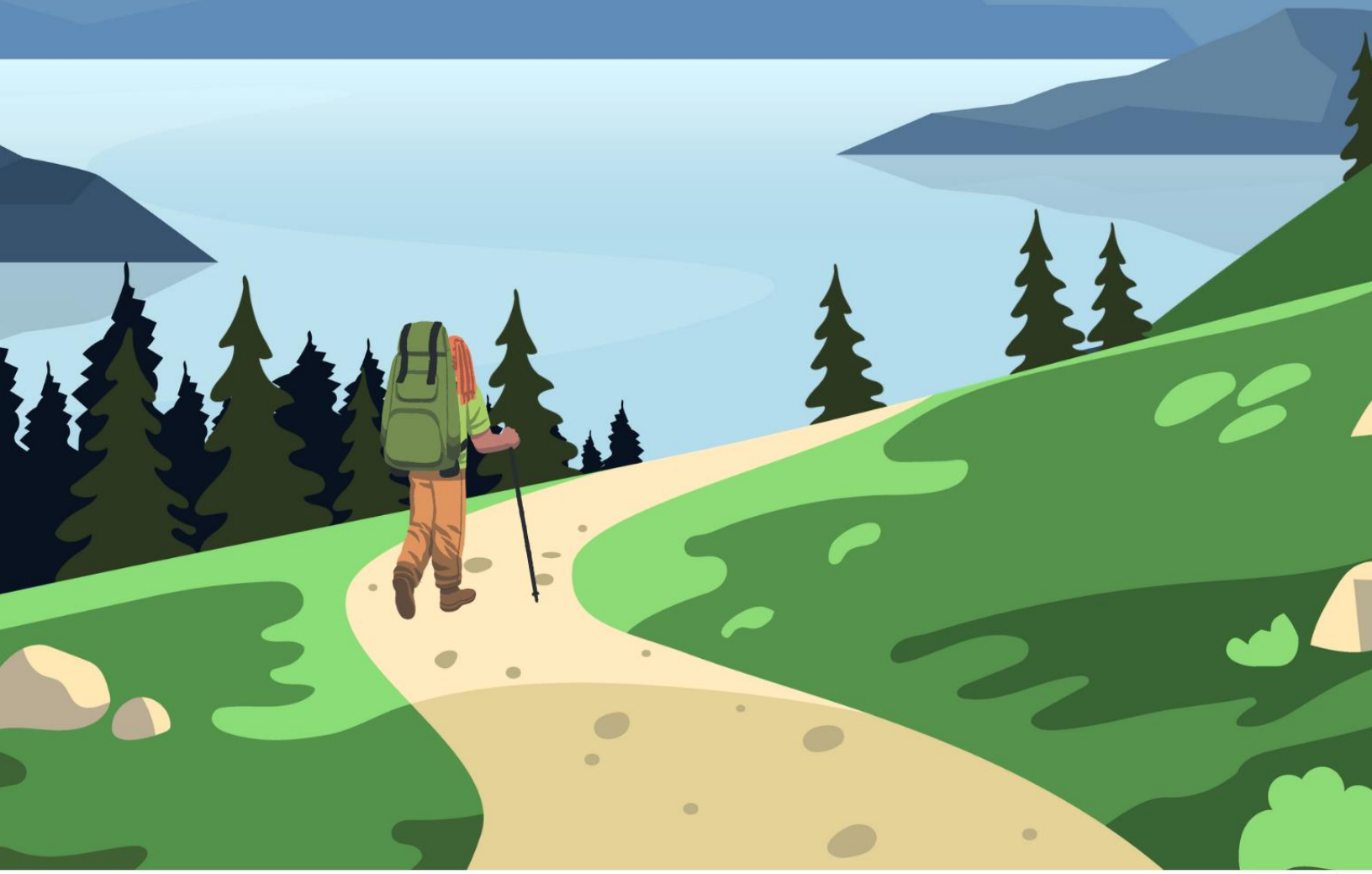
Working in Good Relation:

An Educational Toolkit on Indigenous Truths, Resistance, and Shared Strength



CONGRÈS DES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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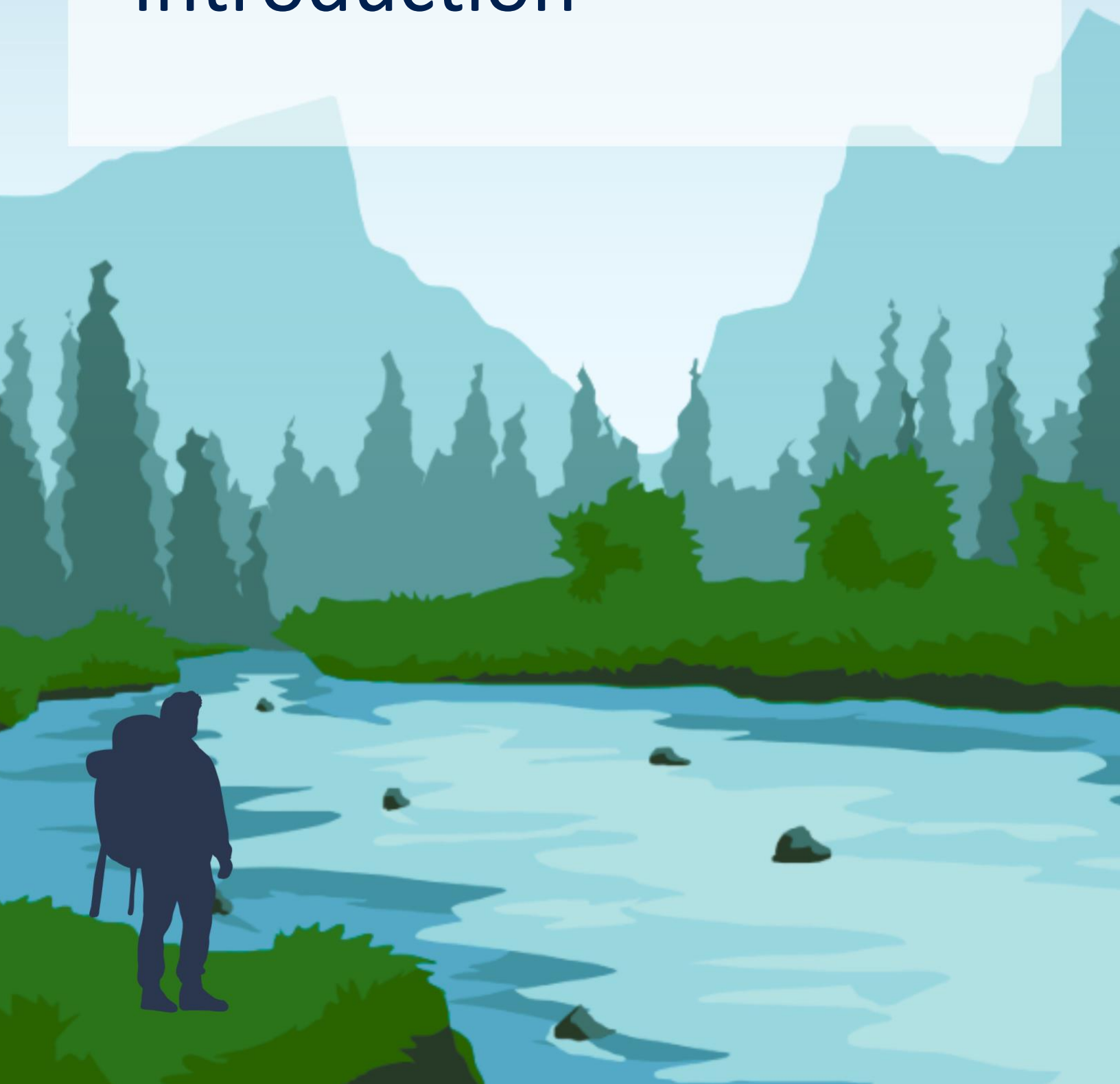
Contents

Module 1

Introduction



This Module will take you about 5-10 minutes to complete.

Acknowledging the Land

We acknowledge that we live, work, and gather on the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples who have cared for these lands, widely recognized as Canada, since time immemorial. From coast-to-coast-to-coast, we acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. We recognize that these lands are home to many distinct Indigenous Peoples whose presence continues to enrich communities. We are grateful for the opportunity to work on these lands and commit ourselves to the ongoing process of reconciliation.

Acknowledging the People

We would like to thank the many people who contributed their knowledge, time, and effort to make this toolkit possible: The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP)'s project team, the CAP Indigenous Advisory Circle, and Subject Matter Experts.

Overview

This Indigenous educational toolkit is a learning journey that invites reflection, responsibility, and relationship.

Module 2: Systems of Oppression begins by naming the truth of harm. It is here that you will learn the histories and living legacies of colonialism that continue to shape our shared present.

From this grounding in history, **Module 3: Resistance as Care** offers tools for action: ways of learning, unlearning, and standing in relationship to resisting oppressive systems in our daily lives and work.

Module 4: Strength in Difference emphasizes looking toward the future with humility and care, celebrating the strength that emerges when diverse communities are supported, honoured, and held together in shared responsibility.

Certificate of Completion

After completing this toolkit, you may email CAP for a Certificate of Completion (instructions at the end of the toolkit).

Self-Care and Safety

Learning to resist systems of oppression can be hard.

Engaging with these discussions may surface feelings of discomfort, guilt, or shame. These are common reactions and a normal part of this process.

Personal growth happens when we bravely embrace discomfort. When we actively choose to reflect on what these feelings reveal, they can lead us to meaningful, accountable action.

Learners might find that certain topics can bring pain and hurt. Each Module will outline the content up front so learners can decide if and how they want to engage with each area.

Ideas for self-care tools

- Consider having a learning friend for both accountability and discussion. Be open with each other and figure out what shared support could look like.
- Take breaks or stretch breaks as you need.
- Get yourself snacks or water.
- Take a walk outdoors.
- Use other grounding exercises or stress reduction techniques, for example:

Try the 5-4-3-2-1 method: Working backward from 5, use your senses to list things you notice around you: 5 things you hear, 4 things you see, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.

Ideas for cultural support

- Connect with the land and nature.
- Smudge.
- Eat traditional food.
- Seek guidance from an Elder.
- Participate in traditional drumming and dancing.
- First Nations might choose to use the four sacred medicines.

If you are in distress, a list of crisis and professional resources is available below.

