



RETURNING TO SPIRIT

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3 NOVEMBER 1, 2011

DIRECTIONS IN ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES CONFERENCE

Rosella Kinoshameg (Odawa/Ojibway from Wikwemikong, ON) presented on *Traditional Healing Ways* at the Directions in Aboriginal Ministries Conference held in mid July 2011 at Star of the North in St. Albert. Rosella was raised in a family who lived the traditional ways and when she became a community nurse, she started to include traditional teachings in her workshops. Many people struggled with diabetes and an elder told her that diabetes was a result of the *inability to process the sweetness of life – not enjoying life*.

Dr Frank Clark told Rosella that *Health is power - the energy to be in balance - mind, body, spirit and be in harmony with your environment and relationships*. Rosella spoke of how the Medicine Wheel represents

living life, or looking at life from the four different aspects. It is all a matter of walking in balance. We need to listen to our bodies, our minds and our spirits and learn when we are not in balance. Rosella spoke of our need to connect with sacred spaces, to pray, to cleanse, to meditate, to heal.

At the end of her talk, Rosella spoke about the *Hope for the Future*. She shared her experience of attending the first Returning to Spirit workshop in Yellowknife in 2001. That workshop created new possibilities for her to move forward with her experience of Residential School. She visited the Residential School later when she heard

it was being demolished, but there was nothing left, except for the front stairs and doorway. She saw the stairs and the doorway as representing her experience with RTS. It shows us that we can climb the stairs and open the door to new possibilities and move forward from the suffering of Residential School. We cannot change the past, but we need to look at it, and then choose to let it go and no longer carry it into the future.

I was truly inspired by all that Rosella shared and was deeply grateful to meet her. She is a walking testimony of the possibilities that can be created into the future!

Anne Taylor, Calgary, AB

I was incomplete when I came here. I was incomplete for the abuse I had inside me for 40 years till I came here at the Queen's House and opened up my life to you all. Thank you deeply in my heart for letting go my pain. Thank you RTS for giving me a new life to myself my spirit. I could spread the word when you see the sunshine that means I will be with in spirit. Thank you so much. High high

Larry Martell, Flying Dust FN, SK (Saskatoon Reconciliation—Oct 2011)

I feel that I have my little girl come out now and her name is Elizabeth Koblogina Kaosoni with the help of my facilitators and other helpers. Even now I have forgiven the people that hurt me.

I want to help my fellow people that need help in any ways possible.

I want to thank each and everyone of the people that has been there for me.

I want more information of how I need to help my people too.

Thank you once again.

Elizabeth Kaosoni, Cambridge Bay, NU (Saskatoon Reconciliation—Oct 2011)

COMING UP!

Next Reconciliation Workshop

May 28-June 1
Prince George, BC



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SLIM FALL EDITION

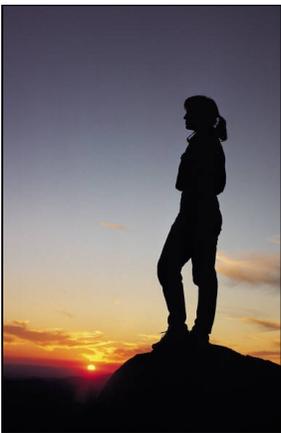
This edition is a little slimmed-down in honour of a busy fall! Thanks for all those who give their feedback on the newsletter!

Do you have experiences to share of how RTS shows up in your life.

CONCERNING
ALL ACTS
OF INITIATIVE
AND CREATION,
THERE IS ONE
ELEMENTARY
TRUTH

—
THAT THE
MOMENT ONE
DEFINITELY
COMMITS
ONESELF,
THEN
PROVIDENCE
MOVES,
TOO.

GOETHE



WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

We can spend a lot of time waiting. We wait for appointments. We wait in the check-out line. We wait in traffic. We wait for Christmas to come. We wait for the winter to be over. We wait for our holidays to come.

Sometimes waiting is inevitable. We can grump and grouse about waiting, but sometimes that's all we can do. And we can do it with grace, or do it with grouch.

