

Journal of Indigenous Research

Full Circle: Returning Native Research to the People

Volume 9 | Issue 2021

Article 3

February 2021

Indigenous Utmost Care

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Recommended Citation

Hains, Shaun L. Ph.D. (2021) "Indigenous Utmost Care," *Journal of Indigenous Research*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 2021 , Article 3.

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Indigenous Utmost Care

Cover Page Footnote

I acknowledge the history and the land of many Indigenous Histories within Treaty Six in Canada

Abstract

Indigenous Psychology can include land-based indicators of validity and reliability. With the question, “How do we earn our eagles over our schools?”, the youth, community, schools, and Nations began with a commitment with the land. The care of the land led to student leadership and the eagles literally began to fly above the schools. Now the work in health and education could include a relevant land-based indicator that could be celebrated. As the eagle feather is used with Indigenous Voice, now the eagles above the schools became a statement of wholeness. With many systems of support for youth, the sharing within complex cases could now also include song. Twenty-two eagles flew above, around the schools and the work was complete when an eagle literally flew over the Métis and Treaty Six flags. With nine different sites and common methods of Indigenous Intervention, while working collaboratively with many professionals, the issues of land trauma, trauma, Indigenous voice, and support could become Indigenous Validity.

Keywords: Land, Trauma, Health, Youth, Indigenous Intervention, Indigenous Validity

Introduction

I was working with multiple sites, with permission from the Assistant Superintendent and then later the Principals of the schools. With the land teaching me, the eagles began to soar in the skies. The eagle, like the eagle feather is a commonly recognized sign and meaningful way for Indigenous North Americans. As I hold my eagle feather, I can speak with this sacred item and fully understand the Sacred (Garcia, 2014).

Utmost of Care is a term developed by this writer to explain the process that involves several professionals, assistants, liaison workers, and the systems around a school for the support of the youth. The professions have ethics, utmost care is also the responsibility of others collaboratively in the care for youth. Utmost care is a term to represent the work and focus that is required to allow many professionals to remain focused on the work within complex needs.

Methodology

Utmost of care includes a unique awareness, qualities of wisdom, and understanding intervention moments and methods. The systems of utmost care involve multiple professions, and each have their own unique standards and methods. Leading change can happen when teams of professionals examine complex needs, through a complex case conference, when many professions can gather with a review of work around a single child. Finding solutions through a collaborative case conference is not uncommon when concerns are shared. With nine different sites and common methods of Indigenous land and language used, the results became validated by the land. This author chose to use the eagles' flights above, and around community to validate, that the work was good. So commonly I had seen eagles flying above community, an Indigenous joy. The results were with the celebration of twenty-two eagles around our schools. This research question, "How do we earn our eagles around our school?", was studied for three years. When a bald eagle flew over the School District's main office, above the Treaty

and Métis flags in 2018, this writer knew that the work was complete. The youth led leadership was about the care of the land. One may ask, what does it mean when eagles fly above our schools, and my common response during these times remained the same, “We must be doing something right.” The need is identified by the District Leaders: The first need was student success, then Indigenous student trauma was the second need. The more specific concerns around trauma included entry to school, speech, literacy, numeracy, family, and community support.

The definition of an intervention now required an Indigenous process of analysis, response, clarity and voice. The professionals involved provided the treatment plans. Wholeness is unique to each Indigenous Community (Hains, 2001) (Garcia, 2014), the eagle is a commonly known indicator and eagles dancing in the skies can mean a moment of wholeness. To intervene using Indigenous Methods for me required an indicator of land led validity and reliability. I chose to recognize the eagles as such an indicator. The eagle feather is used commonly to represent Indigenous voice and the eagle is a North American Indigenous sign of validity and reliability.

Often the youth when nervous or unsure, what was done, was practice with vowels, and songs to allow for breathing, story songs, song sharing, and understanding that articulating a vowel within an Indigenous language and English may be different. The rhythm of the song was also used with school entry or exit as the gentle walk with my moccasins began with the students. We would pause and dialogue or quietly enter the classroom. The land was of course a joy, we would place sage on the land, sing, dance, and watch the animals come close to the school, homes, and community. The geese flew above, the rabbits hopped on the fields, the ducks came by small ponds, hawks flew nearby, eagles came by the schools, homes and communities, and songbirds came to the trees. Indigenous Research now involving the land, (Blume, 2020) (Hains,2001) (Hains, 2011) (Garcia, 2014) with the youth, schools, homes, communities and Nations allows for the wholeness of learning collaboratively to be meaningful.

This was an important time for the youth learned that the land was happy and then the youth began to lead. Traction in leadership often requires a need (Hains, 2001). For the youth, the land was the need, (Hains S. , 2011) (Hains, 2001). Prior to this work, for three years 100% Native high school students remained in school (Hains, 2001), and then later with youth who were diagnosed with Severe Conduct Disorder, 100% of the Native Students successfully completed their diploma exams and were able to graduate with the other Native Students while using a Peace Process (Hains, 2011). With complex cases, multiple sites, the focus on trauma, the land led leadership with nature caused the students to respond with leadership.