Crisis lines and resources

- **Hope for Wellness Helpline:** Indigenous people may receive immediate emotional support by contacting the Hope for Wellness Help Line toll-free at 1-855-242-3310, or by online chat at hopeforwellness.ca (for Indigenous people in English, French, Cree, Ojibwe, and Inuktut).

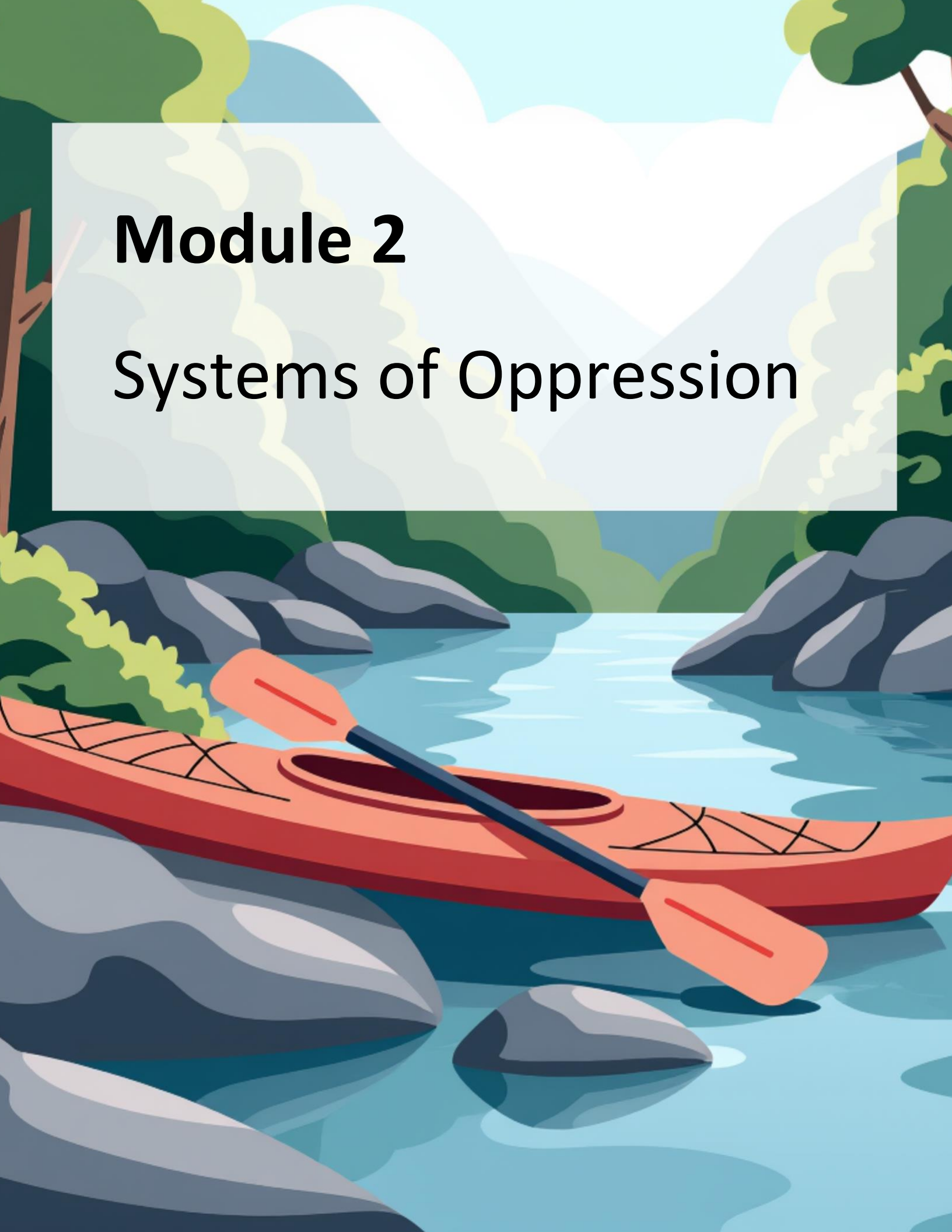
- **National Indian Residential School Crisis Line**: Survivors and family members of survivors may receive immediate emotional support by contacting the 24-hour National Indian Residential School Crisis Line toll-free at 1-866-925-4419.
- **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Crisis Line:** Those who are experiencing personal impacts resulting from the disappearances and murders of Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, and LGBTQQIA+ people associated with the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls may access the MMIWG Crisis Line toll-free at 1-844-413-6649 (English and French language options).
- **Talk 4 Healing (Beendigen)**: Talking 4 Healing has a variety of translators on staff to support Indigenous people (in English, French, and translators can be offered for Indigenous languages). Access the line at 1-855-554-4325 or 1-855-554-HEAL.
- **2SLGBTQ+ Specific Resources:**
    - **Trans Lifeline:** Radical community care run for and by trans people. Call (877) 330-6366.
    - **The Trevor Project:** Provides 24/7 information & support to 2SLGBTQ+ young people. Call 1-866-488-7386 or text 678678.
    - **LGBT YouthLine:** Free support through an Ontario-wide 2SLGBTQ+ peer-support Helpline. Text 647-694-4275.
- **General Mental Health and Crisis Help Lines:**
    - **Talk Suicide Canada:** Call or text 9-8-8 for 24/7, bilingual, free, and confidential mental health and suicide prevention support.
    - **Alberta Mental Health Line:** 1-877-303-2642
    - **British Columbia Mental Health Support Line:** 310-6789 (no area code needed)
    - **Manitoba Klinic Crisis Line:** 204-786-8686
    - **New Brunswick Mental Health Helpline Call:** 1-866-355-5550 (bilingual)
    - **Newfoundland and Labrador Mental Health Help Line:** 811
    - **Northwest Territories Mental Health and Wellness Support Line:** 811
    - **Nova Scotia Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Line:** 1-888-429-8167
    - **Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line:** 1-800-265-3333 (In Iqaluit 979-3333)
    - **ConnexOntario Helpline:** 1-866-531-2600
    - **PEI Mental Health and Addictions Phone Line:** 1-833-553-6983
    - **Québec Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553)
    - **Saskatchewan Health Line**: 811
    - **Yukon Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services:** 1-866-456-3838

Definitions

A full glossary of definitions (throughout the toolkit as bolded terms) is available at the end of this toolkit.

Overall Learning Goals

- **Understand colonial history and its ongoing impact** on Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- **Recognize and respond to anti-Indigenous racism and microaggressions** in personal and workplace contexts.
- **Reflect on power, privilege, and social justice practices** to support more equitable relationships.
- **Practice cultural safety as a shared, relational responsibility** in everyday interactions.
- **Support decolonization and honour Indigenous resurgence** in both personal and professional settings.
- **Value individual identities and lived experiences** as strengths that enrich communities.
- **Learn about 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion,** and how colonial systems have created effects on gender diversity, sexual orientation, and Two-Spirit identities.



Module 2

Systems of Oppression

This Module will take you about 75-90 minutes to complete.

Content Warning: This module includes high-level descriptions of colonization, starvation, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the Millenium Scoop. It also includes brief mentions of Indian Hospitals and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

Learning Goals

1. Examine how colonial practices were established and how they continue to harm Indigenous people today.
2. Understand what anti-Indigenous racism is and how it shows up in the workplace and in personal interactions.
3. Recognize how colonial narratives and stereotypes maintain inequity.
4. Develop skills for accountable allyship and solidarity with Indigenous communities.

Colonialism

Colonialism is the violent, historical practice of European expansion into territories already inhabited by Indigenous people for the purposes of capturing new lands and removing natural resources. It is rooted in the violent suppression of Indigenous peoples' governance, legal, social, and cultural structures. It was a systematic process of forced **assimilation**, exclusion, and degradation of Indigenous ways of life.

Indigenous people continue to be impacted by government laws and systems that were created to force them into colonial structures and ways of life. Some examples of colonial structures include the government, education, healthcare, and justice systems.

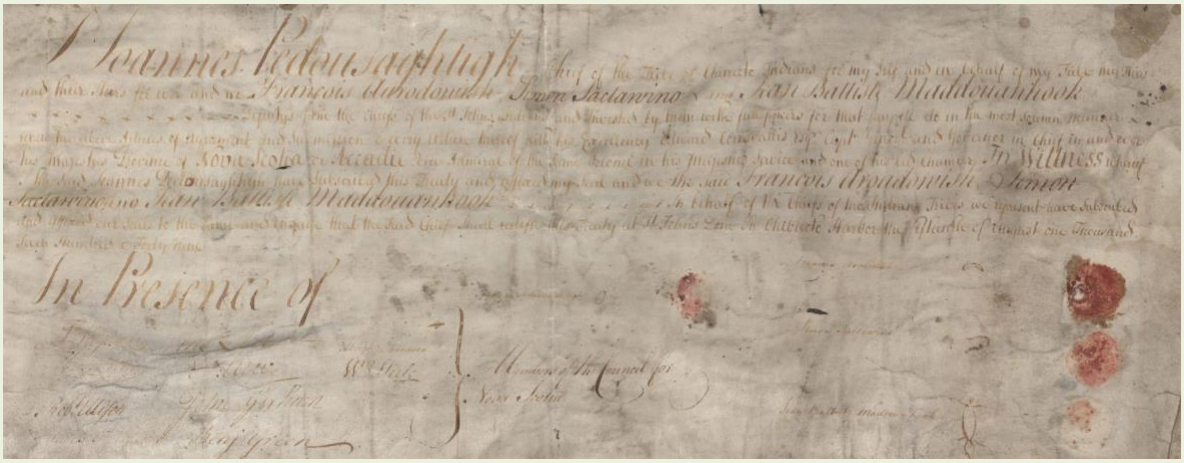
Colonization has shown up in several ways, including:

- Legislation;
- The introduction of the RCMP to control and confine Indigenous people;
- Overhunting of animals; and
- The introduction of diseases and invasive species that harmed Indigenous people and the land they relied on to survive.

History Snapshot: The Evolution of Treaties

Beginning on the East Coast, the Peace and Friendship Treaties (first signed in 1725 and 1726) were created after a series of battles between the Mi'gmaq and French vs. the Wolastoqiyik and English in an effort to put an end to the hostilities between the groups and foster growing cooperation. The Peace and Friendship Treaty explicitly stated that the Mi'gmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Passamaquoddy did not surrender or cede their land, hunting, fishing or livelihood rights. This would continue in modern times.

