried it and buried it because it was something that she felt she was ashamed of. She didn't want anybody to know. So she continued to hide it, her way of hiding it was through burying it and didn't realize that burying everything that happened to her in residential school was only creating anger within herself. To see, know and hear all of the things that did happen to her in residential school I have a better understanding of it now more so then ever. To see that she is using our culture gives me piece of mind that she will grow stronger. When she is open and honest with herself I hope she can set herself free. It will take time and work to fully deal with what she went through at that place.

I never had to experience anything more than my mom drinking and my mom physically being abusive. My grandfather was a huge part of the physical abuse but yet the cycle continues as he did what he was taught and what was done to him. Of all those things that were created and my mom learnt on how to deal with certain situations, that's how we learnt. And my theory on it is my mom can sit here and tell my sisters and I that she feels really guilty for some of the things that she's taught us and my belief with it is, she doesn't have to hold that responsibility. We're adults ourselves now and she's apologized for a lot of her wrong doings and how she dealt with things with my sisters. She has a lot more things that she's apologized to them for and it's up to us as adults to

be able to say thank you for apologizing. Accepting it, moving on with it in a way that we choose to. She doesn't have to take on that responsibility. She's done what she's needed to do. We're grown adults and we can deal with things in our own way and change it to something healthy and positive. We don't need to continue the pattern that happened from my grandfather, to my mom, to my sisters. We don't need that pattern to continue.

I tell my sister's that a lot and I know it's easier said than done. It's easier to point the finger and blame than it is to be like you know what? I can change that negative to a positive. I can teach my children better. I can own my responsibilities. The affection my mom showed my older sisters to the way I was given affection is completely different. My sisters' dealings with things are very different from the way than I do because of how they were brought up. They can't say I love you. They will, and when they do it's like holy shit (laughs). Sorry for my English. I was brought up in a loving nurturing way. For my sisters, my mom was still stuck in a place that was very dark and they went through a lot more and were raised a lot differently than I was. If you say I love you to my sisters they're like "yep, k bye" (laughs). I never understood that until I think the last eight months from my mom saying she was loving and nurturing to them but she feels that she could have done more, and showed a healthier support to them. Shown them a better way of dealing with things because now some of those traits they carry with them and their way of dealing with a lot of things is through drinking. They're okay for somebody to yell at them and they are okay with having a partner that is very strong willed. They are okay with having a partner that is really old fashioned where they do the working and just like the old way the woman takes care of the home. It's their normal because of the traits my mom passed down. So they find it normal to have a hectic, crazy

house with a lot of yelling and to not have that nurturing, loving way of dealing with each other. Whereas myself I watch them go through this and that's not my normal because my mom raised me in a loving and nurturing way and I was the baby. I didn't have to go through the things, or be raised how my sisters were. And what I'm trying to get to is that for a long time my sisters stayed in relationships that, before they met their husbands there was yelling and they weren't being treated with love and respect because of the way they were raised and they thought that was normal. Whereas I don't think that stuff is normal because I didn't have to be raised like that.

Growing up she only seen things her way because we have never really had a man live within our household. We did but didn't or they didn't last long until my dad came into the picture but that's a situation I will get into later. She always used to tell us "anything that a man can do, we can do better". But as the years have gone by there's certain things that she wishes she didn't teach us but it's only because of things that have happened to her. We all never grew up with men in our lives but I believe it all came from the core of what happened to her in residential school. She basically raised us and told us that a man can never look after us. That we never needed to depend on a man and we can do everything we needed to do and survive on our own.

We struggle with it because of those words. I will always remember those words but I try to see it in a different way now. I feel sorry for the partners of my mom, my sisters and myself. Anything a man can do, we can do better and you don't need a man around to do anything for you. That's a huge part of one of my struggles because I won't let a man look after me. I will not. I get very aggravated when they do nice things for me (laughs). I always try and reverse those words because we are equal with our partner

it's okay for them to look after you. It's not looking after you; it's meeting your partner half way. It's being open to saying we can go somewhere with this, we can do this together, and we can make this work.

For myself in the last three months I've trained my way of thinking from I's to we's and told myself it's not I can do this, I can do that, I can make this or it's I have a family. I have a partner that I need to meet half way. We can do this, we can get this done, and we can work on this. We, turning those I's into we's is, was a huge deal for me because it can be very complex to try and get things done. If I don't like my partner's way of doing something I'm always thinking my ways right (laughs) and it's not. Those are some core issues that I myself have because partially of ways that I was raised.

I can be very bull headed. My uncle Randy, (laughs) I love him to death, he used to tell me when I was younger that I was going to grow up to be a little Shirley Alec (laughs). And I see the change that has started to happen within my mom, in the past year and it's enticed me to be more open with myself and open with my words. My sisters got the shittier end of the stick then I did. Everything started to change from when they were younger to me growing up.

It got lighter and the only things I myself learned were almost like egos. I'm going to own my responsibilities and I can be very bull headed. I can be very strong with my words. I can be a very complex person to work with. I've told you this before but my way of thinking of things and learning and healing from things is when you have encounters with people and you and that person don't see eye to eye it's because it's almost like you're looking at yourself in the mirror. Not totally, maybe just one trait, maybe just two traits or three or four traits and it's something within yourself that you

need to deal with. The point that I'm trying to get at is, I think my things that were affected by me is yes I do have memories. Yes I do remember everything that my sisters had to go through and how they were raised and how different it was for myself to be raised. It's more of the thought process and how she dealt with things, the unhealthy way of having to deal with people and a lot of learned behaviours of unhealthy and negative things. But as an adult now, I can take the responsibility and turn this around. I don't always have to say something (laughs). I don't always have to be right. I can sit back and listen, sometimes or I can choose to say something. But it's the way you present it that is important I can choose to be very direct and blunt or I can choose to change it into saying what I want to say and it be clear and in a healthy way. Those are still things to this day that I am working on (laughs).

I will not bury things, and bury things, and bury things to the point where it makes me sick on the inside. And that's another trait that was learned. It's okay to have problems everybody's human. When you're feeling uneasy about something, it's something that you have to work on. You weigh the pros and cons of the situation, where did it come from? Why did this happen? Will this continue? What are you going to do with the situation?

So with myself it's more of my learned behaviors that I was affected by. There were a few times where my sisters babysat me and they would deal with me how my mom dealt with them if I misbehaved. But by the time that they started doing that I was old enough to fight back (laughs). It only happened twice. Stacey dealt with it a lot and she dealt with me the way she knew how to and she did beat me up (laughs). She tried to beat me up, well she did at times but then the second time I fought back and she was

chasing me around in the house and I was running away from her and then I just stopped because she had me cornered in the living room and I got really upset and my anger got the best of me and it came out with my hands and I grabbed her and I threw her into our TV and she got really hurt. My mom came in and asked what happened and that was the first time ever that I got into so much trouble (laughs). Other than the minor part of my sister dealing with something in the only way that she knew how. It comes down to just siblings being siblings we were fighting.

Another thing that I think and my mom was very lenient on me. I was the baby of the family. My sisters didn't understand it and they had every right not to understand it because of the way they were brought up. It was far different from the way that I was brought up. I think about it now because my mom was so easy going on me. She taught me in a healthier way than what my sisters went through. Which today I think about it and I'm such a strict parent. I really don't have an answer to that but my thinking on it was I got everything I wanted when I was younger. My mom was always really good to me. I didn't have that strict parent (phone rings, Crystal says speak of the devil and laughs).

When I was 14 I turned from having so many friends, to having a crazy smile, to being crazy, to being on a powwow trail, to being in a drum group, to drinking and doing drugs. I got into a toxic relationship and I had nobody to blame for those things but myself. It's not like I lived a hard life. I lost that smile and that glow that I had when I was a child that inner person due to drugs and alcohol. I was never raised like that. I didn't see that, I never seen a lot of that growing up. The drinking for sure. The way I chose to experiment was my own choice. Making it short, I don't want that for my son

and I guess my process of thinking about it is, I didn't have that parent to tell me what I was doing right and what I was doing wrong. I didn't have that parent to say no you're not doing that or no you're not going there or to be on top of house chores. I guess my answer would be yes I am a very strict parent but I only want to see my son do better and I didn't have those things growing up. I didn't have somebody to tell me no or that is wrong. So I guess that's the answer. I'm going to change the things that I was taught, not fully, I'll still keep some of the things that I was taught from my mom but I'm my own person and I'm an adult and I can do things in a healthier way. I don't have to be stuck in the past. I don't have to keep the cycle going.

We have choices and I can choose to do things better and after watching how the cycles were brought down within my family I no longer want that. My grandfather used to beat my mom. His dad used to beat him. My mom used to do that to my sisters. My sisters...did that to me. Theirs traits and cycles from residential school that we don't need to continue anymore. I guess another saying, easier said than done, but we can change those things. We can change our future generations. We can see the brighter picture. We can deal with things in a healthier way than they were before because if we don't the cycles will continue...and we can be that positive change. Not saying that everything that happened to our people in residential school will ever be forgotten. We can turn that misery into history and move forward with it.

I won't talk about my dad so much because he very much struggles with it more so than ever. My biological dad umm...attended residential school as well, not for very many years, but enough to turn him to the person that he turned out to be. I don't know him very well. He killed himself because of problems he had and he couldn't do anything

with it anymore. He abused people close to me. As to why he couldn't deal with himself anymore so he killed himself.

My dad [step-dad] now doing the whole court thing really messed him up. No amount of money will ever solve what this has created for my dad. My dad was already an alcoholic so the money made it worse. After he went through his court for residential school it tore him into pieces. He started drinking more. My belief is that when people are still that stuck that it didn't make anything better for alcoholics. In the past two years I've gotten him help six times and he has fled every single time. I've spent hours in a lobby of a hotel because they couldn't give me the room because of confidentiality and he was basically drinking his sorrows away. People deal with things and then they don't know how to deal with things. He's still very lost and lets the anger get the best of him. After going through that process he turned for the worse. My dad can no longer work. He's had three heart surgeries, he's had a knee operation. The alcohol has gotten the best of him. As a daughter it is really hard to sit back and watch when you've gotten to know his schedule he'll wake up two, three in the morning. The first thing that happens is he opens a beer. He was basically trying to drink himself to death. He'd leave home and come to Kamloops and stay in a hotel and drink, drink, drink, drink and hope that he never woke up again because he's not in a healthy place. He doesn't know how to deal with everything that resurfaced when he went to court. Every time he drinks now he talks about death. It's sad to see him go through all those things and all you can do is sit back and pray that it gets better. That when he really does want help he will get it, he will seek it himself.

I've learnt that I can only push, push, push, push for so long and get him into programs and get him into treatment without him fleeing unless he wants the help. My dad knows what he has to do and was supposed to have done three years ago if he doesn't he's going to die. I can't hold that though. His liver is not doing well and because of his three heart surgeries it only makes it worse for his heart. He's making those choices and he can only make those choices for himself. I really wish he didn't get that money.

For some people that were already lost and were dealing with things in different ways it made things worse. Numerous of our people lost their lives because of that money. Our people, a lot of our people didn't know what to do with that kind of money. It wasn't a lot but to some people it was more than enough. For my dad it was a turn for the worst and it's only gotten worse.

I don't blame just that because he was already unhealthy before this all came about. But it does play a huge part in it because he won't say what happened to him. He won't deal with it. What he says is that "he said it in court" and that's where it stays. I went with him when he went to his trial but we weren't allowed to go into the room. My mom and I stayed outside. We will never know what happened to him. We can hope and pray that things just get better and he gets out of his unhealthy state of mind. For my mom it's very complex because she doesn't drink and my dad's an alcoholic.

Nacoma doesn't understand it with my dad and with how much I do for my family. He always tells me we don't need to help everybody (laughs). I'm like they're my family I'll always be there for them. Nothing can change that and he's had to sit with me in hotel lobbies, well there's only one hotel lobby and the manager and front desk people know us pretty well now (laughs). The Plaza hotel my dad always stayed there he'll

always stay there when he runs away and he's trying to drink himself to death. I knew the young girl that was working there and I had talked to my dad prior on the phone and I could tell he was really intoxicated. We went there and I went up and I said "can you tell me what room number my dad's in" and I gave them his name and then they were like "I'm sorry I can't give that information". I said "okay I just need to know he's okay. I just need to get up there". She was like "I'm sorry Crystal" because I knew who she was and I said "no I totally understand". I said "you could totally lose your job over it" and I said "I'll wait". She just looked at me like what? And I was like "I'll wait. If you don't mind me sitting in the lobby then I'll wait until he phones me back". And then Nacoma's like "are we seriously going to sit here"? I said "yes we are, you can go home if you want but I'm not. I'm not going to sit back and say if I wake up tomorrow and he's gone I'm not going to say that I did nothing and I didn't try". He was like "alright". So we sat there and sat there and sat there and he kept going for walks and then finally my phone rang and I was able to get the room number off him and we went upstairs and there was stacked boxes and boxes of different kinds of alcohol bottles laying all over. Him lying there talking about death he didn't want to be here anymore. It would be so much easier for him to just close his eyes and he said I hoped I didn't wake up all the time. We went through I think probably nine times being at the hotel. Nacoma and I have only ever let two people have alcohol in our home and that would have been one person being my dad. Same thing he'd call and be talking crazy and just saying he loved me and how much the family means to him and I'd go through the same thing go down to the hotel and he never let me know what room he was in but I caught on to it after five times that he always asked for corner rooms. I was like oh my gosh, is it tenth, eleventh or seventh or eighth? I

can't remember seventh, eighth or ninth I think and I caught on to it. And then he yelled a lot, so Nicolani who was the lady at the front desk, I'd just come in and then go up the stairs and go to those floors and listen. Nacoma thought I was so crazy, he's like "no", I'm like "yes he's extremely intoxicated I know him" and sure enough I would just knock on the door. She's like "you figured out what room"? I'm like "yeah I did". And then same thing, go in and I never knew what I was walking into but there was just boxes everywhere. I gave them to people on the street (laughs). I got him into detox. I got him into treatment. I bought all of his stuff for him to go and my dad wakes up at three o'clock every morning so I knew I had to be at that hotel because he agreed to go. He said that he would. He told me to just get all of his stuff and so I did and I thought I was thinking ahead of him. So we went there, we got there, he gets up at three, he will be out the door by six, we got there at five, and I walked in and Nicolani said "he's already gone he left at like ten after three". I was like "what"? Then I was like no, I am done. I told myself there isn't anything I could do and Nacoma had to sit back and watch me go through it every single time. He said "he's over it and he's a grown adult" and everything like that. I just said "that's your opinion". I said "if it was your dad you would be doing exactly what I'm doing right now". So at the end of the day I just told him "I'm the only person my dad will listen to". He can be a very delusional drunk. He sees things and talks to people when he's over the limit. But when he gets to that point he just acts out and believes things are happening that are not happening, sees things that are really not there. He's gotten into a bad habit of...dialing 911 and making situations more than they actually are and...it's sad because this past time I had to really pull back. My sister called me and said...dad is being an idiot. You really need to talk to him and he's not

letting mom talk on the phone or anything. I phoned him and normally I stay pretty neutral. I said “if I have to get in my vehicle and come home right now you’re going to be one sorry person” (laughs). I ripped him a new asshole and he’s not used of that especially to come from me because I make the situation better. I always fix the situation for him. This past time I just told him, I said “no I won’t play this poor me anymore”. I was like “poor me only lasts for so long”. I said it in a more drastic way. I swore straight up and down like I had verbal diarrhea coming out of my mouth. I let him have it and I just said “I’m done! I will not sit back any longer and allow you to create this! I won’t allow you to create this! You are creating misery within yourself and you need to deal with the things you need to deal with! You’ll lose your family! You are starting to lose your family!” I said “we can only deal with this for so long”.

