Cree Ways of Helping:
An Indigenist Research Project

by

Michael Anthony Hart

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Social Work

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
*****
COPYRIGHT PERMISSION

Cree Ways of Helping:
An Indigenist Research Project

BY

Michael Anthony Hart

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of

Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Michael Anthony Hart © 2007

Abstract

Cree Ways of Helping: An Indigenist Research Project

Michael Anthony Hart

Despite continuing to face colonial oppression, Indigenous peoples have maintained and

continue to use our own ways of helping. These ways are based on Indigenous

worldviews. The generalized characteristics of these worldviews and ways of helping are

apparently different from the worldviews that dominate many areas of the world, namely

the generalized Amer-European worldviews. Social work reflects this domination in that

the ways of helping most often provided in the profession are those stemming from

Amer-European society. I have attempted to add to the body of work countering this

situation through this thesis.

I first ground the thesis by providing an overview of Indigenous Worldviews,

which includes discussions on Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous ways of helping, Cree

Worldviews, and Cree ways of helping. To develop an understanding of the domination

that Indigenous peoples face, I then provide an overview of colonization that includes

discussions on how Indigenous Worldviews and ways of helping are blinded and

marginalized. The theoretical means to overcoming this domination follows the

discussion on colonialism. The means on which I concentrate are decolonization, anti-

colonialism, and Indigenism.

Once I grounded the thesis in these overviews of worldviews, colonialism, and

means of addressing colonialism, I outline the approach to my research. As I found approaches stemming from the paradigms of postpositivism, critical theory, and interpretivism to be unsuitable for this research, I outlined a paradigm that reflects the stance of radical indigenism (Garroutte, 2003). This Indigenous paradigm argues for reasserting and rebuilding traditional knowledge from its fundamental principles (Garroutte, 2003) and is based on the framework presented by Wilson (2001). Reflecting this framework, I outline the basic concepts in generalized Indigenous ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology.

From this point I present my research design. This Indigenous design is based upon my relationship and directed conversations with ten people I know, six who are Elders and four who are Cree social workers who utilize Cree ways of helping in their practice. The people interviewed are from reserves stemming from the territory now referred to as Western Canada, specifically Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta since the Cree people from these areas are more interconnected with one another than with the Crees from the rest of the Cree territory.

Thirteen themes emerged from our conversations. The titles I gave these themes are as follows: Negativity, Hurting Others, Colonial Oppression and Healer Stress, Use of Amer-European Ways of Helping, An Ongoing Process to Learning and Helping, Listening and Presence, Ceremonies, Identity, Language, Role Modelling, Spirituality, Connection to Land and Place Use of Stories, Values and Teachings, and Wîcihitowin. I follow the presentation of the results with an overview of my thoughts on the themes. This overview ties the themes together in a tapestry on Cree ways of helping. I then relate

the themes to the literature review on worldviews, colonialism, and decolonization, anti-colonialism, and indigenism. The thesis ends with my reflection on Cree ways of helping and my messages on Indigenous social work research, social work education, and social work practice, as well as my messages to Indigenous peoples and Indigenous helpers.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my two sons, Keesyk and Nostyn, who joined me in life during

my doctoral studies. I can only believe and hope that this work will benefit each of you

and our family.

kisákihitinowow Kákiké.

I also dedicate this thesis to my late mother, Vivian Ella Thickfoot who passed away

during the writing of this thesis. She always encourage me to get an education through her

support and words: "Go to school. It is your way out of this."

kisákihitin Kákiké.

Acknowledgements

Mámawi-Ohtáwimáw, okiséwátisiw Kihci-Manitow, ninanáskomon pimátisiwin óma.

While I am responsible for this thesis, I could not have completed this work without the support of many people, some of whom I will have undoubtably exclude due to my poor memory. First and foremost is my family. My late mother, Vivian Thickfoot, who passed during the writing of this thesis, provided me with the drive and commitment to be educated. My late brothers, James and Gerald Thickfoot, and late grandparents, who taught me about my commitment to my family, both past and present, influenced my desire to achieve for my family's sake. My sister, Fjola Hart-Wasekeesikaw, who loved, encouraged and supported me during this endeavour in ways beyond what anyone could imagine, has always been my role model. My niece, Kimberly Hart, who was the first person who taught me that I have a responsibility to model for others, accepted me, including my absence and grumpiness, with support and love while I worked away at this project. My brother, Ronnald Janes, his wife, Fariel, and their children, Tahyr, Danica, and Jessica, have helped me maintain my sense of grounding in the reality of this world, usually with laughter. Two dear people who have blessed me by receiving me as their son, Noah and Dorothy, helped me establish my identity as a Cree man, and have loved and supported me unconditionally throughout this journey. My other family members of choice, including Edna, Marlene, Amos, Bill, Ed ("I wanna go scool, I wanna go scool"), Mervin, Leslie, Lionel, Lorne, and Stuart and their families, have always accepted and supported me, regardless of my goals and time away. My extended family and

provided words of encouragement; and Claudette Cormier who transcribed the recorded material and Nancy Clyde who edited my thesis.

Most importantly for me is my sons, Nostyn and Keesyk. You joined me in this life after I had embarked on this journey. While my commitment to each of you is second to none, I can only hope that my work on this project did not take me away from you to any significant degree and that it contributes a portion of the meaning that each of you brings to me.

Tápwé kinanáskomitinowow.

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Charts

CREE WAYS OF HELPING

Chapter One: Mácítatán–Let Us Begin Our Journey

Who am I?

In following protocol of many Indigenous nations, I begin this thesis with an introduction

of myself, particularly those parts of my life which seems most pertinent to the material

addressed. I am Michael Anthony Hart, a citizen of Fisher River Cree Nation who is

presently residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. My late mother is Vivian Thickfoot. I never

personally knew my father. I had two older brothers who have passed on James and

Gerald Thickfoot, one older sister, Fjola Wasekeesikaw, two sons, Keesyk McIntyre and

Nostyn Hart, and one niece, Kimberly Hart. My aunts, uncles, and cousins primarily

reside in various reserves and cities throughout Manitoba and Ontario. My late

Grandparents primarily resided in Dallas, Manitoba, and Fisher River Cree Nation for

most of their lives.

When I was a child, my late mother worked for an Indigenous addictions centre in

the city of Winnipeg. One of the benefits stemming from her work for me was the

connection to Elders from many places that she established. Of particular importance

were the influences of several Cree Elders from Alberta. I remember many times seeing

and hearing these Elders at various places and functions, including our home. While I had

difficulty understanding what these Elders and my mother discussed at times, for they

often spoke our Cree language and I was not, and am not, a fluent speaker, I still managed

to learn much from them. I watched these Elders host several ceremonies for the benefit

of others, including me. I remember one particular sharing circle where, as a boy of about 11 or 12, I was feeling overwhelmed with the grief carried by the people in that circle. I shared how I felt, but with all my will, I held back my tears. When one of the Elders spoke he addressed my words, feelings, and actions. His words still ring in my heart: "It is all right to cry in this circle for the people. If you had cried, I would have cried with you." These Elders had a tremendous impact on me. It was their teachings that helped me move away from the hurtful lifestyle I adopted in my later teens and early twenties.

It was during those troublesome years that I received some of the most memorable support from my sister. She supported me through one of the most difficult times in my life by taking me to my first sweatlodge ceremony. I knew of sweats, but I always held back from participating in any. It was an Anishinaabe sweatlodge ceremony that was hot and very crowded. Regardless of these conditions, to this day I am grateful for what the Anishinaabe people offered me, namely a sense of belonging. While I did not immediately change my lifestyle after that sweat, I had deeper means to nurture the seeds planted by my late mother and the Cree Elders from Alberta.

I had just started University at that time. While my experience at University laid the foundation for my career, it was a challenging time. It was difficult for me to learn about helping people, particularly our people, when I was consistently taught to neglect whom I was as a Cree man. It was even more difficult when I continued to face the racial stereotypes and put downs that I had previously experienced in grade school. If it was not for my late mother's words to "never forget who you are," I believe I would have

Succumbed to the weight of the oppression our people face and would have never turned

away from the self-destruction I was putting myself through.

One of the high times within my early years in University was a course titled

something like, "Social Policy and Native Cultures". While I was still not hearing the

teachings of our Elders, it did help me to see how the oppression that I was facing was

rooted in the larger experience of our peoples. Up to that point, I gave all effort to learn

the many theories stemming from Amer-European society, despite my invisible presence

in the curriculum. After all, I needed to show that I knew that material if I wanted to

graduate and help our people. However, after that course I felt I had the right to question

what I was being taught. At times I followed through with the questioning, but as I was

one of very few Indigenous people in the program at the time, I was still very cautious

and tenuous in my efforts.

When I graduated with a bachelor of social work degree, I went to work at a Child

Family Services agency in the central part of Winnipeg. Indigenous people were a large

population in the area and an even larger clientele population for the agency. Yet, I

watched many of my peers work in ways that continued to negate the worldviews and

ways of Indigenous people. I knew that there should be different ways of working with

our people at the agency, but again I found myself as one of the few Indigenous people in

a working population dominated by Amer-European people. To cope, I turned more and

more to our Elders and traditional teachers and healers for support. By turning to these

people, I was constantly reminded that we have our own understandings of how to work

with our people.

I later returned to University for my Masters degree. This again was a troubled time for me. My late brother, Gerald Thickfoot, passed away and nine months later, my late mother suffered from a stroke and an aneurysm that left her paralyzed on her right side and unable to speak more than a couple of words at a time. When that happened, one my relatives approached me and, from his Pentecostal perspective, proceeded to tell me that the reason my immediate family was experiencing these traumatic events was because of our involvement with Cree ways. All I could think of at the time was the words and examples the Cree Elders shared with me. So, in following their example, I quietly listened to what my older relative had to say, remembered the oppression my family had faced for generations, considered how this oppression has been internalized by us, and proceeded to follow my heart without confronting him directly.

Those experiences amongst others, helped me to commit to learning about Indigenous ways of helping. As much as the Masters program allowed, I focussed my learning on Indigenous ways of helping. To do this, I was constantly learning about Amer-European ways of social work practice in the class lectures and discussions, and then turned around and completed as many papers as possible on Indigenous peoples and the challenges we face. I continued this dual stream in the writing of my thesis so as to appease the need for demonstrating to others that I knew something about social work. I do acknowledge that I was at least provided with space to develop my understanding of Indigenous ways of helping.

During my six years in the Masters program, I developed more relationships with Cree Elders, healers, and teachers from across west-central Ininiwi-Ministik and continued my learning from them. I had started working as a oskápéwis, or helper, for some of them to gain a deeper understanding. Indeed my learning of Cree ways took more time and effort than what I had committed to my previous three University degrees.

When I was ready to begin a doctoral program, I looked to other universities. Despite being accepted in two other programs, I decided I could not leave my late mother. When the University of Manitoba began its doctoral program in social work, the intent was to offer a program that concentrated on Indigenous people and on women. Erroneously thinking that I would finally be able to learn about Indigenous ways of helping as part of the curriculum, I applied and entered the program. Without getting into details, I continued my dual concentration of learning about Amer-European ways of social work practice in the classroom, and completing papers and presentations on Indigenous peoples and the issues we faced.

Once again, I faced troubling times during my studies. While these times included the much desired and joyful arrival of my two sons, it also included my becoming a single parent and the passing of my late mother. And once again, it was the words and actions offered by the Cree Elders, healers, and teachers that helped me continue to this point. I had tried turning to Amer-European therapists for support, but it was our own people who provided the support I needed. It was also the Cree ways of helping that I had been learning and offering to others that provided me with some of the impetus to keep going

5

in my studies.

It is from these experiences and challenges that I decided what I wanted to do for my thesis. As I had mentioned, who I am has influenced this thesis in that it has shaped the way I looked at the world, my interests, how I sought out new understandings, and how I proceed to write about them. As will be explained in the third chapter on my research approach, I did not attempt to separate myself from the research process in order to achieve 'objectivity'. Instead, I present who I am, at least to a limited degree, so you can decide for yourself how I have influenced the thesis and whether this influence is of concern to the degree that you do not consider this research worthy of attention, consideration, and adaptation.

The Context

Indigenous peoples have faced and continue to face the impact of colonialism. Social work has contributed to the colonial impact through such actions as the scooping of thousands of First Nations children from their homes and communities by social workers holding worldviews, values, actions, and expectations based within their Amer-European perspectives and cultures (Johnston, 1983), and by the stance where "the most harmful assumptions...that western thought ought to be the standard [social work] education platform, is automatically relevant and valid, and is universally applicable" (Sinclair, 2004, p. 51). Thirteen years ago, the Canadian Association of Social Workers (1994) presented to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples their recognition that "social

work practice within Aboriginal cultures demands fundamental change" which is "not simply a reform of social work practice including minor adaptations to ensure that it is culturally sensitive" (p. 158). Others have presented the perspective that social work practices continue to marginalize or ignore Indigenous perspectives and ways of helping (Baskin, 2003; Hart, 2002, 2003; Mawhiney, 1995; Sinclair, 2004). While there are significant efforts by people in the profession who challenge the colonial oppression and work to positively develop social work perspectives and practices with Indigenous peoples, there is clearly much more work to be done.

The need for more work is evident to me on many fronts, but one recent event demonstrates the need. In a meeting of four instructors, of which I was one, we were reviewing the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work standards for accreditation as they related to the course we were commonly teaching. When we got to the point which addressed Indigenous peoples and the oppression we face, one of the instructors spoke up and readily stated that she did not address this point in the course section she was teaching. Another instructor also identified that she did not address this point in the section she was teaching. I remained silent and listened along with the fourth instructor. The first instructor spoke again. She suggested that there was too much material to cover in the course already and since I am probably already covering the material needed there was no need for her to address Indigenous peoples in the course section she was teaching. She went on to say that the material we were covering in the course is general anyway, and as such it addressed Indigenous people. She also stated

pointedly that if she had to include this content she was going to "fight it."

I believe this need for more work in addressing the colonial oppression and developing social work perspectives and practices with Indigenous peoples is heightened when we consider that there are a significant number of Indigenous people who continue to live their lives based on their cultural understandings and traditions. Evidence of such a reliance has been presented by various authors, such as Nadia Ferrara (1999) who recognized that Cree people continue to hold particular emotional expressions that differ from white Canadian society, Winona Wheeler (nee Stevenson, 2000) who presented Nehiẏaw protocols around oral sharing that are still followed, and Joseph Couture (1996) who outlined the continuing roles and worldviews of Indigenous Elders. The need for more work is also heightened when the increasing number of people who are wanting to re-establish their Indigenous perspectives, ways, and actions in their lives are considered (Lane, Bopp, Bopp, & Norris, 2002).

While I believe that parts of this work of challenging the colonial oppression need to be completed by all people in the profession, I also believe other aspects of the work are more applicable to specific peoples. Ward Churchill (2003d), Geore Dei, (2000), and George Manuel and Michael Posluns (1974) suggested that in order to challenge colonialism, Indigenous peoples need to analyze the impacts from our own perceptions and interpretations. Further, our actions need to be based on Indigenous worldviews, cultures, and traditions. Referred to as an anti-colonial stance, these actions require a reliance on Indigenous ways of knowing and being. This stance runs parallel to Nandy's

(2004) identification of the perspective of several critical thinkers, from Karamchand Gandhi to Amilcar Cabral, who see culture "simultaneously as a form of political resistance and the 'language' in which resistance is articulated" (p. 308).

There are Indigenous practices that are based on generalized Indigenous ways of knowing and being that are being incorporated into the field of social work. For example, I have developed an approach to helping Indigenous people that is based primarily on the worldviews of Indigenous peoples of the central part of Turtle Island, also known as North America (Hart, 1999, 2002, 2006). However, considering the diversity of Indigenous peoples and practices, a sole reliance on generalized "Indigenous" perspectives and common practices of Indigenous peoples may not be what particular people need. For example, what a Dakota person who is steeped in her culture needs in a helping situation may not be the same as a Muskéko Ininiw. In this light, this study addressed my intent to come to know Cree ways of helping and how these ways can be a base for social work.

Who Did I Address?: Muskéko Ininiwak, Néhithawak, ékwa Néhiyawak
To develop an understanding of Cree ways of helping, I turned to Cree people who hold a steep understanding of Cree ways of helping. Cree people primarily reside throughout the northern part of Ininiwi-Ministik (Cardinal & Hilderbrandt, 2000), or Turtle Island. Ininiwi-Ministik is the land of the Indigenous peoples. It is used here in reference to the story of our oldest brother, Wísahkécáhk, who recreated the land from the mud brought

forth by wacask, muskrat. Turtle Island comes from an Indigenous story that describes the

lands, which is referred to as North America, as floating on the back of a turtle. This story

has been adopted by many nations, hence Turtle Island is often used to emphasize the

Indigenous peoples ties to our lands and stories of our beginnings. Both of these terms,

Ininiwi-Ministik and Turtle Island are used here to emphasize the political nature of

naming and location.

The term "Cree" is an adopted term that is commonly said to have derived from

the historical French term Kristinon. In turn, Kristinon is said to be a derivative of the

Anishinaabe term kiristinō that referred to a division of Cree speaking people living south

of James Bay in the mid-seventeenth century (Brightman, 2002). While many Cree

people are comfortable with the term, since it seems to have no direct translation to any

term other than the Cree people, we do not refer to ourselves as "Cree" when speaking

our language. How we refer to ourselves varies, depending upon the dialect being spoken.

In the central-west part of Turtle Island, in which this study is based, there are three

primary references: Muskéko Ininiwak who reside in the lands now referred to as

Manitoba and Saskatchewan; Néhithawak, some of whom also refer to themselves as

Asiníkáwithiniwak, who reside in the lands now referred to as Manitoba and

Saskatchewan, and Néhiẏawak who reside in territories now referred to Alberta and

Saskatchewan. These references respectively reflect the "n," "th," and "y" dialects of the

Cree language.

While our peoples' territories span from close to the east coast of Turtle Island to

the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in the west, and from the northern edges of the

boreal forest to as far south as the interior of Montana, I have focussed on Cree people

from the places now called Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. I choose this focus

because of the perceived inter-connections Cree people have from these areas that are

stronger than connections with Cree people from other areas.

In addition, I have addressed Indigenous people from other nations in the

literature review and the fourth chapter on the "teachings" that emerged from the

interviews. I included them in these chapters to provide a wider view and comparison to

enhance my learning of Cree ways of helping. There are other terms that I could have

used to refer to the people from the other nations, including First Nations, Aboriginal

people, Native people, Indians, Native Americans, and American Indians. Of all these

terms, I used Indigenous and First Nations and attempted not to use the others. As

explained by Ronald Niezen (2003), the term Indigenous,

> refers to a primordial identity, to people with primary attachments to land and
> culture, "traditional" people with lasting connections to ways of life that have
> survived "from time immemorial."...It is not only a legal category and an
> analytical concept but also an expression of identity, a badge worn with pride,
> revealing something significant and personal about its wearer's collective
> attachment. (p. 3)

Michael Yellow Bird (1999), a citizen of the Arikara, and Hidatsa First Nations, reflected

my feelings when he stated that using these terms,

> is an important part of my intellectual decolonization and liberation from
> linguistic imperialism. I prefer using Indigenous Peoples because it is an
> internationally accepted descriptor for peoples who are the descendants of the
> original inhabitants of the lands, and have suffered and survived a history of
> colonialism (for example, see the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

Peoples, www.halcyon.com/FWDP/drft9329.html). I like the term because it is accurate and reflects who we really are. For instance, Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1981, defines indigenous "as having originated in...or living naturally in a particular region or environment."...I also prefer First Nations because it suggests that such persons are the original peoples of the land and hold aboriginal title to the lands they occupy. The term also has a strong spiritual foundation because it comes from tribal elders in British Columbia who maintain the traditions of First Nations include a belief in a Creator who placed their Nations on the land to care for and control them. (p. 1).

For a further explanation of the term Indigenous, I turned to Cornel Pewewardy (2005) of the Comache and Kiowa Nations. He stated:

This is my preferred term for describing ourselves and our nations. Previous research focusing [*sic*] on aboriginal people in the United States has used the terms *American Indian*, and *Native American* as the primary nomenclature for this population. This chapter subverts this tradition by instead using the terms "Indigenous Peoples" or "Indigenous." These terms are capitalized to signify and recognize the cultural heterogeneity and political sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples in the Western hemisphere. (p. 156)

According to the background paper prepared by the United Nations Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for the New York Workshop on Data Collection and Dissagregation for Indigenous Peoples in January, 2004 (United Nations, 2004), there is no formal universal definitions of the term Indigenous. I have chosen to utilize the definition of Indigenous forwarded by Jeff Corntassel of the Tsalagi Nation (2003). The definition consists of four interlocking concepts, which are presented here:

1.   People who believe they are ancestrally related and identify themselves, based on oral and/or written histories, as descendants of the original inhabitants of their ancestral homelands;

2.   People who may, but not necessarily, have their own informal and/or formal political, economic and social institutions, which tend to be community-based and reflect their distinct ceremonial cycles, kinship networks, and continuously evolving cultural traditions;

3.   People who speak (or once spoke) an indigenous [*sic*] language, often different from the dominant society's language–even where the indigenous [*sic*] language is not 'spoken', distinct dialects and uniquely indigenous [*sic*] expressions may persist as a form of indigenous [*sic*] identity;

4.   Peoples who distinguish themselves from the dominant society and/or other cultural groups while maintaining a close relationship with their ancestral homelands/sacred sites, which may be threatened by ongoing military, economic or political encroachment or may be places where indigenous [*sic*] peoples have been previously expelled, which seeking to enhance their cultural, political and economic autonomy. (pp. 91-92)

On the other hand, I purposely avoided the term 'aboriginal' unless it is included in a quote. I have adopted the reasoning provided by Taiaiake Alfred of Kaniienkehaka Nation and Jeff Corntassel of Tsalagi Nation (2005) for my actions. They stated that the term aboriginal is purely a state construction that serves to gradually subsume Indigenous existence into its own constitutional system and political body. They further explained that:

> the acceptance of being 'aboriginal' (or its equivalent terms in other countries, such as 'ethnic groups') is a powerful assault on Indigenous identities. It must be understood that the aboriginalist assault takes place in a politico-economic context of historical and ongoing dispossession and of contemporary dispossession and poverty; this is a context in which Indigenous peoples are forced by the compelling needs of physical survival to cooperate individually and cooperatively with the state authorities to ensure their physical survival. Consequently, there are many 'aboriginals' (in Canada) or Native Americans (in the United States) who identify themselves solely by their political-legal relationship to the state rather than by any cultural or social ties to their Indigenous community or culture or homeland. This continual colonial process pulls Indigenous people from cultural practices and community aspects of 'being Indigenous' towards a legal-political construction as 'aboriginal' or 'Native American,' both of which are representative of what we refer to as being 'incidentally Indigenous'. (p. 599)

13

What Did I Address?

Purpose and Goal

This thesis is about my research with Cree Elders and social workers and my thoughts about what they have shared. The purpose of this study was to explore aspects of Cree ways of helping as lived by Kété-ayak [Elders] and social workers utilizing Cree helping practices, and to consider how these aspects may relate to social work practice. Hence, this study is descriptive and interpretative coming from an Indigenous research paradigm. Briefly, this means it not only addressed the information shared by the participants, but included interpretations from my own subjective reflections on what was shared and experienced. My goal to was to set the groundwork for an alternate means of social work practice that is based on Cree worldviews and practices. By achieving this first goal I hoped that I would be contributing to the work that is countering the colonial project that continues in Canada, including those aspects evident in the social work profession.

Research Question

Remembering that this is an exploratory study, the guiding research question was the following: What are Cree helping practices as understood by Cree Kété-ayak and social workers utilizing Cree ways of helping?

Methods

To answer this question, I conducted interviews with ten Cree Elders and social workers

who were helping other people based upon what appeared to be Cree ways of helping. The interviews were part of a design based on an Indigenous research paradigm, meaning that the ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology stemming from a radical indigenist perspective (Garroutte, 2003). The reason I used this design was to embed the research in the philosophies of Indigenous peoples so that the spiritual and sacred elements of our intellectual traditions remained central. By keeping these elements central, our goal of maintaining our knowledge traditions is upheld.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into five chapters. In the first chapter is an overview of the study. The second chapter presents the literature addressed for preparation of the research. There are three main topics in the literature review. The first section of the second chapter addresses worldviews. This section outlines the literature directly and indirectly related to the thesis topic, namely Cree ways of helping, and sets the initial foundation for understanding it. The second section in the literature review addresses colonization. This section provides the context for the study and a rationale for the need to develop an alternate way to address the research question. The third section of the literature addresses decolonization, anti-colonialism, and indigenism. It outlines the foundation for how the research was conducted.

The third chapter presents a brief discussion on research paradigms before outlining the particular Indigenous research paradigm that I have developed from various

literary sources and used as the basis for the research design. This chapter also outlines

the research design and how it was implemented for this study. The fourth chapter

presents the themes, or teachings, stemming from the interviews that were conducted.

Chapter five presents my thoughts on the study. In this chapter I address how I have tied

the themes together, and how I related the information from the interviews to the three

sections of the literature review. I also provide my reflections on the study overall as well

as my messages that stem from the study.

Points on My Writing Format

Within Cree culture, we often pay particular respect to peoples who have passed on from

this life by referring to them in particular ways (Mind, 1997, p. xxv). This cultural trait is

most evident in the language. Although I am primarily writing in English, I have

attempted to follow this demonstration of respect by including the term, "late" prior to the

names of individuals who are known by me to have passed on from this life.

On another point, I have gone against the formatting style primarily used for this

thesis, namely the American Psychological Association, by including the first names of

the authors when I first reference them. My intent for this action is to personalize the

individuals more that just providing their last names. Also, at times it helps us to see such

things as the gender of the author. By fulfilling my intent, I am emphasizing the

importance of personal relationships and the need to recognize the role of such matters as

gender.

On a third point, I have purposely chosen not to italicize words stemming from a language that is not English. This choice reflects my efforts to counter the 'othering' of languages which are not the dominant one in use.

On a final point, when I have referenced Indigenous peoples and I know the particular nation they are from, I have identified their nations. I have included this identification to support the recognition of the many Indigenous nations and the contribution their citizens are making. In a small way, the inclusion of such identifying markers may help us understand from which perspective the individuals are coming. It also serves to locate them. While I recognize that just because someone is from a particular nation does not dictate that they automatically come from an anti-colonial one, the support that it provides to Indigenous peoples and nations is worthy.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter sets the foundation for this study. It has three areas of focus that are

interconnected. I begin by addressing the concept of worldviews and presenting the

perspective that there are many worldviews which influence our thoughts and actions.

Within this discussion I address Indigenous worldviews and Indigenous knowledge

before focussing on Cree worldviews and Cree knowledge. The chapter then changes

focus as I present a general overview of colonization and how colonization has blinded

Indigenous worldviews and marginalized Indigenized knowledge. After this discussion I

address decolonization, anti-colonialism, and indigenism. I close the chapter with a brief

discussion on the connection of these stances and processes to my thesis topic.

Worldviews

The concept of worldviews is a translation of the German concept weltanschauung. I've

noticed that it has been defined in various ways by many people from various

perspectives. Robert Redfield's (1962) philosophical perspective presented one of the

fuller definitions of worldview: It is:

> that outlook upon the universe that is characteristic of a people. "World view"
> [*sic*] differs from culture, ethos, mode of thought, and national character. It is the
> picture the members of a society have of the properties and characters upon their
> stage of action. While "national character" refers to the way these people look to
> the outsider looking in on them, "World view" refers to the way the world looks
> to that people looking out. Of all that is connoted by "culture," "World view"
> attends especially to the way a man [*sic*] in a particular society sees himself [*sic*]
> in relation to all else. It is the properties of existence as distinguished from and
> related to the self. It is in short, a man's [*sic*] idea of the universe. It is that
> organization of ideas which answers to a man [*sic*] the questions: Where am I?

Among what do I move? What are my relations to these things?...Self is the axis of "World view." (p. 270)

Dawn Sutherland (2002), in her exploration of culture, language and the

perception of the nature of science, identified worldviews as knowledge systems. Derald

Sue and David Sue (2002), in their writings on cultural diverse psychology, defined

worldview "as how a person perceives his or her relationship to the world (nature,

institutions, other people, etc.)" (p. 267). In his writings about Native American

worldviews, Jerry Gill (2002) noted that while the concept of worldview is used in

anthropology under the guise of belief systems or conceptual frameworks, in philosophy

under the subject matter of metaphysics, and in religion under the notion of doctrinal

systems, it simply indicates the way a particular peoples understands the world in which

they finds themselves. From a psychiatric perspective that is heavily dependent upon

Freud, Armand Nicholi (2004) suggested "a worldview is a philosophy of life that

answers all of the most fundamental questions of human existence" (p. 4). Finally, Allen

Ivey, Michael D'Andrea, Mary Bradford Ivey, and Lynn Simek-Morgan (2002), who

were addressing multicultural counselling and psychotherapy, suggested that worldviews

are the ways "individuals construct meaning in the world" (p. 4).

It is evident to me that each of these definitions of worldviews– perceptions of

one's relationship to the world, knowledge systems, understandings of the world, idea of

the universe, philosophy of life, and ways of constructing meaning–are reflected in

Marvin Olsen, Dora Lodwick, and Riley Dunlap's (1992) detailed discussion about

worldviews. From their sociological perspective, they presented worldviews as mental

lenses that are entrenched ways of perceiving the world. Worldviews are cognitive, perceptual, and affective maps that people continuously use to make sense of the social landscape and to find their ways to whatever goals they seek. They are developed throughout a person's life time through socialization and social interaction. As such, they are encompassing and pervasive in adherence and influence. Yet, they are usually unconsciously and uncritically taken for granted as the way things are. While they rarely alter in any significant way, worldviews can change slowly over time. A worldview can hold discrepancies between the view and observed events, and inconsistency between beliefs and values within the worldview. Hence, worldviews often contain many incongruencies.

Olsen et al. (1992) postulated that in any society there is a dominant worldview that is held by most members of that society. A society normally establishes the culturally accepted definitions of social reality, and in turn, the dominant worldview is constantly being reinforced by the culture of that society. Alternative worldviews do exist, but they are not usually by held a majority of a society.

Olsen et al. (1992) also identified and explained the components of worldviews. They are composed of beliefs, belief systems and social values. They defined belief as "a specific idea about some aspect of life that its holders are convinced is true, regardless of any disconfirming evidence" (p. 14). A belief system is "a set of interrelated beliefs dealing with a broad social condition or type of activity" (p. 15). A social value is defined as that which is "concerning what is good and bad, or desirable and undesirable, in social

20

life" (p. 16). Olsen et al. explained that beliefs are the building blocks of worldviews and

beliefs systems are its central framework. A worldview contains countless beliefs and

belief systems that are interrelated, unrelated, and even contradictory to one another.

Social values are tightly linked to beliefs and belief systems in that beliefs are expressions

of how people think things are, while social values are expressions of how people think

things should be.

I noticed that these points are consistent with, but more elaborate than other

authors' descriptions and explanations. For example, Sue and Sue (2002) suggested that

worldviews are composed of a person's attitudes, values, opinions, and concepts. They

are thought to affect how we think, define events, make decisions, and behave, in that we

perceive and evaluate situations and derive appropriate actions based upon our

worldview. Another example is the explanation provided by Ivey et al. (2002). They

stated that worldviews include the various beliefs, values, and biases individuals develop

as a result of cultural conditioning. A final example is Leo Schelbert's (2003) discussion.

He explained that worldviews are like a skeleton of interrelated elements that are mainly

unseen and unperceived. "They are taken for granted as the roads to be traveled [*sic*] and

often escape the processes of questioning. Thus the realm of worldview structures is

neither sacred practice nor embrace doctrine of what is true and normative, but the frame,

the pattern, the paradigm that shapes understanding similar to language, explored as a

system of signs" (p. 62).

I also noticed that worldviews have been broken down in various ways. Bryant

Williams (2003) noted two particular dimensions of worldviews, specifically

individualism and collectivism. He suggested counselling processes are influenced by the

dimensions and their related attributes reflected by the person accessing services, and that

the counsellor should incorporate understanding of her or his own worldview as well as

that of the person being served. Sue and Sue (2002) suggested one of the more useful

ways worldviews have been reviewed is through the Kluckholm and Strodtbeck (1961,

cited in Sue & Sue, 2002) model which is pertinent for all people of all cultures. This

model presents an assumed set of core dimensions. Within each of these dimensions are

varying values orientations that are represented by various peoples and cultures. These

dimensions include (1) time focus, (2) modality of human activity, (3) social relations,

and (4) the relationship between people and nature. The time dimension has the value

orientations of past, present, and future. The human activity dimension has the value

orientations of (A) being, (B) being and in-becoming, and (C) doing. The social relation

dimension has the value orientations of (A) lineal, (B) collateral, and (C) individualistic.

The nature dimension has the value orientations of (A) subjugation to, (B) harmony with,

and (C) mastery over. By answering particular questions related to these dimensions and

values a particular picture of a person's worldview emerges.

Another model Sue and Sue (2002) presented, which they suggested as being

important in understanding peoples' psychological orientation, is based on the concepts

of locus of control and locus of responsibility. Each of these dimensions can be internal

or external and placed in a graphic representation with four quadrants. They speculated,

with some supporting discussion, that various ethnic and racial groups are not randomly distributed throughout the graph.

There are many ways such models of worldviews have been applied. For example, James Mahalik, Roger Worthington, and Sandra Crump (1999) used the Kluckholm and Strodtbeck model to investigate whether therapists of different racial/ethnic groups differed on worldview, thus reflecting group membership; and whether these therapists were similar to each other in regards to worldviews, thus reflecting membership in a therapist culture. They found that therapists would support similar alternatives in value orientation, irrespective of race or ethnicity. They stated the results, at face value, suggested the therapist culture reflected in the sample tended to endorse a White middle-class worldview more than the worldviews of people from minority cultures where the study was completed, which was the United States. Their discussion supports the position of multicultural counselling scholars who suggested counselling and psychotherapy is a reflection of Eurocentric values. In their discussion, Mahalik et al. raised the question of whether distinct counsellor values were a result of counsellor socialization to worldviews, or whether students with particular worldviews and values are drawn to counselling professions. They also raised alternative possibilities that counsellor training programs may be inadvertently recruiting students with a particular worldview and/or unwittingly socializing students to adopt dominant cultural values by training them with Eurocentric models.

Interestingly, in another application of worldviews in research, Denise Hatter and

Allen Ottens (1998) studied an Afrocentric worldview and its relationship to Black students' ability to cope with minority status stressors. They found that an Afrocentric worldview may serve to insulate students from such stressors. While the results are not generalizable beyond the sample of the study, the results lead one to speculate the importance of one's worldview to his or her scholastic success. In light of the study by Mahalik et al. (1999), one can speculate that there is a relationship between success of non-dominant located students and ability to maintain their worldview. One could also speculate on what academic institutions are doing to non-dominantly located students when they work primarily from a dominant worldview. These studies exemplify Sue and Sue's (2002) point that one's worldview is thought to be strongly related to her or his racial/cultural identity development, cultural upbringing, and life experiences. They also exemplify their point that the nature of the helping reality is strongly linked to worldviews.

It is apparent to me from this brief discussion of worldviews that Brian Bishop, David Higgins, Francis Casella, and Natalie Contos's (2002) comment, "understanding worldviews of both the targeted community and ourselves is imperative if we are going to do more good than harm" (p. 611), is fairly accurate. The accuracy stems from the stance that as there are many worldviews, good becomes relative to the worldview. As such, the good, including good social work, ideally comes from within the worldview in which we are to be working. Further, I find that understanding worldviews is necessary given Honore France's (1997) statement that our worldviews affect our belief systems, decision

making, assumptions, and modes of problem solving. Considering Clark's (1998) point that the Western worldview dominates the planet[1], and Durganand Sinha's (1998) statement that, "any analysis of social behaviour is ultimately shaped by the *weltanschauung* (worldview) and basic culture postulates about the nature of human and his/her place in the world and society" (p. 18), I suggest work with Indigenous peoples will often require us to act against the dominant worldview found in social work internationally, and particularly on Turtle Island. This point is reflected in Hilary Weaver's (1999) study of the views of sixty-two Native American social workers and social work students where she stated that social workers need to hold knowledge of Native American worldviews in order to work competently. It is this point that is the basis of this thesis.

At the same time, I recognize limitations to these explanations of worldviews. In particular, all are focussed on cognitive processes as the determining factor for worldviews, with the exception of Olsen et al. (1992) who acknowledge the emotions of people. Further, the emphasis of worldview is quite individualistic in that the focus is on the way individuals construct meaning and how individuals develop as a result of cultural conditioning. This individualistic emphasis runs counter to Indigenous cultures which tend to regulate such egocentricism. Such a conceptualization of worldview can limit the

---

[1] I recognize that there is no one "Western worldview". I do follow the stance that there is a worldview that stems from western Europe and North America that dominates world. I see this worldview as being strongly influenced by certain European historical philosophers, and reflecting ideas of "Enlightenment", positivistic empiricism, capitalism, and Christianity.

extent we can understand how particular peoples see the world, especially if they are experiential peoples who rely on their emotions and spiritual influences to define how they collectively experience the world.

With these limitations in mind, I still believe a review of worldviews has some relevance to this discussion. By reviewing how Indigenous peoples see the world, even if we are focussed more on individualistic and cognitive interpretations, a basis for some understanding and further work can be set.

Enisiwapahtamak Ińiniw-askiy

Before moving into a discussion of Indigenous worldviews I think it is pertinent to remember Sue and Sue's (2002) points when addressing worldviews. In particular, they stated that "it is very possible for individuals from different cultural groups to be more similar in worldviews that those from the same culture. While race and ethnicity may be correlated with one's outlook in life, the correspondence certainly is not one to one" (p. 287). Another point they raised is that individuals can adapt and use behaviours associated with another worldview (Sue & Sue, 2002) or express them in entirely personal ways (Fitznor, 1998). These points reflect Brad McKenzie and Vern Morrissette's [Anishinaabe] (2003) model outlining the identification of differences in the expression of Aboriginal identity (also cited in Morrissette, McKenzie, & Morrissette, 1993). With these points in mind, the following section addresses several discussions on enisiwapahtamak Muskéko Ińiniw-askiy, the worldviews of Indigenous peoples of

Ininiwi-Ministik.

While there is no one Indigenous worldview, there are many similarities and

commonalities among First Nations worldviews (Fitznor, 1998; Gill, 2002; Rice, 2005).

McKenzie and Morrissette (2003) explained that Aboriginal worldviews emerged as a

result of the people's close relationship with the environment. They outlined six

metaphysical beliefs Indigenous peoples have that shaped this relationship:

> All things exist according to the principle of survival; the act of survival pulses
> with the natural energy and cycles of the earth; this energy is part of some grand
> design; all things have a role to perform to ensure balance and harmony and the
> overall well-being of life; all things are an extension of the grand design, and, as
> such, contain the same essence as the source from which it flows (Gitchi-
> Munitou); and this essence is understood as 'spirit', which links all things to each
> other and to Creation. (p. 259)

Harold Cardinal and Walter Hilderbrandt (2000) reiterated similar explanations

that they were told by the Elders they interviewed. They stated that, "the First Nations

relied on the spiritual and psychological strength they received from the various life-

giving, life-sustaining forces reflected in the diverse elements of Creation. These

elements are represented by the Creator's other children–the spirit community that

surrounded then, such as those of the eagle, the buffalo, the wind, the thunder, and the

trees" (p. 12).

Sue and Sue (2003) utilized the Kluckholm and Strodtbeck model to describe

Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island [North America]. They identified that Indigenous

people live in harmony with nature; hold a present time orientation; have a collateral

relational orientation that emphasizes various concepts of extended family; are actively

orientated to "being" and "being in becoming" where attainment of inner fulfillment and serenity of one's place in the universe is focussed upon; and see the nature of people as generally good.

Gill (2002) noted that an Indigenous worldview of the cosmos involves a vertical layering of realms and a horizontal expansions related to the cardinal directions. At the centre of the vertical and horizontal dimensions stands the space of the community where "the people" live. He also suggested that Indigenous people hold an understanding of time that connects to kinship and clan structures where temporal evolutions of life within the family and community from birth to death are focussed upon through regulations of rites of passage and rituals by the family and community. Relatedly, ceremonies are very important to Indigenous people as a means of supporting the relationship between family and community members, but also for participating in the patterns and processes in the world around them.

Lee Francis (2000) also noted that for Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island everything is connected, often reflected in the frequently used phrase "all my relations" and in the frequently utilized symbol of the circle. Francis also explained that there are four interrelated aspects that are important to Indigenous people, specifically the mind, body, spirit, and heart. These parts may be focussed on as counterpoints to one another, such as the physical/spiritual, but they remain in relationship to one another, not opposed to one another. In this way, Indigenous people tend to see the world as a serious of "both/and," which includes the idea of either/or.

One of the more thorough overviews of Indigenous worldviews put forth was by Brian Rice (2005). He noted that many Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island hold the belief that there are various realms of existence, and interconnections between times and special places and these other realms of existence. He identified that primal sounds are significant in that they were present in the origins of life as well as today; that spiritual energies are present in the universe, including within beings such as people; and that people are spiritually tied to the cosmos. Thus, through actions, such as drumming and chanting, people are able to bring out their connections to the cosmos. Relatedly, Indigenous peoples see the world holistically through these ties in that people have relationships with the earth world, the plants, the animal people, and the environment, as well as with spirits and the sky world. Clearly, Rice recognized that Indigenous peoples emphasize the spiritual. This emphasis sometimes includes a recognition of a Creator or Great Spirit (Cardinal & Hilderbrandt, 2000). Noteworthy is the point made by Leo Schelbert (2003) who explained that understanding the term 'Great Spirit' as a supreme being "is misleading, not the least on a linguistic basis since the English language seems to lack a proper word for the reality towards which indigenous [*sic*] terms point" (p. 74). While kisé-manitow has often been interpreted as Great Spirit, alternative interpretations have also been shared, included kind spirit, and great mystery. So while there is often acceptance of the idea of a supreme being through such interpretations as Great Spirit, it is also acknowledged that people, as a simple part of creation, do not know kisé-manitow other than through our experiences with the rest of creation. Hence kisé-manitow remains

a mystery.

Finally, Leanne Simpson (2000) outlined seven principles of Indigenous worldviews. First, knowledge is holistic, cyclic, and dependent upon relationships and connections to living and non-living beings and entities. Second, there are many truths and these truths are dependent upon individual experiences. Third, everything is alive. Fourth, all things are equal. Fifth, the land is sacred. Sixth, the relationship between people and the spiritual world is important. Seventh, human beings are the least important beings in the world. I think it is important to note that there are contradictions evident in this list, which supports the idea that worldviews can hold contradictory points. For example, how is it that all are alive (point three), while acknowledging that there are non-living entities (point one). Yet, there are explanations that address these contradictions. One explanation is that rocks are considered animate in several Indigenous languages, thus emphasizing a wider understanding of living. However, people of some nations see only some rocks as living. In speaking with an old Anishinaabe man, Irving Hollowell (1975) asked if all rocks are alive, to which the man responded after some thought, "No! But *some* are" (p. 147). Hollowell went on to explain that this qualified answer is consistent with other data that indicate that the Anishnaabe are not animists in the sense that they dogmatically attribute living souls to inanimate objects such as stones. In other words, such an answer is not based upon a consciously formulated theory about the nature of stones. Thus, "it leaves a door open that our [non-Anishinaabe] orientation on dogmatic grounds keeps shut tight" (p. 148). With such openings, Indigenous worldviews

can seem highly contradictory, especially when there is limited understanding of

Indigenous worldviews.

Values and principles. Within Indigenous worldviews are Indigenous values

(Leroy Little Bear, 2000). Sue and Sue (2003) noted that while it is difficult to ascribe a

set of values that encompass all Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island, they noted several

generalized ones held by the people, including sharing, cooperation, non-interference and

observation, a present orientation, stronger focus on non-verbal communication, and a

spiritual focus where the spirit is interconnected with the body and mind. Rice (2005)

identified respect, reciprocity, sharing, balance, and harmony as generalized values held

by Indigenous peoples. Jack Weaver (1997) emphasized the importance of community.

Blackfoot educator Leroy Little Bear (2000) identified wholeness as a key value from

which several others emerge, including strength, sharing, honesty, and kindness.

Similarly, Douglas Durst (2000) identified these four values and presented their meanings

from an Indigenous perspective. He explained that kindness means harmony in

interpersonal relations and the capacity for caring; honesty means truthfulness and

integrity and that it is conditioned by respect; sharing means generosity, co-operativeness,

desiring harmony and collective well-being; and strength means strength of character,

fortitude, self-mastery of peace, harmony, and well-being in oneself and others.

Also within Indigenous worldviews are Indigenous principles. Rice (2005)

explained that Indigenous ways of doing on Turtle Island are guided by moral principles

31

embedded within spiritual constructs. These principles and constructs are then expressed

in the actions of individuals. Rice emphasizes that "this is crucial to understanding

Aboriginal cultures as these spiritual beliefs promote behaviors [*sic*] within society that

maintain stability, harmony, and balance" (p. 73).

Certain principles or ethics of behaviour have been identified by Clare Brant

(1990). Brant focussed on those ethics that surround the intent of suppressing conflict,

hence emphasizing positive relationships. They include acting without direct intentional

interference, a sense of competitiveness, or verbal expression of gratitude or approval;

acting with emotional restraint, generosity, an intuitive and flexible sense of time, and a

sense of intrinsic reward for ones actions; following uninstructed protocols established by

the local group; and the practice of teaching by modelling. These principles reflect the

overarching principles explained by Francis (2000) that harmony and balance are sought

in all matters.

It is apparent to me that these few noted discussions of Indigenous worldviews

from various authors highlight a strong focus on people and entities coming together to

help and support one another in their relationship. Reiterating Terry Cross [Seneca],

Thomas Crofoot Graham [Colville] (2002) called this a relational worldview. Key within

a relational worldview is the emphasis on spirit and spirituality, and in turn a sense of

communitism and respectful individualism. Communitism is the sense of community tied

together by familial relations and the families' commitment to it (Weaver, 1997; Weaver,

2001). Respectful individualism is a way of being where an individual enjoys great

freedom in self-expression since it is recognized by the society that individuals take into consideration and act on the needs of the community as opposed to acting on self-interest alone (Gross, 2003).

I found that this relational worldview is carried forward in discussion on Indigenous peoples' knowledge. As explained earlier, worldviews are cognitive, perceptual, and affective maps (Olsen et al., 1992). Given such a definition, knowledge is part of the details found within these maps. Indigenous knowledge then is part of Indigenous worldviews. The next section addresses Indigenous knowledge and is intended to act as a means of giving deeper understanding of Indigenous worldviews and ways of being.

Ińiniwi-Miskénihtamowin

In the following section first I outline some definitions of, and understandings about Ińiniwi-kiskénihtamowin, or Indigenous knowledge, followed by a discussion of the means of developing and transmitting it. These two sections are the foundation to the last discussion of this section, that being Indigenous knowledge of helping.

Definitions and characteristics. In reviewing the literature I found it is difficult to give one definition to Indigenous knowledge as there are several differing definitions available. Some of these definitions of Indigenous knowledge follow. Mahia Maurial (1999) defined Indigenous knowledge as "the peoples' cognitive and wise legacy as a

result of their interaction with nature in a common territory" (p. 62). June George (1999)

said it was that which "has evolved in a particular societal context and which is used by

lay people in that context in the conduct of their lives...[It is] generated as lay people seek

to find solutions to problems in their day-to-day lives by drawing on existing societal

wisdom and other local resources...[and is] passed on from one generation to the next in

the oral mode" (p. 80). Joely De La Torre (2004) defined Indigenous knowledge as the

established knowledge of the Indigenous nation, their worldview, and the customs and

traditions that direct them. Dei (2000) stated that Indigenous knowledge:

> encapsulates the common *good*-sense ideas and cultural knowledge of local
> peoples concerning realities of living...specifically...the epistemic saliency of
> cultural traditions, values, belief systems and world views in any Indigenous
> society that are imparted to the younger generation by community [e]lders... It is a
> worldview that shapes the community relationships with surrounding
> environments...[and] refers to knowledge resulting from long-term residence in a
> place. (p. 114)

These last two definitions demonstrate the close connection between Indigenous

knowledge and worldviews. The connection is further evident when looking at the

characteristics of Indigenous knowledge.

Dei (2000) identified the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge: It is (1)

personalized; (2) tied to integrity, familiarity, and the perceptiveness of the 'speaker'; (3)

orally transmitted; (4) experientially based; (5) dependent on subjective experiences and

the inner workings of the self; (6) holistic; and (7) relational. Similarly, Castellano (2000)

described the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge as personal, oral, experiential,

holistic, and conveyed in narrative or metaphorical language. Maurial (1999) identified

three characteristics of Indigenous knowledge: It is local, holistic, and oral. Robert

Mwadime (1999) explained that Indigenous knowledge is contextual and holistic,

meaning that it is inseparable from particular places, derived from direct experience, and

shaped by particular history and characteristics of the places, the people of the place,

physical environment, political factors, and the tools accessible to the people to such an

extent that the knowledge become ways of life and traditions for the holders of the

knowledge. Marcel Viergever (1999) came to the conclusion that there are three

important elements of Indigenous knowledge, namely that they are products of dynamic

systems, integral parts of the social and physical environments of the communities, and

form a collective good.

While these definitions are useful in shaping an understanding of Indigenous

knowledge, I believe Marie Battiste [Mi-kmaq] and Sakej Henderson's [Chikasaw]

(2000), commentary on defining Indigenous knowledge warrants attention. They stated

that attempting to define Indigenous knowledge is inappropriate since such efforts are

about comparing knowledges and that there were no methodologies existing to make such

comparisons. When someone does attempt to define Indigenous knowledge, in spite of or

without awareness of this point, three problems emerge because of the mysticism that has

been created around by Eurocentric perspectives. First, Indigenous knowledge does not fit

into its conceptualization of culture. Second, it is not a uniform concept since it is a

diverse knowledge that spreads throughout different peoples in many layers. Third, it is

so much part of the people, their communities, and individuals of these communities that

it cannot be separated from the holder for development into a definition. Battiste and

Henderson suggested that instead of trying to define Indigenous knowledge, the process

of understanding would be more important. They explained that understanding requires

the inquirer to be open to accepting different realities, however one uses this term.

Development and transmittance. Dawn Sutherland (2002) identified that

Aboriginal knowledge systems are developed through experience and careful observation.

Her point is reflected in Gregory Cajete's (1994; 1999; 2000), a Tewa man from Santa

Clara Pueblo, identification of the contexts and mechanisms through which teaching and

learning occurred. He explained that the living place, family, clan, community and nation

provided the high context experiences and sources for learning and teaching. In addition,

the holistic nature of Indigenous knowledge means that knowledge development and

transmittance can occur in other contexts, including forests, rivers, gardens, homes, and

other places where a person can have a dialogical relationship with nature (Maurial,

1999). Such contexts are where many things are happening at once and at different levels.

The mechanisms included "experiential learning (learning by doing and seeing),

storytelling (learning by listening and imagination), ritual/ceremony (learning through

initiation), dreaming (learning through the unconscious and imagery), the tutor (learning

through apprenticeship), and artistic creation (learning through creative synthesis)"

(Cajete, 1999, p. 55).

Marlene Brant Castellano (2000), a Mohawk woman, identified three sources of

Indigenous knowledge. First are traditional teachings, which is the knowledge that is passed down from generation to generation in a more or less intact manner. The second source is empirical knowledge that is gained through careful observation by many persons over extended periods of time. The third source is revealed knowledge which is of spiritual origin and acquired through dreams, visions, and intuition. I have found that these three sources have been reflected, to a greater or lesser degree, in several other individuals' explanations of how Indigenous knowledge is developed and transmitted. As examples, Battiste and Henderson (2000) explained that to develop an understanding of Indigenous knowledge requires extended conversations with the Elders. Oscar Kawageley (2001) explained that for Yup'ik peoples, knowledge and theories are not only handed down in their mythology, stories, and proverbs, but are also derived by studying each small piece of the world in which they live. In regard to the third source, I saw the connection between spirit and knowledge when I reviewed the writings of several authors, such as when Cree educator Laara Fitznor (1998) noted that, "one of the key aspects of traditional knowledge is that there is spirit in everything" (p. 30); or when Little Bear (1998) and Cajete (1994) identified that all things and all thought are filled with a quality of, and are related through, spirit. In light of these last two points, it was easy for me to understand Cree author Willie Ermine's (1995) explanation that by tapping into our own inner being, our spirit, we can learn about other things, a process fulfilled by the process of mamatawisowin, or the "capacity to tap the creative force of inner space by the use of all the faculties that constitute our being–it is to exercise inwardness" (p. 104).

Mwadime (1999) discussed the validation of Indigenous knowledge. He first

suggested that scientific principles are utilized. Obvious ones include observation and

explanation (theory). Cajete (2000) also stated that methodological elements are present,

including careful observation, practical experimentation, an emphasis on meaning and

understanding (as opposed to controlling and predicting), direct subjective experience that

leads to objective understanding, and the use of high context models. Other key

methodological elements include the preparation of the body, mind, and spirit as the

primary vehicle of "coming to know," incorporation of spiritual processes since there is

no division between spirit and science, the assigning of authority by the society, Elders,

dreams, and visions, and the use of ceremonies as a context for transferring knowledge

and a way to remember our responsibility to life.

It is apparent to me that these methodological elements imply that there are

grounds within Indigenous processes to determine whether emerging knowledge is valid

for the community. Based on the fact that some of these elements differ from the

elements of Eurocentric science, the suggestion made by Mwadime (1999) that validity,

or explanation and application, should be left to local Elders, midwives, teachers,

religious leaders, and traditional healers who reflect Indigenous worldviews is

understandable.

Indigenous knowledge of helping. One area of Indigenous knowledge is that of

Indigenous ways of helping. Several authors have noted that all Indigenous peoples have

developed their owns ways of helping one another (Lee & Armstrong, 1995; Sue & Sue,

2003). The relational worldview previously identified is central to many Indigenous

peoples ways of helping, healing[2] and wellness (Graham, 2002; Yeh, Hunter, Madan-

Bahel, Chaing, & Arora, 2004). This point is evident in several authors' discussions on

Indigenous ways of helping that are firmly rooted in the traditional cultures of Indigenous

peoples and those that have more recent cultural expressions.

Perhaps one of the most widely known discussions addressing Indigenous ways of

helping is that of Black Elk (1981), an Oglala Lakota man, as recorded and edited by

Joseph Epes Brown. Black Elk discussed the gift of the sacred pipe and seven sacred rites

given to the Oglala Lakota peoples. These rights include the keeping of the souls, the

inipi–the rite of purification, henblecheyapi–crying for a vision, wiwanyag wachipi–the

sun dance, hunkapi-the making of relatives, ishna ta awi cha lowan–preparing a girl for

womanhood, and tapa wanka yap-the throwing of the ball. Keeping in mind that I am not

of the Dakota, Lakota, or Nakota nations, I interpret the use of the pipe and these rites as

means to living well for individuals and communities. They are also about strengthening

relationships between individuals and between Wakan-Tanka, the Great Spirit, and

---

[2] Healing as a concept in social work is one of contention in that it often is seen as implying that the social worker does the "healing" and is thus the expert. Social work, as profession in Canada, has moved away from this stance. However, in speaking with Indigenous peoples of various nations, healing is not seen in the same view. Healing is believed to stem from the Creator, not the person involved in the process, whether that person is a traditional healer or social worker. Hence, healing is often used by Indigenous people in a similar manner that helper is used by social workers in that neither the healer or social worker is seen as the expert.

between people. For example, Black Elk is quoted as saying that those who have

participated in the inipi, or sweat lodge, ceremony "are as men born again, and have done

much good not only for themselves, but for the whole nation" (p. 43). For another

example, henblecheyapi, the crying for a vision rite, is about a person seeking a vision

that will provide him "knowledge and a path which men may follow" (p. 64). It is thought

to bring strength to the nation by providing guidance to the people, and relationship

between the people and Wakan-Tanka. As a side note, I cannot suggest that women are

erroneously excluded through the focus on the men in this ceremony since the only reason

for this focus shared with me is that men are often considered more "needy"[3]. The final

example is the hunkapi or the rite to make relatives. This rite is used to bring people of

different nations together in a good way so that their relationship can be seen as an

example for others to emulate. These examples serve to demonstrate that for the Lakota

people helping includes ceremony, a relationship with the spiritual, and the intent of

benefiting the community through individual actions. This understanding of helping is

reflected in the other writings on the Lakota, including that of Mark St. Pierre and Tilda

Long Soldier (1995), Raymond Bucko (1999), and David Martínez (2004).

Similarly, the Anishinaabek include a reliance on ceremonies and a relationship

with the spiritual to help one another. Anishinaabe Elder Edward Benton-Banai (1988)

shared several narratives which addressed how the Anishinaabek helped one another

through such means as the pipe ceremonies, sweat lodge ceremonies, and the Midewiwin

---

[3] I thank Hilary Weaver for sharing her thoughts with me on this matter.

society. Basil Johnston (1989), an Anishinaabe man, explained that the possible meaning of the term Midewiwin could be "The Society of Good Hearted Ones (from *mino* 'good,' and *dewewin* 'hearted'), or Resonance (from *midewe* 'the sound'), as a reference to the drums and the chants that were used in its ceremonies" (p. 96, original italics). William Warren (1984), an Anishinaabe man, explained that it simply referred to "the Grand Medicine Society" (p. 77). Michael Angel (2002) noted that the Midewiwin provided the means by which the Anishinaabe can live the good life to the fullest extent. D'Arcy Rheault (1999), an Anishinaabe man, noted that the Anishinaabe philosophy was based on a way to a good life. Anishinaabe people came to realize that long life was not attained by a knowledge of medicine and healing, as many people still died before living out a long life. A long life occurred as a result of good, upright living and it was up to the medicine people to live this life so that they would be able to help others live such a life (Johnston, 1990). This philosophy, allows the people to find their place in a very complex world, learn about that complex world, and situate themselves directly in the web of Creation" (Rheault, 1999). Clearly, this philosophy reflect communistism found within the relational worldview.

