



RETURNING TO SPIRIT

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ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

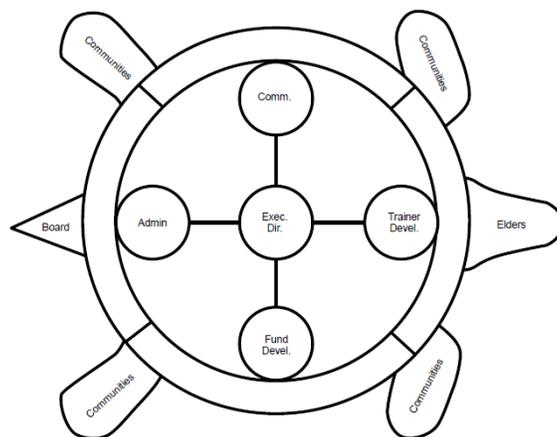
At our Organizational Development gathering in April, attended by Board Members, Trainers, RTS Community members and the Executive Director, we were gifted with an organizational model, one based on the turtle.

It is the elders who lead the way, the Board who gives direction. The communities move us forward. The shell or body of the turtle is the Trainer Body. Within that body, we have the Executive Director surrounded by four Keepers. The four Keepers would be responsible for the four different areas within the organization: Communications, Administration, Fund Development and Trainer Development.

This model is in development, and the starting point is to identify the various keepers. At this point, we have identified two Trainer Keepers, Lisa Raven and François Paradis. Several people are involved in the other areas, although keep-

ers have not been identified yet.

Overall, we have also identified the role of a Turtle Keeper. Trainers have identified Marc Pizandawac as Turtle Keeper. The role for the Turtle Keeper is still being discerned.



This workshop has helped me immensely to grow, not only spiritually but emotionally too. I feel so much stronger within my inner self with the feelings of courageousness, helpfulness (not hopeless) and strong determination in my "intentionality" of making "Reconciliation" become a reality firstly within my own family structure, then stretching myself outwards into neighbouring church communities with the help of other non-aboriginal church leaders and members from this group to bring the awareness of "Reconciliation" and praying for the possibility this beautiful process will keep going and rippling outwards and again back inwards like the waves of the ocean and with the power and strength of God's winds to keep it going. Hycka.

Rosalind E. Strom, Cowichan, BC (Nanaimo Reconciliation—June 2011)

This workshop has helped improve my confidence in myself. I have gone from being ignorant about Residential Schools to getting an inkling of what they were about and the legacy that has been left behind. I have made incredible new friendships. I will have the confidence and knowledge to move forward. I will talk in my church about RTS and its power of healing. I will continue working on my relationship with the Aboriginal friends I have made.

IT SHALL BE!

Mary L. Parry, Victoria, BC (Nanaimo Reconciliation—June 2011)

COMING UP!

Reconciliation Workshops

Oct 11-15, 2011
Saskatoon, SK



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SLIM SUMMER EDITION

This edition is a little slimmed-down in honour of the summer! Thanks for all those who give their feedback on the newsletter!

OUR CHOICE: TO DESTROY OR TO HONOUR

The quote listed to the left got me thinking because it seems to me it would be equally valid in the reverse:

If I destroy myself,
I destroy you.
If I honour myself,
I honour you.

Which begs the question... exactly how do we “destroy ourselves” or “honour ourselves”?

There are many ways to destroy oneself... alcohol, drugs, addictions of various sorts. Fundamentally at the core of it all those is an unwillingness to accept oneself. Essentially we say “I am not OK as I am”. And we end up going through life trying to

pretend that we are something that we are not. We try to pretend that we have it all together. We try to pretend that we are good people. We hide the dark nooks and corners of our lives. In that hiding and that pretending, we destroy ourselves. It might take a while... but take a look and see. Look and see how many people live their lives based on “what other people might think”. That is not living out of the Spirit of Who We Are. That is also the way in which we “destroy others”... a fundamental refusal to accept others for who they are.

So, what does it mean to “honour ourselves”? To rever-

ence the Spirit of Who We Are... in all of its glory and uniqueness and authenticity. To live the life we are called to live. We don't need to try to be someone else. We just need to be ourselves. Sounds pretty simple. That is also how we honour others, by allowing them to be who they are, and not trying to shape them into our vision of who they should be and how they should live their lives.

If we could honour ourselves and others... the destruction would stop, within ourselves and within our world. Haven't we destroyed enough?

Gigi Jakobs
Calgary AB

IF I DESTROY
YOU,
I DESTROY
MYSELF.
IF I HONOR
YOU,
I HONOR
MYSELF.
HUNBATZ MEN,
MAYAN

AN EXPERIENCED DEFINITION OF RECONCILIATION

Ready to get to the heart of the bottom line matter.

Expressing without blame, making wrong or to batter.

Creating a bubble for this neutral safety zone.

Opening SELF to make responsibility my OWN.

Nervously testing out this newly acquired Intentionality.

Conversationally accepting my authenticity.

Individuals we are, under one heaven, one God.

Learning uniqueness and similarities: we are not Alone or Odd.

Inviting a brief peek or shall I say a temporary walk in my moccasins.

Appreciating other humans can't or don't weigh and measure my Sins.

The Blessed Father in Heaven holds that card.

Insecurity melts and amends aren't so hard.

Oracularly regardless of agnostic, atheist, or believer stance

Nary I say do I hold clergy in contempt or Others from their right to enhance.