After he’s had a case of beer we tend to take our kids away now. Our kids used to love going out and spending time at grandma and papa’s. They’re scared to because of how angry and delusional their papa can get and the way that he talks to them after he’s had a few drinks. There’s no helping him anymore. He’s got to help himself and when he’s ready he will. We all hope and pray that it’s sooner than later.

We used to try and hide how hard of a time my dad was truly going through. We used to try and cover it up for the grandchildren. We can no longer do that. They know and they got older. My dog Takonia she won’t even go near him after he’s been drinking. When he starts yelling at my mom, my dog stands in front of my mom and barks at him. She gets nervous of the person that he becomes. Nobody is able to talk to him the way that I can, but I’m also not able to talk him into getting help. It’s a huge struggle but you can’t push someone to help themselves when they are not ready. His

theory in his head is his dad died from a heart attack and because he knows that and because he's in the place that he is. He's unhealthy that's the way he wants to go out. He will drink so it's easy for him to sleep he hopes that he doesn't wake up. We've gotten him to see a counsellor but it only lasts maybe four times. Then he gets to that barrier of what must of happened to him and then explodes. It pulls him back further every time of trying to deal with it because he is an alcoholic. A three-month treatment program won't help my dad. He needs to go for at least six months in order for it to be effective and to know that he doesn't want to go back to drinking. Whatever and whenever he chooses is when he will get help. I used to get really upset over it.

When he goes through a tough time I'll always be there to listen, he always phones me but I won't speak to him after he's been drinking because I don't need to hear that he wants to die. My biological dad did the same thing. He killed himself and I always ask myself I know there's one thing that I can do but it will be very hurtful and it will hit home for him, it will either open his eyes and realize what he has or it will make things worse. We don't know that fine line between where it stands. Do I ask him straight out "why he feels the need to talk about death to me when he knows that's what my biological dad did? You want to take the easy way out". I could say that but those are very strong words to use to try to get somebody to get help. My sister's and I no longer tell my mom or ask her to stay with our dad. We don't see the everyday struggles that she has to go through with an alcoholic and everything he creates within himself, the anger.

I think that I have more of a story with my dad than I have with my mom because I was the youngest. I didn't see as much with my mom I never dealt with the side effects that my sisters went through. I can take responsibility for my own behavior and I can

make the changes I need to. It's not going to happen overnight and the work you put into yourself is the work you will get out of it. It's a struggle to unlearn learned behaviours but if you train your mind to think what you want it to think it will sooner or later become your reality.

With my dad because I have been so involved with his struggle and watched it, lived it since him and my mom have been together. He's been an alcoholic since I was five. I've watched his anger since I was young. I've listened to his anger since I was young. He has a lot of stuff that he needs to deal with not only from residential school but the loss of his dad it happened so many years ago. After going to his court for the residential school it turned for the worse and he started to re-live it after he got his residential school money. He always tried to give us money and I wouldn't take it. I don't believe in that because I know from experience, that money got him nowhere.

I don't know if at this point now I hope and pray for my dad. Can he ever overcome whatever that's happened to him. I don't know if he could move forward. It's sad and I don't like to say it like this but it's like you're waiting to get that phone call. He's in the hospital or passed away. My sisters had to live it with my mom as did I but not to the extremes. I love my dad no matter what, no matter how crazy, delusional, psycho fricken drunk, no matter what he does but I have to stand back and watch now because we can't help it. I can help when he's ready.

I can relate to my dad only because I used to drink and do drugs. I lived a toxic life for a long time and my sisters and my mom were highly affected by it. There's a lot of toxic that came with what I thought was fun, amazing life I was living. So I understand where my dad comes from with those struggles and when I try and see things in his eyes.

When my mom and sisters used to get upset for the things I was doing. I did the complete opposite of what they were asking for. It only made me rebel and be like “oh sorry that’s what you think but I’m just going to do it ten times more”. I try and see it that way for my dad and how long it took me to ask for help before I was able to see things in a clear picture. Before I went to treatment I wasn’t able to. I had wanted that help myself whereas, my dad hasn’t asked for that yet. So I try and see it in that way and understand where he’s coming from and still be respectful and honest to let him know I care about him. Tell him that you love him, all of that.

Resilience is exactly this if I were to look at it in a form of residential school, overcoming and recovering from what happened to our people. I don’t think we could ever overcome it because of how long it went on for and how many generations it continued. I believe that we can work on it and learn from it. I’m only speaking for what two people in my life that have shared their story with me. My mom is starting to deal with it now that half of her life is already gone. My dad is on his way out. To see it in a healthier way I don’t believe that. I believe that we can overcome it but the people who have gone through it will always have that memory and I don’t think they understand that yes it did happen long time ago but it was their reality and it turned to our reality. Through a lot of grief and loss we can overcome it. I don’t believe it’s the wrong word to use when I think about resilience I think of overcoming something. Overcoming a tragedy. Our people can do it. It will just take a long time for it to happen. We can choose to start dealing with it in a healthier manner. We can choose to support our people. We could have avenues, different avenues for everything to go through because not everyone deals with things in the same way. But it’s just like you open that can of

worms they let everybody go through the court process and you give them money and then you want it to be over. The government wants it to be over, thinking you know what we did our part. No you didn't do your part. You gave money that doesn't help anything. "I'm sorry" doesn't even cut it. The priest that apologized or whatever his life is damn near gone and he's suffered no consequences to his actions. How many lives did he ruin? It will take a long time and it's not something that can just be swept under the rug and it's our history and it will remain our history for years to come. That is what resilience is like, you think about it and then I think about it's like the toughness of a situation and can you overcome it? Overcoming something like that I don't think you can. Well you can but it will take work.

I don't want to laugh about it but my laughter can cover up the things that I'm going through I think. I learnt that in Choices when I was there. My way of growing is criticism standing up and letting people tell me exactly what they see in me. I can do that repetitively because those are things that people are being honest and how they see you. Being a strong person and being able to help my family as much as I can to prevent and set examples for my nieces and nephews. I will go above and beyond for them. No family is perfect, but there can always be that one person that tries to make situations better.

It's just like I have a belief on Choices. I believe it helps our people to an extent. I've gone through Choices. I believe they gear it towards Native people but if you honestly wanted to help our people it wouldn't cost so much. For some people like Nacoma he never had any sort of counselling. He was raised to be very strong, not to cry, and not to be emotional or affectionate. When he went through Choices and it worked

wonders for him. But say you bring someone in from a remote community and they've had a life span of problems then they are brought back to what they believe their misery was, and then make everything honky dory for a week and then send them back to their community. Somebody could end up killing themselves. They don't have the supports and that high that they feel at Choices. I know, they say it's a family, they say we're a family but what about that person, if they were only funded to go to that one and they weren't able to go back? We could lose our people's lives like that because you've opened a can of worms and...basically let it explode. It's like sitting on a fire and waiting for it to pop open. It's sad that could be an outcome. I think about it and it's done with all good intentions and you know the week is amazing. I think about those things and the side effects when it becomes your reality.

When I was growing up I had an amazing life (laughs). My mom brought me to powwows. We had the drum group. We traveled to numerous different powwows. We went to sweats since I was six. We smudged. I've been to Indian doctors. Today those are things that I did in my past. Today I go to the Sun Dance grounds. I smudge our home on a regular basis. I smudge at work on a regular basis. I pray. I'm thinking about doing my fasting. I'm going to start going to Yuwipi ceremonies.

I'm learning a lot of different things in our culture and I've started to go back to sweats. Something that my partner, he's not so involved with his culture but his brothers are or close friends. Being able to release that way, going to the sweat lodge and my favourite sweat is when they come off the mountains because it is so long. I love being in a sweat for nine hours and being in that dark place and feeling like I sweat everything out, everything from the inside out. Feeling a sense of relief.

I don't go into just anybody's sweats. When I was younger Johnny Johnson brushed me off one time and he found porcupine quills in my back. He always told me to be careful of who I surround myself with and especially when it came to culture. So I'm very touch and go with knowing the person that is running the sweat and what was held in that sweat lodge and what dealings, any history of the sweat.

Willow's asked me to dance but I don't think that's something that I can do. If anything I think that I could start drumming again. But it's after I deal with what's in here. I have a very strong belief and it comes from Uncle Eddie's ways that the drum can heal but you do need to do the core work before you pick up that drum. You are not to pick up a drum unless you have done that. It's the same thing with drugs and alcohol. I have a very strong belief that you're not to sit or sing with a drum if you drink and do drugs. You can hurt somebody. We all know that. But until then, I am at a happy place with what's in here, I won't be able to have that strong voice that I know that I can have and it's in the process. Finally being able to see the light (laughs).

Chapter Seven: Cheryl's Story

On April 20, 2015 I had the opportunity to interview Cheryl Edwards. She is a cousin of mine. My granny Harriet is her aunt. My granny and Cheryl's mom were sisters.

My name is Cheryl Lynn Edwards. I'm from Ts'kw'aylaxw (Pavilion BC). I am the eldest child on my mother's side and I have three younger brothers Carl, Bruce and Rich. I had one older sister. Her name was Ronda. She was born in 1959 and she died in 1959 and she was only three months old. She was older than me. My brother Aaron is deceased, he would have been 39.

My mom went to Mission residential school. My biological father is Lester from Abbotsford BC. I met my father when I was 21. He went to residential school. I met my grandma Edna before she passed away. I met all my aunts before they passed away. I'm not close to my siblings on that side of the family. Henry's the oldest, then my sister Gail and then my brother Leon. They are all into their own things. The boys are into really hard drugs and Gail's trying to be okay but she gets into her alcohol.

I have two sons. Keelan was born March 7th, 1989 and his father's name is Perry who is from Fountain BC. Keelan had an older sister Perry who is deceased and her birth date was September 8th 1986. She died December 25th, 1987 in a car accident. I was the driver. I have a son Francis Alec Jr who was born December 26th, 1997.

I did an assignment a few years back and realized my daughter was the only family member who didn't die as a result of alcoholism. She was the only one. So at that time was when I decided, my mother died of cirrhosis so she was very young she was 40

years old, I decided that I didn't want to drink alcohol. Those two factors opened my eyes to quit drinking.

My first memories as a child I remember living in Pavilion and my mom was still at home. We were living in the old house with Mama and Papa, Celestine and Jack and those were the best days of my life. They were what I would call the healthiest days of my life. They are the days where I felt I had the most balance in my life. I don't remember having any toys, but that was one of the last times that I really felt that I enjoyed being a child and that was when I was 4 years old, 5 years old and under.

My Papa died when I was 10 years old, which was in January 1972. When they were both home it was the land that provided for us, like they planted gardens. The gardens were from above Ireleigh's house all the way down below Jolly's house, over to where Uncle Des and Aunty Theresa's house is and the trailer. That used to be all gardens. The one thing clear that sticks in my mind that they used to plant was beans. The beans were heaped in big piles and they allowed them to dry and then they would hit them with clubs and break them open, they were kidney beans. But I'm sure it was the type of bean that they planted.

I remember Papa had a juicer, the juice would drip into this big box on the bottom so he made his own apple juice. We had a lot of cherry trees, apple trees, apricot trees and plum trees. I also remember there was, I don't know what it was, but we used to drink it either hot or cold. It might have been balsam bark, it was still clear but it kind of had a black or grey color but you could still see through it. It used to be hot on the stove in this big cast iron pot or some was cool in a gallon jug. We drank it either cold or hot.

And we drank sxúsum (soap berries) or water. I remember those were the things. I remember that's what I drank. Then the adults drank tea and coffee of course.

I know that the only meat and such was the deer meat and the moose meat and the fish and the trout from Pavilion Lake. Then when they went fishing they dried it and canned it and salted it cause at that time I remember we didn't have freezers. They canned it. And then when we did have a freezer the only freezer we had was in a thing that was nailed to the back of the house. It was a box and that was the freezer for the winter months. All of the fruit and the vegetables were in a cellar underneath the house. There was a hole in the floor that you could open up and then go downstairs and there were holes or whatever in the ground where they kept the apples and the potatoes and carrots and they would put kind of blankets over them so they wouldn't freeze. And I remember Mama picking stinging nettles and stsáqwem (saskatoon berries) and hakwa7 (wild celery) and some I think they were called mustard weeds so those were the seasonal vegetables for like our vegetables, our wild vegetables. I remember her taking it off of the tree, the sticky pitch and melting it but I'm not sure what else she added.

And I remember her tanning hides that I remember as a little girl because it smelled. I remember it smelling and she did it right in the house. She had some kind of metal thing sticking out of the doorway and that's where she was wringing the hide. I remember she had it attached to that metal thing somehow and she had a big long stick on it and she was just wringing it until it was dry. I remember having that big frame behind the house, that was a big frame and when she would be working, I remember that.

I remember we used to go up above the community, I guess it's called Rolling Mill. Her and I would walk and she would have two big round white buckets and just her

and I would go to pick sxúsum and she would pack those buckets back by herself all the way from up there. That's the other thing, she would have them on a long stick and she wouldn't pack the buckets like that. She would put the buckets on each end and on a stick and she packed the stick. We picked sxúsum up there just the two of us.

I never did get to go fishing with them and it seemed like forever because they would go maybe like July and August for two months. It seemed like a long time and I had to stay with mom at that time and I didn't like that that much either (laughs).

I remember when they would plant, would make long rows and they would put the seeds in there and they would bury it. I was going behind her and I was taking the seeds out and I was getting into trouble but I didn't know what I was doing, right (laughs). She was telling me I was like a bird and I was taking the seeds out. She thought I was just playing but then she realized I was taking the seeds out. So I remember those parts as a child.

I do remember, I don't think it was for ceremonial purposes though, I think it was just for cleaning, there was a sweat. It didn't look anything like the sweats today. It was down below where Leona lives down at the creek. It seemed like it was more built into the ground. I could see piles of dirt the only part that was wood was the front, the door part where you would crawl in. I remember going in there and it was dark and hot and then we would go in the creek. The only time I heard them praying though was every meal time. At each meal they prayed and they prayed for their health and to be strong and not to run out of food it seemed like they wanted the food to last and that was the prayer that was said. We all ate sitting at a table and we weren't allowed to speak when we were eating we were all quiet, nobody spoke and had conversation. And then after,

people kind of had a sit and it was kind of like I guess being thankful for your food and allowing it to digest in your body where you had to sit, you couldn't get up and just start playing around. You had to sit for a while after you ate as well.

So that was as a child and then I don't remember Bruce and Carl being with me either. There was only one time where I remember her being with my dad Norman. That's when I remember us all being together but it wasn't in a healthy way. There was alcoholism. There was a big party going on at Mama's and everybody was fighting, like everybody was. I remember my dad Norman was holding Bruce in his arm and he was using his other hand to push people around. I remember that. And we left and we went, it seemed like we were living on top at the Diamond S Ranch he must of have been working there and we were living in those little cabins up there. So that's the time I remember being with them. Most of the [time] I was with Mama.

And then the next thing that was clear in my mind was when we were at Mama's without Norman and I remember crying for him one day and I was lonesome for him and missing him and she told me to "shut your mouth. That's not your dad". But then I forgot all about it after that. And it wasn't until later on that I found out he wasn't my dad. So then I remember clearly that mom was supposed to go and pick strawberries down in the states. She left and my brother Richard was about 3 months old. He was just a baby, like an infant baby, and she left and she never came back, she never came back. I think at that time Georgina was the social worker or the CHR [Community Health Representative]. She tried putting us in a foster home and Mama wouldn't allow that. So then, Mama kept me and Poopsie and then Carl lived with Mike and Pearl and Bruce went and lived with Jolly and Sharon.

