

A photograph of a person standing in a forest of tall, thin trees. The person is wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a fringed, brown garment. The forest floor is covered in moss and fallen leaves. The background shows a dense canopy of green trees.

Introduction to Indigenous Cultural Safety & Humility

Foundational Training for Teams 2025
Instructor: Len Pierre, CEO



Intention Setting

Our intention is to create a safe space for exchanging knowledge, conversations, and to support one another in solidarity. We come with an open heart and open mind and hope to be received in the same way.

We welcome questions throughout the session but will also leave time to address them at the end as well. You can do both!

Positioning Our Voice

Our consultancy is based on Coast Salish Territory and includes people who belong to many nations. We pull on the wisdom of many colleagues, allies and relatives of diverse histories to support people in the work of decolonization.

We always welcome the wisdom of other experiences and of the territories on which we gather as we do this important work together.





Training Overview:

PART 1 - Indigenous Terminology

- Define First Nations, Metis, and Inuit
- List culturally safer ways of using Indigenous terminology

PART 2 - Colonial socialization and ideology in Canada

- Discuss the origin of anti-Indigenous racism in Canada

PART 3 - Cultivating Indigenous Cultural Safety

- Define Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS)
- Distinguish ICS from Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity
- Share cultural safety tools for your professional tool belt



1

Indigenous Terminology



"A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer. It sings because it has a song.."

-Maya Angelou



Indigenous & Aboriginal

In the Canadian context both are used to describe the original peoples before the colonial country was formed: First Nations, Metis, & Inuit (FNIM).





First Nations



A term that eventually replaced the term “Indian” in the 1970’s.

First Nations peoples are land-based nations that trace their heritage back to their traditional territory.

The singular “First Nation” can refer to a [band](#), a [reserve](#)-based community, or a larger tribal grouping and the [status](#) Indians who live in them. For example, the Stó:lō Nation (which consists of several bands), or the Tsleil-Waututh Nation (formerly the Burrard Band).

—UBC

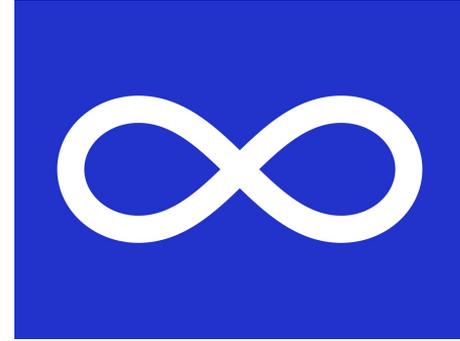




Metis

Nation is made up of the descendants of Indigenous women and Euro-Settler men.

The Métis are a distinct Indigenous nation with their own history, culture, languages and territories with deep historical roots in the three Prairie provinces.





Inuit



They live in communities across the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (northern Quebec), and Nunatsiavut (northern Labrador).

The Inuit call this vast region Nunangat.





Distinctions-Based Approach

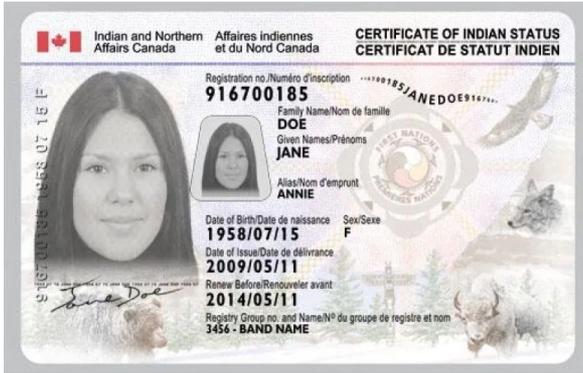
Acknowledges the specific rights, interests, priorities and concerns of each individual First Nation, Metis, and Inuit community.

This requires respecting and acknowledging these are distinct peoples, each with their own unique cultures, histories, rights, laws and governments.





