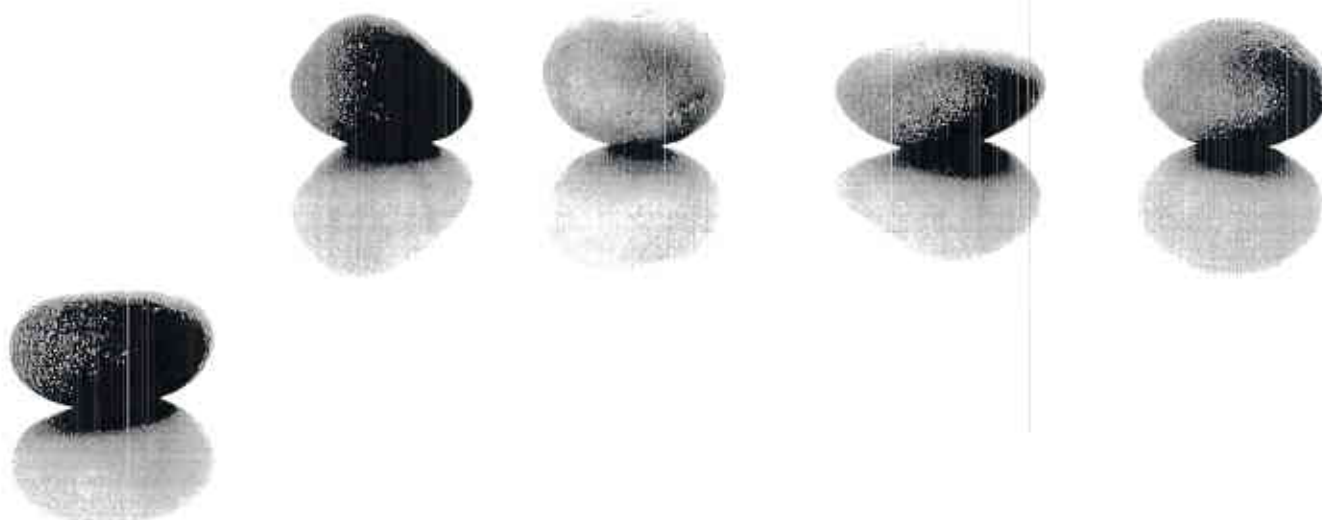


TOUCHstones for Leadership

RECONCILIATION IN INDIGENOUS
CHILD WELFARE

MODULE I PRIMER

Primer on Touchstones for Leadership



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TOUCHSTONES FOR LEADERSHIP GENERAL COURSE OVERVIEW

Purpose

The impetus for this course, *Touchstones for Leadership: Reconciliation in Indigenous Child Welfare*, is a result of a historic meeting held in Niagara Falls in 2005. At this gathering Indigenous and Non-Indigenous leadership within child welfare gathered to create a vision of how to better serve Indigenous children, youth, and families. “A journey down the river” (Blackstock et al., 2006) was the metaphor used to describe the journey ahead that requires reconciliation as a place to begin. Why is reconciliation the first step? Taking care of Indigenous children is an ancient practice based upon traditional beliefs of the rich diversity of Indigenous cultures. These practices have been interrupted by colonialism. Children through residential school or child welfare, have and continue to be, the target of the colonial enterprise with disastrous impacts on Indigenous children, youth and families. In response to this colonial agenda, Indigenous peoples have persistently fought to protect their children and youth from harm caused by mainstream child welfare. Increasingly, we are seeing allies within this system who are troubled by the history of hurt and injustice and wish to assist Indigenous communities. This is evidenced by the large gathering in Niagara Falls of Indigenous people and their allies with the unanimous agreement that healing needs to happen, reconciliation sought, and trust engendered. A first step in the “journey down the river” is to offer individuals an opportunity to garner knowledge, build relationships, and jointly develop action plans. As a means for creating space for this form of relating, the Touchstone collaborative group offers this opportunity to dialogue.

Why Leadership? In optimal conditions, leaders lead – this is their responsibility. By offering this opportunity to leadership, we hope that they will clear path for this important reconciliation work.

Description of Course

This is not so much a course as a structured space of relationship-building. The overarching goal is to create an opportunity for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous

leadership within child welfare to come together for the purpose of dialogue and generating action plans for movement toward reconciliation. Participants of the 2005 Niagara Falls gathering put forth both a vision and a conceptual model for reconciliation that comprises four stages of relating and engages both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people. These four phases include: *Truth-telling*, *Acknowledging*, *Restoring* and *Relating*. Each phase is a part of holistic process which has as its goal a respectful and honest engagement amongst Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples to hear the story of Indigenous child welfare. Through respectful relating, the goal is to work toward creating a new child welfare system that honours Indigenous cultures and peoples. The central values guiding the four stages of reconciliation are:

- Self-Determination
- Culture and Language
- Holistic Approach
- Structural Interventions
- Non Discrimination

This structured opportunity for dialogue and action integrates the Touchstone conceptual model of truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating among Indigenous and Non-Indigenous leadership in Child Welfare on each Touchstone value with the goal of coming out with an action plan for change (Blackstock et al., 2006).