I remember, I had to be about four or five, the first time that I was sexually abused by a man in the community. Is it okay if I say names? Okay by Bill. And I was just four or five because he brought me home and he had to have had me on his shoulders like this and holding onto me. He brought me into the house and I remember they were mad and they were upset. As a little child they were asking me “where were you”? After Bill left they were saying “where were you” and stuff I didn’t know it was bad. So I just told them that he had me at the hay stack. I told them what he was doing and what he made me do and that he was making me touch his penis and stuff like this. And he was touching my private parts and I told them that. Then both of them were kind of scolding me as a child saying “you don’t let somebody do that to you unless they can give you clothes, put clothes on your back, or feed you, or put a roof over your head”. They were saying it in the Indian language of course not in English. It was kind of like, that kind of stayed with me and it still stays with me through my whole life. It’s something that stayed with me and it seemed like that’s how I chose my men after. They had to be able to do that. But that to me still wasn’t healthy. I shouldn’t have remembered those words, but still as a child I kept it and remembered it as an adult. So that was the first time and then when my mom left, I blamed myself, from that situation of abuse. I felt like she left because I was abused and she was ashamed of me so then I blamed myself for her leaving all the time.

Then things started to go really haywire in my life because my grandpa got hurt, seems like he fell twice and broke his hip. He fell and broke his hip once then he went to Vancouver for a long time. Then he came back and he fell again and then went to the hospital and came back and was bedridden after that. And then he died. But I remember

him being in the living room in the corner on the big bed all the time and Mama looked after him. Mama fed him and changed him and bathed him all the time. But that's where I slept. There was Papa, me and Mama and I slept on the wall side for a long time. And then...when Papa died...everything went haywire. Mama started drinking lots, and Shadow and all of them they were just getting into trouble and going to jail and everything was just kind of haywire. I continued to be sexually abused by Bill, by Lloyd and by that time, I don't think I was even 13 yet, I started to run away from home. I used to leave with Marcia and Sugar and would end up in Seton Portage and that's where I was and a lot of time I would end up with Martha Ned when she was with my dad. It was happening on a regular basis, my sexual abuse with Lloyd and Bill. And the drinking, I started drinking when I was like 13 years old.

When I went to school, I don't know what I learned at school because it doesn't seem like I learned anything in grade school, from kindergarten to grade one, grade 12. I don't think I learned anything. I remember in elementary school sniffing glue or gas or whatever, the whole school was doing it at lunch time for a long period of time.

Then... I would go to school, there came a time where...I don't know what was going on I couldn't stop crying it was like I just couldn't stop crying. Shadow would come and ask me if I wanted to go to AA with him and I'd say no. I ended up moving with my mom when I was in grade seven. I just packed up and got on the bus and just went and lived with my mom in Merritt. And then it was okay, there I got some formality of going to school and coming home and meals were cooked. She drank everyday but not to get falling down drunk. Then she had Aaron she drank through all of her pregnancy with Aaron. When Aaron was born it was kind of getting difficult again

where I was ending up looking after Aaron a lot of the time. So then again, I just packed up and hitch-hiked home back to Mama's. I ended up with Perry and I was, I think, 15 and moved out and lived with him and basically was in an on and off again relationship with him. It was an unhealthy relationship where he was verbally abusive and physically abusive and with other women and I was aware of it. I would see it, I would hear it and so it was true and yet I stayed in that unhealthy environment. That went on from the time I was 15 until I had Keelan. I didn't commit to the relationship myself. I wasn't in or I wasn't out I sat on the fence. We had our daughter first. We didn't remain together, at all. Like with all my pregnancies, I was alone like even with Francis Jr. I never remained with the men because they were drinking, they were partiers, and I would end up by myself because I wouldn't drink and I'd have to stay home.

So we had our daughter and I stayed home. I stayed in Mike and Pearl's house all by myself. Then my mom died three days before I had my daughter. No my daughter was born September 08th and my mom died on September 11th so just three days later she died and I didn't know. I had my daughter and I was thinking why isn't anybody coming to visit me? And Perry came, we still were not together, and we got pictures taken together. The pictures were in the photo shop downtown. So I phoned my cousin Theresa and I said "can you do me a favor? Can you stop at this place and pick up the pictures, they are all paid for, Perry paid for them and come to visit me"? And she says "nobody told you"? And I said "what? Told me what"? And I knew my mom was dying because I went over there to visit her two weeks prior, but I didn't want to stay there the whole time and have my baby in the same hospital. So then she says "umm oh I'll just come up there to visit you". I says "no you were going to tell me something now you

need to tell me because I don't want to wait until you get here". She says "your mom died". And I said "oh I kind of knew" and she says "what"? I said "I kind of knew because she came to visit me last night and I could feel her. I was laying on my side and I could feel her, I could feel that and she kept saying everything will be okay daughter". And it was going like this, everything will be okay daughter but it wasn't words. And so she came up and she said "everybody's in Merritt and nobody wanted to, they weren't going to tell you. Nobody was going to tell you until they all got back home to Pavilion, then they were going to tell you". But then I already knew so I just signed myself out of the hospital and then went up to Pavilion to wait for them to bring mom home. Then after we buried her and stuff I went back to live with Perry and just continued on, he partied and I was at home with the baby.

It was Stella Fenton and I, she came and got me and we came to Kamloops to do Christmas shopping. I still stayed at Mama's. Perry was still drinking and he came up and tried to get me to go back home and I wouldn't. We were having dinner at Sharon and Jolly's on Christmas day and Renee was up babysitting for Chucky and Theresa and she was coming to the dinner too so I went up there to pick her and Kenda up. And on our way back, I don't even know if Kenda was on with us, on the way back was when the accident happened. My daughter was killed in that accident and then this was about one o'clock in the afternoon. I didn't know at the time, I took off my coat, I had a really long coat on and then...Marcia and Tim were the first ones on the scene so she wrapped baby in it and she gave baby to me in the back seat and then we went to Ashcroft. From there they shipped her to Kamloops and I stayed in Ashcroft to get stitches on my head. Then Marcia, Tim and I went to Kamloops after. Marcia said she knew already because they

gave Marcia five Valium in a little envelope and told Marcia to give them to me if I needed them so Marcia kind of knew that it wasn't good.

So she died and we had the funeral and I got really suicidal, really suicidal. I drank a lot. I drank for months, every day. I got my insurance settlement for my car. It was probably about four thousand dollars and I was just drinking it away. I would put her places. I would say she's at the hospital. I had a nervous breakdown and I was in the hospital for two weeks. I realized she wasn't there so then I'd say she's at my grandma's house, she's at Mama's house. I would avoid going up to Mama's because I didn't want to face the fact that she wasn't there. But I was sober and I knew that it was getting dangerous because I was sober and I would plot ways of how I wanted to die and what I was going to do. I knew I needed to reach out and get help. So I went to Vancouver and lived with Aunty Harriet for about a month and was getting counselling down there for my suicide and trying to deal with her death.

I made a conscious decision that I needed to have another child. I needed purpose in my life and that was the only way that I was going to be able to carry on. I came home and went back to Perry and made a choice to have Keelan. And today he is my life saver. There is such a strong bond between me and Keelan because of that. So I had Keelan and I left Perry again and wasn't with him for the whole entire pregnancy. I went back as soon as Keelan was born. He was still getting physically rough and stuff and the last thing he did was he throw a plate of chow mein at the wall. I went to Vancouver to visit my brother Richard at the time and allegations came out about my brother attempting to sexually abuse someone. That all came out and everything was just chaotic and Perry was getting rough with me and so I just left.

And one of the things that he used to do was keep a loaded gun and I don't know why he kept a loaded gun under his bed. He kept telling me that he would get me to pull my own trigger and stuff like that. Like, I was starting to get really scared so I left with Keelan. Keelan was 10 months old and we have been separated since then. So that kind of got the ball rolling for me going to get counselling again with Hubert Smith in Vancouver. I was seeing Hubert Smith when I was down there with Aunty Harriet but when I went back and I started it again. And then Hubert Smith was the one that helped me to heal all of my sexual abuses. And it took me driving to Surrey for the first time it was twice a week in the winter months, like I drove by myself and I would cry all the way there and I would cry all the way back to Lillooet and there would be cars off the road and in the ditch and I drove by myself and I was like holy smokes, I must have not cared about nothing and was driving. And Keelan was not even a year old then. So that was already like what, 25 years ago. It was the second hardest, the third hardest thing to do. The hardest thing in my life was losing my daughter Perry, it gets easier but it never goes away.

I think it took a total of ten years for me to really get over it, where it is totally gone and it has given me strength. She gave me the belief in a higher power, in a god. She gave me the evidence that there is life after death. We got home from town that one day it was probably three, four days after we buried her and Perry could smell it and I could smell it. It was like a fresh poopy diaper. It was like a baby's fresh poopy diaper. So we looked for it in the house and we couldn't find it. We turned the whole house upside down looking for it. And then it was like, she just came to visit. And then there was this time that I was crying and I was looking over toward the grave yard and I could

feel this tiny little hand, I could literally feel this. It was going like that the whole time I cried but I knew it was just a tiny little hand. So like that, and plus the fact that I didn't want to just believe that I just put her in the ground and left her there. So I went to the bookstores and I got every book on death and dying and read it. Peoples near death experiences and what they seen. So she gave me that part of my life, there's something beyond the physical part.

So there's physical abuse, there's sexual abuse. There's the, there was no nurturing. My mom didn't tell me, she didn't tell me...I didn't know mom went to residential school. I believe it was Lorainne, the one who was married to Ben, she told me that she went to residential school with my mom. And Della and I believe Ginger they were the ones that told me they went to school with my mom. My mom never spoke one word about residential school. She never said one word. Most of the stuff as a child that I remember of my mom was, she was cruel, she was really really cruel. And see that's what the sexual abuse did. I felt that she was cruel to me because I was sexually abused and she was aware of it. She knew. There was the time I remember where I pinched my thumb in my dad's car and she drug me back to the car to teach me a lesson and pretended to pinch my thumb in the door again. Like instead of hugging me and consoling me and comforting me. Another time we were kids in the cherry tree and the branch broke and we fell down on the ground in burdocks and she was just ripping the burdocks out of my hair and just about ripping every hair out of my head and stuff and it was like that stuff, it was cruel.

And I didn't get why she was so cruel and I didn't know that she went to residential school until it was in 1990 when the road blocks stuff was going on and I

started hearing about it. This is where I took out all my anger was road blocks. I was angry at the government for doing that to our people, especially to my mom. So I went and I did the road block thing and I went all the way to Oka and experienced all of that just out of anger at the government for the residential school stuff.

I started to be a mean mom to Keelan and I knew that. Umm I'd be physically mean to Keelan. I would be verbally abusive mean to Keelan. There was one time where I slipped really bad and I left Jr. with Keelan. Keelan must have been about 12 and Jr. just have been about three before I was able to stop drinking and get it together. So those are things that I picked up from all the intergenerational impacts from my mom. I wrote this to my son. I just want to read it,

Keelan Perry Edwards 2003

Dear Keelan,

I begin to write this diary with a mother's love in my mind and heart. I love my mom Lorraine Catherine Edwards. I know my mom loved me but son most of all I love you and I don't ever want there to be any secrets between you and I. I never knew my mother. She didn't share her life and experiences with me. I know my mom went to residential school. I learned her effects of going to residential school. The experience there had to be awful, horrible, painful and sad since I never heard her talk about her upbringing. I usually remember her being at home with Mama and Papa and me. The times that I remember were sad and mean. She always pulled my hair. When I got hurt like pinching my finger in the car door or falling out of a cherry tree into a burdock bush rather than comfort me with a hug, mom would be angry and pretend to drag me to the car and slam my finger in the door again. Mom would tell me to climb the cherry tree

again. I had a lot of burdocks in my hair and she would yank them out. I would feel a lot of pain. I always remember my mom as an angry lady. This tells me that her experience at the residential school was horrible. I just wish I could have known this about my mom earlier so I could have understood about her pain.

I thought I was okay.

So I could have understood about her pain and I could have said I love you mom. Because my mom went to her grave with me hating her and I never ever told her I loved her.

And Keelan read this, he knows all this. This is what I wrote for him.

I remember when I was first sexually abused by a man in our community mom was still at home. I must have been about 4 or 5 years old. This man brought me home late at night sitting on his shoulders. When I was asked where I was I said at the hay stack. What were you doing there? I was honest and explained this was my first encounter being honest and being scolded. I felt like it was my fault and Mama and mom were ashamed of me. I really believe this is why my mom left me. I was raised mostly by Mama because Papa died in January '72. The best memories I had as a child was when both Mama and Papa were healthy and she worked in the home and he mostly worked outside. I was 3, 4, 5 years old when I last felt safe in my childhood. I don't ever know of Mama or Papa working for money. Mama and Papa planted a huge garden enough fruit and vegetables to last year round. Papa, Brian, Shadow, Leonard etc. hunted deer, rabbit, grouse and I don't remember my life being dysfunctional until after Papa's death.

After 1972, I was around 10 years of age, Mama began drinking alcohol. When she drank it was for two weeks at a time. It seemed that every adult in Pavilion would be

drunk. Eventually my brothers went to live with Mike and Jolly. Only Richard and I lived with Mama at which time Richard was a baby. When Mama drank I ended up taking care of Mama and Richard. Having to cook and feed Richard and myself and get myself off to school. I was too small to realize to clean house so the house would get real messy. I would live in a filthy mess for weeks before Mama would sober up long enough to clean up the house and do laundry. A hurtful thing that Mama would say to me was, even your mom didn't want you. By the time I was 12 years old life was hell for me. I was being sexually abused more and really did not feel safe. I began running away from home only to find no one to come to look for me. It was a very painful time in my life. I really felt no one cared about me. When I would get home after a weekend I would get into trouble but nothing mattered when I was in grade seven and eight.

I moved to Merritt BC to live with mom and her spouse Carl Coutlee. This was okay. I felt a little bit of stability but not for long. I realized mom drank a mickey of whiskey every day and Carl Coutlee drank his dollar bottle of wine and if they could afford more alcohol they would get really drunk. Mom drank the entire pregnancy of Aaron Coutlee. When Aaron was born he had Fetal Alcohol Syndrome so he cried a lot. Mom started to drink even more after Aaron was born so I moved back home to Pavilion when I was in grade nine.

This is when I met your dad. I was staying in the dormitory Monday to Friday and mostly every weekend with your dad. Mama still drank a lot and god only knows what my brothers' lives were like. Was probably hell just as mine since life for them is full of alcohol and drugs? When I first met your dad I was only 15. Way too young.

Perry was 23. I believe your dad was unfaithful right from day one. This was a sure sign that I should not have stayed as long as I did.

So these were to Keelan and these were just journals that I would write when I would get down and stuff. Another thing in my life that like Mama died and my daughter died, Shadow died. I had lots of family die. And I could grieve for them and I could let them go but I couldn't with my mom and I was wondering, like it's just in maybe the last ten years that I finally realized that I grieved my mom's death and I couldn't understand why I couldn't grieve her death. Then I did this one assignment in class. I did it on complicated grief and that's what it was, complicated grief and I had to sort through like I couldn't grieve her because I didn't have her as a mom to begin with. I didn't know where to start because she wasn't a mom to me in my life. I went for years, and because of the fact that my daughter was born...three days before she died, I didn't have time. I couldn't grieve. I was mixed up, I was supposed to be happy that I had my new born daughter, and I was just mixed up. So then when I have tragic things happen in my life I would want my mom so bad. So I was that little girl just wanting my mom. I could finally have a healthy grieving, the healthy grief go on and I was wondering why it took longer to grieve her death than all the rest and it was because it was that complicated grief and I had to sort through that.

And then I wrote this out and it is the grief wheel of trauma and loss. So some of the generational traumas that I've experienced like a death; my parent, and my sibling Aaron, my sexual abuse, my physical abuse, emotional abuse and my cultural oppression, abandonment, adoption, violence, murder, rape, parents substance abuse, residential and boarding schools. My first experience was at age five when I was sexually abused and

then my father left and I was abandoned and then my mom left. All these were in my childhood years. So I did this back in the day to understand.