Indian, Indian Status, and the Indian Act



Indian:

- Used until the 1970's
- Contentious term
- Still used legally in Canada
- Elders/seniors sometimes also use this term to self-identify



Indian Status:

- Federal identification that confirms you are registered under the Indian



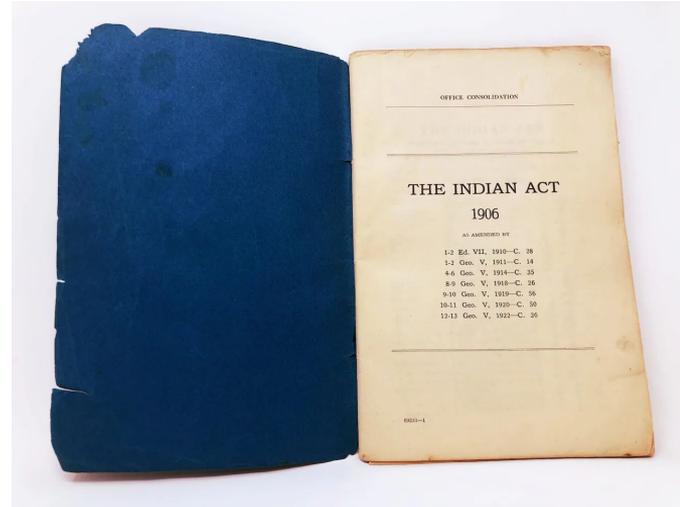


The Indian Act

Federal law that governs 640+ First Nations groups in matters pertaining to:

- Indian status
- Indian Bands
- Indian reserves
- Invasive and paternalistic

Federal government regulates and administers in the affairs and day-to-day lives of registered Indians/reserves.





Settler (Non-Indigenous)



- NOT a cultural or ethnic term
- Used to position oneself
- Relational term
- Used to self-identify oneself as a non-Indigenous person from Canada
- Used to describe non-Indigenous peoples in relationship to Indigenous issues and peoples





Culturally Safer Terminology Guide

Do's:

- ✓ Follow how people choose to identify themselves
- ✓ Capitalize the “i” in Indigenous
- ✓ Pluralize people to peoples

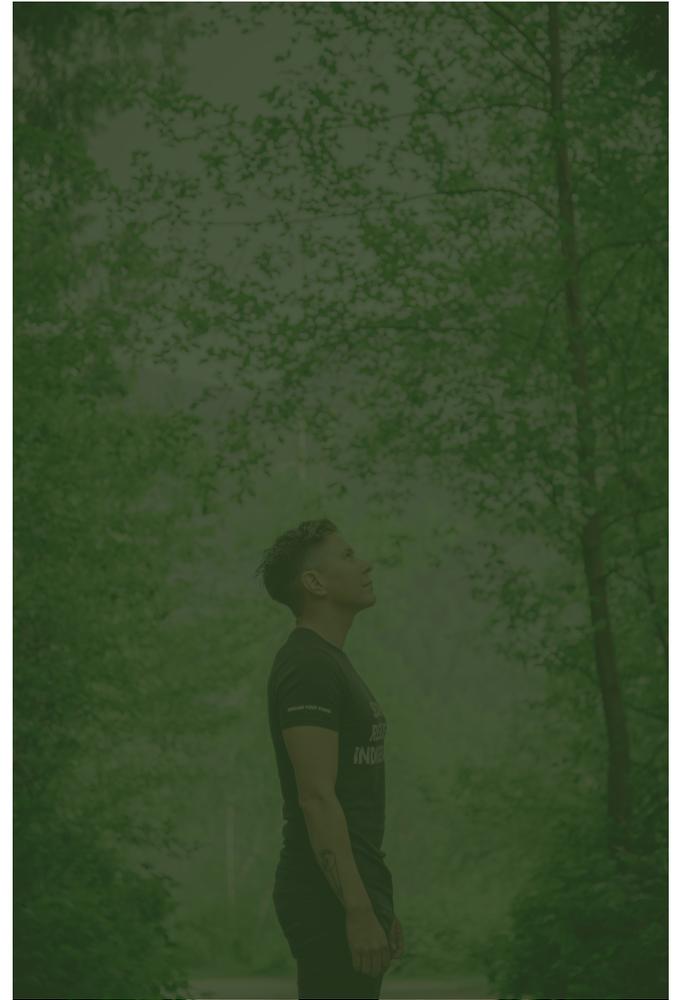
Don'ts:

- ✗ Do not use possessive terms like “our” or “Canada's”
- ✗ Do not use the term Native
- ✗ Do not use the term Indian unless the context permits



2

Colonial Socializations & Ideology





Colonial Socialization



“While Indigenous children were being mistreated in residential schools by being told they were heathen, savages and pagans and inferior people — that same message was being delivered in the public schools of this country.”