There are several applications of Indigenous knowledge of helping that have been more recently developed. In Christine Yeh, Carla Hunter, Anvita Madan-Bahel, Lillian Chaing, & Agnes Arora's (2004) discussion of Indigenous and interdependent perspectives of healing, they explained that there is heavy reliance on the use of communal, group, and familial networks to support individuals and problem solve; use of

spiritual and religious beliefs and traditions in the healing process; and use of shamans, or

persons who conduct healing ceremonies. They noted that in many societies multi-

component interconnectedness may be present, even in the cause of a person's condition

to which he or she seeks help to address. This interconnection includes a strong unity

between the spirit, mind, matter, environment and the cosmos. Disharmony and

imbalance between these aspects of life are seen to be the concern. Hence, a healer's goal

is to bring back harmony and balance between these aspects, particularly between the

individual and the aforementioned groups. Often, restoring harmony and balance involves

the realm of spirituality. Clearly, a relational worldview is addressed in these discussions.

Lakota scholar Hilary Weaver (2002) also presented the characteristics of the

relational worldview of helping when she discussed Indigenous perspectives of wellness.

She explained that wellness "is a holistic concept that encompasses all aspects of

individuals and communities including physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions" (p. 5).

She identified several concepts associated with wellness, including balance, wholeness,

and integrity. Further, wellness reinforces and is reinforced by a sense of cultural identity

and that many Indigenous people pursue wellness through traditional cultural means of

healing and spiritual practices. This pursuit is a continuous lifelong journey and the way

to well-being that First Nations must travel in order to be truly well and healthy human

beings and is often referred to as the Red Road (Weaver, 2002).

Jack Lawson (cited in Diller, 1999), a Creek man, explained that the many

Indigenous nations of Turtle Island have more similarities than differences that set us

apart from the dominating culture on Turtle Island, including our value system that

influences and is influenced by our helping ways. He described us, Indigenous peoples of

Turtle Island, as nonintrusive and non-directive, interconnected, and spiritually

orientated, thus clearly reflecting the attributes of respectful individualism found within

the relational worldview. This spiritual orientation comes from the geology of the

peoples' territory, infuses the community, and becomes base for the community. As such

spirituality is central to each person and is expressed through various cultural practices,

including the ways of helping people. Lawson later explained how he incorporates this

understanding into his helping ways. He stated:

> I use a very different approach with Native clients [than with White groups]. We
> sit in a talking circle, but it is the issues we talk about that are important. The
> issues have to do with Native culture, identity, how they see themselves as Native
> People, the effects of stereotyping, justified anger, positive identity development,
> and ceremony. And we use ritual objects and ceremonies as part of the process:
> eagle feathers and pipes, smudging, sweat lodges, and so on, introducing our
> culture into the treatment process and acknowledging what they are going through
> ritually and with ceremonies. Such a process fits naturally with our cultural
> understanding of health and sickness. (p. 171)

He explained that a key part of the helping process is reconnecting individuals with their

Indigenousness and peoples, reflecting the communitism aspect of the peoples' relational

worldview.

Similarly, Michael Tianusta Garrett (2003), a Cherokee man from the Eastern

Band of Cherokee, noted the importance of spirit and interconnectedness when he

outlined the relationship between these two concepts. He explained that many Indigenous

people on Turtle Island see human beings existing on Mother Earth, the earth, for the

purpose of being helpers and protectors of life. He outlined a number of basic beliefs, stemming from this perspective. First, there is a single higher power as well as lesser beings known as spirits or spirit helpers. Second, there is a spirit world that exists side by side with, and intermingles with, the physical world. Plants and animals, including humans beings, are part of the spirit world. All entities have a spirit that existed in the spirit world before it came into a physical body and will exist after the body dies. Third, human beings are made up of a spirit, mind, and body which are all interconnected. Therefore, wellness and illness affects the mind and spirit as well as the body. Fourth, wellness is the harmony of the body, mind, and spirit while unwellness is disharmony of these aspects. Fifth, natural unwellness is caused by violating a sacred social or natural law of Creation. Sixth, unnatural unwellness is caused by the actions of those with destructive intentions. Seventh, we are each responsible for our own wellness by keeping ourselves attuned to self, relations, environment, and universe. While this list is not exhaustive, it clearly reflects how the relational worldview is incorporated in this perspective of Indigenous peoples' ways of helping.

The relational worldview is also reflected in Richard Voss, Victor Douville [Sicangu-Lakota], Alex Little Soldier [Sicangu-Lakota], and Gayla Twiss's [Sicangu-Lakota] (1999) overview of tribal and shamanic-based social work. They explained that tribalism and shamanism continue to powerfully influence Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. Tribalism was explained as a pervasive cultural attitude or interaction style that holds the extended family and kinship relations as primary over individualism.

Individuals are seen as dependent upon all the forces and powers of creation and an

intimate part of the natural world, not separate from it. Thus, there is a significant

emphasis on humility, a deep respect for natural and ancestral spirits that remind people

of their humble place in the universe. Shamanism was explained as the other power

element of Lakota cosmology that views nonmaterial or transpersonal reality as the

source of power and health. A shaman, or medicine person, is someone picked by the

spirits to address particular needs. The medicine person acts a conduit and relies on spirits

to help people and conduct ceremonies, where "spirits are understood as the power, force,

and source of help and healing" (p. 232). They then explained that life is seen as a

continuous and harmonious circle with no distinctions and that all aspects of life are

intimately connected to good health and well-being since the interconnections among

families, tribe, and clan with moral, political and ceremonial life contribute to the

harmony and balance of all. When a person is out of sync with this circle, medicine

people act to bring the person back into balance, harmony, and good health with these

aspects through ceremonial and spiritual practices.

Terry Fox, a Cree woman of the Wesley-Stoney First Nation, spoke of the Stoney

Nations' view of healing (Long & Fox, 1996). She explained that health is a state of

holistic well-being where the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual components of

each individual are nurtured and balanced. Neglecting one of them results in imbalance

and in turn unwellness. Not only do individuals achieve health by balancing these

components, but the overall health of the people is ensured. In addition, the traditional

people of this Stoney nation see that there are connections between health, the environment, and spirituality. The environment must be respected and maintained in order for the people to survive. The peoples' spiritual strength goes hand in hand with the respect people have for Mother Earth. This spiritual strength is related to good fortune and health. Thus, having strong spiritual beliefs and relying on spiritual practices are seen as means of healing. Thus, people turn to medicine people who provide herbal and ceremonial remedies to help them.

Anishnaabe scholar and social worker Kathy Absolon (1993) utilized a Medicine Wheel framework to address healing. She explained that a Medicine Wheel framework is a holistic, earth centred philosophy that supports the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical healing. It can be applied to a variety of areas, including the individual, family, community, society or environment. Looking at the four quadrants of the medicine wheel, she first presented the east and its focus on the vision of healing. She defined healing as a balanced relationship within oneself and with the earth and the natural and spiritual worlds. It means coming back into balance. The principles of healing include going back to the teachings of the earth, confronting the dark side of life, recognizing the process of death and rebirth, and the restoration of balance. She then addressed the south and its focus on time and relationships. She explained that healing takes time and involves realigning relationships where there will be initial discomfort as one lets go of old patterns and adopts new ones. The west is addressed next by Absolon. She explained that the west is about the helper knowing her or his role. This requires self-reflection and our

own healing journey since "we can only facilitate a healing journey to the degree that we as healers have had the courage to journey on" (p. 10). Such facilitation is about supporting others in their self-determination, not intervening since intervention is contrary to the principle of self-determination. She then addressed the fourth quadrant, the north and its focus on doing. Absolon explained that the knowledge gained must be put into practice by the helper, the person seeking help, and First Nations people generally. It includes such actions as the development of community projects focussed on education and decolonization, and returning to our values to guide us in rebuilding ourselves, our children, and our families. Absolon concludes by addressing several teachings from the centre of the Medicine Wheel. The focus of the centre is the helping of Indigenous people to come to know themselves as Indigenous people, meaning the relearning of our histories and traditions from which we derive meaning and direction.

Gord Bruyere (2001), an Anishinaabe social work educator, also explained the use of the Medicine Wheel by many Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. His discussion of the teachings reflects a relational worldview and the components of respectful individualism and commnitism. He identified the Medicine Wheel as a symbol that carries the teachings Indigenous peoples base their means of helping upon. Amongst the teachings was the one addressing the relationship between the Four Faces of Human Identity, namely the individual, family, community, and nation. He explained that, "the rights and responsibilities of these Four Faces of Human Identity are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and reflect the primacy of kinship and relationship for Anishinaabe

47

and other First Nations peoples. He also explained that human beings are made up of emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual aspects and that all of these aspects are to be nurtured so our human potential may be reached. Further, in the worldview of the Anishinaabe, all of creation is embedded with spirit. He suggested that these teachings, along with others reflected in the Medicine Wheel, are used as guides to facilitate helping processes, such as circles, like healing circles, to address issues such as racism.

The last work addressed is my own (Hart, 2002, 2006). This Aboriginal approach to helping is based upon the Medicine Wheel and has several key concepts, several values, particular views of people, and views of the helping relationship. I understand the Medicine Wheel to be an ancient symbol of the universe that reflects the cosmic order and unity of all things. However, there is no absolute version of the Wheel since many Aboriginal people have given it their interpretations. I have focussed on the commonalities of these interpretations to extrapolate the concepts within this approach. Thus, these several key and interrelated concepts are common to many Aboriginal methods of helping and healing, and include wholeness, balance, relationships, harmony, growth, healing, and mino-pimatisiwin. Wholeness is the incorporation of all aspects of life and the giving of attention and energy to each aspect within ourselves and the universe around us. Balance is the dynamic where we give attention to each aspect of the whole in a manner where one aspect is not focussed upon to the detriment of other parts. All aspects of the whole, including other than human beings, are in relation to one another. These relationships require attention and nurturing. When we give positive

energy to these relationships, we nurture the connections. Nurturing these connections leads to health, while disconnections lead to disease. Harmony is, ultimately, a process involving all entities fulfilling their obligations to others and to themselves. Growth is a lifelong process that involves developing aspects of oneself, such as the body, mind, heart, and spirit, in a harmonious manner. Somewhat similar to growth, healing is a daily practice that is orientated to the restoration of wholeness, balance, relationships, and harmony. It is not only focussed on illness, but on disconnections, imbalances, and disharmony. Mino-pimatisiwin, the good-life, is life in the fullest, healthiest sense and is the goal of growth and healing. It includes efforts by individuals, families, communities, people in general, and all life entities.

The three key values of this Aboriginal approach are respect, sharing, and spirituality. Respect is the showing of honour, esteem, deference, and courtesy to all where we are not imposing our views onto other. Sharing includes the sharing of all we can, including knowledge and life experiences, and emphasizes that everyone is important. It helps to develop relationships. Spirituality is the recognition that there is another existence that is not of the physical world. It is so encompassing of Indigenous peoples' life that is respected in all interactions, including throughout this approach and is demonstrated through meditations, prayers, and ceremonies.

This Aboriginal approach has a particular perception of people. Human nature is seen as good, although negative attributes can develop. It views people in the state of being and a state of being-in-becoming, where people have purpose and are active as they

strive to grow towards mino-pimatisiwin. People are understood as one aspect of life that is dependent upon those who have lived before us, our ancestors, and upon other aspects of life, such as the animals and plants. Thus, people are social beings guided by good-conduct taught through such means as ceremonies.

Helping processes are focus on the relationship of the people being helped, including the helping relationship. The people offering help are not the experts. Instead, there is a focus on speaking from the heart, which includes speaking with personal emotional experience, intuition, and honesty. Finally, the helping processes are shared experience, meaning that the experiences in the helping process are relevant to the life of the person seeking help as well as the person offering help. Overall, it seems apparent that this approach to helping is based on a relational worldview.

These examples demonstrate that while Indigenous knowledge of helping varies in that there are some features that are unique to particular nations, such as the Dakota peoples' hunkapi rite, or the Midewiwin of the Anishinaabek, they share a common thread. This thread is the relational worldview with an emphasis on respectful individualism and communitism. Recognizing that there are similarities and differences between Indigenous nations of Turtle Island, the next section focuses on the Cree people.

Enisiwapahtamak Muskéko Ińiniw-askiy

Before addressing an enisiwapahtamak Muskéko Ińiniw-askiy, or a Cree worldview, it is worthwhile to recall comments made by Ida Moore (nee Brass, 2000), a Cree social

worker and psychology associate from Opaskwayak Cree Nation. She noted that we cannot assume all Cree groups, such as the Muskéko-Ininiwak, Néhiyawak, and Néhithawak, can be seen as exactly the same. However, it is also clear that there are strong links between the Cree peoples and that these links are evident in their worldviews.

Leona Makokis (2001), a Cree woman from Saddle Lake Cree Nation, explained that a Cree worldview is ordered in a circular pattern of interrelated parts and is "intrinsically and extrinsically shaped by the members of the Cree society and their relationship to self, others, the environment, and the cosmos" (p. 89). Central to this worldview is the stance that there is a Great Spirit or Creator (Makokis, 2001; Wastesicoot, 2004). It holds the view that all our needs have been provided to people by the Creator (Makokis, 2001).

Stemming from the centrality of the concept of a Creator is an emphasis on the spiritual. As explained by Douglas Cardinal (cited in McPherson and Rabb, 1993), a Cree man, "you have to realize that you're not only a sensory being but that you have a life force or spirit or whatever that is more than just your complaining human being" (p. 81). In other words, we regard ourselves as spiritual beings, not just physical beings. Further, we Cree believe in the existence of various spirits. This point is reflected within Néhiyawéwin, the Cree language. Unlike English, which draws a fundamental distinction between male and female genders, Néhiyawéwin distinguishes between that which is alive or animate, and that which is not or inanimate. That which is animate extends

beyond English understanding of what is alive and includes entities such as asiniyak

[rocks], ospwákanak [pipes], and átayóhkanak [guardian spirits]. Depending upon

circumstances, many of these entities are understood to have spirit (Zieba, 1990).

One of the ways that these spirits enters people's lives is through their dreams

(Dion, 1979). It was and is considered a privilege by the average person to have his or her

pawákan, or spiritual guide, enter his or her dreams and be consistently available.

However, few people are gifted with the power of communicating with the spirits (Dion,

1979). Spirits are understood to be the messengers between human beings and the Creator

since "people are less worthy than a blade of grass to talk to the Great Spirit directly"

(Young, Ingram, & Swartz, 1990, p. 25). These spirits are not treated as gods, but are

seen as helpers to the Great Spirit (Dion, 1979). As such, none of these spirits can be

controlled by human beings (Young, Ingram, & Swartz, 1990). We can only humble

ourselves in our request for their guidance as we work to maintain balance and harmony.

The late Cree Elder Jim Kâ-Nîpitêhtêw (1998) from Onion Lake Cree Nation,

exemplified this understanding in his counselling speeches. He stated:

> Indeed, and now for this, the sweat-lodge, as it is called, well, it was then that our
> elder brother Wisahketchahk charged the Kind-Man-Rock: "You, indeed, you will
> complete the prayer for the sweat-lodge. Indeed, where a person is chanting his
> prayers, where he makes a mistake in chanting his prayer, indeed, you all
> complete his prayer! You complete his prayer for him, let him obtain a favourable
> answer! Lo, this is going to happen and people are going to play around with this
> learning merely by imitation [rather than by instruction], learning by imitation will
> be used; but for a person who believe in it, you all complete his chanting prayer!
> As he raises the pipe, help him to point it the right way, the pipestem," that is
> what he reportedly said; "then listen to him with pity when re requests something
> from you in the sweat-lodge, as four times he gradually cools the rock with water,
> as he gradually pours the rock-sprinkling-water for you." —"It is then I will hear

him clearly," thus reportedly spoke in response, all along, Kind-Man-Rock. This is what is used in the sweat-lodge, everywhere he [Kind-Man-Rock] is placed in the foremost position. (p. 123)

While a Cree worldview is inclusive of beings in the unseen world, at the same time human beings are understood to be part of the natural world and related to all of creation (Makokis, 2001). Indeed, in her study with Elders, Makokis (2001) found and explained that "the Cree believe that one is born into a family which is a natural extension of the community, thus implying a sense of responsibility towards each member of the community" (pp. 188-189). Similarly, Moore (nee Brass, 2000) identified wakotowin, relations or kinship, as a key principle that set the parameters for all social, cultural, and economic relationships.

Emerging from this principle of wakotowin are several other ones, including the principle that the human-environment relationship is important. Indeed, it has been explained that "our spiritual relationship with the land is of utmost importance" (Makokis, 2001, p. 192) since we are part of the land and are to live in harmony with the land. People are bonded to nature, and have an interdependence with plants and animals. As such, our "identity is stored in and grows out of the relationship that exists between man [and woman] and nature" (Brass, 2000, p. 76). Richard Preston (2002) clarified this point further and stated that unlike Western cultures which tend to categorize the world with vast and autonomous concepts that are external to people and explainable in terms of universal laws, we Cree people tend not to separate the environment from our social and mental context. Another principle that evolves from wakotowin is the person-to-person

relationship. As Moore (nee Brass, 2000) explained, we will often use kinship terms, such as nósisim, [my grandchild], mosóm [grandfather], and nókom [my grandmother], to acknowledge one another. Such terms serve to remind us that we are all related.

While Cree people recognize that we hold many relationships, we also believe the intent of the Creator is to distinguish human beings from other beings of nature through the use of the mind. This does not mean that we hold dominion over every living creature because of how we use our minds. Instead, it is understood that since every living being has a spirit, "we have to be in communion with every one. We're part of the life chain, we're not dominion over it" (Douglas Cardinal, cited in McPherson & Rabb, 1993, p. 79).

These aforementioned points are emphasized when one considers Marie-Odile Junker's (2003) work addressing néhiẏawéwin. She made the point that there are direct connections between thinking and feeling as all thinking words and many feeling words include -eyi-, the classifier that indicates mental activity. She also made the point that there are connections between thinking and the spiritual since our thoughts are viewed to be affecting the spiritual realm. One of her concluding remarks is that for the Cree, "ideas of wholeness and connection with the greater 'mind' of creation (the Great Spirit) were predominant" (p. 190). This point of wholeness and connection was also supported by Cree writer Walter Lightning (1993) in his discussion of a text written by the late Cree Elder Louis Sunchild on the compassionate mind.

We Cree people also understand that it is within each individual to seek out the truth of our existence. This understanding comes from a journey of introspection. Once a

person begins to form this understanding, the individual then holds a responsibility which includes that of serving her/his fellow human being, other life, and the land (Makokis, 2001). Relatedly, individuals never completely exercise tipéyimisow, or the act of being in total control of oneself or being completely independent, since we have to contend with the forces of nature (Makokis, 2001). If we attempt to exercise power and control over other humans, land, and/or animals, we are then exercising the idea of pástahowin, or "stepping over a set of boundaries causing an imbalance, harming the community and/or those children yet to be born" (Makokis, 2001, p. 190). We must then develop ourselves in relation to other beings as they work to develop themselves.

Cree values and principles. Cree authors Harold Cardinal and Walter Hilderbrandt (2000) identified one of the core values of Cree peoples as mino-wícéhtowin, or having or possessing good relations. They explained that people are directed by the value to conduct themselves in a positive manner so that they create good relationships with other individuals or peoples. As a concept, mino-wícéhtowin is understood to have originated in the laws and relationships that the Cree nation has with the Creator. Cardinal and Hilderbrandt (2000) explained that a central pillar that can support mino-wícéhitowin is manátisiwin [respect]. As well, they identified several other values and principles that have been central to guiding the relationships between Cree and other peoples, particularly those signing the treaties between the British Crown and Cree peoples. These other values are yóspatisiwin [gentleness], kiséwátisiwin [kindness],

kwayaskátisiwin [honesty and fairness], and kanátisiwin [cleanliness].

Some of these values identified by Cardinal and Hildebrandt (2000) are included

in the outline of values presented by the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre's Council

of Elders (January, 1988). These Elders included Frank McIntyre, Gus Waskewitch, Jean

Marie Felix, Joe Turner, Antoine Sand, Lizette Ahenakew, William Peigan Sr., John

Haywaha, Lawrence Tobacco, James Ironeagle, Bill Standingready, the late Jim

Kanipitehtew, the late Smith Atimoyoo, and Angus Esperance. Most of these Elders

are/were Cree. The values and their explanations they outlined were the following:

> Obedience: We learn by listening to traditional stories; by listening to our parents
> or guardians, our fellow students and our teachers. We learn by their behaviours
> and their reminders, so that we know what is right and what is wrong.
> Respect: We must give honour to our Elders and fellow students and the strangers
> that come to visit our community. We must honour other peoples' basic rights.
> Humility: We are not above or below others in the circle of life. We feel humble
> when we understand our relationship with Creation. We are so small compared to
> the majestic expanse of Creation. *"We are just a strand in a web of life,"* and we
> respect and value life.
> Happiness: We must show some enthusiasm to encourage others at social
> functions. Our actions will make our ancestors happy in the next world.
> Love: If we are to live in harmony we must accept one another as we are and to
> accept others who are not in our circle. Love means to be kind and good to one
> another.
> Faith: We must learn to believe and trust others, to believe in a power greater than
> ourselves whom we worship and who gives us strength to be a worthy member of
> the human race.
> Kinship: Our family is important to us. This includes our parents, our brothers and
> sisters who love us and give us roots, the roots that tie us to the life blood of the
> earth. It also includes extended family; grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins
> and their in-laws and children. These are also our brothers and sisters and they
> give us a sense of belonging to a community.
> Cleanliness: We must learn not to inflict ills on others, for we do it to ourselves.
> Clean thoughts come from a clean mind and this comes from Indian spirituality.
> Good health habits also reflect a clean mind.
> Thankfulness: We learn to give thanks for all the kind things others do for us and

for the Creator's bounty, that we are privileged to share with others in the spirit of love.

Sharing: We learn to be part of the family by helping in providing food or other basic needs. This is sharing responsibilities in order to enjoy them.

Strength: We must learn to be patient in times of trouble and not to complain but to endure and show understanding. We must accept difficulties and tragedies so that we may give others strength to accept their own difficulties and tragedies.

Good Child Rearing: Children are unique and blessed with the gift of life. We are responsible for their well-being, spiritually, emotionally, physically and for their intellectual development. They represent the continuity of our circle of life which we perceive to be the Creator's will.

Hope: We must hope for better things to make life easier for us, our families, and the community, both materially and spiritually.

The ultimate responsibility to achieve is *"health for a balanced caring for the body, mind, emotions and the spirit of the individual, the family, the community and the nation."*

We are all connected by relationships and we depend on each other. This controls and creates harmony in the circle of life. (Council of Elders, Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre, 1988; original italics)

Other authors noted the same or similar values held by the Cree. The late Cree

Elder Joseph Dion (1979) of Kehiwin Cree Nation, identified several virtues that were

sought, including "kindness and hospitality, bravery in the face of all dangers, honesty,

truth, and reliability" (p. 57). Junker (2003) noted respect for others is a central value.

The late Cree Elder Joe Douquette (1987) of Mistawasis Cree Nation, spoke of the

importance of cleanliness and good child rearing while Cree Elder Peter Vandall (1987)

spoke of maintaining cleanliness and respect. The late Cree Elder Sara Whitecalf (1993)

addressed how respect and good child rearing is to be maintained. The Cree Elder Emma

Mind (1997) from Saddle Lake Cree Nation and Hobemma, in telling about her life and

that of her husband's parents, spoke about how parents would counsel their children and

the importance of giving clear direction for them to follow. The Cree Elder Alice

Ahenakew (1999) outlined stories that demonstrated the importance of faith, caring, and sharing.

Some Cree authors have noted certain principles that are similar to the values noted above. In particular, it has been explained that as Cree people, we have to live up to our responsibilities or act with responsibility, where our first responsibility is to the children, Elders, people with disabilities, and the animals (Dion, 1979; Makokis, 2001). Similarly, Jennie Wastesicoot (2004), a Cree woman from Chemawawin Cree Nation, explained that the laws of the Cree Nations were passed on orally by the Elders. In their teachings they focussed on positive behaviour, encouraging the maintenance of social order through self-discipline and moral responsibility to the families and community. These teachings were an extension of the belief that everyone and everything on earth had a spirit and therefore must be treated with respect. These teachings were also an extension of the Cree understanding of natural law. Westesicoot suggests that natural law can be best explained as that which directs individuals to be respectful, kind, and loving, and having humility and compassion for all living things. Hence, there is emphasis that everyone has an obligation to each other to maintain social order in a particular manner, and to live one's life in harmony and balance. Natural law also includes the point that showing disrespect would bring consequences to the individual or her/his family. According to Wastesicoot (2004), "the Cree referred to this as O-ji-na when a spirit was offended" (p.47).

Evidently from Wastesicoot's (2004) discussion, there are acts and ways of being

that are not valued by Cree people. The late Joseph Dion (1979) identified some of these

acts which are connected to the concept of pástahowin previously mentioned. They

included greed, jealousy, meanness, lying, stealing from the neighbours, and truculence

among friends. Instead of such acts, the values and principles found within a Cree

worldview clearly emphasize communitism and respectful individualism.

Cree Knowledge

A primary way Cree people gain knowledge is "by observing the habits and

characteristics of animals. Lessons are learned" (Makokis, 2001, p. 89). The late Joseph

Dion (1979) explained that such observations are processes of learning the natural laws.

These observations are not done purely as an intellectual exercise. As explained earlier,

there is a direct connection between our feelings and our minds. Walter Lightning (1993)

explained it this way: "In other words, for understanding to happen I needed to

comprehend holistically. I not only had to learn something intellectually, I had to learn it

emotionally as well. For this to happen, timing and synchronicity play a very important

part in the regulation and realization of the entire process" (p. 217). Thus, gaining

knowledge is an experiential process, involving ones mind, heart, spirit, land, and the

events around. The late Cree Elder Smith Atimoyoo (cited in Canadian Plains Research

Center, 1979, p 50) shared a story that demonstrated some of these Cree ways of teaching.

Quoted in length, he stated:

> Many things did I learn from my father, but I think a mother to the Indian people
> is one that we still respect even though we do not fully understand ourselves. I use

to see her [his mother] go out every day of her life...even when it was storming, raining or snowing...But she never said anything about why she did this, and I use to wonder. And about the third year in college I thought there must be something to this. She must be trying to follow up something. And in a traditional manner, I gave her some tobacco and some other things that I had bought her on my way home from school. I gave her these, and she looked surprised. And I said, "there's one thing I wanted to ask you. I would like you to, if you can, explain this to me. Every day we see you go outside and stand. Can you explain this to me?" And she grabbed me and she smiled and said, "I wish you were my daughter because I'm doing this to carry-out the philosophy of my great grandmother and my grandmother and my mother. And so it is important for me that I must do this. You hear your father saying in his prayers every day asking for health, asking for things for you, his children, thanking his Creator for giving us that privilege for being with you today that we may be given the privilege of leading you to adultship, adulthood." She took me out and this is when she said, "The moment I step out of my lodge I am in my church. The woman is a little different but she also has privileges. She has a sense that she can use. She has her sense of sight and sense of hearing and this is what I want to practice. Because," she said, "look there was bird flying our way. Do you know the reason why that bird is flying? The wings are strong now, strong enough that it can carry its weight. And I am as a mother have a responsibility for you my children. I am building those wings. Whenever I say something, it is building those little wings of yours so that they'll be strong enough to carry you and see those things from a vantage point, the things that may hurt you." It makes sense. And how can one forget those words. She went along, she pointed to a flower. She said, "It has bloomed, and this is what happens to a parent when somebody says how well your children behaves, what a good child you have, what a good worker, and so on. And the work and the words that you have said to your children have bloomed." And then she was talking, but what I remembered was her getting down on her knees and parting the grass and there was a little insect. She motioned to me and said, "Look at that little insect, look at that little thing. It's alive. What a wonderful world we are privilege to live in, a wonderful, living world. And this little thing is contributing to this living world. Without it, something would be missing. And compare that to your size. You have your arms, your legs, your eyes, your ears, your head, and your size. How much more can you be a contributing factor to this wonderful living world." (pp. 50-51)

Knowledge is not only gained from observing the natural environment, it is also gained through spiritual insight (Dion, 1979). Cardinal (cited in McPherson & Rabb, 1993) addressed this point through his discussion of the sweat lodge ceremony. He

explained that when a person goes into the lodge she or he sometimes get tremendous

insights. He related this insight to spiritual grandfathers or grandmothers who are there.

These "grandfathers or grandmothers always walk with the people and so they feel

guided. So they just say, 'I think I'll go ask my grandfather about that'" (p. 76).

Such insight is not gained by one person telling another person, Instead, one has to

experience the insight personally. Again, Cardinal (cited in McPherson & Rabb, 1993)

outlined his experience on this point when he presented the insights that came to him

through a fasting ceremony to a Kété-aya :

> I told him [the Kété-aya] of the experiences [those events in his fast] and asked
> him what he experienced on his first fast. He said, "Oh, I experienced the same
> thing." I said, "Why didn't you tell me?" "Then you wouldn't have done it. By
> telling you, I would have robbed you of your opportunity of learning that
> experience for yourself. It's yours," he said. So that's part of their culture, it's
> probably been done for thousands of years. (p. 74)

Thus, to be a person of knowledge in Cree culture means that one has to be in touch with

interconnections between ones mind, heart, spirit, land, and events around. To support

these interconnections Cree people often rely on ceremonies.

Ceremonies fulfill a range of functions. They act as ways of acknowledging the

Creator for all the good things in life and the gifts the Creator gave to the Cree Nation

that provide for our subsistence and maintaining harmony and balance (Kâ-Nîpitêhtêw,

1998; Mandelbaum, 1979; Wastesicoot, 2004). They also serve as a means of learning

and teaching. People also partake in ceremonies to get in touch with their own life force

as well as the spiritual beings around us. Cardinal (cited in McPherson and Rabb, 1993)

explained that there are many ceremonies and rituals to support a person to establish such

connections. These ceremonies include ones held in conjunction with births, deaths,

marriages, namings, celebrations of good life and good health, gift exchanges, and

prayers/meditations for the welfare of the people (Brown, 1997; Kâ-Nîpitêhtêw, 1998;

Wastesicoot, 2004). Among the highest of the ceremonies are the thirst dance and chicken

dance, while the sweatlodge and pipe ceremony are among the more common ones;

(Dion, 1979; Kâ-Nîpitêhtêw, 1998; Wastesicoot, 2004).

Finally, and significantly, there are conditions attached to learning for at least

some Indigenous peoples. For example, Cree scholar, Wheeler (neé Stevenson, 2000),

acknowledged that for Cree people all knowledge is not knowable to everyone. Some

knowledge is reserved in families and passed down in families. In many cases knowledge

has to be earned. She also explained that "education in Cree is Kiskinomatowin, which

refers to a reciprocal and interactive teaching relationship between student and teacher, a

'community activity'" (p. 241). Hence, Cree knowledge requires a relationship based

upon long-term commitment, respect, and reciprocity.

Cree knowledge of helping. Among the limited writings on Cree knowledge of

helping are that of Herb Nabigon, an Anishinaabe man, and Anne-Marie Mawhiney, an

Anishinaabe woman, (1996). They outlined a theory based upon a Cree Medicine Wheel

that addresses healing. They first explained the philosophy behind the theory. This

philosophy is based upon the understanding that healing is a lifelong journey where

individuals constantly strive to create and recreate balance and harmony. This healing

includes a spiritual life since every aspect of life is seen as spirit. All aspects of life are

related where "all is one," including the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical, and

where human life is directly connected to the earth and all life on and in the earth. All

aspects of life can be improved, which means it can be brought into balance and harmony.

Such movement occurs through developing an understanding of the interconnectedness of

life, which necessitates acceptance, and living a way of life that promotes healing.

"Healing reconnects us with our innermost self and our surroundings. This, in turn,

shapes our surroundings" (p. 21). From this understanding, a Cree way of healing is a

way of bringing our inner selves into balance by listening to and coming to understand

ourselves, our surroundings, and others.

To bring such balance requires an understanding of personality. Nabigon and

Mawhiney presented a conceptual device called "the hub" to demonstrate a particular

understanding of personality. This hub is used as a guide to help people look inward and

deal with internal conflicts as well as with our lack of balance and disharmony with our

families, friends, communities, and the earth. They identified that:

> The hub consists of three circles, one inside the other. The outer circle represents
> the negative, or dark side of life. The second represents the positive or light side,
> and the center [sic] represents the spiritual fire at the core of one's being. The
> center [sic] circle has light and dark sides, also. Balance of the three parts is the
> ideal to strive for. The circles are divided into four directions: north, south, east,
> and west. (p. 21)

They explained in further detail that in the outer circle feelings of inferiority and shame

are represented in the east, envy in the south, resentment in the west, and uncaring, or

apathy and disregard, in the north. These four emotional states interact and feed off one

another leading to and maintaining imbalance and disharmony in individuals and in their interaction with other life around them.

In the second circle, presented within the outer circle, there are a number of positive aspects represented. The sharing of feelings is represented in the east, where the appropriate expression of feelings is understood as providing energy and reducing stress. The establishment of good feelings is connected to the development of good relationships. The ability to relate to oneself and to others is represented in the south. Respect, meaning to look twice, is represented in the west. By looking twice, a person takes the time to think before saying or adopting inappropriate thoughts about oneself or others. In the north caring is represented. Caring includes feeling and action: We need to experience care by caring for ourselves and for others. In the centre circles lies jealousy, a negative trait. It is fed by people not listening to themselves and an unwillingness to share themselves. Jealousy leads to possessiveness and a lack of fulfilment. On the other side within the centre circle lies one's spiritual fire. To live a successful, productive, and happy life requires connecting with our spirit.

Clearly, the importance of how people experience life and the manner which they live, especially spiritually and emotionally, is highlighted in the hub. Much attention is given to supporting people to remain positive in Nabigon and Mawhiney's later discussion of how the hub is utilized in helping situations with individuals, families, and communities. This emphasis is also evident in other discussions of helping by Cree peoples. For example, the late Cree Elder Jim Canipitatao stated:

We must help each other. We must help each other and ask for God's help to understand each other, love each other and help each other. It is useless to confront each other, my relatives. It is better to ask for unity, to work together, to think of our grandchildren. That is the Cree way. (cited in Canadian Plains Research Center, 1979, p. 43; translated from nêhiyawêwin)

The importance of how one experiences and lives life is also evident in the writing of Ida Moore (nee Brass, 2000), another author who has written on Cree knowledge of helping one another. She identified five premises within a northern Manitoba Cree methodological framework for counselling. The first of these five premises is that there is a primary philosophy underlying healing by Cree peoples. This philosophy is spiritual based in that the power of all healing evolves from the healers relationship with the Creator. How spirituality is applied is determined by the principles that guide Kété-ayak and ontáwiwéwak, [healers], and their relationship with the Creator. The second premise is that to be a Cree counsellor requires a strong grasps of nêhiyawêwin since the foundations of helping are contained within the language. Moore explained that "because Cree language is very specific [*sic*] and some terms are very difficult to translate into English, meaning can get lost in translation. As a result learning becomes diluted, thus, having a language base is an important aspect to learning traditional counselling methods" (p. 103). The third premise is there is a very long, systematic learning process that requires a life time commitment. Kété-ayak and ontáwiwéwak are understood to be born with their ability, which is nurtured through an apprenticeship process. This process requires humility, extensive listening and stilling one's mind, significant time to reflect and develop understanding, and specific methods of teaching and learning. The fourth

premise is that Kété-ayak and ontáwiwéwak have a spiritually grounded life so to nurture

specific personal qualities. Among the qualities are the following: They do not

intentionally cause harm or pain to another person or living being; they strive

continuously to be positive and helpful; and they live humbly and selflessly. The final

premise outlined by Moore address the techniques used by Cree counsellors in northern

Manitoba. She identified four techniques:

> (a) Utilizing the environment as a teaching tool (e.g. studying the activity of ants)
> or as a source of healing.
> (b) Physical activity (e.g. physical work, crafts, etc.) that is intended to promote
> contemplation, trust building with a client or to release pent up emotion.
> (c) storytelling provides a nonthreatening avenue of self exploration and learning,
> and also presents alternative scenarios to problem solving.
> (d) Ceremonies provide a healing process. (p. 107)

She explained that these premises, albeit not an exhaustive list, are interwoven and used

simultaneously. They are to be applied within a holistic cultural context. She also noted

that people are not usually accepted in their role as healer until the middle or later stages

of life as the journey to get to this stage is a difficult one. It is not easy to live selflessly

and humbly.

Moore noted that the development process for a person to become a healer has

been impeded by the effects of colonization on Indigenous people and their communities.

She explained that in some areas Indigenous cultures have been decimated to the extent

that Indigenous knowledge systems have lost their significance. Similarly, Wastesicoot

(2004) outlined that the Cree Nation did not avoid the terror of colonialism, and noted

that one result is some Cree people do not see the significance of Cree knowledge. To

exemplify this point, she outlined her experience of listening to the radio and hearing a message provided by the host of a gospel jamboree held in a First Nation. The message was that "Indian culture is bad, it is devil worshiping [*sic*]. Those individuals who run to Indian culture are making a mistake thinking that they can be saved. Those that call on the medicine people are lost and no sweet grass will save them" (p. 112).

Thus, while it is apparent that Cree worldviews, knowledge, beliefs, and values continue to guide many Cree people, it must be recognized that they are not utilized by all Cree peoples. Not all Cree people are freely making the choice to utilize Cree knowledge and practices. To understand a significant part of this situation requires an understanding of colonization. The next section provides a brief overview of colonization before the topics of decolonization, anti-colonialism, and indigenism are addressed.

Colonization

This section presents a brief overview of discourses and theories of colonialism. I begin with a discussion of colonialism and imperialism that includes a look at these two concepts and other key concepts addressed within the discourses and theories.

Colonialism and Imperialism

While colonialism and imperialism have been addressed by many people, they have been defined only on occasion (Smith, 1999), and in various, but usually complementary ways, especially since colonial discourses are not homogenous or unitary (McLeod, 2000).

Indeed, these concepts continue to develop in sophistication and complexity (Slemon,

1995). Elleke Boehmer (1995, p. 2) explained that colonialism involved the settlement of

territory, the exploitation or development of its resources, and the attempt to govern the

Indigenous peoples of the occupied lands. Leela Gandhi (1998) defined colonialism as

"the historical process whereby the 'West' attempts systematically to cancel or negate the

cultural difference and value of the 'non-West'" (p. 16). Edward Said (1994) defined it as

"the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (p. 9). He also noted that it is a

consequence of imperialism, or "the practice, theory, and the attitudes of a dominating

metropolitan center [*sic*] ruling a distant territory" (p. 9). Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin

(2000) defined imperialism as "the formation of an empire, and, as such, has been an

aspect of all periods of history in which one nation has extended its domination over one

or several neighbouring nations" (p. 122). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) explained that

imperialism is a total encompassing process in that it has economic, political, military,

cultural, and psychological consequences for the people of the world. A more elaborate

explanation was forwarded by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). She explained:

> Imperialism tends to be used in at least four different ways when describing the
> form of European imperialism which 'started' in the fifteenth century: (1)
> imperialism as economic expansion; (2) imperialism as the subjugation of
> 'others'; (3) imperialism as an idea or spirit with many forms of realization; and
> (4) imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge. (p. 21)

Smith noted that these usages are analyses which focus on different layers of imperialism.

She also explained that the fourth use of the term has been formulated by those

experienced with colonialism from the inside or with an interest in understanding

colonialism from a local context. It has been referred to as "'post-colonial discourse', the 'empire writes back' and/or 'writing from the margins'" (p. 23). From this perspective, Smith then explained that colonialism became imperialism's outpost and means for imperial outreach. As such, colonialism was both the realization of imperialism's imagination and an image of the future nation it would become.

Processes and Components of Colonialism

Poka Laenui (2000) presented a five step description of the colonization process. The steps are as follows. First, at the onset, the colonizing people deny the very existence of Indigenous cultures or the merit of the cultures. The Indigenous people gradually withdraw from their own ways and potentially join in the ridicule of their culture. Second, the bolder steps of deconstruction and eradication are taken to destroy and eradicate all physical symbols of the colonized peoples' cultures, including actions toward the people themselves. Third, new systems are created within Indigenous societies, such as churches, agencies, schools, which denigrate, belittle and insult any continuance of the colonized peoples' culture. Fourth, remnants of the colonized peoples' culture are given superficial accommodation in exhibits, and folkloric and mystical interest. Such actions are considered "showing respect." Fifth, in the final stage of the colonization process other aspects which refuse to die are transformed into the culture of the dominating colonial society, such as a colonized priest using the colonized's symbols in a colonizer's service in a way that supports the colonizer's worldview, or through new age expropriation and

exploitation (See Churchill, 2003c for a discussion on the new age movement).

Another outline of the colonization process has been given by James Frideres

(2001). He has described the colonization of Indigenous peoples within borders of

countries that have established themselves separately from their former imperial centre,

such as the establishment of Canada as separate country from England. He outlined seven

parts of such internal colonialism. The first part is the encroachment of one group onto

another group's geographical territory, often through forced entry. Second is the

destruction of Indigenous peoples' social and cultural structures by the colonizing people.

Third is the establishment of political control over Indigenous peoples by the colonizing

people. Fourth is the availability of poor services for Indigenous peoples in areas such as

health and social programs, and education. Fifth is the establishing the economic

dependency of Indigenous peoples on non-Indigenous society. Sixth is the use of racism

to establish the colonizers' sense of genetic superiority over Indigenous peoples. The final

part is the regulation of social interactions through the establishment of a colour line.

Significant to note is Ward Churchill's (2003a) comments regarding internal colonialism.

He stated:

> While it is true that the "internal" variety of colonialism visited upon native
> people by modern settler states differs in many respects from the "classical"
> models of external colonization developed by European empires over the past
> several centuries, it is colonialism nevertheless. Moreover, it is no less genocidal
> in its implications and effects than were the forms of overseas colonialism
> analyzed by Jean-Paul Sartre in his famous 1968 essay on the topic. Indeed, given
> how seamlessly it has been imposed, how imperfectly its existence and
> functioning are reflected in even the most ostensibly liberatory political
> discourses, and how committed to attaining its formal legitimation the great
> majority of states have lately proven themselves, internal colonialism may well

prove to be more so. (pp. 115-116)

Laenui's and Frideres' perspectives of the colonization process complement

Kellough's (1980) outline of structural and cultural colonialism. The focus of structural

colonialism is on the decision making process and the means to implement these

decisions. Utilizing their power, the colonizers are able to determine the institutions

which will govern and control the colonized people. These institutions include the

political, policing, and administrative structures of daily life. Kellough explained that the

cultural colonialism component generally refers to the cultural and psychological factors

of colonialism. The colonizing people define their perspectives as the norm for all people.

Thus, they attempt to re-define the colonized peoples' worldviews, values, and beliefs in

a manner which ensures that they come to accept their subordinate position and the

discrepancies in power and control between them and the colonizing people. This

normative control is achieved through the imposed educational and religious systems

developed by the colonialists.

Significant Features and Concepts

Binary logic, dialectics, and othering. A significant feature of colonialism is the

incorporation of a common aspect of Western thought, namely binary logic or the

combination of two things. The binary of colonizer/colonized binary is most prominent in

much of colonization and is articulated in several ways (Ashcroft et al., 2000). In relation

to Indigenous peoples these binaries include white/red, civilized/primitive,

71

advanced/savage, good/evil, beautiful/ugly, human/beast, sober/drunk, and

educated/simple. These binaries become a common component of the colonizers'

ideology and act as one of the means to legitimize the oppression of Indigenous peoples.

Albert Memmi (1965) presented these binaries as part of the mythical portrait of the

colonized that is developed by the colonizer. He described the binaries as dialectics

where, "nothing could better justify the colonizer's privileged position than his industry,

and nothing could better justify the colonized's destitution than his indolence. The

mythical portrait of the colonized therefore includes an unbelievable laziness, and that of

the colonizer, a virtuous taste for action" (p. 79). Similarly, other writers of colonialism

addressed this particular dialectic. Edward Said (1978) outlined the dialectic between the

Orient and the Occident where the Orient is pictured as backward, degenerate, and

uncivilized. Frantz Fanon (1967) noted through his studies that "the Negro enslaved by

his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with

a neurotic orientation" (p. 60). Evidently, the premise is regularly postulated that the

colonized are the negative image of the colonizer (Nandy, 1983). These postulations have

been primarily structured according to certain discursive discourse formats. Over time,

frequent use, and developing familiarity, these binaries have become seen as truthful

(Mills, 1997, p.107).

Such a dialectical perspective is taken up in much of colonialism discourses. As

Leela Gandhi (1998) explained, the colonizer and the colonized are in an ambivalent, but

symbiotic relationship. This relationship includes the dynamic that emptied the colonized

of meaning and supported the belief that the colonizer would be able to fill the

colonized's emptiness. It negates the culture of the colonized while valuing the

colonizer's culture (Nandy, 1983; Gandhi, 1998; Freire, 1993; Smith, 2005). This

dynamic is internalized by both groups. For the colonizers, it legitimizes their oppressive

actions. For example, Marx espoused British colonialism stating, "whatever may have

been the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history, which raised India

from its semi-barbaric state into the improved condition of modernity" (cited in Said,

1991, p. 153). For the colonized, it keeps them in psychological shackles. For example,

Janice Acoose (1995), a Cree/Metis author, described her experience:

> I shamefully accepted that I was not only different but inferior. Consequently, I
> learned to passively accept and internalize the easy squaw, Indian-whore, dirty
> Indian, and drunken Indian stereotypes that subsequently imprisoned me, and all
> Indigenous peoples, regardless of our historical, economic, cultural, spiritual,
> political, and geographical differences. Not unlike so many other Indigenous
> peoples who painfully suffered the psychological, economic, spiritual, political,
> and physical pains associated with colonialism, I shamefully turned away from my
> history and cultural roots, becoming, to a certain extent, what was encouraged by
> the ideological collusiveness of textbooks, and the ignorant comments and peer
> pressure from non-Indigenous students. (p. 29)

As evident in this passage by Acoose, this dialectic, through its separation of the

colonized and colonizer and assertion of the naturalness and primacy of colonizing

culture and worldview, helps creates the "other" (Ashcroft et al., 2000). While there are

distinctions between "other" and "Other," the general reference is anyone separate from

one's self (Ashcroft et al., 2000). This creation process, which Gayatri Spivak coined as

"othering," occurs through the colonial discourse (cited in Ashcroft et al, 2000). John

McLeod (2000) explained that, "the colonized are considered the 'other' of the

Westerner...essentially *outside* Western culture and civilization" (p. 52). The 'other'

construction is supported by "institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines,

even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" (Said, 1978, p. 2; see also Mills, 1997, p.

106).

Race and racism. A pertinent concept to colonialism is race. As explained by

Ashcroft et al. (2000), "'race' is a term for the classification of human beings into

physically, biologically and genetically distinct groups" (p. 198). The concept assumes

that humanity is divided into unchangeable natural types, evident by physical features,

and that morality, mentality, personality, and individual capacity and ideas are reflective

of one's race. From this premise, colonizers have categorized races in a hierarchal manner

to meet their needs, particularly their need to establish dominance over other peoples and

justify their actions. This categorization exemplifies racism or "a way of thinking that

considers a group's unchangeable physical characteristics to be linked in a direct, casual

way to psychological or intellectual characteristics, and which on this basis distinguishes

between 'superior' and 'inferior' racial groups" (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 199). Racism

acts as a means to assign values to the difference between the 'superior' and 'inferior'

groups, or as more accurately explained by Memmi (1969), between the accusers and

victims for the accusers' benefit and at the expense of their victims, in order to justify the

accusers' own privileges or aggression. The categorization also supported the creation of

colonial dialectics such as colonizer/colonized, white/coloured (black, brown, yellow, or

red), and civilized/savage. So, while race was not a creation of imperialism, it has become

a key and supporting component (Mills, 1997).

Nicholas Thomas (1994) forwarded the perspective that racial theory, which

includes racism, should be seen as a discourse. He postulated, as a discourse, racism can

be manifested individually in personal attitudes and responses. However, such

manifestations are the internalization of larger ideologies in an attempt to objectify these

personal manifestations by grounding them in conditions faced by oppressed peoples. In

other words, racism is more than just a xenophobic distaste directed at "others" and

should be seen in the larger context of what it does to support the needs of the oppressor.

The importance of race and racism in colonialism and imperialism is evident in

several writings. James Blaut (1993) drew a distinction between classical racism and

cultural racism in his discussion of colonialism and geographic difussionism. He

explained that classical racism is based upon the idea that there are direct links between

intelligence and genetics where certain races are perceived to be genetically superior to

other races. This thought was the basis of Nazi ideology that believed the Nordic race was

the "Master" race. Cultural racism is an implicit theory where it is postulated that:

> Europeans began with a genetic advantage, large or small, and then, throughout
> later history, they were always to a great or lesser extent favored [*sic*] by the
> influence of their genetic superiority in matters intellectual, giving them superior
> decision-making ability, inventive ability, and so on....European superiority was
> carried along by a kind of subtle undertow of genetics, that this made Europeans
> at all times slightly more "rational"...and therefore, slightly more progressive. (p.
> 64)

Memmi (1965) addressed the concepts throughout his book, *The Colonizer and the*

75

Colonized. One particular form of racism he highlighted was defensive racism. He described this form of racism as the judgment of the colonizer by the colonized that is based upon social and historical factors. He stated that "it is not based on a belief in the inferiority of the detested group [the colonizers] but on the conviction, and in large measure on the observation, that this group is truly an aggressor and dangerous" (p. 131).

Memmi (1969) also identified four racist strategies used by colonizers to maintain power over Indigenous people in his text, *Dominated man: Notes towards a portrait.* These include: (1) stressing real or imaginary differences between European "civilization" and New World "savages"; (2) assigning negative value to differences between the colonizers and the colonized; (3) making these values absolute thus chaining the colonized to a destiny of misfortune, inadequacy, and guilt; and (4) using these absolute values to justify privileges received by the colonizers as a result of the colonial relationship and ensure that the balance of power remains in the colonizers' control. George Manuel and Michael Posluns (1974) explained that these "racial myths were created to justify the seizure of our [Indigenous] land base" (p. 221).

Maintaining these dominating views of race in mind, it is also important to note that the concept of race has been used to unify people. The concept has contributed to a sense of belonging to a group, as well as to a history and culture (McLeod, 2000, p. 111). As such, the use of the concept does not have to be divisive.

Finally, it is important to remember that race is a social construct. There are no definitive characteristics that delineate peoples into sub-species of homo-sapiens.

Nevertheless, race as a social construct within colonialism is evidently a powerful influence on people.

Internalized oppression. Another significant concept to colonization and imperialism is internalized oppression (Poupart, 2003). Erica-Irene Daes (2000) explained that by isolating the colonized from outside sources of information and knowledge, one of the most destructive shared experiences of colonized peoples emerges, that being spiritual and intellectual loneliness. From this loneliness comes "a lack of self-confidence, fear of action, and a tendency to believe that the ravages and pain of colonization are somehow deserved" (p. 7). The colonized then believe the negative opinions of themselves and subsequently they are convinced that they are unfit (Freire, 1993).

Bob Mullaly (2002) explained that internalized oppression includes "not only a *belief* that one's self and one's social group are inferior, but also encompasses the *behaviours* (discursive practices) that are self-harming and contributing to one's own oppression" (p. 124). Fanon (1967) and Duran and Duran (1995) have explained that this internalization begins as early as when a child begins school and is presented with the colonizer's truths, civilization, and attitudes, including the views about the "savages." These are then adopted by the young child. An example of internalization could be Angela Wilson's (2004) experience of setting up a Dakota language preschool program in her community which was stopped internally. She was forced to stop teaching children

the Dakota language by people within the community.

Related to the process of internalized oppression is false consciousness. As explained by Mullaly (2002) and Lisa Poupart (2003), false consciousness is the passive assimilation of the dominant group's ideas and ideology from various sources, such as the school system, to the degree that an individual of the oppressed group would judge herself or himself on the basis of the adopted ideas and ideology. These occur despite the detrimental effect these ideas and ideology have on oppressed peoples, including the oppressed individual making the judgment. As the dominant groups ideas, ideology, and definitions are forced upon and accepted by Indigenous peoples, we then come to define ourselves through these constructions and subsequently participate in the reproduction of these ideas, ideology, and definitions (Poupart, 2003, pp. 87-88).

Upon internalizing the ideology of the oppressor, the colonized become fearful of freedom and the autonomy and responsibility that comes with it (Freire, 1993). Once internalized, the self-worth of the individual and/or group "has sunk to a level of despair tantamount to self-hatred" (Duran & Duran, 1995, p. 29). This self-hatred can be directed inward in forms of self-abuse including chronic substance abuse, self-mutilation, and suicide (Duran & Duran, 1995; Warry 1998). Self-hatred can be directed outward in the form of horizontal or lateral violence, such as Indigenous gang against Indigenous gang violence, spousal abuse, child abuse, sexual violence, and murder (Anderson, 2000; Assembly of First Nations, 1994; Duran & Duran, 1995; Smith, 2005).

Post-colonialism–Postcolonialism

To grasp a wider understanding of colonialism it is necessary to address the more recent

discussions about post-colonialism and postcolonialism. Both of these terms have been

used often to address the same topics. These topics include the study and analysis of

European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialisms, the

discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial

discourse and the resistance of those subjects, and the differing responses to such

incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre- and post-independent

nations and communities (Ashcroft et al., 2002). While these terms have become

interwoven, they also have been applied differently (McLeod, 2000).

As explained by Ashcroft et al. (2002), post-colonialism had a chronological

meaning that referred to the end of the dependence of colonial states on an (the) imperial

state(s). However, they also emphasized that post-colonial critics and theorists should be

wary of restricting the meaning of the term to 'after-colonialism' or after-independence

since all post-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle

forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence has not solved this problem

(Ashcroft et al., 1995; Memmi, 2006; Stewart-Harawira, 2005).

More recently, postcolonialism became a field of study concentrating on the

political, linguistic, and cultural experiences of societies that were colonies of European

states. The term postcolonialism has wider applications as it is a colonial discourse theory

that is also influenced by post-structuralism (Gandhi, 1998). However, it is not simply a

kind of 'postmodernism with politics.' Indeed, During (1995) noted that the concept of

postmodernity has been constructed in a way which wipes out the possibility of post-

colonial identity. Postcolonialism gives sustained attention to the processes of

imperialism in colonial and neocolonial societies, and examines the strategies to subvert

the actual material and discursive effects of that process (Ashcroft et al., 1995).

There are limitations with postcolonial discussion. Leela Gandhi (2000) noted that

she has come to see postcolonial theory as principally addressing the needs of the Amer-

European academy. She stated, "what postcolonialism fails to recognize is that what

counts as 'marginal' in relation to the West has often been central and foundational in the

non-West...postcolonialism continues to render non-Western knowledge and culture as

'other' in relation to the normative 'self' of Western epistemology and rationality" (p. ix-

x). Further, when colonized peoples and cultures are addressed by non-colonized peoples,

the stance is taken, likely unconsciously, that the colonized peoples' views and cultures

can be readily understood. Elleke Boehmer (1995) addressed this point:

> Basically, what is frequently ignored in postcolonial criticism is the difficulty or
> otherness of the postcolonial text: the implication for us as readers of its possibly
> untranslatable cultural specificity. For centuries, scholarship and academic
> disciplines located in Europe, and more recently, in North America, have accepted
> without question the permeability of other cultures to Western understanding.
> Postcolonial discourse analysis is guilty of a similar assumption, despite the
> attention it theoretically pays to cultural difference. This can be the case whether
> the critics involved are well known, or whether they write for the many small
> postcolonial journals which have found niches in the academy. It is widely taken
> for granted that post-imperial cultural diversity is not only comparable across
> regions, but is all more or less equally transparent and accessible to European,
> North American, or Australian reader, especially given a shared history of
> colonization. What we often find is that an ahistorical hybridity is set up as a
> universal category or structural principle bracketing together writing from very

different countries. (p. 245)

Thus, while postcolonialism discourse adds to the discussion of colonialism its effort to challenge colonial ways of knowing through authors such as Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabba, and Edward Said (McLeod, 2000), it does not well address practical aspects of colonialism. As noted by Carol Boyce Davis (1994, cited in McLeod, 2000, p. 32), numerous people continue to exist in colonial situations, including those of us facing internal colonialism, such as Indigenous peoples in Canada. With this last point in mind, postcolonialism is not the same as after colonialism. Instead it attempts to recognize that the material realities and modes of representation common to colonialism continue to exist and work today while also recognizing that important changes and challenges have been achieved (McLeod, 2000).

Key Contributors

There are many authors addressing colonialism and postcolonialism. Two writers addressing colonialism, who arguably are the most influential ones, are Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon. Three other writers who have been referred to as the three central writers addressing postcolonialism are Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Edward Said. Two other writers, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and James Blaut, have written on colonialism and postcolonialism in a manner that is relevant to this thesis. Finally, George Manuel has addressed colonialism and postcolonialism in a manner directly relating to Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. All of these writers are briefly reviewed in this section.

Albert Memmi. Memmi (1965) presented an overview of the relationship between the colonized and colonizer. He began by suggesting that a colonial, or a small colonizer who does not have power, does not exist. He explained that all colonizers have power and privilege, just by the fact they are treated differently–better–for being a member of the colonizer group. There may be individuals of the colonizer group who intend to work against the colonial system, but they quickly learn that they are unable to create change without completely forgoing their own sense of identity. In other words, they may be supportive of the emancipation of the colonized, but only to the degree that they do not have to surrender their own world and worldview. Meanwhile the colonized continue to be treated in an oppressed manner. Their identities are imposed on them by the colonizers and their opportunities are based upon these identities. These identities usually include negative and demeaning characteristics. Upon internalizing these characteristics, the colonized present these images back to colonizers.