My brother Aaron was murdered April 15th. I have to look at this because I don't remember the date exactly. April 16, 1999. He was our youngest brother and to me he should have outlived us all but he was the youngest and he died first. It was a murder and he was stabbed thirty-five times it was hard for me to get over that, like I had to go to counselling. I went to see Lorraine Multen for a long time. And again, I felt responsible. I felt guilty that I didn't reach out and help him as his older sister. It took a long time for me to come to an understanding that it would have happened anyways, that I wasn't responsible. I experienced so much pain, just so much pain when he died. And being the oldest, having to take care of the funeral and having concerns about my younger siblings. It was a lot on my shoulders so I just went and seen Lorraine Multen for a long time because when we were doing the preliminary trial and all the gory stuff was coming out about where he was stabbed and how many times he was stabbed. Just feeling the anger and the rage and the hate towards Kathleen. I met her once. Aaron brought her to Pavilion once. They were at Mama's for the summer so I did get to meet her.

I went to counselling with Lorraine for probably a good eight months and I just left it at that until her family burned in a house fire. Her father and her two children, her son and her daughter burned in a house fire on January 23, 2001. So I went to the funeral. I put it in the context that if Aaron was here I would go to the funeral and pay my respects so I did. And then she, Kathleen was there. She was being escorted there by parole officers. When the line-up was going and people were hugging her, I got in the line-up and went and I hugged her and then we went outside. And then just before she

was going to get put back in the patty-wagon I called her name. I said Kathleen and I went running over there and hugged her again and I said I forgive you Kathleen. I forgive you for murdering my brother. I need to tell you that. And I said I need to tell you that I love you. And I left it at that and then she contacted me 2006, so five years later.

She told me that she had cancer, breast cancer and she was just going to not take any treatment and she was just going to allow herself to die. That she felt like she still owed me something that she still had to right that wrong and that she had this profound feeling that she never had in her whole life of having somebody hug her like that and tell her that she was loved and she didn't think that she could be loved by anybody. So she really had that strong feeling that she had to do something to right her wrongs that's what she kept saying. So she brought that letter to me with tobacco with Sandy Ferguson David. They brought the letter with tobacco. Do you want me to read the letter?

January 05, 2006

Cheryl Edwards, I'm coming in a good way, a traditional way so that I may speak with you because I have a heavy heart. The reconciliation team will offer you tobacco in tradition on my behalf and on our institutional elders guidance I want to speak with you and I can understand if you are not ready for the healing circle. It would be one of many healing circles. I saw the pain in the victim impact statement when you asked about what I have done. Have I attended programs and what have I done to better myself. I would like to address this with you. The only way we can do this is through proper channels and I am just now finding the means to contact the victim/offender program so that they can mediate.

I have wanted to talk to you for a long time. When I received a compassionate pass to attend the funeral of my children and father I saw you there. You gave me a card for each one of my children and my father and hugged me. With your actions to physically hug me it gave me an overwhelming sense of feeling that I have never known before. It made me take a serious commitment to change things in my life, to accept things in my life and I would do anything to right my wrongs. I've always wanted to tell you that. It was in this spirit that I send you this letter. If I could have a chance to apologize in person it would mean a lot for me, for the emotional pain and suffering that I caused your family. If you have any questions that you would like answered, I would like to do that. There is somethings that I do not know but there are others that I do know. I hope this could help to lighten your walk in the journey of life. I know what I have done is unforgettable.

So this brought back a lot of that pain that I felt for my brother and what he experienced and I remember laying on the bed crying and just crying so hard. And then, it was scary. It was really really scary to do it, but we did. I was getting counselling from Jann Derrick so that's where I chose to do it. We had a healing circle in there and that will talk about it, the CD. (She passed me the dvd named *In search of healing justice. Cheryl Edwards and Kathleen Walters share their healing story.* 2009). She came, the parole officers, there might have been about four of them that brought her up. And then the elder that she worked with came as well.

Then there was just only going to be me and Jann and then that morning it was just getting, I wanted my mom again really bad. I was in the shower and it just, I don't know, it was just hard to explain what I was feeling. I just wanted my mom and I needed

her I guess for safety and protection. So I don't know what made me think of Ginger, maybe because Ginger and my mom grew up close together. If anybody knows anything about my mom it would be Ginger, probably that's who I would go to see. So I phoned her that morning. This was going to take place at ten or something and I phoned her at eight o'clock in the morning and I said Ginger you need to come. And they didn't have any time to think but they came, both her and Hector came. And then the other party didn't know that Hector and Ginger were going to be there and they almost didn't participate in the circle because I all of a sudden wanted Ginger and Hector to be there and Francis and it was like oh my god is this going to happen? And it did happen.

I don't know it seemed like food and eating a meal was so important to Mama all the time. That's what she was doing and that is what I remembered of her, she would feed everybody, the whole community. Like, when activities happened, everybody was all around. Christmas time after they would fire the gun at midnight, everybody came to our house and ate, like everybody always came to our house to eat and it was always about food. So I wanted to have a traditional meal after the sharing circle so. I don't know how Jann got her daughter Diyame to cook fish and rice and we had a traditional meal afterwards. It was kind of cool.

So we had this sharing circle and I told her that I needed to know these questions and that I needed to know her answer to them so that I could let go of my brother. So I could let him go to the spirit world and let him carry on. So I asked her why she killed him and what happened, if she remembered what happened. And she was trying to get out of it, and we had a break because she wasn't going to answer the questions that I was putting to her. And that elder, that elder had to scold her kind of to tell her "you have to.

She's asking you and that's why we're here". And so when they came back and she talked about it and it will be all in there, in the CD. But I cried so much. I never cried so much in my whole life in that healing and we all shared after.

Then it was Hector and Ginger who said we can't judge you because of our grandson and I thought oh my god why did I do that? I don't know why I just didn't think of Neil [Neil was in jail for the same reason as Kathleen]. That's when I realized that oh my god I asked them to come and be part of this circle and I didn't think about it right. It didn't connect until they started to share in the circle. I was like oh my god. You know I didn't think about it until they started sharing it in the circle and I thought oh how come I did this, why did I do this. But anyways it was so healing for me because they were all in the circle and I just cried tons and I cried lots. It was so healing for me. But to be able to put it all behind me and get to the spot where I have respect and love for her, you know that's one thing that I know and I experienced and it's so powerful to be able to love.

That's what drives me, it's not being able to tell my mom, I love you mom. I know that I was not able to tell anybody that. So that was, that was my goal. I needed to be a loveable person. I really needed to be. So even with the people who sexually abused me, I got to that point where I feel this love for them. After a while I was able to house clean for uncle Bill and just have that respect for them.

So that's my story. Oh and another thing that I would like to talk about is, there is so much dysfunction in our family. After Mama died, we all, we are all separated. It's just gone. I don't know what it is we can't pull ourselves together to be close. Even my brother Bruce and my brother Carl and my brother Richard we are just so, we are far

apart. I try not to hurt too much about it but I do and I'm close to my sons. Like my sons, I always said that I don't want to be like my mom. That's what my mother gave me, the strength that my mother gave me that I didn't want to be like her. I didn't want to be an alcoholic. I didn't want to abandon my children. I wanted to be a good mom. But it's painful to watch my boys grow up without a grandma, without a grandfather. Like that's the missing link in their lives right now. All that has been messed up by residential school. All the roles, all the roles of brother, sister, grandmother like we all had roles to play and they are all messed up. To be healthy we need to go back that way. We need to find those roles and start teaching them.

I didn't know any English as a child. The language, the St'at'imc language was my first language but I've lost it since my Mama died. I grieved really hard for the language and I didn't understand that was happening either. It's like, it was like a death and I didn't realize that until a long time later that was what was going on inside of me. And even now, Delores just did it recently she said "you should come and speak at the schools" and when she said that I find inside of me my soul hurts and it hurts and it's like nobody, no one, no one understands. No one understands and right at this moment. I do understand what they feel like, what they felt like going to residential school and not being able to speak the language because I feel it right and I felt it. I didn't think of it until now that they weren't allowed to speak the language. But in different ways I lost mine and what I feel right now is they're feeling, how lots of them have felt. Because for the longest time there the residential school is over here and my Mama and them over here and I'm in the middle. I felt like I don't belong over here and I don't belong over there. I'm just here in the middle. So when somebody comes at me with the language I

hurt really bad inside because when my Mama left, when my Mama died it started to die slowly. Oh I didn't think I was going to cry this much (laughs) it just happens hey? I saw Brian at Jimmy's funeral and we were talking in Indian to each other and that's when I feel so alive, when I can speak it because I do.

I still pick sxúsum. I still pick hakwa7.

Resilience (laughs)...resilience is having a fricken hard difficult life and just going through it and just carrying on because you're tough and you're strong and you want to survive and you want a better life. And you're determined to get there regardless of whatever it takes.

I didn't have any feelings before I started my sexual abuse healing. I didn't feel. I was so messed up and so confused. I didn't know it was anger that I was feeling. I didn't know it was hate that I was feeling. I didn't know and that's what the counsellor had to help me unwind. Like I didn't know, I had no idea. I know I'm going to get there one day. I have lots to share but I have to get over the fear of going back to where I'm the strongest and that's to the community. I'm not ready yet.

It wasn't too long ago, it's funny because both my sons are at each end of the spectrum, Keelan's proud to be Aboriginal, First Nations. Keelan has lots of knowledge about the St'at'imc area. My son Jr. on this side, he has no idea and he's healthy, he's really healthy, we left the community because he was sexually abused and I had enough healing and enough love that I left the community loving that family that abused him. I won't say which one, which one of the kids. I think it was about two years ago Francis Jr. said mom are we Aboriginal First Nations? He just, he has to find that part. He's really strong; he's going to go places. He graduates May 15, 2015. It's like, I'm so

proud of how I've raised him. You know, one of the goals, one of my goals is I want on my tombstone, she was the best mom. That's all I want my boys to put on there. My boys tell me they love me all the time and that's the biggest gift I can have. All the time they tell me and it's like wow and I couldn't tell my mom that I loved her.

I got to ask Mama, I asked her, did you know where the kids were going when they were taking them from you? She said, no. Richie told me that I would go to jail if I didn't let them go. I know it was painful because when I was going to school in Vancouver she said you better leave Keelan and I said no Mama you guys wouldn't be able to look after him. You guys drink too much. She said Mary-Anne will quit drinking. I said, no you can't volunteer Mary-Anne to quit drinking. The last day that I saw Mama was on my daughter's birthday on September 8th. She didn't want us to go hungry so she made me, she came back and helped us pick apples and I went off to school. And then she died a week later. A couple days later actually on September 13th, a week later she died but see she didn't want me, all that stuff was coming back and she didn't want me to take Keelan with me because I was going to school. She wanted Keelan to be left behind. Just because that feeling was coming up for her again, I was going to school. That's all I talked to her about because I knew it was painful...So that's my story.

Chapter Eight: My Story

Ti7na Lósi nskwátsitsa. Shannon McDonald nsam7ásk'7a. Brenda McDonald nskícez7a. Harriet McDonald nkúkwa7. Hector McDonald nilh nspápez7a. Ts'kw'aylaxcwemckalh, St'at'imc. Dennis Eustache nsqátsez7a. Elizabeth Eustache nkúkwa7. James Eustache nilh nspápez7a. Simpcwkalh, Secwepemc.

My Indian name is Ti7na Lósi. My settler name is Shannon McDonald. My mother is Brenda McDonald. My grandmother is Harriet McDonald and my grandfather is Hector McDonald (deceased). We are from Ts'kw'aylaxw, St'at'imc Nation. My father is Dennis Eustache, my grandmother is Elizabeth Eustache and my grandfather is James Eustache (deceased). We are from Simpcw First Nation, Secwepemc Nation.

Both of my parents attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School and their parents attended residential school. The more that I think of it the more I realize how my parents and I have been affected by the residential school experience. My parents had to deal with alcoholism and poverty within their homes growing up, as did I. But this wasn't our traditional way. Violence, neglect and substance abuse were not the way for Indigenous people. This all started with colonization and with colonization came the residential school system.

I was raised by my mom on the North Shore of Kamloops; however I was still connected to my two communities of Ts'kw'ay'laxw and Simpcw, more so to Simpcw growing up because I enjoyed my summers and holidays with my dad and my cousins in Simpcw. My mom raised my brother Jason and I until my brother Jason was a teen. Then Jason moved to Ts'kw'aylaxw and was raised with the help of our extended family. My youngest sister Shauni was raised by my great Aunty Dolly. Because my brother and

sister were raised by family members at times it seemed as though I was an only child. On my dad's side I had an older sister Jessica that was adopted out as a baby. I did not meet her until I was a teen. We have only been able to start building a relationship in the last 10 or so years. Aside from my biological siblings, I grew up close to a lot of my cousins who are like sisters and brothers. The older ones looked after me. My other cousins and I have many fun and crazy memories growing up. At times it seemed like all we had was each other.

Today I have a caring and loving spouse Boysie and three stepdaughters Wynter Starr, Rayne and Mary. As well, Wynter has a beautiful baby boy Kaedan so we are grandparents. I have been with Boysie since 2011. I don't have any of my own children at this time. When I think about why, prior to Boysie I said I had never found anyone who I wanted to raise children with. I was waiting. And now that I have found him, I am still waiting, waiting to finish school. I have found myself putting up these reasons and I continuously get asked when we are going to start having children? This puts a lot of pressure on me. All my close friends are having children I want children too, but I am waiting to finish school.

The reality is I have put this off because I am scared. I know I have the support of Boysie and our family. For me, the reality is I was raised by my parents who attended residential school. My parents did a great job raising me with the assistance of my family. My parents had to learn on their own how to be parents. The way that I see it, they were still struggling while they were raising me. I want to grow old with the father of my children and I don't want to deal with my children only seeing their dad on weekends and holidays because that really tore me up as a child. I always said that I

wanted to be financially ready to have children because I know how I was impacted by not always having the basic necessities growing up. I wanted to be emotionally ready to have children. In being emotionally ready, I have worked hard on myself in dealing with my own childhood struggles.

My understanding of my parent's lives growing up is that it was not easy. I believe my grandparents were the first generation of my family to go to the residential school. Because of this, my parents were raised by parents who were residential school survivors as well. This was when the abuses started in our communities; it was brought home from the residential schools. It changed our family systems and my parents were the first to see it and then they had to go to the residential school.

Both of my parents have had difficulties growing up. As I stated earlier, both my parents and grandparents went to the residential school. This is an important part of my story because I believe that my parents had the worst of it along with all my aunts and uncles of that generation. Not only were their parents' survivors, but they also had to attend. Prior to attending the Kamloops Indian Residential School, my parents were at home living in communities that were struggling with poverty, alcoholism and violence. Within my mom's home growing up there was alcoholism, poverty, domestic violence, and sexual abuse. I have heard that my father's home also dealt with alcoholism. I have heard that they struggled with poverty and neglect as well. My parents' lives at home was not easy and they were placed in the residential schools.

One difficult thing for me while telling family about my thesis topic was comments about the length of my parents' attendance at residential school. To me, it doesn't matter if they went a day, a year, or 10. The fact that they went means that I was

impacted. I was impacted by my parents' attendance as well as my grandparents'. I felt like saying to them this is my story, please don't make me doubt my experiences. I have doubted myself all my life. This is not something I can question. This is my truth.

I think about what it would be like to have been a student of a residential school. Even just that first day, being brought to the school in the back of a cattle truck and stopping in front of a cold, stone brick building. Once you enter the building, having your hair cut and your head deloused. Then being forced to wear a uniform exactly like everyone else. Walking in the halls and not being able to speak to your brother or sister. I could not imagine not being able to talk to my siblings. At the residential schools students were horrifically abused; sexually, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Students were forced to practice religion. But the worst of it all, they were shown no affection by staff or peers because it was a sin. The students were not nurtured in any healthy form as children. As students at these schools you were not only forcefully removed from your family and your community. You were also forbidden to practice your culture and traditions. This description is only at a very superficial level. You can think of the analogy of the iceberg and this is only what is seen above water, below are all the other effects that were not visible and are only being discussed recently.