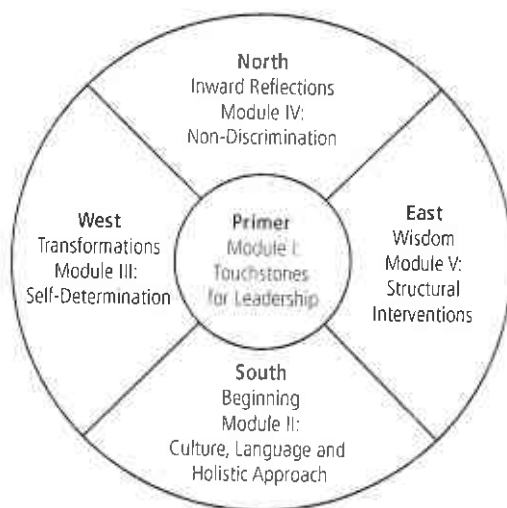
Indigenous Pedagogy

Homes and Abington-Cooper locate a definition of pedagogy within the context of adult education. In referencing Malcolm Knowles the renowned adult education theorist, they provide the etymology for the term pedagogy. Pedagogy means the art and the science of teaching children (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2006). Knowles went onto use the term androgogy which describes the process of facilitating learning with adults. There are many different pedagogies or androgogies that apply to adult education. Such different approaches include Critical Pedagogy, Bloom's Taxonomy, and the Experiential Learning Model. In relation to these various western pedagogical models, there is a distinctive art and science of teaching from an Indigenous perspective. As Indigenous educator Marie Battiste puts forward: "The Aboriginal people of Canada have their own epistemology and pedagogy." (2000, p.18).

In further support of Indigenous pedagogies, recent works by various Indigenous scholars suggest that there is an Indigenous science to sharing knowledge that is based in an oral history and storytelling tradition (Bastien, 2004; Hart, 2002; Youngblood Henderson, 2000; Smith, 1999). They go on to say that Indigenous pedagogy is about intuition and observation and remaining connected to the Universe around us as human beings (Dossey, 1985; Cajete, 2000; Peat, 1994). Indigenous pedagogy is based upon oral traditions which espouse a relational model of learning founded in the values and actions of *truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating*.

Touchstones for Leadership has at its heart, relational goals that will offer Leadership information that they may not be aware of, and provide relational opportunities to work together for creating vision and action on reconciliation in child welfare.

Course Structure



The course is structured into five different Modules that are based upon the Touchstones. They can be organized in the conceptual teaching tool of the *Medicine Wheel*. They include:

Module 1: Introduction to the Touchstones for Leadership

Module 2 (South – Beginnings): Culture and Language and a Holistic Approach

Module 3 (West – Transformations): Self-Determination

Module 4 (North – Inward Reflections): Non Discrimination

Module 5 (East – Wisdom): Structural Interventions

While separated into distinctive modules, all five of the modules work together to offer a fully integrated overview of the Touchstones philosophy as it applies to reconciliation in child welfare. If possible, individuals should invest time in taking all of the five Touchstones Modules. Each module is approximately three hours in length. Because each module ends with an action plan for a specific

Touchstone value, it is important for individuals to keep notes of their action plans. If participants take all of the modules, they will then conclude the course with action plans in each Touchstone area.

Each module models the four phases of the Touchstone process of reconciliation – *truth telling, acknowledging, relating* and *restoring*. As such, the hope is to move beyond bringing awareness of the systematic deficits of the child welfare system in servicing Indigenous children, youth, and families to one which nurtures dialogue and sincere action planning for change.

Each module is structured into a series of units which comprise a number of activities and is organized into the following structure:

- Relational Goals (Learning Objectives)
- Instructional Methods
- Instructional Equipment and Resources
- Time
- Preparation
- Resources
- Procedures for the Activities

Depending upon how the course is delivered, instructors may utilize truth telling sharing circle as part of the Opening or Closing Activity for the Modules or where it is appropriate to pause and have a Circle. This course is designed to offer the facilitator flexibility in facilitating the course while at the same time offering enough structure and guidance so as to ensure the course relational goals are carried out.

Instructional Methods

This curriculum utilizes instructional methods that are consistent with Indigenous pedagogies and adult learning. Additionally, the curriculum is structured so as to achieve relationship building and action planning as part of its course goals. Accordingly, the instructional methods chosen for this course were selected to serve this aim. The instructional methods include:

- Sharing Circle
- Information sharing presentations(direct instruction)
- Self-reflection exercises

- Dyads
- Triad Groups
- Small Groups
- Oral (listening and hearing) exercises
- Large Group Discussion
- Visioning and Action Planning Activity

Delivery Notation

This course is developed with flexibility in mind. Each module can be delivered as a stand alone or as an integral component of a five-Module Series. Additionally this course is not meant to be training per se, rather it is an opportunity to introduce the touchstone reconciliation process in Indigenous child welfare and offer an opportunity to for participants to actively engage in courageous conversations and action planning on reconciliation.

Case Study Notation

In instances where a case study or role play scenario may be used, all references to real-life situations are purely coincidental.

About the Author

Margaret Kovach, PhD (Interdisciplinary) is of Plains Cree and Saulteaux ancestry. She holds an MSW from Carleton a PhD from the University of Victoria. Margaret has an extensive background in Indigenous curriculum development at the community and academic level (both undergraduate and graduate). Recently, the School of Social Work received a prestigious international award by the Commonwealth of Learning for Distance Education course materials. The award winning course is entitled *Indigenous Approaches to Healing and Helping*, of which Margaret was the course writer. The course was commended for using technology to honour oral culture in the virtual classroom. Margaret currently teaches at the University of Victoria. She maintains a commitment to community through her community-based curriculum development work.