Memmi suggested two ways the colonized attempt to get out of the colonial situation: assimilation or revolt. However, both of these efforts keep the colonized tied to the colonial system since both of them are dependent upon it. Assimilation means adopting the customs, values, beliefs, and views of the colonizer. However, the colonized are never fully accepted and will continue to be rejected by colonizers. Revolt means doing the opposite of what the colonial system has imposed since the colonized are too far removed from their own culture, values, beliefs, and views to put them into action. In such circumstances, revolt is only a reaction to the colonial situation since colonization

acts as a basis to their actions. Memmi concluded that the only way out of the situation is

through a revolution where each colonized individual must become responsible for his or

her own thoughts, ideas, and actions. He stated:

> In order that his [her] liberation may be complete, he [or she] must free himself [or herself] from those inevitable conditions of his [or her] struggle....He [or she] must reconquer himself [or herself] and be free in relation to the religion of his [or her] group, which he [or she] can retain or reject, but he [or she] must stop existing only through it. The same applies to the past, tradition, ethnic characteristics, etc. Finally, he [or she] must cease defining himself [or herself] through the categories of the colonizers...Having reconquered all his [or her] dimensions, the former colonized will have become a man [or woman] like any other. (pp. 152-153)

It is worthwhile to note that following such a conclusion means that a colonized

individual is required to sever collective ties to the peoples of which he or she is a part.

Frantz Fanon. Fanon iterated several important points related to colonialism. In

Black Skin, White Masks Fanon (1967) outlined the effects of a racist culture on the

psychological health of a colonized person. He explained in his earlier text, *The Wretched*

of the Earth (Fanon, 1963), that "the colonial world is cut in two where...the education

system serves to create around the colonized person an atmosphere of submission and of

inhibition" (p. 38). Such systems that are based on racist ideas and ideology support the

generation of harmful psychological constructs that blind a colonized person to his or her

oppression and incorporation of a universalized white norm. Fanon (1967) further

explained that this colonial oppression alienates the person from her or his own sense of

identity: "The black man [or woman] wants to be like the white man [or woman]. For the

black man [or woman] there is only one destiny. And it is white" (p. 228). On the other hand, Fanon (1963) has also suggested that resisting colonial oppression brings psychological benefits.

Fanon (1967) also explained the role of language. He stated that "to speak the language is to take on a world" (p. 38) which "means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (pp. 17-18). Thus, to speak the colonizer's language means internalizing, whether by choice or force, the worldviews of the language, including the colonizer's views of the oppressed. Under such conditions, the colonized is alienated from himself since the degree to which the colonized is elevated above his or her low status is in proportion to the adoption of the mother country's cultural standards.

Another significant point is Fanon's discussion of violence in the colonial relationship. Fanon sees colonialism as violence perpetrated on the colonized. He espoused the view that it is through violence that the colonial system could be totally destroyed and a new world would evolve (1963). As such, Fanon's view of decolonization appears extreme. However, he also espoused a counter narrative of deconstructive power. He moved away from nationalist identities, since they were a reflection of the imperialist hegemony, to political and social consciousness where general collectivities, such as African or Islamic, would have precedence over particular ones, such as autonomous tribes (Said, 1994). Fanon also wanted to bind the European and the colonized together in the *process* of liberation to form a non-adversarial community with awareness of anti-imperialism. Thus, Fanon's emphasis on armed

struggle is at most tactical (Said, 1994).

There is a significant point raised by Wilson (2004) regarding Fanon that needs to be considered when utlizing Fanon's ideas in relation to Indigenous peoples. Fanon (1963) was not supportive of Indigenous people returning to their traditional knowledge as a means of overcoming the oppression they faced. Instead, Fanon directed underdeveloped countries "to do their utmost to find their own particular values and methods and a style which shall be peculiar to them" (p. 99). This stance blocks the path which many Indigenous peoples have taken, specifically the embracing of "the traditions of our past and advocating a return to those ways, beliefs, and values" (Wilson, 2004, p. 70).

Finally, but most importantly, it should be noted that Fanon's portrayal of women is quite poor, which in-and-of-itself demonstrates the need for awareness of cross oppression, such as colonial and gender oppression.

Gayatri Spivak. A topic introduced by Spivak that has been frequently addressed is the subaltern's ability to speak. A subaltern, as explained by Gramsci, is an individual of a group in a society who is subjected to the hegemony of the ruling class (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000, p. 215) In her article, "Can the subaltern speak?" Spivak (1988) presented the circumstances around a Bengali woman's suicide, an indication that these circumstances represented a failed attempt at self-representation. This young woman attempted to speak outside the normal patriarchal channels, but was not heard or

supported. While Spivak has been misinterpreted by other writers who have suggested

she is not allowing the subaltern to speak, she actually meant that "even when the

subaltern makes an effort to the death to speak, she [or he] is not able to be heard, and

speaking and hearing complete the speech act" (Spivak, Landry, and MacLean, 1996).

She also implied in the article that a 'true' subaltern, "whose identity is its difference"

(Spivak, 1988, p. 285) is not able to speak in her or his own discourse and worldview.

When a subaltern does find a way to be heard, she or he has changed to "become visible"

and speaks from the dominant discourse that provides the language and the conceptual

categories which are heard by the dominant groups (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 219).

Interestingly, Parry (1995) suggested that Spivik, in demanding disciplinary standards,

has restricted, if not eliminated, "the space in which the colonized can be written back

into history, even when 'interventionist possibilities' are exploited through the

deconstructive strategies devised by the post-colonial intellectual" (p. 40).

Homi Bhabba. Concentrating on deconstructing colonial discourse, Bhabha

reiterated the proposition that the objective of colonial discourse is to justify conquest and

rule. He also explained that the relationship between power and knowledge is an

ambivalent one. This ambivalence results in a heterogeneously identified colonized

person who can be variously positioned. One result of this diversity for the colonized

person is that by taking and using the terms of the dominate ideology for her or his own

benefit, he or she is able to resist the construction of his or her identity and the colonial

processes (Parry, 1995). As explained by Bhabha (1995):

> If the effect of colonial power is seen to be the production of hybridization rather than the noisy command of colonialist authority or the silent repression of native traditions, then an important change of perspective occurs. The ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority enables a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention. (p. 35)

Parry (1995) outlined Bhabha's argument more clearly when she explained that the colonized person does not possess colonial power, but is able to fracture colonial discourse by taking possession of it and reiterating it in broken English where the meaning and message is changed. Through such acts, the absolute power is undermined and impossible.

Edward Said. A significant concept related to colonialism introduced by Said (1978) is Orientalism, where he presented a whole way of constructing and knowing the other (Ashcroft et al., 2000) while not actually seeing the other (Falk, 2001). He described Orientalism as what is said by anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient either in its specific or its general aspects. These writings come to naturalize a wide range of Orientalist assumptions and stereotypes (Ashcroft et al., 2000). He also explained it in a more general manner as a style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and "the Occident" (Falk, 2001). Once again, this thought is based upon the discourse developed by the West. The resultant relationship between the Orient and the Occident is one of power, domination, and varying degrees of complex hegemony (Ashcroft et al., 2000).

However, Said (1994) also noted a significant point that relates to the potential for

anti-colonialism. He stated:

> It bears repeating that no matter how apparently complete the dominance of an
> ideology or social system, there are always going to be parts of the social
> experience that it does not cover and control. From these parts very frequently
> comes opposition, both self-conscious and dialectical. This is not as complicated
> as it sounds. Opposition to a dominant structure arises out of a perceived, perhaps
> even militant awareness on the part of the individuals and groups outside and
> inside it that, for example, certain of its policies are wrong. (Said, 1994, p. 240)

Thomas (1994) noted that while Said's critical review of the Orient was and

continues to be appropriate, it is still a discourse about one part of the world, at a

particular moment in political history. As such this critique will be incomplete and an

inadequate review of colonialism in other areas and times.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. Thiong'o (1986) focussed on the benefits of utilizing local

Indigenous languages within local traditions to support the local community. By utilizing

the Indigenous language a writer, reader, or storyteller is better able to access the

experience of the local people as well as their local traditions. He explained that by

working in Indigenous languages, colonized people are countering the effect of the

cultural bomb. The intent and effect of the cultural bomb is:

> To annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their
> environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and
> ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of
> nonachievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that
> wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed
> from themselves; for instance, with other peoples' languages rather than their
> own. (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 3)

Significant to this view espoused by Thiong'o, is the metonymic gap (Ashcroft et al., 2000). In one of his plays, *A Grain of Wheat* (Thiong'o, cited in Ashcroft et al., 2000), Thiong'o has one of his characters sing in Gikuyu. Through the use of an Indigenous language, the non-speakers of the language experience a gap in understanding that is inaccessible to them. While this gap appears to be empty for the colonizer, in one way it speaks volumes in that it is the part that represents the whole. In other words, it comes to stand for the colonized's culture and the difference it holds. It emphasizes that the colonizer cannot share the experience of the colonized (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 137).

James Blaut. Blaut (1993) presented the premise that all scholarship that axiomatically accepts the "Inside-Outside model" is diffusionist. The Inside-Outside model is "the notion that the world as a whole has one permanent centre from which culture-changing ideas tend to originate, and a vast periphery that changes as a result (mainly) of diffusion from that single center [*sic*]" (p. 13). Diffusionism is an ultra theory that starts with two self-evident propositions: First, most communities are uninventive, and second, a few communities are inventive and thus act as the permanent centres of cultural change or progress (Henderson, 2000a). These propositions create a duality of Insider and Outsider that is evident in colonial discourses of European Insiders and non-European Outsiders, where the Insider part of the world is inventive, creative, historical, and progressive and the Outsider part of the world is imitative, uncreative, ahistorical, traditional, and stagnant, if not backwards (Blaut, 1993; Henderson, 2000a). Further, the

Outside, or the non-European world, is seen as an emptiness of cultural institutions and

people. The reason for the institutional emptiness is the non-European's lack of

intellectual or spiritual character that apparently is evident in the European mind. This

additional proposition of emptiness makes a series of claims:

> (i) A non-European region is empty or nearly empty of people (hence settlement
> by Europeans does not displace any native people). (ii) The region is empty of
> settled population: the inhabitants are mobile, nomadic, wanderers (hence
> European settlement violates no political sovereignty, since wanderers make no
> claim to territory). (iii) The cultures of this region do not possess an understanding
> of private property–that is, the region is empty of property rights and claims
> (hence colonial occupiers can freely give land to settlers since no one owns it).
> The final layer, applied to all of the Outside sector, is an emptiness of intellectual
> creativity and spiritual values, something described by Europeans (as, for
> instance, by Max Weber) as an absence of "rationality." (Blaut, 1993, p. 15)

From these propositions, it is further proposed that European colonialism brings

civilization to the non-European world. It is also evident from these propositions that

another one emerges. Since Europe is civilized and creative, and non-Europe is

backwards, then any ideas stemming from the non-European world must be "ancient,

savage, atavistic, uncivilized, evil–black magic, vampires, plagues,'the bogeyman,' and

the like" (Blaut, 1993, p. 16). Further, the greater the distance away from Europe a non-

European group is based, the less civilized or evolved they are thought to be.

Blaut (1993) suggested that diffusionism has not only shaped peoples'– both

European and non-European – views of history, but influenced such areas as psychology,

geography, economics, and sociology.

George Manuel. George Manuel travelled internationally and upon seeing

conditions in other parts of the world, particularly other colonized Indigenous nations who were facing the same conditions as those found in Canada, came to the conclusion that the First, Second, and Third Worlds would not come to the aid of his people. He also realized that First Nations people share the same vision, experiences, and traditional cultural ways with other Indigenous nations throughout the world. The original nations throughout the world, Manuel reasoned, are the Fourth World (Ryser, 1995). More clearly, the Fourth World peoples are "[I]ndigenous peoples descended from a country's [A]boriginal population...who today are completely or partly deprived of the right to their own territory and its riches" (Gage, 1991, p. 46). But, Manuel also saw the Fourth World as a journey towards decolonization, "a Long March" (Manuel & Posluns, 1974, p. 261). Manuel expressed the belief that it would be Fourth World nations that would support other Fourth World nations.

The Fourth World encompasses Indigenous peoples maintaining their sense of identity while acting and making decisions on their own behalf. It also requires dispelling the myths that gave rise to false dilemmas, such as wanting to maintain an Indigenous sense of identity and wanting to live decently. To maintain a sense of Indigenous identity from a Fourth World perspective means that Indigenous people would gain control of the economic and social development of the Indigenous communities within a framework of legal and constitutional guarantees. It also means Aboriginal and treaty rights are recognized and will act as the mainspring of "future economic and social independence" (Manuel & Posluns, 1974, p. 222). The Fourth World includes a "structure and style and

economic organization that allows the whole community to share in those good things

[material goals], and to decide which are the higher priorities in moving toward that

ultimate goal" (p. 246). This organization requires those who have become educated to

return to their community to share in the knowledge gained for the benefit of the

community since "education is the first key to the Fourth World" (p. 251).

To implement this Fourth World means of organizing requires changing the

colonial relationship to the Fourth World perspective. Manuel explained that, "we

[Indigenous peoples] cannot become equal members in *your* society. We *can* become a

member of a new society in which everyone chooses to share. But that cannot happen

until you begin to reconsider and reformulate your understanding, and your view of the

world, as we have begun to reformulate ours" (Manuel & Posluns, 1974, p. 261).

Blinding Indigenous Worldviews

Eugene Pichette, Michael Garrett, John Kosciulek, and David Rosenthal (1999) and Polly

Walker (2004) and Little Bear (2000) emphasized that Indigenous worldviews are vastly

different from the dominant cultural worldview in western societies. This reflects

Benjamin Whorf's (1956, cited in Battiste & Henderson, 2000) suggestion that radically

different languages with radically different structures create radically different

worldviews. For example, Duran and Duran (2000) noted that the Native American

worldview can be categorized as process thinking while the Western worldview can be

categorized as concept thinking. Process thinking can be understood through explanations

92

given by such authors as Battiste and Henderson (2000), Leroy Little Bear (2000; also

cited in Alfred, 2005) and Cajete (2000) who have noted that most Indigenous languages,

particularly in North America, are verb based while Indo-European languages are centred

on nouns. Being verb based, Indigenous people see the world as active and alive. Life is

then an interrelationship of active perceptions and actions between all that makes up

natural reality (Cajete, 2000, Little Bear, 2000). Alternatively, Little Bear (cited in Alfred,

2005) suggests European languages focus on naming things, describing traits, and making

judgments.

Recognizing the differences in worldviews, Battiste and Henderson (2000) have

emphasized the need to strengthen and develop Indigenous languages and worldviews

within their own contexts. They suggested that any interference is domination, both

cognitively and culturally, and that every Indigenous language has a right to exist without

conforming to Eurocentric language or worldviews. They also suggested that equally

important as strengthening Indigenous languages and worldviews is being honest about

Eurocentric languages and worldviews. "The failure to admit differences in worldviews is

also domination" (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p. 74-75).

Despite the difference in worldviews and the need to support the differences, Gill

(2002) noted that many scholars are hesitant to address comprehensive concepts such as

worldviews. He suggested that "it is frequently claimed by philosophers that Native

Americans and other nonliterate peoples do not really have a coherent view of the world

because they have not yet conceived of the possibility and/or necessity of sequential and

critical thought" (p. 18). Thus, when most professors describe the "world," they describe Eurocentric contexts and ignore Indigenous perspectives and understandings. "For most Aboriginal students, the realization of their invisibility is similar to looking into a still lake and note seeing their image" (Henderson, 2000a, p. 76). This situation is not limited to the experiences of the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. Indeed, Eurocentric thought has come to mediate the entire world to the point where worldviews that differ from Eurocentric thought are regulated to the periphery, if they are acknowledged at all (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Blaut, 1993). When they are acknowledged, Indigenous worldviews are analyzed most often through a Eurocentric point of view.

This marginalization or blinding of Indigenous worldviews "has been and continues to be one of the major tools of colonization" (Walker, 2004, p. 531). Indeed, Canadian educators, regardless of program level, daily ask that Indigenous peoples acquiesce to or fit within the Canadian version of the world while ignoring our Indigenous perspectives. Society demands that we either achieve within this Eurocentric model of education or live a life of poverty and welfare as the uneducated and unemployed or unemployable. Thus, in one way or another we are regularly forced to validate the colonialists' mythology. We are being forced to sacrifice Indigenous worldviews and values for norms outside traditional cultural aims (Henderson, 2000a, p. 59).

Marginalization of Indigenous Ways of Helping

As explained by Sinclair (2004) social work education and practice is not free from

colonial influence. She presents the example of an Indigenous social work student

learning about cross-cultural practice, which Sinclair explains is ludicrous:

> The cross cultural or minority 'client' is automatically labelled as the 'other.' This
> forces the Aboriginal student to take a dominant subjective stance with respect to
> issues of diversity because they are never requested to examine their work with
> 'white' individuals as cross-cultural. They are required to perceive of themselves
> and their people as 'other' who is in need of assistance. (p. 52)

In other words, the perspective that Indigenous social work students, and social workers

generally, are most often required to take is to assume a particular cultural concept of the

person. This perspective, the dominating Eurocentric perspective, has associated values of

individualism and self-efficacy. As explained by Kirmayer, Brass, and Tait (2000) the

approaches stemming from this perspective may not fit well either with Indigenous

cultural values or the realities of Indigenous life. Bonnie Duran and Eduardo Duran

(2000), in addressing psychology, are more pointed in their statements. They noted that

Western thinking does not address any system of cognition except its own. Further:

> To assume that phenomena from another worldview can be adequately explained
> from a total foreign worldview is the essence of psychological and philosophical
> and philosophical imperialism. This lack of theoretical and clinical relevance is
> clearly demonstrated all over the Third and Fourth Worlds and is currently the
> topic of theoretical debate within the academy. (pp. 95-96)

In light of such differences Kirmayer et al. (2000) and I (2003) have suggested

that there is a need to rethink the applicability of such differences in modes of

intervention. For example, Duran and Duran (2000) noted differences between

Indigenous and Western psychotherapy. Western ways of helping, particularly

psychotherapy, entails a linear passage of time in which the client's/community's concern

or problem can resolved. In Indigenous thinking, this idea of passing time for resolving

concerns makes no sense. Instead, Indigenous healing holds intensity as the factor of

importance (Duran & Duran, 2000, p. 92). We need to consider the perspective of local

community values and aspirations and recognize that family and social network

approaches which emphasize the relational self may be more constant with Indigenous

cultures (Kirmayer, Brass, & Tait, 2000).

It has been suggested that Indigenous concepts and practices are beginning to be

accepted within social work (McKenzie and Morrissette, 2003). However, it has been

noted that, "too often these are marginalized or viewed as secondary to the strategies and

techniques emerging from the dominant paradigm" (p. 262). This concern of

marginalizing is heightened whenever we acknowledge the extent to which our teaching

and learning in mainstream social work education programs are based on dominantly-

held, middle-class, patriarchal and white values (Mawhiney, 1995, p. 226). Further, while

there is discussion about integrating Amer-European and Indigenous approaches in order

to address the problem of marginalization of Indigenous ways of helping, for the most

part, the effort seems to be concentrated in the realm of academic discussion (Duran &

Duran, 1995). Sadly, some authors believe that this marginalization, particularly in social

work, will continue to give the absence of infrastructure to support Indigenous knowledge

development (Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999, p. 274). Duran and Duran (1995) have

suggested that the problem of where the concentrated effort rests does not lie so much

with traditional helping practitioners in Indigenous communities as it does with Amer-

European practitioners. "Western practitioners approach traditional healing methods with

skepticism while expecting absolute faith from the traditionals in orthodox Western-

orientated therapeutic strategies" (Duran & Duran, 1995, p. 9).

Critique of Colonial Theory

Colonization as a theory has been critiqued. Wotherspoon and Satzwich (1993) suggested

that there are no clear distinctions to determine when colonization began, and that there

have not been any noted changes in motives, practices and techniques of colonization

over time. They also suggested that colonization does not consider the type of social and

economic production that characterizes non-Indigenous societies, and that Indigenous and

White people are treated as homogenous groups with all people within each group having

similar interests. Wotherspoon and Satzwich also extend their critique by questioning the

applicability of Frideres' (2001) internal colonization theory to alternate situations of

Indigenous peoples. They suggested that the situations some Indigenous peoples are

confronting do not conform to the one espoused by Frideres. Wilkins (1993), in

addressing the experience on Turtle Island, also focussed on treating the dominant and

oppressed groups in a homogenous manner: "These models [colonization theories]

provide only a partial explanation and cannot cope with tribal differentiation, especially

as it pertains to socioeconomic and political disparities between various reservation

communities...An overemphasis on the external environment implies that tribes are

merely reflections of exogenous changes" (p. 405).

Each of these points in the critique of colonialism and imperialism have been

more thoroughly addressed by Thomas (1994). As an alternative, he suggested that

colonialism should not be seen as a single narrative applicable to all situations of

colonization regardless of the time period, but as a series of projects that incorporate

representations, narratives, and practical efforts that are best understood in relation to

their particular time and historical, political, and cultural context. His points tend to

reflect a postmodern review of colonialism.

Decolonization, Anti-colonialism, and Indigenism

Decolonization

Colonization, including the marginalization of Indigenous knowledge and ways of

helping, is a deep seeded and overwhelming experiences that any attempt to resist it is a

daunting and complex task. One means of challenging colonization is decolonization,

another daunting task (Battiste, 1998, p. 20). Decolonization attempts to reveal and

dismantle colonial power in all its forms (Ashcroft et al., 2000). Churchill (2004)

explained that in the context of Turtle Island, it is:

> The assertion and recognition by American Indians of the right to self-
> determination repeatedly confirmed in international law as being vested in *all*
> peoples, 'by virtue of [which], they freely determine their political status and
> freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. More concretely,
> this means the extension of unfettered [I]ndigenous jurisdiction over the full
> extent of the territories explicitly reserved by native peoples for their own use and

occupancy in their treaties with the U.S. and Canada, as well as such territories as were expropriated from them through fraudulent or coerced treaties. Within these reconstituted homelands–an aggregate totaling [*sic*] perhaps half the continent–it follows that [I]ndigenous nations, *not* North America's settler state governments, will exercise complete control over everything from natural resources disposition, to their form(s) of government, to the criteria of citizenship. (p. 79)

This perspective reflects Fanon's (1963) comment that "decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder" (p. 36).

In other words, decolonization is a process, not an arrival, that changes the present order of society, or more appropriately, societies. In this process understanding history is essential (Fanon, 1963; Smith, 1999; Ashcroft et al., 1995). It involves re-educating ourselves on the colonial processes and its effects (Smith, 1999, p. 23). Wheeler (nee Stevenson, 2000, p. 212) identified that a large part of decolonization entails developing a critical consciousness about the cause(s) of our oppression, the distortion of history, our own collaboration, and the degrees to which we have internalized colonialist ideas and practices. This development requires the breaking down of many beliefs that have shaped and been adopted by those of who have been colonized (Fanon, 1967). For example, Churchill (2003a) explained that we need to break down the codes of denial at both individual and institutional levels, by which the colonizing society has shielded itself from the implications of its own values and resulting actions. He explained further:

> The process is in part simply a matter of insisting that things be called by their right names rather than the noble-sounding euphemisms behind which reality has been so carefully hidden: terms like "discovery" and "settlement" do not reflect the actualities of invasion and conquest they are used to disguise; colonialism is not a matter of "trust," it is colonialism, a crime under international law; genocide isn't an "inadvertent" outcome of "progress," it is genocide, an *always* avoidable crime against humanity; ecocide is not "development," it is ecocide, the most

blatant and irremediable form of environmental destruction; mere possession constitutes "nine-tenths of the law" only among things devoted to enjoying the fruits of an organized system of theft. (Churchill, 2003a, pp. 139-140)

Clearly, decolonization requires the rejection of victimage (Stevenson, 2000) and an acknowledgment of the illegitimacy of Eurocentric thought in defining Indigenous knowledge and people (Battiste, 1998, p. 24), especially in light of the position that "no form of decolonization has *ever* been realistic when viewed within the construct of a colonialist paradigm" (Churchill, 2003b, p. 107, italics in original). It is also about changing negative, reactionary energy into more positive rebuilding energy needed in our communities (Stevenson, 2000, p. 212). In other words, decolonization needs to be preemptive and proactive where we name the world for ourselves, rather than being sidetracked into being overly concerned with reactive responses (Freire, 1993; Smith, 2000). While we recognize that there are multiple sites where the struggle against colonialism might be taken up, we Indigenous people must set the agenda for change ourselves, not simply to react to an agenda that has been laid out for us by others (Smith, 2000, p. 210).

Indigenous peoples must break our silence and struggle to retake possession of our humanity, identity, and knowledge (Battiste, 1998; Henderson, 2000). Indeed, a decolonizing framework cannot be constructed without Indigenous people's renewing and reconstructing the principles underlying their own worldview, environment, languages, and how these construct our humanity (Battiste, 1998, p. 24). It also encompasses relearning a sense of authenticity and how indigenous peoples were before colonization

so that we can recover ourselves and claim space in which to develop a sense of authentic

humanity (Smith, 1999). Such relearning includes reaffirming our belief in our traditional

knowledge, and strengthening our health, diet, and relation to the land (Battiste, 1998).

One interpretation of this directive to set our own agenda is that decolonization

must be distinctive to Indigenous peoples and developed from the principles that allowed

us to live a sustainable existence (Wilson, 2004, p. 71). Another interpretation is that the

colonized Indigenous peoples have to initially share Eurocentric thought and discourse

with our oppressors. From that point, we then reconsider this Eurocentric discourse and

move away from such a place to create models to help us to understand and reinvent

Indigenous discourses based on our heritage and language (Henderson, 2000b, pp. 249-

250).

Lynes (2002) noted a challenge that relates to the second interpretation of the

directive to retake possession of our humanity and identity. He explained that there is a

dialect within this situation where those working for self-determination by learning such

things as Eurocentric discourse are at risk of being seen as betraying a tradition of

resistance. This dialectic is heightened when considering Lynes' reiteration of Fanon's

discussion of decolonization, specifically "that the longer and stronger the tradition of

resistance to assimilation, the greater the need to represent this resistance as itself part of

the evolving nature of the cultural tradition to be affirmed" (p. 1061). In other words,

learning Eurocentric discourse may not be seen as resistance. The question arises whether

someone really is betraying their cultural heritage rather than creatively furthering its

survival and development when they include Eurocentric discourse in their deliberations.

Lynes claimed that an answer to the question can never be definitively established. He

stated:

> Just where one stands, as well as the status of one's activities in the process of
> decolonization is always going to be more or less contentious. This is because the
> process itself is necessarily situated between the need to clearly demarcate a
> unique and distinctive cultural tradition on one hand, and the need to respect the
> nature of its evolving character, on the other. The more this evolution includes a
> continual vigilance towards resistance against the assimilating impetus of Western
> politics, economics, justice, and culture, the more difficult it becomes to accept
> the potential contributions of non-[I]ndigenous ingenuity, no matter who it is
> introduced by. (pp. 1061-1062).

In light of this challenge, decolonization at least requires self-reflection and autocriticism

(Stevenson, 2000, p. 212).

It is important to note that while critical reflection of decolonization and

deconstruction as academic concepts and discourses will serve some purpose, they will

not necessarily bring us a better state of existence as Indigenous peoples, particularly

since deconstruction and decolonization can be forwarded without relationality and

accountability to Indigenous communities (Weber-Pillwax, 2001). Further, colonized

Indigenous peoples cannot be content to reach into the past to find coherent elements to

counteract the colonial attempt to falsify and harm the colonized. Decolonization needs to

include actions. These actions need to take up and clarify themes that support the

colonized and to undermine ways of thinking that support and perpetuate colonial social

structures within colonial societies (Fanon, 1963; Lynes, 2002). Raven Sinclair (2004)

noted this need when she explained that decolonization is a contemporary imperative

which requires culturally appropriate and sociologically relevant teaching and healing

models that evolve and translate into direct action. Thus, the need for relation and

accountability to Indigenous communities also is integral to this process.

Although he did not utilize the term 'decolonization' Harold Cardinal (1969)

explained the process and the need for action in relation to the situation in Canada in

1969. I believe his comments continue to be relevant today:

> Before we can take our place in a larger society, we must regain our own
> confidence and self-respect. To do this we must be allowed to rebuild our own
> social institutions, torn down by their white counterparts. We must rebuild our
> structures of social and political leadership, demoralized and undermined for a
> hundred years by the Department of Indian Affairs; we must restore our family
> unit, shaken and shattered by the residential school system [and child welfare
> system]; we must rebuild communications between the younger and older
> generations of our people. We must recognize the negative images of Indianness
> are false; the Canadian government must recognize that assimilation, no matter
> what it is called will never work. Both Indian and non-Indian must realize that
> there is a valid, lasting Indian identity. (p. 25)

Poka Laenui (2000) also outlined the process for decolonization that addresses

several of the points focussed on earlier. He generalized the process and presented it in

five phases. In the first phase, entitled "Rediscovery and Recovery," through the

colonized peoples' curiosity, despair, accident and/or coincidence, a desire to escape the

oppression, or fate, they begin to study their own history. Thus, this phrase is marked by

the rediscovery of one's own culture, language, and identity. In the second phase,

"Mourning," colonized people lament their victimization. This lamentation is essential to

healing from the harm inflicted by the colonizing processes. In the crucial third phrase,

"Dreaming," the full panorama of possibilities is expressed and considered through

debate and consultation between the colonized people. The intent is the building of

dreams on further dreams. During this phrase the colonized people consider their own

forms of self-direction, the institutions which reflect this direction, and the desired social

order. This must run its course in that short sighted goals measured by material gain

cannot overrun these dreams. During the "Commitment" phrase, the people make clear

statements that outline their desired direction for the society to move. In the final phrase,

"Action," proactive steps are taken based on a consensus of the people. In outlining these

phases, Laenui explained that each one can be experienced at the same time or in various

combinations since these phases of decolonization do not have clear demarcations

between them.

In relation to Indigenous social work, Sinclair (2004) explained that the

decolonization of Indigenous people is the goal. It is established through methodologies

that critically present colonization within a historical context and integrate healing

methods based upon Indigenous epistemology and knowledge. Further, decolonization

within Indigenous worldviews requires the social work practitioners and educators to

include a focus on healing themselves in order to act as a role models who are:

> Expected to challenge stereotypes, address issues of oppression and internalized
> colonization, reclaim and contextualize Aboriginal history, acquire western
> theoretical and practice knowledge, engage in reconstruction of Aboriginal
> epistemology and pedagogical forms, and synthesize these tasks into a form that
> meets the mandate of Elders, the requirements of western institutions and
> regulatory bodies, and needs of students. (Sinclair, 2004, p. 57)

This decolonization process through the recovery of Indigenous knowledge,

including the decolonization of social work, is seen as survivalist in nature because of its

potential to restore health and dignity to Indigenous people, and how it will assist us in

advancing our political aims as Indigenous people (Wilson, 2004). Also, this blatant

dedication to Indigenous goals is openly political because it defies those who have been

defining our existence for us and who have attempted to make us believe we are

incapable of self-determination. This means as Indigenous peoples and scholars our first

obligation in the process is to our nations (Sinclair, 2004; Wilson, 2004, p. 74) since

decolonization is about empowerment and the belief and trust in our own peoples' values,

abilities to change the situations, and willingness to make change (Stevenson, 2000, p.

212).

It is important to recognize that while this discussion has focussed on Indigenous

peoples, the process of decolonization is not just an Indigenous responsibility. It must

also involve colonizers learning new ways of relating to people who are different from

them. As explained practically and personally by Patricia Monture-Angus (1996), "it is

very difficult to honour my commitment to live in a decolonized way when I survive in an

enclavement where others ([A]boriginal and not) continue to remain committed to the

entrenchment of the colonizers' ways. So far, my efforts to decolonize my own life and

mind have proven to be a long and difficult process" (p. 337). The importance of

Monture-Angus' note of the long and difficult process to decolonize is heightened when

we consider Wilson's (2004) comment. She stated, "the strength of our Indigenous

cultures rests in our ability to exert our humanity through the decolonization of our minds

and the transformation of the world around us while recognizing that our truths stem from

the eternal nature of our languages, ceremonies, worldviews, and values" (p. 84).

Anti-colonialism

Another theoretical perspective is anti-colonialism. Like other critical social theories and

critical post-modernism, anti-colonialism takes a political stance. George Dei (2000)

explained that it is anchored in the Indigenous sense of collective and common colonial

consciousness where colonialism is conceptualized as imposed and dominating. It sees

colonialism as a continuing process. As stated by Graham Smith (2000):

> I do not believe for an instant that we are in a postcolonial period. I do not think
> we have seen the last of colonization; on the contrary, it is very much alive and
> well. What has happened in recent years is the creation of an illusion that
> colonization is no longer practised–that somehow the "white" world now
> understands this phenomenon and is able to desist from it. This, of course, is a
> myth...What has happened is that the processes of colonization have been
> reformed in different and more subtle ways. Many of these new formations are
> insidious, and many of them have yet to be fully exposed. (Smith, 2000, p. 215)

Similarly, Makere Stewart-Harawira (2005) explained that colonialism continues in

territories such as Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. In these places the relationships

between Indigenous peoples and states have been reassessed and structures for more

participatory forms of governance have been negotiated to varying degrees. However,

these actions brought new and increasing influential forms of liberalism that shaped the

relationships between Indigenous peoples and the settler societies in frequently

problematic ways. In particular the undermining of Indigenous sense of the collectivity

has aroused growing concern. Stewart-Harawira presented the example of this

undermining where Indigenous identities have been reshaped and corporate institutions

are constructed as pseudo-traditional social and cultural institutions. "Within this

neocolonial framework, [I]ndigenous knowledge forms are subjected to commodification,

on one hand, and, on the other, devaluation and marginalization through reductionist

reconstructions" (Stewart-Harawira, 2005, p. 179).

Thus, anti-colonialism is understood to be the political struggle of colonized

peoples against the specific and existing ideology and practice of colonialism (Ashcroft et

al., 2000). As Smith (2000) noted, it is the proactive position of resistance that Indigenous

people have adopted or should adopt to challenge these neocolonial frameworks. The

challenge includes resistance to the operations of colonialism in political, economic, and

cultural institutions (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 14). Anti-colonialism questions institutional

power and privilege and the rationale for dominance, and acknowledges the intertwining

role state, societal, and institutional structures play in producing and reproducing

inequalities. This questioning also includes the interrogations of "the power configuration

embedded in ideas, cultures and histories of knowledge production and use" (Dei, 2000,

p. 117).

In relation to ideas and knowledge production, Leanne Simpson (2004) suggested

that anti-colonialism includes the development of strategies that have a focus on the

recovery of traditional Indigenous knowledge. Indeed, Dei (2000) suggested that

Indigenous knowledge acts as its entry point. Locally produced knowledge is recognized

as important and where social understanding is developed from local language and

Indigenous cognitive categories and cultural logic. Strategies based on such an

understanding require deconstruction of the colonial thinking and its relationship to

traditional Indigenous knowledge. Hence anti-colonialism also includes a critical analysis

of colonialism and how it has led to the current state of traditional Indigenous knowledge.

Significant, if not primary, to analysis of the present state of Indigenous

knowledge is diffusionism, as explained previously. Anti-colonial thought works to

denaturalize the discourse of diffusionism and spell out this narrative. Mary Louise Pratt

(2004) noted this point in greater detail:

> Diffusion is often represented as a process of substitution and replication
> whereby, say,...Western education replaces native education; the modern and
> universal replaces the traditional and local...Imperial ideology naturalized or
> normalized this process (the substitution of an inferior paradigm with a superior
> one) as if Peter Amato puts it, "the economic and political realities of the
> modernization of Europe had to create this modern Africa only insofar as it is
> their byproducts." Anti-colonial accounts recover it differently, as structured
> intervention combining physical and epistemological violence. (Pratt, 2004, p.
> 452)

In its place anti-colonial writers present an alternate set of questions, techniques and

strategies in order to create an anti-oppressive discourse, such as rereading the histories of

peoples who have been colonized in clearly separated stages of precolonial, colonial, and

postcolonial. Through the development and presentation of this discourse, anti-colonial

knowledge producers remain aware of the historical and institutional structures and

contexts that sustain intellectualism and intellectual projects (Dei, 2000).

This concern over intellectualism plays strongest between proponents of

postcolonialism and those of anti-colonialism. "For example, whereas postcolonial

theorists depend on Western models, anti-colonial theorists work with

alternative/oppositional paradigms, based on the use of Indigenous concepts and

analytical systems and cultural frames of reference" (Dei, 2000, p. 118). Further, anti-

colonialists tend to see postcolonial perspectives as mystifying and co-opted (Pratt, 2004),

whereas those representing postcolonial approaches tend to reject critiques of

Eurocentricism as too simple. In response, anti-colonialists point that across the

ideological spectrum the diffusion narrative continues to be reaffirmed by contemporary

thought. In addition, the role of Europe's interactions with the rest of the world is

marginalized or obliterated. Finally, anti-colonialists identify openly with a process of

decolonization that is understood to be incomplete, while in postcolonial discourse that

identification generally remains unstated (Pratt, 2004; Taoua, 2003).

Given the anti-colonial stance, academics, Indigenous knowledge holders, and the

political leaders of Indigenous nations and settler governments engaged in the protection,

recovery, and maintenance of Indigenous knowledge systems must work to dismantle the

colonial project in all of its current manifestations (Simpson, 2004; Smith, 2005).

Academics who are true allies to Indigenous peoples in the protection of our knowledge

must "step outside of their privileged position and challenge research that conforms to the

guidelines outlined by the colonial power structure and root their work in the politics of

decolonization and anti-colonialism" (Simpson, 2004, p. 381).

Another key trait of anti-colonial resistance is cultural revitalization for social

transformation. Despite the physical and epistemological violence, proponents of anti-

colonialism are quick to point out that Indigenous knowledge and ways have not been

substituted and replaced by diffusion (Pratt, 2004). Instead of the offsetting disregard of 'tradition' and 'culture' often present in postcolonial discourses, and indeed by some colonial theorists such as Fanon, anti-colonialism stands from a place of tradition, orality, visual representation, material and non-material cultures and Indigeneity and validate Indigenous voice, words, and languages.

On an international level, anti-colonialism also moves away from a concentration on victimization to celebrate the political and material resistance of colonized groups. It also moves beyond the displacement that occurred through European expansion, to address the inequalities and imbalances arising from the decolonization efforts of the recent past, manifested in "Third World" nation-states. The [I]ndigenous peoples' movement is in this sense pursuing a process of decolonization once removed (Niezen, 2003, p. 196). It emphasizes the need to reject colonial power and restore local control (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p, 14). For the Maori, this restoration is one of the key elements to social transformation. It is what Maori name *tino rangatiratanga*, meaning, "absolute self-determination, full authority, and complete control" (Smith, 2000, p. 222).

In summary, anti-colonialism includes actions, including political mobilization, to stop the colonial attack on Indigenous knowledge and peoples. It seeks to reaffirm Indigenous knowledge and culture, and establish Indigenous control over Indigenous national territories, the protection of Indigenous lands from environmental destruction, and education opportunities that are anticolonial in their political orientation and firmly rooted in traditions of their nations. It works to create the spaces needed for the recovery

of Indigenous knowledge systems using the processes, values, and traditions inherent in

those knowledge systems (Foley, 2003; Simpson, 2004, p. 381).

Indigenism

Indigenism takes a particular anti-colonial stance (Alfred, 1999, 2005; Churchill, 2003d).

It is a progressive Indigenous viewpoint that opposes imperialism and colonialism,

acknowledges the Fourth World position identified by Manuel and Posluns (1974) and

advocates for our empowerment (Churchill, 2003d; Niezen, 2003; Walters & Simoni,

2002). Indigenism is also a process that acts as a counterweight to the hegemonic

strategies of states (Niezen, 2003). It is a global phenomenon where Indigenous

organizations work both independently and together to form a transnational solidarity and

invade institutional space of states from two directions, specifically the international and

local (Niezen, 2003). For certain, is does not supplant the localized culture of any

particular community as it is from these communities that its driving force (Alfred, 1999,

p. 88). From another perspective, it is also the collection of theoretical, political and

cultural discussions, analyses and critiques (Alfred, 1999; Guzmán. 2005). Evidently,

other than sharing the patterns stemming from conquest and colonialism, the

understanding of indigenism is quite varied (Guzmán. 2005).

The variability in Indigenous discourse raises an important point identified by

Tracy Devine Guzmán (2005). She explained that a review of the interconnected national

and international discussions, analyses, critiques and debates on indigenism reveals that

"any discussion of indigenist discourse that fails to examine the regional and historical

contexts to which that discourse pertains empties indigenism of any possible value as an

analytical tool or even a descriptive concept" (Guzmán, 2005, pp. 93-94). Thus, while

recognizing the global scope of indigenism, the discussions have to be grounded in a

place and time. Indeed, as explained by Jamies*Guerrero (2003), indigenism can literally

mean "to be born of a place," (p. 66). However, for Indigenous peoples, it also means "'to

live in relationship with the place where one is born,' as in the sense of an "[I]ndigenous

homeland" (p. 66). Within this understanding of indigenism, an Indigenous person has:

> the responsibility to practice kinship roles in reciprocal relationship with his or her
> bioregional habitat, and this is manifested through cultural beliefs, rituals, and
> ceremonies that cherish biodiversity (that is, human culture in relationship to
> bioregion): this is the context of a Native Land Ethic and Native Spirituality.
> (Jamies*Guerrero, 2003, p. 66)

Ward Churchill (2003d) reflected this point in his focussed discussion of

indigenism on Turtle Island. He saw Indigenous peoples as working together to establish

our own frame of reference and our own future, one that is likely different from Amer-

European societies, since colonialism and imperialism is equated with the Amer-

European societies. He noted that all frames of reference established in the Amer-

European soceieties are viewed as just other Amer-European manifestations, including

Amer-European definitions of capitalism, socialism, or Marxism. An Indigenist

framework in Ward Churchill's perspective is essentially socialist, but from an

Indigenous perspective. An example of a difference in the Indigenist and Amer-European

conceptualization of socialism is the natural world. While an Amer-European perspective

tends to hold nature as an enemy to be subdued, controlled and exploited, an Indigenist perspective sees people as indivisible from and in relation with nature. Thus an Indigenist cannot try to dominant nature.

By identifying himself as an Indigenist, Churchill positioned himself to take a stand where the rights of Indigenous peoples are the highest priority and draw upon the traditions of Indigenous peoples to uphold these rights. His Indigenist outlook not only framed his critiques, but acted as the lens for developing and espousing alternatives to the present social, political, economic, and philosophical order. A significant matter for an Indigenist stance is the need to know history from an Indigenist perspective. This need includes knowing past Indigenous leaders (Churchill, 2003d).

D'Arcy Rheault (1999) noted Paul Bourgeois and Don Longboat commentary to explain who is an Indigenist. He quoted them to explain that an Indigenist is usually, but not exclusively, an Indigenous person "who combines the abstract and theoretical thinking involved in the creation and transmission of Indigenous knowledge" (p. 38). These thoughts are then acted upon as the basis for daily living. As such, "the Indigenist is clearly a thinker and practitioner of Indigenous knowledge" (p. 38). From this perspective, indigenism is not only a stance, process, and discourse; it is a way of life.

Worldviews, Colonization, and Indigenism, and Learning Cree Ways of Helping

I have outlined the position that there are a plurality of worldviews. Amongst the worldviews there exist enough common features within the way Indigenous peoples see

and understand the world that the commonalities could be drawn together, which I have

attempted to do. One of the Indigenous worldviews that reflects these commonalities is a

Cree worldview within which there is knowledge about how people are to help one

another. This knowledge has been affected by the colonization processes as outlined in

the second section of this chapter, including the attempt to blind Indigenous worldviews.

Moreover, colonization has attempted to exclude, marginalize, and appropriate

Indigenous knowledge, including the marginalization of Indigenous ways of helping.

However, not all Cree people are freely making the choice to utilize Cree knowledge and

practices. Many Indigenous people have turned to the stances and processes of

decolonization, anti-colonialism, and indigenism to challenge the colonialism and

marginalization.

From this review I understand myself to be taking the stance of indigenist

academic working against the colonization of Indigenous, in this case Cree, ways of

helping. This means I am attempting to espouse an alternative means of helping that is

based within a Cree worldview and practices. To be able to make such a contribution, I

have sought out the understanding of Cree ways of helping through a research paradigm

that reflects my indigenist stance. This paradigm and the resulting research design and

means of implementation is addressed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Nanátawápáhtamowin

This chapter outlines the manner in which I searched out understandings of Cree ways of

helping. Thus it is entitled nanátawápáhtamowin, meaning "to search for something." The

chapter begins with two brief sections addressing quantitative and qualitative research

and research paradigms before moving on to discuss an Indigenous research paradigm

used as the basis for coming to know. This paradigm uses Amer-European concepts of

ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology from an Indigenous perspective. The

research design and implementation are addressed in the final section where the topics of

purpose, research questions, participants, researcher, consent, confidentiality, data

collection, transcription, data analysis and synthesis, self-reflection, ceremony,

subjectivity, trustworthiness, and influences are addressed.

Quantitative Research, Qualitative Research, and Research Paradigms

Deborah Padgett (1998) explained that there are several schools of thought in social

research. While the lines between these schools are blurred, it is recognized that there are

some characteristics that tend to hold some schools of thought under the title of

qualitative research and other schools under the title of quantitative research. She

presented a table, reproduced here as Table 1, that identified distinctions between

qualitative and quantitative research.

Table 1: Distinctions Between Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Qualitative	Quantitative
Inductive	Deductive
Naturalistic: in vivo	Scientific Method Decontextualizing
Uncontrolled Conditions Open Systems	Controlled Conditions Closed Systems
Holistic; Thick Description	Particularistic
Dynamic Reality	Stable Realty
Researcher as Instrument of Data Collection	Standardized Data Collection Instruments
Categories Result from Data Analysis	Categories Precede Data Analysis

This table reflects the basic philosophical standpoint of each orientation. Quantitative

research is oriented to the belief that there is a normative reality that "we can fathom, and

understand, and master by statistics and experiment" (Holliday, 2002, p.5). Qualitative

research is oriented to the belief that reality can only be interpreted through our own

explorations and impressions (Holliday, 2002). Margaret Williams, Yvonne Unrau, and

Richard Grinnell Jr. (1998) also presented the philosophical standpoint of these two

orientations in relation to perceptions of reality, ways of "knowing," value bases, and

applications:

> Perception of Reality
> * Quantitative   One reality exists and it can only be separated and studied
>   in parts; the reality is "objective."
> * Qualitative   Multiple realities exist and they are studied holistically; the
>   reality is "subjective."
> Ways of knowing
> * Quantitative   Knowledge is generated through a process of strict logic

and reason; knowledge is generated primarily through a deductive process.

- Qualitative   Knowledge is personally constructed and contextually bound; knowledge is generated primarily though an inductive process.

Value Bases
- Quantitative   The research process is "value-free" and "unbiased." The researcher is separate and independent from the research participants and data analyses.
- Qualitative   The research process is "value-bound." The researcher and research participant mutually enter a "research partnership" to produce data.

Application
- Quantitative   Research results are generalized across time, people, places, and contexts. Data exist separate and apart from the research participants who provide them.
- Qualitative   Research results provide a richer understanding of a particular person, problem, or event. Data are "expressions" of the research participants who provide them. (p. 54)

Willis (2007) suggested that while some discussions tend to concentrate on quantitative and qualitative as the two paradigms found in research, such discussions are oversimplifications that emphasize data rather than foundational beliefs and assumptions. When one focuses on beliefs and assumptions, several paradigms of research emerge. For example, Tim May (1997) identified various schools of thought in social research. These schools included (1) positivism, where a social scientist objectively, or in a detached manner, studies a phenomenon through an explicit theoretical lense to produce 'true', precise, and wide-ranging laws of human behaviour; (2) empiricism, which lacks the theory driven aspect of positivism, objectively gathers 'facts' about the social world in a way that is independent of how people interpret them; (3) realism, which does not assume that we can 'know' the world out there independently of the ways which we describe it,

117

attempts to collect observations of the social world and explain these observations with theoretical frameworks that examine the underlying mechanisms which structure people's actions; and (4) idealism, which emphasizes the creation of the social world through the realm of ideas, suggests that we are governed by the rules which we use to interpret the world and thus concentrates on how people produce social life, interpret the world, and interact with one another.

Willis (2007) noted that while the exact number of paradigms varies from author to author, there is a generally accepted list that includes three paradigms, namely postpositivism, critical theory, and interpretivism. He summarized some of the differences between these three paradigms, which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Difference Between Postpositivism, Critical Theory, and Interpretivism on Five Major Issues

Major Issue	Positivism	Critical Theory	Interpretivism
Nature of reality	Material and external to the human mind	Material and external to the human mind	Socially constructed
Purpose of research	Find universals	Uncover local instances of universal power relationships and empower the oppressed	Reflect understanding
Acceptable methods and data	-Scientific method -"Objective" data	Subjective inquiry based on ideology and values; both quantitative and qualitative data are acceptable	Subjective and objective research methods are acceptable

Meaning of data	-Falsification -Used to test theory	Interpreted through ideology; used to enlighten and emancipate	-Understanding is contextual -Universals are de-emphasized
Relationship of research to practice	-Separate activities -Research guides practice	-Integrated activities -Research guides practice	-Integrated activities -Both guide and become the other

As opposed to simply moving to utilize one of the methods of social research already established within one of these paradigms, such as unstructured systematic observation, ethnography, cross-cultural research, case studies, grounded theory, phenomenology, oral histories, and case study (Creswell, 1998; Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002), I first determined the orientation and paradigm that best suited my research. To help me make this determination, I paid attention to the ideas expressed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) who identified the need for a modern Indigenous peoples' research project that resists the oppression found within research, and Eva Marie Garroutte (2003) who argued for the need of an approach to research that stems from Indigenous peoples' roots and principles.

Assuming that a particular peoples' roots and principles are important, meaning that to some degree a subjective reality was a critical component to the research, caused me to exclude a postpositivist paradigm as a basis for my research. While it could have been argued that the critical theory perspective on research would have been appropriate, given my attention to Smith's (1999) point about resisting oppression, my focus for the

research was not primarily on the power dynamics. Further, I was not focussed on critical

theory as the sole ideological basis for my research. Similarly, it could have been argued

that interpretivism would have been an appropriate orientation to my research since I was

focussed on Indigenous peoples values, beliefs, and principles. However, the impetus for

the research was about enlightenment and emancipation of Indigenous peoples. Thus,

instead of relying on one of these paradigms I decided to seek out an Indigenous one.

However, as I did not find any such paradigm when I reviewed the literature, I was driven

to develop an Indigenous research paradigm to act as the foundation for my research

design and the means to implement it. To develop an Indigenous paradigm to research, I

first look to some basic definitions of a research paradigm.

Defining "Research Paradigm"

While referencing Thomas Kuhn (1962), Berent Enç (1999) explained that a paradigm is

a theoretical framework made up of a set of scientific and metaphysical beliefs within

which scientific theories can be tested, evaluated, and revised if necessary. Jerry Willis

(2007) explained that in relation to social sciences a paradigm is "a comprehensive belief

system, world view or framework that guides research and practice in a field" (p. 8).

Alternatively, Shawn Wilson (2001) defined paradigm as "a set of beliefs about the world

and about gaining knowledge that go together to guide people's actions as to how they are

going to go about doing their research" (p. 175). He then focussed on four aspects that

combine to make up a research paradigm. He identified and defined these aspects as

follows:

> Ontology or a belief in the nature of reality. Your way of being, what you believe is real in the world...Second is epistemology, which is how you think about that reality. Next, when we talk about research methodology, we are talking about how you are going to use your ways of thinking (your epistemology) to gain more knowledge about your reality. Finally, a paradigm includes axiology, which is a set of morals or a set of ethics. (p. 175)

Clearly these concepts of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology are not rooted in Indigenous worldviews since they have evolved elsewhere. This raises the question of whether the application of these concepts in relation to Indigenous worldviews as well as their ability to contribute to self-determination and liberation is a priority or relevant for Indigenous people (Rigney, 1999). However, since an Indigenous research paradigm has not been fully outlined and I could not think of an alternative framework upon which to base an Indigenous research paradigm, I decided to use these concepts.

An Indigenous Research Paradigm

Eva Marie Garroutte (2003) presented an approach to American Indian scholarship that she named as "radical indigenism." She explained that "it argues for the reassertion and rebuilding of traditional knowledge from its roots, its fundamental principles" (p. 101). Although borrowing from the work of postcolonial theorists, radical Indigenous scholars resist the pressure to participate in academic discourses that strip Indigenous intellectual traditions of their spiritual and sacred elements. It takes the stand that such elements are absolutely central to the coherence of our knowledge traditions and that if the spiritual

and sacred elements are surrendered, then there is little left of our philosophies that will make any sense. Garroutte explained that radical indigenism is scholarship that allows questions to unfold within values, goals, categories of thought, and models of inquiry that are embedded in the philosophies of knowledge generated by Indigenous people. I believe Garroute's call for radical indigenism will have to be reflected in an Indigenous research paradigm in order to be considered Indigenous. Indeed, several Indigenous scholars have been moving towards the development of such an Indigenous research paradigm.

Patsy Steinhauer (cited in Wilson, 2003) noted this development towards an Indigenous paradigm. She outlined four fluid stages of this development. Indigenous scholars working from the first stage perspective situated themselves solidly in a "Western" framework, giving little consideration to the idea that this Amer-European way could be challenged. From this place, Indigenous scholars regularly separated their Indigenous lives from their academic endeavours. From the perspective of the second stage, notions of an Indigenous paradigm are introduced. However, Indigenous scholars regularly seek to maintain mainstream Amer-European influences in order to avoid marginalization. Such actions are taken so as to avoid defining Indigenous perspectives as exotic or pigeon-holing them into one research method. Steinhauer explained that the third stage perspective focuses on decolonization. From this stage, Indigenous methodologies are not necessarily explained. Instead, Indigenous scholars challenge Amer-European methods and Amer-European focussed researchers who have studied Indigenous peoples. The focus stemming from the fourth and present stage is one where

Indigenous scholars are challenged "to articulate their own research paradigms, their own

approaches to research, and their own data collection methods in order to honour an

Indigenous paradigm" (p. 172).

So what is an Indigenous research paradigm? Using Shawn Wilson's definition of

a paradigm, I am presenting an Indigenous research paradigm in the following manner.

Ontology

This Indigenous research paradigm has an ontology. Given Wilson's definition, I am

struck by what I would say is the apparent relationship between ontology and worldview.

How people see the world will influence their understanding of what exists.

From this perspective, there are many views of being as such. For example, A.

Irving Hallowell (1975) outlined aspects of Anishinaabe ontology where one particular

focus was how dreams were perceived by the Anishinaabe he addressed. He stated,

"although there is no lack of discrimination between the experiences of self when awake

and when dreaming, both sets of experiences are equally self-related. Dream experiences

function integrally with other recalled memory images in so far as these, too, enter the

field of self-awareness" (p. 165). He went on to explain that it is through dreams that

individuals come into direct contact with ätíso`kanak, or persons of other-than-human

class. If dreams are understood as holding a sense of reality to the degree that they are

seen as an aspect of a person's defining self, where self is a part of the world, then what

appears in these dreams may be understood as existing in the world. In other words, for

the Anishinaabe, ätíso`kanak exist. Similarly, átayόkanak, or "spirit beings, spirit powers, spirit guardians, spirit animals" (Wolvengrey, 2001) exist for the Muskéko-Ininiwak. Recognizing the point that there are many worldviews, and in turn understandings of what exists, and recognizing that there are directly related, indirectly similar, and completely diverging perspectives, it appears that there would be overlaps and divergences in ontologies. A case in point is the shared understanding between the Muskéko-Ininiwak and Anishinaabek that átayόkanak/ätíso`kanak exist, and that this understanding diverges from the mainstream Amer-European lack of acceptance, philosophically, of such entities.

This last point leads me to suggest that the divergence between a generalized mainstream Indigenous ontology and a generalized mainstream Amer-European ontology is significant enough to give a different base for an Indigenous research paradigm. However, to describe an Indigenous ontology fully would be an overwhelming task for my purposes here. Hence, I am only identifying those aspects of an Indigenous ontology which seem prevalent to me. One dominant aspect that has been noted amongst some, if not many, Indigenous peoples is the recognition of a spiritual realm, and that this realm is understood as being interconnected with the physical realm (Cajete, 2000; Rice, 2005). With a connection, it is accepted that there are influences between the spiritual and physical. For example, Gregory Cajete (2000) has explained that Indigenous science integrates a spiritual orientation, that human beings have an important role in the perpetuation in the nature processes of the world, and that acting in the world must be

sanctioned through ceremony and ritual. Another dominant aspect is reciprocity, or the belief that, as we receive from others, we must also offer to others (Rice, 2005). Reciprocity reflects the significance of relationships and the understanding that we must honour our relationships with other life. Since all life is considered equal, albeit different, to human beings, all life must be respected as we are in reciprocal relationships with them. These are two key factors of an Indigenous ontology that form part of the foundation of an Indigenous paradigm that I based my research upon.

Epistemology

This Indigenous research paradigm has an epistemology. Paul Moser (1999) defined epistemology as "the study of the nature of knowledge and justification" (p. 273). Simplistically then, Indigenous epistemology is Indigenous ways of studying the nature of knowledge and justification. Maggie Kovach (2005) presented the thoughts of several Indigenous authors who noted some characteristics of Indigenous epistemology. These thoughts are that an Indigenous epistemology is a fluid way of knowing derived from teachings transmitted from generation to generation by storytelling, where each story is alive with the nuances of the storyteller. It emerges from traditional languages emphasizing verbs, involves a knowing within the subconscious, is garnered through dreams and visions, and is intuitive and introspective. Indigenous epistemology arises from the interconnections between the human world, the spirit, and inanimate entities.

Another aspect of Indigenous epistemology is perceptual experience. However, an

Indigenous definition of perception is relevant. While perception has been defined as "the

extraction and use of information about one's environment (exteroception) and one's own

body (interoception)" (Dretske, 1999, p. 654), perception is considered more inclusively

within Indigenous epistemology to include the metaphysics of inner space (Ermine,

1995). In other words, perception is understood to include a form of experiential insight.