As Europeans made their way to the West Coast, they began creating treaties that would benefit themselves over the Indigenous Peoples that lived in the area, with the purpose of forcing genocide or assimilation into their society. Unlike the Peace and Friendship Treaty, other treaties would restrict where Indigenous Peoples could live, hunt, gather and travel.



1749 Renewal at Chebucto [Halifax] of the Treaty of 1725 – signed by several British, New England, and Nova Scotia figures, plus four Mi'kmaw leaders.

[1]

[1] Settler Colonialism in Acadie/Mi'kma'ki

Timeline of Colonization and Separation

Colonization

Colonization, in what is now widely recognized as Canada, began with early contact between Indigenous people and European settlers in the 15th and 16th centuries. Initial trade and diplomacy quickly shifted toward land acquisition, control, and settlement. European powers asserted sovereignty over Indigenous lands without consent, relying on doctrines that treated Indigenous people as obstacles to expansion rather than nations with their own laws, governance systems, and relationships to land. Treaties were often misunderstood, broken, or imposed, while settlement expanded through force, coercion, and displacement.

By the 19th century, colonization was formalized through policies and laws like the Indian Act, reserve system, and federal control over Indigenous identity and governance, aiming to assimilate and eliminate Indigenous nationhood. Colonial policies restricted cultural practices, criminalized ceremonies, and centralized authority in the government's hands.

These systems were not accidental or neutral; they were deliberately constructed to secure land, resources, and political control for settlers while undermining Indigenous self-determination.

Separation from land was central to colonization. Indigenous people were forcibly removed from their traditional territories and confined to reserves, often located on marginal or resource-poor land. Access to hunting grounds, waterways, and sacred sites was restricted or eliminated, disrupting economies, food systems, governance, and spiritual relationships that had existed for generations. Pass systems, permits that restricted Indigenous people from selling goods, and land surrender policies further limited their ability to move freely or maintain connections to their territories. Lands were then opened to settlement, extraction, and development without Indigenous consent.

History Snapshot: The Imposition of Indian Agents[2]

Indian Agents were federal officials that managed affairs on First Nations reserves from the 1830s to the 1960s. Acting as on-reserve wardens, they:

- Controlled travel through pass systems;
- Had authority over First Nation's resources;
- Controlled First Nation's governance;
- Directed and supervised agricultural activities;
- Restricted opportunities to participate in business activities;
- Suppressed and erased cultural practices; and
- Enforced residential school attendance.

By treating Indigenous people as wards of the state, the government diminished and undermined Indigenous peoples' authority and autonomy. By framing communities as incapable and reinforcing dependency narratives, Indigenous people were denied the right to self-determination.

[2] The Canadian Encyclopedia – Indian Agents in Canada

History Snapshot: Inuit Disc Numbers and Project Surname[3]

From 1941 to 1978, the Canadian government gave every **Inuk** in the Arctic a personal number, called a disc number, which was put on a small leather or fibre disc. This system was used to track **Inuit** for things like hunting, medical care, education, housing, and food. The disc numbers replaced traditional names for official purposes, making the Inuit the only Canadians required to use numbers to access basic services.

In 1970, the federal government launched Project Surname, a program intended to replace the personal disc numbers and assign last names to Inuit in northern Canada. Some Inuit and non-Inuit viewed Project Surname as a more effective and politically correct system of identification. Others saw it as another instrument of colonialism and **paternalism**.

Case Study: Trading Companies in the North

For many Inuit communities, trading companies were more than businesses; they were deeply connected to colonial systems that reshaped life in the North. Inuit trappers often brought furs to trading posts in exchange for essential supplies like food, tools, and clothing. Despite claims of fair trade, fur prices were controlled by the companies, while store goods were expensive, leaving many Inuit trappers in constant debt and rarely able to get ahead financially.

The system also fostered dependence. As colonial industries grew and external systems replaced traditional ways of living, Indigenous people were increasingly pushed into relying on trading posts and merchants for basic necessities.

Many Inuit Elders and community members remember this history as deeply harmful and degrading. Hunters and providers who had long supported their families through land-based knowledge were placed into a system that kept them constantly dependent on outside merchants. Some community

[3] The Canadian Encyclopedia – Inuit Disc Numbers

members compare the impact of these systems to that of other colonial institutions, which undermined dignity, independence, and traditional ways of life.

Despite this history, the role of trading companies in colonialism is discussed less often in mainstream Canadian narratives. They are often remembered simply as historic businesses rather than part of a broader system of control and assimilation.

Reflection Exercise

How might understanding the role of trading companies in Inuit communities change the way we think about institutions or symbols that are often celebrated in Canadian history?

Separation

Colonialism also created separation from family, community, and culture. The government constructed **Treaties** and **Scrip** systems. Families would be divided, with some choosing Scrip (**Métis**) and others choosing Treaties (**First Nations)**, meaning they were legally considered different, even if they came from the same family tree.

History Snapshot: The Scrip System[4]

The Métis scrip system was created by the Canadian government after the Red River Resistance. After the resistance, the government passed the Manitoba Act, which set aside 1.4 million acres of land for the children of Métis families. When this land was used up, the government introduced the scrip system. Instead of recognizing Métis land rights collectively, scrip gave certificates to people that could be exchanged for land, or money to buy land.

From the late 1800s to the early 1900s, government commissions travelled through Métis communities distributing scrip while treaty negotiations with First Nations were also taking place. Some accepted treaty and became Status Indians, while others accepted scrip and were classified as Métis.

The scrip system was deeply flawed and led to the widespread loss of Métis land. There were few protections against fraud, and land speculators often targeted Métis people. Many bought scrip for very low prices or forged people's names without their knowledge. Speculators then sold the scrip to banks or used it to claim land themselves. As a result, Métis people lost control of the vast majority of the land that had been promised to them.

Residential schools, day schools, and later the Sixties Scoop removed children from their families to sever the transmission of language, culture, and identity. These systems caused profound emotional, physical, cultural, and intergenerational harm, positioning Indigenous families and ways of life as inferior or dangerous. Even after the closure of residential schools, child welfare systems, and education systems, social policies continued to disproportionately separate Indigenous children from their communities. This separation was not a side effect of colonization but a core mechanism through which colonial control persisted.

Colonization in Canada was not a single event, but a lengthy and intentional process carried out through laws, policies, and decisions made by people in power. These actions separated Indigenous people from

[4] Indigenous People's Atlas of Canada – Scrip

their lands, cultural fabric of family and community, and governance systems, creating divisions that would continue across generations.

This timeline shows how colonial policies built on one another over time, with government control enduring through class creation and distinctions-based approaches that categorize Indigenous people and act as gatekeepers to identity, recognition, and the ability to assert rights. It highlights how colonization continues to shape Indigenous lives in the present, not only the past.

Timeline of Colonization, Truth, & Reconciliation

- Colonial Practices
- Indigenous Resistance
- Truth & Reconciliation

1700s
The formation of Canada
As colonial powers were changing shape under a new flag, they separated Indigenous people into three categories: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. This was formalized over centuries of consistent effort and violence from the Canadian Government, the RCMP, churches, and politicians.

1725
Treaty of Peace and Friendship
The Peace and Friendship Treaty was created to put an end to the hostilities between the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, French and British in the Maritimes and Gaspe. This treaty did not address the surrender or cession of land, resources, or rights.

1764 - 1921
Other Treaties
Upper Canada, Vancouver Island, and Treaties 1-11 were established. These treaties ceded land and resources, and surrendered rights in exchange for clothing, payments, ammunition and certain hunting or fishing rights.

1816
The Battle of Seven Oaks
Rising tensions and competition over land, trade, and political control between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company resulted in the Battle. The Métis were victorious and the event is often considered the birth of Métis nationalism.

1831 - 1996
Residential Schools
First Nations children were forced to assimilate into Anglo-Saxon society by being removed from their families.

1850
Intensive Whaling
After overhunting in the 1700s, year-round colonial stations were established to continue the killing. This introduced the Inuit population to diseases their bodies were not equipped to fight off, and left devastating impacts.

1869 - 1921
The Métis Scrip
After the Red River Resistance, Métis Scrip was implemented to divide families. Indigenous people were forced to choose between the Scrip (Métis) or the Treaties (First Nation).

1872
Dominion Lands Act
This provided a legal basis for the establishment of the Scrip System and allowed free homestead to those who applied.

1900s
NWMP
The establishment of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) and NWMP entry to the Eastern Arctic. The NWMP would later evolve into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

1930S - 1980S
Indian Hospitals
The Canadian government established racially segregated “Indian hospitals” for the treatment of First Nations and Inuit. Hospitals were intended to further assimilationist goals and replace traditional healing with biomedicine.

1950s and 1960s
Sled Dog Slaughter
The Canadian Government approved the unjustified killing of more than 1,000 sled dogs by the RCMP and Québec police, some community teachers, and Hudson’s Bay Company employees. This led to food insecurity, loss of movement, and loss of Inuit traditions that has impacted generations.

1951 - 1980s
The 60s Scoop
The mass removal of more than 20,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children from their families by child welfare authorities. Children were placed in predominantly non-Indigenous homes and were separated from their cultures, languages, and communities.

1953 - 1955
Inuit Relocation
Inuit were forcefully relocated to further Northern Arctic locations in a genocidal policy meant to assert Canada’s claim to Arctic sovereignty.

1981
A Long Walk
Indigenous protesters began a 2,400km walk from Manitoba to Ontario to highlight the rights of First Nations people living off reservations.

1991 - Today
The Millennium Scoop
A continued system of removing Indigenous children from their homes and families to place them in foster care.

1999
The Nunavut Act
The Nunavut Act is the biggest land rights agreement signed in the history of Canada and Inuit, with Inuit reclaiming self-government.

2004
Sisters in Spirit Campaign
Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) launched the Sisters in Spirit Campaign to address the high levels of violence against Indigenous women in Canada.

2007
IRSSA
After survivors took Canada to court, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) was approved. It included payment to former students at Indian Residential Schools, as well as funds used for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and for the Truth & Reconciliation Commission.

2007

UNDRIP

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. 143 voted in favour, with Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States opposing.

2008

The Truth & Reconciliation Commission

With funding from IRSSA, the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was created to correctly document the history and impacts of Residential Schools. The Commission was intended to build a relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people based on truth and respect.

2012

Idle No More

Four Saskatchewan women started the Idle No More Movement. This act quickly transformed the conversation in Canada around Indigenous people.

2015

The United Nations

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women said that Canada violated the rights of Aboriginal women by failing to thoroughly investigate why they are targeted for violence.