MODULE 1: PRIMER FOR TOUCHSTONES FOR LEADERSHIP

Module 1: Touchstones for Leadership is based less on learning outcomes as a prescribed way of instructing and learning, rather it is using this opportunity to reach relational goals. In accordance with Indigenous pedagogies, we learn in relation to each other. Further, we live, build families, communities and nations through our relationships with people, and the environment that hosts us. In terms of the Touchstone endeavour, it is evident that changing the child welfare system requires working in relationship with one another as suggested by the four phases of the Touchstone approach (truth telling, acknowledging, relating and restoring). In light of this the goals are primarily relational and restorative – building relationships that can generate substantive action plans for change in child welfare that will positively impact both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous children, youth, and families. *Module 1* is an introduction to the Touchstone reconciliation story, the Touchstone curriculum development movement, and the role of leadership – both Indigenous and Non- Indigenous – within this important work. It is meant to be informational yet highly interactive and relational.

Overall Module Relational Goals and Hopes

Upon completion of this Module you will be able to:

- Identify the Purpose and Guiding Values of the Touchstone Movement
- Describe the Touchstone Reconciliation Process of truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating as it applies to Indigenous child welfare
- Relate own values and role in reconciliation initiative within Indigenous child welfare
- Develop a personal mission statement in relationship to the Touchstone reconciliation movement

Participants

Who is this course for? This course is intended for individuals involved in leadership activities within child welfare. Leadership is defined broadly to mean those engaged in leadership at the cultural, community, institutional, governmental, and political

level within Indigenous communities in the context of child welfare policy, practice and research. This course is also aimed at Non-Indigenous leadership impacting Indigenous child welfare at the political and institutional levels. Further, it is the hope that this course will call forth those leaders who are invested in working toward a reconciliation process that is sincere, non-totemic, and offers real change within Indigenous child welfare.

Contact Information

The Touchstones initiative is a collaboration of several organizations including the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and the National Indian Child Welfare Association. If you wish to receive further information about the Touchstone movement, please visit the website:

Website: www.reconciliationmovement.org

UNIT I: INTRODUCING THE TOUCHSTONE RECONCILIATION movement

Relational Goal

Identify the Purpose and Guiding Values of Touchstones and the Touchstone Curriculum.

Objectives

The objectives for this unit are:

- Identify the impact of the child welfare system on Indigenous children, youth and families;
- Describe the history of the Touchstone Reconciliation Movement;
- Present an overview of a principle approach to child welfare to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples;
- Describe general overview of the five-Module course – *Touchstones For Leadership*;
- Identify who this course is directed toward;
- Present an overview of each of the five Touchstones (Self-Determination; Culture and Language; Holistic Approach; Structural Interventions; Non Discrimination);
- Identify how these Touchstones work together and apply to Indigenous child welfare.

Methods

- Direct instruction
- Large group discussion
- Opening Circle (at facilitator's discretion)

Instructional Equipment

- Overhead projector
- Overhead transparencies of identified resources
- Flipchart and pens
- Place Cards and Marker

Note to Facilitator/Preparation

- Review the curriculum and ensure overhead materials are on hand.
- The course has been developed with flexibility in mind. For example in Unit 1, the facilitator can choose whether to start with an opening circle or another introductory exercise. The course is developed with a flexibility that can accommodate the needs and the time allotment.
- This course can be a stand alone introductory module or can be delivered as the primer for the entire five-module course. Depending upon the delivery options, the facilitator can introduce this course correspondingly.

Time

- 30 minutes

Resources

Resource 1-1: [Overhead/Slide] Impacts of the Child Welfare system on Indigenous families and Communities

Resource 1-2: [Overhead/Slide] Considering a Principle-based Approach to Child Welfare

Resource 1-3: [Overhead/Slide] History of the Touchstone Movement

Resource 1-4: [Overhead/Slide] Overview of the five-Module Touchstone Curriculum

Resource 1-5: [Overhead/Slide] What it means to Participate in a Reconciliation Process

Resource 1-6: [Overhead/Slide] Agenda for the Module

Suggested Reading

Blackstock, C., Cross, T., Brown, I., George, J., & Formsma, J. (2006) *Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children, youth and families*. Ottawa: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

Procedure

1. This curriculum has been developed to allow for flexibility. In the preparation for this course the facilitator will have to determine the amount of time available for each module and make delivery decisions accordingly. Because it is assumed that the facilitator brings her or his own skills, abilities and experiences in facilitating community-based Indigenous curriculum, this model allows for the facilitator to enhance this training according to her or his facilitation style.
2. Because this curriculum is based upon the touchstone reconciliation model, the assumption is that each module will work through the process of truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating. What this means for the training is that this approach is less content heavy and more directed toward the process of dialogue with the hope that participants will create action plans to further the goals of a more principled practice that is advocated for within the Indigenous child welfare reconciliation movement. The first unit is largely informational and focuses on truth telling and acknowledging.
3. As this is the beginning of the Touchstone for Leadership curriculum, it is up to the facilitator to determine if she or he wishes to start with a sharing circle as a form of introduction. It is recommended that the facilitator use the circle for instances when there is a need for emotional integration of the material or for a closing circle for individuals to reflect upon their experience.
4. The facilitator introduces her/himself to the group (if Indigenous this usually means indicating one's tribal affiliation or cultural ancestry) and indicates to participants that the first part of this activity is to introduce the participants to each other.

