January 2013

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Cover Page Footnote
As Presented at the Conference for The Society of Indian Psychologists, June 25-26, 2012, Utah State University, Logan Utah

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Abstract

An Indigenous Research process over sixteen years and during this time, a peace process emerged as a key element within Indigenous Research. The Indigenous Research included a school where and 100% of Native Students stayed in school (large urban school), work with mediators, and work with youth with special needs. The Indigenous Research was also during a time as Indigenous Ethics was being defined. When applied, it became clear that a working understanding of a peace process was needed. A peace process was defined that worked cross-culturally. This longitudinal work then was then placed within Indigenous Knowledge, Indigenous Research, Indigenous Ethics, Indigenous Pedagogy, Indigenous Science and Indigenous Peace Processes. As a result of Indigenous Research methods, this paper was prepared to outline how the work of peace can be a foundation for defining work in Indigenous Psychology.

Background

When the work of defining Traditional Indigenous Knowledge, Indigenous Research and Indigenous Ethics began, the term peace continued forward. Over sixteen years of study using Indigenous Research, a working definition of a Peace Process emerges. This Peace Process was within the Indigenous Research Process and also the Indigenous Ethics Process within the research. The Working Indigenous Peace Process was used in Native settings and in multi-cultural settings. Within the Traditional ways of knowing, there is a sacred place for the sharing of peace and throughout this writing, these will not be shared. When applying Indigenous Research to a variety of settings, the peace process emerged as a variable within Indigenous Research in each setting. While understanding that the teachings of peace are considered sacred knowledge within many Native communities, the question was "How could the sacred space of peace be protected while also allowing for the teaching about peace to go forward in research and ethics?"

This question shaped the Indigenous Research that unfolded over sixteen years. In the nineties when I began to study in Psychology, using Indigenous ways of learning (Hains, 2001). Some of the findings from this work were included in the document for outlining Aboriginal Research by the Social Sciences and Research Council of Canada (2003)

"From the synthesis paper:

Dr. Shaun Haines:

When I began the process of defining Aboriginal research methods for my dissertation, I met with another elder, listened to other Aboriginal researchers, read research done by Aboriginal people and then applied the process to my own research. In my research process, I prayed, met with people, listened in talking circles, fasted for four days twice,

came back to my findings, and shared my findings with those who were involved in the research. After this was done, I came to the following conclusions:

- There is a common history of Native people from life close to the land, to colonization.

- attempts at assimilation, to a time of re-emergence. Though there are many different nations in Canada, there are similar threads in our history. Any study done using traditional Native research methods is a part of the great history of Native people within Canada.

- The traditional ways are holistic and incorporate all ways of knowing. These ways are with a history of these holistic ways of knowing and are not the same as the ways that separate science from other ways of knowing.

- Traditional Native research methods emphasize the responsibility of knowledge. This

- Responsibility extends beyond any specific point of knowledge to the impact of the learning on the community.

- Traditional Native research implies action as well as reflection. This shifting from societal to personal views is a normal part of traditional Native research methods and is linked to the ways that we are taught interdependence and responsibility. It is also through personal reflection that integrity of the research is gained with personal honesty.

- Traditional Native research is about service. The skills of academic research are viewed as a gift that is earned and is to be used to assist the community.

- o Traditional Native research involves many ways of listening, which include prayer. (Please remember that in my research I used prayer and still the dissertation received an award from a highly recognized group of researchers).

- o Traditional Native research involves personal honesty. The disclosure of this personal honesty brings strength to the research process. This honesty not only includes reflection, but also up-front facing of biases and the influence of personal experiences.

- o Traditional Native research comes from the knowledge of traditional Native epistemology. Native culture influences all aspects of a Native person's life and life view.

- o Traditional Native research involves focusing on a problem with the intention of finding a deeper understanding that will provide insight into a solution. What I have come to call "The journey to the point of peace".

- o Each researcher is unique and the definition of the process must allow for the uniqueness and still provide definition to the historical principles that have guided us in research for many years.."(p.44-45)

.   Following this, I was invited to join the Aboriginal Ethics Working Group with the Canadian Institute for Health Research (2007). Peace is seen as element of Indigenous Ethics and can be considered to be within sacred space. A working definition was needed that would protect the sacred teachings of peace while allowing the teachings of peace to go forward within Indigenous Ethics and Indigenous Research. The challenge of defining a peace process continued and over time, I realized that there would need to be ways of defining peace in a manner that

would both protect the sacred knowledge of peace and allow a teaching of peace to go forward into ethical space.

Method

How do we explain peace in research? To answer this question, I had to apply a working definition to many groups: members of the law society, educators, researchers, teachers, members of the community and students. Over sixteen years while using Indigenous Research, and Indigenous Ethics I worked to define the peace process that was being used.

The first opportunity began with my dissertation (2001) when the Native students worked with non-native students within an urban high school in Edmonton. Shortly after this worked was done with the Alberta Mediators Association. The work was presented to Saybrook University graduate students for their work with Native communities. Following this work was done with professionals and students who work with students with special needs. With individuals and with small groups the peace process was practiced.

The purpose of this writing is to share the simple peace process that was used. Peace can both be protected in sacred space and also defined in ways that allow peace to be a part of ethics and research. This peace process was developed over sixteen years in working with youth, mediators, and professionals. There may be many ways to define peace within each of us and within our communities. I come in peace as I share these words.