— Justice Murray Sinclair

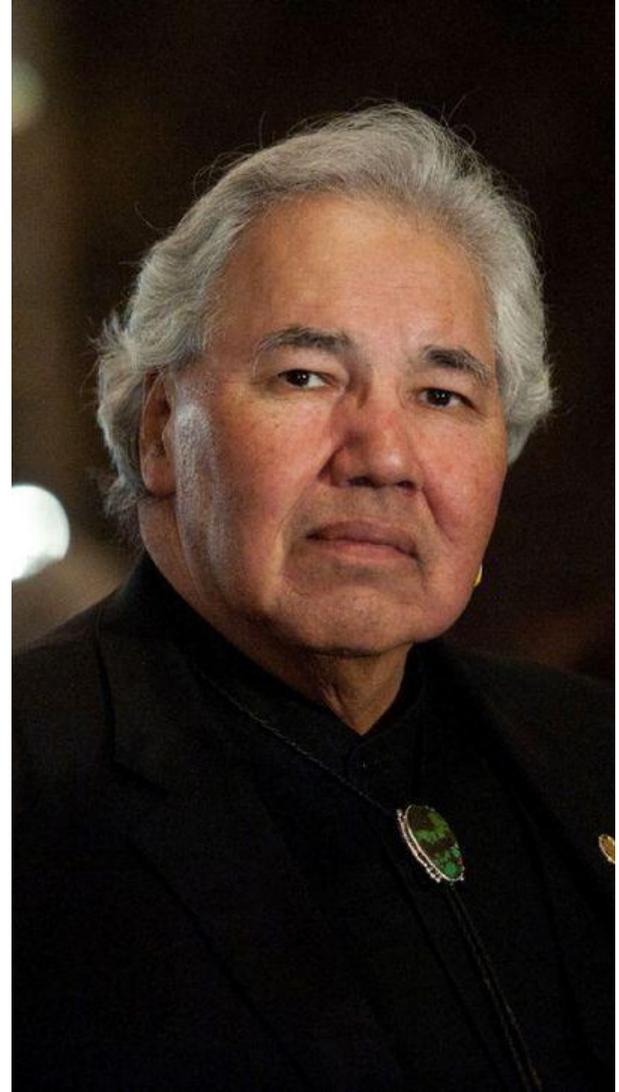




Illustration: Vernon Mould, Upper Canada College

This image from *Breastplate and Buckskin*, a Canadian history textbook used for several decades from the 1950s on, depicts Indian "warriors" "dressed as devils" who "pranced about" trying to scare Cartier. In response, the text claimed, "The Frenchman smiled."





487 FOR TANKS, ETC., SEE FOURTH PAGE.

REPUBLICAN UNION NOMINATIONS.

State Ticket.
 For Governor..... STEPHEN MILLER, of Stearns.
 For Lt. Gov. Governor..... CHAS. D. SHERWOOD, of Fillmore.
 Secretary of State..... DAVID BARELY, of Nicollet.
 Auditor of State..... CHAS. MILLIKEN, of Washington.
 State Treasurer..... CHAS. SCHIFFER, of Washington.
 Attorney General..... GORDON E. COLE, of Rice.
 Clerk Supreme Court..... GEO. F. PORTER, of Houston.

County Ticket.
 For State Senator..... THOMAS SIMPSON.
 For Representative..... JAMES S. YOUNG.
 For Sheriff..... THOMAS P. DIXON.
 For Treasurer..... LESLIE H. KING.
 For County Clerk..... MATTHEW G. NORTON.
 For Coroner..... N. PULSIFILBERT.
 For Constable..... EDWARD ELY.

The State reward for dead Indians has been increased to \$200 for every red-skin sent to Purgatory. This sum is more than the dead bodies of all the Indians east of the Red River are worth.



A CHILD IS WAITING

Happy, Playful Girl



Sherri, 3, ... loves to be hugged and cuddled. She is talking, repeating what others say and is more attentive. She is attending a speech therapy program once a week and her favorite moon darts speech exercises with her at home.