2015

TRC Final Report

The TRC released its final report, titled *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future.*

2016

Daniels Decision

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in Daniels v. Canada that the federal government holds the legal responsibility to legislate on issues related to Métis and Non-Status Indians. The court found that Métis and Non-Status peoples are considered 'Indians' under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867.

2019

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls (MMIWG)

The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), titled *Reclaiming Power and Place* was officially released.

2013 & 2021

September 30th

September 30th was originally known as Orange Shirt Day in reference to Phyllis Webstad's (Northern Secwepemc) experience of attending residential school. The day was meant to honour the residential school survivors, and mourn the children who never made it home.

In June 2021, the Government of Canada passed a bill to make September 30th the National Day of Truth & Reconciliation.

2021

UNDRIP

Canada officially adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Act.

Reflection Exercise

In your self-reflection, consider the impact of colonialism and its progression.

The Legacy of Displacement and Dispossession

The legacy of **displacement** and **dispossession** continues to shape the lives of Indigenous people in what is now widely known as Canada. Forced removals disrupted governance, economies, food security, and spiritual relationships to the land, which are foundational to identity and wellbeing. Losing land also meant losing authority, as decision-making power over territories, resources, and community life was transferred to colonial institutions. These processes created enduring structural inequities, including:

- Poverty through wealth-building bans;
- Housing insecurity;
- Barriers to education;
- Barriers to health care; and
- Overrepresentation in child welfare and justice systems.

These outcomes are not the result of individual failure, but of deliberate policies that redirected wealth, land, and opportunity away from Indigenous people.

Dispossession has also produced deep intergenerational impacts, disrupting land, language, and cultural continuity, which impacts families and communities beyond one generation. Indeed, intergenerational trauma is recognized as a social determinant of health and wellbeing.

At the same time, Indigenous people have continuously resisted displacement, advocating for human and Indigenous rights through survival, adaptation, and resurgence. Land back movements, treaty rights advocacy, language revitalization, and community-led governance reflect ongoing efforts to repair what was taken and to reassert self-determination.

To understand social justice today, we must understand the history of displacement and dispossession. Many current inequalities come from these past and ongoing systems. Reconciliation requires more than acknowledging this history; it means restoring land, authority, and relationships.

> ***"You have to believe that doing something about this history is the right thing to do and you have to be fearless in doing what you can. This is not a time for the timid. It is a time for the daring."***
>
> \- Senator Murray Sinclair in his 2017 Convocation Speech

Reflection Exercise

Consider what you have learned in the History Snapshots (The Evolution of Treaties, The Imposition of Indian Agents, The Impact of Inuit Disc Numbers and Project Surname, and The Scrip System) as well as the events on the timeline.

- When you see the timeline showing the continued effects of colonialism from as early as the 1700's, what do you feel?
- Had you learned of any of the events before today? Why or why not?
- Which moments that you learned about do you personally feel left an impact?

Activity: Building out the Timeline

Pick one event and think about:

- Who benefited from this action or policy?
- Who was harmed, and how?
- What systems or institutions were strengthened by this event?
- What impacts of this event or policy are still visible today?

Activity: Additional Timeline Research

Take one event from the timeline and do some additional research on it.

If you have one, talk about it with your study-buddy or accountability partner.

Self-Care Break

Pause for a few minutes to recharge. Stretch, breathe deeply, grab a drink, or step outside, whatever helps you reset.

The Impact of Colonial Law

Although the following case studies span different contexts and time periods, they both illustrate how Canadian colonial laws, policies, and systems have deeply affected Indigenous lives. Systems were not designed with Indigenous rights in mind and have shaped and constrained Indigenous identity, family integrity, mobility, and access to services. These stories highlight how discrimination is often embedded in policy and practice, even when it is framed as neutral, administrative, or lawful.

The Indian Act and Bill S-3

The Indian Act has legislated division and inequity among Indigenous people. Many amendments have been made since it came to pass; some in response to court decisions. Passed in 2017, Bill S-3's initial purpose was to fix sex-based discriminatory registration rules within the Indian Act. These four problems included:

- Unknown/unstated parentage;
- Excluded minor children (children who lost status when their mother married a non-status man);
- The cousins issue (differential treatment among first cousins whose status depended on the sex of their grandparent); and
- The siblings issue (girls born out of wedlock between 1951-1985 who were denied status).

Today, these people are now eligible for status. While this Act provides opportunities for more people to apply for status, the government continues to determine who does and does not qualify for 'Indian' status.

Case Study: Sandra Lovelace-Nicholas

Sandra Lovelace-Nicholas is a Wolastoqiyik woman from Neqotkuk (Tobique) First Nation, New Brunswick. She was married to a non-Indigenous man from the United States, and when they divorced, she and their children moved from the U.S. back to her community of Neqotkuk in Canada.

Unfortunately, because she had married a non-Indigenous man, Sandra and her children were not considered Neqotkuk members under the Indian Act. Sandra and her children were forced to move between family members' homes as they had no other workable options at the time.

In the summer of 1977, Sandra joined a group of Indigenous women, and they occupied the Neqotkuk band office to try to end discrimination against Indigenous women in the Indian Act. This protest lasted

about four months and, with support from other community members, she and her children were finally allowed to stay in the community.

In 1981, Sandra brought her case to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, arguing against the discriminatory practices in the Indian Act and seeking to end it. Although the UN would rule in Sandra's favour, it would still be a few years before Canada would act.

Sandra Lovelace Nicholas and others continued making appeals to Canada to end gender-based discrimination in the Indian Act, resulting in Bill C-31.

Bill C-31 ruled that non-Indigenous women who had gained Status through marriage could keep their Status, and Indigenous women and their children who lost their Status through marriage could be reinstated. However, Bill C-31 still had limitations that continued to affect Indigenous women's rights, band membership, and ability to pass Status on to future generations.

Reflection Exercise

- What harms did Sandra and her children experience as a result of the Indian Act's rules on identity and membership?
- Who had the authority to decide who belonged to Neqotkuk and who did not?
- How did being an Indigenous woman and a mother intensify the consequences of losing Status?
- How do the dynamics in this case study continue to show up today?
- Why may community members have enforced rules that excluded other community members?
- At what level have you had to fight for justice, and why? What qualities did Sandra bring to her struggle?

Case Study: The Harms of the Child Welfare System

Patricia, a legally deaf Indigenous woman, was born and raised in the United States and worked for many years as a healthcare professional. When she moved to Canada with her children, they were taken away by the child welfare system. Determined to regain custody, Patricia committed to fighting for her rights as a parent.

During her court cases, multiple childcare and social work professionals recognized that Patricia was being held to a higher standard than a non-Indigenous parent. Her legal deafness, without a working

hearing aid, meant she could not fully follow conversations or properly review documentation, which added barriers to her ability to advocate for herself. Supporters emphasized that these accessibility challenges, combined with systemic bias, contributed to the unfair treatment she faced.

When Patricia tried to work in healthcare in Canada, she encountered further obstacles. Her U.S. healthcare credentials were initially marked non-transferable, and government officials discouraged her from pursuing further education. Additionally, the child welfare case had left a mark on her safety screening check, which threatened her eligibility for positions involving vulnerable communities.

Patricia's experience reflects the broader colonial history of child welfare systems in Canada, which have disproportionately intervened in Indigenous families, from residential schools to the Sixties Scoop and ongoing child welfare practices today. **Indigenous parents often face systemic bias and additional barriers that can lead to the separation of families.** Her experience also demonstrates how multiple identities like Indigeneity, gender, disability, and parenthood can intersect to produce compounded forms of discrimination.

Through persistent advocacy, Patricia was eventually able to secure funding for post-secondary education, regain custody of her children, and return to work in healthcare. She is now able to support her children financially while continuing her professional career.

Reflection Exercise

- What harm did Patricia experience as she navigated child welfare, the courts, and employment systems?
- Which harms are visible, and which are less visible or normalized?
- How did Patricia's identity (gender, disability, family status, or Indigeneity) intersect in this story?
- What assumptions did you notice in yourself while reading this story?
- In Patricia and Sandra's cases, they had to devote themselves full-time to seeking justice. What kind of opportunities might they, and their families, have missed?

Colonial Impact on Gender Roles, Identities, and Sexual Orientation

Before colonization, many Indigenous societies valued women's roles as central to family and community life. Women were respected as life-givers, teachers, and leaders within their households and **kinship systems**. They passed on cultural knowledge, cared for children, and helped sustain their

communities through activities like preparing food, making clothing, and guiding values such as respect for the land and animals.

The introduction of the Indian Act and European values of **patriarchy** had a severe impact on Indigenous women. This devalued and disrupted women's roles in families and communities, and weakened their influence in decision-making. For example, First Nations women were formally excluded from voting in or holding Band council positions until the Indian Act was amended in 1951.

Additionally, many Indigenous cultures have long recognized diverse gender identities and sexualities, often described today using the term **Two-Spirit**. Rather than fitting into a strict male/female binary, gender was understood as flexible and connected to roles, responsibilities, and spiritual identity. Two-Spirit people often held important cultural and social roles, such as healers, knowledge keepers, or mediators, and were respected within their communities.

Colonization disrupted these understandings of gender and sexuality by imposing rigid European norms that enforced binary gender roles and stigmatized non-conforming identities. Christian missionary influence, residential schools, and colonial laws worked to suppress Indigenous knowledge systems, including gender fluidity and sexual diversity. As a result, roles that were once respected became marginalized, and many of these traditions were silenced or lost. Today, there are ongoing efforts within Indigenous communities to reclaim and revitalize these understandings of gender and sexuality.

Role of Workplaces and Systems

Workplaces and systems continue to replicate colonial harms, hierarchy, and oppression today. Some examples of this include:[5]

- Valuing individualism, competition, and seeking success for oneself above all else;
- Believing the environment and its resources are to be owned and exploited for the accumulation of wealth and personal enjoyment;
- Instituting a hierarchical order in society that declares some as more deserving, smarter, and more capable than others (e.g., heteronormative ideas that men are better than women, or the belief that 2SLGBTQ+ people are less important than others);
- Placing importance on the accumulation of material things shows better skills and capabilities,

[5] Adapted from *Decolonizing the Canadian Workplace*

- Acknowledging only one correct view of the world; and
- Creating barriers for Indigenous people to be in leadership positions.

Colonial Worldviews

Modern-day workplaces operate with colonial structures and can often hold these worldviews:

Singular World Perspective: Hierarchical management systems, where upper management is more valuable than lower management, are upheld. The common belief is that if an employee may move up and gain money and status by working hard, sacrificing personal responsibilities, and promoting the company.