Willie Ermine (1995) presented an overview of Aboriginal epistemology that

focuses on this means of perception. He outlined that an Aboriginal epistemology is a

subjectively-based process, which is described as mamatowisowin, "a capacity to tap the

creative life forces of the inner space by the use of all the faculties that constitute our

being–it is to exercise inwardness" (Ermine, 1995, p. 104). Through inward exploration

where creative forces that run through all life are tapped into, individuals come to

subjectively experience a sense of wholeness. This exploration is an experience in

context, where the context is the self in connections with happenings, and the findings

from such experience is knowledge. Happenings, as I understand them at this time,

include events, thoughts, feelings, and actions that have occurred, are occurring, or

believed will occur. Happenings may be facilitated through rituals or ceremonies that

incorporate dreaming, visioning, and prayer. The findings from such experiences are

encoded in community praxis as a way of synthesizing knowledge derived from

introspection. Hence, Indigenous peoples' cultures recognize and affirm the spiritual

through practical applications of inner-space discoveries. In this process, "the community

became paramount by virtue of its role as repository and incubator of total tribal

knowledge in the form of custom and culture. Each part of the community became an integral part of the whole flowing movement and was modeled on the inward wholeness and harmony" (Ermine, 1995, p. 105).

Key people for this process are Elders and practitioners who have undergone processes to develop this ability. Stiegelbauer (1996) suggested that Elders may be understood simply as individuals who have reached a certain age, or they may be "experts on life" (p. 41) who know their traditional teachings that were handed down to them, who practice these teachings in life, and who support others to incorporate these teachings into their lives. Contradicting Stiegelbauer somewhat, Sandy Johnson (1994) explained that Elders are not defined by age or gender. She also stated Elders are people who carry knowledge of traditions; possess wisdom of the heart; walk with truth, dignity, and humility; serve the people by offering whatever they have; and heal others with natural and spiritual medicines. In a similar manner to Johnson, Joseph Couture (1996) described Elders in the following:

> Elders are superb embodiments of highly developed human potential. They exemplify the kind of person which a traditional, culturally based learning environment can and does form and mould. Elders are evidence that Natives know a way to high human development, to a degree greater than generally suspected. Their qualities of mind (intuition, intellect, memory, imagination) and emotion, their profound and refined moral sense manifest in an exquisite sense of humour, in a sense of caring and communication finesse in teaching and counselling, together with a high level of spiritual and psychic attainment, are perceived as clear behavioural indicators, deserving careful attention, if not compelling emulation. (p. 47)

While such a definition demonstrates that Elders are key in Indigenous epistemology, it is important to recognize that the Muskéko Ininiw language does not have a term that

directly translates to how Elders are defined in English. Ida Moore (nee Brass, 2000) used

the term Kété-ayak for Elders. She defined this term literally as elderly people, thus

indirectly emphasizing the role of age in the concept. She also used the term

ontáwiwéwak for people who heal or healers. Ontáwiwéwak often embody the

characteristics outlined in the previous understandings of Elders given.

Thus, an Indigenous research paradigm incorporates an epistemology that includes

mamatowisowin for knowledge development, and a reliance on Elders and individuals

who have or are developing this insight.

Methodology

This Indigenous research paradigm has a methodology. Cora Weber-Pillwax (2001)

explained Indigenous methodologies are those ones which permit and enable Indigenous

researchers to be who they are while they are actively engaged as participants in the

research processes. This way of being not only creates new knowledge but transforms

who researchers are and where they are located (p. 174). Shawn Wilson (2001) suggested

that an Indigenous methodology implies talking about relational accountability, meaning

that the researcher is fulfilling his or her relationship with the world around him or her. It

requires researchers to be accountable to "all my relations" (p. 177). Through a

comparison, Wilson (2001) explained his thoughts on relationality:

> One major difference between those dominant paradigms and an Indigenous
> paradigm is that those dominant paradigms build on a fundamental belief that
> knowledge is an individual entity: The researcher is an individual in search of
> knowledge, knowledge is something gained, and therefore, knowledge may be

owned by an individual. An Indigenous paradigm comes from the fundamental belief that knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all creation. It is not just interpersonal relationships, or just with the research subjects I may be working with, but it is a relationship with all of creation. It is with the cosmos; it is with the animals, with the plants, with the earth that we share this knowledge. It goes beyond the idea of individual knowledge to the concept of relational knowledge...[hence] you are answerable to all your relations when you are doing research. (p. 177)

Thus, one key characteristic of an Indigenous methodology, and in turn an Indigenous research paradigm, is its wide emphasis on relationships (Kovach, 2005). An example of the emphasis on relationships is evident when Indigenous people, specifically those of Turtle Island, meet they do not first attempt to find out what the other person does. Instead, they focus on finding out where the other person is from and how they may be connected through such means as relations, marriage, or friendships.

This last comment relates to another key characteristic of Indigenous methodology, that being the collective. As explained by Maggie Kovach (2005), there is a sense of commitment to the people in many Indigenous societies. Inherent in this commitment to the people is the understanding of the reciprocity of life and accountability to one another. As she described, there is the question that is whispered in our ears as we move forward in our research, "Are you helping us?" This question is not only part of methodology, it demonstrates Indigenous values, and, in turn, our axiology.

A final point to note related to methodology is Garroutte's (2003) identification of a particular aspect of radical indigenism. Specifically, there is an emphasis on practicality where "one seeks knowledge because one is prepared to use it" (p. 114). In turn, an Indigenous methodology includes the assumption that knowledge gained will be utilized

practically.

Axiology

This Indigenous research methodology includes an axiology. Axiology is a branch of

philosophy that is concerned with the nature of values and the kinds of things that have

value (Lemos, 2001). Narrowly, it looks at what is desirable for its own sake. Broadly, it

is concerned with all forms of values, including ethical values of right, wrong, obligation,

virtue, vice, and justification. An Indigenous axiology looks at those things that are

desirable from an Indigenous perspective. An Indigenous research axiology reflects on

those things that are desirable in research from an Indigenous perspective.

It is difficult to completely determine an Indigenous research axiology since there

are many values, ethics, and principles that have been identified and outlined. However,

some of these values, principles, and ethics that have been noted in relation to research

warrant attention. Building on Shawn Wilson's (2003) outline of Atkinson's

identification of certain principles for Indigenous research, I have identified some values

to be held and the actions that would reflect these values.

1.   Indigenous control over research, which can be demonstrated by having

       Indigenous people themselves approving the research and the research methods;

2.   A respect for individuals *and* communities, which can be demonstrated by a

       researcher seeking and holding knowledge and being considerate of community

       and the diversity and unique nature that each individual brings to community;

3.   Reciprocity and responsibility, which can be demonstrated in the ways a researcher would relate and act within a community such as a researcher sharing and presenting ideas with the intent of supporting a community;

4.   Respect and safety, which can be evident when the research participants feel safe and are safe. This includes addressing confidentiality in a manner desired by the research participants;

5.   Non-intrusive observation, where one, such as the researcher, would be quietly aware and watching;

6.   Deep listening and hearing with more than the ears, where one would carefully listen and pay attention to how his/her heart and sense of being is emotional and spiritually moved;

7.   Reflective non-judgment, where one would consider what is being seen and heard without immediately placing a sense of right or wrong on what is shared, and where one would consider what is said within the context presented by the speaker;

8.   To honour what is shared, which can be translated to fulfilling the responsibility to act with fidelity to the relationship and to what has been heard, observed, and learned;

9.   An awareness and connection between logic of mind and the feelings of the heart, where both the emotional and cognitive experiences would be incorporated in all actions;

10.   Self-awareness, where one would listen and observe oneself, as well as oneself in

relationship with others during the research process;

11.   Subjectivity, where the researcher acknowledges she or he brings to the research

her or his subjective self to the research process.

Weber-Pillwax (2001) reflected some of these values when she addressed a particular one

that needs to be considered for Indigenous research, a value which can be seen as directly

related to the methodological importance of relationships. She stated:

> I could also make a value statement and say that whatever I do as an Indigenous
> researcher must be hooked to the 'community' or the Indigenous research has to
> benefit the community...The research methods have to mesh with the community
> and serve the community. Any research that I do must not destroy or in any way
> negatively implicate or compromise my own personal integrity as a person, as a
> human being. This integrity is based on how I contextualize myself in my
> community, with my family and my people, and eventually how I contextualize
> myself in the planet, with the rest of all living systems and things. Without
> personal integrity, I would be outside the system. If I am outside the system, I
> don't survive. I destroy myself. I am isolated. All these are important aspects
> connected to research in general and would almost certainly be an important
> consideration of anything I would be claiming as Indigenous research. (p. 168)

I believe at least one other value merits attention. Respect is perhaps one of the

most cited values of Indigenous peoples. While I have noted several definitions of respect

(Hart, 2002), Ida Moore (nee Brass, 1999) has explained that respect is reflected in the

Ininew term kisténitámowin, which directly relates to my intended research. She defined

kisténitámowin as meaning "to take care never to mistreat any form of life" (p. 79).

Moore then went on to explain that ocinéw, or retribution, is tied to kisténitámowin. It is

understood that if you do any wrong to another life, recalling that life is understood more

broadly than the English implies or what non-Indigenous people generally accept, then

some form of retribution will come upon you and/or those close to you or your decedents.

I understand these values in relation to research as meaning that I must respect and honour myself for what I know and do not know; that I must respect and honour others for what they know and do not know; that I must respect and honour the relationship between me, others involved in the research, other influenced by the research, and others generally; and that I must conduct myself in a way that supports and/or helps Indigenous people individually and collectively.

In summary, my research study was based upon this Indigenous research paradigm as I have highlighted. In particular, I considered the following:

1. The potential influences of the spiritual through other than consciousness means (meaning such events as dreams, day visions, and ceremonial experiences);

2. subjective insight (meaning self reflection, analysis and synthesis);

3. elders as key informants;

4. particular values that reflect Ininew worldviews, such as sharing and respect.

5. the participants understanding of the context we shared in the research process;

6. the inclusion of ceremonies as a means to develop insight and connection;

7. my subjective understanding of the context of the research processes, which included influences from my life experiences with Elders, ceremonies, and traditional Indigenous means of living, through to the completion of the research; and,

8. the perspectives of anti-colonialism and fourth world Indigenism.

Research Design and Implementation

In this section, I have outlined my research design. I begin with an identification of the

study's purpose and research questions. These topics are followed by a discussion on how

I accessed information. I then identify the people who were interviewed, explain how

matters of consent and confidentiality were handled, and outline my means of analysis.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore aspects of Cree conceptualizations of helping as

lived by Cree Kété-ayak, [Elders] and social workers utilizing Cree helping ways, and to

consider how these aspects may relate to social work practice. This study was based on an

Indigenous research paradigm, meaning it not only reports what information was accessed

from participants with whom I hold a relationship, but included my own reflections on the

knowledge that was shared and experienced.

Research Questions

The guiding research question was the following: What are Cree helping ways as

understood by Cree Kété-ayak and Cree social workers utilizing Cree ways of helping?

The secondary guiding question was as follows: How may these ways relate to social

work practice?

There are a number of other research questions that extended from these research

questions. These questions included the following: What are the characteristics of a helper? What happens during a helping situation? What does the helper experience when helping? What values are to be followed? Are there particular teachings that stand out when helping others? What sort of activities would be engaged when helping others? Are there things to be avoided when helping others? What kind of concerns may be addressed? What are the expectations of someone who is following these ways of helping? How does someone come to learn about these ways of helping?

While in the interview process, I was guided by these questions to varying degrees, formulated my questions in a manner that demonstrated and maintained learning as the theme of the interview (Kvale, 1996), and reflected the context of each interview and my interpretation of the context. The initial question asked of the participants was a derivative of the following: Could you share with me your understanding of Cree helping practices? Further, in keeping with the unformated structure of the interviews, other questions arose that were dependent on the response given to the initial question.

I was also aware that I held previous understandings of Cree helping practices and that I brought these understandings to the interviews, consciously and unconsciously. When these understandings arose, I made note of them and how they may have influenced, reflected, or contradicted what had been shared by the people I interviewed.

Researcher

I was an active participant in this research. I could not shed my values, beliefs, and

experiences. In order for my learning to occur through this research, I not only connected

with people, I considered my own insight gained through my interactions and

relationships with these people and through my own participation in traditional Muskéko

Ińiniw means of learning, such as the ceremonies noted later.

I approached this research with values that I learned from my family, other Cree

Elders, and traditional Cree ways of living. As such, I had some ideas of what might be

shared with me when I was about to talk and/or hear from the Cree Kété-ayak and social

workers about our values. I attempted not to focus on those which had been demonstrated

and shared with me in my past. On the other hand, those values that I had not considered

stood out to me when they were presented to me. I also approached this research holding

some beliefs that have been demonstrated within my family, identified by some Cree

Kété-ayak with me, and taught through Muskéko Ińiniw ceremonies. I attempted to

remain open to hearing about, seeing in practice, and/or participating in activities that

would demonstrate other beliefs since I recognized that there are an assortment of beliefs

that are held by Cree people.

I also recognized that my life experiences prior to taking on this research will have

likely influenced this research. I recognize that I have not lived my life on a First Nation;

have lived in various territories, albeit mostly Cree territory; have an education based in

Amer-European society; spent extensive parts of my life learning from Cree Kété-ayak, as

well as Kété-ayak from other nations; faced many oppressive comments and actions

regarding our peoples and our practices; met many people who want to support our

peoples to meet our aspirations; and have generally lived my life in a manner where there is a division between my traditional and academic learning. These, and many other experiences, have influenced me in how I look upon the world.

As such, I tend to work in a manner which reflects a belief in the good of Cree ways of living, including Cree ways of helping; a hope for the re-emergence of our ways as the means to guide our liberation from the colonial oppression we continue to face; and a commitment to supporting Cree ways of being. I approached the people who participated in the research with this manner in my heart. Through our interactions during the past years and their observation of me during that time, they know my commitment to further our peoples and our ways. Indeed, some people agreed to participate in this study because it was I who had asked them to participate, and they believed I would respect them, the understandings shared, and Cree peoples.

Participants

I focussed on the understandings of people from two different perspectives: One perspective was from the Cree Kété-ayak and the other was from Cree social workers who have and are learning from Cree Kété-ayak and other traditional Cree teachers. For the purposes of my research, I understood Kété-ayak to be individuals who have developed their abilities and knowledge through traditional indigenous means and who are able to explain Indigenous understandings of helping. I developed this definition from the literature reviewed, particularly the definition provided by Joseph Couture (1996).

The Kété-ayak come from a cross-section of Cree peoples' territory and dialects.

The territory represented included that of the Western Cree which spans from the areas

now known as Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. The territory is made up of rocky

muskeg, muskeg, boreal forest, and plains. Reflecting the territory covered, the Cree

dialects spoken by these Kété-ayak included the Néhiẏaw (two speakers), Néhithaw (two

speakers), and Muskéko-Iñiniw (two speakers) dialects. These Kété-ayak were

individuals with whom I was already connected. As explained by Kovach (2005), "In

Indigenous communities (both urban and rural), a relationship-based approach is a

practical necessity because access to the community is unlikely unless time is invested in

relationship building" (p. 30). My relationships with these Elders or individuals closely

aligned with these Elders has been built over a period of years. This relationship-based

approach is a direct reflection of the Indigenous paradigm as outlined previously. As

such, the selection process of these participants was discrete and purposeful.

Initially, I identified four Kété-ayak to be interviewed, one woman and three men.

However, in two of the interviews, their partners joined in the interview process. While I

did not initially intend to interview these two other individuals, as I did not know about

their understandings of helping, I later learned that they had fulfilled the role of Kété-ayak

in their communities and they both had spent significant time learning about Cree ways of

helping though Cree means. Thus, these two individuals were interviewed as Kété-ayak

for the purpose of this research. Upon recognizing that these individuals were joining in

on the interviews, I informed them of the consent and confidentiality processes. In total,

there were six Elders interviewed. The following are the names I have given them:

Marissa, Doreen, Norbert, Steven, Joshua, and Samuel.

The people who reflected the second perspective were Cree individuals with the

following characteristics: (1) they had been trained as social workers with at least a

Bachelor of Social Work degree; (2) they made a commitment to learn from Cree Kété-

ayak and other traditional Cree teachers; and (3) they have been partaking in this learning

for a period of time which they believe demonstrates their commitment to Cree ways of

helping. As with the Kété-ayak, I had already been connected with these individuals.

Hence, the selection process for these individuals was also discrete and purposeful.

Four social workers participated in this study. There were three women and one

man interviewed. One individual had completed a Master degree in another discipline and

a second was in the process of completing a Master degree in social work. These

individuals reflected the Cree from the territory now known as Manitoba. They

represented two dialects of Cree spoken in this territory, namely the Néhithaw and

Muskéko-Ininiw dialects. Two of the individuals were fluent Cree speakers, one of each

dialect. Two individuals were not fluent in the Cree language, but they could understand

much and speak some of the Muskéko-Ininiw dialect. The names I have given them are as

follows: Irene, Marlyn, Maureen, and Leland.

The reason I chose people from these perspectives is threefold. First, I thought,

based on their knowledge and previously demonstrated experience, the Kété-ayak may be

able to shed light on the Cree helping ways in a clear and direct manner. Second, I

thought that these social workers may have already drawn some ideas about how Cree

ways of helping may connect to social work practice. Third, as I was aware that there is

much variation in the Cree peoples, I wanted at least the territorial and dialectic variations

to be present in the group of people I interviewed. Hence, I purposely chose individuals

who reflected this cross-section of Cree peoples.

The overall number of people I interviewed was determined by my sense of

saturation, sufficiency, and time constraints. Saturation refers to the hearing of similar

information repeatedly. Sufficiency refers to the ability to effectively reflect a range of

sites and/or participants. However, as explained by Siedman (1998), "Practical exigencies

of time, money, and other resources also play a role, especially in doctoral research" (p.

48). Indeed, I was influenced by these additional factors. While I found that there were

common (saturation) and diverse (sufficiency) elements shared between the people

interviewed, I was also faced with a time limit. Time was limited because interviewing

additional people would have meant I would have to spend more time developing my

relationship with other people, introduce them to my research activities, and prepare

myself to learn from them. All of these activities would have taken significant amounts of

time that would have impinged on my ability to finish the research within the outlined

time span for the degree.

It is important to note that the concepts of saturation and sufficiency are well

rooted in qualitative research. While there is significant overlap, at least, between

qualitative research and the Indigenous research paradigm that I have outlined, I cannot

confidently say that I fully followed an Indigenous paradigm when I determined the

number of people to be interviewed since I, perhaps erroneously, relied on these concepts

without consideration of how they reflected an Indigenous research paradigm. For

example, while I relied on my relationships with Cree Elders and social workers that

happen to span a range of site, I can see how I had not included my own subjective place,

including my sense of inner-space, to help me determine how many people should be

interviewed.

Participants' consent. All participating individuals were informed of this

research. They were told the purpose of this study, my intended manner for proceeding,

and my hope for how they might participate. This was generally done in two stages. In the

first stage, I contacted each participant ahead of time by phone or in person to provide

them with an overview of the study and express my interest in having them participate.

As required by the research ethics board that approved the implementation of this study, a

telephone script of what was to be said to prospective participants was developed. It

consisted of the following points:

1. "Hello *name*."

2. Unrelated small talk, such as how they were doing, how the family was doing,

and activities they were engaged in recently.

3. "*Name*, as you are aware, I am presently working on my Ph.D. Part of the

requirements to complete the degree includes me completing a research study. I

am going to be looking at Cree ways of helping. I was hoping to visit you to tell

you about what I am doing and ask you if you are interested in participating. Do

you think that is possible?"

4. If that was possible I then arranged meeting dates, times, and locations. Each of

these were either chosen by the potential participant or suggested by me and

accepted by the potential participant.

While this script was not read, each point was addressed with the participants prior to

meeting them in person to discuss the research in detail. At these times I did not attempt

to gain their consent. Instead, I confirmed whether they were interested in hearing more

about the study and whether they might consider participating.

When individuals expressed interest, the second stage was initiated. I made plans

to see them at another time to outline the research in detail and potentially participate in

the interview. When I met them at this other time, I followed Cree protocol of

pakitinásow, which is the offering of something in exchange for help, support, and/or

direction. I presented each potential participant with cístémáw [tobacco] and wípinasona

[cloth ceremonial offerings] prior to the interview, and a gift after the interview. From an

Indigenous perspective, their acceptance of these items was understood as consenting to

participate in the study. This approval for participating was recognized as a commitment

to themselves as holders of the knowledge sought, to me as the person wanting to

learning about the knowledge sought, and to the spiritual realm. All individuals accepted

the cístimaw, wípinasona, and gifts.

This offering process was followed by another process for gaining consent. As required by the ethics board, I prepared a script to guide obtaining consent from each potential participant. This script was either read by the participants and/or reviewed verbally by me for the benefit of the participants. It consisted of the following points:

1. Initial greetings.

2. A statement to the effect of "I am completing a study entitled An Indigenous study of Cree helping principles."

3. A statement to the effect of "I am interested in having you participate by sharing your knowledge on Cree helping ways."

4. A statement to the effect of "I have a consent form [see appendix A] that I would like you to read over. This form presents an outline of the study and such matters as how I would like you to participate, what I will do with the information you give me, and how confidentiality can be maintained. Alternatively, we can verbally review the form in detail. Once you have read the form or we have reviewed it, then you could let me know if you want to participate. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to ask me them at any time."

5. Finally, I would respond to questions and comments as raised by the participants in a manner which a) reflected social work code of ethics, b) reflected the study, and c) reflected the consent form.

After addressing all of these points with each of the participants, I sought written or audibly recorded consent from the participants to demonstrate their willingness to

participate in this study. Eight individuals offered written or audibly recorded consent.

Two of the Kété-ayak did not sign the consent form or even look at it, reflecting their

nature of relationship with others and/or their personal preferences for not being recorded.

In these situations their unrecorded, unwritten verbal consent was noted by me after the

interviews. Overall, I gained written or verbal consent from all participants to participate

in this research study.

Confidentiality

Although the information sought did not appear to be that which was related to risk, I

offered the participants the option that all information would be maintained as

confidential. On the consent form [see appendix A] individuals had the opportunity to

sign in one of two places. If they signed on one area, they gave permission to use

identifying information about them. If they signed on the alternate area, they confirmed

that they did not want any identifying information shared. I also asked all individuals

verbally whether they wanted any identifying information about them to be shared. All

individuals provided clear verbal indications of their preference. Of the ten people

interviewed, five individuals requested that their identifying information be maintained in

confidence.

During the process of accessing consent and reviewing confidentiality, I also

explained to the participants that the research records, whether written or audio, would be

stored in a secure location in my residence and/or office, with the exception when the

tapes were bring transcribed. At these times, the transcriber kept the tapes. Other than the

person's first names, no other identifying information was provided to the transcriber. At

all other times, the tape recordings were kept securely in my office and/or residence. All

written records were kept securely in my possession either in my office or residence.

Data Collection: Connected Conversation

A key feature of this research were the conversations I had with the people sharing their

understandings, or referred here as interviews. An interview has been described by

Steinar Kvale (1996) as, "Literally an inter view, an inter change of views between two

peoples conversing about a common theme" (p. 44). Irvin Seidman (1998) explained that

interviewing is a powerful way to gain insight into issues through understanding the

experience of the individuals in a way that affirms the importance of the individual

without denigrating the possibility of communication and collaboration. Interviews are

well suited for studying, describing, clarifying, and elaborating people's experiences and

self-understanding of their lived world (Kvale, 1996).

Seidman (1998) has suggested that there are no absolutes in the world of

interviewing. There are no clear identifiable procedures describing the ideal or best

interview structure and process since there have been few studies on the effects of one

procedure over others. Recognizing that there are no ideal procedures, I searched for a

format I thought would be suitable to my research paradigm and for the purpose of my

study. I decided to incorporate Kvale's (1996) outline since it has the purpose of

obtaining descriptions of the lived world of the interviewees. He described several aspects of qualitative research interviews:

- The topic of qualitative interviews is the everyday lived world of the interviewee and his or her relation to it.

- The interviewer seeks to interpret the meaning of central themes in the life world of the subjects. The interviewer registers and interprets the meaning of what is said as well as how it is said.

- The interview seeks qualitative knowledge expressed in normal language.

- The interview attempts to obtain open nuanced descriptions of different aspects of the subjects' life world.

- Descriptions of specific situations and actions are elicited.

- The interviewer exhibits an openness to new and unexpected phenomena, rather than having ready-made categories and schemes of interpretation.

- The interview is focussed on particular themes; it is neither strictly structured with standardized questions, nor entirely "non-directive."

- Interviewee statements can sometimes be ambiguous, reflecting contradictions in the world the subject lives in.

- The process of being interviewed may produce new insights and awareness, and the subject may in the course of the interview come to change his or her description and meaning about a theme.

- Different interviewers can produce different statements on the same

theme, depending on their sensitivity to and knowledge of the interview

topic.

- The knowledge obtained is produced through the interpersonal interaction

    in the interview. (pp. 30-31)

Kvale's outline for interviewing was appropriate for this study. I also incorporated Cora

Weber-Pillwax's (2001) understanding of interviews from an Indigenous perspective, as

she reflected my intentions and expectations I have of myself in the interviews. She

stated:

> To address methods in the framework of Indigenous research, I will share some
> points on one practice that I follow in doing my research. I talk to people all the
> time, purposefully and with as much awareness as I possess. I could refer to my
> method as interviewing so that it might be more easily recognized. Interviewing,
> however, is to be seen as a process of total involvement. I connected with people
> that I had known for years, not in terms of knowing their personalities, but
> knowing their connections. They also knew my connections. We were part of a
> network that was safe and trusted and established. The trust in some cases was not
> necessarily vested in me as an individual, but in me as a part of my family...I met
> a lot of people, but a meeting with one Elder provides a good demonstration of the
> process that I followed in my work. To meet this Elder and to have him share with
> me, three people spoke for me, indicating to him that it was all right for him to
> talk to me. Further, they advised me and supported me by active participation in
> the planning and carrying out of a particular event. If something had occurred to
> put anyone in the community in a "bad" position, I would have been held
> accountable, and rightly so. However, the three people who stood beside me
> would also have been held accountable, whether in fact they had been responsible
> or not. (p. 170)

Interviewing as described by Kvale (1996) was applicable for this study. However, it was

necessary to go beyond his explanation of interviewing and obtain a reflection of an

Indigenous approach where full researcher participation, relationships, respect, and safety

are paramount.

Five out of the six interviews conducted with the Kété-ayak occurred in their homes. For the sixth interview, the Kété-aya was in a city away from his home. Thus, the interview was conducted at a place of his choosing, namely a restaurant in the hotel where he was staying. Most of the interviews, which commenced with my arrival and ended at the completion our of discussions, took approximately one to four hours. The one exception was the discussion between me and two of the Kété-ayak which took place over two and half days.

The first of the interviews occurred at the home of two of the Kété-ayak. The process started soon after I arrived at their home. I sat with the Kété-aya I initially spoke with over the phone and her oskápéwis [Elder's helper] in the dining room. The husband of the Kété-aya, their daughter, and their grandchild were in the adjoining livingroom. We talked over some tea about our families, our present well-being, and our recent activities, a dynamic that occurred at the start of the interviews with the other four Kété-ayak as well. The more formal part of the interviews began when I offered the cístémáw and wípinasona to the Kété-aya whom I had initially contacted and explained about the research and what I was requesting. She agreed to participate. The oskápéwis then set up the necessary items for a pipe ceremony in the livingroom, which was led by the Kété-aya. At this time the daughter left the room. The husband of the Kété-aya participated in the pipe ceremony, as well as the oskápéwis, the grandchild of the Kété-ayak, and me. The discussion on consent, confidentiality and the questions I brought forward then took place. The first Kété-aya signed the consent form before the recording of the interview.

The husband of the Kété-aya demonstrated his willingness to be part of the process by immediately participating in the discussions as one of the Kété-ayak. He later signed his consent form after the interview. I had not initially offered him a consent form as I did not realize that he was intending to participate. One of these Kété-ayak agreed to wave confidentiality, while the other did not. Hence, the identities of these two Kété-ayak were and are kept confidential. At the end of the interview I offered the Kété-ayak a gift and took one of them and her oskápéwis out for supper. The second Kété-aya decided to remain at home.

At the home of another Kété-aya, I was offered a meal before we started. After we ate the meal he prepared, I offered the Kété-aya the cístémáw and wípinasona and explained about the research and what I was asking from him. He agreed to participate. He also signed the consent form noting that he understood the requirements of the University as well as his desire to help me through that part of the process. He also explained that there was no need to identify him, hence his identity was and is kept confidential. Upon completion of the interview, I offered him a gift.

The interview of the fourth Kété-aya occurred in a restaurant. I met him there after making arrangements the night before. As he immediately saw that I was carrying the cístémáw and wípinasona, I offered him these items soon after we had discussed our families, personal well-being, and activities. We were interrupted by the serving personnel on occasion during this process. He agreed to openly participate and signed the consent form to reflect his willingness to be identified in the write up of the research.

This interview was the shortest of all the interviews, a dynamic likely due to conducting

the interview in an unfamiliar location. At the end of the interview, I offered the Kété-aya

a gift and paid for our meal.

The final two interviews took place over two and half days. For these interviews, I

travelled to the residence of the Kété-aya with whom I had spoken. I spent two nights and

two and half days staying with him and his partner. His partner became the sixth Kété-aya

to be interviewed. On the first day of this visit, most of our conversation was an update

about our families, lives, and activities. The bulk of the interview began on the second

day, starting immediately after breakfast. One of the two Kété-ayak and I moved to sit in

the livingroom at which time he began talking. After awhile I realized he was addressing

topics related to my research. In following Cree protocol, I did not immediately interrupt

the discussion with my need to address confidentiality, consent, and the offering of the

cístémáw and wípinasona. These items were still packed in my bag and I would have to

leave to get them. I did not have my recorder with me during any of this conversation, so

attempted to remember as much of it as I could. The second Kété-aya joined our

discussions in the latter part of the morning. We broke our discussion in the early

afternoon when the second Kété-aya asked us to eat lunch and then complete a chore.

This chore took approximately three hours and included some travel through the reserve.

We completed our chore and sat down for tea. A visitor had arrived while we were

completing our chore. This visitor came to request the Kété-aya facilitate a matotisán

[sweat lodge] ceremony later that day. After the guest left, the Kété-aya reinitiated the

conversation for a short period of time. Once again, the conversation started before I could offer him the cístémáw and wípinasona. Later, we broke off our discussions and partook in the matotisán ceremony. After the ceremony, he began speaking about the matters once again, but without the presence of the second Kété-aya. At this time I explained to him that I had some commitments I had to follow through on that relate to the University's requirements. He agreed to hear them the next day. On the morning of the third day, I brought out the cístémáw and wípinasona and before we began our discussion, I offered them to both of the Kété-ayak. They mediated/prayed over the items before going further. I then explained the consent form and confidentiality to them. Neither of them looked at the form. They both offered verbal consent to participate and one of them stated that there was no need to identify him as he felt such identifications placed him in the limelight, a place he felt was unnecessary for him to be in. Hence, their identities are maintained confidentially. Before leaving their residence, I offered my words of thankfulness, and presented them with gifts.

All of the interviews with the Cree social workers took place away from their residences since it was agreed during our telephone conversations that I would connect with them while they were in the city of Winnipeg. Three of these interviews occurred in restaurants and one occurred in my home.

The first of these interviews with the social workers occurred after the participant and I had escorted her father to a medical appointment. After returning to the hotel where they were staying, she decided we could hold our discussion in the hotel's restaurant.

After having a meal, I presented her with cístémáw and wípinasona. I also outlined the

purpose of the research, the process to be followed, and the matters of consent and

confidentiality. She agreed to participate, but stated she did not want to be recorded nor

be identified. Accordingly, she signed the consent form. As such, her identity was and is

held in confidence. After the interview, I offered her a gift and paid for our meal.

The second social worker was interviewed at my home. He was in the city of my

residence for an operation and requested to stay at my home during his recuperation. It

was during his one week stay that we completed the interview. I offered him the cístémáw

and wípinasona, which he accepted. He requested a pipe ceremony before we began. I

prepared the ceremony for us. After the ceremony, I outlined matters of confidentiality

and consent. He agreed to participate and was willing to be identified. At the end of our

discussions related to the research, I offered him a gift.

The third social worker was interviewed in a restaurant. She identified the

restaurant after I picked her up from her son's home in the city. We engaged in discussion

about her journey to the city and our well-being, our families, and our activities during

the ride to the restaurant. Once at the restaurant, I offered her the cístémáw and

wípinasona. She accepted the items and agreed to participate. She signed the consent

form and expressed an openness to be identified. Upon completion of the interview, I

offered a gift to her and paid for the meal.

The fourth social worker was interviewed in a restaurant as well. She and her

partner had travelled to the city to participate in a sporting event that was occurring

during the weekend. They stayed at my home for part of this time. During the event we

made plans for when and where I would meet her to inform her fully of the research and

ask her formally to participate. She identified a restaurant and we met later that evening in

between the times she had to be at the sporting event. When we met, I offered her the

cístémáw and wípinasona. I then explained about the research and the matters of

confidentiality and consent. She agreed to participate and signed the consent form. Upon

completing our discussion, I offered her a gift and paid for our coffees.

Transcription

All the tapes of the interviews were transcribed by someone hired specifically for this

task. I reviewed all of the transcriptions to confirm their accuracy. A couple of the

interviews were minimally transcribed due to the inability to hear the participants' words.

In these cases I reviewed the tapes myself to fill in as much of the blanks as possible. In

addition, in most of the interviews the participants periodically spoke néhiẏawéwin [the

Cree language]. As the transcriber was unable to speak néhiẏawéwin, she was unable to

transcribe these sections of the recordings. In these instances I attempted to translate the

Cree into English. In those instances where I was unable to translate the Cree, I contacted

the participant to interpret his or her Cree comments.

Data Analysis

Karen Martin (2001) presented the thought that data analysis is based upon assumptions

derived from the worldview of the researcher and that the criteria, categories, and themes

devised from data will further reflect and entrench the researcher's worldview. She

further suggested that the process for analyzing data that is outside of an Indigenous

worldview will lack the "cultural rigour." A key aspect of cultural rigour is the researcher

drawing upon her/his ways of knowing, being, and doing to identify and categorize data,

and using internal logic as criteria and referents.

While I kept Martin's points in mind, the analysis for this study included several

processes. Transcriptions of my recorded interviews were completed prior to my analysis.

The transcriptions and my notes were analyzed through meaning condensation and

categorization. Meaning condensation "Entails an abridgement of the meaning expressed

by the interviewees into shorter formulations" (Kvale, 1996, p. 192). Meaning

categorizations implies that the interview is labelled into categories (Kvale, 1996:

Seidman, 1998). Labelling involves sifting through the transcribed material to look for

coherent passages and marking them with a particular label that reflects the passage.

Labelled passages are then classified to create thematic categories.

While I initially considered utilizing a computer program to assist the analysis, I

decided to process the data manually. There were two reasons for my choice. First I

wished to maintain as close contact, in other words, relationship, with the data. Not only

did this reason reflect the paradigm that this study was based upon, it reflected Seidman's

(1998) point that, "There is no substitute for total immersion in the data" (p. 110). The

second reason was more practical in that I did not have the time to learn to use such a

program. Learning such a program would have taken the completion of this dissertation past the available time line for completing the degree.

Another aspect of analysis was the process of narrative structuring that part of the transcript underwent. Narrative structuring focuses on the stories being told. It involves presenting the text in a manner which brings out a coherent story that reflects the original meaning shared by the person interviewed (Kvale, 1996). I maintained a constant awareness that what was shared by each of the participants was a complete narrative and that by taking away pieces of their narratives influenced their stories. As such, I tried to keep these influences to a minimum.

Data Synthesis

Martin (2001) suggested that Indigenous research data interpretation has less to do with capturing "truth" or drawing general conclusions and more to do with checking with the participants. This reflects the relational and communal aspect of an Indigenous research paradigm. Hence, the synthesis, or interpretation, process was not an isolated process, but involved an ongoing relationship between me, the people interviewed, and the material shared. It required rechecking my experiences and thoughts by bringing them back to the participants for their feedback and direction. I would bring my thoughts and experiences to the participants in a variety of ways.

At a later point, I had to go beyond what was said by each participant and synthesize the material into a flowing overview. The process was one of weaving the

contributions of each participant together. While the tapestry that was created was

dependent upon the analysis and rechecking process, it is incorrect to say that it was a

group creation. In this aspect of the process, I utilized what Kvale (1996) explained as ad

hoc meaning generation, where there is a free interplay of techniques during the synthesis:

> Thus the researcher may read the interviews through and get an overall
> impression, then go back to specific passages, perhaps make some qualifications
> like counting statements indicating different attitudes towards a phenomenon,
> make deeper interpretations of specific statements, cast parts of the interview into
> a narrative, work out metaphors to capture material, attempt a visualization of the
> findings in flow diagrams, and so on. Such tactics of meaning generation may, for
> interviews lacking an overall sense at the first readings, bring out connections and
> structures significant to the research project. (pp. 203-204)

Self-reflection

Another key process undertaken within this study was self-reflection. This aspect of the

study was fully based upon the Indigenous paradigm previously outlined. To give

understanding of what I mean by self-reflection, I present two scenarios I have

experienced on several occasions. First, I have spent many years with and learning from

Kété-ayak. I have spent much of this time developing a relationship with them. During

this time, I have been honoured with the responsibility to hold particular knowledge. At

times this knowledge was given directly and clearly. I knew the nature of this knowledge

and how it was to be passed on to others and put into practice. However, I was still left to

figure out how it was to shape my life around what was shared. Second, there are other

times when Kété-ayak gave me some information, usually through stories, and I was left

to ponder, "What does that have to do with what we were previously talking about? What

does that have to do with my question?" While it took me awhile, I realized that each time this dynamic occurred, I was actually given the task to reflect on what was said by the Kété-ayak. I was not given direct answers, as I was to make the knowledge my own by taking what was said, and running it through my mind, my heart, and my experiences. I now understand that the passing of knowledge from the Kété-ayak to me as a learner in this manner supports knowledge maintenance and development. In both of these situations deep self-reflection was required. Hence, self-reflection means becoming or being aware of (1) myself, (2) the Kété-aya, (3) what is shared, and (4) the relationship between me, what is shared, the Kété-aya, and the spiritual realm. This awareness is necessary so that I will able to understand and incorporate the knowledge in a manner which respects and honours all involved, including the knowledge that was shared.

Self-reflection was incorporated into this study throughout the research process, from prior to my entering the Ph.D. program when I first considered completing such a degree to the completion of the report. It included previous experiences I had and which were determined to be relevant to the research. This inclusion reflects the principle that I was to be part of this research and as such, and that my life experiences were part of and have likely shaped the research. It fits within the previously outlined Indigenous research paradigm which requires the total involvement of the researcher with his or her environment (Colorado, 1988) and has been implemented and supported in other studies by Indigenous researchers, including Shaun Hains (2001), Mary Hermes (1998), Patricia Steinhauer (2001), and Roxanne Struthers (2001).

Ceremony

As explained previously, ceremony plays a featuring role in an Indigenous paradigm and

has been incorporated throughout this research. Wípinason and cístimaw had been offered

to the people interviewed and in ceremonies as part of the process. More in-depth

ceremonies were included, such as fasting, pipe, and sweat lodge ceremonies. Fasting

relates to the process of self-reflection. People may fast for various reasons at different

periods in their lives, for varying lengths of time. When and where a fast will occur is

dependent upon the person who is to fast, the directions they may have been given, the

experiences the person may be undergoing, and logistical parameters. One of the reasons

for fasting is to come to an answer about something the person is trying to address

(Haines, 2001). This particular reason was well suited to this research. Thus, I fasted at

one point in the research process.

Pipe ceremonies relate to many matters, including the establishing of an honest,

faithful, respectful, kind, and mutual supportive relationship. A pipe ceremony affirms

participants' commitment to the relationships of the people involved, including the

spiritual relationships. The pipe ceremonies included in this research fell within these

lines, and thus established a level of commitment by me to the participants that went

beyond any academic requirements.

Sweat lodge ceremonies are held for many reasons. Some of these reasons include

the cleansing of one's mind, body, spirit, and emotions; the re-balancing of self with life

around the participant; and the preparation of oneself before a particular deed. It was

within this understanding that I participated in sweat lodge ceremonies before and during

the research process. These ceremonies prepared me for this research, supported me

during this research, and supported me in my reflections, analysis, and synthesis. They

helped me to ground my mind and heart in Cree culture. This grounding helped me to

keep focussed on the Cree aspect of the study, as opposed to such discourse as

postmodern and critical theories and theorists which had initially captivated my attention.

Subjectivity

When research is addressed from the Indigenous research paradigm subjectivity is

expected to be present. Indeed, the Kété-ayak that I have been privileged to accompany

and learn from have often said, "I am not here to offend you. I am here to share with you

what I have come to understand" and "Take what is useful to you and leave the rest."

These comments speak of the specificity of what they know. These comments also speak

to the idea that what they know may or may not be applicable to others. In academic

terms, it speaks to location. It means the person hearing is given the opportunity to

partake in this knowledge if that person deems it applicable to his or her life. The nature

of this dynamic is well-captured in a common passage shared by Thomas King (2003) in

several of his personal stories. He stated, "Take Louis's [or any another other person he

may have addressed in the story] story for instance. It's yours. Do with it what you will,

Cry over it. Get angry. Forget it. But don't say in the years to come that you would have

lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now" (p. 119).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was a consideration for this research. From a general qualitative research

perspective, trustworthiness, or believability, has been explained as the ability to address

four major concerns, namely credibility (truth value), transferability (applicability),

dependability (consistency), and confirmability (neutrality) (Tutty, Rothery, & Grinnell,

1996). While the paradigm of which this study was based is not concerned directly with

neutrality, this study demonstrated this perspective of trustworthiness through three

primary means. The first was the use of rich description of the research experience and

what was shared. The second was the explicit presentations of my steps in the research

process (Kvale, 1996). The third was through a member's check process, where I outlined

to the Kété-ayak and social workers the manner which I interpreted and presented what

they had shared (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Seidman, 1998).

From the Indigenous research paradigm, trustworthiness is about relying on (1)

understandings stemming from people who are living in way that reflects their

understandings, such as community acknowledged Elders, (2) one's own understandings

that have grown from the process of mamatowisowin and the practical applications of

one's inner-space discoveries, and/or (3) relationships between people where both parties

are respectful as defined by all the people participating in the project, committed to

helping to one another and their community(ies), and supportive of each others actions as

a means of personal and community growth. This third point is about one's place in

relation to the community, where the community trusts the person's intent to move

forward in a way that will reinforce the community's well-being. As such, it requires an

individual to be well-situated in the community. Accordingly, I relied on Elders and

people I knew to be following Cree ways of helping in their social work practice to

inform me, included my own inner-space discoveries, and relied on relationships with

people in the Cree community as well as openly conducted myself as a member of the

community.

Influences

I recall reading a question that is relevant, but unfortunately I cannot recall the source.

The question asked, "Do we shape language, or does language shape us?" This goes to

the heart of one of the major influences on this study, namely the role of language. I have

always been in a difficult situation in that my belief regarding language does not match

my actions. I am in agreement with Weber-Pillwax (2001) who stated, "The survival of

Cree epistemologies and cosmologies are totally dependent on the strength and presence

of Cree orality. Without wide and popular usage of the language, the Cree consciousness

of orality surely–or perhaps I should say logically–faces a weakening and, therefore,

ensuing and significant transformation" (p. 153). Yet, I am not a fluent speaker. More

accurately, I struggle to understand each time I am present with another person speaking

néhiýawéwin. It takes me several days to get into the swing of things and start getting the

gist of what is being shared.

For this study, I was not able to spend several days at a time with each participant.

Indirectly, I requested that they speak English by addressing them only in English. When

they spoke Cree, I attempted to give their words my English interpretation. When I could

not understand what was said, I contacted the speaker and asked for an interpretation.

This brings me back to the influence of language. If I rely on people speaking

English, or on the interpretations of néhiẏawéwin, the meaning will be different to

varying degrees. As my colleague, Ida Moore (nee Brass, 2000), stated in her thesis, "The

philosophies that provide the foundations of healing/counselling are contained within the

language" (p. 102). This study is orientated to an English perspective and interpretation of

Cree thoughts. Hence, it is a step away, at least, from the original understanding.

A second influence is the subjectiveness, meaning in this case, me. I brought a

particular view to the study. For example, as a Cree man raised in what I would call

cultural riches, but economic poverty, I come from an upbringing that includes

experiences of privilege and oppression. As a man, I experience the world from a

dominant male position. This position has meant that I was generally validated as a man

through the consistent and constant positive messages about, and treatment of men in

Canadian society. As a Cree person, I experience the world from an oppressed, but

culturally rich position. For example, while I regularly was able to connect with Elders,

was provided with many Cree teachings, and well-connected to my family which support

my sense of identity as a Cree person, my identity as a Cree person was constantly put

down directly and indirectly in my experiences with Canadian society. Though these

experiences, including being raised in poverty, have shaped how I see and interpret the

world. While I find that these interpretations are often shared by other Cree people, there are times when I do not share particular experiences, such as those of Cree women. Thus, while this study includes the perspectives of several Cree people who have shared similar experiences as I have experienced, their stories are still interpreted through my own understandings which may not be completely on track with theirs.

A third influence was the time constraint for completing this study. It was my intention to complete the study within the time period allowed for completion of my doctoral degree. As five years had passed since I began the doctoral program, I was under pressure to complete the study within a short period of time. This short time frame meant that my ability to offer more time to the participants so they could reflect on my study and question was compromised. I put them in a new situation, namely as participants in a research study. They might have required more time to further reflect on what they wanted to say as they were in an unnatural situation. Yet the time constraint limited the opportunity for such reflection since the time line was a key factor for their participation.

The time line also influenced my ability to analyze and synthesize the data. I was under constraints which may have affected my ability to sift through the data, confide in the participants, and weave the material together. This hastened pace countered a key concept various Kété-ayak have said to me, namely péyáhtak, meaning I am to move slowly, gently, softly, quietly, and/or carefully. Hence, while I tried to follow such guidance, the deadline for this study was paramount. This catch-22 situation likely influenced the outcome of material in that it may be a step, meaning a value, away from

the original intent.

The fourth significant influence, was my already established relationships with individuals whom I interviewed. One of these people have known me for all of my life, seven people have known me for over 10 years, one has known me for approximately eight years, and another has known me for approximately two years. These long standing relationship have provided much opportunity for the people interviewed to see how I conduct myself. As such, a sense of trust has been established between me and each of them that permitted me to move forward in the research which may not have occurred if such trust was not already established.

Chapter Four: Kiskinomákéwina

In this chapter I present how I have organized what has been shared with me into themes.

The themes are based upon commonly shared ideas held by several, if not all, of the

people interviewed. There are also some commentaries by the people interviewed that

were quite stirring to me, either emotionally, mentally, physically, or spiritually, that are

included. These commonly shared and stirring commentaries comprise the 13 themes

addressed in this thesis. These themes are given the following titles:

1.   Negativity, Hurting Others, Colonial Oppression and Healer Stress

2.   The Use of Amer-European Ways of Helping

3.   An Ongoing Process to Learning and Helping

4.   Listening and Presence

5.   Ceremonies

6.   Identity

7.   Language

8.   Role Modelling

9.   Spirituality

10.   Connection to Land and Place

11.   The Use of Stories

12.   Values and Teachings

13.   Wíchitowin

Together with the people who were interviewed, I have taken what has been shared with

me as the teachings of the people interviewed, hence the title of this chapter is

Kiskinomákéwina, or teachings.

(1) Negativity, Hurting Others, Colonial Oppression and Healer Stress

Most of the people interviewed spoke of three concerns, particularly negativity

surrounding Cree culture and traditional ways of helping, people getting hurt through the

misuse of cultural and traditional practices, and oppression by outside forces and

practices. These concerns seem to create a downward spiral process that feeds itself.

The negative influences towards cultural and traditional ways were seen as

coming from various places. Leland noted one source as stemming from within

individuals. He used his own experience to shed light on this source of negativity. He

related this negativity to certain feelings he held and how he used those feelings to start

hurting others and avoid the Cree cultural practices connected with helping. He explained

it this way:

> The complete opposite of that [the positive teachings of the pipe] of course is
> anger, or hurt, or envy, or resentment. For instance myself, I had not been
> physically well for a long while and I gotten to a point in my life where I thought
> people didn't believe that I was actually sick. I thought people didn't care that I
> was sick. I guess what it basically what it boils down to is that people don't care.
> So, they feel self-pity. Without even realizing that self-pity I start feeling sorry for
> myself and I was hurting myself, just with my thoughts. But after a while I didn't
> want to hurt myself anymore, I started hurting people outside of me, my family
> and friends. I stopped doing the things I like to do, like smudging and going to the
> sweat lodge and helping out. Over time when you are sick, I really figure that
> there is a build up of resentment, leading to being vindictive and hurting those
> people that I thought didn't care. So, eventually I started pushing people away and
> people started avoiding me. People stopped phoning me and then my family
> started feeling the brunt of that. And so, one day my partner told me to leave.

Another source of negativity noted by some of the people interviewed was the family. Maureen related the negativity to the family environment. She explained that whether the Cree ways of helping are seen negatively depends on this environment:

> It depends again on where they come from, what environment their family system comes from, what kind of upbringing they've been raised in. And because of the [negative] values and the beliefs for that kind of system, the children are prevented from learning the culture because they're scared. And although they hear many good things about it, and because they have this strong connection with strong family ties, they don't want to disrespect where they've come from.

Maureen gave an example of such a home environment by relating to her own experience. As a child she was taught that Cree culture and traditional ways of helping, particularly the ceremonies, were bad. She was told if she went to any of these bad things she was going to go to hell and that the devil was going to get her. In her own family, her brother attempted to bring Cree helping practices to their home community and was greeted with such negative comments. She told part of the story this way:

> My brother brought it home to our community and I remember my mom because she was so Christian and worried. She did not want to have anything to do with learning about our way as Aboriginal people. She said that it was evil and that if we continued to bring these kinds of things into our home, like the medicines and the rattles and stuff like that, we were gonna burn in hell. She wanted no part of him, and of course my brother, because he respected my mom, he listened to what she said.

Leland noted that negative attitudes about Cree culture and traditions, and, in turn, ways of helping, are also present within Indigenous communities as a whole: "[People wanting to learn] look at the influences we have today, with all the negative influences, the loss of culture in the community...and a lot of our influences come from within our own community." He explained this negativity often comes in the form of stereotypes

167

about Cree spirituality:

> And for a lot of Aboriginal people, right away the first thing that they think of
> when we say the spiritual part of being, they think sweat lodges, pipe ceremonies
> and maybe fast camps. And they also think the negative, the old stereotype they're
> taught, 'it's bad medicine. It's gonna drive you crazy. You don't, don't fool
> around with it. You're gonna get hurt 'cause somebody's gonna hurt you.
> Someone's going to send bad medicine,' or 'you're gonna burn in hell.'

Such negative attitudes were noted as coming from outside of the communities as

well. Samuel explained that people, not from the community, come to reside in the

community with negative attitudes:

> There's so many of those people and they come do damage to our people, a lot of
> our people, in my community, in my wife's community. It doesn't anger me in
> that sense anymore. It just saddens me how so many people that live in the
> community, here in the community, they ridicule the culture. They're mocking it.

Some of these negative stereotypes are grounded in some real situations. It was

noted that there are a few individuals who know how to work from Cree ways of healing.

On the other hand, there are individuals who become involved in activities without the

proper guidance and direction. Samuel noted these situations:

> I know one Elder. His name is William Dreaver[4]. That's a beautiful man. There's
> a guy that's almost like Grandpa Joe Douquette, I hope I see him again, once more
> before he leaves this earth, this world. I'd like to see him this summer even. He's
> a nice old man. I'd like to bring him up here. A good teacher. He use to be on the
> parole board. He must be in his seventies now. But this man, when he spoke [it
> was] broken English in front of the parole board. There was ten of us on the
> parole board, ten of us, and a few other people, about fifty all together. All
> doctors, psychologists, lawyers listening to what he had to say. He says, 'I don't
> have much to say. I'm going to talk for about 15 minutes,' but he spoke for almost
> a half an hour and used broken English. You could make out what he was trying
> to say. He said, 'I could always say it better in my Cree language, but you guys are

---

[4]Several Elders are identified by name as requested by individuals interviewed.

the wrong colour.' After he talked just a pin could drop. The only Native there was myself. When he was finished, this guy made a comment, I think one of the lawyers, 'Man the guy has an intelligence beyond imagination.' He said that and everyone was in agreement. He got a standing ovation from 50 people. Me, I got a lump in my throat. I could have cried right there. I knew where he was coming from. I knew what he was saying. That's the kind of guy, that's the man I would like to bring here...Those are the ones with the down to earth, good culture. We don't have that around here. We don't have that. The only one I'd say around here probably, that I got, I'd say, is my wife. We don't got that. We don't have that here at all. Again, it's sad. I get hurt. I could almost cry. I get emotional about it because they [popcorn people, as Samuel referred to them, or untrained people who suddenly call themselves healers or Elders] are hurting a lot of people. They are hurting a lot of people, men and women. I worked with a guy and a pipe was given to him. All of sudden he's smudging, he's got the lights all closed up, having a pipe ceremony there at [a community site], but he's doing it. All of sudden he smudging the schools. He just doing his thing [without guidance or direction].

Maureen explained that these peoples' actions are not based on the needs of the people requiring support or Cree culture. She explained that, "There are some out there, unfortunately, that have hidden agendas or self-interest." Samuel shared another story which demonstrated such self-interest:

> There was another guy, I think you know him too, he came up here..from The Pas. We had a camp. That's the time we had Albert Lightning and these guys from the states...All these people were at mile 20 and this guy came in from Alberta. And he's eating chicken. He's sitting on the bench in front there at mile 20 and eating chicken. This guy from The Pas says, 'Look it, I've got this big bump, a cyst, eh,' and he holding his arm. He went like this [motions that the man eating chicken was feeling the bump with one hand] and grabs his arm, 'four hundred bucks.' He didn't even stop eating his chicken.

These individuals are also seen as attempting to control the people by creating fear.

Leland noted this point: "Recently I've been hearing about people going to see a medicine man and they're saying that he's taking tampons out of their bodies. That in itself is bad

medicine, but not in the sense that people tend to think it is. Because what they're doing

is fear-mongering, and they're using that fear to control people."

One concern arising from this situation of popcorn healers and Elders working

with self-interest is the abuse that is occurring in the community. In particular is the abuse

women face. Maureen was concerned enough that she wanted this issue addressed

directly in this thesis. She described her concern this way:

> One of the things in my work as an Aboriginal woman that I come across quite
> often is how our women are taken advantage of because of the lack of knowledge
> and so-called healers, so-called traditionalists. They put themselves up there and
> they're better than someone else. We're not all like that but there are those that
> will hurt others and it's not talked about. It's not talked about enough. You know,
> you talk about this, I hope that you talk about this because one of the things I hear
> time and time again in our ceremonies is how our women are respected in our
> ceremonies. You go to ceremonies, different ceremonies, and it's not there. The
> women are looked at as second class and I've seen that. I see it in my community.
> I see it in meetings. I see it in, it's not only in our ways, in our practices, but it's
> also in our communities. I think that they need to be mindful of how women are
> treated disrespectfully and that this needs to be talked more about by our men.
> That when we say it, we walk the talk, and not just talk about it. I think it's really
> critical that this issue and how it is hurtful is talked about. It's very disheartening
> to see women being mistreated, especially if we're not there as a group to support.
> But when they come to us and they tell us, 'this is what happened and we have no
> one to go to, we have nowhere to turn to.' So I see a lot of that and not very often
> is it talked about. And when it is talked about, it's not talked about truthfully. It's
> only talked about when it's for their own good or for the good of the community
> or when people are in the limelight and it shouldn't be that way. You know what I
> mean? It really bothers me when I hear that at ceremonies when that's being said,
> because I know it's not true. 'Cause I've seen it happen too many times where
> women are not treated the way that they should be. And it's not to say that there
> are men out there that don't treat women in high regard. And of course it's
> mutual, right? It's not only one, it's both. I shouldn't just say women, but
> disrespecting one another. We need to be mindful of that.

This grave concern goes as far as to include the sexual abuse of women by so-called

traditional healers or so-called Elders. Maureen continued by noting this abuse: "I think

another big issue is men who are healers or traditionalists and claim to work with women

and they end up sexually abusing them or whatever." Samuel also highlighted the

significance of this abuse. He said:

> Oh man, I could talk about that [sexual abuse] for about an hour because I have
> interviewed those kind of guys in the penitentiary that have done that! They got
> five years for it. Horrible cases, right in the sweat lodge! Horrible! Horrible right
> in the sweatlodge! And these are Elders!

He went on to explain the background of this abuse:

> I see what goes on around us and it's hard to zipper up your lip, because I see
> people getting hurt. I see people that are taken advantage of. And when when I
> was counselling at [a Cree First Nation] for 2 years, I sure learned a lot because I
> try to practice the culture as much as I could. Maybe that's why I have such an
> advantage, especially with my own people. I was dealing with a lot of people that
> are damaged. A lot of people that are abused men and women, specifically [in this
> Cree First Nation], 'cause that's only people I was counselling was in [this Cree
> First Nation]. 'Cause there was a lot of things that happened, like a pedophile.
> There was a school teacher that did that for about 30 or 40 years, and that's not
> counting residential schools. In some of our older people, sadly to say and I don't
> mean to say that to disrespect them, a lot of our grandfathers were perpetrators
> themselves. To this day, some of them are still continuing today. And that's sad,
> eh, that's sad. 'Cause there's so many people in that community have very, very
> unresolved issues. And I'm only deal with counselling. Like there's sometimes
> that I think we're just hitting the tip of the iceberg.

Another situation connected to this situation of negativity and popcorn healers and

Elders is that there are clashes within the community in regards to cultural practices.

Maureen explained this effect:

> One of the things that I see going on right now, I guess in a lot of our
> communities, is how there's so much in-fighting. What I mean by that is the
> different leaders or the different traditionalists or the different role models in the
> communities that are supposed to be teaching us and teaching our children are
> fighting amongst each other.