Sherri enjoys play-time with her furry animals, rabbits and the kitchen pots. She loves to listen and

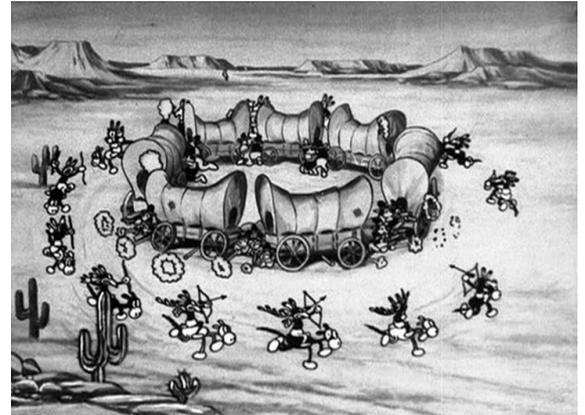


JASON, A LOVABLE LITTLE CHARMER ... is all-boy.

Youngster loves outdoors

Don't let his wispy look fool you, seven-month-old Jason is a happy boy who enjoys playing with his children and adults.

Now that Jason is walking he loves to explore and get around. He loves playing outdoors in the sand with pots, pans and little objects. Being far out adds to his unique prisms.



Let's Talk

Turn to your neighbour.

Offer a reaction to what you just heard or learned:

- An 'aha' moment
- A feeling that came up for you
- A memory of what you experienced
- What else does this make you think of?



The Pathway to Harm

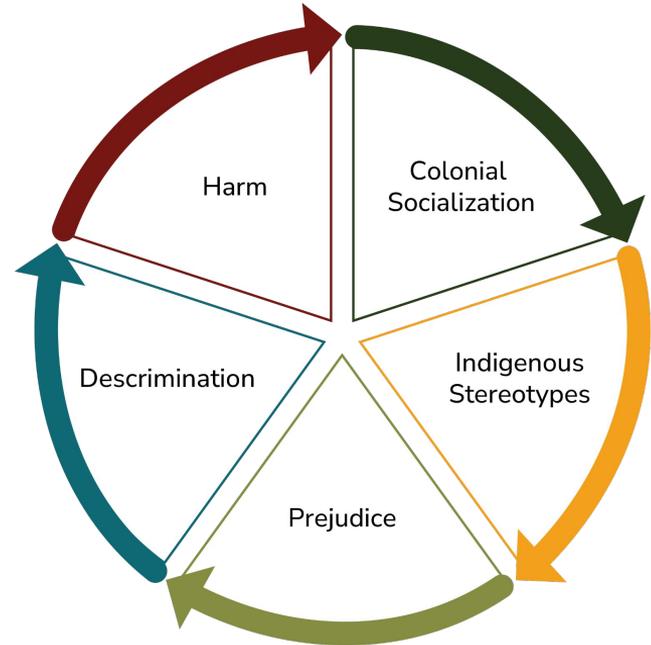
Colonial Socialization: A colonial process of learning to see, treat, and behave a certain way towards Indigenous peoples.

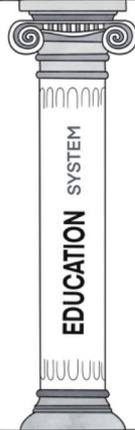
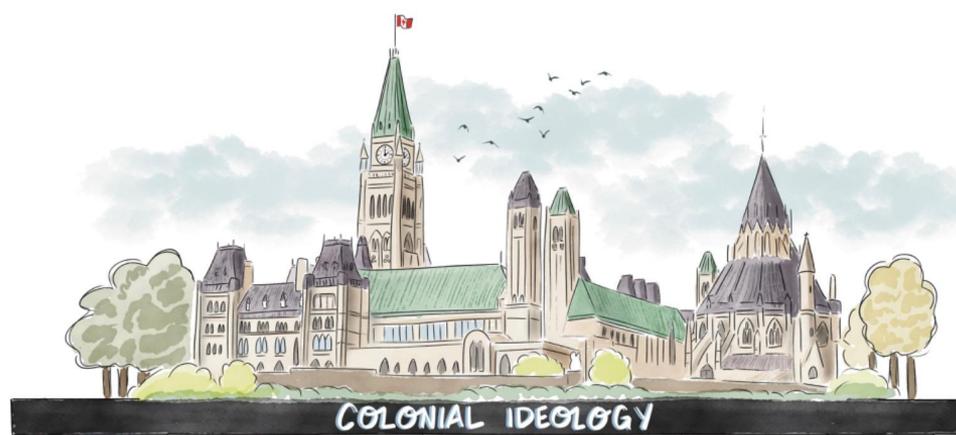
Stereotypes: Widely held and oversimplified ideas about First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples.