Indigenous Research

I knew that I would have to follow the Indigenous Research method as I journeyed to both define a Working Indigenous Peace Process and to implement that process within the community. The method was the same as experienced and researched during my dissertation work (2001)

Role of the Elder

There had been a change in my life. Prior to this research process, my elder invited me into the circle where ceremony was performed in becoming an elder.

Common history of Native people from life close to the land

I went back to the basic teachings that I had received about finding times of sovereign and sacred dialogue with the land.

The traditional ways are holistic and incorporate all ways of knowing

The process of articulating the Working Indigenous Peace Process came through tight focus on my traditional teachings and what was acceptable in work.

Traditional Native research methods emphasize the responsibility of knowledge.

Responsibility for the Working Indigenous Peace Process and for the implementation was accepted throughout the journey. What did surprise me later was how quickly others would do the same.

Traditional Native research implies action as well as reflection.

By returning to a place of peace on the land, I continuously reflected on whether or not the process was acceptable, viable, and helpful.

Traditional Native research is about service.

The Working Indigenous Peace Process was shared through conference design, research work, teaching in the classroom, sharing with other teachers, researchers, sharing with psychologists, lawyers, leaders, and then after each time, reflecting on the process.

Traditional Native research involves many ways of listening, which include prayer.

I followed the sacred ways that were passed on to me, and this will not be written about.

Traditional Native research involves personal honesty.

The Working Indigenous Peace Process requires honesty. The sacred ways maintained a high level of protocol.

Traditional Native research comes from the knowledge of traditional Native epistemology.

The peace process and this traditional Indigenous Research method required that I needed to apply the Working Indigenous Peace Process to all aspects of my working life.

Traditional Native research involves focusing on a problem with the intention of finding a deeper understanding that will provide insight into a solution.

I needed to find out if the Working Indigenous Peace Process worked and if solutions would be found.

Sovereignty – A Personal Journey

For me the ethics of peace begins in a sacred place on the land. This becomes a sacred time when traditional knowledge comes. I discover new ways of working within this complex world. The place of peace for me must begin with my own sovereignty, accountability, and wisdom gathering. From this place, the ethics of peace goes with me, as I go forward back into this complex world. Years ago I learned that people from other cultures or teachings could sit on the land and have a place of dialogue with the land. In some ways I now realize that of course it is one land, water and air. Perhaps cultures around do the same and sit in dialogue with the land.

Wisdom Gathering

We would sit in a circle and greet each other with peace. Then we could share and gather wisdom from each other. The qualities of this sharing were guided by the ethics of doing no

harm and by remaining within an ethical place of dialogue. We shared with respect, the sovereignty of each person in the circle and we allowed them to speak their truth. When there was a question or a problem that we chose to focus on, we all shared equally in finding the solution during that time. We also were respectful of the impact of that gathering on the community around us.

Results

When working with groups these were the steps that were followed and were found to be helpful.

Steps for the Working Indigenous Peace Process

1. Sovereignty in preparation

2. Choosing to be responsible

3. Identifying the problem/topic

4. Allowing a sovereign voice

5. Wisdom gathering to the place of finding the solutions

6. Committing to go forward in peace

7. Accepting responsibility for peace outside the circle

8. Sovereignty

When the Process of Peace Takes Time

There are times when finding peace takes time, and some questions may take me a lifetime of learning and even then I will only be able to pass on the small part of what I know when it is time. Returning to the circle, for me, requires me to return to a place of sovereign dialogue with the land prior to returning to the circle. Then each step was repeated for as long as there is the

need, the capacity, the continued commitment or until peace was found. I have come to learn that allowing peace to grow works best.

Sharing and Learning

100% of Aboriginal students stayed in school when sharing this process forward with Native students and students of other cultural backgrounds (2001, p. 44). Within the schools there were successes in ethics, engagement, retention and achievement as measured by district data. Youth who have been identified as having extremely violent behaviors taught the Working Indigenous Peace Process to others. Many problems were solved along the way using this method. When working with other groups I learned that these teachings can go forward into the world of law, business, economics, leadership and health.

There was a time when I included the term, "Giving Back", but I later was reminded of my own words, "We were taught to give back to the land, and the rest is about leadership." Giving back or exchanging did take place in many ways rather spontaneously when I didn't include it in the teachings, so I have left it out. The gifting with the land for me is a sacred place or process so this will not be shared in this writing.

I came to learn through the youth that they could facilitate peace and that they would value this process deeply. Quietly, I had shared the question, ``Is it possible that our most troubled youth actually understand peace?" and I found that the answer was a deep and resounding yes. Perhaps our complex world could learn from this as well.

The Peace Process was a part of the Indigenous Research Process that was used and assisted with conflicts in maintaining an Indigenous Ethics Process.

Conclusions

The Place for Peace in Research

Peace is a place of Sacred Traditional Knowledge. The Working Indigenous Peace Process allowed me to teach the ways of peace in ethics and in research. The process continues to grow and it can be passed forward. The Working Indigenous Peace Process, when used within Indigenous Research methods has allowed the teachings of peace to go forward into a place of ethics and research.

Implications within Psychology

Watching Peace Grow

The first implication is in how we define Indigenous Research and Ethics within Psychology. Will peace be a part of that process? Secondly when I watch peace grow, I have come to learn that there are ways of learning wellness, balance and wholeness. Over time we may come to recognize these four aspects as being a part of Indigenous Psychology.

- Peace

- Wellness

- Balance

- Wholeness

Defining Indigenous Psychology may take many researchers and many years. Can the Working Indigenous Peace Process survive this rigor? Time will tell and much wisdom will be gained.

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