The negativity and abuse, whether it is connected to individuals, families, or

communities, is seen by several of the people interviewed as being rooted outside the

community. In particular, descriptions of colonial oppression were given as the source of

many of the difficulties. Steven noted that we, Indigenous peoples, have been facing this

oppression for a long time. While we have been able to hold off such interference, this

resistance has been overcome to a significant degree. Steven noted,

> We've had some difficult times [from outside sources] over the last century, but
> there was still a degree of self-sufficiency in many communities, economically
> and socially. Now we live in times where there's a lot of intervention, as you
> would call it, a lot of intervention and often disrespect for the people in that
> pattern of where you can't just stand by and say things will get better.

Samuel believes this oppression is linked to the experiences the people had in residential

schools. He has learned through his work with individuals who have abused others that

they have been abused themselves in these schools. He explained it this way:

> And you'll find that a lot of the guys, when they go to jail,...they need counselling.
> A lot of that stuff [Cree culture and helping practices] is not there, so they'll just
> grasp on to it [when it is made available]. That's why it's so important when you
> talk to someone who's a client, to remember they're very fragile. A lot of times it
> is very easy to take advantage of them, and that's what has happened. You listen
> to some of their stories, I know that there's just horror stories and you hurt, and
> you try to help somebody heal...a half a dozen people or so in their 50s, 60s, they
> have disclosed for the first time, a very traumatic thing that happened in their lives
> as a child, that would be residential school.

Maureen also related the oppression to residential schools, but she extended the roots to

include the sixties scoop where thousands of First Nation children had been apprehended

by social workers and placed in non-First Nation homes.

Steven related this oppression by outside healers, like social workers and

educators, to processes of assessments that determine, or label, the problem and solution.

172

This labelling is seen by Steven as problematic since it removes the issue from the

context of liberation.

> Well I've talked with some Cree families who are involved in the school with
> their children and so on. And I think, 'labelling,' some people say it helps to
> decide what kind of care some of them may need. They categorize or classify the
> problem or in some way limit the situation by defining behaviour or what would
> best work here. And I think that can be problematic, because what I think happens
> is the healer determines that this is the problem. Then we really limited again all
> of the context and all of the other things that are at play. So I think to
> oversimplify, to ignore the mystery and to limit the possibilities of what might be,
> like to set goals. Personally, maybe it's too personal, but I remember [a young
> Cree woman] had a dream in high school to do something with her life and the
> school determined that the answer was this and not what she wanted. They had
> determined what was the best way for her. So I think whenever we do that, the
> person for whom we're prescribing or describing what it is in human life that's
> possible for them, I think when we do that, we fail the person because we're
> imposing understanding from our experience. We can share some of that, but if
> it's closed and doesn't have an open ending about the mystery of life, then I think
> we have moved into an area that isn't for us, despite our training and as much
> background and analysis as you were able to do for a situation. I think if we then
> give a description and try to resolve something in ways that are small and narrow,
> I think we have not really helped with healing. I think we've made a step against a
> liberation, the possibilities of life.

Similarly, Marlyn suggested that despite outside helpers with good intentions, the helping

process can become dangerous if the helpers come with an agenda when working with

others. The people with whom they are working can become dependent and then the

helpers can get caught having control over them.

One of the effects of this oppression is the stress Cree healers and Elders are

facing in trying to combat the negativity, abuse, and oppression. This feeds a downward

spiralling process where the outside oppression is internalized, and the internalized

oppression is used as grounds to further oppress the people and the potential of Cree ways

of helping. This process limits the peoples' ability to address issues on their own grounds.

Steven's comment reflects this spiral:

> The Cree healers are under severe stress and the young people are being informed
> that there's no answer then; that there's no healing to be found with the Elders, the
> grandmothers and grandfathers, or even with their own parents. They'll tell you,
> 'they don't hold the credibility.'

(2) Use of Amer-European Ways of Helping

Several of the people interviewed recognized that there are many ways of helping. For

example, Joshua noted that, "There's a lot of different ways that you want to help, either

by knowledge or practices or feelings." Marissa also noted that, "There are different types

of models for counselling" and that some of these models stem from Cree ways of

helping while others are based in Amer-European ways. A few of the people interviewed

incorporated both ways into their helping practices. For example, Maureen stated:

> In general, it is so cold in University. It's all mechanical. Everything seems so,
> you feel like you don't fit in, or you feel like you don't belong. You're only there
> because, the only reason I went is because I needed, I needed this paper to work
> with my people. And the wonderful thing about getting that piece of paper is that
> you are looked at in a different way now, in a good way. That you are now an
> educated Aboriginal woman who knows what she's talking about because she's
> been there. She's been through the system and she's learned all those different
> theories, all those different, I guess, different ways, different approaches. I only
> took what I know will work and left the rest behind, because that is what you're
> taught [by our Elders], and when I was going to University, that's what always
> stayed in my head. I'm only here because I need this paper and I'm here because I
> want to learn. I want to learn and I want to take this back to my community. I want
> to take it back and I want to use this and I will take what I can use, and what I
> don't like, I will leave. And that's what I've done. I'm using what works with our
> people and what doesn't work, I don't even go there. And some of the stuff is
> valuable, like you know, like some of the theories that I use is the systems theory.
> Another one is the Bowen theory [a theory on family therapy]. Another one is
> cognitive. But all that is incorporated into the wheel, into the medicine wheel, you

know. So it's not just one, but they're combined. It's not systems theory is better than the medicine wheel or Bowen is better than the medicine wheel. They complement one another and that's what I think is really, really important. But I guess the wonderful thing about these approaches is I'm in control, and I go to the people and I offer it and I say this is something that you might be interested in. I don't say this is what you have to take, or this is what you have to do, you know. I give them choices. That's the difference, you know.

However, such incorporation of Amer-European ways of helping is seen as limited.

Maureen later added, "I've also incorporated it [Amer-European ways of helping] in the

Aboriginal ways, and blended those together. And although the Western way works in

some ways, what's most effective is our way."

Marlyn also explained that she will use outside ideas, such as a genogram, but she

will lead these ideas back to her/our own ways of doing things. Irene was more limited in

her incorporation of Amer-European ways, as evident in her statement, "I use the

academic [Amer-European ways of helpings] to supplement our ways when I need it."

Indeed, Irene saw her education in Amer-Europeans ways of helping as less than what she

needed. She explained it this way: "For someone who's going through that formal

training what I would say is that you need to not take this so seriously, this western

academia because how you're going to work as an Indigenous person is very different

from what you're learning here." Marissa echoed this situation when she stated,

"Sometimes you can't use those [Amer-European ways of helping]." Indeed, it sometimes

gets in the way for some of the people interviewed. Irene stated, "One of the things that

I've learned is that when I sit down with people, when I try and put on my counsellor hat

and I use all my 'knowledge' I get lost and I start fumbling." She explained further that

when she does apply it, she notes a difference: "I could take all the theory stuff that I've

learned through western psychology and apply it, but when I do that, in both the person

that I'm working with and myself, I rarely feel good about it. And I don't feel that I have

been effective."

The people interviewed noted some of the differences between Amer-European

and Cree ways of helping. Marissa stated that:

> In a different setting [an Amer-European setting], they serve a criteria that we
> need to follow bang, bang, bang. But in our form, my way of counselling is it's
> very different. Its more focussed on the people. People that have had a harder time
> successfully completing other recovery programs, we found out later on that it was
> a language barrier and the way the counsellor was communicating didn't fit our
> people. So quite often we [Indigenous people seeking help] have a stumbling
> block.

Joshua explained that our ways of helping include our feelings as helpers. This point was

addressed in Marlyn's discussion on how reflection is part of a Cree way of helping. She

spoke of how we carry the helping experience with us. She explained, "If they [the people

we are helping] don't come in your mind at night you are not connecting. If things are

only carried from 9 to 5, then you are not connecting. In our way we also reflect at night."

She noted that when she was taught about social work in University, this reflection piece

was missing. She also noted that, as helpers, we included reflections that are based upon

our emotional experiences in the helping process. This part was also missing in her

education. She stated, "They trashed it [the inclusion of feelings]. We do not

compartmentalize ourselves."

This difference in Cree and Amer-European ways of helping was noted from

another angle. Maureen noted the experience of non-Indigenous helpers trying to help

Cree people. She stated:

> When a non-Aboriginal person goes into the community, 90 percent of the time they don't understand. They don't understand our ways. They don't understand our culture. They don't understand our values. They don't understand our beliefs. They don't understand who we are as people. And if they don't take the time to understand or if they don't take the time to learn, how are they ever gonna come to respect, and understand and learn who we are.

She also noted that this lack of understanding and disrespect was seen in how they

attempted helped our people, meaning that they helped only from Amer-European ways

of helping.

(3) An Ongoing Process to Learning and Helping

It was clear from most of the people interviewed that there is a process people go through

to become helpers. This process is intimately linked to the helper's personal healing and

well-being. It begins with a person seeing or hearing of an alternative way of being. In a

quote partially stated earlier, Maureen outlined how she became aware of another way of

knowing life and living:

> When it first really started for me, at least 12 years ago when my brother brought it home to our community and I remember my mom because she was so Christian and so worried. She did not want to have anything to do with learning about our way as Aboriginal people. She said that it was evil and that if we continued to bring these kinds of things into our home, like the medicines and the rattles and stuff like that, we were gonna burn in hell. She wanted no part of him, and of course my brother, because he respected my mom, he listened to what she said. But that didn't stop him and over the years I watched him and I watched how he changed. I can remember how troubled he was as a young boy growing up. He was always getting into trouble. He was into drugs and stealing, you know, all those things. Then when he started learning about the traditional ways, his whole

177

life began changing in a good way. And today you see where he's at, how far he's come, and if you would have known him when he was just a young boy, he himself is, I guess, a good example of how our ways help.

From paying attention to her brother and others going through a similar change, Maureen initiated direct changes in her life:

> Once I left home and I went out on my own, I began learning about this way. But again, it wasn't without living a life of addictions and abuse and going through all that, that whole process first before I was able to find my way and find something that had meaning that I believed in. Because in my life, for many, many years I was taught that if you didn't go to church, the devil was gonna get you, and if you did this you were gonna go to hell. And we were taught all these negative things about the church and I thought that doesn't make sense to me. Then I started learning about our ceremonies and watching from afar because where I came from and how I was taught, learning about our ceremonies was a bad thing. So I really believed that. But, at the same time that I was curious, I was also afraid because of what I was taught as a child. But, the more I listened and the more I learned and the more that I became involved, I began changing my life around. And it took me 10 years to come to this place where I am today, but it's not without those years of watching and observing and going to ceremonies and just sitting on the outside and watching. I did not trust very easy. I did not feel safe because of where I came from. And as I began attending and going to these places more and more, I began incorporating these things into my life and that's where it's at today. So my values and my beliefs are based on our teachings and I know that they work, because, I've seen the work, and I've seen the changes in people.

Samuel shared a similar experience of hearing about the different lifestyle and becoming directly involved in the Cree way of life.

> In 1976, I guess, my wife and I moved to Leaf Rapids before we met old Joe, Grandpa Joe. Then I had a good job. I had a little over a year's sobriety, good paying mining job and five kids and money in the bank, cattle on the range, so to speak. I had all these things, but you know, there was always something missing and I didn't know what it was. I never knew what was missing. My wife, that first year, she went to Morley and then she came back and we talked to the wee hours of the morning. I just knew about sweetgrass, sage and stuff like that. I just started. We were at the [Friendship Centre]. It was just opening up. I got introduced to this one guy and we went for a sweat. We went to [a Cree Nation]. When I came back, that's what was missing, was the cultural aspects. Ever since

178

then I always had balance in my life.

As this process carried on, some of the people interviewed noted that some of their past

life experiences and teachings were raised once again. For Leland, these childhood

teachings were put out of his memory until after he initiated the change to his lifestyle:

> I've grown up a traditional way of life. I grew up with my dad in the bush. He
> taught me the values of respect, of caring, of caring about the land, especially the
> animals, respecting the land. He taught me all of that, but because of a second
> knowledge [what he was taught in the non-Indigenous academic system], I never
> saw it until later on in my life when I started living a traditional way of life and all
> these traditional teachings my Dad had taught growing up.

Steven explained that remembering the teachings we have received from our families is a

key part of the initial process:

> The first thing would be to sort out your own life journey, and to remember that in
> the Cree mind, there's a tremendous capacity to remember the positive things. So
> many capacities that were given, the Creator gave us. I think the first thing I
> would say would be to remember all the positive things and all the symbols of
> caring, sharing, the expressions of love, sometimes play in direct ways in Cree
> families, and the awareness of all of that brings you to this place, and how the
> things that are happening now have connections to your life journey.

Once they had initiated their participation in the process, most of the people

interviewed spoke of turning to Elders, medicine people, healers and/or storytellers for

guidance. Steven continued to explain:

> And then to spend, to make time to be on the land, and to be with the storytellers
> and the healers, the ones who feel right and create a safe space and invite you to
> be yourself, and are willing to share stories. I think just the growth that's possible
> within your own history and the options that are now there lead up to that peaceful
> place and [it] begins when we are imagining what are the Elders saying now.

Leland noted that there were particular Elders that he would turn to for guidance:

> The Elders that are the best I've come across, they come with life experiences and

a lot of oral stories that they could share. They helped me to see myself and helped me look at myself and helped me understand what I need to do for myself.

The Elders and other helpers were said to provide guidance and support through

the things they taught. Joshua identified a variety of things that he would learn from the

Elders and the ceremonies they hosted:

> Understanding the different things, like the ceremonies. How the sweat came to be, how the fast came to be, and all those lodges like the birthing lodge because a person needs to understand [these things] in order for a person to honour this the way of life. To be strong.

Leland explained that the ceremonies symbolize and demonstrate certain teachings, and

guided the learning of particular values, beliefs, directions, and principles:

> So basically the pipe, the sweat lodge, and the fast camps, and the sun dances, have those basic spiritual values and beliefs [and] that we carry those things, these laws, or natural laws that you use to walk this medicine road. We use those as guiding principles in our life on how to treat people. And we also use those to try to study principles on how we treat the earth and take care of the earth, how we take care of animals, how we take care of birds and how you take care of the insects. Because we all have a lot of place on earth, we all have a purpose.

Irene outlined that what we are trying to do is to live life in the best way possible.

She stated:

> Mino-pimatisiwin is living life in the best way possible, in the best way that you're able to, each and every day that you wake up. For me that means getting into the practice of saying my morning prayers and asking the Creator to guide me, being and working on myself and accepting that I'm very human and I'm gonna make mistakes and I'm gonna fall. And when I fall, not being so harsh on myself, which I have a tendency to do, but just trying to live each day in the best way possible. In that, when I look at creation, the trees out there, I see it's just so beautiful and just makes me feel so good. I think that's how we're supposed to live.

She further explained this idea:

> This one person told me that one of the things that we're supposed to be working towards is é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin. É-kiyamih is, you know, when you look at the water and it's like glass, it's so calm and it's so serene, it just looks like glass. That's the state we're supposed to be working towards in life.

Irene also explained that seeking this goal was and is supposed to be *the* way of life for Cree peoples. She shared her understanding that this process related to Cree people historically, specifically her grandparents:

> Like for my grandmother, and my grandparents before her, they came to learn about pimatisiwin and how do you live out your life right from when they were born. Being in that tikinákan, and the learning process beginning there on learning to listen, and learning to use your eyes, and as children, learning to be quiet and learning how to live in a good way. And it's rather funny that we actually talk about it now, when it was a way of being for our grandmothers and our grandfathers. And it's following the teachings and the laws of our people and again that goes back to the land and creation and our Creator and all that it encompasses.

By living out these teachings, and participating in the activities that symbolize the teachings, we start to internalize the teachings and move toward mino-pimátisiwin and é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin. This point was explained by Leland:

> So given that, when we start practicing patience, understanding, honesty, love, forgiveness, humility, and respect, it becomes part of you, it becomes a part of who we are. People then know who you are. It becomes part of what we show and it's the same with the pipe teachings that we carry. It refers to kindness, to honesty, the caring, sharing, and the strength. It carries you. It just helps sitting down to practice them.

Marlyn identified that this process is not an easy one. She explained it is like looking in a mirror in that we need to come to know ourselves. However, many times we don't want to see ourselves. In other words, we do not want to fully and honestly face all of what we are. To support us to address this challenge is a point outlined by Leland. He

stated:

> Well, the most important thing is to practice being a human being. As a human being, myself, I believe that there's no such thing as a perfection in life. With myself, as a perfect human being, is to put myself in the Creator's domain, and that's why I believe there is no such thing as perfection here on earth. So we practice to better ourselves, to continue to live those values and beliefs, to live with that kindness, with that honesty. To practice those things, honesty, kindness.

In other words, we will make mistakes as we go through this self-reflection and movement towards mino-pimátisiwin and é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin. Maureen explained it this way:

> When I first talk about the teachings and how simple they are to talk about, but to actually follow them 24/7, it's a really, really hard thing to do. That's why when we talk about honesty and we talk about those teachings that were taught, we always say that in our journeys that the healing process is always ongoing because many times we fall, you know, many times we will relapse and many times we'll put away our medicines because maybe we started drinking again or whatever, and we see that a lot too. That's our way. That's how respected our way is.

Further, some of the Elders and social workers interviewed noted that process is long and ongoing. Indeed Irene and Maureen suggested it is a lifelong process.

Some of the individuals saw that this personal change process was necessary before they could reach out to others. Maureen best explained it:

> It made a whole lot of sense that in order for me to help anybody, I had to help myself first. What I mean by that is I needed to go inside and look at who Maureen was, and what my behaviors were about. Why I was the way I was, why I hated, why I had so much pain, why I carried all this hurt and what all that stuff was about, and once I began looking at that, once I began working with me and doing what I needed to do and doing that by going fasting as part of ceremonies, going into sweatlodges, going to listen to people talk, share their stories, going to healing circles and doing all that stuff I needed to do. I needed to do all that stuff first and it's always ongoing.

Once they had begun to walk this way of living, several of the people interviewed

182

said they were in a better position to offer support and guidance to others. Leland said it

this way:

> When we know ourselves, when we practice these things [teachings and values including the concept of strength], when we know we are good people, we practice humility to be a good person. When I say strengths, I mean strengths of mind, body, and spirit, and knowing who you are, what your values and beliefs are, how you live your life, how you treat people. When you know yourself like that, you are better prepared to go out into the world. You won't allow people that come into your life to hurt you and make you feel uncomfortable. It's [then] part of your perception. It's medicine. That what we use to protect ourselves. We use it to help us to be better people. We always praying for these things. We're asking for guidance. We're asking for help.

Several of the people interviewed outlined how they had begun to share what they

were learning and doing. While Leland stated, "For myself, I share with my family, 'cause

I'm a young person and I haven't been living this way of life for a very long time," he

also explained that he began to incorporate his learning into his social work practice in a

post-secondary institute. He stated, "So I switched all these things around and started

living that way of life. And I shared these with the students." He also noted that by

following what he has learned helps him in helping others:

> Once we give those things to ourselves, it's easier to give them to other people. Then the resentment, that hate, that anger, is not holding us back. So I help through understanding that it's our responsibility to practice those things on ourselves for our families, for our children, to pass them on to our friends, to the community in whatever we do in our lives, wherever we go, we try and practice those things.

While Leland began incorporating the process, the teachings, and values into his work

after what he identified as a short period of time, Irene suggested that to learn the

teachings takes a long period of time. She proposed that "this is like 10, 20 years of

studying, and a lot of the teachings that you get don't come until you have the

understanding. They don't even come till later on."

Similarly, Marlyn suggested that the process is a long one that likely started

earlier than we realize. She expressed a concern when we do not follow what we have

been prepared for in our early life:

> We learn throughout our lives to become something, a leader or caregiver. You get trained, living that life, from when you are born for what you are to do in life. Things can become a mess when we don't follow what we are to be doing, for example, a young person trying to lead a community or organization without life training.

Hence, from this perspective, part of the process of training to become a helper who

follows this process involves tapping into our life experiences and dreams, including

those experiences and dreams we had forgotten or suppressed.

Finally, Irene noted that while this process has a common framework, it is

particular to individuals. She explained it this way:

> I believe that it's a very individual journey that each of us has to go through. Much like our relationship with the Creator, that's part of our relationship with the Creator. When we have this gift [initial ability to help others] and we're given that responsibility as part of our gift to be helpers, that [understanding our own experiences] comes along with the teachings. All that unfolds as you're learning. And you're connecting, learning the cultural teachings, because you always have to go back to the land and to the community. You know, you can read all the stuff that we read in the academic sphere, but that's not enough. You have to take that and you go back and you start at the bottom. And you start learning and only through that learning process [guidance of Elders, participating in ceremonies] will what you need to know unfold for you and the direction that you need to take, because how we help people is very individual.

(4) Listening and Presence

A central dynamic of the Cree way of helping emphasized by several of the people

interviewed were the notions of presence and listening. For Steven, Maureen, Doreen,

and Samuel, being present was a long standing Cree tradition. To explain the tradition,

Marissa shared a story of how she came to learn about the importance of listening.

> An example is, for me, I went and asked a question from my grandmother. I was very curious to know the answer and then I asked her. I said, 'When do I do this? When do I start preparing for this?' And we were supposed to have a project and that's learning how to clean and fillet a fish and smoke the fish and make everything. But because I wasn't listening I had to go back to her. And she sat there, went about her duties, and then I said, 'tánispí óma máka?' I said that five times. I thought she totally ignored me. I felt turned off by her. I went home and I told my mom, 'I'm not gonna go and work with her no more.' And she said, 'Why?' I went and asked, 'When do I do this?' And she said, 'Were you listening the first time?' I said, 'No.' She said, 'What were you doing?' 'I was pulling Evelyn's braids.' 'Then that's what you're gonna go and do.' I was so upset. Anyway we went to the next teaching and this time, we were picking mint, and she taught me to pick it properly. She said, 'You don't stand up there and yank them. You go down at their level and you tell them that you're gonna take this for your own medicine. You're gonna learn how to tag them properly and hang them up to dry. You don't keep them in a place where they suffocate. They're alive, you know' she said. Well that teaching I didn't miss one word she said. And you know what, a month exactly, she answered me. She said, 'When you take a fish from the water, that fish gave his life so you will eat. And then you clean your fish. Before you clean your fish you go and take proper branches, leaves, whatever, because there's certain texture that doesn't stick with the fish, they come off clean, and then you wash your fish. You gut your fish and wash it, but before you gut it, you have to know what you're gonna use it for. You separate all the little intestines.' I was so upset by then I thought, 'Yeah, so she taught me that.' She said 'That was the whole piece you weren't listening to. I saw you.' She said, 'I seen you the minute you started pulling on her braids. One month. 30 days is a long time. I knew you were thinking about it every day. Every day, and finally one day you forgot about it. So that's important for you to know,' she said to me. 'When I say something, you listen.' So that's what I learned.

Steven stated that this traditional emphasis on listening is utilized in helping

situations. He explained that coming to someone who is grieving or facing difficulties and

just being in their presence as they face the challenges is "a classic model of the Cree way

of being available to each other and being present for each other." Such means of being

present, according to Steven, "always allow space and silence." He explained that many

times the older people in the community would say, "I'll come to sit with you." The idea

of presence was further explained through a story told by Steven:

> I was in [a Cree community] in '72 when a plane crashed bringing students home
> from the south, back home to [another Cree community]. Some of the Cree high
> school students, 7 of them, died in the aircraft. And so I went in to [this other Cree
> community]. I had to arrange for a charter flight to get in on a small aircraft that
> afternoon. I was getting my bag ready and I just had a two-way radio phone in
> place, something like that. I knew I had to go that day and I was just getting my
> bag here very quickly and even before I could close my bag, one of the Elders in
> the community arrived at the door and said, 'I'm gonna go with you.' And this
> was like for me the first example of our ways of helping. I was really surprised. I
> just assumed I was the one with the responsibility. I was gonna fly in there and
> carry my responsibilities. But, before I could even prepare myself, there was an
> Elder there who said he was called to be a part of this helping. So we arrived in
> the community that afternoon and the Elders from all the communities around
> starting flying in, like at their expense, at their cost. People with not a lot of
> resources began descending on that community and it was a phenomenal process
> because there was a need and the response was to be present for the people. And
> what happened then in that time is that they were not able to bring all of the
> bodies back into the community at the same time. It was staggered over 3 days,
> because there were no aircrafts. Large aircrafts could not land on the airstrip,
> small airstrip there, so they were bringing two at a time. And then each night then
> they would be with different families. The Elders would go and sit and there were
> enough Elders to go into the six homes. One family lost two young people. All the
> rest were from different families. And so they provided individual care, designed
> for each family that was grieving, and the interesting thing to me is that they
> would stay there till dawn. They'd go in the evening till dawn. And then there was
> this old house we were staying in and we'd gather there as they'd come back and
> they'd start telling stories, usually made up stories, but usually teachings as well,
> but a lot of healing for themselves, for each other. So they cared for the family and
> then they came home and before they took any rest, they would care, debrief the
> Cree way. And I think in your work, in social work, there are different ways of
> maintaining some balance. But, these Elders, at this point all the people that came
> in were men, but I know that the women in the communities, as well, are

consistent in finding ways to relieve the tension and find healing and prepare them for the next piece of work. Through this, to spend a couple of hours sitting there and hearing stories and laughing with each other, well they were then able to go to rest and prepare for the next cycle of caring and going in the community. So I think that for me is my memory a classic model of the Cree way of being available to each other and being present for each other.

This idea of presence reflects Doreen's emphasis that as helpers our main task is to

"listen, listen, listen." Joshua also emphasized listening over talking. He stated. "I like to

listen, let them talk, and don't interrupt them. I guess that's our ways, to learn to listen to

people, not cut in when they're talking. But, a lot of times I see people do it. The person

will want to say something or talk, you shouldn't interrupt." Similarly, Samuel noted that

a key part of listening in a Cree way is not interrupting others. He suggested that such

ways of being demonstrates respect for the person speaking. Marissa noted that not

interrupting also applies to asking questions in a helping situation. She explained, "If you

don't get an answer right away, you don't continue asking. Just leave it. Maybe that

person is not ready to disclose, but in due time they disclose in their own way." In this

way, Marissa was emphasizing the importance of presence, listening, and waiting

patiently for the person to speak on issues when they are ready.

Once people spoke about what they were experiencing, the emphasis on presence

and listening continued. What was often said after someone spoke was a simple

affirmation and openness, as opposed to responding deeply with your own views on such

experiences. Steven explained such affirmation this way:

> So what comes to mind when people share dreams, is the old grandmothers. They, often in the afternoon, would sit and drink tea, and stories always happened. And one of the grandmothers, unfailingly, one of them would come and sit down and

they would tell about their dreams they had that night, you know, a lot of detail and some of them quite long stories. And the other ones listening would just sit there and at the end of the description, they would say mámaskác, you know, 'isn't that amazing.' And I think that's the kind of affirmation and openness that, for me, is about how we approach other people and how healing is shared in the community. It's enough to say what you've told me is an amazing thing. It's just a wonderful thing.

Maureen incorporated this way of helping as a social worker. She stated she would say to people, "Come and talk to me, and I will sit and I will listen." She stated, "I will not get mad or I will not yell, that's not how I deal with people. I've come a long ways in that way, and that's by learning. Learning from our ceremonies and learning how to live a good life and a healthy life. That's how I try to live. So, if anything, those are the things that I'm always mindful of and I speak the truth about that." Thus, Maureen would bring a sense of peace that she has personally developed and lives the helping process.

Steven compared this way of being to what we are taught in Amer-European based means of helping through his reflections of it in practice:

> I remember a woman Elder being a caregiver at the end of a lifetime. Families would ask her to come when they knew a member of the family was near the end of their life's journey, at the end of life, and she would be invited into the home. And she'd come and she would stay there constantly sometimes for three or four days, just sitting with the person. Sometimes she would talk to the person, but [there would be] hours and hours of praying. And I think in the professional North American world, you'd have almost none of that. The questions are always being asked, comments made, advice is being given. And the Cree way, especially in certain circumstance, is to be with a person as much as to offer solutions, and that's the healing way. There is respect of silence, of sacred space.

Finally, Marissa noted that the same process happens in other formats, such as groups. She explained, "All these things [issues raised] are important, and you hear them [in the group]. You don't have to answer them. It's their conversation, but you're the

188

silent listener."

(5) Ceremonies

All participants noted that ceremonies play a central part in Cree ways of helping. All

individuals noted that the ceremonies provided them guidance. For example, Leland

shared his personal journey of how a particular ceremony helped him cope with the

passing of his father as well as some other challenges. He shared his story this way:

> I lost my Dad in 1991 in a boating accident. I went through the anger and through
> the denial. And at the time, 1996, I thought I had overcome all of that, but I was
> only sober for a year, going on to a year already at that time. I decided to let go of
> alcohol and tried to rebuild my life because I had lost my family as well at that
> point. My wife had left me for another person and my children were taken away
> from me because they went to live with their mom. I drank for about a year and
> went crazy; just about killed myself in three vehicle accidents. So, I went to
> treatment and started sobering up and met the old man that gave me my name
> when I went to this fast camp at mile 20. I went up there to deal with my dad
> because after 5 years of drinking heavily after my dad had died, I didn't realize
> that I was still grieving for him. In all that time, I was using alcohol to help me
> forget, to help me overcome that, to cope. Whenever I came down from it, a week
> or two would go by, a few days, I would go back to it because of not realizing it.
> Once I sobered up I took a look at myself and I started to do something for myself.
> Then I realized that I was dealing with the loss of my dad. So, I went to a fast
> camp in the fall time for my dad. This was the second one. I offered my tobacco
> and cloth and went to work on myself for four days and four nights without food,
> except for the medicine in the third and fourth day. But in that time, the whole
> time I prayed and got a connection with my dad. Every time, at some point in
> time, I felt my dad getting closer and closer. Whenever I got that feeling, that fear
> would go away. So one morning, I woke up and meditated, made sure my fire was
> lit, and sat beside my fire. It had snowed that night, about a foot of snow. While I
> was sitting by the fire there, out of the corner of my eye, I seen something black in
> the snow. I looked back and there's this big spruce bug. I don't like spruce bugs at
> all. They gave me the creeps. But, he was digging slowly. The first thing that
> came to mind was my dad, because my dad had died of hypothermia in the fall
> time. I started talking to myself, what was happening and why was that thing out
> here, snowing and all that. I didn't pay any attention to it for a few seconds, for

about a minute, and then I looked back at it. You know, that was my dad when I
am off like that. So I took that bug, and I put him on the rocks by the fire to help
him thaw out, warm him up so he can fly off into a tree kind of thing and go
hibernate. I put him on that rock and what was happening was the legs started to
burn off of the spruce bug. So I had no choice but to squash him with my foot. I
ended up killing it. Then I sat for a while and I thought about it. For a lot of years
I blamed myself for the loss of my dad because he asked me to go with him that
weekend and 'if I would have went, things would have been different,' I was
saying to myself. That's a lot of years, its been five years, to that point there. But,
with all due respect to that spruce bug, that spruce bug came around to teach me
something. What that spruce bug taught me was that it didn't matter what I would
have done for my dad, our Creator wanted him and there was nothing I could do.
So I accepted it like that, knowing it was my Dad's time to go through that bug. I
call him my acceptance bug now. Whenever I see that bug today, I still think of
my dad and remember what I've accepted, that my dad is gone on. For my dad, his
work was done here on earth and our Creator wanted him to do something else on
the other side. His work was beginning on the other side. So, that's why I call him
my acceptance bug.

Maureen also explained that she strongly believed in the values and beliefs stemming

from the different types of ceremonies, and that she has relied on them for her personal

healing growth. She stated how they have helped her:

> I needed to go inside and look at who Maureen was, and what my behaviors were
> about, why I was the way I was, why I hated, why I had so much pain, why I
> carried all this hurt and what all that stuff was about. And once I began looking at
> that, I began working with me and doing what I needed to do. And doing that by
> going fasting as part of ceremonies, going into sweatlodges, going to listen to
> people talk, share their stories, going to healing circles and doing all that stuff I
> needed to do. I needed to do all that stuff first and it's always ongoing.

Individuals interviewed also explained that they would incorporate what they have

learned through the ceremonies to help others. For example, Marlyn incorporates

ceremonial songs whenever she can, such as when she smudges in circles she will take

the opportunity to sing. She also saw the smudging ceremony as important. She would

have in her office a unique smudge bowl and feather in plain sight and will use these for

others to break open conversation on our ceremonies and teachings. Maureen explained

how she incorporated her ceremonial learning into her helping practice, including how to

life a good and healthy life. She later said her means of helping others was based upon

Cree teachings and ceremonies. She stated:

> When I talk about the ceremonies and our traditional way of life, I think of using the medicine wheel approach and also the teachings, the seven teachings. Based on those, I feel that those are key components to helping First Nations people, and the reason why I say that is because I guess my own life experience and also in the work that I've been doing in the last 10 years and how it has involved the teachings. It has involved the ceremonies. It has involved the Elders, the healers.

Similar to Maureen's incorporation of her ceremonial learning into her helping practice,

Joshua would also use the ceremonies to help others find their well-being. Steven also

thought ceremonies were central to the well-being of the children, as the ceremonies,

teachings, and songs helped children to remember their spiritual foundation and help

them remember their direction in life. He presented the naming ceremony as an example:

> I'd say it's very much about spiritual understanding, some understanding in a spiritual way, and then to find out what your name is, and just look back. So it's always manageable. It's never an impossibility to know your name and live in some way what that means. Never to finish that, that's not finished, but to know that there is something that describes for you what is important. And then to find ways to maintain the journey, the ongoing feeling, and sharing that's possible for you to begin to see those dreams, where those dreams are leading and knowing what it is you must tell your own children. All that cycle of living into the future by remembering the past and the marvelous tradition of storytelling, the marvelous tradition.

As a last example, Leland, explained that he would talk with others reaching out for help

about particular ceremonies and how the teachings behind them provide guidance on how

to live life. For example, he stated:

191

I'll talk to them about the pipe, how I try to live that way of life with that pipe, and the pipe teachings that I carry, which are kindness, honesty, caring, sharing, and strength. These are the five things that I'll teach them. And to remember that with the pipe, when you connect it like that (motions connection between the pipe bowl and pipe stem) it bonds the earth to the spirit world, and it bonds man and women as it represents man and woman. It also teaches when you take it apart, you're also teaching people that there's a certain amount of separation in life.

(6) Identity

Identity was raised often by several of the people interviewed as an important factor in the

helping process. More specifically, a challenge that helpers face is Indigenous peoples'

loss of their Indigenous identity. This loss is seen as significant. Leland relied on a

frequently stated phrase to explain its significance to one's life process: "One of the

things that we talk about is if you don't know where you come from, how do you know

where you are at? If you don't know where you're at, how do you know where you're

going?" Leland went on to explain how he saw the loss of his own sense of identity and

what he attempted to do to re-establish it:

> Even in grade nine, in my own community, I remember being called a pagan, barbaric, savage kind of thing. The land wasn't being used by anybody, they didn't have anything in place governing them, and this on and on negative kind of stuff. I felt shame and embarrassed about that. But, because of that, I started exploring my own culture in different ways. I tried to find myself in different ways. And most of the time, I looked to people around me, but even at that time people in my generation had already lost their culture through their residential school experience and that. It's sad. You looking at finding an identity from other people who have already lost their culture.

Leland later added to his story and related it to others:

> I was telling you early a story about myself. At age 18 I didn't even know who I was. I could be the Fonz, you know, a youth putting on a jean jacket, rolling up the sleeves and flipping up the collar, walking down the road, thinking I'm cool,

but that was part of my identity, my search for my identity. And so, today the
youth are still searching. A lot of them are in their teens and in their early 20s.
Some of our youth are still searching in their 40s, late 30s, early 40s, still
searching for that culture, for who they are, for what their purpose is in life is or
what their culture is, what their spirituality is.

Leland is not alone in noting this situation. Joshua stated that, "there are other people who

don't even know who they are. They're ashamed to be Cree Indians. They no longer have

that pride in who they are. They're ashamed to be Indians."

One of the results of this situation identified by Leland is that, "you kind of lose

yourself in other cultures when trying to fit in, try to be part of it." Irene noted that

coming to such a result may not even be a conscious experience. She outlined the time

when she working with her father to learn about Cree ways of helping. She was informed

by him that she was not thinking like a Cree woman. She stated that when she realized

this point, she thought, "I'm thinking like a White man." She also realized that she

needed help to relearn how to think like a Cree woman. She said, "That's why I needed to

be guided, because when I went out into the field and tried to apply this [Cree ways of

helping], I fast realized that I do think like a White man and I need to change that."

Leland noted that the desire to relearn one's Cree identity is shared by many

people. He outlined his experience of others asking him questions on Cree ways of being:

I have that opportunity to phone [for] and to go a sweat lodge, and to have them
[the student he works with] come with me to a sweat lodge. I think about students
who come here and they start asking me, when they know that a sweat lodge is
coming, they start asking questions, 'When is it going to be?' or they come do the
rocks, or 'Can I get my name?', things like that, so you know they're questioning.
They want that. They know it's out there and they want to learn more about
themselves. And my experience in seeing people when they start to care or they
start coming into their college and into the school, they start to question their

identity and they start to explore. They start wanting to know because they're still looking for that identity.

When Maureen started questioning her own identity, she turned to people who seemed to have a grounding in their Cree way of being, such as Elders and others who followed Cree ways, for support and guidance. She stated:

> I look to them and I look at the teachings that come out of them, the learnings that come out of them, to learn how I'd want to be and how I would not want to be. I'm always mindful of that [learning] and I always want to include them in my life. And I know that there are gonna be mistakes, but at least that I will learn from them. So, it's always trying to be mindful, not only mentally but emotionally and spiritually. That's how strong I believe. I look at my brother, and I look at people like you that have been influential in my life. My Mom and Dad have helped me to grow. That helped me to take a look at who I am and to be proud of who I am. Those are the kinds of teachers that I'm looking at; the ones that are genuine.

Steven noted how when people reached out to others, such as Elders, the Elders would try to help the people remember who they are:

> So an Elder that I spent time with would say to the young people who came to him overly confused, 'You haven't lost identity. You can remember it. You can rediscover yourself'. I think that's that calling back to the story and back to teachings, the philosophy of life. However the stories are told, however we did this in past generations, calling to our caring for each other, the idea really is about remembering. And I love these teachings about the idea that everyone is given original instructions. And I think about the old traditional ways, when a child is born, the Elders come and visit that child and then certain Elders will begin to find a name for that child. And the whole thing of identity is important, including the acknowledgment, 'this is a woman or this is a man, and we're seeing certain things about this little child that this is a gift to the community'. So that foundational understanding is of birthing into community and that this child is a gift from the very beginning, and that the child just needs to be helped to remember the teachings and the songs through the ceremonies, to remember their spiritual foundation and again, that they belong in this place.

The importance of our identity is seen as central to our spiritual well-being. For

example, Marissa explained it this way: "They'll never take your spirit away, just like they'll never kill your spirit as long as you know who you are. You may not master your language, but you will always have your identity as a Cree person.' Similarly, Steven explained that while language is important to our identity and spiritual well-being, if we cannot speak our language we can still maintain our identity through other means. He explained it this way: "You have to maintain the stories, but even just hearing the language, maybe even more than talking it, to gain self-understanding and to maintain the flavour of life, I call it, the beautiful flavour that's about peace and strength, the system of our identity."

One of these other means of maintaining our identity is by recognizing our connection to particular territories. Marissa noted that when we have such a connection, others will come to know of us through that connection. She stated, "Once they understand what territory I come from, then they'll have a better understanding of who I am." This connection between land and identity was also emphasized by Irene. However, unlike Marissa and Steven, she also stated that to develop this connection requires an understanding of the language. She stated:

> Each of our groups of people have a specific identity and have a specific place in the world, that we're connected to that land. As First Nations people, our connection to our land is our connection to Creator, our connection to Mother Earth. So as a Swampy Cree woman, that's where my identity starts from. It's from the land where I'm from. And it tells me a lot about who I am and it tells the world about who I am as a Swampy Cree woman. And so that's why I don't say I'm any Ininiw person. I always say I'm a Muskégo. I'm a Muskégo-Ininiw. So that's the difference in that having been taught that from a language base, and why that's important. And for someone who doesn't speak the language, they don't get that.

(7) Language

A significant topic within all of the interviews was language. Indeed Marissa expressed

that it is an advantage that Cree people have over non-Indigenous peoples. Indeed she saw

it as coming from the heart of the Cree people. For Joshua and Leland, the Cree language

is an important part of the Cree peoples' traditions and culture. Joshua explained it this

way:

> And language, in my own community, language is still very strong 'cause it
> relates to our culture, who we are. Also, [it is] part of our ceremonies, where the
> Elders use the language when they talk. They don't use another language when
> they are asked to pray for forgiveness, they are following this language. Even in
> ceremonies, when you go to any kind of ceremony, and when you hear these
> spirits, the grandfathers speaking, you never hear them speak English. They
> always talk the old Cree, so we have to understand that's part of our ways when
> we talk. Everything that's part of that 'cause it's who we are. When we talk to the
> Medicines, the plants, the animals, the water, we speak the language because
> that's part of our way, to use the language. The language, its our culture, its our
> tradition, especially the land, its our culture, our tradition, our children. It's our
> culture. So language is important.

Samuel also noted the importance of the Cree language. But he, like Joshua, recognized a

connection between the language, Cree culture, and the earth.

The importance of the language was highlighted by other people interviewed,

including Irene who said, "What I would strongly recommend is that you need to learn the

language because the teachings that you're looking for are in the language." Yet, she also

stated, "It's such a natural thing that a lot of times I'm not even conscious of it. It's just

going with the language and going with what's happening with the person I'm sitting

with."

Steven noted the significance of language in a similar fashion when he explained that language is fundamental to helping us understand Cree philosophy. He said that "so much of the language speaks about our shared responsibility, our shared life with all of creation, and the teachings which I think is Cree philosophy." He also explained, "it contains all of the generational teachings. It has fairly broad parameters....the Cree approach to philosophy is contained in the language."

Joshua recognized that the language is a key component for the people to establish their own direction and follow their own dreams as it contributes to, "our children having their own mind." He also noted that "they [the children] can't learn it [language and the Cree philosophy] from the White people or the churches." Joshua explained that people were stronger when they were able to speak and understand the Cree language, and gave an example of the people working against non-Indigenous practices, particularly baptism. He stated that the churches, "can't be baptizing our people now because they have their own mind."

Individuals who were not able to speak the language fluently suggested that their inability to speak the language was a misfortune and left them feeling incomplete. Samuel stated, "I wasn't raised properly. I wasn't fortunate to speak my language." For Maureen, not speaking the language fluently created a feeling that something was missing for her as a helper:

> I guess I feel what is really missing in my life to feel complete as a helper is my
> language, my language as an Aboriginal woman. I understand my language
> fluently and I speak it, but I don't speak it fluently. I speak it in chunks. But it's
> getting there. So that's the wonderful thing. When you talk about what is it that

you would like to go and learn from the Elders, that is one of the things that I would like to learn is my language because I think that is what is gonna fulfill me in my life as a helper, as a woman.

It was clear from the interviews overall that understanding and speaking the language is seen as a significant aspect of being a helper who is following Cree ways of helping.

(8) Role Modelling

During the interviews, role modelling was frequently brought up as a means of supporting and guiding others. For Marlyn, the influence of role modelling began early in her life. She referred to memories of her grandparents and her life in the bush. Her grandparents showed her how to be in that they led by example. Marlyn explained that, "they lived the behaviours to follow." Joshua also noted that role modelling was about how you live. He stated, "I guess when you live that life, people see that, people feel that kindness. That means a lot. Be yourself. Be kind to a person. 'Cause it comes from us first. Like the Cree teachings that say you have to be kind to your family, your people, your community, and all the things."

Maureen also looked to others who lived in a particular way. She explained we watch out for, "people in your life that are living the good life and you look to them for role modelling and you look to them for guidance and direction. That's what gives me the courage to keep going, and knowing what I'm doing is helping other people." Joshua related such modelling to the helping process from a different perspective. He stated,

198

"You gotta be able to be what you want, how you want to help those people. You got to

be able to be healthy yourself, healthy in your mind, your body, and your spirit in order to

help other people. You know, like the blind leading the blind, you can't be like that. You

got to be able to be healthy in order to help others." Similarly, Leland noted that it is

important to care for yourself as others would be watching you as an example. He

explained that helpers are "to take care of themselves, to feed themselves, eat properly, to

sleep well, to be mindful of what we're putting into our bodies, like alcohol and drugs."

Norbert gave a reason for role modelling, namely it will help people look more at

life positively. He stated, "Let's show them...if we share our love, our kindness to other

people, you're making better relationships, you'll be more at peace. People are gonna

look up." Joshua gave another reason for such modelling:

> Well, that's what I always say, that we have to be careful how we conduct
> ourselves. If we're not, and we're doing those kind of things, we're teaching
> people that this doesn't apply to me. You have to be a model; a role model
> ourselves to be able to work with people. If I go gambling, if I go to the bars, I set
> a bad example to others, to the young people. I try to live a clean life.

However, if we have been or experienced bad examples in our past lives, we can

incorporate them into the helping process. Marlyn explained that we can relate more to

others when we share experiences, meaning that we can use our experiences when we had

not been living a good life and share how we moved away from these experiences. These

experiences might be ones other people are presently facing. Leland also explained this

point when he stated, "I share those stories [about how his actions were influencing his

family] to encourage them, to help them look at themselves and help them see where they

come from and can see from their own families and how they teach them, not necessarily

through oral things but also through their actions." From another perspective, Steven

explained that when we are with people who are trying to help us in ways that are not

positive, we may still learn from them. He stated:

> You know, they may go at it the wrong way. They may cause pain before the healing comes, but there's a teaching there and there's a reflection for us to see ourselves and understand why everything doesn't quite work the way we maybe want it to work.

Maureen explained that role modelling cannot be just something we follow while

we are at work:

> If we are to follow this way of life and, if we are to be role models in our communities, then we need to be mindful of how we treat people, how we are around people, how we conduct ourselves. It's 24/7. It's not just eight hours a day where you're this respectful and loving, caring person and then you go home at the end of the day and you're something else or you go into the workplace and you're something else.

The idea that we are role models throughout our daily lives relates to Cree

philosophy of helping. Steven explained this point through reflection on his experience

with a particular non-Indigenous institution:

> And I think this may be the biggest break between our philosophy of helping and the way the [non-Indigenous institution] has been coming to us. Maybe the biggest break is that the [non-Indigenous institution] had trouble understanding that you don't just go out and change someone. You might help people remember [through role modelling and story telling] who they are, to remember why we're placed on the earth, it's then each of us finding our way, our own family, our names, our dreams. So, I think that is where, within the [non Indigenous institution], I personally have struggled because I don't think many people that I have worked with in the [non-Indigenous institution] can begin there, can begin to see that everyone is sacred. Everyone is a healer.

(9) Spirituality

While the importance of spirituality was not directly outlined, its significance clearly

showed as all the people interviewed spoke of the role of spirituality in their lives, in how

they proceed to help others, and in the helping process. Irene shared her understanding

that spirit is what people share as human beings, and that "being a helper and being a

human being is a very spirit, is supposed to be a very spiritual thing." Samuel emphasized

this point as well when he referred to two Elders who guided his earlier growth: "The old

people will tell you, late Ernest Tootoosis and Albert Lightning, 80 to 90 percent of our

people's lives were spiritual." Steven reflected this view when he made the comment that

everyone is sacred. He also spoke of the spiritual in terms of dream time and the

significance of dreams for our lives:

> We live at a time when reality TV is a big thing. But, the healers would say that
> reality is when we can dream. That's the real life in a sense of how things could be
> if we have these gifts [ability to dreams], to imagine. With our own children and
> with young people I think we can see, we can almost name, the day when they
> stopped dreaming, in terms of their daytime activity. I think the nighttime dreams
> are very hard to suppress. Sometimes they're nightmares. But the healers know
> that as long as there is imagination and the visioning that the dreaming can go on
> in the lives of the people, that we can rise above [difficulties, problems].

Several people interviewed also believed that the spiritual also included spirits.

Irene spoke of our family members who had recently passed on as ancestral spirits:

> Well, one of the things that happened when I lost my father was I recognized how
> much of him I carried in me. Not only just looking in the mirror and knowing that
> I am my father's daughter, but all those special hours that we spent together where
> he was sharing with me the things that he needed to share with me. How special.
> And you know, that's here. So, even sitting here talking to you, my father's here,
> just like your mother's here.

Similarly, Marissa recognized people who have passed on as spirits. From Marissa

perspective, these spirits play a role in our lives in that they continue to educate us:

> My own family, like my dad, my mother, my grandparents, my extended great
> grandparents, they are the teachers from my past, and so forth. They are the
> teachers from my past, acáhkowi-ithiniwak. It's just like the spirits that walk,
> that's how we refer to them. They are spirits. A lot of our White brothers and
> sisters refer to them as angels. They are the spirit teachers now. They come to us,
> although they are gone, they are deceased. But they come to us when we ask for
> help or we dream about them. To me, they are the spirit helpers because they were
> here. Specifically, they were flesh and blood.

Marlyn also understood acáhkowi-ithiniwak to be walking with us at times. At these

times, they can be turned to for guidance.

All of the informants spoke of how spirituality guides one's processes of helping.

Leland spoke of how, living a traditional Cree life, he incorporates spirituality into his

life, including when he helps others. Likewise, Marlyn includes spirit and spirituality in

her work. She explained that she does not separate the two, meaning the physical and the

spiritual, since we are always in the spiritual world. She noted that the very old and the

very young are able to see the spiritual, but the rest of us cannot. So, whatever she does

she includes the spiritual. She explained that this means she includes prayer and

meditation when she is about to help others. In a more encompassing statement, Marlyn

stated that everything we do is a prayer and therefore she has always been careful to do

good things. Irene also includes prayer as part of her ways of walking spiritually: "One of

the first things that I'm doing that's conscious is that I pray silently and ask the Creator to

help me in guiding others." Marissa explained about her inclusion of the spiritual and

prayer. She explained, "When I work with a client for the first time, I hope and pray that

they will disclose some stuff that has been hurting them emotionally, physically,

spiritually, but mostly spiritually. My expectation [for herself] is that I sincerely pray that

they successfully complete the program and that they will be okay." Samuel, also suggest

that prayer or meditation is significant in the helping process. He stated, "I don't think

there is anything stronger than the power of prayer or mediation for me. I used to open

with the power of prayer. When you are going through difficult times, always ask for

guidance, directions, strength."

Maureen related prayer and meditation to the Creator:

I think one of the things that always stands out is who is the Creator. Like there's so many different perspectives, I guess is the right word, about who the Creator is...But, I guess for myself, when I'm asked that question, 'What is your belief?', [I explain that] my belief is that there is a Creator and that there is only one Creator. We may have different names for the Creator, but we still pray to the same one. We still have this belief that there is a higher power and I believe that there is a higher power so, that anytime, anything to do with ceremonies, anything to do with teachings, anything to do with learnings, about learnings around our ceremonies, we acknowledge our Creator. So that's what stands out for me.

Doreen also acknowledged the Creator and what we are to be doing in thinking of the

Creator:

Our Creator is always there. And we also got to tell our children that you don't have to go kneel in a corner and pray. Instead we ask them to be thankful everyday. We don't think about asking too much, but we live in a complicated world, complicated. When you think simple, rule number one is, in the morning, get up, be thankful and listen.

Similarly, Steven stated that the Cree way of moving forward during difficult times is by

first being thankful. He explained this point and gave an example of it:

And the other piece that comes with helping is in the midst of the most difficult situation, the way of the Cree that I have learned is that you always begin with

thanksgiving. Speak to the Creator and give thanks. And then you begin to deal with what there is, so you're never overcome by whatever disaster, whatever pain, and I saw this understanding as well. I saw it in [a northern Cree community], but I would be able to see it in many, many settings. It would amaze me sometimes. I would be in the midst of this tragedy or this great time of pain and disturbance and so on, and the Elders would stand up and she or he would begin 'ninanáskomonan kisé-manitow,' where 'we give thanks to the Creator for what you've [the Creator] given us and for the community.' So, I think those are some of the clues of your starting place and your philosophy–your understanding of life.

Connected to the spiritual, prayer, and meditation is the sacredness of our words.

Joshua explained that when we make a commitment to helping someone, it is a

commitment that is tied to the spiritual and that this commitment is most evident when

tobacco is passed during the request. Marissa also explained this point of our sacred

words in relation to the helping process:

> I think keeping your word is very important. They [people reaching for help] will check you out. If you say you're gonna be here at a certain time, then you must be here at a certain time. Yeah, because that's where this trust is born from. We are told even in the textbooks, well First Nations people, they kept their word and the promises [made to First Nations people] were all broken and that's where it comes from and they [people reaching for help] value that. Your word is sacred to them. It's just sacred, your commitment.

When moving forward in helping others, several connections between helping and

spiritual were noted by the people interviewed. Marlyn explained that she shares and

shows how things helped her spiritually, including how she would use visual and/or audio

imagery. On a similar line of thought, Steven outlined that when helping others it is

significant to acknowledge their dreams. He stated:

> So it's again that level in the helping area of being able to acknowledge other's dreams and acknowledge that it's been marvelous to hear about them. I think that's the style, the clinical style. I don't know if the word clinical is helpful, but that's the style of being together that I think we can experience and experiment

with, work with, in many circumstances. We are amazed at others and their capacities and their abilities to deal with life, and even to share mysteries with us.

He also explained a particular style of Cree helping that includes the spiritual:

> I think that healers will use ways of Cree shock therapy, Cree approaches where, all of a sudden, they'll change the subject, just change. We can talk about something, where what we might say is irrelevant, and then come in another approach or change the conversation. Suddenly you see the other side, how you come around from another place, and often it has to do with remembering, enabling memory to be more grounded. To be more about what is the truth for the person who's telling, sharing. And I would imagine many therapists have ways of doing that, but if you're able to do that with a sense of mystery, or with a sense of humour, with a sense of the spiritual dimension of life, then I think you discovered other ways of sharing.

Leland explained that the traditional Cree ceremonies provide some guidance in helping

others:

> The pipe, the sweat lodge, the fast camps, and the sun dances have those basic spiritual values and beliefs, that we carry these laws, natural laws that you use to walk this medicine road. We use those as guiding principles in our life on how to treat people. And we also use those to try to study principles on how we treat others, and take care of the earth, how we take care of animals, how we take care of birds and how you take care of the insects. Because we all have a lot of place on earth, we all have a purpose.

Steven focused on the naming ceremony and related it to aspects of the helping process.

He explained that we are all given original instructions when we are born:

> The old traditional ways, when a child is born, the Elders come and visit that child and then certain Elders will begin to find a name for that child. The whole thing of identity is important. Their acknowledgment [of], 'this is a woman or this is a man, and we're seeing certain things about this little child that this is a gift to the community.' So that foundational understanding of birthing into community and that this be a gift from the very beginning is important...that [the naming ceremony] has a lot of potential for healers, if they can help people dream, because you break the cycle [of decay and of pain]. When you're in poverty or when you are marginalized, experience racism, and life is closing in on you, you can find ways to survive, for the spirit to survive. So I think many people who

have been incarcerated, what they [authorities] attempt really is to break the spirit. And unintentionally, I think, children are going to the classroom at age 5 or 6, even if this classroom doesn't have rows of seats, and will somehow be conditioned to stop dreaming in their daily life as well. Their imagination will be limited by the structure of what is called education.

Thus, according to Steven, "that [person] just needs to be helped to remember the teachings and the songs through the ceremonies, and to remember their spiritual foundation and again, that they're being in this [spiritual and safe] place."

Doreen explained that forgetting the spiritual and values and beliefs tied to the spiritual are part of the difficulties Cree people are facing. She stated, "You have a lot of hurting people today...somehow money got to be the priority. Our Creator got to be the lower level and it has to be turned around 'cause in the future, money is not gonna be more edible than it is today." Leland also acknowledged this forgetting when he explained that many teens and adults, even those in their 40s, are still searching for their culture, spirituality, values, and beliefs.

To help people remember the spiritual, values, and belief of the Cree peoples, Leland identified some of the teachings he would share, including those connected to the pipe and medicine wheel. Steven suggested that part of helping that people remember involves the land and its influence on bringing out the child and dreams within people. He stated:

> So to get back on the land and play as children, I think the Elders have taught us that's how life is really understood. When you get out to the natural order people imagine, people play. And the social practice is that there's always a child in us and I think what the Cree healer would say is that's who we really are. That's the belief, that's the really human quality about us. That's what's non-judgmental. That's the amazement time. That's the revelation of life, new insights. It's always

206

the child in us. So, like the child is sacred means that inner child, that sense of the power of memory and the power to dream coming together. They're enabling us to live beyond the present pain and confusion to think of other ways.

Steven also explained the importance of the helpers allowing space for their own dream time and feeding the spiritual. He outlined this explanation and gave a personal example of it.

> I don't think a healer or caregiver can go on for very long without being fed as well. And so the Cree understanding is that if you're involved, the possibility of a burnout happens only if you detach yourself from the real journey of being with people and of being involved in the whole journey and going away and finding your own healing. Like the cycles, because we're human beings, and whether we're receiving support or whether we're offering support, in some ways we're all healers. The truth of the philosophy again is holistic and inclusive. I don't think a social worker or a teacher, educator, ever goes into a situation and find any kind of real, I guess, fulfilment unless we also receive. In the few years I spent in a northern school system, teaching children, my healing really happened at recess time. I remember I used to volunteer to do playground duty and in January and February especially, there weren't many teachers who wanted to be out on the playground at this time. But, I never minded. I always thought that this was when the children got out of their desks, they went out into the yard, and they became who they were. While sometimes they had to be helped 'cause some of them were aggressive, some of them had anger, to be there and to watch the ones who had their imagination and were playing together and sharing life on the playground, not hurting each other, that was just good for the spirit. And to be available for those who had anger and who might hurt each other, to be there just to say, this doesn't have to happen, for me, that was a healing for me.

Finally, Steven's comment on liberation well summarizes the connection between spirituality and helping.

> There has to be some liberation and the healer really is about liberating the true human being in the place just by inviting them out. Not by giving answers or by solving all the problems, but inviting the strength of the older people and out of the earth, that the Creator gives. So the philosophy of healers [is about allowing the spirit and dreams] to flow and it's marvelous to watch children who can play and create a world for themselves and enjoy life.