But there is also another type of waiting, which isn't so inevitable. It's actually a habit that we form... and we think that there is nothing we can do.

We wait for someone to come and apologize. We wait for someone else to pick up the dirty socks. We wait for someone to realize the error of their ways. We wait for the olive branch to come our way. We wait for someone else, out there, to do something. We wait for the right person to come into our lives. We sit and we wait. But is that sort of waiting inevitable? That sort of waiting can disempower us. It leaves us

thinking that we are at the mercy of the currents of life. We can't do anything. We just have to go with the flow. We wait, and we wait, and sometimes we die—still waiting for something different.

What about altering the course of our lives? What about stepping into the future with a purpose, rather than waiting? What about apologizing first? What about forgiving someone first? What about taking the initiative?

Because really... what are we waiting for? If we're waiting for "something out there" to alter, we could wait a very long time. If we're waiting for "someone out there" to alter their way of being, then we could wait a very, very, very long time!

Sometimes we are waiting for something or someone to alter, because then we think we'll be happy. "If only this would alter, then everything will be wonderful."

Really.

And even if that "something" does alter, then there'll be something else that you're waiting for.

So, what are you waiting for? What would your life look like if you stopped waiting for stuff or people "out there" to alter? What would your life look like if you started to alter? You might be surprised.

So why not try something different this week or this month. If you're waiting for the cashier to say "hello" first... why don't you say "hello" first and smile first. If you're waiting for someone to call you... why don't you call them first. If you're waiting for someone to offer the olive branch, why don't you offer it first. If you're waiting for the other person to lay down their resentment first, why don't you lay down yours first.

Let's see what would happen if we all stopped waiting... and started moving. Because waiting is a form of being stuck. Maybe we could get ourselves unstuck. Maybe we could get our communities unstuck. Maybe we could get our world unstuck.

Gigi Jakobs
Calgary, AB

It has awesomely!!! moved me to a higher level of understanding of me as an individual, my family, my community and nation. Now this is what you can "pay it forward" this information that I have learned and acquired here is valuable stuff and cannot allowed it to collect dust on a shelf of sitting on the couch watching T.V. and wasting time, it is now my responsibility to pass this on to my family, community and Nation. "MOVED!"

Dorah Montgrande, Buffalo River Dene Nation, SK (Saskatoon Reconciliation—Oct 2011)

This workshop really brought a change in myself. I feel joy and happiness in my heart. It gives me enthusiasm and courage to do my ministry further.

It helped me to have a shift of different point of view to work with my community. It enlightened me to accept and understand my peoples problem and provided a change of heart and mind to work for the aboriginal people with the spirit of compassion, care and concern, with love and affection.

Fr. Gaspar Savarimuthu, La Loche, SK (Saskatoon Reconciliation—Oct 2011)

RECONCILIATION—SASKATOON

A Reconciliation Workshop took place in Saskatoon from October 11 to 15. It was attended by 39 participants and 10 trainers.

This reconciliation session was a very positive experience for me, both as a former trainee, and now as an archbishop. Through respectful listening to aboriginal participants, I gained a deeper understanding of the legacy of the IRS and its impact not only on former students but also on their descendants. I heard firsthand how even persons who stayed within the church carry heavy burdens of shame and anger, and are in need of healing. I also grew in my appreciation of the power and depth of the RTS process to go the bottom of the hurt

and move participants, using very effective concepts, images and rituals, beyond victimhood and story to a new freedom. The presence of four international priests, the quality of their participation and what they gained from it revealed the relevance of this process for all people. There was some personal healing in my own life and inspiration to deal with some issues more directly.

I truly appreciated the marvel of aboriginal and non-aboriginal persons working together, healing and praying together, leading all to let go of the past and move into a healthier future. The skill and competence of the facilitators was impressive. I have an

even stronger conviction to promote and support this program and help find funding for it into the future. I would encourage all priests, religious, pastoral ministers, non-aboriginal laity and my brother bishops to take it as perhaps our most effective way of forging a renewed relationship between the churches and the aboriginal people in our country today. Indeed, I would encourage every Canadian, and certainly every member of our archdiocese to become part of this unique process of healing and reconciliation.

*Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie OMI
Saskatoon, October 11-15, 2011*



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

THERE IS ONE
GOD LOOKING
DOWN ON US
ALL
WE ARE
CHILDREN OF
THE ONE GOD.
GOD IS
LISTENING
TO ME.
THE SUN,
THE DARKNESS,
THE WINDS
ARE ALL
LISTENING
TO WHAT WE
NOW SAY.
GERONIMO,
APACHE

Our workshops are scheduled well into 2012. We are beginning 2012 by moving East into Ontario! We are finalizing dates for Reconciliations in Cranbrook and Edmonton.

For more information on any of these workshops or to host a workshop, please contact our office at 403-244-3963 or info@returningtospirit.org

Nov 28-Dec 2, 2011

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

Nov 28-Dec 2, 2011

Aboriginal – Trapper's Lake, Yellowknife, NT
Contact: Sandra Sanderson
867-920-2129

Jan 9-13, 2012

Aboriginal – Five Oaks Centre, Paris, ON
Contact: Jenny Rypma
519-442-3212

Jan 9-13, 2012

Non-Aboriginal – Five Oaks Centre, Paris, ON
Contact: Jenny Rypma
519-442-3212

Jan 16-20, 2012

Non-Aboriginal – Heritage Inn, Cranbrook, BC
Contact: Mary Richardson
250-426-8284

Jan 16-20, 2012

Aboriginal – Prince George, BC (Facility TBC)
Contact: Marlaena Mann
250-562-3591

Feb 6-10, 2012

Non-Aboriginal – St. Michael's Retreat Centre, Lumsden, SK
Contact: Dawn Rolke
306-789-3048

Feb 6-10, 2012

Aboriginal – St. Theresa Point, MB
Contact: John Peter Flett
204-462-2279

Next Reconciliation:

May 28-June 1, 2012

Reconciliation – Domano Renewal 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.

RETURNING TO SPIRIT—RESIDENTIAL
SCHOOL RECONCILIATION INC.

Email: info@returningtospirit.org
www.returningtospirit.org

Calgary Office

Suite 303 - 6707 Elbow Drive SW
Calgary, AB T2V 0E5
Phone—403-244-3963
Fax—888-224-1286

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

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Anne Taylor for contributions to this edi-
tion.

Next edition—February 1, 2012



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.

TDP SEPTEMBER 2011

In September, we held a training for our trainers in which the distinction “coaching” was brought forward:

Coaching is an authentic way of being that takes a stand rooted in the work of RTS.

Coaching is an art—an intentional interaction which generates partnership dedicated to creating insights to alter and unfold a new experience in life.

We always like to distinguish between what something is and what something is not. And sometimes it’s easier to understand what something “is” by first understanding what something “is not”.

Coaching is not advice, teaching, therapy. It is not disempowering, manipulative, controlling or complicated. It does not keep people stuck. Coaching is not being the expert with all the answers. Coaching is not telling someone what to do or correcting their behaviours and actions. Coaching does not shut people down.

So... what is coaching? Coaching is empowering. It is an art that inspires and energizes people to develop and move forward in their lives. Coaching creates trust and cooperation. Coaching is a partnership.

Now, coaching isn’t just for trainers... it is for all of us! How many times have we thought that we were “helping” someone by telling them what to do, or giving them advice, or manipulating them into doing what we think is right? That’s not helpful. That’s not empowering. It actually creates a fair bit of resentment on the other end. So what would our relationships look like if we ditched that stuff and tried on the art of coaching rooted in partnership and what we’ve learned from RTS?

Gigi Jakobs, Calgary, AB

IN A WORLD
SO TORN APART
BY RIVALRY,
ANGER, AND
HATRED,
WE HAVE THE
PRIVILEGED
VOCATION TO
BE LIVING SIGNS
OF A LOVE THAT
CAN BRIDGE ALL
DIVISIONS
AND HEAL
ALL WOUNDS.
HENRI NOUWEN