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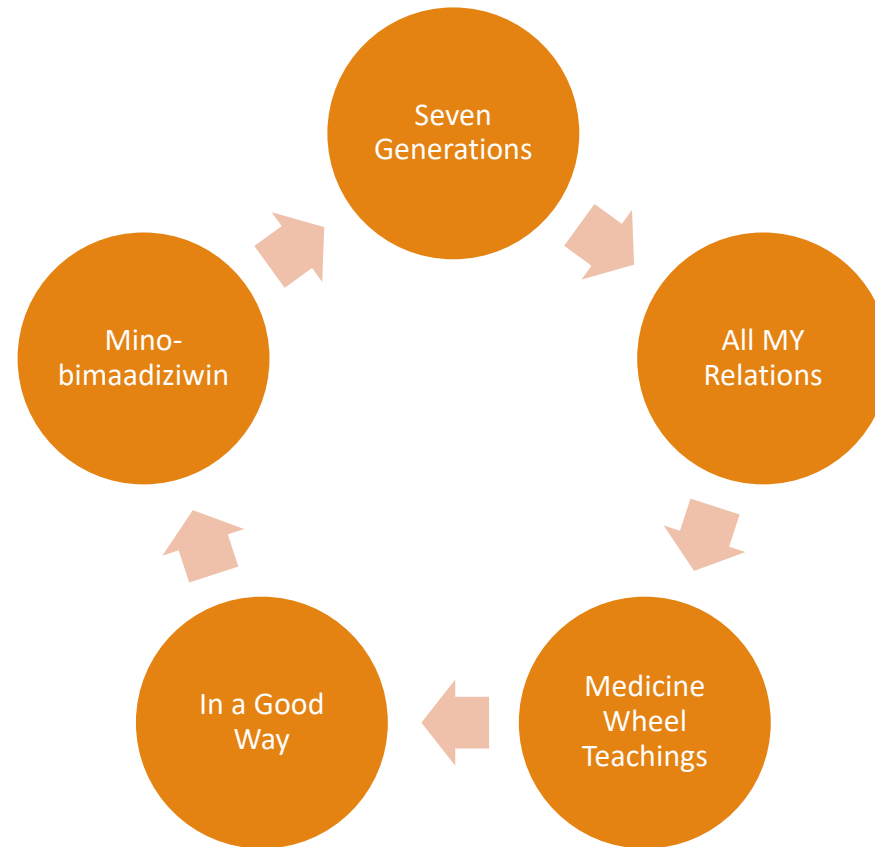
Decolonizing Post-secondary Institutions

Indigenous Perspectives

Indigenous people as stewards of land.

- **All my Relations** – inextricable interconnectedness
- **Seven Generations** – perception of time and relationships
- **Medicine Wheel Teachings** – balance, equilibrium (flux, moving, shifting dynamic state; negotiation, respect, reciprocity)
- Leroy Little Bear: Patterns (narrow margin of existence), relationship between order and chaos (constant flux), all support and sustain the health of the entire eco-system. Importance of renewal ceremonies (vision quests, sun and rain dances).

Indigenous Perspectives



Indigenous Perspectives



https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=32&v=EE6BAcSghZo

Water: The Sacred Relationship



https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=15&v=5NxByZ-8a4
<https://www.sacredrelationship.ca/videos/>

Basis for Change

Treaty Agreements

Canadian Constitution 1982, *Section 35*

(1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.

(2) In this Act, “aboriginal peoples of Canada” includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

(3) For greater certainty, in subsection (1) “treaty rights” includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the aboriginal and treaty rights referred to in subsection (1) are guaranteed equally to male and female persons.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

“The five-volume, 4,000-page report covered a vast range of issues; its 440 recommendations called for sweeping changes to the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and governments in Canada”.

There were “178 days of public hearings, visited 96 communities, consulted dozens of experts, commissioned scores of research studies, reviewed numerous past inquiries and reports. Our central conclusion can be summarized simply: *The main policy direction, pursued for more than 150 years, first by colonial then by Canadian governments, has been wrong*”.

Looking Forward Looking Back

“After some 500 years of a relationship that has swung from partnership to domination, from mutual respect and co-operation to paternalism and attempted assimilation, Canada must now work out fair and lasting terms of coexistence with Aboriginal people”.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

Proposed 4 principles as the basis of a renewed relationship:

1. Recognition
2. Respect
3. Sharing
4. Responsibility

Metaphor: The silver on the Treaty medallions – the covenant chain

United
Nations of
the Rights of
Indigenous
Peoples, 2007

Recognizing that respect for Indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment.

United Nations of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007

Article 25

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

United Nations of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007

Article 29

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.
3. States shall also take effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of indigenous peoples, as developed and implemented by the peoples affected by such materials, are duly implemented.

United Nations of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007

Article 32

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

3. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

United Nations of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007

Resolution:

Recognizing that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment

Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action

92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.

Truth & Reconciliation: Education

57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to

Provide education to public servants on:

- a. the history of Aboriginal peoples,
 - including the history and legacy of residential schools,
- b. the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
- c. Treaties and Aboriginal rights,
- d. Indigenous law, and
- e. Aboriginal–Crown relations.

This will require skills-based training in:

- intercultural competency,
- conflict resolution,
- human rights, and
- anti-racism.