207

(10) Connection to Land and Place

All individuals interviewed outlined that Cree culture emphasizes a connection to land

and place. For Maureen, this connection came out in terms of a belief in the land as the

mother of all beings. She stated:

> I think Mother Earth is another belief that I have. I really believe that all of
> creation is, involves Mother Earth, like the animals and water and all those
> elements that we talk about, the fire, the air, the animals, human beings, all those
> things. That's another belief that I have and that's another belief that I always
> hear, that's talked about in our culture.

Similarly, in a previously included quote, Irene spoke of how our connection to Mother

Earth is directly tied to our identity as Cree peoples:

> Each of our groups of people have a specific identity and have a specific place in
> the world that, you know, that we're connected to that land. As First Nations
> people, our connection to our land is our connection to Creator, connection to
> Mother Earth. So if you don't have, so as a Swampy Cree woman, that's where
> my identity starts from. It's from the land where I'm from. And it tells me a lot
> about who I am and it tells the world about who I am as a Swampy Cree woman.
> And so that's why I don't say I'm any Ininiw person. I always say I'm a Muskégo.
> I'm a Muskégo-Ininiw.

This connection to the land was central to our survival, as explained by Steven,

who stated, "So, the flexibility of everyone learning and learning effectively about

survival from living on the land. You know, up until 60 years ago, we were almost

entirely self-sufficient on the land." However, such a connection to the land has been

strained more recently. Steven went on to explain that our "communities often become

places of captivity." Joshua expressed similar concerns about the land and related it to our

identity as Cree peoples:

We understand that Creation is crying. It's crying right now. We're losing our land. We're losing the land. We're losing our lives. We're losing our children. We're losing our identity. There's teaching stories that goes with the land. We can relate to that. I always use those teachings about our way, like the raven and a woman and child in a teepee, the moss, the bow and arrow, the fire pit, and the fire also. Like I say, our people are crying. The Cree Nation is crying. We lost our child and the child that's lost represents those seven things.

Steven suggested that to break through this captivity and regain our sense of identity we need to create places of healing. He stated:

So I like the ideas of people who take young ones off into the woods or follow the lake or somewhere to create a new context, create reality for these people who live in this unreal stigma that is allowing.poverty and despair, and I think we are to create healing models in places where the stories can be shared in good ways.

He explained that such places involve returning to the land:

So, to get back on the land they play as children, I think the Elders have taught us that's how life is really understood. You get out to the natural order and people imagine. People play, and you know, social practice is that there's always a child in us and I think what the Cree healer would say is that's who we really are. That's the belief, that's the really human quality about us. That's what's non-judgmental. That's the amazement time. That's the revelation of life, new insights, it's always the child in us. So, like the child is sacred means that inner child, that sense of the power of memory and the power to dream come together. They're enabling us to live beyond the present pain and confusion to think of other ways. And I think we have tried to practice that.

From this perspective, by returning to the land we reconnect with our inner selves. This connection to the land and our inner being teaches us and helps us determine our direction. This is evident in the story shared by Leland where he outlined how he went onto the land to gain insight and support:

Another example that I shared with the youth is that of the ant, and the ant has been a big teacher in my life. What I do is I go into the bush, and I offer tobacco when I'm struggling with something. At one point in my life I was struggling with overwhelming problems, different problems coming into my life and they were all

piling up, kind of like the dam in the water. All the problems that came into my life had to do I was getting frustrated with them, and I didn't know what to do with them. So I went and offered tobacco. I went to heal and I went to offer my tobacco. I was careful where I offered my tobacco 'cause you know I looked around, then I looked down, and there was an ant by itself. I figured, well this is a good place to offer tobacco. So I offered the tobacco and asked for some help. And I sat down and I had my coffee and sandwich and that. I knew I was going to be up there for awhile. So I sat down and watched it, this ant. He dug a little hole in the ground here and then he came out on top. He was around here and came out and walked. He came out with a grain of sand and put down here, and go back. He comes right back. By the time I realized what I was feeling, I noticed a perfect circle around that little ant. There was other ants there I noticed, but there was one ant I was watching. He was coming with one rock, one grain of sand, putting it down, going inside the earth, coming back with one grain, back and forth like that. Then it dawned on me, you know, I can't work on all these problems at the same time. I have to work on them one at a time. I have to look inside myself and work on the problem one at a time. If I try to work on them all at the same time it just going to drive me batty, which is what I was doing in the first place. I priorize and focus on what I need to do to find the answer and build a foundation for myself. How I do spiritual practice for my problems. And sure enough, things got a little easier because I was able to say, 'I'm doing this right now and I can't deal with this right now'.

Irene shared that when people develop their ability to connect to the land, life, and their inner being, they will be able to live beyond the present pain and confusion and maintain a sense of well-being. She explained further that with such development these understandings and connections become evident in any and each aspect of life, no matter how small. She stated, "You just look at any tree and it's there, any plant, it's there. You could look at a little ant crawling on the sidewalk and see the teachings that little ant brings." Steven addressed this point as well, but from a different angle. He explained that by developing our sense of well-being and connection to the land as a sacred place, we become respectful of life. He stated, "Life is sacred, so you give thanks, and you acknowledge the life. There's no point where life ever ceases to be sacred. In creation, it's

certainly reminding each other as humans of the sacred space. That's important."

Marlyn stated to develop one self in such a manner, it is important to at least make a daily connection to land and life in general. She spoke of the need to touch the ground and natural things. as opposed to remaining only on concrete, to at least look out a window to the natural life outside. She explained that when she goes to bed, she looks to the sky, and when she wakes up, she looks to the sky. She does not draw the curtains as it is like shutting yourself off.

Finally, Leland explained that he shares his experiences on the land, such as the one noted above, to help the people with whom he works. He stated, "I share with the youth. It gives them a better understanding of how we could use our land, the stories of the land, to help us through different things." Similarly, Norbert and Doreen both spoke of the need to share our experiences in connecting with the land with others.

(11) Use of Stories

The use of stories in relation to helping others was addressed by some of the people interviewed. For example, Steven stated, "I would say that stories come to mind in terms of helping practice." Leland uses stories to help others in a safe and somewhat indirect manner. He stated, "So when I talk to the youth about those things, I try to make it a little bit easier, more directional rather than influential. Something for them to look at, to understand our or their values and beliefs."

Leland also explained that he would share stories about his own experiences to

help others look at their experiences:

> I share those stories to encourage them, to help them look at themselves and help them see where they come from, so they can see from their own families and how they taught them, not necessarily through oral things but also through their actions. More often than not, the youth will begin to share at that point. From there you can talk about what they enjoy, those good memories...It's all part of the medicine wheel, and incorporate all of these so that they can look at themselves, not necessarily by pointing out things I see in them, but just telling my own stories and pointing out things I see in myself. So it's a lot easier for them to bring it out, because I'm sharing my own experiences and they're comfortable with that. And it shows that I'm a human being.

Steven noted that stories are often shared repeatedly. This process of sharing stories is meant to support people to uncover the many meanings and feelings that are present within each story. He stated:

> They [the Elders] said they [the stories] have seven levels of meaning and the retelling and the remembering of the story uncovers them, and I heard the expression in English is 'hearing again for the first time'. That idea that in a certain setting a story that is retold is not about repetition, it's about feeling underneath so that we can hear each other more clearly.

Steven went on to explain a purpose of sharing stories. When we share stories, we are reconnecting and remembering in several areas. Areas of remembering included the teachings, the philosophy of life, the manner which stories are shared and told, and how we are to care for each other. By remembering these teachings, philosophy, mannerisms, and means of caring we reconnect with who we are as Cree people as well as to one another. Marissa also spoke of a purpose of sharing stories, namely teaching through indirect means. She shared her understanding of one short story told to her:

> I have a habit when I am working, when I am sewing, instead of putting my sewing stuff away, I'll take a sheet and cover it. That comes from my history, my background. A lot of people will say, 'Is that a myth? You better wash your dishes

or the devil will come and lick them while you are sleeping or you'll hear things happening.' But you know that is a positive myth because it drove us girls to be up to par with our house cleaning before we go to bed. 'Don't go to bed with a messy kitchen or a living room or the bad spirits will come and visit. They'll bother things.' For us, it was a discipline, form of discipline. So these things are important.

Leland also addressed the purposes of stories:

> With our oral stories, you have to remember that, like the Wísahkécáhk stories, they're not only stories, that show us the humour, the laughter, but they are also stories that show us our laws and what to do with people who break those laws. They come with the laws of the communities. Each Wísahkécáhk story will be a little different in each community because of what the values and beliefs and laws of that community are.

(12) Values and Teachings

The most concentrated discussion with all the people interviewed was on the values and teachings of the Cree people as understood by the people interviewed. Maureen felt that one of the key components to helping First Nations peoples includes the teachings of the people. Similarly, Irene clearly noted that "if you're wanting to be a helper and wanting to help from a cultural way, you do it from the ways of your people, and you do it from the teachings of your people. And you have to let go of yourself."

To learn to help on the basis of Cree ways requires a significant commitment. Irene identified the commitment this way:

> You have to be willing to put in as much effort and more into learning the cultural, your people's way, your people's teachings as you do the western, because otherwise you get into thinking too much like a white man and that becomes your primary influence in helping. And then you start [wrongly] thinking that it's cultural.

Part of the learning clearly involves understanding the Cree language since the teachings

stem from the language. This point was outlined by Steven, who stated:

> The language is not simply about a philosophical understanding. It's really about how we see ourselves in basic life ways. It includes all of the teachings, the stories for children, the stories for the young people, the stories for the adults and the Elders. It contains all of the generational teachings. It has fairly broad parameters. There's a lot of freedom in the language but at the same time it has some very basic teachings about life, and some things like spirituality. Of course, it's all grounded in the language. Just all of the very day to day items; how you relate to human beings, the kind of language you use in community, about shared life. I don't think you can replicate that in translation into other languages, but what you have is the Cree approach to philosophy contained in the language.

In the same manner that the teachings stem from the language, it was noted that values also stem from the language and teachings. As Steven stated, "I think we have our basic teachings, our stories, that teach us and maintain our values." Similarly, Maureen stated, "What I base my values on are the teachings which are honesty, respect, humility, understanding, kindness, caring, sharing, courage, all those."

Norbert identified that "our values are a way of life." Leland explained that, as such, we have to follow these values to the point they become part of us. Once they become part of us, these values then carry us in life, meaning they provide us with direction on how to live and behave. He stated:

> If we practice them enough, they become a part of who we are, what we are. So given that, when we start practicing patience, understanding, honesty, love, forgiveness, humility, and respect, it becomes part of you. It becomes a part of who we are. People then know who you are. It becomes part of what we show and it's the same with the pipe teachings that we carry. It refers to kindness, to honesty, the caring, sharing, and the strength. It carries you. It just helps sitting down to practice them.

Living these values is not a quick adaptation. As Samuel stated, "A lot of that has to do with the culture, the smudging, the respect for the Elder, don't interrupt. I've been

learning those values as time goes by. It takes time. This is not an overnight thing. This is

a thing for the rest of your life, and I'm still learning today." Similarly, Maureen

emphasized that adopting and living these values requires ongoing effort. Such an

adoption does not necessarily come easily and the effort given does not mean that one

will obtain perfection in life. She stated, "It's not to say that I'm perfect in any way

because I'm not. I never will be. I wouldn't want to be, you know. The reason why I say

that is then I'm setting myself up to say that I know everything and I never will. So that's

where I come from, that's how I try to live my life as best as I can."

On the other hand, the adoption of the teachings and values are seen as the means

to which people are able to move forward. They become guides for people. This point

was noted by Leland who referred to them as natural laws. He stated:

> We carry those things, these laws, or natural laws that you use to walk this
> medicine road. We use those as guiding principles in our life on how to treat
> people. And we also use those to try to study principles on how we treat the earth
> and take care of the earth, like how we take care of animals, how we take care of
> birds and how you take care of the insects, 'cause we all have a lot of place on
> earth, we all have a purpose.

There is recognition that all peoples have values and beliefs. As stated by Leland,

"We all come with values and beliefs wherever we come from, whether or not it is with

the pipe or religion, or we live another way of life, or going to church, or how a

community base their own laws, and how we act and how we take care of each other." It

is also recognized that often these values are shared across peoples, cultures, and

languages. As explained by Norbert, "Those values [the ones he described in the

interview] go straight across. It doesn't matter which nationality, [Indigenous nation] it

goes straight across. In time, they can transcribe them in their own dialect, and they can

add and delete in their own dialect so they can go across too." So while the values and

teachings of differing peoples have different roots, such as being rooted in the Cree

language, the values are often shared across cultures. However, it was also noted that

there are times when people do not share particular values. Steven explained his view that

values are not permanently set for everyone. At times, people will move away from

particular community values, and in turn, move away from or be pushed away from the

community. He explained it this way:

> It's my understanding that these values don't become enshrined in stone for
> everyone. A story keeps them alive. As the degree of flexibility and inclusiveness
> changes, it then really deals with the problem of judgment in the society because it
> sets a place for everyone. And so it's an understanding then within the
> communities that there are times when we have to decide when someone should
> move on. If someone cannot be a part of the [community's] value systems and
> becomes a danger or a problem to the community, that the community cannot
> sustain itself with an individual or some individual's presence who has decided
> they will not be a part of this community and has made choices that are harmful,
> then there is a kind of shunning or a time that they are removed from the
> community. That's a part of the culture. So, I think the idea is that they might find
> healing elsewhere, that the community cannot sustain itself with this presence. So
> it's not as though we live in perfect settings. You know, the pain is real and at
> times the clashes were real. There were power struggles, but again the clan system
> had ways of dealing with it.

Values

There were several values identified by the people interviewed as being central to Cree

peoples. Amongst the most noted ones was thankfulness. Steven explained that "life is

sacred, so you give thanks and you acknowledge the life, and there's no point where life

ever ceases to be sacred." This recognition that life is always sacred, thus implying there

is no limit to when you give thanks was noted by Doreen who stated, "Be thankful

everyday." The importance of being thankful at all times, including during a helping

situation, was outlined in a story shared by Steven:

> And the other piece that comes with helping is, in the midst of the most difficult
> situation, the way of the Cree that I have learned is that you always begin with
> thanksgiving, speak to the Creator, and give thanks. And then you begin to deal
> with what there is, so you're never overcome by whatever disaster, whatever pain.
> And I saw this understanding as well. I saw it [in a Cree First Nation], in that
> setting, but I would be able to see in many, many settings. It would amaze me
> sometimes. I would be in the midst of this tragedy or this great time of pain and
> disturbance and so on, and the Elders would stand up and she or he would begin,
> where we give thanks to the Creator for what you've given us and for the
> community. So also I think those are some of the clues of your starting place and
> your philosophy, your understanding of life.

Another central value frequently noted during the interviewed was respect. As

Samuel noted, respect would be identified by Cree Elders as one of the most noted values.

Respect, kisténimowin, was understood by Irene as more than a way of thinking or

behaving: She felt it as the state of her whole being that included peacefulness and

gentleness, and where she experienced a sense of responsibility to see and properly treat

other people as part of creation. She also added the following statement to her

explanation:

> It is being very respectful of the person, the human being, regardless of what
> they've done or whatever, 'cause I've had to work with victims and perpetrators
> and I've had to fight that [being disrespectful]. I've worked with people who have
> committed the most horrendous crimes, and that's one of the things that helped,
> that I follow is that [being respectful]. 'Cause when I started in this formal
> training, I asked one of the Elders about that, like, 'what do I do?' And she said,
> 'Do what you've always done and just respect that person because they're a
> human being.'

Among the most noted means of demonstrating respect was provided by Steven.

217

He explained that while respect includes sharing stories and possibly providing very

direct response once trust has been established, it also requires we provide space to others

to experience and follow their own understandings and make their own choices. We may

share our thoughts about their dreams when asked, but we are also to provide space where

we may be with a person in silence, instead of offering solutions. In this way, respect is

also tied to individual freedom, meaning the freedom of people to determine their choices

for themselves. Steven addressed this point this way:

> So, the healer does not go in and try to express their feelings in the sense of their
> love and concern directly. While there may be some fairly formalized encounters,
> I think at the point where there is trust, I see in the healers that honesty, a
> respectful but a strong honesty. What they are seeing in the other person may be
> addressed directly and sometimes it might be in a story or a teaching that they will
> leave with the person. Because of the understanding of long term commitment and
> sharing of life, they also look to you, meaning, 'you can work at this for a period
> of time.' And the ability of the healer to say, 'Ékwani, enough for now. We've
> done enough work now. Maybe you can do this or do this, and maybe we can talk
> again. Maybe we have something more to do together.' But now there's an
> evolution and a process of relationship, that the person who is being offered help
> or who is being with the healer will have some freedom. Always that freedom to
> want to say, 'Now I need some more time'. I think the healers often will accept
> that. So there's a power relationship, there's an offering, there's a presence, but I
> don't think there's any sense of too questionable a dealing or an imposition, for
> the person who is being offered some other ways of being will always have the
> freedom and then will have choices to make themselves options.

Noteworthy in this commentary is a related value held in high esteem, namely

relationship. As Norbert explained, the most important thing is to have relationships.

These relationships may be friendships as noted by Norbert, or family relations as noted

by Marissa. She explained that wákóhtowin, a relationship, has been and continues to be

central to the people. Marissa explained, "Well our traditional values, being together, the

kinship, that is very important. When you're going to deal with a family, like in the event

of children being placed in another home, for whatever reason, it's always important to

focus on that family's ties, the relationship ties." Steven explained that this value is

demonstrated in our everyday activities, particularly how people greet one another. He

stated:

> The common greeting really gives the philosophy of our relationships. So as a child growing up, we just remember the greeting between men with all the other people, 'Tanisi nístáw, how are you doing my brother-in-law, my brother?' So relationship, you know, always, was always expressed [acknowledged] and it was joyful. It was a joyful greeting, when you're meeting a relative, and I just think that the language carries the teachings in itself.

Strength was identified as another significant value. It was explained that strength

is not an isolated characteristic that is based upon a person's physical attributes. Leland

described strength this way: "When I say strengths, I mean strengths of mind, body, and

spirit, know who you are, what your values and beliefs are, how you live your life, how

you treat people. When you know like that, you better prepared to go out into the world."

He continued by explaining that, "strength is not always being by yourself and doing

things on your own. Strength is sometimes asking for help." Strength is not something

that people show off or exhibit. It has to do with going forward in life despite what

challenges we face. Samuel spoke of strength in this manner when he outlined the

strength of his wife. He stated, "A lot of them [people who originally came to learn from

her] have turned on her and she still keeps her humble way. She stills follows that way

and that's what probably makes her a strong person." Thus, strength is tied to humility,

another key value.

Humility, or being humble, is a long standing value of Cree people. Marissa

remembers being taught about humility at a very young age, as described in a story she

shared:

> When growing up back home, my grandfather, my own biological grandfather, he was a very holy man, in his own right, but he used to say to me, 'Nosisim. Kitánawapamisew,' look after yourself. 'Otapáhtéthimow', that's to be humble, 'otapahtéthimisiw. Never be above anybody, even if you know the answer, keep it to yourself. That's why I am an old man.' He taught me that. He said, 'Even if you know the truth, you do not talk about it till you are given the right to speak about it. If you do that the other way around,' he said 'you will create hardship for yourself and for your family and your children.' So when I listen to people, I try to [be humble]. Of course, what he says [referring to Samuel], 'boy she irritates me. These women they just put daggers in your back and you go greet them' *(Laughing)*. 'I can't understand you' he says. But, I can't be that way [to ignore people who have offended her], 'cause it will it'll go right against my traditional beliefs, my traditional values. Sure I may need some time to overcome the difficulty, but I know in my heart it will always be that relationship line connecting all the time. And if you learn from experience, it's a very hard experience. And I know that it irritates my partner. He's seen that person, 'They did you so wrong. Whoa, he just gets me angry', he says to me. But, he does not understand, deep inside, what I know and I always say to him, 'Just let it go. Just let it be.'

Marissa continued by sharing another story about how she learned about humility. This

one involved her grandmother: Her grandmother stated to her:

> 'Creator gave you doorways here, two doorways to see, two doorways to hear. One doorway to speak. You use those. If you don't use them', she said, 'you will go through life being ignorant, arrogant, self-centred,' She was just making me feel awful *(Laughing)*. 'Mistahikithámison', She said that to me, eh. 'Your nose will be up in the air all the time, but you don't know nothing.' That's where I learned humility. That's where I learned to be humble. She said, 'You carry yourself that way. Even if you know the answer, you remain neutral. Is it the right time to share that? Must I share it now? Who's gonna get affected by it?' Everything that I learned today come directly, solely, from my own family. Nothing comes from the textbooks, nothing. My language, it came from the heart of my people.

Samuel recalled how he and his family were also taught about humility. He shared his

experience of being put down by other people. He, his family, and a few others would

continue to follow the traditional Cree ways and they would be mocked and ridiculed for

their beliefs and practices. In response, the Elder they were closest to would regularly

direct them to 'just humble ourselves.' Norbert and Leland understood that humility was

tied to coming to know ourselves through traditional Cree ways. As we come to know

and appreciate ourselves honestly, we "practice humility" to ensure we don't place

ourselves above anybody else. Samuel also noted the need for this self-awareness. He

outlined an experience of what happened when this self-awareness was not in place:

> Some guys get a little bit of power and you see that on the reserves, you see that
> anywhere here, they get a little bit of power and hoooly jumping dina, you can't
> talk with them. They are way, way up there. Power. Power does something. You
> talk about power, when my wife and I were first living together I worked
> underground with this guy in [a northern mining community]. We were blasting
> together. Because he was an intelligent man in mining he got made into a shift
> boss. He name was Tony. A little short guy. Three days after he got appointed,
> about a week later I saw him up town. [Name of the community] is a small town. I
> was at the bank, [my son] was holding onto me by my finger. I was walking
> downtown and said, 'Hey Tony'. I didn't realize that he changed. He looked at
> me. He was way up there. I couldn't talk to him anymore. Power. That's what
> power did to him. That's what power does to our people. That's what power does
> to some people. If you don't learn about yourself from the people around you, you
> abuse it [power]. And then, some people just self-destruct. I never wanted to go
> that way. I never want to go back to the way it was for me.

Sharing was noted as a key value by Steven. This value of sharing was so

significant that Steven understood it to be fundamental to the community. He explained it

this way:

> There's no place in my childhood that I can really think of, in our community as I
> grew up, and in some ways I guess it has a quality of being unreal in that I don't

221

remember a time when sharing wasn't happening around me. And I mean significant sharing, like hunters and fishers and people who were baking and cooking. And not just the basics of life were being shared, but also the celebrations. There were never invitations mailed to a birthday party or to a wedding anniversary. The wedding feast was for everyone. 'You'll all come. You'll all come now, you hear?' That sort of feeling in the community of sharing life and celebration. And of course, I began by talking about the Elders who supported families in grief and in tragedy. Just in the whole that [sharing] would come up. The commitment to community and the historic structuring of the clans and the extended family relationships and all of that was about maintaining health, from survival and shared life. So I just think that we have words like communal life or reinforced like socialism in our community, but it's not really systemic.

Forgiveness is another valued that is emphasized. Doreen shared an image to

demonstrate her understanding of forgiveness:

> I always think to myself, I know he whispered, our Creator whispered in every one of our ears something, it's just that we're kinda dense. That the times when we gotta go cry and everything. We get ourselves in a lot of trouble, but it's all a lesson and he's still there. The birds still sing in the morning. The wind still blows. The rain still comes. The thunder still comes. To me that's all the songs of forgiveness.

Similarly, Maureen recognized that forgiveness is such a significant value that she has

decided to commit her personal growth and life's work to the value. She stated:

> I guess the final phase of my journey, until I pass on to the next life, will be focussed on forgiveness. That is where my focus is going to be from here on now. Because for my own personal journey and the people that I've worked with and come in contact with and my own life experience–who I am as a woman, I guess something like that–forgiveness is such a scary thing. And it's not to say that I've forgiven, because I haven't, but I'm working on it. I'm working, it's a process. Forgiveness is a process, and I will continue working on that, and that's where my, hopefully, my area of expertise will revolve around that.

Another value discussed was honesty. Samuel was one of several people

interviewed who identified honesty as a strongly held value for many Cree people. It was

said on several occasions by the people interviewed that we are to be honest with our

feelings. Indeed, both Joshua and Leland shared stories of how they would teach about

being honest. They explained that in order to teach about honesty they would rely on their

own past experiences of trying to live on a daily basis the four directions teachings, of

which one was honesty. Marissa stated, "I think keeping your word is very important."

She later said, "Your word is good as gold. Like, if you say you are going to be here at a

certain time, then you must be here." In reflecting the importance of honesty, Maureen

emphasized at different times that what she had shared was the truth. For example, she

stated at one point, "So, if anything, those are the things that I'm always mindful of and I

speak the truth about that."

Another value noted by most of the people interviewed was kindness. As Joshua

explained, we have to live in a way where people feel our kindness. He stated, "Well, I

guess when you live that life, people see that, people feel that kindness. That means a lot.

Be yourself, like, be kind to a person, 'cause it comes from us first. Like the Cree

teachings that say you have to be kind to your family, your people, your community, and

all the things." Joshua noted kindness to be one of four key values, or the four directions

teachings, that he tries to follow. He stated:

> I follow what the Elders taught me long ago, when I was taught about values.
> Respect, and also the four directions that guide us in our life, and also the spirit
> that is within us. I have always accepted the four directions teaching, that you are
> to be kind. Kindness, honesty, sharing and caring, strength–that's what I usually
> use most in my teaching when a person approaches me. These are the things I use
> with the people I'm helping.

Perhaps the most in-depth discussion of values took place with Doreen and

Norbert. They relied on a symbol used to outline the values of Cree peoples, namely the

tipi. Norbert explained that the Elders who originally outlined these values in relation to

the tipi understood the symbolism of the tipi. He stated, "They [the Elders] used the tipi

and explained how everything reaches out to the higher power, and all this ties together.

It's what life is about, to better your own, to better your own self. That's what the teepee

symbolizes, the whole world." Norbert and Doreen then identified each of the values

represented in the tipi and discussed them in relation to social work. They had written out

some of their points and encouraged me to include this written document in this work.

These values as they have noted are as follows:

<div align="center">

TRADITIONAL VALUES
(A guide for any human service career)
</div>

TIPI POLES

Developing life-skills through Indian teachings. Sharing this guide with any
professional to use: simple, yet difficult to practice "Walking the Talk." This will
represent a *peace of mind* and a *balance* in one's life. The bottom line is that it is
professionalism and that is everyone's future.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

The client is a private and unique individual. Respect their confidentiality; allow
them to be open and always let them know that any conversation between you and
the client is considered confidential. Let them know where the information will
go, e.g. their files, whatever is legally required. Make the client aware of what is
going on. Let the client know you are there for them and they will, in turn, be
there for you. The values that you will use are all interconnected.

OBEDIENCE

This value needs to be practiced continuously.

> (1) Listening to the client requires obedience from you. It is difficult
> because we feel that we are always listening to the same story and we feel,
> most times, that it is time consuming. Ask yourself: "Could it be that the
> client just wants you to listen to him/her?" By not listening, you are not
> doing justice to the client or to yourself—you may miss something very
> important—or you may have just missed an important lesson of life.
> Disobedience causes more problems—social problems—issues are not
> resolved.

The government(s) whether local, provincial, or federal often place a social
worker in a disobedient position—especially with the client. Policies and

<div align="center">

224
</div>

procedures, rules, laws need to be obeyed and the client's position is often disregarded, ie. Mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional needs are not met, unavailability of resources due to funding, etc. If a social worker should bend a policy or procedure–what is the reaction of the policy enforcer? What are the consequences? Are you prepared to protect your client, to help your client, and to stand by your client?

> (2) By listening and hearing the client, you may be able to set a clear direction for the client. This requires follow-through by the client and follow-up by the worker. A conflict is often resolved by hearing what is said and by following through and following it up. Solutions are often reached in this way.

RESPECT

Respect the client's requests. Be prepared to listen. Honour your client; respect your client; validate your client by making them comfortable in speaking with you. They may be sharing their innermost thoughts with you. Consider their feelings because of the fear they may have and the fear of the program you are representing. Understand that they have their own definitions of whom you work for. The majority of the time they may be negative, afraid of being judged by you–to them, you hold the purse strings; being judged by how they dress, talk and of themselves personally.

Raise their spirit by understanding their position: Some clients may not want your involvement but they may need your assistance. They still want their independence. Tell them it is a temporary aid. As a worker, there is no room for judgment.

Do not take away the client's responsibilities. Give them room to breathe. They must help themselves through directions set out by both the client and yourself.

Goal. Get the situation to the point where your client will thank you for your assistance. Your understanding and your kindness will play a major role. Gaining a friend is really important and it does not matter who it is. Client may be the best friend you ever had.

HUMILITY

Be humble. You are a person (our Creator's child) and your client is a person (our Creator's child). It does not matter what side of the desk you're on. Listen to the client; respect yourself and your client; treat your client as you would want to be treated; respect your client's confidentiality; humility interconnects all these values.

HAPPINESS

Feeling good about yourself, dealing with your own issues, being healthy physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually gives you a peace of mind, and an understanding of people and their problems. You, yourself, may have been there. You can help your client meet his/her own issues. Be willing to learn; willing to accept challenges; achieve an acceptance from the client; assist them in

225

achieving their goals. Accepting the client brings the client forward to independence, to pride, to self-respect, to loving themselves. The client has a meaningful role in his/her life. Be happy for any of the client's accomplishments, no matter the size.

LOVE

The greatest of all the values is love. Love yourself and love what you are doing–be it your job, your client, or the people you work with. Your home environment should have love. Leave your problems at home, by bringing them to work, your client may suffer in the end. If you can't leave a problem at home, find a person who will listen–sometimes a fresh perspective is better. It is through love that we often learn our life's lessons, because when someone reprimands it does not mean that they don't love us–it could be entirely opposite. Although we may be faced with selfish reasoning by someone who may be power-tripping, remember "Keyam," it's them–not you. Continue to love.

FAITH

Have faith! Believe in your Higher Power, believe in yourself and believe in your client. Have faith in yourself. Have faith in your client as a person, his capabilities. Instill this faith in your clients–he or she has the capabilities to succeed; to have faith in himself/herself; to follow up and follow through on the responsibilities he/she may have. "Go for it!" Give support emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically.

KINSHIP

In our Creator's eyes, we are all brothers and sisters.
Understand identities: the roles of the clients–parental roles, guardian roles, the family unit, the roles of relatives. On-going sharing of value teachings, setting examples of well-being, good attitude. Protecting future generations; their well-being, no abuse in families, siblings, parents, extended families and other relatives. The value of kinship is important–all the values interconnect with kinship.

CLEANLINESS

Be a role model for the client. You should be clean, not only in how you dress. Clean your own backyard, your actions, your words, your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness. Be an example to your client. Do not tell a client to do something that you would not do yourself. It could come back to haunt you.

THANKFULNESS

Be thankful to your Creator everyday. Be thankful that you have a job. Be thankful that there will be more learning today. Be thankful for everything whether it is good or bad–there is a lesson in there. Be thankful for all you have accomplished. Be thankful for your client's accomplishments, great or small. Be thankful for your client's acceptance of you. You may not see that acceptance but you may hear of it from the strangest places. People do speak positively–they are

not always negative. If they speak good of you, then you may have succeeded in more ways than you thought.

SHARING

Share ideas, share decisions. Treat clients fairly--they are important. Share your abilities, your experiences, be honest with them, listen to them, and listen some more. Hear them, share your caring by honouring them, by validating them as people who want you to hear them. Consider their feelings, validate their feelings. Share and share and share whatever you have that may help them, be it spiritually, mentally, emotionally, or physically.

STRENGTH

Have confidence within yourself, share your strength with the client, and show them the importance of who they are--not to give up. Have the strength to adapt to negativity, the pain, the anger. The strength will come from listening and hearing the client, understanding their frustration. Clients can be demanding. Respond by listening some more. Do not react. Outside opinions/judgments may weaken your resolve in assisting the client. Leave that alone. Remember: They may not like where they are: Their pride may be hurt, and their sense of being in control may be damaged by their reliance on you or on any other assistance. Remind [them and yourself] that it will get better--it is only temporary. In working together, you and your client can find solutions. Don't let them give up. Strengthen them with kindness, encouragement, love, and faith.

GOOD CHILD REARING

Study your client. Know where he/she is coming from. Know the background. Know the strengths. Know the client's understanding of where they are at emotionally, spiritually, physically, and mentally. Know their interests and go from there. Sometimes you may feel you are raising another child, but always remember, they may not like being there. Be patient, be kind, be helpful, offer other resources/programs that are available. For parents you may offer a program on parenting skills; for young adults you may offer programs that will help them, or it could be a job or furthering their education; for the child offer them love and encouragement. Know your client; honour your client.

The child is also a person who has rights in terms of respect, confidentiality and also has the right to make their own statements. We need to understand the child; we need to assist the child and should be shown by listening and hearing what they have to say. We don't always know what is right for the child. The child may know himself or herself, their own needs. Policies and procedures do not always have the answers, therefore, cannot dictate the feelings of the child or the needs of the child. Extended families may be the most important in the child's life.

HOPE

There is always Hope. Hope that you are doing well with your client. Hope that your client is doing well, and always praying for the best. Have faith, have love. Use all the available resources whether it is through the community, the

government, or your own place of employment, Use Elders whenever possible. They have many teachings.

ULTIMATE PROTECTION

The Creator is your ultimate protection. Ask for His protection daily.

Protect yourself from harm, protect yourself from abuse. Protect your client. The client must also learn to protect himself/herself. Teach them by using available resources and understand their need for protection. Help them to know themselves and strengthen your client with caring, kindness and encouragement.

Our traditional values sound simple and easy to follow, but to walk these values may be the most difficult journey you will have. Remember that you are human, and no one has, yet, made a perfect journey. We all make mistakes and we must learn to forgive ourselves. Do not look at someone else's mistakes, correct your own first. You can only keep trying to better yourself along with your client. Remember: You are never alone.

When it gets rough, look to the Creator. He is always with you.

Despite the few differences between these values and social work, such as the stance that a social worker is not to put emphasis on establishing a friendship with the people they serve while Norbert and Doreen believe it is a desirable goal, overall these values were explained by Norbert and Doreen as being applicable to social work and that they could be used as a means to determine how we work with people. Joshua also explained that the values he identified, particularly caring, sharing, honesty, strength, and kindness, are significant in his work: "Same thing with all the four directions [values] that's what I follow...They stand out more in my work what I do. I guess it [they] gives me guidance when I do my work."

Leland noted how these values have to be followed in relation to one another, such as honesty and kindness. He explained that by following them in isolation, a person may do more harm than help:

> So we practice to better ourselves, to continue to live those values and beliefs, to live with that kindness, with that honesty. To practice those things, honesty,

kindness. Kindness is one thing and honesty is another as far as how we teach to live both. Let's say, for instance, with honesty, what can end up happening is we can be disrespectful of others. You have to maintain kindness when we are being honest. I mean, being not only good to ourselves, but you are to be good to the people that you're honest with. Like, with all the stories we just shared with people, say for instance, our Cree stories about the Sioux. They shouldn't be shared with the Sioux, for example, because that would be disrespectful of the other culture. But we do have that history of our own fighting in our history. We have to be careful of how we are in being honest with people, how we share those things. One instance that I recall in talking to an Elder, she was talking to one of the committee members and they were talking about having a difficult time approaching another person that appeared to be breaking a law. He [the other person] gave a treaty number to help other people overcome a fishing limit. So, the Elder had the opportunity to tell her [the committee member] to talk to him [the other person] and talk to him honestly, 'You have to be honest and share this, be honest with that person.' Because what was happening with her [the committee member] was she was being honest with herself, but she wasn't releasing it. It was becoming a problem for her because it was eating her up inside. So they talked about being honest with that person. She went to talk with that person and it turned out a lot better than she thought it was gonna be. Then what was happening was that she went around being honest with everybody and she started hurting and disrespecting people with her honesty. Because the growth and where she was at in her life, she didn't understand the concept of being respectful and being mindful of others with honesty. So I talked about those kinds of things as well with the youth, being kind, being honest, being caring, sharing, being respectful of others when you are living a certain way of life.

Finally, there were some other values that were noted, but discussed minimally by the people interviewed. These values included love, trust, understanding, caring, and courage. For example, Samuel stated, "Honesty, trust, kindness. The biggest one, I always say, I was taught was love."

As evident in one of the aforementioned stories shared by Marissa, these values came about through the teachings from Elders or family members to the younger generations. However, the understanding of these values also came through personal development and reflection. For example, Leland outlined how he had come to

understand certain values that he now uses to guide him. He stated:

> I use the values and beliefs that I am taught. One time I was sitting at home and I was looking at my fasting staff. One of the things I learned at fasting camp was to use the fasting staff as a symbol of who I am. As things went on, it represented who I was, part of my life story I could share with people. I was looking at that fasting staff, and I was having a difficult time trying to remember the seven teaching that people talked about, the seven natural laws. And I remember looking at that and I started thinking about myself, my family, my children, and I started thinking. I don't know how long I sat there, but this is just how it came out. I mean I sat there for a long time. By the time I was finished looking at that, everyone was in bed. I knew there was a lot of ruckus before I started looking at it. Then, all of a sudden, everything was quiet 'cause everyone was sleeping. But, the way it came to me was, there is seven natural laws for myself: patience, understanding, love, honesty, forgiveness, humility, and respect. Those seven teachings are how I live my life, how I try to be patient with myself; Through patience I gain understanding; through understanding I gain love for myself; through love I deal honestly; through honesty, I feel forgiveness; through forgiveness I feel humility; through humility I gain respect for myself. It's through those guiding principles, I am trying to live my life, or practice living. Then it did come back to me several years later, to remind me what was given to me. I remember driving the highway to Winnipeg. I started thinking about it around the perimeter here. Next thing you know I'm in [a community that is about an hour away from Winnipeg]. In about two hours, it come to me. It came to me in the form of a bee, ámo in Cree. That bee came to show me about these seven teachings and how in my own life I have that responsibility to give those things in a good way. Remember how I was telling you about how I was pushed over and I started pushing people away? Well, my patience became anger. My understanding became ignorance. My honesty became deceit. My love became hate. My forgiveness became resentment. And humility became ego. My respect became disrespect. So I switched all these things around and started living that way of life.

Overall, these values are not only about ourselves, but are also about how we are to acknowledge and get along with others. Steven explained it this way: "I think the values are grounded in the capacity of things beyond yourself. The values are about inclusivity, and I've already talked about sort of the respect and the value of the spirituality. I think there are many levels, but I think it's about acknowledging our

relationship or our relations."

Teachings

In addition to the values noted by the people interviewed, there were other

understandings, or teachings, shared. These teachings were discussed specifically as well

as indirectly. Similar to values, they seemed to be understood by the people interviewed

as information that provided guidance to people, including themselves. The most

common ones shared follow.

The first teaching noted by several of the people interviewed was the offering of

tobacco and cloth when you approach someone with a request. This offering identifies

that the request and the helping process is greater than just the interaction between the

person with the request and the person who would be helping. It involves a larger

understanding. As outlined by Joshua:

> We understand people that are talking to us or wanting help from us. We usually
> know to bring tobacco or cloth or whatever. Most of our people know the
> protocols when you approach an Elder. So, that's one of the ways that we try to
> help, I think, is we accept the tobacco. Most of the time I have never turned down
> anybody when I accept that tobacco. That means I'm committed to help. And also,
> understand the Creator, the Grand Spirit, when you accept something, you made a
> commitment, and when you go back to your work, they'll know it's no good. So,
> that's one of the ways of how we have to be.

The offering of tobacco and cloth are made for a variety of reasons, but they are often

offered to Elders. Leland noted these points when he stated, "I'll offer them [Elders]

tobacco, I'll offer them cloth, depending on what it is I need, whether it is a fast camp, or

a sweat lodge. I talk to them about what I'm feeling, what is it I need to do. And the

Elders that are the best I've come across, they come with life experiences and a lot of oral

stories that they could share." Reflecting Leland's comments is the point highlighted by

Samuel who also discussed offering tobacco. He explained one of the reasons we make

such an offering in beginning the helping process. Specifically, he identified that the

offerings are part of the disclosure process:

> How to offer tobacco, cloth up in a tree, write a letter, and burn it. All those
> things. I mean the pain is still there, but it's not as bad. It just brings a little closer.
> We're taught those things, the Indian way. When you start learning those things,
> then you try to teach it to other people. So, there is little different exercises that
> you could do to try to get people to disclose what happened to you when you were
> young to share the pain.

When someone approaches you for help, we are to remember that as human

beings we all have abilities, or gifts, and that we all contribute to the community. This

next teaching was identified by Steven who stated, "You've got to remember your place

in community and then work in ways that you're gifted individually. Everyone has gifts,

but those gifts are valuable in the context of the people, the community." In extension of

this teaching is the idea that we all have something to offer others. As such, we are all

able to teach others as well as learn from them. This again was explained most pointedly

by Marissa; "See, learning doesn't only belong to one individual. We are all learners,

teachers, and helpers. And once you know that it becomes very easy to go from A to B."

Steven also noted this view when he stated:

> What follows with that is that there is no one who lives who isn't a teacher. So,
> the respect is the foundation and it's based on the idea of someone who is making
> many mistakes. A lot of our stories are Wísahkécahk stories. It's almost entirely
> the teaching that someone who is feeling sometimes greedy, sometimes very
> aggressive, is a teacher. It's not about how we should be, but yes, about how we

can learn from Wísahkécahk, so some of our stories, our heros are teachers who make mistakes.

Thus, regardless of whether we are offering or receiving help, we all have something to offer that will help others to heal. This point was also noted by Steven.

Another teaching identified was speaking from the heart. Related to this point, Irene stated:

> When you say, think, what comes to your mind, one of the teachings that I got was that as a helper, you don't think from up here. You think from here [motioning to her heart]. You have to. This [motions to her head] has to work with this [motions to her heart] and it's not all thinking from your head. You don't just think from here [motions to her head] so that's why I use feeling.

Joshua also noted that he has changed from speaking his thoughts without feeling it from his heart to how he now speaks with a basis in his feelings, or heart. Similarly, Maureen explained, "I speak from the heart but I always try to be mindful of what I say to not hurt in any way."

When it comes our time to speak and share our stories, thoughts, feelings and experiences, we are to remember another significant teaching identified by several of the people interviewed, specifically that we are not to impose our values and beliefs on others. Maureen addressed this directly when she stated:

> I think one of the things that I strongly believe is not imposing our values and our beliefs on others...My belief has always been that's one of the things that I would never do, and that's a teaching again, is to not go and impose my values and beliefs on someone in another setting, like, say in a church, or maybe go to another part of the country where there are different tribes, different clans or different cultures of First Nations people and try to impose our values and our beliefs on them, because we all have our own. While there are a lot of similarities, they have their ways too.

Similarly, Steven identified this teaching in relation to helping. As quoted earlier, he

explained, "You don't just go out and change someone. You might help people remember

[through role modelling and story telling] who they are, or to remember why we're placed

on the earth. It's then each of us finding our way, our own family, our names, our way is

remembering." Relatedly, Joshua explained his approach to helping; "That's what I

usually do. I like to listen, let them talk and don't interrupt them. I guess that's our ways

to learn to listen to people; not cut in when they're talking. But, a lot of times I see people

do it. The person will want to say something or talk, you shouldn't interrupt." Marissa

noted that such ideas extend to allowing a person to reach out to other sources of help

when they no longer want to work with you. She explained it this way:

> And not to be intimidated if they say, 'Well, you know, we are not getting
> anywhere being with you, working with you, I think we should move to work with
> another person,' and that's fine. Give them that avenue and say 'Okay, if that's the
> way you want to go for now, that is fine. But in the future, if you should want to
> come back, always remember that you do have a place you can come back to.'

Steven explained that this teaching and the previous one is about liberating the true

individual. "There has to be some liberation and the healer really is about liberating the

true human being in their place just by inviting them out, not by giving answers or by

solving all the problems, but inviting the strength of the older people and out of the earth,

that the Creator gives."

Although it was talked about by only a couple of the people interviewed, the

medicine wheel as a teaching tool was identified. Leland noted that:

> The medicine wheel, some people call it. Where I come from, there is no term for
> that medicine wheel except maybe the closest translation you can find is

maskihkiy méskanaw, the medicine road. Another Elder called it mino-maskihkiy méskanan. What basically it translates to is the good medicine road, to live a good life on that medicine road, and how we do that, how we practice. That is which is why I asked you to light the pipe today. One of the things that I see is the medicine wheel. When we take a look at the medicine wheel it incorporates these things. It not only encompasses human life, it encompasses all life, all aspects of helping communities, wherever they work in an organization, without that, without incorporating that, there's going to be an imbalance. Because if you take a look at the medicine wheel and how we use that and how you use it to help the youth, to help adults in understanding themselves in places that they work, one of the things that I always explain to them is that in the medicine wheel, there's four aspects. No matter what culture you come from, we all share these four common aspects, you know. That emotions, we have our spirit, our bodies, and our minds.

He later added:

When you look at the medicine wheel, it encompasses not only the human being, but all life, organizations, land, the earth, our universe itself. So when I talk to the youth about those things, I try to make it a little bit easier, more directional rather than influential…With the basic concept of that medicine wheel, I'm helping the youth understand who they are as a human being, how they are as a human being. What is it that makes up human beings, the basic principle, and giving them direction in which way they're going.

Thus, Leland uses the medicine wheel as a symbol to help teach others. Another concept reflected in the medicine wheel is balance. Marlyn identified this point when she explained that balance is part of mithwayin, being healthy, and that the medicine wheel talks about balance. As such, it could be used to explain balance and health.

Steven noted another significant teaching, namely that there is constant interplay between the individual and shared life. This shared life encompasses more than just people to include many expressions of life. He stated that there is "a balance between individualism and shared life, and life in the context of creation, of course, is always important." Maureen also noted this in relation to establishing good health:

And if you're around healthy people, if you're with strong people, strong
traditional people that follow this life, you can be honest with your emotions. You
can talk about your feelings and you know who you feel safe with and who you
can trust. You know who you can sit with and just, you know, and just be
yourself. And that's what I mean by watching and by, when you talk about
learning from different people, that's what I'm always aware of.

Thus, in following a Cree philosophy, helping is a larger process than just considering

individuals, as noted by Steven, "So, if we can look beyond individual help or individual

need to the larger context, and feed them our holistic approaches, I think that the Cree

philosophy would come into play."

There were some other teachings that were discussed briefly during the

interviews, but which seemed to have great weight. I had also heard them spoken by other

Elders outside of these interviews. One of these teachings was "kíyam." Norbert outlined

that we are not to get overwhelmed with particular events in life. We are to "take things

in stride." When a significant event happens that seem overwhelming, we need to step

back, relax, and not get caught up in the intensity of the event. This point was also noted

by Irene. But, she recognized that this teaching was not generally easy to follow. Through

constant reminders to herself of kíyam, she has begun to follow this teaching. She stated,

"I always wondered how, when things were going so very wrong, old people could say,

'kíyam'. And the odd time now I can, you know, I realize this is a kíyam moment."

Another teaching that was briefly outlined, yet struck a chord in me, was the

importance of living with a focus on today. This point came from Marissa:

And you know, my grandmother was a very wise old woman. She used to say to
me, 'Nosisim, remember one thing. You only have one day to live. You live day
by day, not month or year by year, eh. You live for the day, for the moment. And

it's important what you're gonna share, what you're gonna give, 'cause in the future, nothing will be ours but the sacredness of it will always be there.'

Doreen outlined another teaching that is related to what was shared by Marissa. She stated:

> This life is loaned to us. When you look at everyday life, you lend something out. You want it back in the same condition. What do you think our Creator wants? It's really up to us, this life. Maybe we should give it back in the way we'd like to receive our stuff back, in good condition. And it's so simple. They're actually very simple, but they are difficult to live. Because a lot of things you have to let go, you know. Your priorities change. When it's simple, it's life should be your first priority.

Finally, Steven identified a key point that is clearly evident among those who live life according to these values and teachings. He stated, "Probably underlying all of the teachings in the Cree community is the laughter, and that is modelled everywhere, the sense of humour, and the kind of teasing that happens between people." The laughter and the teasing in-of-itself was a form of teaching used to help people see their own behaviour in relation to the community. However, he also noted that the teasing aspect may be changing through the generations. He explained it this way:

> The people I was visiting with were talking about this [laughter and teasing], saying they remember their youth and how they would take this teasing and in some ways being put down. But in other ways, they knew as they grew up, and as years passed, that this was preparing them to be men, to be who they were meant to be. And that the problems they were seeing in their communities, and we're talking 15 years ago or so, that young people no longer could live with this way of being taught. There was a lot of anger, a lot of aggression, and young people weren't able to sit with the Elders too to receive some of the teachings about self-understanding and life in the community.

(13) Wicihitowin

The value that was most deeply addressed, particularly by the Elders, and thus deserves to

be highlighted, was wícihitowin. Irene explained that this value "comes from the laws of

the people, of the land." In a simplistic manner it is defined as the help we offer one

another. However, it is a more encompassing term than just 'help.' It is tied to fellowship

and sharing. Leland shared his experience with wícihitowin:

> I'll share a story about how, a while back when I was growing up in [a Cree
> community], doors were never locked. They were all open. People would usually
> go out and visit and stay the night with my grandparents or other relations on the
> reserve. You'd go in, make yourself at home, make yourself some tea, get some
> bannock, sit down, and maybe chop some wood or see whether or not they need
> water or some food, some wild meat, some fish. Little things like that to help take
> care of one another, especially with the Elders. A lot of my stories are about that
> because I used to help them [the Elders]. My parents encouraged me to go and
> help them. And they'd share with me food, muffins, cookies, and especially
> something that was hard to come by, especially when you live off the land.
> Definitely money wasn't always very important to us.

Marissa also noted that at one time wícihitowin was a common experience, but things

have changed:

> Yeah, wícihitowin. A long time ago there was a lot of that. Yeah, people helped
> each other. Like you do in my home reserve, everybody had a garden. Everybody.
> Nobody was without a garden. It meant that you had to prepare for the harsh
> winter ahead of time and you had to know how to store food properly. If you don't
> have a cellar, you have to negotiate with your neighbour and work together.
> Today, that doesn't happen. If you come and ask someone, 'can I plant potatoes in
> your garden?' They'll say, 'Well I'll charge you this much to do that.' They don't
> realize the value system of it has gone out the door. Those that have managed to
> hang on to that value are told, 'You guys are crazy. You have four gardens and
> you divide all your potatoes and your veggies to everybody. What do you get out
> of it?' Well, everybody eats well.

Samuel also thought there have been changes. He noted the change by referring to a story:

238

Our reserve was just next about 40 miles away by river. We helped move her brother, that time, and family to [a Cree Nation]. As she said, in them years there was no welfare up there. Everybody had fishing and lived off the land. Anyway, this guy, it was her brother, and my uncle Luke, grabbed a box and said, 'I'll go and get something to eat.' It was late at night. He got a box and went to all the neighbours and they all pitched in. Them days are gone. There is no more of that. It's just like the values they had with moose. I remember a time they used to come and share the moose. People would come down with a pan and get a piece of meat. Those days are gone. All those values are slowly changing, you know. Everybody hoards.

Samuel thought the change was brought about with the technological changes occurring

in the area at the time:

The railroad came through there. The railroad came through there in the 50s, so things started to deteriorate there. I remember in '61, the first murder they had there was that [person's last name] guy, you know the one? And it never was the same after that.

As was noted by Marissa, wícihitowin is still emphasized by some people,

especially those living traditional Cree culture. She stated:

Down the river, that's one of our traditional grounds. That's where I grew up in the summer months. Our wintering grounds were up the river, the [river's name] area and all those areas. But, in [Cree satellite community], that's where the good soil is because that's where the garden, the community gardens, were. My father ran five to six at a time because they came from a very large family and it was his job to ensure that all of those gardens were in good operational condition at all times. So that was our whole summer. Same thing with the fisheries. When the fisheries came, it was not only for his benefit, it was for the benefit of his home, the whole family system. And that kind of changed, but there's still people that practice that way of life.

While she did not directly state such, she outlined an experience with her husband that

demonstrates she is one of the people who continues to follow the concept of

wícihitowin:

So you know, we talk about our values. They clash many times [between Samuel

239

and Marissa]. Like if I earn $300, somebody will need money. 'Oh here, you can have it'. And he'll say, 'I'm appalled by you. You just threw away $300 for what? *(Laughing)* You could have paid for this and paid for that'. Well maybe not today, maybe tomorrow. Well, if we never see that money again, it was never ours to begin with. It was there for the moment, and sometimes it's a test to see what you'll really do with it.

Norbert also recognized that wîcihitowin is still lived by some people but he has observed

that it is being forgotten by those people who are going out to be educated as social

workers.

> So we look up to the higher power for guidance, direction to help one another, share with one another. That's what you call love, and enjoy one another, peacefully. We're not out to hurt anybody. We want to extend our love for our futures, that's okay. We don't need much. Let's focus on how can we better the human being. And how can we extend that is by extending your hand, 'come along, come along', sharing. And that was the old way of life and all of a sudden, they were in this class and they were forgetting all our values.

As evident in Norbert's statement above, wîcihitowin has a broad meaning, one

that includes a spiritual element. Marissa also recognized this broader spiritual meaning

of wîcihitowin and shared her examples of it:

> Wicihitowin is an ongoing element. It has a spirit of its own. You do it subconsciously. Many, many times. Sometimes you are aware of it. Other times you are not. Even a simple phone call. Pick up the phone and talk to someone. You are already doctoring that individual, no matter how great of a distance they are. Your spirit is someone that speaks for you. And sometimes when we sit in a pipe ceremony we pray for each other so that we are guided and looked after. Nobody needs to know that, only you. Well, the Creator knows. Our giveaways, is part of wicihitowin: Our feasts, same thing. Our ceremonies are a big part of it. Don't forget, ninety-eight percent of our ancestors prayed. The minute they wake up to the minute they fall asleep, in everything they do. Like last night, I went to bed at 12 o'clock. I seen this big ball of yarn. [Her son] used them to make regalia. I thought, they sure take a lot of room and room is something he always fighting for to store his stuff. I thought, I'll take care of these for him. So, I unravelled them and I started to put them together, hook them up properly. Pretty soon, I get into the nitty gritty part of it. Before I knew it, it was 12 o'clock. I

thought, I always wanted to do this. I said to myself, 'I going to deal with everything I left undone.' Like Leland's ribbon shirt that has been patiently waiting, waiting. Every time I'd open [the container it was in], I said, 'Hello Leland, we are getting close.' It use to bother me before, but now it doesn't. Because I understand why. Sometimes everything goes four times maybe, and then we pick it up, we put it out. I don't like to do things just like that, because for everything we do is supposed to be a prayer because that's where knowledge comes from. That's part of that wicihitowin.

Steven shared his wider understanding of wícihitowin as well. He emphasized the long term relational commitment associated with the value:

> It may be about sharing stories, so there may be ways of helping the community that will require some action, some work, some physical work, you know, providing wood and water for the Elders, you know, and then understanding that providing food, you know, all those things are medicine. Then the teaching, the Cree teaching would be that to give someone a good glass of water, to share a fish or to do something of that kind, physically, is a healing, helpful way, that medicine. But the element of coming in a good way and working humbly with respect and showing, sometimes I think very indirectly, is sharing and love. Some things aren't talked about a lot in terms of describing feelings. Sometimes feelings are kept inside more than we think would be healthy at times, I guess, in the Cree way. But when you're with someone and the sense that you are willing to spend time with someone and understand them for the long term. Like long term commitment is the way of the Cree I think. It's not a 15 minute appointment. It's time to share stories and hear stories. It's an interchange. I think the healer encourages and listening to the person tell about their pain or about their confusion, you know, allowing them to share the story and then create a safe space.

Marissa explained that wícihitowin will involve indirect ways of helping. Often this means that she and the people she is helping will get involved in other mutually supportive activities as part of the helping process. She gave an example:

> That starblanket or the arts and crafts. That's a big part of the therapy that I do. I'm the one that runs that program and it's amazing to see a lot of our people when they all get together. They start talking and they kinda laugh about the similarities, the experiences they went through and you could tell when they hit a sad note, everybody's quiet. Like they're not sympathizing with each other,

241

they're empathizing with each other and they talk about it openly. And they said, 'Well, you're lucky that you didn't get as far as me and my wife did, because now I think we've lost our children permanently. So you guys still have a sense of hope of regaining them, and what differences will you make now?' All these things are important, and you hear them. You don't have to answer them. It's their conversation but you're the silent listener. And very often they will work in clusters.

Seeing a part of wícihitowin as an experience of group sharing and helping was noted by Steven as well. He stated, "I learned very, very soon from the Elders that if I went into a gathering and just invite people to talk about options, that working with groups for healing is the other piece [of wícihitowin] that is possible, to build a community and to have a process where people are working together."

It was also shared by Steven that wícihitowin follows the holistic and cyclic philosophy of Cree people. Samuel reflected this point when he stated, "When you start learning those things, then you try to teach it to other people." Steven and Marlyn explained that it is about a shared life where individualism and communialism are balanced. Steven explained it this way: "Well, in terms of helping, there are many examples of how that happens and I think the balance between individualism and shared life, and life in the context of creation, of course, is always important." He later explained that "the idea that to help is to share life."

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined what was shared by the people interviewed into 13 themes as I have come to understand them. These themes are: Negativity, Hurting Others, Colonial

Oppression and Healer Stress, Use of Amer-European Ways of Helping, An Ongoing

Process to Learning and Helping, Listening and Presence, Ceremonies, Identity,

Language, Role Modelling, Spirituality, Connection to Land and Place, Use of Stories,

Values and Teachings, and Wícihitowin These themes are further reflected upon in the

next chapter where I take my understanding a step further by discussing them in relation

to one another and the literature.