I was not raised in my community. I struggled with my identity as a Native because I do not know my language and am only learning more of my traditions and culture now. I never lived with both of my parents because they split up prior to me being born. Not having both parents while I was growing up was a big loss for me. I never had the opportunity to see my parents together and consequently I never knew what

a healthy relationship was. I had to learn on my own or look beyond my parents to see this.

I remember once talking to my mom about my dad. I remember talking about when I was born. My mom said that she made the choice to have me. She loved my dad dearly and wanted to have a baby with him. They broke up before I was born and I was several months old before my dad met me. He isn't on my birth certificate. It was hard to hear this all but it all made sense. My mom wanted us to be a family but due to whatever, this didn't happen. This still upsets me today to think of it.

Another way I struggled with my identity was not growing up on reserve with my family. My cousins teased me because I didn't grow up on the reserve and I didn't know my traditions. I was also teased in Kamloops because I had dark skin and appeared very "Native looking". For this I was teased, even by my "friends". I didn't know how to handle this growing up. To make this even harder when I went to a Native school on the Kamloops reserve, I was teased because I was not from that community. I moved around a lot growing up, and I went to seven different elementary schools on the North Shore of Kamloops. Due to moving around so much I didn't have a lot of constant friends until about grade five when I stayed in one elementary school and transitioned into high school with the same group of friends. Even though I stayed in one school I was still teased by my cousins, now for not having Native friends. Why did it matter to my cousins? Why should it matter to me?

In about grade 10 I transitioned friends from my non-Native friends to a group of Native friends. This was hard for a dear friend of mine, who I lost because I was no longer her best friend. I did this because I was being told to hang out with my own kind.

Was this right? I don't know. But my Native friends, at the time, understood my home life, the poverty, and the alcoholism in the home. I did not have to hide my life from my Native friends like I did with my other friends. I felt like for once I didn't have to hide this secret I had hidden all throughout elementary and up to this point in high school. I felt like I had nothing to hide.

If I grew up in my community, with my family I would have been immersed in my culture/traditions I would have learned my language, my culture and what it really meant to be an úcwalmicw. I would have learnt more from my parents, my grandparents, aunts and uncles about important things such as how to gather and preserve food/medicines for the winter. I would have learned early on how to pray, how to use my spirituality to help guide me in a good way. But because I was not raised in my community, as an adult I had to reach out and ask these questions on my own. It wasn't a part of my childhood teachings, what was taught was how to survive.

Relationships were not an easy thing for me to figure out on my own. My first relationship was an abusive one. It took me four years to leave. I was not happy and neither was he. He struggled with alcoholism and I struggled with depression. There were times that I was suicidal or other times that I wondered if he would kill me. I remember being beat up and trying to hide the fat lip from my aunt or the bloody nose from my mom. He made me feel very insecure because he called me horrible names. I knew that I didn't want children with him because we were not healthy together. This relationship really messed me up. I remember when I left the first time, I should have charged him but I didn't. And the second time I left him I didn't charge him again. To this day I regret not charging him or documenting it because he should be accountable for

his actions. I remained single for a long time after that and didn't have a serious relationship until I met Boysie.

In between that first relationship and meeting Boysie I did a lot of counselling. I quit drinking. I picked up the hand drum and started learning my language, culture and traditions. I started my career and became an independent woman. I learned to walk on my own two feet. Learning to be independent was a lot of hard work and took a lot of the time. It was a really lonely time but I am so grateful for where it has brought me. I am now in a great relationship with a great man because of the counselling and healing I went through.

I had role models that I looked up to for what a good relationship should look like. My Aunty Lisa Rose and Uncle Ron. They have two beautiful children. I remember watching them raise their children and thinking I want to be like them. One thing that I remember standing out was in the morning, every morning when they first woke up, their little children Skye and Garren would go and sit with their parents and just cuddle. This was amazing to see morning after morning, it showed me how much love and nurturing they provided to their children, so simple but so beautiful.

My mom was always honest with me about her struggles growing up. Her honesty, I believe, taught me life's lessons about and through her experiences. She told me about her attempts at committing suicide, the abuse, abandonment and neglect. At times this may have been inappropriate information to share with a child or teenage daughter, but I now see how it helped to guide me in the right direction. She taught me how to always persevere through her stories.

Her stories taught me to keep going, despite all possible obstacles in front of me. Our struggles taught me the importance of education. Despite all that my mom went through in her life, she obtained a Bachelors of Arts degree. When I was young she went back to school and got her adult dogwood and then she kept on going. I remember her reading out loud and remember the sound of her typewriter. I was able to see her hard at work in completing her schooling.

Our experience with poverty taught me the importance of employment. Despite our struggles financially, my mom always provided for us through her summers of preserving food (frozen, salted, canned or dried fish). Her brothers would bring us deer meat. We always had the staples of rice, potatoes, celery and carrots. Our cupboards always had oatmeal, flour, sugar, peanut butter and jam. We always made ends meet.

My brother tells me of times when we were young. One constant memory he has is making me pancakes from scratch. My brother said when we were left alone and he would make me pancakes because he could with what we had in our cupboards. Later on he told me that all he was using was flour and water and it didn't work out. He continued the story to say that he walked with me to our aunts to eat. I don't remember this. I was too young. He told me that he used to get mad at me when we would walk to our aunts home because I walked too slow. "You were just little," he said. "I was yelling at you to hurry up and I'm sorry." This is one memory that he continues to apologies to me about. I tell him, Jason you were too young as well. You did the best you could. You were just a child as well. I always thank him for caring for me.

The only time that I ever felt alone was once when I was 13. I came home from a school dance and our door was locked, the lights were out and no one was home. I

remember the sense of loneliness but I just had to walk one block and I rang my aunt's doorbell. I was crying, she answered the door and let me in and I spent the night there. Even in that one instance of loneliness, I was with my family within minutes. I was thankful that my aunt and uncle were home.

I have been lucky to always have family around me. Although my parents may have been drinking and out, I always had someone I could call on. I am grateful for this. I believe that someone was watching over me as I grew up because many children were removed due to their parent's alcoholism. I never was taken away from my family. I could have been a child in care in the 80's. If a social worker knocked on the door of my mom or dad's home while there was drinking I could have very well been removed. To the best of my knowledge my parents never had to deal with the child welfare system while I was a child.

Growing up, my mom had many parties in our home. I normally knew all the people in my house. I was never afraid but more angered. I would storm out into the living room and turn down the music. I would yell "I have school in the morning"! I would do this several times throughout the night. Due to the partying in my home I had to get myself up in the morning, get ready and get myself to school. I hid the fact that my mom drank. I made sure I was at school on time because I didn't want anyone to know that my mom was an alcoholic.

I had a lot of family at my house living with us at different times. There were aunts and cousins. I know that some of them were not in a good place, were drinking or doing drugs but my mom always had her door open for anybody. She always had room

for family to spend a night, a week, or a month or two. To me it just seems normal to have family over visiting or living with us.

Throughout my time with my dad things were not very different. There was a lot of drinking and driving. There are many memories of drives to Dunn Lake and Little Fort. I remember one time my dad took me and my cousin Candice huckleberry picking. My dad was drinking that day. He pulled over on the dirt road returning from Dunn Lake and he passed out by a hay field. I am not sure how long he slept but I remember being scared and crying with my cousin. He eventually woke up and continued to drive home. There were many times where he was drinking and driving but we always made it home. I also remember him always driving very slowly.

Despite the times when I struggled my mom and my dad both showed me the importance of hard work. To this day my dad is still working hard. Many of those years were in labour intensive jobs. He has always worked in a saw mill or in the bush tree spacing or logging. He also enjoys working as a cook. He has training in culinary arts. My mom is very intelligent. She worked through her Bachelor of Arts degree while raising me. She taught me a lot about Indigenous history and the Indian residential schools. She had a lot of struggles throughout her time in school but she persevered. Both of my parents instilled the importance of hard work.

I do not share these stories to try blaming my parents for my hardships growing up. I share my stories to help others understand how I have been affected by my parent's and my grandparent's attendance at Indian residential schools. I think it is very important to hear the stories of the children whose parents attended Indian residential schools, they too have been impacted and have endured the effects of those institutions.

My parents, my aunts, uncles and grandmothers all taught me a lot about how to be a St'at'imc/Secwepemc woman. I remember going to visit my dad every holiday, summer break and many weekends. I remember going berry picking during the month of July. I remember going with my aunts in Simpcw. We would go picking huckleberries and sxúsum (soapberries). I remember eating saskatoons (stsáqwem) and choke cherries. As well as sitting by the roads eating wild raspberries and red caps. I also grew up eating crab apples. To this day I still really enjoy local berries and foods.

When I was in Ts'kw'aylaxw I remember going fishing, hunting, and mushroom picking for morels. I also remember picking hakwa7 (wild celery). Here I also picked stsáqwem and choke cherries. I always remember the feeling of peacefulness when I was in the mountains. Whether I was in the back of an uncle's truck or walking in the bushes, as long as mosquitoes weren't eating me, these times in the mountain were some of my most peaceful times as a child.

In order for me to speak about myself, my identity as a St'at'imc/Secwepemc woman I need to speak about who my parents are. I know that they have not had an easy life. I am grateful that they are still here. The reality of Indigenous peoples today is that if they went to residential school, and their parents attended as well there is a good chance that they are no longer here on earth and they have passed on into the spirit world. I hear my parents speak of this, their friends passing away and what I notice is a lot of our people are passing way for other reasons not from natural causes. A lot of my parents' close friends, those they partied with when I was growing up, are not around anymore. I see how all of this grief and loss affects them and how it makes them re-evaluate their lives and their decisions.

I too have now started losing friends who are dear to my heart due to unnatural causes. The impact of grief and loss is something that you can not understand and explain until you have dealt with it yourself. I have had many losses in my life. But my friend Bernadette has impacted me the most. She passed away December 30, 2016. My life turned upside down after losing her. She was my go to person in life, in my struggles. She understood me.

I have always been able to ask my mom about questions that I may have had regarding my upbringing. She is always open to discuss whatever I ask. For some reason I do not have that same comfort with my dad. I try to find brief ways to discuss things with him. One instance is when I wanted to know when he attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School. I didn't ask him directly but started off discussing a TV program called Blackstone on APTN. This was a program that both of us enjoyed watching. Our discussion was less than two minutes but I finally asked him a question that I have been meaning to ask since I started my schooling for my Master's in Social Work. I felt a sense of relief that I finally had the courage to ask him. He told me he was nine or ten years old when he went to the residential school.

A part of my identity is that of struggle, but it also includes resilience. I am here because of my parents. I am where I am because of their teachings. To some it may not be a lot but to me it was my foundation that helped create who I am today. Through my own struggles growing up, I have learned the important things in life do not include a monetary value. I have learned the importance of family, traditions and hard work.

I first learned Secwepemc and St'at'imc in school. Other than the odd word here or there in my household I wasn't taught the language. This wasn't my parents' or

grandparents' fault, it was the result of the government and churches that forced our families to speak English and to be ashamed of the language. As an adult I had to take a journey on my own to learn more about myself as an Indigenous person. I learned some of the St'at'imc and Secwepemc hand drum songs. Today I take pride in carrying a hand drum and being able to share some of our songs.

I learned how to make st'swan (dry fish), from catching the fish, clubbing the fish, breaking his neck, packing it up to the drying rack to cut the fish into strips and drying it. When I am down on the Fraser River and cannot hear anything but the sound of the water crashing against the fishing rocks, I am most peaceful. I also learned to freeze and can the fish to preserve it for the winter. As a tradition, I used to can my fish with my Granny Harriet in Ts'kw'aylaxw. This was bonding time with her that I cherish. Today I can fish and bring it to her. I have my family to thank for teaching me these traditions. As an adult, I understand the importance of learning these traditions.

My future goals are to get a gun, learn to shoot it and shoot my first deer, gut it and give it away as tradition is to give away your first kill. I also want to learn those berry picking spots my aunts brought me to as a child. I want to gather huckleberries and sxúsum berries. I want to learn more of my languages (St'at'imc and Secwepemc) as well as our traditional songs and dances.

There is so much that Canadian society struggles to understand about Indigenous people. So I get very angered when non-Native people say "get over it", "it was long time ago" or "you guys get everything for free". This is not the truth. I have struggled, and my parents have struggled so much more. My grandparents have lived through all of this. I would much rather have my traditions, language and culture in exchange for the

life of poverty, alcoholism and the broken family that I grew up in. Non-Indigenous people don't understand the reasons for my struggles and those of my family. All I can do is fight for who we are! Fight for our lifestyle; our livelihood. I am St'at'imc! I am Secwepemc!

This story is just a few pages of an example of what I have learned about resiliency, about healing, my courage and strength. It is about parents who because of Indian residential school experience struggled to parent their children- not that they didn't love them, but they were not taught how to be loving, devoted, caring parents due to the Indian residential schools. In closing I say a prayer:

I pray for the people,
for the language,
for our traditional way of life
for the healing of my people and mother earth
Takem Nsnuknukwa7 (All my relations)

Chapter Nine: Data Analysis

Within Indigenous communities, families have been struggling since the onset of colonization, including policies such as the Indian Act and the residential school system. Many of the students of residential school returned home and didn't know how to deal with the pain caused by the abuses they endured in those institutions. They returned home to their family system broken down because their children were taken. How do families continue on with life without their children?

The survivors of residential school became parents without the parenting skills they would have learned at home before colonization and the forced removal of children from the communities. They would have learned how to parent if the government systems did not make it illegal to keep children home. The children were institutionalized and then ended up not having the parenting skills when they became parents themselves. This led to instances of neglect and abandonment of their own children. As evident in the five stories shared, there are many similarities in regards to the effects of residential school on second-generation survivors.

It cannot be stressed enough that the purpose of sharing the five stories is not to judge parenting abilities or lack thereof. "The practice of separating children from their parents and their way of life had a drastic impact on almost all Aboriginal families...Parenting skills diminished as succeeding generations became more and more institutionalized and experienced little nurturing" (Lafrance & Collins, 2003, p.106). The purpose is to share the stories of the second-generation survivors, provide an opportunity for healing within the Aboriginal communities' and help educate the Canadian society.

All five stories were transcribed, and then reviewed by the participants. Once the transcripts were approved by the participants I started going through them and highlighting the themes that came out of the stories shared, including my own.

Initially, I was going to base the themes on the six questions that I asked but then as I reviewed all five stories, the themes started showing up on their own. Throughout the writing process, I was reminded to expand on my data analysis method. Kovach (2009) reminded me how delicate this work is.

As I think about the data analysis and interpretation of Western research processes, I am reminded to pay close attention to the principles of the Indigenous research paradigm and the decolonizing aim of this research. I tried to be as respectful as possible, particularly in the matter of coding, and hope that the ancestors will not disown me for this one (p.53)

As an Indigenous researcher, I hope that my work doesn't further stereotype Indigenous peoples in Canada. I aim to write in a way that shares the participants' truths kept to the original version as much as possible.

First I shared all five stories and prior to my data analysis so the reader can understand the contexts of the data analysis. Kovach (2009) touches on this point and states "the process cannot be separated from the product because they belong together, they complete each other. Making meaning within Indigenous inquiry demands this much (p. 129). I would only be sharing half the story if I didn't include the whole stories that were shared with me.

Through the transcription of the stories, I had the opportunity to really sit and listen to each of the storytellers and to really hear what they were saying. I printed each story out and then I carefully read through all of the transcribed stories several times seeking themes. On each story I highlighted the themes on the transcripts. As I read and

re-read the stories several themes naturally emerged. This may also be due to the fact that I too am sharing my story and the themes were very consistent in all of the stories. Some of the themes were experienced by all the storytellers, others were shared by most. I categorized the stories themes and created sub-sections. The three themes that I determined that needed to be shared are:

1. Effects as a child
 - Parenting
 - Being left alone
 - Lack of food
 - Alcohol and Drug Use
 - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Child Welfare involvement
 - Disconnection with siblings
2. Adulthood
 - Grief and Loss
 - Addictions
 - Relationships
3. Healing
 - Acknowledging the past
 - Addressing the issues

- Role models
- Culture and Traditions

The patterns seen throughout the stories occurred as a result of our parents attending residential schools.