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Our workshops are scheduled well into 2012. We have one more Reconciliation scheduled for 2011. For more information on any of these workshops or to host a workshop, please contact our Calgary Office at 403-244-3963 or

info@returningtospirit.org

Aug 2-6, 2011

Aboriginal – Burns Lk, BC
Contact: Judy Charlie
250-692-4727

Aug 15-19, 2011

Non-Aboriginal – Smithers, BC
Contact: Jean Marie Lehtinen
250-964-4475

Sept 26-30, 2011

Aboriginal – Star of the North, St. Albert, AB
Contact: Kathy Jackson
780-435-3995

Sept 26-30, 2011

Non-Aboriginal – Providence, Edmonton, AB
Contact: Kathy Jackson
780-435-3995

Oct 11-15, 2011

Reconciliation – Queens House, Saskatoon, SK
Contact: Lucie Leduc
306-242-1916

Oct 31-Nov 4, 2011

Aboriginal – Domano Centre, Pr. George, BC
Contact: Jean Marie Lehtinen
250-964-4475

Oct 31-Nov 4, 2011

Aboriginal – Heritage Inn, Cranbrook, BC
Contact: Mary Richardson
250-426-8383

Nov 7-11, 2011

Non-Aboriginal – Little Britain Comm. Hall, MB
Contact: Rene Gauthier
204-482-6448

Nov 28-Dec 2, 2011

Non-Aboriginal – Domano Centre, Pr. George, BC
Contact: Jean Marie Lehtinen
250-964-4475

Contact the Calgary Office if you would like to see a workshop in your area.



VIDEOS AND INTERVIEWS

At our Special Event in May, we commissioned a video outlining the work of Returning to Spirit. We engaged the services of a Métis videographer, Marjorie Beaucage, who stitched together a wonderful overview of the history of Indian Residential Schools and the work of Reconciliation. Thanks to all who par-

ticipated in the creation of the video. The video is 7.5 minutes long, and well worth the viewing. You can find it at the following link:

www.vimeo.com/26462357

In July, Anne Taylor was interviewed by Hilary Bird of the Sunrise morning show on CKLB (Northwest Territories). The interview came in

the wake of the Truth & Reconciliation gatherings in the north and highlights how Returning to Spirit is making a difference in the Indian Residential School legacy (interview is 9.5 minutes).

You can access the interview on the home page of our website:

www.returningtospirit.org

THE WORD
"IMPOSSIBLE"
IS ONLY
IN THE MIND
AND NOT
IN THE HEART.

SRI CHINMOY

DAVE FORTIN—NEVER FORGOTTEN

Last year, on August 21, one of our trainers and former Board members passed away. Dave Fortin, an Aboriginal, from Pic River First Nations, Ontario, was extremely committed to the work of reconciliation and healing in our country. We were shocked to hear of his passing.

As the anniversary of his passing approaches, we would like to acknowledge Dave for his many contributions to the work of Returning to Spirit. He was a committed trainer and board member and brought a strong presence wherever he went. Dave is sorely missed and we wish his family peace and healing.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all of our volunteers who helped to make our May 2011 Special Event a huge success! Special thanks to Jacques Lafrance, Deborah Clark and their team for their dedication to the Living and Expressing Reconciliation Event! Please visit the photo gallery on our website for pictures of the Special Event.

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Newsletter articles are welcome!
Send to the Editor (Gigi Jakobs):
communications@returningtospirit.org

Thanks to Gigi Jakobs, Emily Gonzales and
Anne Taylor for contributions to this edi-
tion.

Next edition—November 1, 2011



Returning to Spirit (RTS) is a non-profit organization that designs and delivers workshops and training programs for reconciliation within the context of residential school issues that have negatively impacted First Nations People, Religious communities and Canadian society in general.

Our focus is on moving people forward through the principles of personal empowerment. This defines all our work, including coaching sessions and consulting, which are designed to support individuals, families, organizations and whole communities to move forward in life.

Our work goes beyond healing. It provides conditions for transformation in personal, family, community, and organizational life.

SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS

Returning to Spirit is a charitable non-profit, and as such, we are governed by a Board of Directors. Our Board members come from a variety of backgrounds. We have several Aboriginal members from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. We have a couple of Bishops (Yukon and BC) and a religious Sister (Saskatchewan) as well.

The Board of Directors meets about once every two to three months, usually by teleconference. Once a year, they have a face-to-face meeting. Board Members also attend RTS Community Gatherings. While there is no remuneration for the time of Board members, all travel expenses to attend Board meetings are covered. In between meetings, Board members promote the work of Returning to Spirit in their respective areas. Serving as a Board member means that you get to contribute to the work of Returning to Spirit in a different way! Not everyone can be a trainer... but some people could be Board members.

Maybe you have some previous experience with other charitable or non-profit Boards? Perhaps you have a gift in financial management? Perhaps you are just committed to the work of Returning to Spirit and have a strong drive to have it spread across Canada? Or maybe you know someone who would make a great Board member? We are seeking new Board members!

If you are interested in being a Board Member, or have questions about what is involved (time, experience, skills, etc.), please contact Anne Taylor at the Calgary Returning to Spirit office:

Phone: 403-244-3963

Email: anne@returningtospirit.org



I BELIEVE MUCH
TROUBLE
AND BLOOD
WOULD BE SAVED
IF WE OPENED
OUR HEARTS
MORE.

CHIEF JOSEPH,
NEZ PERCE