The community began to assist with the making or providing of drums for the youth. The vowel became a song that was later sung in front of community. Twice during the school years such community gatherings took place. The land was a joy for one could ask if the validity and reliability indicators were valued, and this was witnessed in the songs and dances of the youth. The land story to song and dance as the eagles danced in the skies. There are many assistants within a school or school district, when the eagle flew over the Métis and Treaty Six flags in 2018, I knew that it was a sign of joy for all who had helped. The rhythm with the land, and work with youth included many professions.

I began to pause with the youth and utilize specific amounts of time, 5 minutes for finding solutions, 15 minutes to pause, sing or dialogue, 50 minutes when the larger group would work collaboratively. The game with the youth often involved finding solutions. I switched to using round protractors, grids or graph paper, and colors, the questions that the students asked led to methods of communicating solutions, or wholeness. The longer sentences using subordinate conjunction, or verb participle beginnings allowed the students to create with more complex thought. The communication could now include numeracy patterns, and artwork that was contextually three dimensional and relevant. Discussing how the wisdom from these moments of pause for learning and sharing could be later used within the workplace was to allow the extension of relevance. The rhythm of quickness, a skill worthy of

note for an adult teaching safety in the workplace. Safety, an important word within a school, community and nation. Pause for safety, how, when, where, why, who? How do we explain this by counting eagles around our schools? This could be explained through love of land, and language. Literacy grew with the development of sentences and rhythm.

Land

While walking upon the soft leaves of the fall, the geese flew with strength as I entered the school. Pausing to notice the spotted eagle above the school, I knew that we were doing something well. Hearing reports of the hawks in the neighborhood with so many Indigenous Nations in the area, the diplomacy within the fluency of life around the school was alive.

Wholeness

Soft were the moccasins in rhythmic time

Pause, breath, sing and soar

Within came the leadership this time

Soft were the moccasins on the floor.

Numeracy became a process of patterns and contextual design. The story of the land through math:

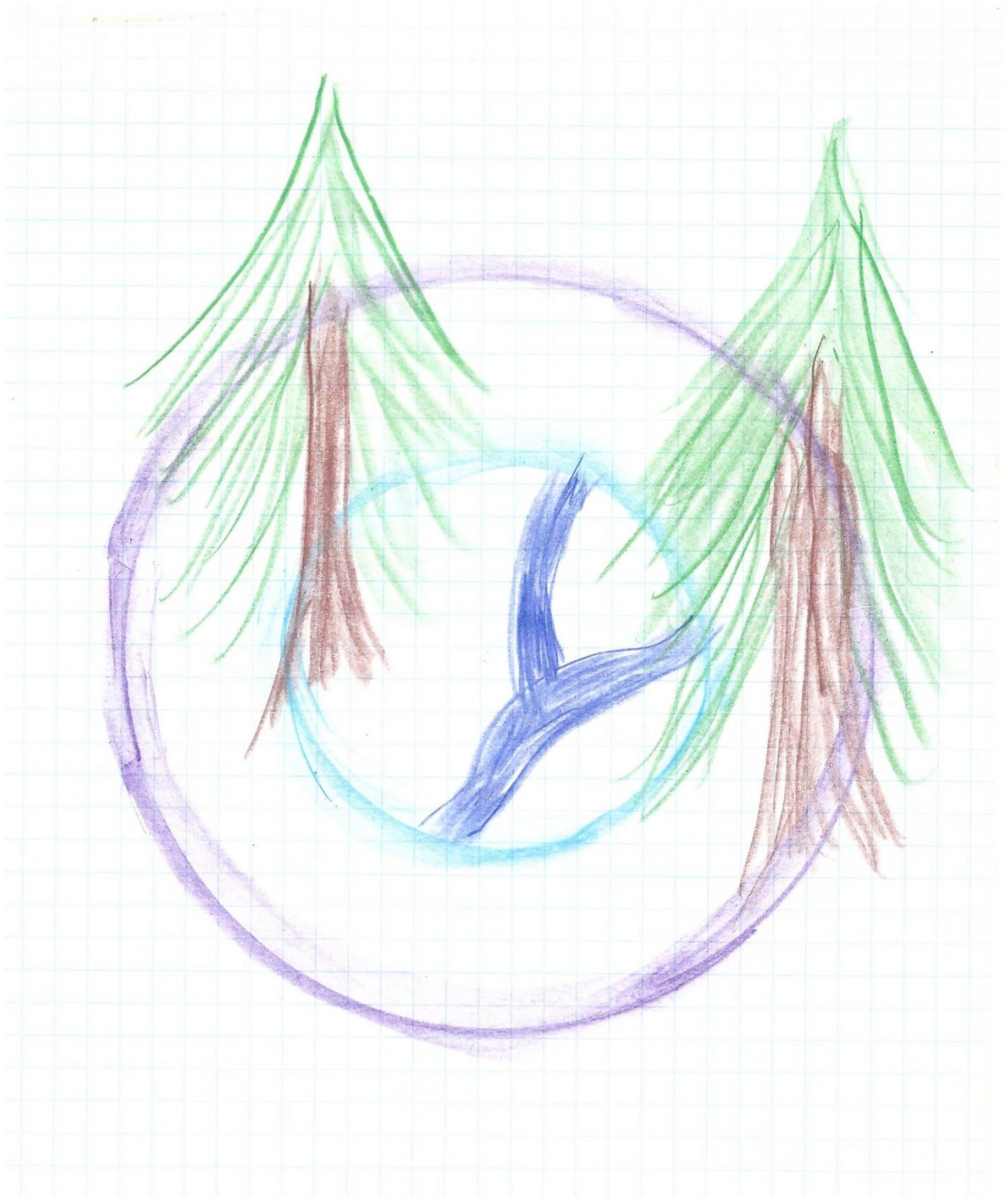


Figure 1. The Fluency

Discussion

The pause as an Indigenous Intervention whether in a case conference, playground, school, or community began to make sense. As the students began to list leadership qualities of ethics, this included the love of the land and language. There was a need for a pause. The success with the students inspired the school and the community. The success indicators of attendance, treatment plans, care plans, transition plans, could pause for song, dance, sharing, and youth leadership. The congruence of the process worked with the land as the youth led. The reliability and validity indicators, the eagles that represent that voice with the eagle feather was a validation and reliability that became whole. (Garcia, 2014) The new variables for research were introduced:

- The Land
- The Pause
- Quickness
- Timing and Rhythm

Within many Indigenous moments the Love of Many Nations existed as the eagles provided the validity and reliable measures around many professions, many communities, and many youths. Seldom have we included such common understanding within professions and ethics.

Context

Context was taught with the love of the land, language, moccasins, with the soft shoe walk with the land, the quality of the dialogue, or the context of the community. Context as a health term was shared and was understood as a part of a dialogue with education, health, peoples and land. Context allows for non-verbal sharing that was needed while the students adjusted to the new school each day.

The Pause

There are times when complex issues require a review of the vowel sounds, breathing and songs; however, I have also learned to do this as a method of translating the need for a pause within professional gatherings, schools, communities, and allowing the wisdom to grow collaboratively. The pause that includes an Indigenous song can be understood as the demonstration of a point of order within a professional gathering to explain within Multiple Indigenous moments. During those times, people can feel comfortable in sharing, and working collaboratively to find solutions. Do Indigenous Peoples find solutions through the love of land, language and song, yes repeatedly. Can we use a pause stop within a board room or an agenda, through song, as we introduce this more gently than a speech with a speech while holding an eagle feather, yes? When I use a song, every time the moment of pause, even among professionals has been well received.

Results

With twenty-two eagles, came many answers around a process of utmost care that involved many adults, professionals, assistants, and systems of care for children. Earning our eagles around the school was about the care for life on the land around the school and community.

Points of Order as a Psychologist/Educational Leader/Leader during those years focused on:

- The Land
- The Vowel
- Utmost Care for Health
- The Indigenous roles within Health/Education
- Complex Care and Supports

Learning how to guide a board room requires wisdom of Board Room Rules, and the understanding of a Point of Order and a Position of Privilege. For me, the music comes from the love of the land and language and often with a dance of fluency. A song had been used in one third of the situations requiring a pause to find solutions for youth. Songs, like the eagle feather (Garcia, 2014) are a part of recognizing the Sacred work and Wholeness.

Was there health in a pause? The health was determined through the feedback from youth, parents, care-providers, systems of professionals, and reviewed. The determinants of health were complex with the treatment plans for the youth, and the dialogue was time to review the effectiveness of systems of support with an intent for utmost care for complex needs that included the schools and communities. The results remained positive with the indicators and the feedback throughout those years.

Implications for Research

With the fluency of life around the schools, community and Nations, the youth can learn with greater ethics in a contest that support health and learning. Defining Indigenous Interventions as an Indigenous Pause, required thorough review by youth, homes, communities, professionals, and Nations and continued. Indigenous indicators of eagles were used for validity and reliability and completed this work in 2018 when the eagle flew above the flags.

When defining terms for Indigenous Research (Hains, 2001), (Hains S. , 2011) the land allowed for this learning about Complexities of Leadership with professions, assistants, schools, and wholeness.

- Indigenous Voice
- Indigenous Position of Privilege
- Indigenous Pause
- Indigenous Indicators with the land
- Indigenous Intervention within systems of support

- Indigenous Context
- Indigenous Qualities within a Dialogue
- Indigenous Responsibility within Society
- Indigenous Land
- Indigenous Languages

Conclusion

Monitoring the need for Indigenous Interventions and Methods allowed the opportunity for the land to respond with the fluency of life that is commonly recognized by the schools, homes, communities, and Nations. Indigenous Methods included indicators of validity and reliability that were congruent with the eagle feather and voice. As Indigenous methods were maintained, the dialogue changed to allow youth leadership. Youth Leadership when placed next to (Association A. P., 2015) (Association C. P., 2017) (Behnke, 2014) (Garcia, 2014) (Hains, An Emerging Voice: A study using traditional Aboriginal Research Methods, 2001) (Hains S. , 2011) previous work, allow researchers to find wholeness with natural signs of validity. What becomes obvious is the important role of youth leadership with land, ethics, and implementation.

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