As children of residential school survivors it would be important to start here. These were the most formative years and influenced how each second-generation survivor would be as adults. Several themes were talked about by each participant pertaining to their childhood. This would have been the time that they were most dependent on their parents.

The next theme that emerged was on adulthood. It has been identified by some of the participants that the teachings by their mothers influenced their adulthood. Some of the same struggles that the participants witnessed their mothers go through were repeated as adults. In each story, they also spoke to taking responsibility of their lives and moving past the impacts and speaking to not blaming their parents. They spoke to learning to understand where their families struggles and move past them.

The final theme was on healing. During this section I envision seeing our people walking out of the darkness of colonization and attempted genocide. I hear the importance of healing, learning traditions and re-learning out ways that the residential school tried to take away.

Effects as a child

There were a lot of similarities shared that categorize as effects that second-generation survivors experienced as a child. Some of the themes I will discuss are:

parenting; being left alone; lack of food, alcohol and drug use; fetal alcohol spectrum disorder; sexual abuse; child welfare involvement; disconnection from siblings. This chapter is where the majority of the themes came from.

Parenting

I think of the first-generation survivors and when they were sent to residential school; they had feelings of abandonment due to their parents not being around. Jack (2000) shared this example. “The first day I was really scared, I cried. I just wanted to go home...it was hard, but she [the residential school survivor’s mom] told me that I had to” (Anonymous cited, p. 112). Here Jack shares the bond between the child and their mom prior to going to residential school. There are many instances of these disclosures of the feeling of sadness and being scared when going away to the residential school.

Parenting skills were not taught by the first-generation survivor’s families because they were in residential school. “Children learn parenting skills by the way they were parented. Those who spent eight, ten or more years at K.I.R.S had limited experience as family members” (Haig-Brown, 1988, p. 122-123). The institutionalization of children, along with the abuse and neglect within the schools had devastating impacts on the first-generation.

The schools were intended to sever the link between Aboriginal children and parents. They did this work only too well. Family connections were permanently broken. Children exposed to strict and regimented discipline in the schools not only lost their connections to parents, but also found it difficult to become loving parents” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p.4).

These impacts trickled down to their children. Here I will show some of the effects on second-generation survivors. The parenting themes found within the stories shared by participants included: Being left alone; lack of food; alcohol and drug use.

Being left alone

Second-generation survivors recalled that growing up there were feelings of loneliness and abandonment, many times parents were not home. Deanne and I spoke of times where we felt alone growing up. Deanne describes one memory when she was left alone,

...well my mom left us with one of her babysitters...and our babysitter got so scared he left so me and my brother were by ourselves...I remember walking to another of my mom's friends late at, kind of late at night because of that.

Deanne also shared some of the struggles despite when her mom quit drinking,

[M]y mom was able to quit drinking for 14 years so it wasn't too bad but even when she wasn't drinking...she was never home. She would work late or she'd just stay in Kamloops and we'd just be by ourselves.

There were many times that I remember being home alone. I wouldn't know when my mom would be home. However, there was only one time that I remembered feeling lonely. But my aunt was a few minutes away. For myself, I was always with my aunts or uncles growing up. I say they had a hand in raising me because I was always with them in Kamloops, Ts'kw'aylaxw or Simpcw when I was growing up. If I wasn't with them I was with my cousins. Some of this was similar for those that attended residential school.

In residential school students had to find someone they knew in order to stay safe. Jack (2000) shared how Margaret Abel and Ralph Sandy found their family to help them while they were in the residential schools. "...I wasn't really lonely because I had my cousins there and they were always looking after me and you just got along" (Margaret Abel p.37). "...You always had to have a protector when you're in there. Like you had an older boy to look after you all the time" (Ralph Sandy p.128). The first-generation survivors of residential school had to depend on their siblings, cousins or friends for

guidance, safety and security. It is important that I make the link between what happened to in the residential schools and how that also effected the second-generation. I noticed participants shared about how they were left alone and their older siblings watched over the younger ones.

Older siblings sometimes had to take the responsibility of caring for their younger siblings when their parents were out. This was shared by all participants. In my story I share about my brother caring for me,

My brother tells me of times when we were young. One constant memory he has is making me pancakes from scratch. My brother said that we would be left alone and he would make me pancakes because he could with what we had in our cupboards. I don't remember this. Maybe I was too young.

My brother only 10 or 11, he was so young to have the responsibilities that he shouldn't have had at that age. Lenora recalls a story that her brother told her their mom locked them in the bathroom during a party when he was four and Lenora was a baby. Her brother had to jump out the window to grab her some water in the nearby creek to fill her bottle. Unable to seek help he had to figure things out even though he was only four years old. In these two situations, Lenora and I were so young we don't remember what was shared with us by our older brothers.

Deanne also remembers when her older brother cared for her when they lived in Vancouver. She also talked about stealing food but she wasn't sure if they needed the food. Later Deanne talked about how she looked after her younger brother when their mom was working in Kamloops and wouldn't always return home to Simpcw.

Crystal remembers when her sister used to look after her and they would spend weekends in Lillooet. They would leave afterschool on Fridays and return on Mondays

on the bus. It became a routine and the bus driver didn't ask any questions, just knew the routine.

Cheryl shares about when she lived with her mom. She talked about watching her younger brother Aaron after he was born. She also remembers watching her brother when she lived with Mama,

Only Richard and I lived with Mama at which time Richard was a baby. When Mama drank I ended up taking care of Mama and Richard. Having to cook and feed Richard and myself and get myself off to school.

Siblings caring for one another is a strong theme throughout the stories. As long as there was someone there, it eased the loneliness.

Lack of Food

Food, or lack thereof, seemed to be a theme in the some of the stories. As stated earlier in my story, my brother tried to cook me pancakes from scratch because that we had nothing else in the house to eat. Lenora also describes her brother grabbing creek water to put in Lenora's bottle. Deanne said, "I remember having, we would have no food in our house and we'd come home and there would be no power". When discussing food Haig-Brown (1988) shared "...the kids were hungry most of the time. We used to sneak potatoes out of the storage room and bake them in the garbage incinerator" (p.18). Whether it was the first-generation survivors at the residential school, or at home for the second-generation survivors the children had to learn to eat with what they had. For me, my brother attempted to make pancakes. In the residential school, children cooked potatoes using an incinerator.

It is difficult to share how children struggled to have basic needs met such as food whether in residential school or at home. Traditionally, the family would have gathered

fruit, vegetables, roots, fish and wild meat such as deer and moose. A family and community would have provided this for the children. They wouldn't have had to struggle just to eat. This is another example of how residential schools broke down our traditional systems of caring for one another.

Alcohol and Drug Use:

For those that attended residential school their visits back home changed drastically with the introduction of alcohol. Haig-Brown (1988) claims that "Alcohol became a force in the lives of some families. Some parents, heartbroken at the loss of their children and objects of continuing oppression from all aspects of the dominant society escaped these pressures with alcohol" (p.123). Subsequently, when the first-generation survivors returned home, they too found the escape from the pain and suffering that they had to endure in the residential schools by drinking. The topic of parent's alcohol abuse was brought up in all the participants' stories.

I shared how both my parents drank and there were parties at both their homes. I remember my mom having parties and how I would have to get myself up in the morning for school on those mornings. I also shared how when I was visiting my dad he would drink and drive. Deanne shares her memories of being around parties. She remembers drunk people being the norm and how she witnessed fights and seeing her mom beaten up after those events.

Cheryl remembers when she was about 10 years old Mama was drinking she said it seemed like everyone was drunk on the reserve.

Lenora's brother told her about the struggles in her first three months living because their mom was drinking so much. Her brother once thought their mom was

dead, but she was passed out. In those three months prior to her coming into care, Lenora was being cared for by her brother Marcel because their mom was an alcoholic.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Parents of second-generation survivors are suffering with that they went through at the residential schools and this causes a lot of trauma and pain. As a result there was a higher risk of alcohol consumption and addiction to occur. No parents intentionally want to hurt their children. The hurt they had inside was so painful that alcohol was used to cope and try and forget the pain, but then there was the risk of FASD children if the mom drank while pregnant.

Lenora remembers her brother struggling with his anger. Lenora wondered if it was due to him being prenatally exposed to alcohol. Cheryl also discusses her brother's struggles as a baby due to her mom drinking throughout the pregnancy. She talked about how her mother continued drinking after her brother was born.

There are many people who may judge or criticize a mom for drinking when she was pregnant. But, we should be careful what we judge because there are so many reasons why someone is addicted to substances and can't stop their addiction.

In relationship to the intergenerational links to substance abuse and pregnancy, and fetal alcohol syndrome and other alcohol-related birth defects, it is clear that the residential school system contributed to the central risk factor involved, substance abuse, but also to factors shown to be linked to alcohol abuse, such as child and adult physical, emotional and sexual abuse, mental health problems and family dysfunction (Tait, 2003, p.75).

For those who are survivors of residential school, their whole childhood was taken away from them and everything that they knew was taken from them. They were forced from their parents; abused, neglected and abandoned and they returned home to communities

that were not the same. Alcohol abuse was rampant in the communities because people wanted to escape the abuse that occurred in the residential schools. Consequently, survivors who returned home started to drink alcohol as a way to cope as well.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is an unspoken epidemic in Aboriginal communities. Many times, the victims of sexual abuse don't speak up. For those that do, there is always a fear that it will not go to court. Within Aboriginal communities, there is a lot of healing that still needs to occur to make it safe for those who are victimized to feel safe enough to speak up.

Hylton (2002) speaks to some of the characteristics of Aboriginal sexual offenders. The ones that stood out for me were: abandonment, identity confusion, history of abuse (sexual, physical, verbal /emotional), maltreatment, struggling with life skills, living in poverty and experiencing multiple unnatural deaths. Another characteristic was alcohol or drug problems. Hylton's (2002) research goes on to say that these offenders mainly offended in Aboriginal communities against "members of their immediate or extended family" (p. 68). These offenders are known to the victims in many instances. In my research, the participants that discussed sexual abuse said they knew their perpetrators.

Childhood sexual abuse was brought up by two of the participants. As a result of dysfunction within their community and addiction there were times that they were not protected from sexual abuse. In these two instances there were people who knew about the abuse and didn't help them find their voice and report it.

Deanne said her mom left her with different people throughout her childhood. She shared that she was abused by people that she knew; family, friends and acquaintances of the family. She discussed how sexual abuse caused her to struggle with depression, alcohol use and low self-esteem.

Cheryl stated that her sexual abuse started when she was four or five and continued until she was 13. She also knew the two men who abused her. She also stated that she was only 13 when she started drinking.

Both Deanne and Cheryl were abused by people they knew. They both disclosed the abuse and weren't encouraged to report it. In their teen years, both Deanne and Cheryl used alcohol as a coping mechanism. I put my hands up to them for having the courage to share these painful memories. I hope that through sharing, others will speak up.

Child Welfare involvement

Traditional parenting practices were lost when children were removed from their families and sent to the residential schools. "Those who spent much of their childhood in residential schools were deprived of valuable opportunities to experience family life, and many reached their adulthood with no clear concept of parenting behavior and traditional family functions" (Lafrance & Collins 2003, p. 121). Because of racist governmental and church policies that removed our children from their homes and families, many lack the influence of their families to role model parenting skills.

Since government and the churches believed that Aboriginal parents were inferior when it came to raising children, and could not be relied upon to raise them to be 'proper' Canadians, a central objective of the residential schools was to separate Aboriginal children from their parents and communities to 'civilize' and Christianize them (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 11).

Ultimately, they destroyed Aboriginal communities. They tore families apart, broke down family systems which resulted in involvement of the child welfare system.

Of the five stories, three of them talked about involvement with the child welfare system. Deanne recalls coming into care and being moved down the coast to live with a family in Langley. She talked about getting moved around but then returning to her mom after her mom finished treatment. When they got their own home in Chu Chua, she remembers being removed a couple other times and then staying with extended family.

Cheryl recalls when she and her brothers were almost removed, but her family stepped up after her mom left Pavilion.

[S]he never came back. And I think at that time Georgina was the social worker or the CHR, Georgina, and she tried putting us in foster home and Mama wouldn't allow that. So then, Mama kept me and Poopsie and then Carl lived with Mike and Pearl and Bruce went and lived with Jolly and Sharon.

Lenora talks about what led to her and her brother Marcel coming into care and then being adopted. Lenora's mom was neglecting her and her brother which resulted in them ending up in care and then being adopted. After her mom signed the adoption papers, Lenora and her brother were raised by non-Aboriginal parents.

Two of the five stories shared talked about being in care of the child welfare system. One participant shared how she was almost placed in care. Cheryl shared that it was her extended family that stepped up when her mom was not around.

Disconnection with Siblings

Traditional forms of child rearing continued on despite everything else, family members were stepping in to help care for children. When parents were unable to care

for their children, some ended up living with family. As great as this was, it was difficult not being raised with siblings. For me,

My mom raised me and my brother Jason until my brother was a teen. Then he moved to Pavilion...My youngest sister Shauni was raised by my great aunt Dolly...Aside from my biological siblings, I grew up close to a lot of my cousins who are like sisters and brothers. The older ones looked after me.

Cheryl also describes her relationship with her siblings. Cheryl is not close to her siblings on her dad's side, because they struggle with alcohol and drug use. She was raised with one brother but her two other brothers lived with family members. She also speaks about her relationship today with her brothers on her mom's side.

And after Mama died, we all, we are all separated. It's just gone. I don't know what it is we can't pull ourselves together to be close. Even my brother Bruce and my brother Carl and my brother Richard we are just so, we are far apart. And I try not to hurt too much about it but I do...

The residential school has created shifts in family systems that have caused families not to be as close as some want. For myself and Cheryl not being close to our siblings is a difficult topic. Those are relationships that should be the closest and yet due to the breakdown of our families these connections are not happening naturally. And some of us long to be connected with our family.

Adulthood

All of these factors identified in childhood have contributed to some effects that are felt into adulthood. A person's childhood impacts your life, your relationships, and how you deal with difficult situations. There were a couple themes that came out of the participants' stories. These include grief and loss, addictions, and relationships.

Grief and Loss

Aboriginal people have a lower life expectancy than non-Aboriginal people (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). The rates of unnatural deaths within Aboriginal communities has been identified by Cheryl and Deanne in their stories.

Deanne discusses how the loss of her parents has affected her. “The last few years have been kind of difficult. I lost my mom and it’s been pretty hard on me, hard on my brother, and hard on my nieces”. She also talks about the loss of her dad. She said that he was murdered when she was a baby. She doesn’t have a picture of him and she wonders how it might have been if he was around?

Cheryl discusses grief and loss regarding her daughter, her mom and other family members,

Mama died and my daughter died, Shadow died. Like I had lots of family die. And I could grieve for them and I could let them go but I couldn’t with my mom...I couldn’t grieve... I was wondering why it took longer to grieve her death than all the rest and it was because it was that complicated grief and I had to sort through that.

One result of residential school attendance has been the enormous amount of grief and loss. Cheryl’s example highlights this. She also discusses the loss of the language when Mama died. Cheryl’s first language was the St’at’imc language. She said “when Mama died it started to die slowly”.

If a child was raised not to show their emotions, they may not know how to grieve the loss of a parent, a grandmother so on and so forth. Many communities are dealing with grief and loss. People experienced loss of their loved ones but also loss of their traditions and culture. So how do they deal with this loss that they feel inside?