Chapter Five: Nimámitawénítamona

Cree people who are focussed on helping share clear ideas on how to help others. Some

of these ideas have been shared in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I weave these

ideas into a tapestry, or model, if you like. I also relate these ideas to the literature

reviewed in Chapter Two. Following this relating process, I proceed to share my

reflections on this research as a whole before I close with some messages addressing

social work research, social work education, and social work practice, as well as

messages to Iińiniwak and Indigenous helpers. As this chapter is focussed on my thoughts

it is entitled Nimámitawénítamona, or my thoughts.

Tying the Themes Together

There were thirteen themes identified in the previous chapter. I noted through the

interviews that there were overlaps in these themes. In some instances I had to choose

where to use particular quotes as some of these quotes related to more than one theme

area. For example, the following quote related to the themes of (1) the ongoing process of

helping and learning and (2) negativity, hurting others, colonial oppression and healer

stress:

> When it first really started for me, at least 12 years ago when my brother brought
> it home to our community, and I remember my mom because she was so Christian
> and so worried. She did not want to have anything to do with learning about our
> way as Aboriginal people. She said that it was evil, and that if we continued to
> bring these kinds of things into our home, like the medicines and the rattles and
> stuff like that, we were gonna burn in hell. She wanted no part of him, and of
> course my brother, because he respected my mom, he listened to what she said.
> But that didn't stop him and over the years I watched him and I watched how he

changed. I can remember how troubled he was as a young boy growing up. He was always getting into trouble. He was into drugs and stealing, you know, all those things. Then when he started learning about the traditional ways, his whole life began changing in a good way. And today you see where he's at, how far he's come, and if you would have known him when he was just a young boy, he himself is, I guess, a good example of how our ways help.

As I tried to sort through these interconnections to develop the themes, I quickly realized that later I would have to rejoin these themes to create a fuller picture. This experience reminded me that while we could look at each particular theme, we need to come back to the whole picture.

The picture, as I have come to see it, includes five key areas. These areas are tasks, foci, guiding values, means, and cautions. The tasks are broad activities that are to be addressed. The foci are the areas of interest that are concentrated upon. The guiding values are the ones addressed by the people interviewed and potentially followed as an individual moves forward to complete the tasks. The means are the methods used to complete the tasks. The cautions are the things individuals needs to be cognizant of so they may be able to avoid them as they work on the tasks.

I understand that there are at least five tasks to be addressed (see Figure 1). One task is the reconsideration of life all around a person. In this task, a person is faced with the realization that life can be understood and lived in alternate ways to how she or he is presently understanding and experiencing it. A second task is the reflection a person undertakes where he or she looks at him- or herself in relation to life around him or her, and, in particular, in relation to alternate ways of understanding and living. A third task is remembering and/or rediscovering one's sense of identity. A fourth task involves a person
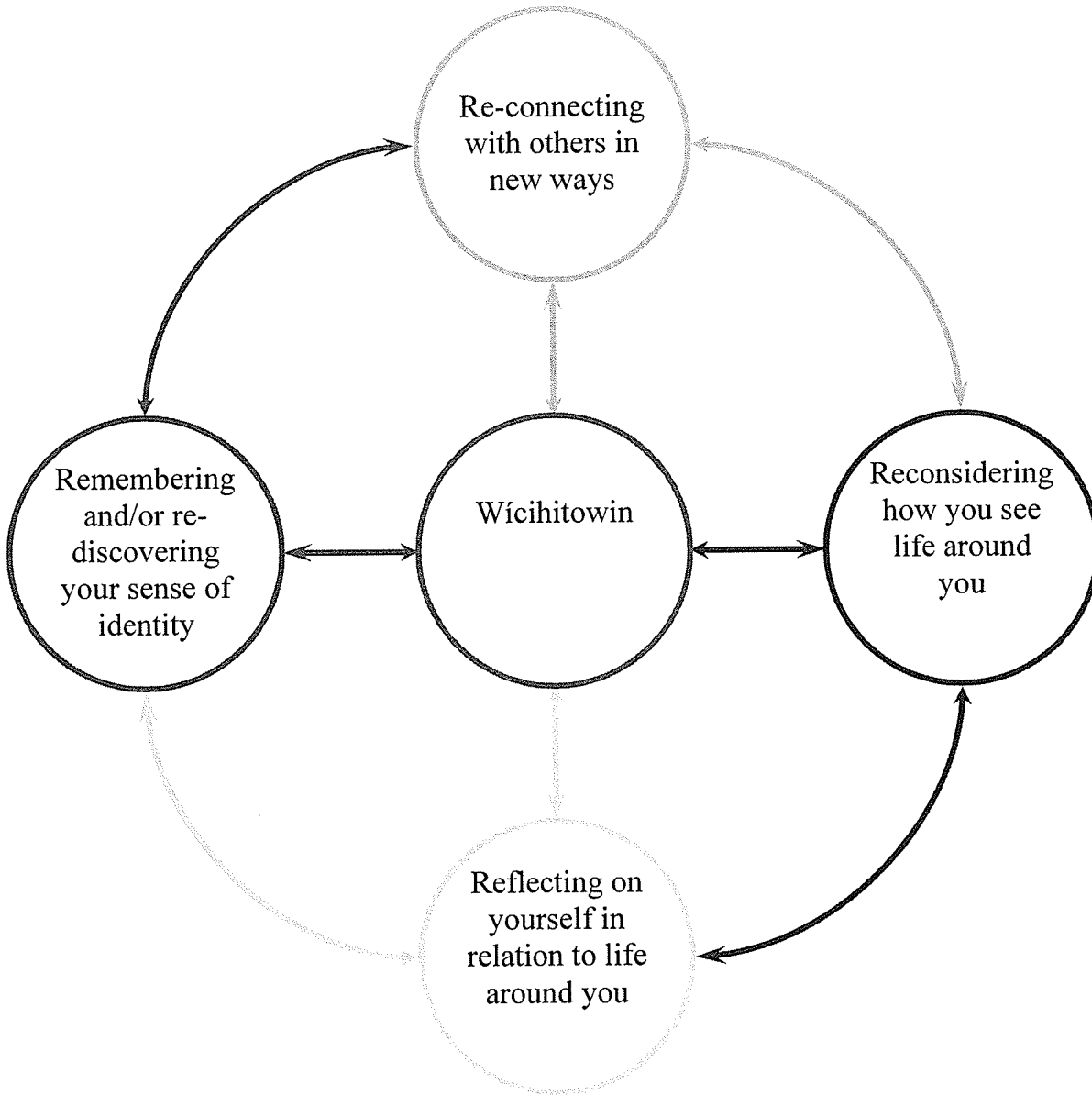
Figure 1: Tasks in the helping process

246

reconnecting with the people around her or him in new ways that are based upon our

remembering and/or rediscovering. A final task is based upon the concept of wicihotiwin

[helping one another] where a person helps others and shares with them her or his

rediscovered and/or remembered understandings and ways of living in an unimposing

manner.

Coinciding with these five tasks are five foci (see Figure 2). The first focus in on

seeing a Cree view of life as an alternative to the mythical, negative picture of Cree

people. This involves a person hearing about or seeing, without prejudice, how someone

or some people live in ways that reflect Cree worldviews, understandings, and practices.

A second focus is seeing one's self in relation to the portrait and the alternate Cree view

and ways of being. With this focus an individual reflects on how the alternative view and

ways may be desirable and more healthy than the way the person is living at that time. A

third focus is on the values, beliefs, and understandings of Cree peoples. This focus

involves a more in-depth look at the traditional Cree values, beliefs, and understandings,

often by participation in activities that reflect these attributes. The balance of

individualism-communalism is the fourth focus. In this focus, a person recognizes the

importance of relating with other people who are knowledgable of Cree ways and

attempts to connect with them. In other words, the person is concentrating on becoming

more involved in the community of Cree people who are living, or trying to live, in a

manner that reflects Cree values, beliefs, and understandings. The final focus is on é-

kiyamihk pimátisiwin [peaceful life] and mino-pimatisiwin [good-life]. This focus
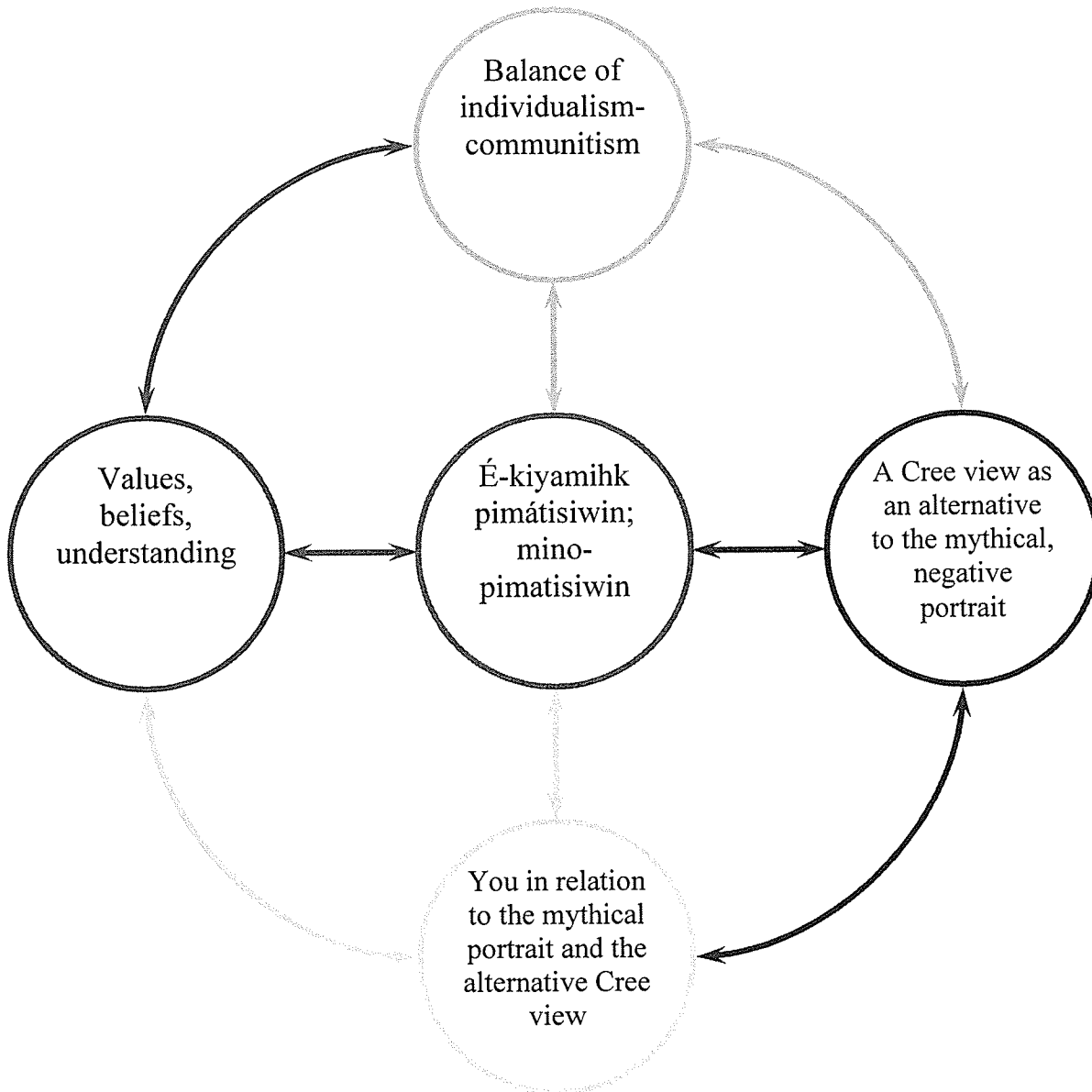
Figure 2: Foci in the helping process

248

involves an individual living based on what she or he has learned and sharing her or his

knowledge and experience with others in a positive, supportive manner. It also involves

the continuing development of her or his spiritual awareness.

There are several values that coincide with these five tasks and five foci (see

Figure 3). These values are the ones frequently highlighted by several of the people

interviewed. They include honesty, respect, kindness, strength, sharing, relationships,

thankfulness, caring, forgiveness, sharing, and helping. It seemed to me that these values,

while not identified clearly as coinciding in an order, related to particular tasks and

focuses. Hence, when looking at a Cree view of Cree people, as an alternative to the

negative and oppressive mythical portrait of us (Memmi, 1965) the values of honesty and

respect are highlighted. These values are emphasized at this time as they are required by

one so he or she would be more readily able to move beyond any imposed or internalized

portrait that oppresses him or her, or the people. Clearly, a person cannot reconsider how

he or she sees life around him or her if he or she continues to think of Cree ways as

savage or devil worshipping. The values of strength and kindness are required when

reflecting on one's self in relation to life around her or him. It takes strength to see one's

self and how he or she may have taken on negative traits of the mythical portrait. It also

takes strength to go against those who continue to oppress her or him with negative

stereotypes. A person also has to be kind in that he or she should not judge him- or herself

or his or her peers for unwittingly believing in and/or supporting such racist ideology. As

a person moves to remembering and/or rediscovering one's sense of identity by learning
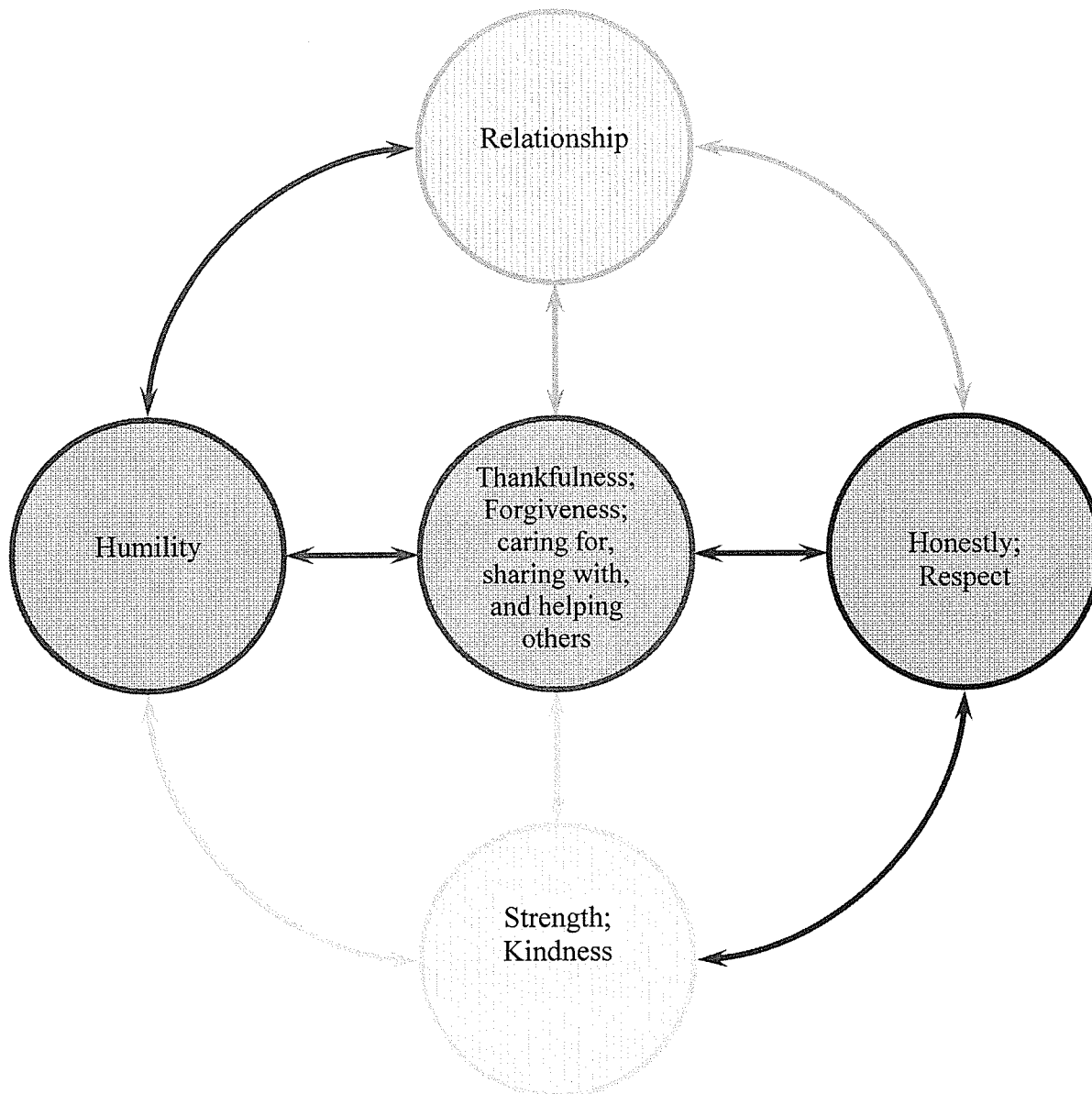
Figure 3: Guiding values in the helping process
250

about Cree values, beliefs, and understandings, she or he has to maintain a sense of humility so she or he does come to not place her- or himself and Cree ways above others, including those people who judge her or him. The value of relationship is then emphasized as one reconnect with Cree culture and learns about balancing individualism and communitism. This value tends to bring one closer to the people around him or her, including the Elders and teachers of Cree views, beliefs, values, and practices. Finally, when one is in a place where she or he can live out and share what she or he has learned, one works at maintaining the values of thankfulness, forgiveness, and caring for, sharing with, and helping others. These values support one to be humble and are available to others who are also working on this learning and helping process.

There are several means to carrying out the tasks identified (see Figure 4). First, as a person begins to reconsider how one sees life around him or her, there is a reliance on hearing stories about alternative views on life. Also, one is to provide space, both physically and metaphorically, for alternative views and understandings to be shared with him or her. Second, as the person begins to reflect on her- or himself in relation to the alternative views on life around him or her, watching role models becomes more significant as a practical way of learning about (1) her- or himself, (2) how she or he is living, and (3) how she or he could be living. Third, a person can carry out the tasks previously identified by attending ceremonies, hearing Cree teachings and language, and connecting to the land and places of healing. These activities support a person to learn about Cree values, beliefs, and understandings as they demonstrate and represent the
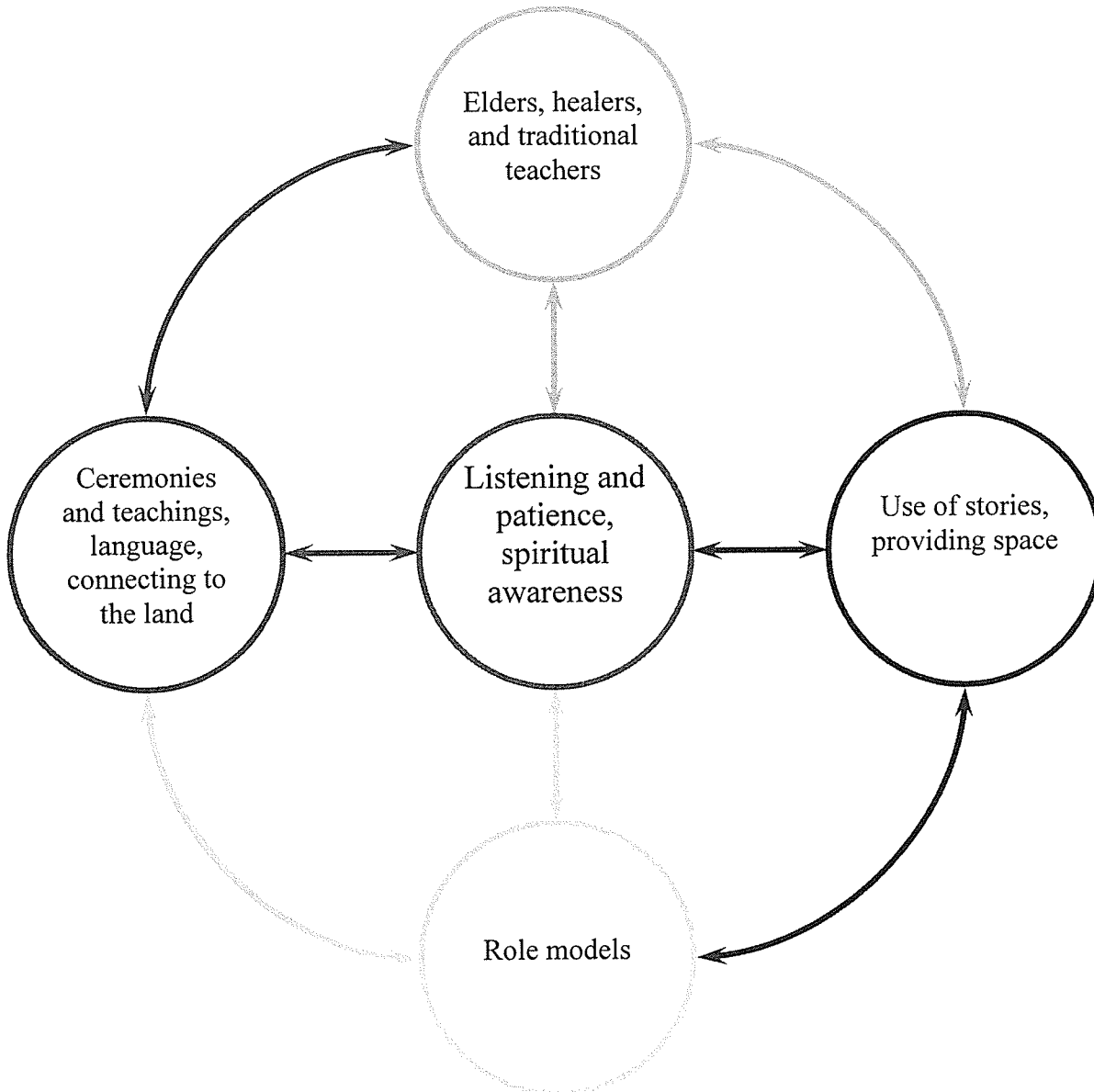
Figure 4: Means of helping in the helping process
252

values, beliefs, and understandings. Fourth is the means of reconnecting with Elders, healers, and teachers of Cree ways, as well as one's relationship with the Cree community. These people will be able to provide a person with support and guidance particular to the person's circumstances. Such reconnecting also requires a greater focus by the person on the relationship between the Elders, healers, and/or teachers and him or her. Fifth, is where a person focuses on listening, developing patience, and relying on spiritual awareness. These means also support a person as she or he develops her or his sense of é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin [peaceful life] and mino-pimatisiwin [good-life].

There are five cautions that a person has to heed when walking through this process (see Figure 5). I see the first one as the colonial oppression Cree people are facing, although the people interviewed did not use this term. In particular, they outlined concerns of racism, labels, internalized stereotypes, and our own negative attitudes. These dynamics are all central to the colonial oppression a person faces. Since part of the process is a movement away from the imposed negative portrait drawn of our people, and since a person is less clear about the effects of the dynamics early in the process, this caution stands strongest in the beginning of the person's walk. In other words, without being aware of this caution, it is more difficult to move away from the mythical portrait.

The second caution is about other peoples' agendas and/or self-interest. As a person begins to watch others as role models and a means to reflect on his- or herself in relation to life around him or her, the person need to be cautious that there are people who will take advantage of his or her lack of understanding to manipulate the situation for
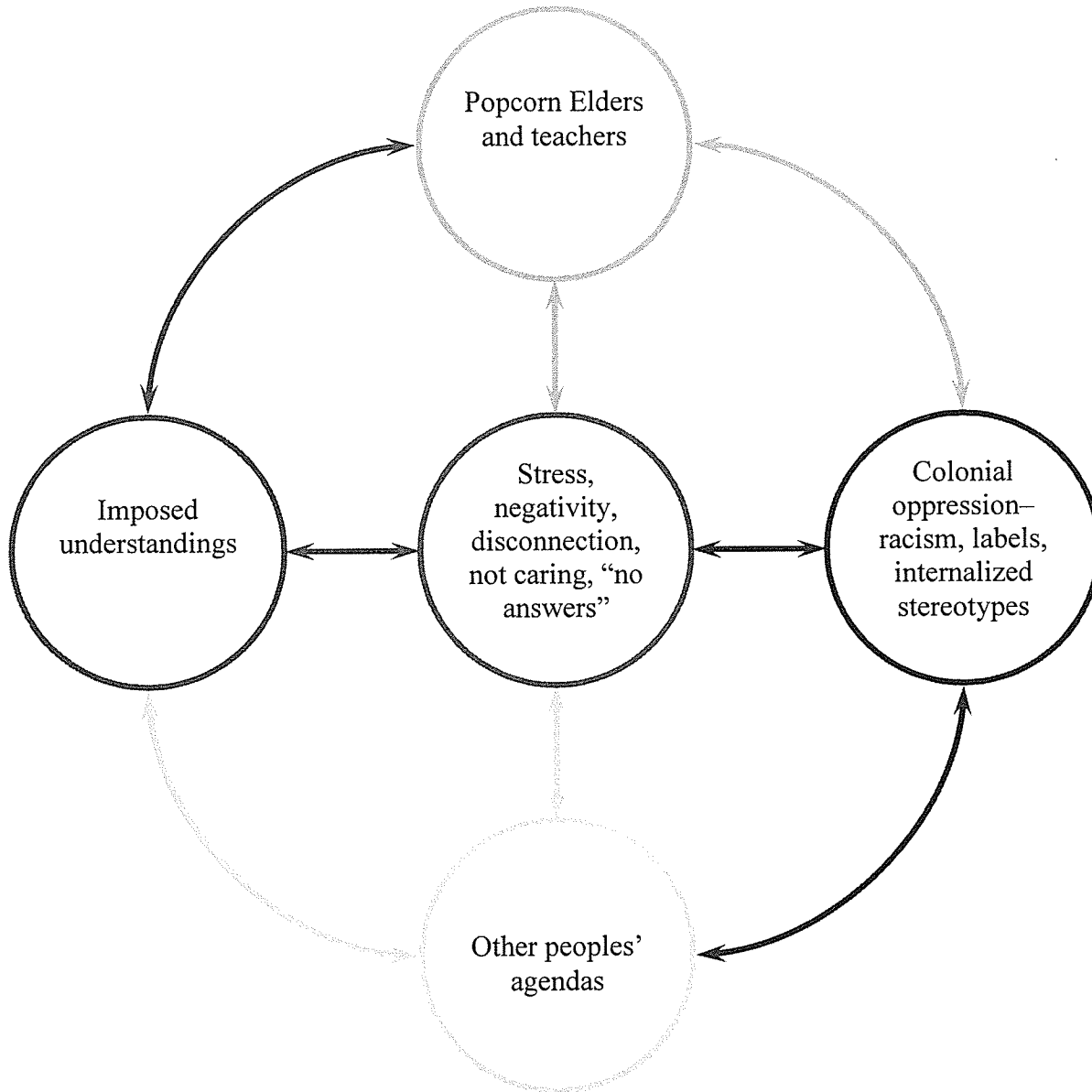
Figure 5: Cautions in the helping process

254

their benefit. Without awareness of this caution, a person can fall victim to supposed role models who, consciously or unconsciously, are not following the Cree guiding values and practices.

Closely tied to the second caution is the third, which is 'imposed understandings.' As one begins to participate in ceremonies, and listen to the language and teachings, she or he may face situations where the people participating in or hosting the ceremonies, or sharing their views, may be acting in such a capacity without receiving the proper guidance or direction. In situations such as these, some individuals may have no basis to their actions or words and attempt to impose their ways and/or their unsupported understanding. They may also judge Cree teachers or Elders and their knowledge and practices negatively as a means to give themselves credence. Without awareness of this caution a person may be taken off her or his path of learning and receiving help in a Cree way. One may learn things thinking that this is the Cree way to be, and yet be off the mark of how Cree ways are lived. A person may adopt a similar attitude and become judgmental and insecure of those who are steeped in Cree knowledge and ways. Hence, a person may not be able to continue with the task of connecting with Cree Elders, teachers, and healers for particular support and guidance. In other words, the bitter taste left after such an experience could jeopardize a person's willingness to continue the process.

The fourth caution is about popcorn Elders, healers, and teachers. As there are individuals who are hosting or participating in ceremonies without proper guidance or support from Cree Elders or teachers, there are individuals who suddenly appear and are

referred, including self-referred, as Elders, healers, or teachers. The concern arises when these individuals with little or no previous connection with Cree views, values, beliefs, practices, Elders, and/or the Cree community, present themselves as holders of Cree knowledge and understandings. Such individuals can cause confusion for a person seeking support and guidance since what is shared with that person may not be grounded in the wider Cree understanding and practices, and may be internally inconsistent. Popcorn Elders, healers, and teachers are the charlatans of Cree ways of helping and supporting. They are similar to "professionals" practicing without proper accreditation in that they can potentially harm a person through such actions as spiritual, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse.

A fifth caution is about the stress, ongoing negativity, disconnection, and the potential of a person developing a attitude of not caring. As a person begins to offer what one has learned and followed, one may be called on to guide other people who have not walked through this process to the same degree as her or him. During this time of offering support and guidance to others, a person may face the challenge of many people calling on her or him as well as a lack of support from those who actions continue to reflect colonial oppression. These actions from others, including such statements as "there are no answers in Cree ways of being," and general negative views of those who walk in Cree ways, create stress for a person offering help. As the stress builds, it may cause a person to no longer care about others, or to stop following the Cree values, beliefs, and practices they have learned. It may also push a person to disconnect from the community and those

seeking his or her guidance and support. Thus, a person who is offering support and guidance needs to work on his or her own self-care and continue his or her own walk by connecting with others who are also walking further along this process. In other words, the learning and helping process is never ending.

While I have presented these five areas, tasks, focuses, guiding values, means, and cautions, in a particular order, it is more conceivable, and possibly appropriate, to see all five areas and their five parts as an interconnected whole (see Figure 6). For example, while a person is likely to learn about Cree ways of learning and helping initially through a story being told to him or her, it is possible that the story teller is an Elder who is offering guidance and support. As another example, a person may be attempting to reconnect with one's Cree community and learning about how to make such a connection by observing her or his role model. Finally, as a person attempts to balance the idea of individualism with communitism, he or she will have to be aware of how colonialism has impacted on individuals and communities.

Relating the Interviews to the Literature

The information shared by the Cree Elders and social workers interviewed runs parallel to much information provided in the literature. To demonstrate this connection, the following section compares the themes and the information shared to literature on worldviews, colonialism and then to decolonization, anti-colonialism, and indigenism.
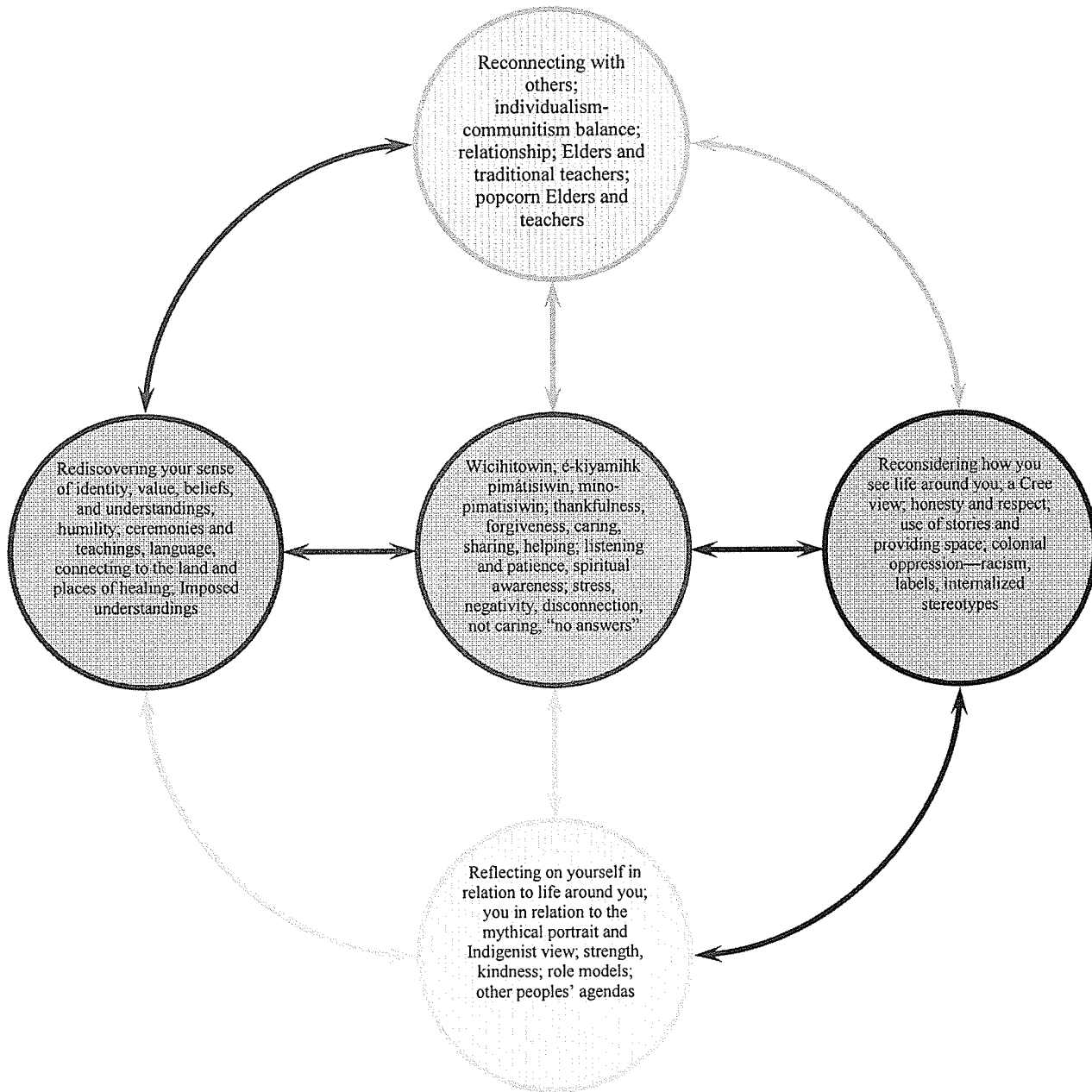
Figure 6: The helping process

Worldviews

There were two key attributes identified in the literature review on Indigenous

worldviews: respectful individualism and communitism. As explained previously,

respectful individualism is a way of being where an individual enjoys great freedom in

self-expression since it is recognized by the society that individuals take into

consideration and act on the needs of the community (Gross, 2003). Communitism is the

sense of community tied together by familial relations and the families' commitment to it

(Weaver, 1997; Weaver, 2001). These two attributes are central to the relational

worldview identified in the literature review. Both of these attributes are evident when

one looks at Chart 1 which presents the literature findings on Indigenous and Cree

worldviews as well as the findings from the interviews.

Chart 1: Comparison of worldviews identified in the literature and interviews

Indigenous worldview identified in the literature review	Cree worldview identified in the literature	Worldview identified in the interviews
close relationship with the environment	interdependence with nature	in relationship with the land
reliance and emphasis on spiritual	emphasis on the spiritual	reliance and emphasis on the spiritual
there is a Great Spirit	there is a Great Spirit	there is a Great Spirit
harmony with nature	harmony with nature	make time to be on the land for well-being
present time orientation		focus on today
emphasis on extended family	wakotowin–relations or kinship is central	kinship-extended family is important
focus on inner fulfillment and serenity of one's place	introspection and seeking truth of one's existence	é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin-serene life

sees the cosmos a vertical layers and expansions in cardinal directions	circular pattern of interrelated parts–relationship with self, environment, and the cosmos	directions of the medicine wheel–relationship within self and with others
ceremonies are important		ceremonies provide guidance
everything is connected	connections between thinking, feeling, spirit, plants and animals	connections within self, with others, spirit, and land
people hold relationship with the earth, plants, animals, and environment	human beings are part of the natural world and related to all of creation	shared life with people and other expressions of life
there are many truths		
truth is dependent upon individual experience		
all things are equal	we do not have dominion over others or nature	we do not dominate others
land is sacred	our spiritual relationship with the land is of upmost importance	land is important
	dreams are an access for the spiritual	dreams are leading and knowing; dreams are real
	distinguish people from nature through the use of the mind	
		look at life positively
	direct connection between thinking and feeling	speak from the heart

There appears to be a fair degree of consistency between what the people interviewed

shared and that which is found in the literature. There also appears to be particular

consistency between the literature addressing Cree peoples and what was shared by the

people interviewed. This consistency continues when we look at the values and principles

identified in the literature and interviews.

Values and Principles

In regard to these values and principles, there appears to be some consistency between

what the literature has outlined and what the people interviewed have shared, particularly

between literature on Cree values and the values identified in the interviews. To show this

comparison, Chart 2 presents both Indigenous values and Cree values and in comparison

to the values identified by the people interviewed.

Chart 2: Comparison of the values identified in the literature and interviews

Indigenous values in the literature review	Cree values in the literature review	Cree values identified in the interviews
sharing	sharing	wícihitowin [sharing/helping]
respect	manátisiwin [respect]	respect
cooperation		wícihitowin includes the idea of cooperation
non-interference and observation		listening and story-telling (not identified as a value, but was emphasized)
present orientation		presence (not identified as a value, but was emphasized)
stronger focus on non-verbal communication		role-modelling (not identified as a value, but was emphasized)
spiritual focus		spirituality (not identified as a value, but was emphasized)
reciprocity	responsibility to serve others	wícihitowin [sharing/helping]
balance	we work to maintain balance	balance is part of health and is to be sought (not identified as a value but was emphasized)
harmony	we work to maintain harmony	
importance of community	kinship	kinship
wholeness	wholeness and connection with the greater mind of creation	

strength	strength	strength
honesty	kwayaskátisiwin [honesty and fairness]	honesty
kindness	kiséwátisiwin [kindness]	kindness
	good child rearing/offering clear direction	good child rearing
	hope	hope
	hospitality	
	bravery in the face of all dangers	
	truth	
	reliability	
	faith	faith
	thankfulness	thankfulness
	mino-wícéhtowin, or having or possessing good relations	relationship
	obedience	obedience
	yóspatisiwin [gentleness]	
	kanátisiwin [cleanliness]	cleanliness
	happiness	happiness
	love	love
	faith	faith
	humility	humility
	caring	caring
		forgiveness

This apparent consistency between the literature and what was shared in the interviews also seems evident in the principles identified. The comparison can be seen in Chart 3. For comparison, the principles derived from the interviews were the teachings that were shared.

Chart 3: Comparison of the principles in the literature and teachings shared in the interviews

Indigenous principles identified in the literature review	Cree principles identified in the literature review	Cree teachings identified in the interviews
Indigenous ways of doing are guided by moral principles	more responsibility to families and community	a emphasis placed on proper behaviour; a person is to incorporate the values until they become part of her/him
moral principles are embedded within spiritual constructs	everyone and everything has spirit and must be treated with respect	commitments are made within a understanding that they are witnessed spiritually
intent of suppressing conflict	showing disrespect will bring consequences–pástatowin	be humble; remain neutral
emphasizing positive relationships	focus on positive behaviour	responsibility to see and properly treat people as part of Creation-to be very respectful
acting without direct intentional interference		people are not to impose their values and beliefs on others; do not interrupt people
acting without a sense of competitiveness		all persons are teachers, helpers, and learners; we are to help one another;
acting without verbal expression of gratitude or approval		humility is emphasized
action with emotional constraint		é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin; péyáhtak; kiyam
acting with generosity		all persons contribute to the community
acting with an intuitive and flexible sense of time		live day by day; live with a focus on today
acting with an intrinsic reward for ones actions	self-discipline	as human beings all people have abilities or gifts that they are to build upon
following uninstructed protocols set by local group	people have an obligation to one another to maintain order	offering of tobacco and cloth when approaching someone with a request
practice teaching by modelling		people are to model desirable behaviours; people get to know a person by how that person behaves
harmony and balance is sought	live in harmony and balance	balance, as exemplified in the medicine wheel, is sought

	act with responsibility to children, Elders, people with disabilities, and animals	people are to respect all life, including insects and the earth
	natural law directs people	natural law as a means to direct behaviour
		people to speak from the heart
		support to liberate the true individual
		recognize that things are not enshrined in stone; recognition of change and need for flexibility
		there is interplay between individual and shared life
		humour, teasing, and laughter to help see behaviour

In this case, the Cree teachings stemming from the interviews seem to reflect the

Indigenous and Cree principles identified in the literature.

Ways of Helping

A final comparison is in relation to helping. These comparisons can be seen in Chart 4.

This chart presents findings from the literature on Indigenous and Crees ways of helping

as well as the ways of helping identified in the interviews.

Chart 4: Comparison of ways of helping identified in the literature and interviews

Indigenous ways of helping identified in the literature	Cree ways of helping identified in the literature	Cree ways of helpings identified in the interviews
use of ceremonies as a means to helping	ceremonies provide a healing process	ceremonies are emphasized
inclusion of the spiritual relationships	inclusion of spiritual life and relationships	inclusion of spiritual life and relationships
	all healing involves a relationship with the Creator	relationship with the Creator is emphasized

focus on establishing good, upright living as a means for a long life	we are to nurture specific personal qualities	we are to incorporate and nurture specific values and principles
heavy reliance on communal, group, and familial networks		reliance on reconnecting with and within family and community in particular ways
interconnection between spirit, mind, physical, matter, environment, and cosmos	all life is interrelated	all life is interrelated, including within individuals and between life entities
disharmony and imbalance are the concern; balance and harmony are key	deal with lack of balance and disharmony within, and with family, community, and the earth	imbalance is a concern; focus is on establishing balance within, and with family, community, and the surrounding life
wellness is a holistic concept that encompasses all aspects of individuals, communities, and environment	healing reconnects us with our innermost self and our surroundings	wellness encompasses reconnecting within and with others
wellness is a life long journey–the Red Road; mino-pimátisiwin	healing is a life-long journey	healing is a life long journey
values and helping ways are interconnected; return to our values for wellness	values and helping ways are interconnected	values and helping ways are directly connected; we are to live certain values
wellness is reinforced by strong cultural identity; key is reconnecting individuals to their Indigenousness and peoples		wellness is tied to one's identity; re-establishing one's identity is a key to this process
we are responsible for our own wellness		we are responsible for our well-being so as to support our families, communities, and other life; wellness is a shared responsibility
life is continuous, harmonious cyclic circle intimately connected to well-being	the key is to work together	life is a series of cycles
medicine wheel used as a framework	medicine wheel-the hub is used a framework	medicine wheel is used as a framework
healing includes going back to the land	helping includes utilizing the environment	helping includes connecting with the land
support others, but not intervening or imposing	support one another	wícihitowin
	focus on remaining positive	focus on remaining positive

	strong grasp of the language is necessary	should have a strong grasp of the language
	there is long process to learning how to help others	there is long process to learning how to help others
	helper is to extensively listening and stilling one's mind	listening and presence is emphasized; affirmations and openness is supported
	helpers are to do no harm	helpers are to maintain a certain lifestyle–it includes doing no harm
	helpers are to include physical activity	physical activities are included as part of helping
	storytelling is included in helping process	storytelling is emphasized
		role modelling is emphasized

From this fourth chart, it can be seen that findings from the literature seem to be reflected in the interviews. Also, it appears that there is a solid connection between the literature on Cree ways of helping and the interviews.

Overall, reviewing what was shared in the interviews in relation to the literature, it is evident to me that:

1) Cree ways of helping exist;

2) these ways of helping are rooted in particular Cree worldviews, values and teachings;

3) these ways of helping share much commonality with some literature on various Indigenous ways of helping;

4) these particular Cree worldviews share much commonality with literature on Indigenous worldviews;

5) these presented ways of helping are more elaborate than what is discussed in

the literature on Cree and Indigenous ways of helping; and

6) Cree worldviews are more elaborate than what is discussed in the literature on

Cree and Indigenous worldviews.

At this point I think it is significant to state that what I focussed on for my data

gathering was the brief time spent interviewing the Cree Elders and social workers. From

my personal experience, I am aware that the information on Cree ways of helping is much

deeper than what these interviews revealed. In other words, while these interviews present

more information than what I could find in the literature on Cree ways of helpings, the

information gleaned from them is just a starting point.

Colonialism

When I completed the literature review, the reason for including the section on

colonization was to set the background for the purpose of this study and the rationale for

the particular research methodology taken. As such, colonization was not a topic for the

interview questions. Despite this orientation to the study, the people interviewed raised

the topic, albeit not by the name of colonization, but by the description of events they

have faced. The following points from the literature review on colonialism were some of

the main ones reflected in the interviews.

The first point is that Indigenous people withdraw from our own ways during the

colonial process (Laenui, 2000). This point was evident in the interviews as several of the

people interviewed spoke of living life in a way that did not fully reflect the views and

practices that Cree people have held for life times. Instead they were forced to participate in new systems that were created by Amer-Europeans and then became imbedded in Indigenous nations (Kellough, 1980). These systems that the people interviewed talked about include churches and residential schools. The literature outlines how these systems made a concerted effort to re-define Indigenous peoples' worldviews (Frideres, 1991; Kellough, 1980; Pettipas, 1994). These systems were directly referred to by the people interviewed who spoke of how individuals were not only abused in these systems, but were taught to believe a particular way of seeing the world, namely an Amer-European one based primarily on Christianity. The literature also outlined how binaries are emphasized where non-Indigenous peoples are seen positively and Indigenous people are seen negatively. These binaries are then considered as accurate truths (Ashcroft, 2000; Nandy, 1983; Mills, 1997). The negative portrait drawn of Indigenous people is then internalized by us (Daes, 2000; Friere, 1993; Memmi, 1965). Aspects of these binaries and internalization were acknowledged by the people interviewed. They spoke of themselves and other Cree people as being labelled as less capable, being told that Cree Elders held no credibility, and that our ways of being were considered as evil. Several people interviewed also spoke of how they lived in unhealthy ways prior to focussing on Cree ways of seeing the world and living out that vision. These points are also reflected in discussions in the literature of the false consciousness that arises where, as oppressed people, we come to judge ourselves based upon the adopted negative ideas (Mullaly, 2002; Poupart, 2003). This was most clearly evident in a statement that described the

mother of one of the people interviewed:

> When it first really started for me, at least 12 years ago when my brother brought it home to our community, and I remember my mom because she was so Christian and so worried. She did not want to have anything to do with learning about our ways as Aboriginal people. She said that it was evil and that if we continued to bring these kinds of things int our home, like our medicines and the rattles and stuff life that, we were gonna burn in hell. She wanted no part of him [her brother].

The literature suggested that these judgements lead toward various degrees of self-hatred, which include actions of lateral violence such as Indigenous women being abused by Indigenous men (Anderson, 2000; Smith, 2005). This violence, which relates to the colonial process, was noted by the people interviewed. In particular, Maureen stressed the point that there are women being sexually abused by "so-called healers, so-called traditionalists." She made no connection between such abuse and Cree ways of helping. Instead, she emphasized the phrase 'so-called' to create separation of the abuse and what she understood as Cree ways of helping. On the other hand, Samuel made a connection between this internalized oppression and the experience people had in residential school.

From these few points, I would suggest that the people interviewed indirectly acknowledged that part of the helping process is about addressing the effects of colonialism. Such a connection relates to the worldview that encompasses the whole where colonialism is a highly significant part of Indigenous peoples' experiences.

Decolonization, Anti-colonialism and Indigenism

As outlined in the literature review, decolonization is a process that attempts to

reveal and dismantle colonial power in all its forms. Understanding history is essential to

reconsidering Eurocentric discourse and aiding the breakdown of colonial beliefs that

have shaped and been adopted. It is a rejection of victimage where we change negative

reactionary energy into more positive rebuilding energy. As such, decolonization is

preemptive and proactive where we break our silence, name the world ourselves, and

retake possession of our humanity, identity and knowledge. It involves renewing and

reconstructing the principles underlying our Indigenous worldviews, environments,

languages, and how these construct our humanity. It is about relearning a sense of

authenticity, reaffirming our belief in our traditional knowledge, strengthening our health,

diet, and relation to the land. Decolonization has elements that are distinctive to

Indigenous peoples in that it requires culturally appropriate and sociologically relevant

teachings and healing models.

The themes from the interviews reflected aspects of decolonization, although none

of the people interviewed spoke of decolonization. For example, while the people

interviewed acknowledge Amer-European ways of helping, there was an emphasis on

relying on Cree ways of helping. The overall process reflected as presented in Figure six

rejects any sense of victimage and emphasizes self-responsibility for one's growth and

healing while accessing the supports of those who model that which is desired. There is

support for individuals to break out of one's silent oppression and retake possession of

one's humanity. This sense of humanity is based on a Cree worldview where particular

values, teachings, and practices are emphasized. This Cree worldview is seen as

reaffirming traditional Cree knowledge, such as including Cree ceremonies and the related teachings. The themes also demonstrate the reaffirmation of spirituality in Cree culture. Overall, the way of helping outlined is culturally appropriate and sociologically relevant to Cree people. Thus, I suggest that the process outlined reflects decolonization.

However, as the interviews did not focus on colonization, decolonization, or anti-colonialism, there were aspects not addressed. For example, there was no discussion of whether the intent of what was shared was to emphasize decolonization or anti-colonialism. Indeed, while there was some discussion on greater political oppression in a few of the interviews, it was not the focus of the ways of helping as outlined by the people interviewed. We did not focus on revealing the colonial apparatus and its effects on Cree people.

This lack of focus on colonization is a significant point in relating the interviews with anti-colonialism and indigenism. As was outlined in the literature review, anti-colonialism takes a stance that is anchored in the Indigenous sense of the collective, common colonial consciousness. It is a political struggle against specific and existing ideology and the practice of colonialism and proactive resistance that challenges colonial frameworks or systems. It sees decolonization as incomplete and colonialism as continuing, thus it works towards dismantling colonial project in all its forms. This work includes denaturalizing the discourse of diffusionism and spelling out this narrative for what it is: a self-serving ethnocentric view of the world and peoples. The focus of anti-colonialism is on recovery of Indigenous knowledge in that Indigenous knowledge acts as

its entry point. It uses an alternate paradigm based on Indigenous concepts, analytic

systems, and cultural frames of reference in an effort to revitalize Indigenous cultures and

restore local power. As for indigenism, it acknowledges the situation of the Fourth World,

while keeping its focus on the local. Analytical discussion addresses the colonial

oppression faced by Indigenous peoples. These discussions are grounded in space and

time. They reflect and emphasize peoples' responsibility to their kinship roles, and in

reflecting the Indigenous land ethic and spirituality, they follow the cultural beliefs of the

local Indigenous peoples.

In the interviews, anti-colonialism and indigenism were neither focussed upon nor

conceptualized. We did not focus on the political struggle against colonialism, describing

a proactive resistance, or denaturalizing diffusionism. While the people interviewed

spoke of situations that demonstrated the idea that decolonization was incomplete, it was

not overtly stated. On the other hand, the focus of the interviews was on local Indigenous

knowledge, specifically Cree knowledge of helping. As Cree people, the people

interviewed shared their Indigenous knowledge and conceptualization of Cree ways of

helping. Their frame of reference included a responsibility to kinship roles, emphasis on

connections and responsibility to the land, Cree spirituality, and following the cultural

beliefs of Cree people. This reference clearly related to Indigenism's emphasis on

following a particular way of life. There was a sense of power associated with Elders and

practitioners of Cree ways of helping, although it was not overtly stated. Overall, the

specifics of what was addressed in the interviews was not on anti-colonialism or

Indigenism, although the information shared in the interviews clearly has relevance to these concepts as outlined.

While the concepts of colonization, decolonization, anti-colonialism and Indigenism were not the focus of the interviews, they provided the foundation for this thesis. The relationship intent and the research process overall is addressed in the next section.

Mamitonánitamona [Reflections]

Recently, there was an in-depth critique by James Waldram (2004) of how Indigenous people are attempting to help one another which relates to this thesis. In this book, where he addressed how culture is theorized and operationalized in relation to Indigenous mental health, Waldram (2004) stated:

> The scholarly discussion of traditional Aboriginal healing clearly suffers from conceptual development, leading to ambiguities that challenge our ability to know much about it. The very notion of 'traditional healing' as presented in the literature appears to represent an internal tension or conflict in meaning and constitutes a 'moving target,' shifting from place to place, context to context, and from time to time. Within the healing discourse, 'healing' appeals to the glory of the past and exists today as a metaphor for uncontaminated pre-contact culture that is the property of Aboriginal peoples, a 'thing' that can be owned, practiced, and lost, a thing that can heal. But 'healing' seems to be a metaphor for socio-political change as well as personal recovery and includes both process of cultural repatriation or revival and political self-determination. Tradition looks to the past, healing looks to the future, yet they are combined in often cleaver and dramatic ways to construct Aboriginal peoples in the present as both different from, and perhaps more advanced than, non-Aboriginal peoples in the curing/healing arena. Underscoring this is a primitivist view of Aboriginal holism versus European dualism. But are we not simply replacing one dichotomy, that is mind/body, or physical/mental with another dichotomy, *dualism/holism*? Does this not appear to be the essence of primitivitist discourse, with its parallel appeal to the broader

nature/culture, savage/civilized, or Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal dichotomies? Those who argue for Aboriginal holism, especially given the empirical data on the topic, appear to be replacing one rigid construct with another, and are doing so largely as a matter of affirmation and not empiricism. (Waldram, 2004, p.299)

Waldram's points are worthy of consideration, especially since his criticism relates directly to this thesis. However, it must be recognized that they stem from a particular point of view, namely scientific empiricism. Without getting into the debate, empiricism has its own premises, some of which are not well reflective of Indigenous worldviews. As helpful as empiricism has been and can be, it is not always a fit for working in a manner supportive of Indigenous worldviews.

If Waldram had immersed himself in Indigenous cultures and worldviews, including the language, he might have been able to see the lack of emphasis on owning 'things.' He might then have been able to see the emphasis on verbs, or processes. Healing, or the helping, as described in this thesis, is not a 'thing' but a process which within an Indigenous reality includes the involvement of people. The ownership is not the "thing" of healing, but the "experience" of healing. This point relates to the worldviews and the actions which stem from them where people do not interfere with another's process. People cannot simply follow another person's outline of a process, but they must experience it themselves. Once they are able to experience it, then they will have their own experience to relate to. This point is reflected in Douglas Cardinal's experience of fasting and his discussion with the Elder who helped on his first fast:

> I told him [the Elder] of the experience and asked him what he experienced on his first fast. He said, "Oh, I experienced the same thing." I said, "Why didn't you tell me?" "Then you wouldn't have done it. By telling you, I would have robbed you

of the opportunity of learning that experience for yourself. It's yours," he said. So that's part of the culture, it's probably been done for thousands of years. (cited in McPherson and Rabb, 1993, p. 74)

On another point, I believe it is evident in the literature review that Indigenous worldviews do reflect holism. As explained in the review, Indigenous views do not necessarily negate the concept of dualism. Instead, it is recognized that dualistic counterpoints exist in relation to one another within the whole. You cannot have the shadow without having the light. Both are needed. Thus, it is not a dichotomy of Indigenous *versus* non-Indigenous; it is Indigenous *and* non-Indigenous. As explained by Lee Francis (2000), "Essentially then, both/and is about inclusion and either/or is about exclusion. It is important to understand that intrinsic to the concept of both/and is the inclusion of either/or. What this means is that for Natives both/and/either/or occur simultaneously when experiencing the world" (p. 179). Relating this point to Waldram's commentary that Indigenous peoples are just replacing one rigid construct with another, it is understood that both constructs exist, and that they are part of a larger picture than Indigenous/non-Indigenous, that being human beings, and still a larger picture, that being life on earth, and so forth. However, it is also recognized that Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people are in relationship with one another, but that this relationship has been out of balance and disharmony to the detriment of Indigenous people. Much of Indigenous ways of helping is about re-establishing the balance by re-emphasizing Indigenous people as peoples while recognizing that we hold much in common with non-Indigenous people as human beings. On a more personal note, I have not heard

Indigenous helpers speak otherwise in these interviews or in other discussions. For example, there is often talk about the people of the four directions. These people are associated with colours, including the red, yellow, black, and white people. The people in each direction are seen as a group, but that outer circle represents and emphasizes that we are all of the same cloth, that being the two-legged people.

A third point in Waldram's critique is his concern that Indigenous ways of healing is a metaphor for socio-political change. Hopefully this thesis has made it evident that helping is a cultural and political activity. From the previous quote, it appears Waldram fails to see this dynamic of helping. Instead, he continues to see helping as an apolitical, culturally void event that can be measured for particular outcomes through particular systematic analysis. Many Indigenous people do see that how we offer help speaks volumes politically and culturally. There is recognition that certain ways of helping stem from and support certain perceptions, values, beliefs, and outcomes. What many Indigenous people are calling for is consistency in the process so that how we experience the world supports and is supported by how we help one another move forward in life. There is recognition that our histories are carried within us, not as weights as the mythical portrait would suggest, but as guides on how to move forward. As Indigenous peoples, we are not trying to relive our past, but to remain consistent with our values, beliefs, and practices. This consistency is seen as giving us a firm grounding to make our decisions today for our children tomorrow. It does not mean that we do not adapt, change, and grow. It does mean we are patient, methodical, and grounded in our decisions to change

our past practices. It also means we do not change for the sake of change or simply

because a particular manner of doing things brings an immediate desired effect for this

specific action. Such change or reasoning ignores how we see the world as

interconnected, including connection to our ancestors and unborn children. Change or

reasoning from Indigenous, including Cree, perspectives considers such larger

connections as these when contemplating the best way to move forward when helping.

Thus, while Waldram's points are well taken in relation to this thesis, they are

based in an epistemology that is different from one followed for this thesis, and I would

suggest the one(s) followed by many other writers on Indigenous ways of helping. If I was

to take the research approach that is reflected in his comments, I would have emphasized

such points as the operationalization of the key concepts, distanced myself to ensure

'objectivity,' and interviewed different people than I did so as not to 'bias' the result

because of my relationship with them. I certainly would not have considered supporting

the political and cultural aims of Cree people. But, as explained in the literature review on

Indigenous knowledge, attempting to define such terms as Indigenous knowledge and

ways of helping is inappropriate since Indigenous knowledge (1) does not fit into Amer-

European conceptualization of culture; (2) is necessarily uniformed; and (3) is so much

part of the peoples, communities, and individuals that it cannot be separated from them

for development into an operational definition. Indeed, some knowledge has to be earned

and is not knowable to everyone as the learning of such knowledge requires a reciprocal

and interactive teaching relationship, such as the one Douglas Cardinal had with the Elder

who put him out to fast, or the one I hold with the people I interviewed.