Superiority Over Others: Colonial workplaces have established hierarchies that are enforced by other colleagues. This can mean that only upper management's ideas and ways of doing things are valued, while others' perspectives are inferior.

Individuality and Competition: It can be common to view colleagues as competition or roadblocks 'in the way' of advancing a career. In extreme cases, this could look like sabotaging colleagues for promotions, gossiping and spreading rumours, or preventing growth opportunities.

These perspectives, built on individualism, hoarding resources, and competing with others to move up in a social hierarchy, are contrary to Indigenous worldviews. Indigenous worldviews are generally based on community, respect for land, and equity between all living creatures.

Activity: Mapping Workplace Barriers 

Consider the following list of types of discrimination that Indigenous employees may face in the workplace:

- Denial of career enhancement opportunities
- Cultural exclusion
- Undervaluing experience
- Slurs and harmful jokes
- Tokenism
- Questioning credentials and merit
- Racial stereotyping

- Inaccessible hiring practices
- Identity policing
- Lack of respect for Indigenous culture
- Microaggressions
- Retaliation and silencing
- Harassment and discrimination

Which category does each type of workplace discrimination fit under? Are there ones that could fit under more than one category? (Answers on next page)

Singular world perspective

Superiority over others

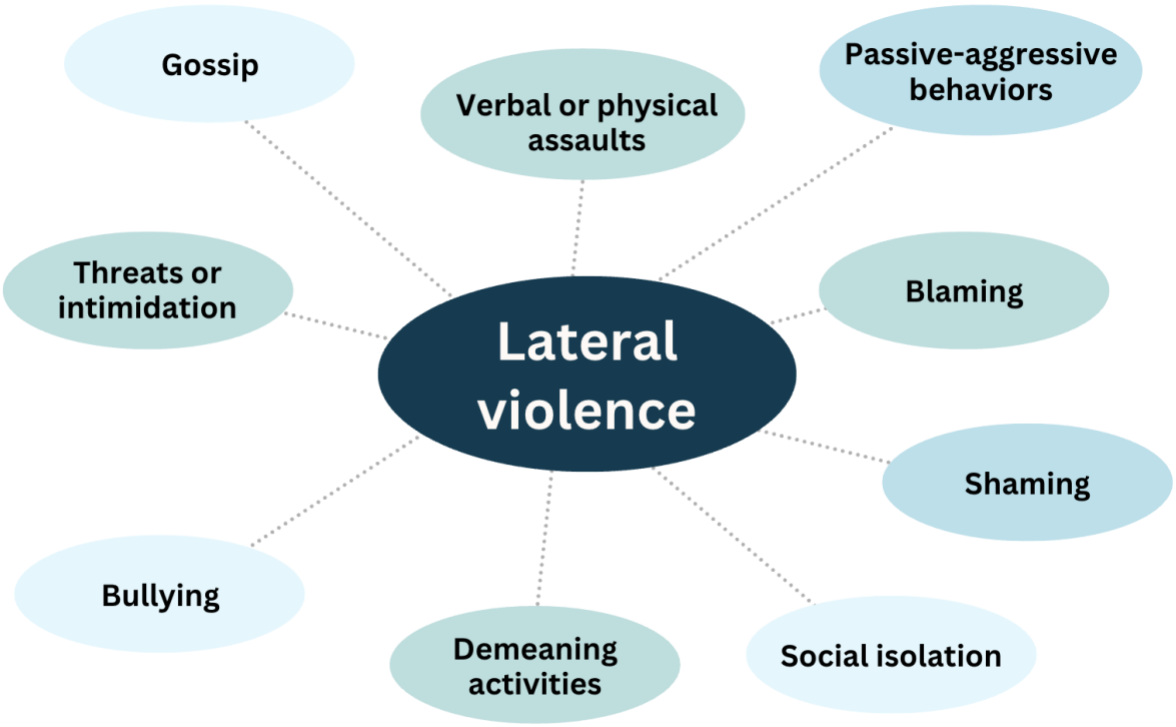
Individuality and competition

Answers

The Origins of Lateral Violence

Lateral violence, sometimes called lateral "unkindness," occurs when people direct feelings of dissatisfaction or frustration toward one another instead of recognizing that the root causes are colonialism, internalized racism, and systemic oppression. It is a consequence of the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization.

Lateral violence can take many forms, including:



These behaviours often arise in response to the stress, trauma, and internalized oppression imposed by colonial systems over generations. Policies like the Indian Act, the removal of children to residential schools, and forced assimilation disrupted Indigenous communities, eroded cultural systems and created intergenerational trauma. All of this contributes to lateral violence that is distinct to Indigenous communities.

Lateral violence can also take the form of **microaggressions,** which are every day, subtle, and oftentimes unintentional interactions or behaviours that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalized groups.

We will continue to learn how lateral violence shows up and how we can address it in the following modules.

Resources for Further Learning

- NWAC Aboriginal Lateral Violence (PDF)
- The Story of Joyce Echaquan and Joyce's Principle (News article and social movement)
- Heritage Minutes: Chanie Wenjack (Video)
- Bob Joseph - 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act (Novel)
- Bob Joseph - 21 Things You Need to Know About Indigenous Self-Government: A Conversation About Dismantling the Indian Act (Novel)
- Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers (Novel)

Module 2 Quiz: Check your Knowledge

Answers on the following page.

1. What made colonialism in Canada a long-term system rather than a single historical event? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. It only happened during early European contact
B. It ended once treaties were signed
C. It was built into laws and policies that still shape systems today
D. It only affected land ownership

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2. How did separation from land function as a tool of colonization? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. It improved access to natural resources for Indigenous communities
B. It strengthened Indigenous governance
C. It disrupted economies and spiritual relationships to land
D. It transferred decision-making power to colonial governments

---

3. Which of the following are examples of how stereotypes maintain inequality? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. They challenge dominant narratives
B. They justify unfair policies and treatment
C. They frame harmful assumptions as "common sense"
D. They promote accurate understanding

---

4. Lateral violence is best understood as: *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Harm between community members rooted in internalized oppression

B. Conflict caused by personality differences
C. Normal workplace disagreements
D. A direct result of colonial disruption and trauma

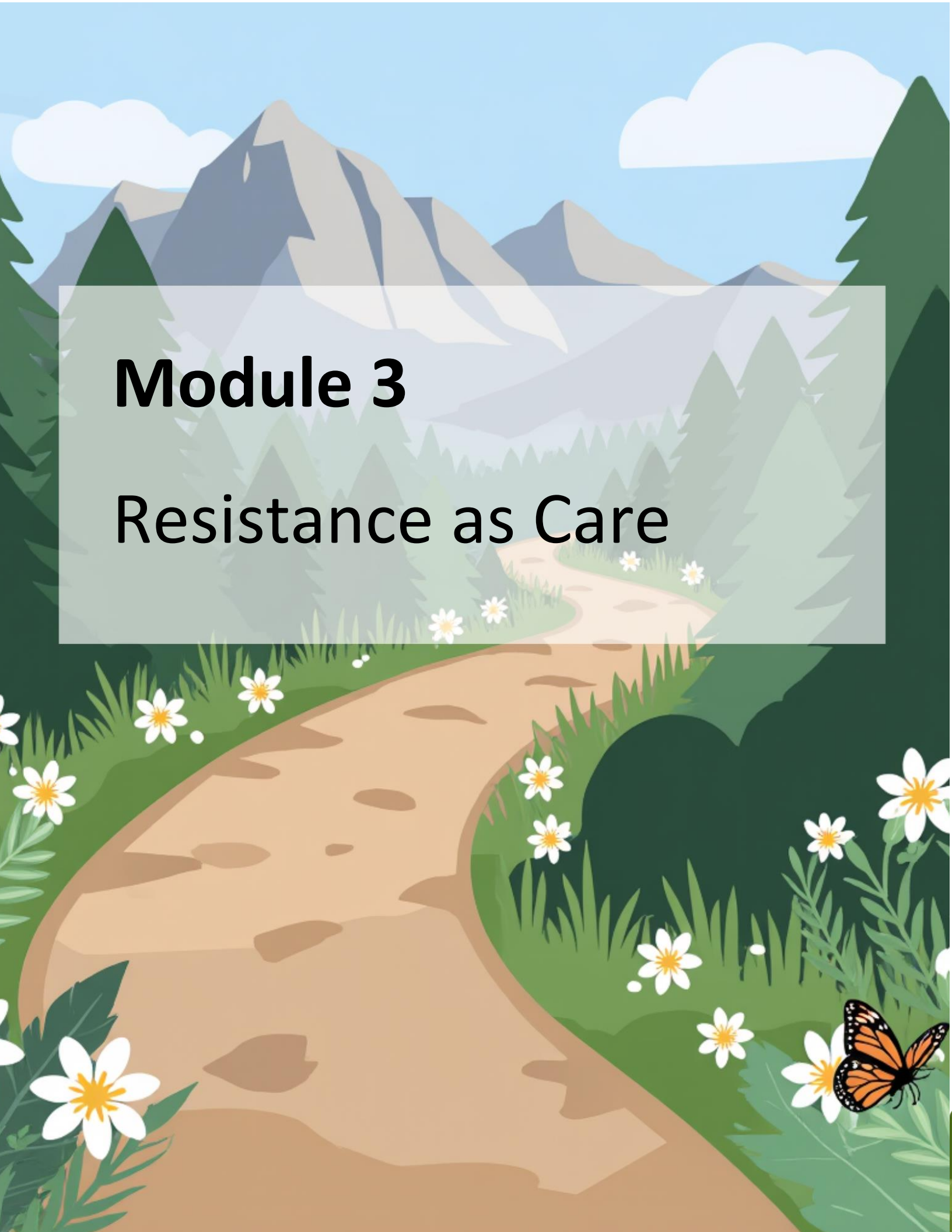
---

5. In the workplace, colonial worldviews often show up as: *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Valuing hierarchy and competition
B. Prioritizing community and shared leadership
C. Rewarding individual success over wellbeing
D. Creating barriers to Indigenous leadership

Module 2 Quiz Answers

1. C
2. Both C and D
3. Both B and C
4. Both A and D
5. A, C, and D



Module 3

Resistance as Care

This Module will take you about 55-70 minutes to complete.

Learning Goals

1. Understand decolonization as a shared responsibility.
2. Recognize government control of identity.
3. Examine lateral violence and its impacts.
4. Learn practical actions to disrupt colonial harm and create care for your communities.