5. To start the introductions, the instructor asks participants to introduce themselves by indicating the following:
 - Name and Organization
 - Reason for participating in the course
 - Preliminary expectations of the course
6. After the oral introductions, the facilitator hands out name place cards for each participant and asks them to put their name and the organization or position they are associated with on the place card.
7. The facilitator begins the unit activity with direct instruction by giving a brief presentation on the impact of child welfare services on the Indigenous communities. This purpose of this brief overview is to show that the currently existing model of child welfare practice (e.g. the risk assessment) is not working. The facilitator will begin by using:
 - Resource 1-1: Impacts of the Child Welfare System on Indigenous families and communities
8. After this brief overview, the facilitator indicates that the Touchstone Reconciliation Movement is based upon a Principle-based approach to child welfare practice that honours traditional values of Indigenous peoples. This approach is based on the assumption that research, policy, and practice impacting child welfare must be based on principles of practice accepted by the community that they impact. For Indigenous children, youth and their families the accepted principles of practice would be based upon principles or values that are acceptable to Indigenous communities. To explicate this concept use:
 - Resource 1-2 Considering a Principle-based Approach to Child Welfare
9. To link the Principle-based Approach with the Touchstone project, indicate to the participants that the Touchstone Reconciliation Movement is a Principle-based approach to moving forward to a more compassionate practice that serves vulnerable children and youth. In introducing the Touchstone Reconciliation Movement use the following resources:
 - Resource 1-3: History of the Touchstone Reconciliation Movement
 - Resource 1-4: Overview of the Touchstone for Leadership Curriculum
 - Resource 1-5: What it means to Participate in a Reconciliation Process

10. As you are working through this information, ask participants if they have any questions. Indicate to participants that the goal of this course is to link the touchstone reconciliation movement with a principle-based approach to practice, based on Indigenous shared values, to Indigenous child welfare.
11. Once you have presented this information review the agenda for Module I: Touchstones for Leadership using:

- Resource 1-6: Agenda for the Module

Ask participants if there is anything else they would like to add. Remind individuals that this is Module I of a five-Module Course.

12. After you have provided an overview of the course, indicate to participants that the next activity is a short dyad exercise. The purpose of this activity is to explore the question:

- Why is leadership important within Touchstones for Child Welfare?
- In your leadership role, why does this Touchstone matter to you?

Ask participants to pair with another person beside them. Spend about five minutes on this discussion. In the large group ask for a few people to share their responses (not everyone's). The facilitator can choose to write these ideas down; however, the point is to get leadership thinking about their role in the Touchstone reconciliation movement.

You may add to the discussion by clarifying some of the responsibilities of leadership:

- Having an understanding of the needs of those one is leading
- Sharing information
- Listening
- Acting
- Role Modeling
- Having Strong People Skills
- Developing Trusting
- Building Relationships
- Setting a Course of Action

13. Indicate to participants that the next activity will look specifically at Reconciliation component of the Touchstone movement.

UNIT 2: focusing on the four-stage Touchstone RECONCILIATION PROCESS

Relational Goal

Describe the Touchstone Reconciliation Process of *truth telling*, *acknowledging*, *restoring* and *relating* as it applies to Indigenous child welfare.

Objectives

The objectives for this unit are:

- Identify the four phases (truth telling, acknowledging, relating and restoring) of the Touchstone Reconciliation conceptual model;
- Differentiate between the four phases of the Touchstone Reconciliation process and the necessity of honouring each phase;
- Describe how the Touchstone Reconciliation conceptual model is integrated into the five-Module course – *Touchstones For Leadership*;
- Orally articulate the importance of *process and relationship* in reconciliation efforts;
- Relate your understanding of the word reconciliation;
- Apply your understanding of reconciliation to child welfare in an Indigenous context.

Instructional Methods

- Direct instruction
- Small Group Dialogue
- Large Group Dialogue

Instructional Equipment

- Overhead projector
- Overhead transparencies of identified resources

Note to Facilitator/Preparation

- Review the curriculum and ensure overhead materials are on hand.

Time

- 30 minutes

Resources

Resource 2-1: [Overhead/Slide]: The Touchstone Reconciliation Process

Resource 2-2: [Overhead/Slide]: An Attempt at definitions: Reconciliation

Resource 2-3 [Overhead/Slide]: The Centrality of Relationship

Resource 2-4: [Overhead/Slide]: Small Group Discussion Questions

Resource 2-5: [Overhead/Slide]: Reflection Question: As a Leader in your community or organization what is your role in the Indigenous Child Welfare Reconciliation Movement?

Suggested Reading

Blackstock, C., Brown, I., & Bennett, M. (2006). Reconciliation: Rebuilding the Canadian Child Welfare System to Better Serve Aboriginal Children and Youth. In *Putting a human face on child welfare: Voices from the prairies*, Ivan Brown, Ferzana Chaze, Don Fuchs, Sharon McKay and Shelley Thomas Prokop (Eds). Regina: Prairie child welfare consortium.

Procedure

1. Indicate to the participants that the purpose of this activity is to review concepts about reconciliation and then move from direct instruction toward

relationship-building and dialogue. The purpose of this activity is to bring awareness to the notion of reconciliation in general and how it applies to the touchstone movement in specific with the goal of focusing the discussion on leadership roles and responsibilities.

2. The facilitator indicates to participants that the entire curriculum is based upon the touchstone reconciliation process. So each module will have within it opportunities for leadership to participate in truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating as individual engage with modules pertaining to a specific touchstone (e.g. Module II: Culture, Language and Holistic Approach). The facilitator uses the following resource to review the touchstone reconciliation process.

- Resource 2-1: The Touchstone Reconciliation Process

3. The facilitator shares a definition of Reconciliation from the Niagara Falls Reconciliation Gathering, among several other definitions found in Reconciliation literature. Indicate to participants that there is a vast amount of literature on reconciliation, using the following resource present a few examples of attempts at a definition.

