



BC Association of Community Response Networks

Provincial BCACRN Teleconference Review

Wednesday, June 3 2009

Indigenous Knowledge / Respectful Connections with First Nations Groups (Facilitator: Georgina Martin)

1. Overview

- Canada's Indian Act considers Aboriginal Peoples as Guardians of the State; it controls all elements from birth to death.
- Historically things have been viewed from an Euro-centric lens/ perspective. Now, aboriginal groups are adding their own lens/perspective, as a territory and a Nation.
- Federal and Provincial regulations and engagement are in transition.

2. Respectful Connections with First Nations Groups

Refer to Powerpoint '**Indigenous Knowledge or Ways of Knowing**'. Many things need to be considered in dealing with First Nations groups, with the understanding of the context as a distinct yet diverse society.

Indigenous Knowledge Links (maps)

<http://maps.fphlcc.ca/>

http://www.moa.ubc.ca/pdf/resource_packages/MOA_Continuity_Change.pdf This is a very good entry-level lesson plan.

http://www.moa.ubc.ca/pdf/First_Nations_map.pdf

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/map.htm> This site outlines the language groupings.

3. Guiding Principles – 4 R's

- ❖ Respect – esteem for, or a sense of the worth or excellence of a person, a personal quality or ability, or something considered as a manifestation of a personal quality or ability;
- ❖ Relevance – describes how pertinent, connected or applicable something is to a given matter. A means to an end.
- ❖ Reciprocity – a reciprocal relationship
- ❖ Responsibility - a duty or obligation to take care of something, having to account for one's actions, of good conduct and being trustworthy.

4. Prevailing Racial Mind-set of Non-Aboriginals

- *It's safest to avoid talking about race*
- *When race comes up, change the subject*
- *Sharing politically correct jokes lessens the tension*
- *Try to be 'over' complimentary*
- *Avoid being in places where Aboriginal People hang out*
- *Participate in events to show you're 'not racist'*

5. How does one build relationships with Aboriginal peoples?

a. Learn about:

- Histories of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, and the world, e.g., Colonization... Imperialism...Decolonization Laws...Racism...Education...Land Use...Specific Aboriginal cultures in area

b. Understand concepts such as:

- Intergenerational trauma, violence (Residential School), cultural similarities and differences, oppression
- Prove your integrity!
- Listen...ask questions
- Build trust

c. Be aware of BEHAVIOURS

- Passive Aggression- Agreeing...BUT...not following through (passive on the 'outside' but angry/aggressive on the 'inside') This behaviour is a common response when relationships are not well grounded.

6. In Indigenous ways of knowing, the self exists within a world that is subject to flux. A whole view features inter-connectedness, with the grounded self at the centre of a Circle, linked to family; Elders; Spiritual Guidance; Creator. Learning wisdom from our Elders is crucial to our people surviving. The Elders need to be able to speak and we all need to listen. It is important that the Elders are afforded the great respect due them. Our teaching relies more on storytelling rather than physical or verbal reprimanding, with a high respect for culture and protocols in the community.

7. ***The Fallen Feather***" (DVD, Dec 2007) This very moving and thoughtful film discusses the residential school, and features educator Thomas Burger, Phil Fontaine and more; it was released before the "National Day of Apology". It is an excellent educational experience for those of us who are not native. Information about "The Fallen Feather" & purchase info is available at www.fallenfeatherproductions.com

8. FN Project offered through Public Health Agency of Canada in collaboration with First Nations of Canada...The project is around historical analysis, research, education, prevention of abuse of older persons, on and off reserves. After the initial research, we will hold five regional teleconferences across Canada with people working on the reserves and other resource people to research the issues, tools, assessments/ promising approaches, and evaluations that are currently being used. A national summary teleconference will pull together in a critical analysis so people can look at what the results are.