Decolonization

Decolonization is an ongoing process aiming to deconstruct settler colonial ideologies (such as white supremacy), value Indigenous knowledge, and dismantle power imbalances.[6] It involves naming how laws, policies, institutions, and everyday practices uphold the privilege of those in power, and taking actionable steps to dismantle these systems.

What decolonization is NOT:

- **Work solely for Indigenous people to do:** Decolonization is a shared responsibility. Non-Indigenous people have a responsibility to listen, learn, and act. While Indigenous people hold **lived experience** and knowledge, it is not their job to educate, fix, or carry the burden of breaking down colonial systems.
- **The same as Indigenization: Indigenization** recognizes the validity of Indigenous worldviews, knowledge, and perspectives while identifying opportunities for Indigeneity to be expressed and incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.[7] Decolonization goes deeper by questioning and changing the structures, power dynamics, and decision-making processes upon which colonial systems are built.
- **A metaphor:** Decolonization means the real return of Indigenous land and the restoration of Indigenous life and sovereignty, not just changes in attitudes, language, or policies. When decolonization is treated as a metaphor for personal growth, it allows non-Indigenous people to avoid confronting the real change they need to uplift.[8]
- **A final destination:** Decolonization is not something that can be completed, achieved, or checked off. It is a living practice that requires learning, unlearning, and taking responsibility as relationships and systems change.

"Decolonization is work that belongs to all of us. We are never going to go back and erase the past; it's already been done [...] This history is not your fault. But it is your responsibility."

- Pipil/Mayan academic Nikki Sanchez in her TEDx Talk, *Decolonization Is for Everyone*

[6] Taken from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*
[7] Taken from Indigenous Corporate Training INC's *A Brief Definition of Decolonization and Indigenization*
[8] Tuck and Yang's *Decolonization is not a metaphor*

Recognizing Government Control

Mini Recap

As we learned in Module 2, colonial constructions of identity create nuanced and harmful impacts to Indigenous people.

Remember that colonial constructions of identity (through tools like the Indian Act, Status classifications, Scrip systems, Inuit disc numbers, and band membership rules) imposed externally defined categories that disrupted Indigenous kinship systems, governance, and ways of belonging.

These imposed definitions fractured families and communities, creating divisions such as “Status” and “non-Status,” “First Nations,” “Métis,” and “Inuit,” while restricting who could access land, rights, housing, and services.

Government control of identity manifests through laws, policies, and administrative systems that define who is recognized, who belongs, and who has access to rights and resources. In Canada, the government decides who is considered Indigenous using its own rules, instead of letting Indigenous communities or traditions decide.

The Indian Act gave the federal government control over who is legally recognized as Indigenous. This turned identity into a status that could be added, taken away, or changed—sometimes because of marriage, moving, or government decisions—without the person’s own choice in the matter.

Other examples of government control over Indigenous people are:

- Federal trust-keeping of First Nations funds, paid out via annual federal transfers
- Federal oversight of Band membership
- Land & treaty recognition systems
- Gender-based discrimination in registration (e.g., Bill C-31)

Control is enforced through everyday systems requiring Indigenous people to repeatedly prove who they are to access services, benefits, or recognition. Documentation requirements (e.g., Status cards) and eligibility thresholds can then become an extra step for Indigenous people to:

- Access healthcare and social programs

- Apply for scholarships and bursaries
- Apply for housing and community programs

These processes are often framed as neutral or procedural, but they reproduce unequal power relations by granting institutions the authority to question identity, credibility, and belonging. **When identity is verified or validated by the state, Indigenous self-determination is undermined, and harm is normalized through routine interactions.**

Government efforts to control identity cause generational harm. Decisions about who is officially recognized and who is not affect access to land, housing, education, jobs, child welfare supports, and community belonging. These impacts are not singular; they are passed on to children and grandchildren as well.

Families can be separated from their communities, services, and cultural supports when someone is excluded. Over time, this weakens family ties and makes it harder to pass on language, culture, and a sense of belonging.

Even when discriminatory rules are changed or removed, their effects are felt. Government systems may still rely on paperwork, categories, and approval processes that continue to control identity. As a result, identity is still treated as something people must "prove" or "qualify for," rather than something grounded in relationships, community, and respect. This can also show up in social situations where people may experience pressure to quantify their identity (e.g., "How Indigenous are you? What percentage are you?").

Storytelling: When Identity is Challenged

This story highlights how policies, personal bias, and power intersect in everyday interactions. The incident shows how colonial assumptions about who "looks Indigenous" can override formal documentation, lived identity, and dignity, turning a routine transaction into an experience of exclusion.

In Ontario, tax exemption rules require proof of Status at the cash register. When Kai, a First Nations person, was out shopping, they showed their Status card at the cashier as per the policy. The employee then took the card and refused to give it back to the customer, as they didn't believe Kai was Indigenous based on their appearance. The manager of the store became involved and verified the legitimacy of the Status card and apologized. The employee, however, refused to apologize and insisted Kai was not Indigenous. Kai left without making the purchase.

Reflection Exercise

- What were your immediate reactions to this story?
- How might this experience have felt for Kai at that moment? What could the employee, manager, or organization have done differently at each point?
- What would meaningful repair look like in this situation?
- What responsibilities do non-Indigenous people have to challenge these dynamics when they witness them?

Government Control in the Workplace

In the workplace, Indigenous employees are often required to prove their identity through government-issued identification or proof of legal status, as opposed to recognizing their own lived identity and community. Some examples of access gatekeeping include:

- Hiring and employment eligibility
- Benefits and pension access
- Employee resource groups and inclusion programs
- Training and funding opportunities

Activity: Mapping Identity Checks in the Workplace

Reflect: Think about a workplace (current, past, or imagined). Consider the processes that require people to "prove" their identity or eligibility. Examples could include HR onboarding, benefits enrollment, training programs, or participation in employee networks.

List: Make a table with two columns:

- **Where identity is required** (e.g., applying for a pension, joining a mentoring program)
- **How it is verified** (e.g., government ID, Social Insurance Number, or community recognition)

Analyze: For each example, ask yourself:

- Does the verification process recognize someone's lived identity or just their legal/government identity?
- Could this process unintentionally exclude people whose identity isn't documented?
- How might these requirements create barriers or inequities?
- How could workplaces better acknowledge lived or community identity?

Approaches to Decolonizing Workplaces

Workplace decolonization is about examining and changing the systems, policies, and everyday practices that uphold colonial power and privilege. It requires creating spaces where Indigenous knowledge, voices, and experiences are respected, valued, and meaningfully included.

Below are some practical approaches to help organizations move toward equity, cultural safety, and stronger relationships with Indigenous communities.

Organizational Policies and Structures:

- Review and reform policies that perpetuate inequities, e.g., hiring, promotion, and recognition systems that privilege certain cultural norms over others.
- Decentralize decision-making and include Indigenous voices or marginalized staff in leadership and governance.
- Create equitable benefits and accommodations that respect diverse cultural, spiritual, and family practices.

Education and Awareness:

- Prioritize cultural safety and anti-racism training that goes beyond awareness to reflection and action.
- Attend workshops on colonial history and local Indigenous realities.
- Commit to ongoing learning to integrate education into workplace life.

Representation and Inclusion:

- Hire and support Indigenous staff and leaders, not just in symbolic roles.
- Honour Indigenous knowledge and practices in decision-making, workplace culture, and project planning.
- Mentorship programs to strengthen retention and advancement of Indigenous staff.

Cultural Practices and Protocols:

- Meaningfully recognize Indigenous land and community protocols in meetings, events, and partnerships.
- Where appropriate, create space for cultural practices.
- Avoid tokenism and ensure participation is voluntary and meaningful.

Power and Relationship Shifts:

- Reflect on and redistribute power within teams (who decides, whose knowledge counts, whose voices are heard).
- Build reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities or local partners.
- Use accountability mechanisms, like Indigenous advisory councils, to guide workplace change.

Everyday Practices:

- Language and communication: Use inclusive and respectful language.
- Avoid defaulting to Western hierarchies or dominant cultural norms (e.g., meetings or decision-making).
- Recognize contributions fairly and publicly, including non-traditional or community-based knowledge (e.g., The First Nations Principles of OCAP®).

Learning from Data:

- Measure the impact of decolonization initiatives through feedback, surveys, and community input.
- Be transparent about challenges and failures; decolonization is an ongoing process.
- Adapt policies and practices based on learning, not just compliance.

Learning in Action

Which of these practices can you bring into your workplace this week?

Here is an example of a vision statement that organizations can use to move towards decolonization in the workplace.[9]

SAMPLE VISION STATEMENT, PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

Indigenous Peoples are more likely to access care when they need it, if they feel safe and respected and the care that they receive is in line with their wellness beliefs, goals and needs. (Insert organizational name) recognizes the significant health gaps that continue to exist for Indigenous Peoples and the importance of providing culturally safe, responsive, high quality, and trauma-informed care. We will do this by implementing equity- based policies, processes,

[9] Indigenous Primary Health Care Council - NE IIKAANIGAANA 'All Our Relations' Toolkit

and procedures that support the full inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the health care system that is free of discrimination.