- Resource 2-2: An Attempt at definitions: Reconciliation

4. Indicate to participants that the literature and research on reconciliation identifies that relationship (and building relationship) is a key component. To further clarify this point, the instructor uses the following resource:

- Resource 2-3: The Centrality of Relationship

5. After reviewing the definitions and key principles of reconciliation efforts, indicate to participants that this is their opportunity to relate their understanding of reconciliation and apply it to child welfare. At this point participants do not have to focus specifically on their role as leaders, but rather on their role as interested parties in shaping a more compassionate, relevant and effective child welfare system for Indigenous children and families. Number off participants into four groups:

- Truth telling
- Acknowledging
- Relating
- Restoring

To provide a starting place for the discussion, the facilitator provides some guiding questions for each group using the following resource:

- Resource 2-4: Small Group Discussion Questions

Ask participants to dialogue on the topic focus for their group. For example, why is truth telling important in reconciliation. Ask the group to decide on one person to take on the task of *listener*. This person will be report back on key ideas emerging from the dialogue to the larger group on the discussion.

The *listener* may want to write notes, but should be somewhat unobtrusive (this is not a flipchart activity). This is an opportunity for people to engage in dialogue around the discussion group topic. The first step in building relationships is talking with others.

Allow as much time as can accommodate your time schedule (approximately 15 minutes). Then ask everyone to come back to the large group and relate the key themes of their discussion – likely it will be the *listener* that will relate these themes.

- 6 In concluding this activity, ask participants to generally think about their role as leaders in the touchstone reconciliation movement. Indicate that they might want to make some personal notes for next activity that focuses on leadership responsibilities within the Touchstone Child Welfare movement. You can refer people to the following resource is appropriate:

- Resource 2-5: As a Leader in your community or organization what is your role in the Indigenous Child Welfare Reconciliation Movement?

- 7 Segue into the next activity.

UNIT 3: LEADERSHIP ROLES WITHIN THE TOUCHSTONE RECONCILIATION movement

Relational Goal

Relate own values and role in reconciliation initiative within Indigenous child welfare.

Objectives

The objectives for this unit are:

- Examine how leadership works to enforce a set of values, beliefs and worldviews in child welfare;
- Assess your leadership impact within Indigenous child welfare;
- Identify the role and responsibility of leadership in relationship to the Touchstone reconciliation movement;
- Begin to explore your personal role and responsibility in relationship to the Touchstone reconciliation movement.

Instructional Methods

- Dyad
- Large Group Dialogue

Instructional Equipment

- Overhead projector
- Overhead transparencies of identified resources
- Flipchart and pens
- Place Cards and Marker

Note to Facilitator/Preparation

- Review the curriculum and ensure overhead materials are on hand.

Time

- 15 minutes

Resources

Resource 3-1: [Overhead/Slide]: Reflection Questions on Leadership

Resource 3-2: [Overhead/Slide]: Dyad Questions

Suggested Reading

Cross, T., & Blackstock, C. (2005). To reach out in friendship. *First Peoples Child and Family Review*. 2, 5–8. Ottawa, Canada: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

Procedure

1. This activity is fairly short and it flows naturally from Activity 2 which asks participants to begin to consider the implications of reconciliation and the roles and responsibilities of leadership. As the audience for this course are already leaders within their organization and community it is assumed that they are familiar with the responsibilities of leaders and the corresponding skills necessary to achieve these responsibilities. As such, there is a pedagogical assumption that individuals will bring this experience and knowledge into the room. In this sense, the purpose of this course is not to prepare individuals to be effective leaders within reconciliation; rather it is to ask of the leaders in the room to reflect upon their existing leadership skills, abilities and experience as they consider the touchstone child welfare movement.
2. Indicate to participants that we are moving into the restoring and relating aspect of this course, and much of the activities in the remainder of this module will be opportunities for individuals to dialogue and relate to each on this topic. This meets the mission of the curriculum project as a tool for

reconciliation, in that the heart of reconciliation is about listening, talking, sharing, relating, envisioning, and making plans. This is to get people talking with each other.

3. The key question of this activity is to uncover the values and beliefs that underlie your leadership. Leaders lead. Optimally, leaders consider the need of their community or organization, work collaboratively to generate a vision or mandate to respond to an existing issue, and use their leadership skills and abilities to lead their community toward a desired state. However, leaders come with values and beliefs about how change to be carried out. The above example is based on a leadership style that values a collaborative approach. The question for this activity is: What is your approach to leadership? Does your leadership approach lend itself to reconciliation as viable strategy? What is your role and responsibility, as a leader, to Indigenous children if you believe in reconciliation? What is your role and responsibility, as a leader, if you do not? To facilitate reflection on these questions the facilitator uses the following resource:

- Resource 3-1: Reflection Questions on Leadership

1. After you have posed these questions to the group, indicate to participants to pick someone in the room that they find interesting, or would like to hear more about their leadership perspective. If there are Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in the room, the facilitator recommends that they pair together. Indicate to participants that they have 15 minutes to discuss the following reflection questions and then be prepared to share some of their conversation with the larger group. The facilitator uses the following resource for to guide the dyad discussions:

- Resource 3-2: Dyad Questions

2. In the large group, briefly ask participants to share not only what they talked about with their dyad partner, but also what was the level of comfort? Ask people to be as honest as possible.

UNIT 4: DEVELOPING a LEADERSHIP mission statement ON THE TOUCHSTONE RECONCILIATION movement

Relational Goal

Develop a personal leadership mission statement in relationship to the Touchstone reconciliation movement.

Objectives

The objectives for this unit are:

- Visualize how and where leadership could utilize the four-phase Touchstone Reconciliation conceptual model in resolving worldview conflicts in child welfare services for Indigenous peoples;
- Develop a personal one-paragraph leadership mission statement of your commitment to reconciliation work and what it can mean within child welfare;
- Prepare a collective vision statement as leaders on reconciliation within child welfare.

