

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE WILL MAKE “CANADA” GREAT AGAIN

The important role of Aboriginal education in embedding all settlers in the process of healing and transforming the land to a sustainable land of the “strong and free”

Abstract:

There is an urgent need for reconciliation as a Nation and ALL settlers are responsible for the healing process of the First Nations, Métis and Inuits. Educators play a big role in this process, and to understand what an authentic transformation entails, educators need to be ready for the challenges and outcomes that might arise. Through testimonials, published articles by known scholars in the community and through my personal relationship with the land, the unequal and hidden distribution of power and the abuse that is being imposed to the land for profit is highlighted. This is a direct link to the abuse on the Aboriginal Peoples that all settlers are contributing towards through their silence. Through revolutionizing the way we approach and think of knowledge by embedding the Aboriginal knowledge and learning into the education system and curriculum, there is hope in making this land more sustainable for our nation and the future of our children, who play a major role in the transformation.

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Purpose: Why is healing of the land important?

- Canada is currently a nation that is divided and there is an urgent need for reconciliation
- The division is hidden to benefit a small group of people
- Multiculturalism is used as an excuse to support the agenda of the colonized system
- The rights and needs of the First Nations, Métis and Inuits are being abused and left out through the abuse of the land
- We are ALL treaty people – We are ALL responsible for this land
- The contamination of the land by those in power, affects all of us as a nation
- The land needs to be nurtured and it will in turn nurture and take care of us

Question:

- How and why do we as a nation build a relationship with the land through education in order to understand it, respect it and nurture it?
 - How do we stop abusing the land with our habits and daily activities?
 - How do we settlers change our mindsets in order to protect the land for our children?
 - How do we learn from the land?
 - How does that benefit all communities?

Challenges:

- The land is covered by buildings, infrastructure and distractions
- As a nation, we mistakably believe that Western/European knowledge is the only truth
- Educators need to deconstruct their thinking in order to have an authentic approach to embedding Aboriginal education in the classroom
- Transformation will take time

“I am the mother, I am the land and when the land is contaminated, I am contaminated” –
Leanne Simpson

Approach:

- Testimonials from Indigenous peoples of this land
- Published articles written by indigenous scholars
- Personal experience and exposure to indigenous traditions, teachings and stories
- The land

Findings and steps in Education:

- Facing History and the truth about Canada
- Acquiring and establishing Indigenous Languages in schools
- Empowering indigenous communities
- Taking responsibility as settlers for the harm being caused today
- Listening to Aboriginal students voice
- Active involvement from educators

“a critical race theory analysis that might explore how a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained” – Verna St. Denis

Summary and conclusion:

- There is an urgent need for healing of the land in order to make it sustainable
- The system currently in place supports only a small group of people who abuse the land for profit and personal gain
- Settlers are all part of this system that abuse the land, which is directly linked to the abuse of the First Nations, Métis and Inuits
- Indigenous knowledge understands this land and can help the nation build a relationship with it to keep it sustainable
- The education system is not neutral
- Embedding Indigenous knowledge in schools will be beneficial and empower the whole nation
- There will be challenges that will need attention and focus from all parties
- **We can unlearn and learn freely**