Prejudice: Predetermined judgements about other cultural groups in society.

Discrimination: Treating people differently because of prejudice beliefs.

Harm/Colonial Violence: Mental, social, physical, emotional, or land-based injury which is deliberately inflicted.









COLONIAL IDEOLOGY

HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

- Male Supremacy
- White Supremacy
- Paternalism
- Systemic Racism
- Exploitation
- Assimilation

EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Capitalism
- Cognitive Imperialism
- Parochial
- Conformity
- Saviourism
- Ageism

JUSTICE SYSTEM

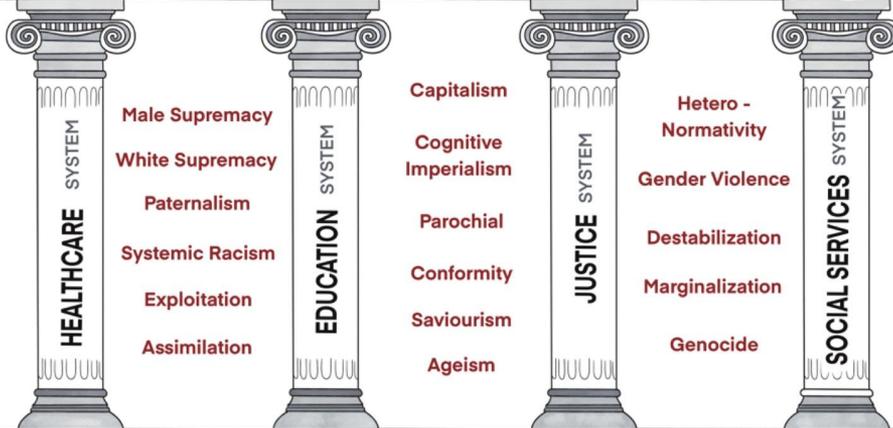
- Hetero - Normativity
- Gender Violence
- Destabilization
- Marginalization
- Genocide

SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM





COLONIAL IDEOLOGY

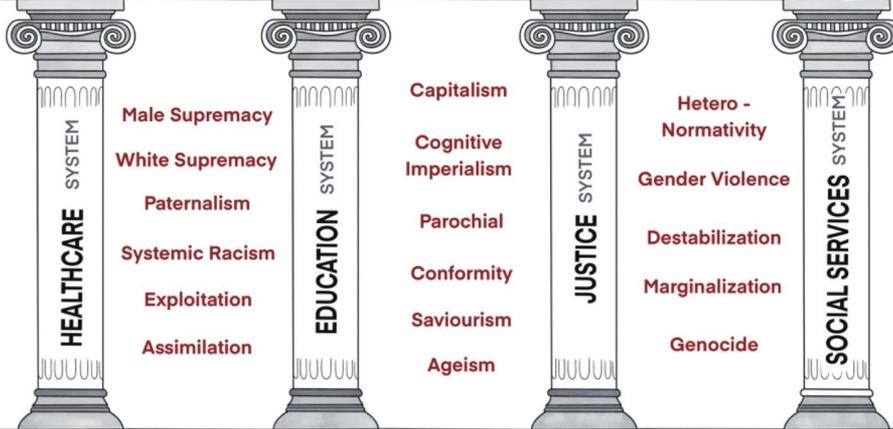


The Indian Act	The Civilization Act	The Bill of Rights
The Residential Schools	The 60's Scoop	Land Theft
The Electoral Franchise Act	Beast of the Land	Prohibition





COLONIAL IDEOLOGY



The Indian Act	The Civilization Act	The Bill of Rights
The Residential Schools	The 60's Scoop	Land Theft
The Electoral Franchise Act	Beast of the Land	Prohibition

STATE & STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES





There Is Some Good News!

Resocialization is in progress...