Instructional Methods

- Visioning group (a small group)

Instructional Equipment

- Overhead projector
- Overhead transparencies of identified resources
- Flipchart and pens

Note to Facilitator/Preparation

- Review the curriculum and ensure overhead materials are on hand.
- This activity may be optional depending on whether if it is being delivered as an integral component of the five-module series and the length of time that available. The facilitator will have to make this determination in conjunction with participant needs prior to the start of the workshop.

Time

- 60 minutes

Resources

Resource 4-1: [Overhead/Slide]: Small Group Discussion for Collective Vision

Suggested Reading

Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Procedure

1. Indicate to participants that this next activity is to provide an opportunity for engaging in some preliminary relating work around creating a general vision for principles to guide reconciliation in child welfare. This incorporates both process and goals and allows for an on-going relationship that is helpful toward this end.
2. The facilitator indicates to participants that the collaboration process will include two steps. The end result will be a starting vision for reconciliation in child welfare. The facilitator reminds participants that this is the starting place, so focus is to be on principles or values that can guide this process. However, ask people to take this seriously – could they walk the talk. As leaders could you advocate for this vision?

3. The instructor reviews the two steps and what is involved. To start the instructor writes the following on a flipchart:
 - Collaborative visioning in small groups
 - Sharing small group collaborative visions with the larger group
4. The facilitator reviews each of the steps with the participants ensuring that the participants are clear about the instructions and the time frames. Prior to starting the exercise the facilitator assigns participants into three small groups. The instructor should assign participants into three small groups ensuring that there is a blend of representatives from Indigenous and Non-Indigenous leadership in each group.
5. Collaborative visioning in small groups: In small groups participants will be asked to generate a discussion on the questions identified in the following resource:
 - Resource 4-1: Small Group Discussion for Collective Vision
6. The goal of the small group work is to develop a collective vision statement of principles for reconciliation in Indigenous child welfare. Ask the group to select a recorder to write down the vision statement and presenter to relay the vision statement to the large group. The group has 20 minutes to complete this exercise.
7. Sharing small group collaborative visions with the larger group: In this final step each group will be asked to present their vision statement. After the activity is complete the facilitator will have the task of amalgamating the three vision statements into one page summary to send via email to the participants after the course.
8. Indicate to participants that this vision statement will guide them through the rest of the modules. Ask participants if they have any questions.

RESOURCES

Resource 1-1: Impacts of the Child Welfare System

The Facts¹

“There are between 22,500 and 28,000 First Nations children in the care of the Canadian child welfare system... three times the number that attended residential schools in the 1940s (First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, 2002; Child Welfare League of Canada, 2003; Blackstock, 2002).”

“The chances of a First Nations child going into child welfare care are one in 17 whereas it for non-Aboriginal children it is one in 200 (Blackstock, 2004)”

“From the very outset, Aboriginal children are more than twice as likely to be investigated compared to non-Aboriginal children. Once investigated cases involving Aboriginal children are more likely to be substantiated, more likely to require on-going child welfare services, more than twice as likely to be placed in out of home care, and more likely to be brought to child welfare court (Wen:de Report)”

Why?

Reconciliation Gathering: Looking Back, Reaching Forward – Presentation by Professor John S. Milloy²

“The “good,” whatever the policy may have been, was often expressed as “good for them” so that the immediate pain caused by well-intentioned policies such as the removal of children from parents and community or the attempt to suppress their language and culture to fit them for employment in the dominant society, is characterized as no more than a necessary evil – something akin to the nasty taste of cough medicine which, after all, will cure what is really sore. Unfortunately, as we all

¹ This information was taken from the following public presentation: Blackstock, C. (2006). Prevention of Violence Against Indigenous Children. Cape Mudge First Nation.

² Milloy, J. (October, 26, 2005). *How do bad things happen when good people have good intentions?* Paper presented at the Reconciliation: Looking Back, Reaching Forward, Niagara Falls.

know, such policies have not only left a bad taste in all our mouths, but they made the recipient ill, inflicted long-term damage on individuals and on communities.”

Resource 1-2: Principle Approach to Child Welfare

Considering a Principle Approach to Child Welfare

A Principle-based Approach to practice is based a set of core principles or values for which a community should be accountable.³

An example of Guiding Principles for Child Welfare Practice can be found in the Touchstones.⁴

- Self-Determination
- Culture and Language
- Holistic Approach
- Structural Intervention
- Non Discrimination

Does existing child welfare practice (both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous) meet practice standards in accordance with these principles?

³ The Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, A Non-Profit Organization Committed to Improving Outcomes by Improving Practice. url: www.childwelfaregroup.org/framework.html

⁴ Blackstock et al. (2006) *Reconciliation: Rebuilding the Canadian Child Welfare System to Better Serve Aboriginal Children and Youth*.

Resource 1-3: History of the Touchstone Movement⁵

Current Child Welfare System Impacting Indigenous Families

The Question

Do we want systemic change or are we simply moving deck chairs on the Titanic?