Instead, the development of this thesis reflects an anti-colonial, Indigenist stance that I have taken. When I began the thesis, I was anchored in an Indigenous sense of the collective, common colonial consciousness. I, like Smith (2000) and Stewart-Harawira (2005), do not see colonialism as over. Indeed, I believe as one of the Indigenous peoples of Ininwi-ministik, Cree people are in a political struggle against the ideology and practice of colonialism. I would also suggest that part of this struggle relates to how we help Indigenous peoples. Despite Waldram's criticism, I have followed the Indigenist belief that our ways of helping must at least reflect a proactive resistance that challenges colonial frameworks or systems. Thus, my intent for this thesis was to contribute to the resistance by identifying and highlighting ways of helping that remain consistent with, and not against, Indigenous worldviews. I believe completing this thesis serves this intent. I have attempted to denaturalize the discourse of diffusionism by highlighting the Indigenous means of helping utilized by several Cree people. Thus, I have focussed on recovering Indigenous knowledge, especially since knowledge of the Cree Elders and social workers utilizing Cree ways of helping was my entry point for the research data outlined in this thesis. To access this knowledge, I relied on an Indigenous paradigm, at least the best one that I was able to develop for such academic purposes. This paradigm was based on Indigenous concepts, analytic systems, and cultural frames of reference as my effort to revitalize Indigenous cultures. In implementing this paradigm, I have remained focussed on the local, that being the Cree of Central Ininwi-ministik. While

discussion on the colonial oppression we face as Cree people was limited, I did

emphasize other key aspects of Indigenism, such as reflecting and emphasizing my

responsibility and the peoples' responsibility to our kinship roles. This was done by (1)

respecting my relationship with the Cree people interviewed first and foremost; and (2)

conducting myself and writing in a manner which is respectful to Cree people overall, and

to Cree ways of helping specifically. Finally, I maintained an Indigenous land ethic and

spirituality, and reflected the cultural beliefs of the local Indigenous peoples. This last

point was followed in how I prepared myself to start, conduct, and write about this

research. Throughout the whole process, I continuously relied on Cree ceremonial

practices as a means to support and guide me. As well, I turned to several of the people

interviewed for additional support and guidance.

While my intent was to contribute to the resistance by identifying and highlighting

ways of helping that remain consistent with, and not against, Indigenous worldviews, it

must be noted that my reflection of an Indigenist stance was effected by a limitation I

recognized through hindsight. Specifically, I was focussed on helping on an individual

level in the interviews and paid little attention to others levels that have been identified as

key to Indigenous, including Cree, peoples. These other levels include family,

community, nation, and environment (Brant, 1990; Waver, 1997; Francis, 2000; Makokis,

2001; Gil, 2002; Hart, 2002; Sue & Sue, 2003; Rice, 2005). While this limitation may

reflect my understanding of Cree ways of helping which hold the premises that the health

of the community is directly link to the health of an Individual and vice versa, an

Indigenist stance should consider these other levels in relation to determining our own ways of helping particularly since since a key aspect of Indigenous worldviews and ways of being is communitism (Weaver, 1997; Weaver, 2001). This limitation has likely influenced the research overall by overemphasizing an individualistic stance.

With these points in mind, this thesis contributes to Indigenous, particularly Cree, self-determination. It is a proactive piece of work that relies on Indigenous views and practices. It does have some limitations when looked at from an alternative perspective, namely a positivistic empiricist one. From this perspective, one could question the conceptualization of concepts, the operationalization of these concepts, the means of measuring them, and the biassed nature of the study overall. Depending on the direction of the research, I believe this study provides a foundation for future research. Such research could address these assertions. It could also address expanding on some of the general points further to uncover some details of Cree ways of helping. For example, which particular Amer-European ways of helping coincide with what is outlined here and which of these ways would contradict this foundation? What does wícihitowin look like in social work practice? Do Cree Elders and social workers agree that the model developed from the themes reflect their understanding? How can this model guide social work practice? Are these findings reflective of other Cree Elders and social workers? Are these findings reflective of Indigenous people from other nations? What are the ethics behind these themes? How do Cree ways of helping reflect or counter codes of ethics for social workers?

These reflections and questions lead to offering several messages on Indigenous

social worker research, education, and practice, and messages to Indigenous peoples

which are addressed in the next section.

Nitwánikáwina

Typically, a thesis includes several recommendations. I have purposely taken an alternate

route that feels more consistent to how I have interpreted an Indigenist paradigm, that

being the sharing of several of nitwánikáwina, my messages. This section provides these

messages on Indigenous social work research, social work education, and on social work

practice. The final messages are to Indigenous peoples generally and Indigenous helpers

specifically.

Message on Indigenous Social Work Research

There is much research being done on Indigenous people. Indeed, there are many

comments such as "Indigenous people are being researched to death." It seems to me that

the concerns lie not so much in the research being done, but in how it is carried out and

the such research is used or not used. Indigenous peoples do not often see research as

objective. It has been seen as a tool used against us (Smith, 1999). There have been

efforts by Indigenous peoples to gain greater control over research conducted on us.

These efforts have led us to the present stage outlined by Steinhauer (cited in Wilson,

2003) where we are beginning to articulate our own research paradigms, approaches to

research, and methods of data collection in ways that respect our Indigenous worldviews and practices. The Indigenous paradigm presented here is such an effort. I believe other examples of such paradigms need to be developed and applied. It is through research paradigms that are based in our worldviews and cultures that we are best prepared to bring indigenism to the academic realm since academia places emphasis on research.

I do believe, however, that we need to critique these paradigms, particularly from an Indigenist perspective. We need to consider how well any particular paradigm reflects Indigenist worldviews and practices. For example, in talking with some fluent Cree speakers, I have not been able to find a comparable term for epistemology, not to say that it does not exist. My point is that if we are to ideally represent Indigenous worldviews and practices, the primary concepts, at least, should stem from the languages. So, instead of basing a paradigm in concepts such as epistemology and finding the translation, we should find the key terms in Indigenous languages that are about how we understand knowledge, how we come to know, how we know what we know is true, and how we put what we know into action, and then translate these terms into the language of the learner, if necessary. In this way, we would develop Indigenously based paradigms.

Not only do we need to develop further Indigenous research paradigms, we need to apply them to further study our own ways to helping. These ways are being implemented through Canada, reflecting the commonalities and differences Indigenous peoples hold. While some of them have been shared (for examples, see Absolon, 1993; Duran & Duran, 1995; Hart, 2002; Morrisseau, 1998; Nabigon, 2006), there are many

more theories and practices that could be examined and shared. Those that are available

need to be applied and critiqued further to confirm their appropriateness for our people.

All of this is not to say that non-Indigenous paradigms, methods, theories, and

practices are irrelevant. Indeed, there are some very useful studies that have supported

Indigenous peoples, such as Chandler's and Lalond's (1998) population health study on

cultural continuity and youth suicide. However, I must emphasize that there is a need for

an Indigenist stance in social work research. This need is pointedly reflected by Leanne

Simpson (2004):

> Removing Indigenous knowledge from a political sphere only reinforces the
> denial of the holocaust of the Americas and trains a generation of scientists to see
> contemporary Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous knowledge as separate from our
> colonial past, as an untapped contemporary resource for their own exploitation
> and use. This serves as a reminder that it is not enough to *recover* certain aspects
> of Indigenous knowledge systems that are palatable to the players in the colonial
> project. We must be strategic about *how* we recover and where we focus our
> efforts in order to ensure that the foundations of the system are protected and the
> inherently Indigenous processes for the continuation of Indigenous knowledge are
> maintained. The most vulnerable and fragile components are often those that are
> subversive in nature and that are a direct threat to those who maintain their power
> as beneficiaries of the colonial system. (Simpson, 2004, pp. 376-377)

Message on Social Work Education

In his writing of more than 25 years ago, James Midgley (1981) outlined the

inappropriateness and cultural irrelevance of social work education in the Third World.

He identified that the myth of social work's cross-universality can no longer have

credence and that attempts to apply the profession's theories and principles to non-

western societies will demonstrate their unworkability. He went on to state:

283

> Because of marked cultural differences, these objectives of western social work are unattainable in the Third World; people in developing countries do not share in the American Dream or the liberals' belief in rationality or the individualism which is so prized in the West. Nor are the techniques used by social workers in the West relevant when dealing with clients who are different culturally...The application of social work's culturally specific principles to non-western societies is fraught with practical difficulties. (p. 98)

I believe that despite Midgley's erroneous identification of Amer-European societies as encompassing the west, since a significant part of the Fourth World is in the west, his discussion well applies to Indigenous nations, including that of the Cree. Social work education has contributed to the oppression of Indigenous peoples, including Cree people. It has supported oppression by its continued heavy reliance on non-Indigenous social work when teaching up-and-coming social workers, especially when the likelihood is that they will be working with Indigenous peoples. Through the limited inclusion, if not neglect, of Indigenous worldviews, beliefs, values, and practices in the education of students, the social work profession and, indeed, academics continue to support, albeit indirectly and unconsciously, the mythical portrait (Memmi, 1965).

In its relation to social work, the mythical portrait of Indigenous ways of helping is one of irrelevance and ineffectiveness since the focus is not on the contribution we have made and are making, but is on the issues that we as Indigenous peoples are facing. The means to address these issues are those which stem from the repertoire of Amer-European ways of helping, while Indigenous contributions are often neglected or ignored. Many times I have heard of the "challenges" instructors face in finding material which relates to Indigenous people. Social work students are often left with the unspoken belief

that Amer-European ways are universally applicable. If there are questions on the

applicability of these ways, concepts such as "cultural sensitivity" and "culturally

appropriate" are introduced to present the idea that Amer-European ways are still the

roots for helping all people and that these ways only have be tinkered with a bit so as not

to offend the Indigenous person(s) seeking help. Some Indigenous social work students,

in particular, are left wondering about their own peoples' sense of worth since they are

among the peoples neglected. Other Indigenous students accept holding Amer-European

ways of helping as "the" answers to the issues we face without realizing that they are

potentially contributing to the subjugation of their own people and their worldviews and

ways of being.

On the other hand, there have been efforts to support Indigenous peoples and our

ways of helping. First Nations University of Canada, formally Saskatchewan Indian

Federated College, and Wilfrid Laurier University both have a Master program on

Indigenous social work while a Bachelor program is offered through First Nations

University of Canada and Laurentian University's Native Human Services Program.

Many other institutions in Canada provide a concentrated effort to address Indigenous

peoples and ways of helping, such as University of Victoria's First Nations Social Work

Specialization. Programs such as these make a conscious effort to not only include the

challenges Indigenous peoples are facing, but to include Indigenous peoples' views and

practices as a central component to their curriculum.

These points remind me that things are rarely black and white, meaning that there

are times when we may be acting with the peoples' best interests at heart, but our actions

create results that are far from our intent. As such, we need to be cognizant of the direct

and indirect influences of our perspectives and practices that we are teaching and *not*

teaching. I believe that as social work academics we have an obligation to access and

provide space for resources that will act to support Indigenous worldviews and practices

so that they positively address the oppression we face as Indigenous people. There are

many resources in the Indigenous community generally' and Cree community specifically

which social work education programs and instructors can tap into for support, including

Elders such as those I have interviewed. This effort will require significant flexibility by

institutions and academics so the required space for these views is made available. It

could mean the inclusion of more programs focussed on Indigenous social work, such as

the ones at Laurentian University, First Nations University of Canada, or Wilfrid Laurier

University; it could mean the development of specialization in current programs, such as

the one at University of Victoria; it at least means the opportunity for students to access

more courses focussed on/or addressing Indigenous ways of helping. More importantly, it

requires respect of Indigenous ways of helping that are primarily based in Indigenous

worldviews. In other words, social work education cannot be satisfied with culturally

sensitive or culturally appropriate practices: It is high time we actively support and

include Indigenous based helping practices. Indeed an Indigenist stance requires it.

Message on Social Work Practice

James Midgley made another comment in 1981 that continues to be relevant today:

> While many descriptions of social work theory and practice, such as the one given in this chapter, equate genericism with social work, it should also be recognized that the theoretical unification of different norms of social work practice through the generic principles is a comparatively recent development which is neither accepted universally nor always implemented, But, in spite of this, the generic approach has been adopted widely. Also, the generic principles reflect the profession's humanitarian and Christian heritage and demonstrates the extent to which social work embodies specific cultural values. Although it has been claimed that these values are applicable universally, social work's philosophical and ethical ideas are rooted firmly in the profession's experience of nineteenth century, European and North American philanthropy. (p. 16)

On the opposite side of the coin, through my years of being educated in social work, from my Bachelor degree in the mid-eighties, to the completion of my courses in the doctoral program a few years ago, I have never been taught about Cree, or any other Indigenous nations, ways of helping. There have been some generic Indigenous ideas presented, but usually from a perspective outside of that of Indigenous peoples. As a result, nearly all of my learning about Indigenous ways of helping has come from my own efforts. While some curriculum on Indigenous ways of helping has been included in many social work programs in the past two decades, it appears to me that there is much room for improvement. I believe that this thesis demonstrates that there are alternative ways of understanding how we should be helping, and alternative ways to implement these understandings. There will be challenges in incorporating ways of helping that stem from Indigenous worldviews, values, beliefs, and practices that do not easily fit with the worldviews, values, beliefs, and practices dominating social work today. For example,

how do we support the concept of respectful individualism when the person we are

working with is an involuntary client required to meet an agency's policies. These areas

of challenges shows that there is further research needed to support practice.

In addition to these challenges, social work as a profession needs to consider how

it will make room for helping practices that are not rooted in social work's historical

development. This is not to say that Indigenous helping practices should necessarily

become part of the repertoire of all social workers. I do suggest that social workers need

to be willing to consider accommodating, if not changing, how they practice so that their

work coincides with and/or supports individuals who can work from an Indigenous base.

Such accommodation or change is rooted in acting in the best interest of the people we

serve. I would also suggest that best interest means working in a way that is the most

supportive of the people and their worldviews, values, beliefs, practices and experiences.

Message to Ininiwak

As Indigenous peoples we come from societies with deep histories, full cultures, and

extensive knowledge. Our ways are more than just ceremonies and anti-colonial thought.

They are expressions of who we are. When our ways are ignored and/or bypassed,

whether by others or by us, the messages given include the ideas that all who we are is not

worthy of such attention, that our ways are not as effective, and/or that we only want what

other peoples have to offer. We cannot afford to buy into the mythical portrait (Memmi,

1965) and continue the internalized oppression (Daes, 2000; Mullaly, 2002). We need to

reach into our own views, beliefs, values, and practices for answers to the challenges we

are facing. Indigenism is about this reach. It is also about taking action which is based on

this reach. In taking an Indigenist stance as a people, we cannot allow professions such as

social work to dictate what will work best for us. It requires us to be vigilant in our efforts

to stand up as a peoples. It requires us to entrench our connections to one another, share

our understanding of the teachings passed down to us, and determine how we will

implement them today for the sake of our children, and our children's children.

This does not mean that we should ignore all alternate views, beliefs, values, and

practices. It does mean, however, that we will determine which of these alternatives we

will accept. I would suggest that we incorporate those which support us as Cree people, as

well as ones which confront the oppression we face.

Message to Indigenous Helpers

There is a difficult balance present in an Indigenist stance. On one hand, we are to stand

up against colonialism by making it overtly known and directly confronting it. This often

means we take on a confrontational stance such as the ones included in Alfred's (2006)

discussions. Such a stance means we include a focus on the negativity we face as

Indigenous peoples. On the other hand, Indigenism is based on the worldviews and

cultures of Indigenous peoples. In the central area of Ininiwi-Ministik, there is emphasis

on working together, accepting and supporting others, and non-confrontation. It is

orientated to focussing on the positives in life. As stated by Elder Joe Cardinal (cited in

Meili, 1991) if we focus on the positives, the negatives will die a natural death.

As Indigenous helpers, we need to consider the challenge that these two perspectives bring. I believe we need to reflect on how our peoples meet challenges brought to our nations, such as how teaching the okicitak [simplistically defined as warriors] may help us. We need to consistently take the time to reflect on our action to see how we are managing this balance. Most importantly, we need to maintain our connections with Elders for guidance on how we are to keep moving forward.

Without reflecting on this balance, we can fall to what Memmi (1965) has called the answer of revolt, where we are simply reacting against the colonial oppression we face with counterstrikes. Such reactions have no foundation other than oppression itself. As such, the colonial reality will continue to dictate who we are as a peoples. We can also fall into a position where, as my dear friend Lionel Mason has stated, "we are simply making our misery more comfortable." We may be able to continue living our teachings and values to some degree, but if we don't address colonial oppression, we will not be directing our lives as a peoples. We will be acquiescing our demise. This surely would be a loss not for ourselves and other peoples, but for our children and our children's children.

I believe one of our roles as Indigenous social workers is to maintain this balance while we push for space in the institutions affecting our people, including the profession of social work. This requires us to develop and implement ways of practice and policy analysis that are consistent with us. Such consistency will not only model the importance

of who we are to those we serve, it will also serve to validate their and our experiences as

Indigenous peoples.

References

Absalon, K. (1993, June) *Healing as practice: Teachings from the Medicine Wheel*. A

commissioned paper for the WUNSKA network. Canadian Association of

Schools of Social Work.

Acoose, J. (1995). *Iskwewak–Kah' ki yaw ni wahkomakanak: Neither princess nor easy

squaw*. Toronto: Women's Press.

Ahenakew, A. (1999). Âh-âyîtaw isi ê-kî-kiskêyihtahkik maskihkiy – They knew both

sides of medicine : Cree tales of curing and cursing (H. C. Wolfart & F.

Ahenakew ed. & Trans.). Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Alfred, T. (1999). *Peace, power, righteousness: An Indigenous manifesto*. Toronto:

Oxford University Press.

Alfred, T. (2005). *Wasáse: Indigenous pathways of action and freedom*. Peterborough:

Broadview Press.

Alfred, T., & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgence against contemporary

colonialism. *Government and Opposition, 40*(40), 597-614.

Anderson, K. (2000). *A recognition of being: Reconstructing Native womenhood.*

Toronto: Second Story Press.

Angel, M. (2002). *Preserving the sacred: Historical perspectives on the Ojibway

nidewiwin*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2000). *Post-colonial studies: The key concepts.*

New York: Routledge.

Assembly of First Nations (1994). *Breaking the silence*. Ottawa: Assembly of First

Nations, First Nations Health Commission.

Baskin, C. (2003). Structural social work as seen from an Aboriginal perspective. In (W.

Shera, Ed.) *Emerging perspectives on anti-oppressive practice* (65-79). Toronto:

Canadian Scholars' Press.

Battiste, M. (1998). Enabling the autumn seed: Towards a decolonized approach to

knowledge, language, and education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education,*

22(1), 16-27.

Battiste, M., & Henderson, J. S. Y. (2000). *Protecting Indigenous knowledge and*

heritage. Saskatoon: Purich.

Benton-Banai, E. (1988). *The mishomis book: The voice of the Ojibway*. Saint Paul, MN:

Red School House.

Bhabha, H. K. (1995). Signs taken for wonders. In B. Ashcroft, G. Griffith, & H. Tiffin

(Eds.) *The post-colonial studies reader* (pp. 29-35). New York: Routledge.

(Original work published in 1985.)

Bishop, B.J., Higgins, D., Casella, F., & Contos, N. (2002). Reflections on practice:

Ethics, race, and worldviews. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(6), 611-621.

Black Elk, J., & Brown, J. E. (1981). *The sacred pipe*. New York: Peguin.

Blaut, J. M. (1993). *The colonizer's model of the world: Geographical diffusionism and*

eurocentric history. New York: The Guilford Press.

Boehmer, E. (1995). *Colonial and postcolonial literature: Migrant metaphors*. New

York: Oxford University Press.

Brant, C. (1990). Native ethics and rules of behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry,*

35(6), 534-539.

Brass, S. I. (2000). *Put on the kettle: Study on identifying theoretical premises of*

Muskego and Asini Cree counselling methods. Unpublished Master's thesis,

University of Saskatchewan.

Brightman, R. (2002) *Grateful prey: Rock Cree human-animal relationships.* Regina:

Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina.

Brown, R. J. (1997). *A description and analysis of sacrificial stall dancing: As practiced*

by the Plains Cree and Saulteaux of the Pasqua Reserve, Saskatchewan in their

contemporary rain dance ceremonies. An unpublished Master's thesis, University

of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

Bruyere, G. (2001). Making circles: Renewing First Nations ways of helping. In L.

Dominelli, W. Lorenz, & H. Soydan (Eds.), *Beyond racial divides: Ethnicities in*

social work practice. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Bucko, R. (1999). *The Lakota ritual of the sweat lodge: History and contemporary*

practice. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska.

Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountain: An ecology of Indigenous education.* Durango,

CO: Kivaki Press.

Cajete, G. (1999). *Igniting the sparkle: An Indigenous science education model.* Durango,

CO: Kivaki Press.

Cajete, G. (2000). *Native Science: Nature laws of interdependence*. Santa Fe: Clear Light
Publishers.

Canadian Association of Social Workers. (1993). The social work profession and
Aboriginal Peoples: CASW presentation to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal
Peoples. *The Social Worker, 62*(4), 158.

Canadian Plains Research Center (1979). *Proceedings of the Plains Cree Conference held
in Fort QuAppelle, October, 24, 25 and 26, 1975.* Regina: University of Regina.

Cardinal, H. (1969). *The unjust society: The tragedy of Canada's Indians.* Edmonton: M.
G. Hurtig.

Cardinal, H., & Hilderbrandt, W. (2000). *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan: Our dream is
that our peoples will one day be clearly recognized as nations.* Calgary:
University of Calgary Press.

Castellano, M. B. (2000). Updating Aboriginal traditions of knowledge. In G. J. S. Dei,
B. L. Hall, & D. G. Rosenburg (Eds.), *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts.*
Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Chandler, M. & Lalond, C. (1998). Cultural continuity as a hedge against suicide in
Canada's First Nations. *Transcultural Psychiatry Review, 35*(2), p. 191-219.

Churchill, W. (2003a). A breach of trust. *Acts of rebellion: The Ward Churchill reader*
(pp. 111-140). New York: Routledge.

Churchill, W. (2003b). The earth is our mother. *Acts of rebellion: The Ward Churchill
reader* (pp. 66-110). New York: Routledge.

Churchill, W (2003c). Indians 'r' us: Reflections on the men's movement. In *Acts of rebellion: The Ward Churchill reader* (pp. 223-244). New York: Routledge.

Churchill, W. (2003d). I am indigenist: Notes on the ideology of the Fourth World. In *Acts of rebellion: The Ward Churchill reader* (pp. 275-299). New York: Routledge.

Churchill, W. (2004). *Kill the Indian, save the man: The genocidal impact of American Indian residential schools.* San Francisco: City Lights Books.

Clark, M. E. (1998). Human nature: What we need to know about ourselves in the twenty-first century. *Zygote, 33*(4), 645-659.

Colorado, P. (1988). Bridging Native and Western science. *Convergence, XXI*(2/3), 49-67.

Corntassel, J. J. (2003). Who is Indigenous? 'Peoplehood' and ethnonationalist approaches to rearticulating Indigenous identity. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, 9*(1), 75-100.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design.* Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage Publications.

Council of Elders (1988, January). *The tipi.* Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre.

Couture, J. E. (1996). The role of Native Elders: Emergent issues. In D. A. Long, & O. P. Dickason (Eds.), *Visions of the heart: Canadian Aboriginal issues* (pp. 41-56). Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Daes, E. I. (2000). Prologue: The experience of colonization around the world. In M.

Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 3-8). Vancouver: UBC

Press.

Dei, G. J. S. (2000). Rethinking the role of Indigenous knowledges in the academy.

International Journal of Inclusive Education, 4(2), 111-132.

De La Torre, J. (2004). In the trenches: A critical look at the isolation of American Indian

political practices in the nonempirical social science of political science. In D. A.

Mihesuah, & A. C. Wilson (Eds.), *Indigenizing the academy: Transforming*

scholarship and transforming communities (pp. 174-190). Lincoln: University of

Nebraska Press.

Deloria, V. Jr., & Wildcat, D. R. (2001). *Power and place: Indian education in America.*

Golden CO: Fulcrum Resources.

Diller, J. V. (1999). Working with Native American clients: An interview with Jack

Lawson. *Cultural diversity: A primer for the human services.* Toronto:

Brooks/Cole.

Dion, J. F. (1979). *My tribe the Crees.* Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

Douquette, J. (1987). (F. Ahenakew Ed. & Tran.), *Wâkahikaniwiyiniw-âcimowina:*

Stories of the House People. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Dretske, F. (1999). Perception. In R. Audi (Ed.), *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy*

(2nd. ed., pp. 654-658). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Duran, E., & Duran, B. (1995). *Native American postcolonial psychology.* Albany: State

University of New York Press.

Duran, B., & Duran, E. (2000). Applied postcolonial clinical and research strategies. In M

Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 86-100). Vancouver:

UBC Press.

During, S. (1995). Postmodernism or postcolonialism today. In B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths,

& H. Tiffin (Eds.), *The post-colonial studies reader* (pp.125-129). New York:

Routledge. (Original work published in 1987).

Durst, D. (2000). Cultural values. *Social Service issues affecting Aboriginal peoples* (pp.

61-77).Regina: Social Policy Research Unit, University of Regina.

Dylan, A. (2003). Talking circles: A traditional form of group work. In N. Sullivan, E. S.

Mesbur, N. Lang, D. Goodman, & L. Mitchell (Eds.), *Social work with groups:*

Social justice through personal, community, and societal change (pp. 119-133).

New York: Haworth Press.

Enç, B. (1999). Paradigm. In R. Audi (Gen. Ed.), *The Cambridge dictionary of*

philosophy (2nd ed., pp. 641-642). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ermine, W. (1995). Aboriginal epistemology. In M. Battiste, & J. Barman (Eds.), *First*

Nations education in Canada (pp. 101-112). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Falk, R. (2001). Empowering inquiry: Our debt to Edward W. Said. In N. Aruri, & M. A.

Shurayadi (Eds.), *Revising culture reinventing peace* (pp. x-xvi). New York:

Olive Branch Press.

Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth.* New York: Grove Press.

Fanon, F. (1967). *White skin, black masks.* New York: Grove Press. (Original work

published 1952.)

Ferrara, N. (1999). *Emotional expression among Cree Indians*. Philadelphia: Jessica

Kingsley Publishers.

Fitznor, L. (1998). The circle of life. Affirming Aboriginal philosophies in everyday life.

In D. C. McCance (Ed.), *Life ethics in world religions* (pp.21-39). Atlanta:

Scholars Press.

Foley, D. (2003). Indigenous epistemology and Indigenous standpoint theory. *Social

Alternatives, 22*(1), 44-52.

France, H. (1997). First Nations: Helping and learning in the Aboriginal community.

Guidance and Counseling, 12(2), 3-8.

Francis, L. (2000). The shadow knows: A Native philosophical perspective on the light

and dark side of the soul. *Ayaangwaamizin: The International Journal of

Indigenous Philosophy, 21(2), 171-185.*

Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (20th aniv. ed.). New York: The Continuum

Publishing Company. (Original work published 1970.)

Frideres, J. S., (2001). *Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Contemporary conflicts* (6th ed).

Toronto: Prentice Hall.

Gage, S. (1991). *Colonialism in the Americas: A critical look.* Victoria: Victoria

International Development Education Association.

Gandhi, L. (1998). *Postcolonial theory: A critical introduction.* New York, NY:

Columbia University Press.

Garrett, M. T. (2003). Counseling Native Americans. In N. A. Vace, S. B. DeVaney, J,

M. Brendel (Eds.), *Counseling multicultural and diverse populations: Strategies*

for practitioners (4th ed.; pp. 27-54). New York: Brunner Routledge.

Garroutte, E. M. (2003). *Real Indians: Identity and the survival of Native America.*

Berkeley: University of California Press.

George, J. M. (1999). Indigenous knowledge as a component of the school curriculum. In

L. M. Semali, & J.L. Kincheloe (Eds.), *What is Indigenous knowledge: Voices*

from the academy (pp. 79-94). New York: Falmer Press.

Gill, J. H. (2002). *Native American worldviews: An introduction.* New York: Humanity

Press.

Graham, T. C. (2002). Using reason for living to connect to American Indian healing

traditions. *Journal of sociology and social welfare, XXIX*(1), 55-75.

Gross, L. W. (2003). Cultural sovereignty and Native American hermeneutics in the

interpretation of the sacred stories of the Anishinaabe. *Wicazo Sa Review, 18*(3),

127-134.

Guzmán, T. L. D. (2005). Diacuí Killed Iracema': Indigenism, nationalism and the

struggle for Brazilianness. *Bulletin of Latin American Research, 24*(1), 92-122.

Hains, S. (2001). An emerging voice: *A study using traditional Aboriginal research*

methods to better understand why Native students drop out of school. An

unpublished doctoral dissertation, Saybrook Graduate School and Research

Centre, San Francisco.

Hallowell, A. I. (1975). Ojibway ontology, behavior, and world view. In D. Tedlock & B.

Tedlock (Eds.), *Teachings from the American earth: Indian religion and*

philosophy (pp. 141-178). New York: Liveright.

Hart, M. A. (1999). Seeking mino-pimatasiwin (the good life): An Aboriginal approach to

social work practice. *Native Social Work Journal / Nishinaabe Kinoomaadwin*

Naadmaadwin, 2(1), 91-112.

Hart, M. A. (2002). *Seeking mino-pimatisiwin: An Aboriginal approach to helping.*

Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Hart, M. (2003). Am I a modern day missionary? Reflections of a Cree social worker.

Native Social Work Journal/Nishnaabe Kinoomaadwin Naadmaadwin, 5, 299-

309.

Hart, M. A. (2006). An Aboriginal approach to social work practice. In T. Heinonen, & L.

Spearman's, *Social work practice: Problem solving and beyond* (pp. 235-260).

Toronto: Nelson.

Hatter, D. Y., & Ottens, A. J. (1998). Afrocentric world view and black students'

adjustment to a predominantly white university: Does worldview matter? *College*

Students Journal, 32(3), 472-481.

Henderson, J. S. Y. (2000a). Challenges of respecting Indigenous world views in

Eurocentric education. In R. Neil (Ed.), *Voice of the drum: Indigenous education*

and culture (pp. 59-80). Brandon, MB.: Kingfisher Publication.

Henderson, J. S. Y. (2000b). *Ayukpachi*: Empowering Aboriginal thought. In M. Battiste

(ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 248-278). Vancouver: UBC

Press.

Henderson, J. S. Y. (2000c). The context of the state of nature. In M. Battiste (ed.),

Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision (pp. 11-18). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Hermes, M. (1998). Research method as a situated response: Towards a First Nations'

methodology. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 11*(1), 155-168.

Holliday, A. (2002). *Doing and writing qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Publications.

Ivey, A. E., D'Andrea, M., Bradford Ivey, M., Simek-Morgan, L. (2002). *Theories of*

counseling and psychotherapy: A multicultural perspective (5ᵗʰ ed.). Toronto:

Allyn and Bacon.

Jamies*Guerrero, M. A. (2003). "Patriarchal colonialism" and indigenism: Implications

for Native feminist spirituality and Native womanism. *Hypatia, 18*(2), 58-69.

Johnson, S. (1994). *The book of Elders: The life stories and wisdom of great American*

Indians. New York: HarpersCollins Publishers.

Johnston, B. (1989). *Ojibway ceremonies.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Johnston, B. (1990). *Ojibway heritage: The ceremonies, rituals, songs, dances, prayers*

and legends of the Ojibway. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Johnston, P. (1983). *Native children and the child welfare system.* Toronto: Canadian

Council on Social Development in association with James Lorimer & Company.

Junker, M. (2003). A Native American view of the "mind" as seen in the lexicon of

cognition in East Cree. *Cognitive Linguistics, 14*(2/3), 167-194.

Kâ-Nîpitêhtêw, J. (1998). *ana kâ-pimwêwêhahk okakêskihkêmowina: The counselling speeches of Jim Kâ-Nîpitêhtêw*, F. Ahenakew & H. C. Wolfart (Eds. & Trans.). Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Kawageley, O. (2001). Tradition and education: The world made seamless again. In J. Keith (Ed.), *Science and Native American communities*, (pp. 51-56). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Kellough, G. (1980). From colonialism to economic imperialism: The experience of the Canadian Indian. In J. Harp, & J. Hofley (Eds.), *Structural inequality in Canada*, (pp. 343-377). Scarborough, Canada: Prentice Hall.

Kirmayer, L. J., Brass, G. M., & Tait, C. L. (2000). The mental health of Aboriginal peoples: Transformations of identity and community [Electronic version]. *Psychiatry. 45*(7), 607-616.

Kovach, M. (2005).Emerging from the margins: Indigenous methodologies. In L. Brown, & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Critical, Indigenous, & anti-oppressive approaches* (pp. 19-36). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Kuhn, T. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kvale S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Laenui, P. (2000). Processes of decolonization. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming*

Indigenous voice and vision (pp. 150-160). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Lane, P., Jr, Bopp, M., Bopp, J., & Norris, J. (2002). *Mapping the healing journey: The final report of a nation research project on healing in Canadian Aboriginal communities*. Report submitted to the Solicitor General Canada and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Ottawa, ON., Report no. APC 21 CA.

Lee, C. C., & Armstrong, K. L. (1995). Indigenous models of mental health interventions: Lessons from traditional healers. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casa, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 441-456). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lemos, N. M. (2001). Value theory. In G. A. (Gen. Ed.), *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy* (2nd ed., pp. 273-278). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lightning, W. A. (1993). Compassionate mind: Implications of a text written by Elder Louis Sunchild. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 20*(1), 215-253.

Little Bear, L. (1998). Aboriginal relations to the land and resources. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, K. Kinew, & E. Maloney (Eds.), *Sacred lands: Aboriginal world views, claims, and conflicts* (pp. 15-20).Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta.

Little Bear, L. (2000). Jagged worldviews collide. In M. Battiste (Ed.) *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp.77-85). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Long, D. A., & Fox, T. (1996). Circles of healing: Illness, healing, and health among Aboriginal people in Canada. In D. A. Long, & O. P. Dickason (Eds.), *Visions of*

the heart: Canadian Aboriginal issues (pp. 239-269). Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Lynes, D. A. (2002). Cultural pain vs. political gain: Aboriginal sovereignty in the context of decolonization. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 25*(6), 1043-1065.

Mahalik, J. R., Worthington, R. L., & Crump, S. (1999). Influences of racial//ethnic membership and "therapist culture" on therapists' worldview. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 27*(1), 2-18.

Mandelbaum, D. G. (1979). *The Plains Cree: An ethnographic, historical, and comparative study.* Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina.

Manuel, G., & Posluns, M. (1974). *The fourth world: An Indian reality.* New York: The Free Press.

Martin, K. (2001, September 18-20). Ways of knowing, ways of being, and ways of doing: Developing a theoretical framework and method for Indigenous re-search and Indigenist research. Paper presented at the 2001 Major AIATSIS Conference entitled The Power of Knowledge, the Resonance of Tradition–Indigenous Studies. Retrieved February 27, 2003 from http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/conf2001/conference.htm.

Martínez , D. (2004). The soul of the Indian: Lakota philosophy and the vision quest. *Wicazo Sa Review, 19* (3), 79-104).

Makokis, L. (2001), *Teachings from Cree Elders*: A grounded theory study of Indigenous

leadership. An unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA. (UMI No. 3007293).

Maurial, M. (1999). Indigenous knowledge and schooling: A continuum between conflict and dialogue. In L. M. Semali, & J.L. Kincheloe (Eds.), *What is Indigenous knowledge: Voices from the academy* (pp. 59-77). New York: Falmer Press.

Mawhiney, A. M. (1995). The First Nations in Canada. In Turner, J. J., & Turner F. J. (Eds.), *Canadian Social Welfare* (3rd. ed., pp.213-230). Scarborough, ON: Allyn & Bacon.

May, T. (1997). *Social research: Issues, methods and process* (2nd ed.). Bristol, PA: Open University Press.

McKenzie, B., & Morrisette, V. (2003). Social work practice with Canadians of Aboriginal background: Guidelines for respectful social work. In A. Al-Krenawi & J. R. Graham (Eds.), *Multicultural social work in Canada: Working with diverse ethno-racial communities* (pp. 251-282). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

McLeod, J. (2000). *Beginning postcolonialism.* New York: Palgrave.

McPherson, D. H., & Rabb, D. (1993). *Indians from the inside: A study in ethno-metaphysics.* Thunder Bay: Lakehead University Centre for Northern Studies.

Meili, D (1991). *Those who know: Profiles of Aberta's Native Elders.* Edmonton: Newest Publishers.

Memmi, A. (1965). *The colonizer and the colonized.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Memmi, A (1969). *Dominated man: Notes towards a portrait.* New York: Orion Press.

Memmi, A. (2006). *Decolonization and the decolonized.* Minneapolis: University of

Minnesota Press.

Midgley, J. (1981). *Professional imperialism.* London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse.* New York: Routledge.

Mind, E. (1997). *Kwayask ê-kî-pê-kiskinowâpahtihicik: Their example showed me the

way.* F. Ahenakew & H. C. Wolfart (Eds. & Trans.). Edmonton: University of

Alberta Press.

Monture-Angus, P. A. (1996). Lessons in decolonization: Aboriginal overrepresentation

in Canadian criminal justice. In D. A. Long, & O. P. Dickason (eds.), *Vision of the

heart: Canadian Aboriginal issues* (pp. 335-354). Toronto: Harcourt Brace &

Company Canada.

Moser, P. (1999). Epistemology. In R. Audi (Ed.), *The Cambridge dictionary of

philosophy* (2nd. ed., pp. 273-278). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Morrisseau, C. (1998). *Into the daylight: A wholistic approach to healing. Toronto:

University of Toronto Press.*

Morrissette, V., McKenzie, B., & Morrissette, L. (1993). Towards an Aboriginal model of

social work practice. *Canadian Social Work Review, 10*(1), 91-108.

Mullaly, B. (2002). *Challenging oppression: A critical social work approach.* Don Mills,

ON: Oxford University Press.

Mwadime, R. K. (1999). Indigenous knowledge systems for an alternative culture in

science: The role of nutritionists in Africa. In L. M. Semali, & J. L. Kincheloe

(Eds.), *What is Indigenous knowledge: Voices from the academy* (pp. 243-267).

New York: Falmer Press.

Nabigon, H., & Mawhiney, A. M. (1996). Aboriginal theory: A Cree medicine wheel

guide for healing First Nations. In F. J. Turner (ed.), *Social work treatment:*

Interlocking theoretical approaches (18-38). New York: The Free Press.

Nandy, A. (1983). *The intimate enemy: Loss and recovery of self under colonialism.*

Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Nandy, A. (2004). Culture, voice and development: A primer for the unsuspecting.

Bonfire of Creeds: The essential Ashis Nandy (pp.304-323). Toronto: Oxford

University Press.

Nicholi, A. M. (2004). Definition and significance of a worldview. In A. M. Josephson, &

J. R. Peteet (Eds.), *Handbook of spirituality and worldview in clinical practice*

(pp. 3-12). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing.

Niezen, R. (2003). *The origins of indigenism: Human rights and the politics of identity.*

Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nimmagadda, J., & Cowger, C. D. (1999). Cross-cultural practice: Social worker

ingenuity in the indigenization of practice knowledge. *International Social Work,*

42(3), 261-276.

Olsen, M. E., Lodwick, D. G., & Dunlap, R. E. (1992). *Viewing the world ecologically.*

San Francisco: Westview Press.

Padgett, D. K. (1998). *Qualitative methods in social work research: Challenges and rewards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Parry, B. (1995). Problems of current theories in colonial discourse. In B. Ashcroft, G. Griffith, & H. Tiffin (Eds.), *The post-colonial studies reader* (pp. 36-44). New York: Routledge. (Original work published in 1987.)

Pettipas, K. (1994). *Severing the ties that bind: Government repression of Indigneous religious ceremonies on the prairies*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Pewewardy, C. (2005). Ideology, power, and the miseducation of Indigenous Peoples in the United States. In W. A. Wilson, and M. Yellow Bird (eds.), *For Indigenous eyes only: A decolonization handbook* (pp. 139-156). Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Pichette, E. F., Garrett, M. T., Kosciulek, J.F., & Rosenthal, D. A. (1999). Cultural identification of American Indians and it's [*sic*] impact on rehabilitation services. *Journal of rehabilitation, 3*, 3-10.

Poupart, L. M. (2003). The familar face of genocide: Internalized oppression among American Indians. *Hypatia, 18*(2), 86-100.

Pratt, M. L. (2004). The anti-colonial past. *Modern Language Quarterly, 65*(3), 443-456.

Preston, R. J. (2002). *Cree narrative* (2nd ed.). Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Redfield, R. (1962). The primitive world view. In M. P. Redfield (Ed.), *Human nature*

and the study of society: The papers of Robert Redfield (pp. 269-280). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rheault, D. (1999). *Anishinaabe mino-bimaadiziwin: The way of a good life.* Peterborough: Debwewin Press.

Rice, B. (2005). *Seeing the world with Aboriginal eyes: A four dimensional perspective on human and non-human values, cultures and relationships on Turtle Island.* Winnipeg: Aboriginal Issues Press.

Rigney, L. (1999). Internationalization of an Indigenous anticolonial cultural critique of research methodologies: A guide to Indigenous research methodology and its principles. *Wicazo Sa Review, 14*(2), 109-121.

Ryser, R. C. (1995). *The legacy of Grand Chief George Manuel.* Center for World Indigenous Studies. Retrieved on October 25, 2004, from http://www.cwis.org/manuel.html.

Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism.* Toronto: Random House of Canada.

Said, E. W. (1994). *Culture and Imperialism.* Toronto: Random House of Canada.

St. Pierre, M., & Long Soldier, T. (1995). *Walking in the sacred manner: Healers, dreamers, and pipe carriers–medicine women of the plains.* Toronto: Simon & Schuster.

Schelbert, L. (2003). Pathways of human understanding: An inquiry into western and North American Indian worldview structures. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 27*(1), 61-75.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in*

education and the social sciences (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers' College Press.

Simpson, L. (2000). Anishinaabe ways of knowing. In J. Oakes, R. Riew, S. Koolage, L.

Simpson, & N. Schuster (Eds.), *Aboriginal health, identity and resources.*

Winnipeg: Native Studies Press.

Simpson, L. R. (2004). Anticolonial strategies for the recovery and maintenance of

Indigneous knowledge. *American Indian Quarterly, 28*(3 & 4), 373-384.

Sinclair, R. (2004). Aboriginal social work education in Canada: Decolonizing pedagogy

for the seventh generation. *First Peoples Child and Family Review, 1*(1), 49-61.

Sinha, D. (1998). Changing perspectives in social psychology in India: A journey towards

indigenization. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 1*(1), 17-31.

Slemon, S. (1995). The scramble for post-colonialism. In B. Ashcroft, G. Griffith, & H.

Tiffin (Eds.), *The post-colonial studies reader* (pp. 45-52). New York: Routledge.

(Original work published in 1994.)

Smith, A (2005). *Conquest: Sexual violence and American Indian genocide.* Cambridge:

South End Press.

Smith, G. H. (2000). Protecting and respecting Indigenous knowledge. In M. Battiste

(Ed.) *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 209-224). Vancouver: UBC

Press.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples.*

New York: Zed Books.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.),

Marxism and the interpretation of culture (pp. 271-313). Urbana: University of

Illinois Press.

Spivak, G. C., Landry, D., & MacLean, G. (1996). Subaltern talk: Interview with the

editors (29 October 1993). In D. Landry, & G. MacLean (Eds.), Selected works of

Gayatri Chakravort Spivak (pp. 287-308). New York: Routledge.

Steigelbauer, S. M. (1996). What is an Elder? What do Elders do?: First Nation Elders as

teachers in culture-based urban organizations. The Canadian Journal of Native

Studies, XVI(1), 37-66.

Steinhauer, E. (2002). Thoughts on an Indigenous research methodology, Canadian

Journal of Native Education, 26(2), 69-81.

Steinhauer, P. (2001). Situating myself in research. Canadian Journal of Native

Education, 25(2), 183-187.

Stevenson, W. L. (2000). Decolonizing tribal histories. An unpublished doctoral

dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

Stewart-Harawira, M. (2005). The new imperial order: Indigenous response to

globalization. New York: Zed books.

Struthers, R. (2001). Conducting sacred research: An Indigenous experience. Wicazo Sa

Review, 16(1), 125-133.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2002). Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice (4th

ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Sutherland, D. (2002). Exploring culture, language and the perception of the nature of

science. *International Journal of Science Education, 24*(1), 1-25.

Taoua, P. (2003). The anti-colonial archive: France and Africa's unfinished business.

Substance # 103, 32(3), 146-164.

Thiong'o, N. wa (1986). *Decolonizing the mind: The politics of language in African

literature.* Oxford: James Currey.

Thomas, N. (1994). *Colonialism's culture: Anthropology, travel and government.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2004). *The concept of

Indigenous peoples.* Workshop on data collection and dissagregation for

Indigenous peoples. New York, January 19-21, 2004. (PFII/2004/WS.1/3

Original: English). New York: Author.

Vandall, P. (1987) . *Wâkahikaniwiyiniw-âcimowina: Stories of the House People.* F.

Ahenakew (Ed. & Tran.). Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Viergever, M. (1999). Indigenous knowledge: An interpretation of views from Indigenous

peoples. In L. M. Semali, & J.L. Kincheloe (Eds.), *What is Indigenous knowledge:

Voices from the academy* (pp. 333-359). New York: Falmer Press.

Voss, R. W., Douville, V., Little Soldier, A., & Twiss, G. (1999). Tribal and shamanic-

based social work practice: A Lakota perspective. *Social Work, 44*(3), 228-241.

Walker, P. (2004). Decolonizing conflict resolution. *American Indian Quarterly, 28*(3 &

4), 527-549.

Walters, K. L., & Simoni, J. M. (2002). Reconceptualizing Native women's health: An

"Indigenist" stress-coping model. *American Journal of Public Health, 92*(4), 520-

524.

Warren, W. W. (1984). *History of the Ojibway people* (reprint ed.). St. Paul: Minnesota

Historical Society Press.

Warry, W. (1998). *Unfinished dreams: Community healing and the reality of Aboriginal

self-government.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Wastesicoot, J. (2004). *A cultural framework for Cree self-government: Retracing our

steps back.* An unpublished Master's thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg,

Manitoba.

Weaver, H. N. (1999). Indigenous peoples and the social work profession: defining

culturally competent services. *Social Work, 44*(3), 217-225.

Weaver, H. N. (2001). Indigenous identity: What is it, and who *really* has it? *American

Indian Quarterly, 25*(2), 240-255.

Weaver, H. N. (2002). Perspectives on wellness: Journeys on the red road. *Journal of

Sociology and Social Welfare, XXIX*(1), 5-15.

Weaver, J. (1997). Native American studies, Native American literature, and

communitism. *Ayaangwaamizin, 1*(2), 23-33.

Weber-Pillwax, C. (2001). Orality in Northern Cree Indigenous worlds. *Canadian

Journal of Native Education, 25*(2), 149-165.

Whitecalf, S. (1993) . *Kinêhiyâwiwininaw nêhiyawêwin: The Cree language is our

identity. H. C. Wolfart & F. Ahenakew (Eds. & Trans.). Winnipeg: University of

Manitoba Press.

Wilkins, B. (1993). Modernization, colonialism, dependency: How appropriate are these

models for providing an explanation of North American Indians and

"underdevelopment." *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 16*(3), 390-419.

Williams, B. (2003). The worldview dimensions of individualism and collectivism:

Implications for counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 81, 370-

374.

Williams, M., Unrau, Y. A., Grinnell, R. M. Jr. (1998). *Introduction to social work

research.* Itasca, IL: Peacock Publishers.

Willis, J. W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical

approaches.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Wilson, A. C. (2004). Reclaiming our humanity: Decolonization and the recovery of

Indigenous knowledge. In D. A. Mihesuah, & A. C. Wilson (Eds.), *Indigenizing

the academy: Transforming scholarship and empowering communities* (pp. 69-

87). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Wilson, S. (2001). What is Indigenous research methodology? *Canadian Journal of

Native Education, 25*(1), 175-179.

Wilson, S. (2003). Progressing towards an Indigenous research paradigm in Canada and

Australia. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 27*(2), 161-180.

Wolvengrey, A. (Compiled by, 2001). *nēhiýawēwin: itwēwina.* Saskatoon: Houghton

Boston.

Wotherspoon, T., & Satzewich, V. (1993). *First Nations: Race, class, and gender relations*. Toronto: Nelson Canada.

Yeh, C. J., Hunter, C. D., Madan-Bahel, A., Chiang, L., & Arora, A. (2004). Indigenous and interdependent perspectives of healing: Implications for counseling and research. *Journal of counseling and development, 3*, 410-419.

Yellow Bird, Michael. (1999). Indian, American Indian, and Native Americas: Counterfeit Identities. *Winds of Change: A Magazine for American Indian Education and Opportunity,* (14), 1.

Young, D., Ingram, G., & Swartz, L. (1990). *Cry of the eagle: Encounters with a Cree healer*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Zieba, R. A. (1990). *Healing and healers among the Northern Cree*. An unpublished Master's thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Appendix A: Consent

Informed Consent to Participate and be Audio-taped

The following comprised the text of the consent form. It was provided to the participants

on paper with the University of Manitoba Faculty of Social Work letterhead. The first

three consent forms were entitled *Néhiñaw Wicihitowin: An Indigenous study of Cree*

helping principles. After discussions with one of the participants on the various terms

used to describe ourselves, it was emphasized that I had mistakenly used the word

Néhiñaw, to reflect a particular dialect. Hence, it was not always understood by the

people of this dialect. We discussed the people's names for ourselves including Néhiýaw

Néhithaw, and Muskéko Iñiniw, and how these terms all refer to the Cree people of

particular locations. After our discussion I decided I needed to drop the phrase *Néhiñaw*

Wicihitowin and retained the English translation only so as not to offend anyone with my

poor use of the Cree language.

An Indigenous study of Cree helping principles

Researcher: Michael Anthony Hart   Research Supervisor: Denis Bracken

Kinanaskomitin for indicating your willingness to consider participating in my Ph.D.

thesis study entitled An Indigenous study of Cree helping principles.

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is

only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the

research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail

about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to

ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand the accompanying

information.

The purpose of this study is to learn about aspects of Cree understandings of helping as

lived by Cree Kété-ayak [Elders] and social workers using Cree helping practices, and to

consider how these aspects may relate to social work. I am intending to interviewing

Elders or social workers, like yourself, who appear to me as holding knowledge about

how to help people from a Cree perspective.

By agreeing to be interviewed, we will be involved in a informal discussion that will last

approximately two hours. I will have a list of questions that we could use as a guide for

this discussion. I will make notes on the discussion after the interview. If you agree, I will

also audio record our conversation. If you like, I will make a copy of the recording for

you to keep. In addition, I will have the audio taped interview typed out word for word

and offer you a copy of this typed out transcript of the interview once it has been

completed. After offering you a copy of the typed out interview, I will contact you to see

if you want to change, delete, or expand on anything you had shared.

I will then proceed to include parts of what you have shared in a thesis paper I will be writing. Once this paper has been written, I will contact you to offer you a summary of how I have incorporated what you will have told me. You will once again have the opportunity to change anything you have said, direct me to use the information differently, or to remove anything I have used. Finally, if you would like, I will provide you with a copy of the final thesis paper and/or a summary of the paper once it is completed.

Unless you direct me otherwise, all information you share with me will be held confidentially, meaning that I will not identify who shared the information with me. The audio recording will be kept in my home and not made available unless you provide direction or consent to the sharing of these tapes with others. I will keep the audio recordings for one year after the thesis paper has been completed and accepted by the University of Manitoba. At that time, unless you provide with alternate directions, I will destroy the audio recordings. I do not foresee any consequences for you if you decide to share information openly, other than people may want to contact you to request further discussions and/or the use of the information in other studies. I do not perceive any risk for your participation in this process as I am only intending to address experiences that are part of your interactions when helping others.

For participating, I will present you with a small gift and financial offering for your time,

effort and contribution.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the study and agree to participate. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. You can contact me or my supervisor at the following numbers:

Michael Anthony Hart   Supervisor: Denis Bracken

(204) 474-9264

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba's Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122 or e-mail Margaret_Bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

If you consent to participate and wish that all information you share to remain

confidential, meaning that your identity is not shared, please sign on the following line.

_____

Participant's Signature   Date

_____

Researcher   Date

If you consent to participate and are willing to have yourself identified with the

information you share, please sign on the following line.

_____

Participant's Signature   Date

Researcher   Date

Appendix B: Glossary

Néhiẏawéwin / Cree Terms

acáhkowi-ithiniwak   (acáhkowi-ińiniwak) spirits that walk (interviewee); literally spirit

persons

ámo   a bee

Asiníkáwithiniw(ak)   A Cree person (people) generally from the rocky area in the north-

western part of Manitoba who speaks or descends from speakers of

one the Cree dialects where th predominates

asiniy(ak)   rock(s)

átayóhkan(ak)   guardian spirit(s)

cístémáw   tobacco

é-kiyami   peaceful, still, calm, serene (I understand this as papíyátakan)

é-kiyamihk pimátisiwin   (your) peaceful, serene life

ékwani   enough for now

enisiwapahtamak Muskéko Ińiniw-askiy   a Cree worldview

Ińiniwak   the peoples, specifically, Indigenous peoples of Ińiniwi-Ministik. A

termed used to describe the people made healthy by the land

(Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000)

Ińiniwi-kiskénihtamowin   Indigenous knowledge

Ińiniwi-Ministik   Indigenous peoples' island, Turtle Island, or North America (see

Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000, for additional discussion)

kanátisiwin	cleanliness (Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000)
kisé-manitow	Creator; Great Spirit; Kind Spirit, Great Mystery
Kété-aya(k):	Elder(s)
Kéyam	an expression with a variety of meanings, including "that's okay" or "whatever"
kiséwátisiwin	kindness (Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000)
Kiskinomákéwina	teachings
Kiskinomatowin	a reciprocal and interactive teaching relationship between student and teacher (Stevenson, 2000)
Kitánawapamisew	look afer yourself (Marissa) (I understand this as kanawémisew)
kisténimowin	a state of respectfulness
kisténitámowin	to take care never to mistreat any form of life (Ida Moore, nee Brass, 1999)
kókom	(your) grandmother
kwayaskátisiwin	honesty and fairness (Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000)
mámaskác	amazing
mamatowisowin:	"a capacity to tap the creative life forces of the inner space by the use of all the faculties that constitute our being–it is to exercise inwardness" (Ermine, 1995, p. 104)
mamitonánitamona	reflections
méskanaw	road, path

maskihkiy méskanaw   literally–medicine road

matotisán   sweat lodge

mino-maskihkiy méskanan   literally good medicine road (I understand this to be mino-

                        maskihkiy méskanaw)

mino-pimátisiwin   literally the good life

mino-wícéhitowin   (miyo-wícéhitowin-Cardinal Hildebrandt, 2000); having good

                        relationships; getting along well with others

mithwayin   mino-ayawin) being healthy (Marlyn)

mosóm   grandfather

mistahikithánimison   (mistahikiténimison) be very bashful, quiet, peaceful nature

                        (Marissa)

Muskéko-Ińiniw(ak)   A Cree person (people) generally of the muskeg territory who

                        speak or descends from the speakers of one the Cree dialects where

                        "n" is predominant.

ninanáskomonan   giving thanks; we are thankful, grateful

nanátawápáhtamowin   to search for something

néhithaw   A Cree person generally of the rocky muskeg territory who speak

                        or descend from the speakers of one the Cree dialects where "th" is

                        predominant.

néhiẏaw(ak)   A Cree person (people) generally of the plains territory who speak

                        or descend from the speakers of one the Cree dialects where "y" is

predominant. Interpreted as a person of the four directions

(Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000)

néhiẏawéwin   the Cree language

Nimámitawénítamona   my thoughts

nístáw   brother-in-law

nitwánikáwina   my messages

nósisim   (my) grandchild

ocinéw   retribution

o-ji-na   when a spirit is offended (Wastesicoot, 2004, p. 47)

oskápéwis   Elder's helper

ospwákan(ak)   pipe(s)

otapáhtéthimow   a humble person (Marissa)

otapahtéthimisiw   to be humble (Marissa)

pakitinásow   the offering of something in exchange for help, support, and/or

direction;

pástahowin   (pástatowin) breach of the natural order (Wolvengrey, 2001);

stepping over a set of boundaries causing an imbalance, harming

the community and/or those children yet to be born (Makokis,

2001, p. 190)

pawákan   spiritual guide accessed through one's dreams; a personal power

(Zieba, 1990)

péyáhtak	to move slowly, gently, calmly, softly, quietly, and/or carefully.
pimátisiwin	life; living life in the best way possible (Moore, nee Brass, 2000)
mácítatán	let us start, commence
tikinákan	craddleboard
tipéyimisow	the act of being in total control of oneself or being independent (Wolvengrey, 2001)
wacask	muskrat
wakotowin	relations, kinship (Moore, nee Brass, 2000)
wacistakac	similar to the saying, "for goodness sake"
wícihitowin	the help we offer one another
wípinasona	cloth offerings with related connotations to the spiritual realm
Wísahkécáhk	A cultural hero of the Cree of whom there are many stories shared for such purposes as teaching, entertaining, and creating laughter
yóspatisiwin	gentleness (Cardinal and Hilderbrandt, 2000)

Anishinaabemowin / Ojibway / Saulteaux Terms

Anishinaabe	the original man (Benton-Banai, 1988); the term used for a person who speaks/spoke Anishinaabemowin or is Indigenous
Anishinaabek	the Anishinaabe term that refers to the Indigenous people or people who speaker/spoke Anishinaabemowin
ätíso`kanak	spirit beings, spirit powers, spirit guardians, spirit animals

Lakota / Sioux terms

inipi	the rite of purification
henblecheyapi	crying for a vision
hunkapi	the making of relatives
ishna ta awi cha lowan	preparing a girl for womanhood
tapa wanka yap	the throwing of the ball.
Wakan-Tanka	the Great Spirit
wiwanyag wachipi	the sun dance