As an organization, we endorse the following equity principles:

1. *We recognize that racism and discrimination exist towards Indigenous Peoples in Canadian society, in the health care system and its institutions, which therefore affects (insert organization name) itself.*
2. *We recognize and respect the unique identities and diversity of Indigenous Peoples and the need for a distinct approach to equity and participation measures for Indigenous Peoples.*
3. *We recognize the role that the health care system has played in creating and perpetuating harms for Indigenous Peoples, and the impact that these harms have on health behaviours and health status.*
4. *We recognize our role in combatting Indigenous-specific racism in the healthcare system, in (insert organization name) itself and will ensure that mechanisms for handling issues of racism and discrimination are in place that enable personal and organizational accountability.*
5. *We recognize the need for health care providers and staff to reflect on their own biases and assumptions, and we strive to address power imbalances between health care providers, administrators, leadership, decision makers, patients/clients, and communities.*
6. *We assert our commitment to creating and implementing specific measures that effectively combat Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination at all levels of our organization and to engage in actions to proactively eliminate racism and discrimination.*
7. *We strive to create an environment that supports the wellbeing of Indigenous patients/clients, health care providers, staff, and learners.*
8. *We recognize and acknowledge that cultural service providers and traditional healing practices are legitimate methods of health service provision and are to be valued and treated commensurable to westernized medicine and health care providers.*
9. *We recognize and acknowledge the importance of incorporating wholistic care (physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional) needs into the programs and services we deliver.*

10. *We recognize and acknowledge the importance of developing and maintaining trusting, respectful, purposeful, and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous populations & communities.*
11. *We recognize, acknowledge, and respect Indigenous self-governance and the right of Indigenous Peoples to lead the development of actionable strategies and their involvement from the beginning in decision-making processes with a commitment to reciprocal accountability.*

As an organization, (insert organization name) will therefore:

1. *Actively identify and challenge individual and systemic acts of Indigenous- specific racism and discrimination within our organization and the services we deliver.*
2. *Equip trustees, executives, managers and all employees with knowledge and skills to recognize and challenge Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination within our organization and the services we deliver.*
3. *Ensure that trustees, executives, managers, and all employees are responsible and accountable for challenging Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination within our organization and the services we deliver.*
4. *Foster respect daily, regardless of racial or ethnic background, amongst trustees, executives, managers, and all employees.*
5. *Ensure that any acts of racism or discriminatory treatment against Indigenous people that are reported are investigated, and the individual who made the report is supported throughout the process and protected against reprisals.*
6. *Ensure that executive leadership and management team members understand their legal responsibilities as "directing minds (senior officials)" to act immediately when a situation of potential racism and discrimination is witnessed or reported.*
7. *Continually monitor and assess progress towards addressing Indigenous- specific racism and discrimination within our organization and the services we deliver.*
8. *Provide Indigenous cultural safety and humility training to all trustees, executives, managers, and all employees to create safer environments for Indigenous patients/clients, health care providers, staff, and learners.*
9. *Actively evaluate the success of equity and anti-racism progress to ensure lessons learned are documented, promising practices are highlighted, and areas of improvement are identified so that other organizations can benefit from the learnings.*

10. *Develop and implement policies, procedures, training, and structures that advance Indigenous patient/client safety and satisfaction to ensure the best health care experience possible.*

Self-Care Break

Pause for a few minutes to recharge. Stretch, breathe deeply, grab a drink, or step outside, whatever helps you reset.

Mini Recap

As highlighted in Module 2's case study on Sandra Lovelace Nicholas, colonial laws like the Indian Act have historically controlled who is recognized as Indigenous. Sandra and other Indigenous women who lost their legal status were barred from returning to their communities, simply because of whom they married.

These policies did not just regulate identity; they disrupted families, communities, and cultural continuity, enforcing a system where belonging was conditional and controlled by the state.

Community Divides

Colonial systems thrive on division, fostering an "us vs. them" mentality between Indigenous people that sustains separation and hierarchy. This "divide and conquer" approach influences resource distribution and power dynamics, often manifesting in communities, workplaces, and social spaces. Recognizing this helps us understand systemic exclusion and the importance of solidarity across differences.

When Indigenous people gatekeep, it often comes from a place of pain and protection.

Many communities have had their identities erased, exploited, or misrepresented, and Indigenous people are trying to defend what little they have been allowed to keep.

But when protection becomes exclusion, we reproduce the same colonial harm within our own spaces.

The Impact of Stereotypes

One way that colonialism operates is by "othering" and excluding Indigenous people. "Othering" means viewing or treating someone as fundamentally different, allowing a dominant group to justify oppression and violence through stereotypes meant to exclude Indigenous people.

Stereotypes from non-Indigenous perspectives[10]	**Stereotypes that can happen between Indigenous people**
● Indigenous people get a "free ride." ● Indigenous people have ample reserve lands. ● Indigenous people can do what they want with their reserve lands and resources. ● Indigenous people living on reserves get free housing. ● Indigenous people get a free secondary education. ● There's no connection between Indigenous unemployment and Indigenous health and social problems. ● Indigenous people don't pay taxes in Canada. ● Indigenous people are all the same. ● Residential schools are "ancient history."	● Assuming someone is "not Indigenous enough" based on how they live, look, speak, or act. ● Urban or "off-reserve" Indigenous people are not *really* Indigenous because they do not live on-reserve. ● NOT having a status card means someone is not *really* First Nations. ● Generalizing about other Nations (e.g., "they're more traditional," "they've lost their culture," etc.). ● Assuming an Indigenous person is being "too traditional" or "too assimilated" based on their actions.

[10] Taken from Indigenous Corporate Training Inc's *10 Myths About Indigenous Peoples*

	• Assuming an Indigenous person is “less than” or not committed to their culture for not knowing their traditional language.

Stereotypes that happen *between* Indigenous people can also be described as **lateral violence**.

The existence of these stereotypes underscores the importance of questioning dominant narratives. Consider what purpose certain stories serve, and what assumptions you might jump to without knowing the full context. Take the time to get to know Indigenous people and listen to their stories. We all have a responsibility for our own learning and our own truth-seeking journeys.

Reflection Exercise

- When have I made assumptions about someone based on identity, appearance, or background?
- Where did those beliefs come from (family, media, school, policy, lived experience)?

Activity: Naming Stereotypes

Think about a stereotype that is commonly applied to a marginalized group (for example, stereotypes about Indigenous people, racialized communities, people living on low income, people with disabilities, or newcomers).

- What is the stereotype?
- Where do you encounter this stereotype most often (media, workplace, policy discussions, everyday conversations)?
- How is this stereotype usually framed? Is it a “fact,” a joke, a concern, or common sense?

Now shift your focus from the stereotype itself to its <u>function</u>.

- Who benefits when this stereotype is believed or repeated?

Now, think about how this stereotype affects the dignity, safety or opportunities of the people it targets.

- Why are these stereotypes still so widely held in modern Canada if they are so harmful?

Learning in Action

This week, what is one small way you could interrupt harmful stereotypes in your own work or interactions?

Lived Experiences of Lateral Violence

The effects of lateral violence can last a lifetime, with people recalling the hurt, shock, and disappointment of harassment or questioning. Through education and reflection, they may come to understand that other Indigenous people's actions often stemmed from fear, misplaced anger, lack of understanding, or generational teachings.

Communities can be places of safety and belonging, but they can also unintentionally cause harm when people do not act or speak as others expect. This can create rifts between families and long-standing friends, deepening divisions.

In their own words:
"I'm Status. I look Indigenous, but I've had strangers come up to me and say to me, "You don't really know what it's like to be an actual native. You never lived in a community." And they just ridiculed me. I typically respond by saying, "Just because I didn't live in the community, doesn't mean I didn't suffer intergenerational trauma. This is when I was growing up twenty minutes from my reservation."

In their own words:
"Many Inuit have internalized the idea that Inuit rely on social assistance, public housing and food banks, as part of our identity. So, when Inuit achieve success, some people question whether they're still Inuk. There's this attitude of, 'You think you're better than the community.' That mindset is harmful and can damage people's careers."

Storytelling: Lateral Violence

Consider the following story that shows how lateral violence can operate in the workplace.[11]

[11] Taken from Native Women's Association of Canada's *Aboriginal Lateral Violence*

Sheila was employed at an Aboriginal organization as a financial administrator and she felt the sting of lateral violence incrementally. Having just graduated from university she was keen to make a good impression. Sheila worked extra hours. Then one day a few of the senior managers had talked about promoting her at one of the meetings.

After that meeting, Sheila started to notice that there were subtle changes in how her manager and some of her coworkers treated her. When she walked into the lunch room conversations would stop. She was no longer asked out for lunch. Then the key to her filing cabinet would go missing, as would her office chair. Soon the financial administrator noticed she wasn't being invited to team meetings.

Instead of speaking directly to her, her Manager now began using emails to communicate as a way to avoid her. After that her requests for training were turned down and she was given assignments with unrealistic deadlines. Rumours started to circulate throughout the organization that she did not actually have a degree and she was not really First Nations.

Soon Sheila began to doubt her abilities and wonder if there was something wrong with her. "It takes away your self-esteem," she said. "You don't want to get out of bed in the morning; you have nightmares, migraines, aches and pains. At work you never knew what to expect. I would go into work thinking, what are they going to do to me today?" After talking about it with a good friend, Sheila's friend suggested that these behaviours were connected with lateral violence.

Navigating Lateral Violence

Experiencing lateral violence can be very hurtful and isolating. Unfortunately, while you cannot control others' behaviour, there are techniques you can use to support yourself.

If you feel that you are being the target of inappropriate behaviour, you could:[12]

[12] Taken from Native Women's Association of Canada's *Aboriginal Lateral Violence*

If someone you know is experiencing lateral violence, here are some techniques you can use to support them:

- Check in as often as possible. People experiencing lateral violence can feel isolated.
- Shut down or redirect gossiping when it begins.
- Speak up when you notice the harassment.
- Offer to give your perspective of the incidents in writing or verbally to the direct manager and/or human resources colleague.
- Refer to resources that could help with the situation. Mental health, Employment and Social Development Canada, and more.
- Promoting lateral kindness: Although it is not guaranteed to stop lateral violence, what you can do is practice *lateral kindness* in the workplace. This can be a variety of actions, such as:
    - Complimenting a colleague on their skill set.
    - Saying ‘thank you’ to colleagues.
- Know your story and the impacts of internalized oppression on your holistic wellbeing.
- Practice self-kindness. Though often seen as selfish, it’s an act of love towards oneself that shows the world how you want and deserve to be treated.
- **NOT** calling out lateral violence at the moment. The person experiencing it may not want to draw more attention to the situation. Instead, let them know afterwards that you noticed what

happened and want to support them in the way that is best for them. Ask if that means they want you to speak up next time.
- Reassure your colleague that they are in a safe space and do not need to “prove themselves” to you.
- Checking in with colleagues after a tragedy. This can be a “Are you in a good headspace?” “Do you need to take some time?”

Taking a step forward can feel intimidating; however, the support you extend to your fellow colleagues can have a strong impact.

Learning in Action

What is one concrete action to you could commit to trying in the next month?

Reflection Exercise

- What gets in the way of noticing harm when it doesn’t look overt or “serious”?
- How might actions meant to “help” unintentionally cause more harm?
- How does lateral kindness differ from ignoring or minimizing harm?
- Which of these practices feels most natural to you? Which feels hardest?

The Urban Indigenous Experience

The urban Indigenous experience is diverse and complex, just as life on-reserve is. Some face skepticism or teasing from on-reserve community members, feeling pressure to prove themselves or show emotional vulnerability before being fully accepted. Others build strong bonds with fellow off-reserve Indigenous people, creating spaces of solidarity rooted in shared experiences. These networks often become powerful communities where people reclaim language, culture, and identity.