National Day for Truth & Reconciliation



BC Schools



University and Colleges



National Health Standardization



BC UNDRIP



First Nations Health Authority



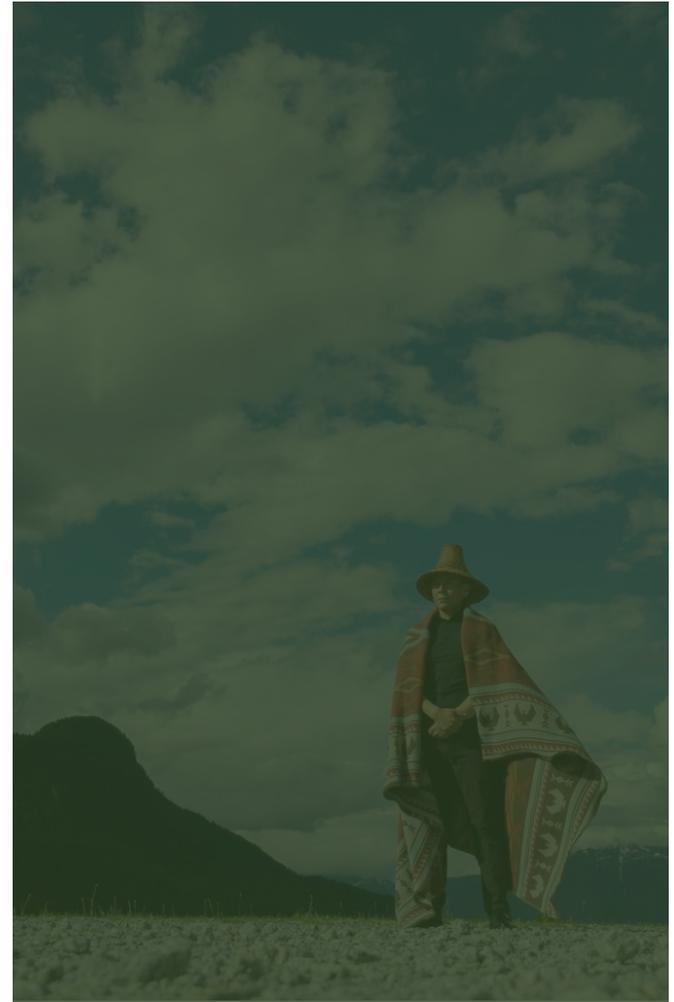
Land Back



News & Media Commitment

3

Cultivating Indigenous Cultural Safety





What Is Indigenous Cultural Safety?



- **Addresses power imbalances in colonial systems:** healthcare, education, social services, and more
- Challenges racism and inequity
- Centers Indigenous rights and equity in practice





Cultural Safety Spectrum

Cultural Avoidance

Cultural Awareness

Cultural Sensitivity

Cultural Safety

Cultural Advocacy



Superiority

Apathy

Dominating

Saviourism

Censoring

Remaining Silent

Limiting

Exploiting

Consuming

Aggressive

Violent

Humbleness

Humility

Compassion

Empowering

Allyship

Speaking Up

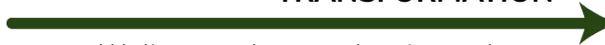
Asking Questions

Sharing

Attend To

Vulnerability

TRANSFORMATION



We listen, we learn, we lean in, we change.