Addictions

It is not a surprise that struggles with alcohol and drugs were brought up in the stories shared. “A number of multigenerational Survivors told the Commission (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada) about turning to drugs and alcohol to cope with the scars of residential school (Truth and Reconciliation, 2015, p. 153). All five stories including my own discussed witnessing alcohol abuse as a child. Here are two examples; Crystal stated, “I lost that smile and that glow that I had when I was a child that inner person due to drugs and alcohol”. She also sympathizes with her dad’s struggle to quit drinking and using drugs:

I can relate to my dad only because I used to drink and do drugs. I lived a toxic life for a long time and my sisters and my mom were highly affected by it...So I understand where my Dad comes from with those struggles and when I try and see things in his eyes...I had wanted that help myself whereas, my Dad hasn’t asked for that yet. So I try and see it in that way and understand where he’s coming from and still be respectful and honest to let him know I care about him.

Deanne stated she used alcohol to help mask what was going on for her. She was about 24 years old when she settled down.

Whether the use of substances was a learned behavior or a coping mechanism those that shared their story discussed the issue as an effect of being a second-generation survivor of residential school. Both Deanne and Crystal no longer have issues with substances.

Relationships

Another subject or theme that was shared throughout the stories was relationships. For myself, I didn’t have my mom and dad to show me what a healthy relationship looked like. I struggled with unhealthy relationships and shared one relationship experience that stood out.

Relationships were not an easy thing for me to figure out on my own. My first relationship was an abusive one. It took me four years to leave. I was not happy and neither was he. He struggled with alcoholism and I struggled with depression. There were times that I thought of suicide or wondered if he would kill me. I remember being beat up...He made me feel very insecure because he called me horrible names. I knew that I didn't want children with him because we were not healthy together. This relationship really messed me up. I remember when I left the first time, I should have charged him but I didn't. And the second time I left him I didn't charge him again. To this day I regret that, not charging him.

Crystal shares, “[I] got into a toxic relationship and I had nobody to blame for those things but myself. It’s not like I lived a hard life”. She also talks about some of the teachings from her mom.

‘[A]nything that a man can do, we can do better’...She basically raised us and told us that a man can never look after us. That we never needed to depend on a man and we can do everything we needed to do and survive on our own...We struggle with it because of those words.

She continues by explaining that she is trying to change those patterns of thought with her relationship now. She shared that she is working on seeing her partner and herself as equal, and how important it is to meet each other half way and make it work together.

For Cheryl, she also remembers some of the things she was told as a child. She remembers when she disclosed that she was sexually abused and was told in the language. “[Y]ou don’t let somebody do that to you unless they can give you clothes, put clothes on your back, or feed you, or put a roof over your head”. She explained how this stayed in her head for a long time when she was in relationships. She also talks about her unhealthy relationships. Her first relationship was on again off again. He was verbally and physically abusive and he was unfaithful to her. She also talked about being alone during her pregnancies because they continued to party when she was pregnant and she didn’t want that in her life.

The intergenerational effects of residential school will have lasting impact on generations to come if the cycle is not broken. From the stories shared, there was a personal choice to make a change and not to continue in such an unhealthy way. This is difficult to identify and requires the courage and strength to follow through with the change.

Healing

Intergenerational trauma is important to acknowledge in all Aboriginal communities because it is a direct result of colonization and oppression.

Aboriginal children experience trauma within families and communities struggling to cope with the legacy of the residential schools. Residential school survivors, their families, communities and Aboriginal children collectively have experienced trauma (Turpel-Lafond, 2012, p. 31).

The stories shared provide hope that change does happen. Cycles can be broken. Throughout the stories the theme of healing and having supports appeared to be paramount in turning life around for the better. In this section I review: acknowledging the past; addressing the issues; role models and culture and traditions. Despite the struggles one had to endure as a child and as an adult, the resilience came through in each one of these ladies stories.

Acknowledging the past

Lenora's thoughts on generational trauma, highlight the struggles second-generation survivors' experience:

In terms of how I have been effected by her attendance I think too on a deeper level I think about the generational trauma and how it's passed down. You can call it blood memory or what have you but that's a really big one I think as I start to understand more about that it has definitely had an impact on me in terms of frustrations or resentments and trying to work through those. It's almost like they're hers and I'm packing them but I have to deal with them so I'm not bitter and I can get through life in a

healthy way and not have it impact my children again like the next generation.

She also discusses genetic memory,

I also thought about our DNA our genetic memory or genetic coding you know and as First Nations, Indigenous people, we are tough, we are resilient. Like right from the beginning fighting colonialism, fighting everything, small pox, residential schools, the sixties scoop like all of those different things over the generations have built up resiliency in us. And there's other things that come with it and I know I can carry some of that sadness and hurt from my ancestors but there is also resiliency there that tells me we are not going anywhere. We got to continue to fight for, you know for what we believe is right.

The thought of genetic trauma and blood memory are vital discussions for this research.

Brave Heart (2003) explains that “Historical trauma (HT) is defined as cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma” (cited in Brave Heart, Tafoya, Bird, & Salvador, 2012, p. 283). The residential school system across Canada has resulted in massive group trauma. Brave Heart et al (2012) states,

American Indians/Alaska Natives have experienced devastating collective, intergenerational massive group trauma and compounding discrimination, racism, and oppression. There is increasing evidence of emotional responses to collective trauma and losses among Indigenous Peoples, which may help to inform ways of alleviating psychological suffering and unresolved grief. Tribal cultural and regional differences exist which may impact how the wounding across generations and within an individual's lifespan are experienced and addressed (p. 288).

Addressing the issues

It takes a lot to decide to work on yourself especially when you have are dealing with addictions, abuse and abandonment. For example, Crystal was asked by her sisters and mom to go to treatment. However, it wasn't until Crystal herself realized she needed help that she reached out and asked for help that she went for treatment. She understands that the individual has to be ready in order to be successful in change.

Cheryl shares her story of healing. She stated that she didn't have feelings until she started her sexual abuse healing. Cheryl stated that she could not identify feelings like anger and hate, it took several years of counselling before she started to heal her abuse. I also share some of my personal healing and all the work it took.

In between that first relationship and meeting Boysie I did a lot of counselling. I quit drinking. I picked up the hand drum and focused on learning my language/culture and traditions. I started my career and became an independent woman. I learned to walk on my own two feet. This was a lot of hard work and a lot of the time it was really lonely.

For Cheryl and I it was important that we found support through counselling to assist us in our healing.

For Lenora the work was to reconnect with family. Lenora didn't live in her community. She was adopted out and isolated from her family/community and traditions. She talks about the work that it takes to build relationships with family as a result of being adopted,

After being dislocated and I guess it's different because I've got connections there now but they are not like those lifelong kind of connections. And so the relationships that I do have, have taken a lot of work to make them exist really...Or my uncles or my sisters or even to get my nieces or my nephews to know that I am their aunty like it is just ridiculous the amount of energy you put into relationships and trying to reconnect. So it's like okay focus on the relationships and try to do cultural things with them at the same time to kind of kill two birds with one stone try to get to know them and have a cultural experience.

For second-generation survivors to address core issues they need must be ready and able to seek out the support. And, for everyone, healing will take a different path. For Crystal it was treatment. For Cheryl and I it was counselling. Lenora had to find a way to reconnect with family and incorporate culture to tackle both needs at the same time.

Role models

During the times when life may have been difficult, second-generation survivors of residential school sometimes had pivotal people in their lives who gave them hope. For those that grew up outside their family and community it may have been someone they had to find as an adult. Lenora talks about the struggles of not having those connections with birth family growing up. She also discussed how difficult it was to reconnect and help her boys through the process as well. Lenora is seeking connections that were severed when she was removed and adopted while also role modeling this to her boys.

I struggle to maintain those relationships and to develop them and my kids are sitting there watching me do it. So it's not something natural that they are growing up in...I have this grandma who's an Irish/Catholic grandma, and I have these aunts and uncles who are native like how does this work?... so it's impacted me tremendously.

Lenora continues to work on building these connections and acknowledges it is a lifelong process.

For those that stayed with their families, having people to look up to was important. Deanne shares how she looked up to Aunty Sandy. She also commends her mom for her sobriety.

My sense of resilience, I think my mom quitting drinking for 14 years helped a lot and having my aunty Sandy was a big role model for me and she was always there for us. My other aunts were there too. So I think that helped me.

Deanne discusses the importance of the close connections she had growing up,

I grew up with the kids on reserve and made some close girlfriends... Growing up all my younger cousins were usually with me. I babysat a lot especially during the summer months. We used to go swimming, probably every day at the river, creek or Dunn Lake.

For me this was also important,

I had role models that I looked up to for what a good relationship should look like. My aunty Lisa Rose and uncle Ron. They have two beautiful children...One thing that I remember standing out was in the morning, every morning when their children were little Skye and Garren would go and sit with their parents and just cuddle with them when they first woke up.

Families played a role in raising children in the traditional way. It is important that the traditional family values come back to the Aboriginal values. Surprisingly from the stories shared, I see that traditional family values are still around despite colonization and oppression. The residential school system tried to break these traditions. "Breaking up Aboriginal families by placing children in residential schools removed the traditional role of childrearing from the community and placed it in the hands of the church and the government" (Tait, 2003, p. 71). Some Aboriginal families took on non-Aboriginal family values and looked at the nuclear family systems because they were taught that their ways were wrong, evil and uncivilized, but others hung onto our Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Culture and Traditions

All of the storytellers shared their experiences with culture and traditions or their lack thereof. Four themes identified by the storytellers pertaining to culture and traditions were: raised in it; not being raised with it, wanting to learn more, and what culture, and currently practicing.

Raised in it

Three storytellers shared how they were raised with some of their culture and traditions. For Cheryl, the majority of the food gathering traditions occurred when she was under the age of five. She shared how Mama and Papa had a garden, fruit trees, fish and hunted. She shared that Mama would gather various plants, berries and medicines

from the land. Mama would tan hides. Cheryl recalls these times “were the best days of my life. They were what I would call the healthiest days of my life. They are the days where I felt I had the most balance in my life”. She also remembered when she would hear Mama and Papa pray,

The only time I heard them praying though was every meal time. At each meal they prayed and they prayed for their health and to be strong and not to run out of food it seemed like they wanted the food to last and that was the prayer that was said.

Cheryl also recalls sweats but not for ceremony. She did not speak English, “The language, the St’at’imc language was my first language but I’ve lost it since my Mama died”.

Crystal shared how she was raised with many of the traditional teachings. “My mom brought me to powwows. We had the drum group. We traveled to numerous different powwows. We went to sweats since I was six. We smudged. I’ve been to an Indian doctor”.

As for me, I too learned about fishing, hunting, berry picking when I was with my family on my parents’ reserves. I remembered being brought to fish, hunt, and gathering food such as mushrooms or berries. I had many fond memories.

I always remember the feeling of peacefulness when I was in the mountains. Whether I was in the back of an uncle’s truck or walking in the bushes, as long as mosquitoes weren’t eating me, these times in the mountain were some of my most peaceful times as a child.

Not being raised with it

Lenora shared how her non-Aboriginal adoptive parents followed through with their yearly duty to involve Lenora in some type of cultural activity. She shares,

I went to a pow wow maybe once or twice. I shared about the Calgary Stampede's Indian village ...And if I had been with a Native family or with my own family we would have just been living life, just being ourselves.

When Lenora heard my stories about berry picking and she stated, you had the huckleberry patch, "I had the Indian village at the Calgary Stampede". You can hear the disappointment in her statement.

Deanne discussed not having much cultural or traditional teachings growing up. "We were not raised with our language. We were not taught any cultural beliefs. We had a few like small words for language from my Granny but she wouldn't talk the language to us".

Wanting to learn more

Deanne, Crystal, Lenora and myself all shared that we wanted to learn more about our culture and traditions. For Deanne, Lenora and myself, we all wanted to learn our language. Crystal would like to pick up the hand drum, I shared that I wanted to learn more hand drum songs, and Deanne shared that she wanted to make a hand drum. Crystal shared that she wants to learn about fasting and Yuwipi ceremonies. Deanne would like to learn to make a fishing net and to tan hides. I talked about wanting to learn the process of hunting.

Lenora said she likes to ask a lot of questions. "I want to know. I want to know how you say this in our language. Or how do this in our culture". For me, I want to know where those berry picking spots are that I went to as a child. Deanne shared that she would need to find someone to teach her these cultural and traditional teachings.

Currently practicing

All five storytellers shared how they are currently practicing their culture and traditions. It was great to see the enthusiasm from each participant as they shared what they currently do. No one is the same, all are at their own paces, but all were glad to have culture and traditions in their lives. It is great to see.

Cheryl said that she still gathers *sxúsum* and *hakwa*⁷. She recalls her excitement about speaking the language. “I saw Brian...and we were talking in Indian to each other and that’s when I feel so alive, when I can speak it because I do”.

Crystal shared that she smudges, prays and goes to Sun Dance. She discussed the importance of going to sweats.

Being able to release that way, going to the sweat lodge and my favourite sweat is when they come off the mountains because it is so long. I love being in a sweat for nine hours and being in that dark place and feeling like I sweat everything out, everything from the inside out. Feeling a sense of relief.

Deanne shared that she goes berry picking and mushroom picking every year.

Her and the family go fishing and she goes for drives when Marcel hunts. Lenora shared the importance of learning traditions and passing them on to her sons or to others who want to learn. She understands the difficulty of asking questions and is open to teaching others how to do things like preserve *sxúsum*.

I shared how I have re-learned a lot of my traditions as an adult. I learned how to fish, preserve fish by freezing or making *st’swan*. I have learned some of the hand drum songs. I thank my family for helping me with the teachings.

Returning back to some of the traditional teaching that were forbidden in the residential school is healing in itself as a second-generation survivor of residential school. Because our parents were denied these teachings because they

attended residential schools, it is exciting to see the important role it plays in the life of second-generation survivors. Knowing that the traditions will be passed down to the next generations provides hope for me. Knowing that I can help revitalize my culture and traditions helps me to move in a positive and healthy direction to learn more. The role that culture and traditions continue to play in the lives of first and second-generation survivors shows that the cycle can be broken.

Conclusion

The residential school did not just effect those that attended. The residential school effected those that attended, their children and grandchildren. The struggles that the participants shared have been broken down into two stages: childhood and adulthood. There was also space made to identify the healing that is going on as well, because this highlights how strong and resilient Indigenous people are.

Within the stories that were shared it is important to identify how resilient the participants are. They have been through all these struggles and are able to not only share, but also articulate the healing that they have done to make a change. It takes a lot of strength to share their stories and be honest considering all that they have been through. For those that were open to share their story, there were more who were not ready, and this too is okay.

Despite the residential schools stripping students of their culture, traditional and language, all the participants shared how they fought to keep their culture and language alive by wanting to learn, share and participate in their traditional ways. They have remained rooted in their Indigenous ways.

As a second-generation survivor of residential school, I believe it is important to try and not judge your parents. It is critical for you to learn their stories and learn the history of your family. Only through learning your own history can you fully understand yourself. It assisted me in my own healing.

In order to heal the trauma of the residential school experience there has to be an understanding of the impact of colonization and oppression on Aboriginal people in Canada. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has shed light on the residential school experience. The information within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada publications can help intergenerational survivors and the society at large better understand the pain that has been inflicted by the churches and the government. Only through acknowledgement can we heal together. This did not happen hundreds of years ago. This happened in my lifetime. The last residential schools didn't close until 1998 (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

Chapter Ten: Conclusion

When I started this process of researching experiences of second-generation survivors of residential school and planning my questions, I knew that there would be some similarities in my literature review and the findings from my interviews. Of course, the intergeneration effects of residential school have been identified in this process. I had the opportunity to review literature on residential schools, the effects on first generation survivors as well as literature on second-generation survivors of residential school.