A Gathering

2005: Niagara Falls Reconciliation in Child Welfare Gathering

- Prompted by a growing awareness of the crisis within Indigenous child welfare
- 200 child welfare delegates from (both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous) gathered
- Starting place for establishing principles for a new system of child welfare practice for Indigenous children
- These principles would uphold Indigenous worldviews
- These principles would work to uncover the underlying problems with mainstream child welfare practice with the goal of creating a new child welfare for Indigenous communities system based on ancient values
- The outcome of the gathering: Reconciliation was needed to move forward

The Work

- Four individuals (two Indigenous and two non-Indigenous) from First Nations Caring Society of Canada, National Indian Child Welfare Association and the Centre for Excellence for Child Welfare (University of Toronto) were charged with the task of reviewing the participant contributions from the 2005 Reconciliation Gathering
- Each individual was to identify 10 touchstones or core values
- The group of four then meet to compare their findings
- The results were alarmingly similar with two key sets of directions:
- A need for Reconciliation in Child Welfare and a describe process
- An interrelated set of values **or** touchstones to shape a new child welfare system

⁵ Information on the history of the Touchstone Movement was taken from: Blackstock, C., Cross, T., Brown, I., George, J., & Formsma, J. (2006) *Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children, youth and families*. Ottawa: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

- As a result a draft document was developed – Touchstone of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth and Families. This was sent back to participants to review and approve
- The final document was published in 2006.

The Outcome

- Reconciliation Process in Child Welfare
- **Truth telling:** The Process of open exchange (listening and sharing) regarding child welfare's past.
- **Acknowledging:** Affirming and learning from the past and embracing new possibilities
- **Restoring:** Addressing the problems of the past and creating a better path for the future
- **Relating:** Having recognized that Indigenous peoples are in the best position to make decisions about Indigenous children, moving forward in a respectful way to achieve better outcomes for Indigenous children and youth.

An interrelated set of touchstones to shape a new child welfare system

- Self-Determination
- Culture and Language
- Holistic Approach
- Structural Interventions
- Non Discrimination

Resource 1-4: Overview of the Five-Module Touchstone Curriculum

The Curriculum explores the four Touchstones of Hope:

- Culture, Language and Holistic Approach
- Self-Determination
- Non Discrimination
- Structural Intervention



The Touchstone Curriculum Conceptual Model is Based on the Touchstone Reconciliation Process

Each Module models the four phases of the Touchstone process of reconciliation and include within it an opportunity for participant engagement on:

- truth telling
- acknowledging
- relating
- restoring.

The hope is to move beyond bringing awareness of the systematic deficits of the child welfare system in relationship to Indigenous children, youth and families to one which nurtures dialogue and sincere action planning for change.

Resource 1-5: What It Means to Participate in a Reconciliation Process

Who Should Be Participating in This Process and How?

- Leadership who can forge change within Indigenous child welfare
- Leadership who can hear the Indigenous community
- Non-Indigenous leadership who can leave their own assumptions about “what is best for Indigenous people” at the door

Marlene Brant Castellano, Mohawk Scholar, once said at Indigenous Research conference:⁶

If we are to move forward Indigenous people must suspend distrust and non-Indigenous people must suspend disbelief.

Resource 1-6: Agenda for Each Module

Module I: Primer on Touchstones for Leadership

- Introduction to the Touchstones (completed)
- Focusing on the Four Stage Reconciliation Model
- Leadership Roles within the Touchstone Reconciliation Movement
- Developing a Leadership Mission Statement on the Touchstones

Module II: Culture, Language and Holistic Approach

- What it means to have a distinctive worldview unique from the Dominant Perspective
- Why culture, language and a holistic approach matters in Child Welfare practice
- Leadership's role in Creating Space for Indigenous ways of being, knowing and protecting Indigenous children
- Visioning and Action Planning on supporting Indigenous ways of being and knowing in protecting Indigenous children.

Module III: Self-Determination Touchstone

- What does Self-Determination mean in context of the Touchstones?
- Why Self-Determination matters in Indigenous child welfare
- Leadership's role in Advocating for Self-Determination in Indigenous child welfare
- Visioning and Action Planning on supporting the Self-Determination Touchstone.

6 Brant Castellano, M. (June 2005). Paper presented at the "Shawane Dagosiwin" – Aboriginal Education Research Forum, Winnipeg.

Resource 1-7: Agenda for Each Module

Module IV: The Non Discrimination Touchstone

- What does Non Discrimination mean in Indigenous child welfare?
- Bringing awareness to discriminatory practices in your context
- The Role, Responsibility and Implications for Leadership in advocating for a non discriminatory approach to Indigenous child welfare
- Visioning and Action Planning on the Non Discrimination Touchstone.

Module V: Structural Interventions Touchstone

- What is the linkage between Structural Interventions and Non Discrimination
- Differentiating between Structural Risks and Family Risks
- Leadership's role in Reducing Structural Risks impacting Indigenous children, youth and Families
- Visioning and Action Planning on Structural Interventions

Resource 2-1: The Touchstone Reconciliation Process

The Touchstone Reconciliation Process in Child Welfare

- **Truth telling:** The Process of open exchange (listening and sharing) regarding child welfare's past.
- **Acknowledging:** Affirming and learning from the past and embracing new possibilities
- **Restoring:** Addressing the problems of the past and creating a better path for the future
- **Relating:** Having recognized that Indigenous peoples are in the best position to make decisions about Indigenous children, moving forward in a respectful way to achieve better outcomes for Indigenous children and youth.

Resource 2-2: An Attempt at definitions: Reconciliation

Why the Need for Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is needed when:⁷

- There is some form of structural injustice (e.g. racism)
- Conflict coincides with Group identity, where one group has experienced oppression as a result of another group (e.g. Indigenous-Settler relations)
- There is a long history of conflict
- Those in conflict live in close proximity to each other
- There has been direct violence

An Elder's Question – Elder Wilma Guss⁸ proposed that we begin at the beginning and explore how we define reconciliation. She said:

- What is Reconciliation?
- Were there examples we could learn from?
- How could reconciliation make a difference?