**SUPPORTING THE
TYRANNY OF EFFICIENCY**

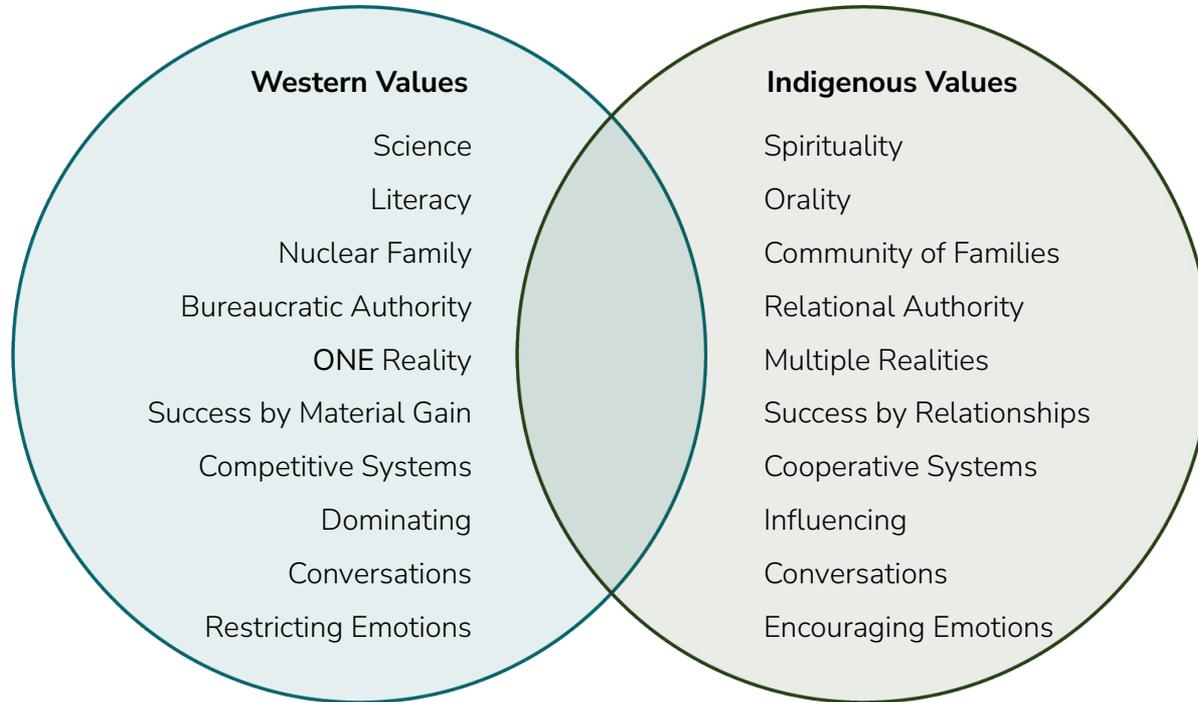


Productivity, efficiency, data, hierarchical, time, etc.