I have shared my own story throughout this process. For me this has been healing work. I have grown from the time I started my research until today as I complete writing my thesis. Prior to this work, I have done my own healing regarding how I have been effected as a second-generation survivor of residential school. However, through this journey and the stories I had the opportunity to hear, gave me a deeper understanding of the effects on second-generation survivors. I had the opportunity to hear five stories and share four of them in this process. I have learned from each story. I have healed during the process of working with each storyteller and I am so humbled they shared their story with me.

Based on the questions that I asked the participants in the interviews I came up with three main categories in my findings/analysis which were: effects as a child, adulthood and healing. The first category effects as a child, have the subthemes: parenting, being left alone, lack of food, alcohol and drug use, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, sexual abuse, child welfare involvement and disconnection with siblings. The next category adulthood, included the subthemes: grief and loss, addictions and

relationships. The final category of healing had the sub-themes including, acknowledging the past, addressing the issues, role models and culture and traditions.

Some of the information that I didn't have the opportunity to review included: blood memory, genetic memory and complicated grief. These topics were raised a couple of times, and they deserve further research, but were beyond my scope of this thesis.

Upon review of the findings it can be thought that this portrays a very negative picture of the effects of residential school. For me however, I see how our families, have been effected and how much we have grown and healed. Through healing work our families and communities are stronger. The findings also give me hope that others will read this thesis and know they too can begin a healing journey.

My own healing

During the process of writing this thesis, I have done a lot of healing of my own in regards to how my family was effected by the residential school. At the beginning of this process I stated that I wanted to try to regain that inner peace that was beaten and tortured out of my family.

I never was able to speak in depth with my dad about his attendance at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. My mom said she went for a short period of time and then was kicked out. Throughout this process I have been able to hear the words of my late grandfather Hector McDonald. He told his story to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Kamloops in May 2013. In his interview he stated "I learned how to hate. I learned how to steal. I learned how to fight. I learned how to cheat" (Youds, M. 2013). He talked about forgiveness. Then he talked about love. He talked about telling his kids

and grandkids that he loved them. Prior to his passing he told me he loved me. We talked about being St'at'imc and Secwepemc and we exchanged a couple words in the two languages. In that moment I found that inner peace that I was searching for. He passed away on November 03, 2016.

The following spring the Statimc Outreach Health Services organized Naskan Uxwal (I'm Going Home) walk from the Kamloops Indian Residential School(KIRS). I had the opportunity to participate in that walk. It started on March 25, 2016 with St'at'imc elders and healers smudging the KIRS building and grounds. I had the opportunity to participate in this ceremony in the main building. I felt the emotion and healing as we walked through the buildings room by room and smudged the building, drumming and calling back the spirits of former students. While walking through the building I imagined my mom seeing her brother William and hearing him say he wanted to go home. I prayed for my family's spirits to be brought home. I prayed for my mom, my dad, my Granny Elizabeth and my late grandfathers James Eustache and Hector McDonald.

After the smudge ceremony, the walk started on March 26, 2017 and ended on March 28, 2017. There were marathon runners, people riding horses and others following in their cars. There were people walking, drumming, singing and praying throughout this journey.

The first day was very powerful. I took part in a group of hundreds of people, past students and their family walk away from the residential school. I heard our songs being sung as we walked away. I imagined myself walking with all those little spirits, holding their hands and supporting them as they left that horrible school. I was grateful

that I was able to walk with my mom on this day. Although some people may have told me that she was only there for a short time, I can imagine she was walking out of there with her brother, my uncle William. She was bringing him home because she couldn't bring him home that day when he approached her at the bus. The walk started in Kamloops and ended in the community of Bonaparte on the first day.

On the second day the walk continued from the community of Bonaparte to Xax'lip (Fountain). On this day, I was able to walk with my Granny Harriet from the Hat Creek turn off, the border of the St'at'imc territory almost to the Ts'kway'laxw pow wow grounds where we were gathering for lunch. My Granny is the strongest person I know. She walked and walked and walked. She was happy to be walking with her grandchildren. She had just celebrated her 83th birthday. Her son, my uncle Mac kept asking her if she wanted to get on the bus and I think the only reason she got on was because she was tired of her son asking her. We walked to the powwow grounds and then our next stop was in Ts'way'laxw. As we drove closer to my community, there is a ranch. As the dozens of vehicles drove by and the runners went by there was a couple horses that were just running in the field. These horses did the same thing when we brought my Grandfather Hector home after he had passed away. I envisioned him on that horse again that day. Naskan Uxwal was a healing journey for me. During this journey I shed tears for all the healing that was going on. It was so powerful and uplifting to call our families spirits back. I wish this healing for all nations across Canada. This journey was documented and will tell the story of the St'at'imc journey home from the residential school.

My Calls to Action

Based on my work here I have my own recommendations regarding intergenerational effects of residential school.

1. Indigenous families will be open to their children about the residential school and the intergenerational effects. This does not necessarily mean going into the horrific stories but making sure the children understand their own history.

With my step-daughters I try to explain from my own family history why my family are where they are at. For example with my sister Jessica, I explain that she was adopted when she was a baby and she was raised away from our family in a non-Aboriginal home. This helps them to understand why she still struggles today.

2. First Nations leadership stop the silence of abuse within their communities and support healing. There should be funding directed at healing.

Within Deanne and Cheryl's stories, they stated that they told someone of their abuse and they weren't encouraged to report it. There needs to be key people in the community who will listen and not silence the victims.

3. First Nations communities and families need to continue to bring back traditional knowledge, protocols and language back to communities. Having community gatherings, naming ceremonies, language immersion programs and cultural camps.

Cheryl grew up with the language. She remembers it and enjoys when she can speak the language with others. For us four other participants, we need someone who would be open to sharing it with us. We want to learn the ceremonies, the traditions, and the songs.

My hope is that in the future our children will not be still struggling with our parents' attendance at residential school and the impacts/effects that are still felt today.

Through being able to speak up about the current effects of residential school, work towards healing, and re-learning of our traditional ways of knowing and being, our communities would be able to heal from the colonial Canadian governmental systems and the oppression that they caused the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

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Appendix 1

Interview Questions:

- a) Tell me your story?
- b) Which of your parents attended Kamloops Indian Residential School?
- c) Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Kamloops Indian Residential School?
- d) What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?
- e) How do you define resilience and what contributed to your sense of resilience growing up?
- f) What type of cultural or traditional teachings did you learn about growing up? Are you currently involved in cultural traditions?

Appendix 1(a)

Interview Questions:

- a) Tell me your story?
- b) Which of your parents attended an Indian Residential School within British Columbia?
- c) Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Indian Residential School?
- d) What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?
- e) How do you define resilience and what contributed to your sense of resilience growing up?
- f) What type of cultural or traditional teachings did you learn about growing up? Are you currently involved in cultural traditions?

Appendix 2

University of Victoria
Human and Social Development
Department

Participant Consent Form

The Impacts/Effects of Residential School: A Storytelling approach to the stories of Second-Generation Survivors.

You are invited to participate in a study entitled The Impacts/Effects of Residential School: A Storytelling approach to the stories of Second-Generation Survivors that is being conducted by Shannon McDonald.

Shannon McDonald is a Graduate in the department of Human and Social Development Department Student at the University of Victoria and you may contact me if you have further questions by telephone or email.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Masters in Social Work-Indigenous Specialization. It is being conducted under the supervision of Robina Thomas. You may contact my supervisor.

Purpose and Objectives

I am writing this research to learn about the struggles and resilience of second-generation survivors of residential school using a storytelling method. I will write stories of second-generation survivors of Kamloops Indian Residential School. The questions that I want to answer are:

- Tell me your story?
- Did your mother or father attend Kamloops Indian Residential School Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Kamloops Indian Residential School?
- What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?
- How do you define resilience and what contributed to your sense of resilience growing up?
- What type of cultural or traditional teachings did you learn about growing up? Are you currently involved in cultural traditions?

Importance of this Research

Research of this type is important because as children of survivors of Indian Residential School, we have not shared our stories of how we have been effected by our parent's attendance. There has been a lot of information regarding survivors of residential school. Recently there has been the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that has been documenting the stories of those who attended the residential schools in Canada. My hope is to share the stories of the intergenerational impacts on the families, community

and nations. I want to share the stories of the larger impacts of the Indian Residential School on the children of survivors.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a second-generation survivor (you have not attended Indian residential school but one of your parents were survivors of the residential school) of the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

What is involved

Should you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include a one-two hour interview to allow you to share your story of how you have been effected. Additional interviews will occur if 1) you requesting to stop the interview for the day, 2) you want to share more information. Your interview(s) will be audio recorded. The interviews will take place in your home or in Kamloops at my home, or at my office after work hours.

I will request your help in review your final transcript. I will also request your assistance in editing the final story so I am sharing your story correctly. I am estimating that this will take a maximum of 4-5 additional hours.

Inconvenience

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including the amount of time(1-2 hours interview, 4-5 hours of data review) and commitment to editing your transcript and final draft of your story.

Risks

There are some potential risks to you by participating in this research and they include emotional stress due to the topic being discussed. To prevent or to deal with these risks the following steps will be taken:

- The researcher will provide sage before and after the interview process to ensure the interview begins and ends in a good way.
- The researcher will sit with the participant after the interview to support in case of any difficult memories are brought up.
- The researcher will provide a counselor who is available to do some counseling.

The counsellor that I will be using is Nicole Arnould. She is a registered clinical counsellor specializing in individual, and family therapy. She has a Bachelor of Social Work and a Masters in Education- Counselling Psychology.

I have asked this counsellor if she would be open to working with me throughout this research process and she is open to working with the participants. I have contacted Nicole who has the funding through the residential school funding to provide one to one counselling for survivors or residential school and their family members. This funding is called Indian Residential School Resolution funding through the First Nations Health Authority (<http://fnha.ca>).

There is the chance that Nicole is known by the participants as Nicole has been a counsellor for over 15 years. From my research with her colleagues Nicole is a very highly recommended counsellor for the Aboriginal population in Kamloops.

Benefits

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include the following: you will be able to share your story so that society can better understand how Aboriginal people are still be effected by the Kamloops Indian Residential School. This will provide new information regarding the continued intergenerational impacts of the Indian Residential School system.

Compensation

As a way to compensate you for any inconvenience related to your participation, you will be given traditional gifts of canned goods, sage and a blanket in honour of sharing your story. If you need assistance with transportation in terms of gas or transit tickets, the researcher pay all expenses regarding transporation while the interview takes place. If you would not participate if the compensation was not offered, then you should decline.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will be destroyed and not used unless you give permission for the use of your information after you withdraw from the study. You will still be presented with the traditional gifts and compensation for travel.

On-going Consent

To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, I will review the consent form prior to each interview if there are more than one to ensure that I have your consent for the information gathered on that specific day. If there is information that you later want to withhold, I will go through the transcripts with you and edit that information.

Anonymity

In terms of protecting your identity if you choose to remain anonymous, I will change your names within the written results. I will also change any identifying information pertaining to your family, age, community, current employment or any other information that may identify who you are. However, if you choose to have names in the document I will honour your request.

If the participant shares any information that may be harmful to themselves or others I will not maintain confidentiality and I will have to provide the information to the proper sources (RCMP, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Aboriginal Child Welfare agencies).

There is also a limit to confidentiality due to the Kamloops Residential School survivors and this community being small (the interior of British Columbia) but I will honour your confidentiality to the best of my ability.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by having all documentation and audio recordings locked in a secure filing cabinet. Only the researcher will have access to that locked cabinet.

Dissemination of Results

The results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: I will be presenting my thesis to the University of Victoria. I will also provide a presentation in the community of Kamloops to participants and others interested in the research who are community members. There may be a chance that the information gathered maybe published in an article, or chapter in a book. In the even that your data will be used for future publications I will contact you.

Disposal of Data

Data from this study will be disposed of five years after the final document has been written. After all the edits have been made the data (transcripts, audio recordings) will be shredded and physically destroyed after five years.

A copy of the participant's final transcript will be provided to them. As well, after those five years if they request the audio recording it will not be destroyed but will be given to the participant.

Contacts

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include: the researcher Shannon McDonald. Research Supervisors Robina Thomas.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Appendix 2(a)

University of Victoria
Human and Social Development
Department

Participant Consent Form

The Impacts/Effects of Residential School: A Storytelling approach to the stories of Second-Generation Survivors.

You are invited to participate in a study entitled The Impacts/Effects of Residential School: A Storytelling approach to the stories of Second-Generation Survivors that is being conducted by Shannon McDonald.

Shannon McDonald is a Graduate in the department of Human and Social Development Department Student at the University of Victoria and you may contact me if you have further questions by telephone or email.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Masters in Social Work-Indigenous Specialization. It is being conducted under the supervision of Robina Thomas. You may contact my supervisor.

Purpose and Objectives

I am writing this research to learn about the struggles and resilience of second-generation survivors of residential school using a storytelling method. I will write stories of second-generation survivors of Indian Residential School's within British Columbia. The questions that I want to answer are:

- Tell me your story?
- Did your mother or father attend an Indian Residential School within British Columbia?
- Have you been effected by your parent(s) attendance at the Indian Residential School?
- What were some of the struggles that you had to go through as a child and as a result of being a second-generation survivor of Indian Residential School?
- How do you define resilience and what contributed to your sense of resilience growing up?
- What type of cultural or traditional teachings did you learn about growing up? Are you currently involved in cultural traditions?

Importance of this Research

Research of this type is important because as children of survivors of Indian Residential School, we have not shared our stories of how we have been effected by our parent's attendance. There has been a lot of information regarding survivors of residential school.

Recently there has been the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that has been documenting the stories of those who attended the residential schools in Canada. My hope is to share the stories of the intergenerational impacts on the families, community and nations. I want to share the stories of the larger impacts of the Indian Residential School on the children of survivors.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a second-generation survivor (you have not attended Indian residential school but one of your parents were survivors of the residential school) of an Indian Residential School within British Columbia.

What is involved

Should you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include a one-two hour interview to allow you to share your story of how you have been effected. Additional interviews will occur if 1) you requesting to stop the interview for the day, 2) you want to share more information. Your interview(s) will be audio recorded. The interviews will take place in your home or in Kamloops at my home, or at my office after work hours.

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- The researcher will provide sage before and after the interview process to ensure the interview begins and ends in a good way.
- The researcher will sit with the participant after the interview to support in case of any difficult memories are brought up.
- The researcher will provide a counselor who is available to do some counseling.

The counsellor that I will be using is Nicole Arnould. She is a registered clinical counsellor specializing in individual, and family therapy. She has a Bachelor of Social Work and a Masters in Education- Counselling Psychology.

I have asked this counsellor if she would be open to working with me throughout this research process and she is open to working with the participants. I have contacted

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There is the chance that Nicole is known by the participants as Nicole has been a counsellor for over 15 years. From my research with her colleagues Nicole is a very highly recommended counsellor for the Aboriginal population in Kamloops.

Benefits

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include the following: you will be able to share your story so that society can better understand how Aboriginal people are still be effected by Indian Residential School's within British Columbia. This will provide new information regarding the continued intergenerational impacts of the Indian Residential School system.

Compensation

As a way to compensate you for any inconvenience related to your participation, you will be given traditional gifts of canned goods, sage and a blanket in honour of sharing your story. If you need assistance with transportation in terms of gas or transit tickets, the researcher pay all expenses regarding transporation while the interview takes place. If you would not participate if the compensation was not offered, then you should decline.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will be destroyed and not used unless you give permission for the use of your information after you withdraw from the study. You will still be presented with the traditional gifts and compensation for travel.

On-going Consent

To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, I will review the consent form prior to each interview if there are more than one to ensure that I have your consent for the information gathered on that specific day. If there is information that you later want to withhold, I will go through the transcripts with you and edit that information.

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If the participant shares any information that may be harmful to themselves or others I will not maintain confidentiality and I will have to provide the information to the proper

sources (RCMP, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Aboriginal Child Welfare agencies).

Confidentiality

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Signature

Date

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