United Nations Sustainability Development Goals, 2030

United Nations Sustainability Development Goals



7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW
WATER



15 LIFE
ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND
STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Sustainability & Reconciliation

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) (an organisation that represents 634 First Nations communities in Canada) notes that in 2008 the PSSSP 'supported an estimated 22,303 students at a total cost of \$300 million ... \$724 million was needed to support the number of First Nations learners qualified to attend post-secondary' (AFN 2012 , p. 13).

The First Nations Education Council (2009)argues: '[Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's] overall PSSSP funding has been historically inadequate, resulting in a backlog of **10,589 First Nations students who could potentially enroll in post-secondary programs** today, but have been denied PSSSP funding due to INAC's imposed 2% cap' (p. 41).

AFN highlights that '**approximately seven in ten First Nations youth aspire to complete a post-secondary degree**' (p. 13).

Sustainability & Reconciliation

2. Poverty

- ❖ United Nations Report on the Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2012) noted the incidence of poverty, malnutrition or lack of education and discrimination against Indigenous children and children with disabilities.
- ❖ Macdonald and Wilson (2013) argue that Indigenous children trail the rest of Canada's children on measures of wellbeing: family income, educational attainment, poor water quality, infant mortality, health, suicide, crowding and homelessness.
- ❖ The most poverty-stricken group of children are status First Nations children, of whom 50% live below the poverty line (Macdonald & Wilson, 2013, p. 12).

Sustainability & Reconciliation

Revisiting Family Security in Insecure Times : 2011 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada also disclosed:

- a) There **were three times the number of First Nations children in care in 2010** (27,500) than at the height of the residential schools during the 1940s, yet First Nations Child Welfare agencies receive 22 % less per capita funding than provincial agencies. The Auditor General of Canada reported in 2008 that the funding formula [for First Nations communities] has not been reviewed since 1988 nor adjusted for inflation since 1995.
- b) Youth **suicide** is more prevalent in First Nations communities than among all youth in Canada. While the suicide rates vary widely among First Nations communities, the suicide rate in these communities is between three and seven times greater than in Canada overall. (Campaign 2000, 2010b , p. 9)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Odulaja and Halseth, 2018: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health)

The availability of **safe drinking water** is a critical issue affecting the health of many Indigenous communities. Between 2004 and 2014, **400 of 618** First Nations communities were under Drinking Water Advisories (DWA), which required that they boil their water before drinking it (Levasseur & Marcoux, 2015). At the end of 2016, an estimated one in four First Nations communities were under a DWA (Lui, 2017a). Some communities have been under a DWA for a very long time; for example, the Neskantanga FN in Ontario has had unsafe drinking water for over 20 years (Levasseur & Marcoux, 2015). SDG 6, and its associated targets, is therefore an important goal for Indigenous peoples in Canada over the next 15 years. (p. 33)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Odulaja and Halseth, 2018: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health)

Indigenous peoples are considered to be among the most food insecure populations in Canada (Chen & Che, 2001; Tarasuk, et al., 2016). In 2014, **12%** of non-Indigenous households were considered to be food insecure, compared to **25.7%** of Indigenous households (Tarasuk et al., 2016). Of the Indigenous households, 6% were marginally food insecure, 11.8% were moderately food insecure, and 7.9% were severely food insecure. (p. 18) ***The Root?***

Why?

Colonization and widespread poverty, coupled with a departure from traditional ways of procuring food, loss of cultural knowledge, and family disintegration, are at the root of food insecurity and malnutrition among Indigenous peoples. (p. 18)

Partnerships

For partnerships to be successful in tackling actions on the SDGs, there must be a **collective acknowledgement of the past and awareness of where the country wants to go**; efforts must be made to **engage and build consensus with Indigenous peoples**; and **community-driven and nation-based programs that involve working with Indigenous peoples** rather than for them must be emphasized (Johnson, Ulrich, Cross & Greenwood, 2016). Furthermore, increasing Indigenous peoples' **involvement in decision-making by increasing their representation in leadership**, along with a renewed commitment to improving health and social services for communities. (p. 35)

Nīkānītān manācihitowinak Ni manachīhitoonaan

Nākatēyihtamowin | Nakaatayihtaamoowin

The principle of sustainability ensures that we take care of the relationships with which we've been entrusted—with the land, with the air and water, with our students, colleagues and neighbours—guided by mindfulness, respect and reverence. In Cree and Michif, the idea is much bigger, extending to the attention we pay to protecting and honouring the wellness of all humanity and creation, the integrity of our cultural identities and the stories embedded within language—the baskets of stories—our students, staff and partners bring to our community. For the University of Saskatchewan, Nākatēyihtamowin | Nakaatayihtaamoowin is a cultural and ecological touchstone.

Partnerships

Examples of successful partnerships between Indigenous peoples and governments include the “Haida Watchmen” and “West Coast Trail Guardians;” two initiatives that ensured responsible use of resources (one a fishery, the other a national park) while providing employment for the surrounding Indigenous communities (Lowan- Trudeau, 2016) (p. 37)

Being strengthened by Indigenous Perspectives

“...the answer is contained within our teachings of “One Bowl and One Spoon,” which holds that the gifts of the earth are all in one bowl, all to be shared from a single spoon. This is the vision of the economy of the commons, wherein resources fundamental to our well-being, like water and land and forests, are commonly held rather than commodified. Properly managed, the commons approach maintains abundance, not scarcity. These contemporary economic alternatives strongly echo the indigenous worldview in which the earth exists not as private property, but as a commons, to be tended with respect and reciprocity for the benefit of all. (p. 376-377)

Kimmerer, Robin. *Braiding Sweetgrass : Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, Milkweed Editions, 2014