Broad Definitions of Reconciliation

“Reconciliation, in essence, represents a place, the point of encounter where concerns about both the past and the future can meet. Reconciliation requires the creation of a safe space for Aboriginal and non Aboriginal peoples to acknowledge the past and envisioning of the future is the necessary ingredients for reframing the present. For this to happen, people must find ways to encounter themselves and their enemies, their hopes and their fears.”⁹

“Reconciliation is a complex term, and there is little agreement on its definition. This is mainly because reconciliations is both a goal – something to achieve –

7 Lederach in de la Rey, C. (2001). Reconciliation in Divided Societies. In D. J. Christie, Wagner, R., V., & Winter DuNann, D. (Ed.), *Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century* (pp. 251–261): Prentice Hill, p. 251. This paraphrased from the analysis in this work.

8 Blackstock, C., Brown, I., & Bennet M. (2006). Reconciliation: Rebuilding the Canadian Child Welfare System to Better Serve Aboriginal Children and Youth. p. 5

9 Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building peace: sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

and a process – a means to achieve that goal. A great deal of controversy arises from confusing these two ideas... the goal of reconciliation is a future aspiration, something important to aim towards, perhaps even an ideal state to hope for. But the process is very much a present tense way of dealing with how things are – building a reconciliation process is the means to work, effectively and practically, towards that final goal – and is invaluable in itself.”¹⁰

Reconciliation as Defined within the Touchstone Reconciliation Process of Truth Telling, Acknowledging, Restoring and Relating

Reconciliation begins with a truthful exploration of the harm caused by child welfare by all who were, or are still, involved. The definition of harm must be acknowledged to be the first property of those who experience it, just as acknowledging the harm and learning from it is the first obligation of those who perpetuated it. The journey through the other phases is often more tidal in nature than linear – respecting the need for natural processes of thought and paces for change to flow forward and backward before finally settling on a new and improved reality.¹¹

Resource 2-3: The Centrality of Relationship

In referring to the list of reasons why reconciliation needs to occur, Cheryl de la Rey says:

“As is evident from the list [Resource 2-1] the concept of relationship, albeit conflictual, is often central to the divisions in contemporary societies. It makes sense then, that any policies established to promote reconciliation must focus on changing the relationship between the parties in conflict. On this aspect, there is consensus.”¹²

¹⁰ Bloomfield, D. (2003). Reconciliation: An Introduction. In D. Bloomfield, & Barnes, T. (Ed.), *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict*. Stockholm: International IDEA.

¹¹ Blackstock, C., Cross, T., Brown, I., George, J., & Formsma, J. (2006). *Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children, youth and families*. Ottawa: First Nations Caring Society of Canada.

¹² de la Rey, C. (2001). Reconciliation in Divided Societies. In D. J. Christie, Wagner, R., V., & Winter DuNann, D. (Ed.), *Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century* (pp. 251–261): Prentice Hall, p. 252

John Paul Lederach says:

“In all contemporary internal conflicts, the futures of those who are fighting are ultimately and intimately linked and interdependent. Opportunity must therefore be given for people to look forward and envision their shared future. The perspective of native peoples, such as the Mohawk nation, is highly instructive in this respect. In the midst of the 1991 Oka crisis, which involved the Mohawk nation and the Quebec and Canadian governments, a Mohawk chief reflected on the decisions before his people. He noted that, as required by Mohawk tradition, the chief must think in terms of seven generations...Such a long view brings both a sense of responsibility for, and a new clarity about, the shared future.”¹³

Resource 2-4: Small Group Discussion Questions

Truth telling Discussion Group

In terms of Indigenous child welfare reconciliation, what will truth telling involve? What is leadership's Role?

Acknowledging Discussion Group

In terms of Indigenous child welfare reconciliation, what will acknowledging involve? What is leadership's Role?

Restoring Discussion Group

In terms of Indigenous child welfare reconciliation, what will restoring involve? What is leadership's Role?

Relating Discussion Group

In terms of Indigenous child welfare reconciliation, what will acknowledging involve? What is leadership's Role?

13 Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building peace: sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press. p. 27

Resource 2-5: As a Leader in your community or organization what is your role in the Indigenous Child Welfare Reconciliation Movement?

Individual Reflection Question

As a Leader in your community or organization what is your role in the Indigenous Child Welfare Reconciliation Movement?

Resource 3-1: Reflection Questions on Leadership

Self- Reflection Question

- What is your approach to leadership?
- Does your leadership approach lend itself to reconciliation as viable strategy?
- What is your role and responsibility, as a leader, to Indigenous children if you believe in reconciliation?
- What is your role and responsibility, as a leader, if you do not?

Resource 3-2: Dyad Questions

From One Person in an Leadership Role to another – what are your thoughts on:

- What is your approach to leadership?
- Does your leadership approach lend itself to reconciliation as viable strategy?
- What is your role and responsibility, as a leader, to Indigenous children if you believe in reconciliation?
- What is your role and responsibility, as a leader, if you do not?



Resource 4-1: Small Group Discussion for Collective Vision

Instructions

- Select a group recorder to keep note of all the key ideas generated.
- Generate ideas to formulate in a vision statement.
- The vision statement should be short but encompass the collective sentiments shared by the group.
- Please ensure that all people in the group are heard and their ideas reflected in the vision statement.
- The instructor will advise you of the time allotted for this activity and when the allotted time is almost up.

Questions

What are the principles that underlie Reconciliation within Indigenous Child Welfare?

Write only those principles that you as a leader can make a commitment toward?

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