Bridging Our Cultural Awareness

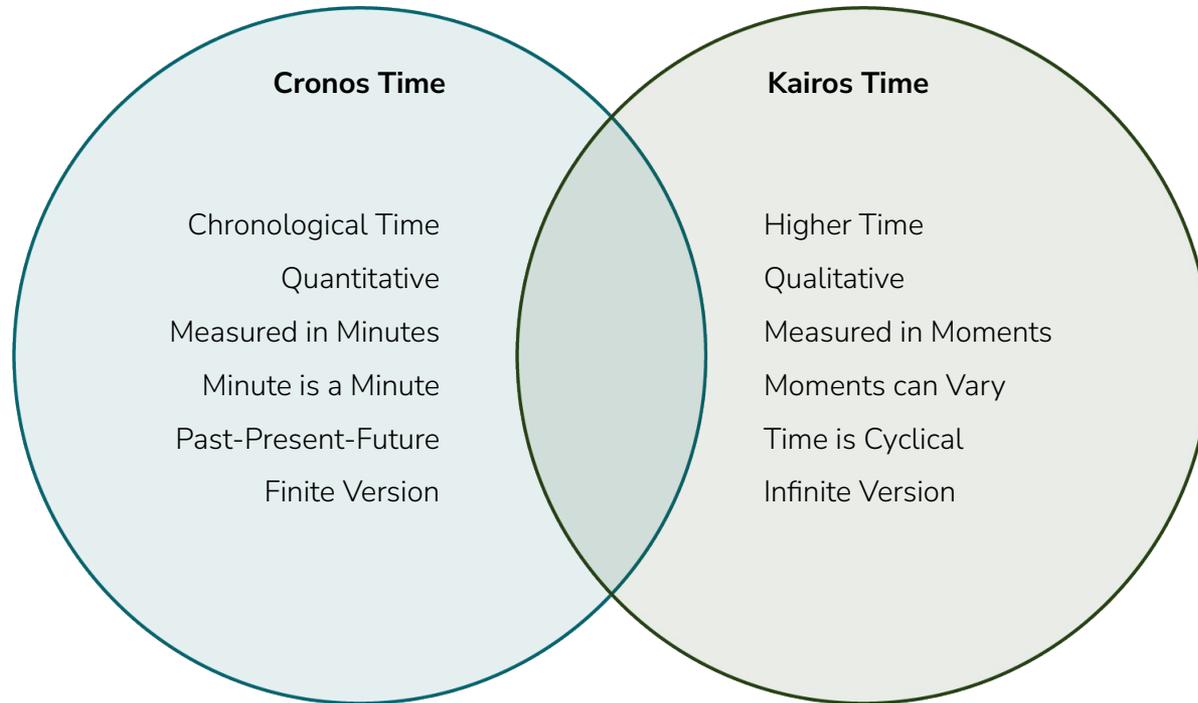
CULTURAL AWARENESS AND RESPONSIVENESS





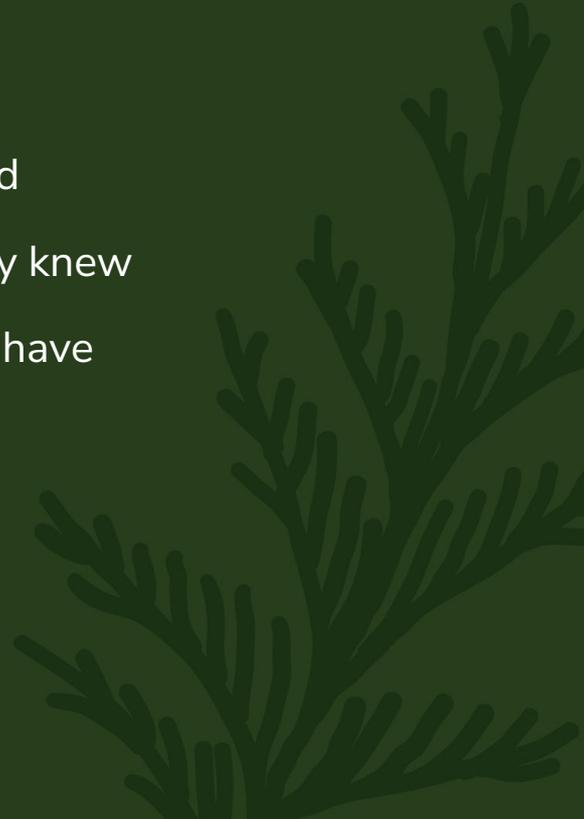
Time As A Cultural Safety Tool

LEVERAGING TIME FOR SAFETY



3, 2, & 1

- 3 things you learned
- 2 things you already knew
- 1 question you still have





What About Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion?

- EDI operationalizes and reinforces colonialism rather than disrupting it
- To be welcomed is to be not at home
- You cannot “include” us on our own lands and territories
- No evidence that demonstrates EDI work has recognized or surfaced Indigenous issues
- Reinforces Canadian Socialization (erasure of Indigenous peoples)





Embedding Cultural Safety:

Professional Practice

Your commitment to anti-racism, journaling, ongoing professional development, seeking and leading change in the organization.

Places

Naming/renaming places in Indigenous languages, reflecting Indigenous culture throughout the facility.

Processes

Recruitment, hiring, performance, team-meetings, and strategic plans, etc.

Policies

Embed ICS into team/organizations policies and other governing documents (operating manuals, HR, guides, etc.).
Where possible, make transparent policies.





Professional Tools for Your Tool Belt

1

Train yourself to examine and re-examine your language and behaviour.



- ICS Terminology
- iTIEP Communication Guidelines
- Seek feedback and give feedback to colleagues on their language/behaviour

2

Check-in with your prejudices. Ask yourself “How am I being prejudice?”



- In your team meetings
- When talking about First Nations, Metis, and Inuit
- When working in Indigenous context/projects

3

Pass on what you have learned.



- Tell your family what you learned
- Share with a colleague
- Do a social media post
- Share a social media post
- Write a reflection



4

Aspire to be an ally.
You do not need to be
Indigenous to talk/advocate
for Indigenous Cultural
Safety.



- Practice disciplined listening
- Speak up, but not over!
- Listen with your heart
- Be patient, present, and participate in Indigenous things

5

Commit to lifelong
learning and unlearning.



- Join our LPC Learning Community
- Buy a book
- Listen to podcasts
- Commit to one next thing from this course!





Indigenous Cultural Safety

What?

What did you expect?
What did you learn?

So What?

Why does this matter?
How does this relate to your work?

Now What?

Will you do something differently?
Do you see any changes that need to happen?



From Conversation to Commitment

Write down one action you are
committed to following today!



“

“Safety is not the absence of threat... it is the presence of connection”

—

DR GABOR MATE





CONTACT

lenpierreconsulting.com

len@lenpierreconsulting.com

hay cxw qə

Thank You for Joining Us at Len Pierre Consulting!

We value your feedback and invite you to take 1-2 minutes to share your thoughts on today's session.

- **Feedback helps us grow:** Your insights will be used to enhance future course offerings.
- **Your evaluation is anonymous**
- **Session Details:**
 - Course: [Introduction to Indigenous Cultural Safety](#)
 - Instructor: [Len Pierre](#)