Friendship Centres offer Indigenous people living off-reserve welcoming spaces to connect, learn, and access support. They can help strengthen cultural knowledge, build community, and provide essential services like housing support, mental and physical health programs, food security, justice services, financial guidance, and employment and education training. They remain vital in sustaining Indigenous culture and community in urban city settings.

Further, urban Indigenous communities have also been central to the resurgence of Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Indigenous networks, creating spaces for cultural renewal, advocacy, and community support. Many 2SLGBTQIA+ Indigenous people can find protection and strength in their urban communities.

Did You Know?

As of 2021, about **61%** of Indigenous People are living in urban settings across Canada.[13]

Moving forward

Decolonization is an ongoing practice that encourages us to reflect, learn, and take responsibility for the systems and behaviours that uphold colonial power, a commitment non-Indigenous people must make in solidarity with Indigenous people.

Government control, lateral violence, and microaggressions impact many Indigenous people. Practicing cultural safety and inclusive decision-making can transform this, creating workplaces where Indigenous knowledge is valued, voices are heard, and relationships are strengthened. Each step, whether learning, advocating, or adjusting our own behaviour, helps dismantle colonial structures and fosters a shared responsibility for a more equitable and respectful society.

Resources for Further Learning

- Nikki Sanchez's TEDx Talk - *Decolonization Is for Everyone* (Video)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action Report (Report)
- NFB: Miss Campbell: Inuk Teacher (Film)
- Decolonization is Not a Metaphor (Academic article)
- CBC: Revitalizing Indigenous languages: Meet some of the people working to keep their language alive (Audio series)
- What is lateral violence? Kwanlin Dun FN youth say education key in prevention (Video)
- What Is the Impact of Lateral Violence? (Article)
- Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society (Blog series and articles)
- The First Nations Principles of OCAP® (Organization)
- Native Youth Sexual Health Network (Organization)

[13] National Association of Friendship Centres

Module 3 Quiz: Check your Knowledge

Answers on the following page.

1. Which statements best describe decolonization? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. It is a shared responsibility
B. It is the same as Indigenization
C. It requires changing systems and power structures
D. It is something you can complete and check off

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2. What is an example of government control of Indigenous identity? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. The Indian Act defining who is legally recognized as Indigenous
B. Requiring a Status card to access services
C. Indigenous communities deciding their own membership
D. Gender-based discrimination in registration rules

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3. Why is government control of identity harmful across generations?

A. It creates paperwork delays
B. It affects access to land, services, and belonging
C. It can separate families from culture and community
D. It is not harmful and is a respectful way to classify identities

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4. Which actions could help decolonize a workplace? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Including Indigenous voices in decision-making
B. Treating cultural safety training as a one-time task
C. Reviewing hiring and promotion policies for bias
D. Building meaningful relationships with Indigenous colleagues

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5. Which of the following are examples of lateral kindness? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Shutting down gossip
B. Reassuring someone they don’t need to “prove” themselves
C. Ignoring harmful comments to avoid conflict
D. Checking in on a colleague after a tragedy

Module 3 Quiz Answers

1. A and C
2. A, B, and D
3. B and C
4. A, C, and D
5. A, B, and D

Module 4

Strength in Difference

This Module will take you about 60 minutes to complete.

Learning goals

- Understand cultural safety as a relational and ongoing practice.
- Recognize how individual identities and lived experiences strengthen communities.
- Reflect on power, privilege, and discomfort in intercultural relationships.
- Apply cultural safety concepts to real-world situations.
- Understand cultural safety as a shared responsibility.
- Recognize and honour Indigenous reclamation and resurgence.

Cultural Safety as our Shared Strengths

Recognizing and valuing individual strengths is central to Indigenous community resilience. Just as ᐃᑲᔪᖅᑎᒋᓚᐅᖅ (Ikajuqtigiinniq)[14] emphasizes working together for a common purpose, each person's unique experiences, skills, and knowledge contribute like individual strands in a rich tapestry.

Engaging with this diversity of lived experiences strengthens communities and Nations, fostering personal resilience, creating a foundation for shared growth and cultural safety.

Definitions

[14] Manitoba Inuit Association - IQ Principles

What is Cultural Safety?

A concept originating from Māori healthcare professionals in New Zealand in the 1990s,[15] cultural safety transcends the boundaries of the healthcare system. In practice, cultural safety can be applied to our everyday interactions with one another.

Cultural safety can be defined as an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances.[16]

Cultural safety addresses power dynamics by shifting focus from learning about others to critically examining one's own culture and thinking deeply about what it means to be truly equitable in our interactions. In this way, we can think about cultural safety as, "how might someone else's boundaries be different than my own? And what is my responsibility to respond to their boundaries with understanding, respect, and care?"

Cultural safety is NOT:

- **A checkbox you "complete"** by attending a single training, reading a guide, or learning a few facts about a culture.
- **Becoming an expert,** "knowing everything," or making gains from knowing about another culture.
- **Stereotyping or generalizing, or assuming** all members of a cultural group think, behave, or value the same things (even when those assumptions are framed as "positive.")
- **Being "colour-blind" or "culture-blind"** by ignoring differences or claiming to treat everyone the same. This ignores the reality of systemic racism and prevents addressing racial inequities.
- **A guarantee of good intentions.** Harm can still occur, even with reflection, accountability, and openness to feedback.
- **A final destination.** It is an ongoing, reflective process that evolves over time and across contexts.

Viewing cultural safety as a two-way street encourages Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike to make attempts to understand each other's culture to build relationships. However, colonial histories create power imbalances, making it important for non-Indigenous people to hold the important responsibility of checking their **privilege**.

Let's take a look at the following story.

[15] *Why cultural safety rather than cultural competency is required to achieve health equity: a literature review and recommended definition (2019)*

[16] Adapted from Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC)'s *The Cultural Safety Continuum*

Storytelling: The Weight of a Feather

Maya had been invited to her first powwow by a coworker. The energy was electric: drums echoed, dancers swirled, and colours shimmered in every direction. She was mesmerized by a dancer in a bright, hand-beaded regalia.

Without thinking, Maya reached out and lightly touched a feather on the dancer. Immediately, the dancer glanced back with a look of surprise and discomfort. Her coworker, standing nearby, leaned over and whispered, "That's their regalia, it's not a costume. Every piece has meaning, and it's sacred. You can watch, but don't touch."

Maya's cheeks warmed with embarrassment. She didn't realize that her actions were disrespectful and harmful to the dancer.

Afterward, the dancer, Robin, approached Maya.

"Is this your first powwow?" they asked.

"Yes," responded Maya sheepishly.

Robin felt themselves soften slightly. They understood that, as someone from outside the community, Maya might not have been briefed on the "dos and don'ts" of powwow etiquette. At the same time, they felt very violated and uneasy after the incident. After all, it was still Maya's responsibility to be respectful, even if powwows might be new to her.

Standing across from Robin, Maya was internally panicking. She felt awful that she had been disrespectful and embarrassed that she was now facing Robin in a conversation.

Let's pause: What should happen next?

Reflection Exercise:

- What would you do in this situation if you were Maya? If you were Robin?
- Where did you notice room for each person to "meet each other halfway?" Where might there be hard cultural boundaries?
- How are power and privilege reflected in this situation?

Lessons learned:

- **Even if you didn't mean harm, harm can still happen.** Maya didn't mean to be disrespectful, but touching the regalia still caused hurt and discomfort.
- **Being unfamiliar with others' customs will happen, but it's still important to move carefully in new spaces.** Taking time to observe, listen, and learn helps show respect when entering a cultural space that isn't your own.
- **Feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable is part of learning.** Discomfort can be a signal to pause, listen, and take responsibility rather than shut down or defend yourself.
- **No one owes you an explanation.** Robin is not required to teach or comfort Maya. If learning happens, it should be their choice, not an obligation.
- **Power and privilege matter.** Maya had the freedom to act without thinking. Robin carries the impact and the emotional weight of deciding how to respond.
- **Some boundaries are not flexible.** Meeting "halfway" does not mean crossing cultural or personal boundaries. Respect means accepting clear limits.

Case Study: Cultural Appropriation in Indigenous Training

Pam was an Indigenous woman recently hired to work for a non-Indigenous organization.

Within her first few weeks of work, it was announced that the organization would be hosting an Indigenous training course. Intrigued, Pam looked deeper into how the training would unfold. She was surprised to learn that the training would be held in a convent. This was troubling to her, given the recent news of unmarked graves at the Catholic-run Kamloops Indian Residential School.

Pam approached the leaders of the organization and explained how damaging it was to hold the training in a convent and how it could be triggering to Indigenous staff members. The leaders dismissed her concerns.

On the day of the training, it became clear that the training was a form of Indigenous cultural appropriation since the moderator shared that he was non-Indigenous and only lived in the community for a week before building this training.

Pam realized he was sharing stolen 'Indigenous teachings' and was not open to what the Indigenous staff were sharing. She held up an item for the rest of the employees to see. "Look, it says 'Made in China' on the talking stick. This training is not authentic. This is what cultural appropriation looks like."

Pam sat down. One by one, her Indigenous colleagues shared that they also did not feel comfortable.

Reflection Exercise:

- What were your initial reactions to this case study? What emotions came up for you as you read it?
- Were there moments where you felt defensive, uncomfortable, or uncertain? What might be the root causes of those feelings?
- What assumptions did you notice yourself making—about people, intent, or outcomes?
- Who holds power in this situation? What kind of consequences might Pam have faced for speaking out?

Privilege

Privilege refers to unearned access, benefits, and opportunities that members of a social group with high power possess. Privilege occurs when structures and institutions have been historically designed for the benefit of or to be accessed by a particular group. [17]

Holding privilege does not mean a person has not faced hardship; it means certain barriers are less present because of how society is structured.

Activity: Privilege Self-Inventory

Consider the statements below that detail different types of privilege.[18] Add a checkmark beside each statement that is true for you.

☐	Most of the religious and cultural holidays celebrated by my family are recognized with days off from work or school.
☐	When someone is trying to describe me, they do not mention my race.
☐	People assume I was admitted to school or hired based upon my credentials, rather than my race or gender.
☐	I can expect that forms, records, and systems will accurately reflect my gender.
☐	I can advocate for myself without being labeled difficult, emotional, or ungrateful.

[17] Taken from Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*
[18] Some examples taken from University of Waterloo's *How do I Identify the Privilege I Hold*

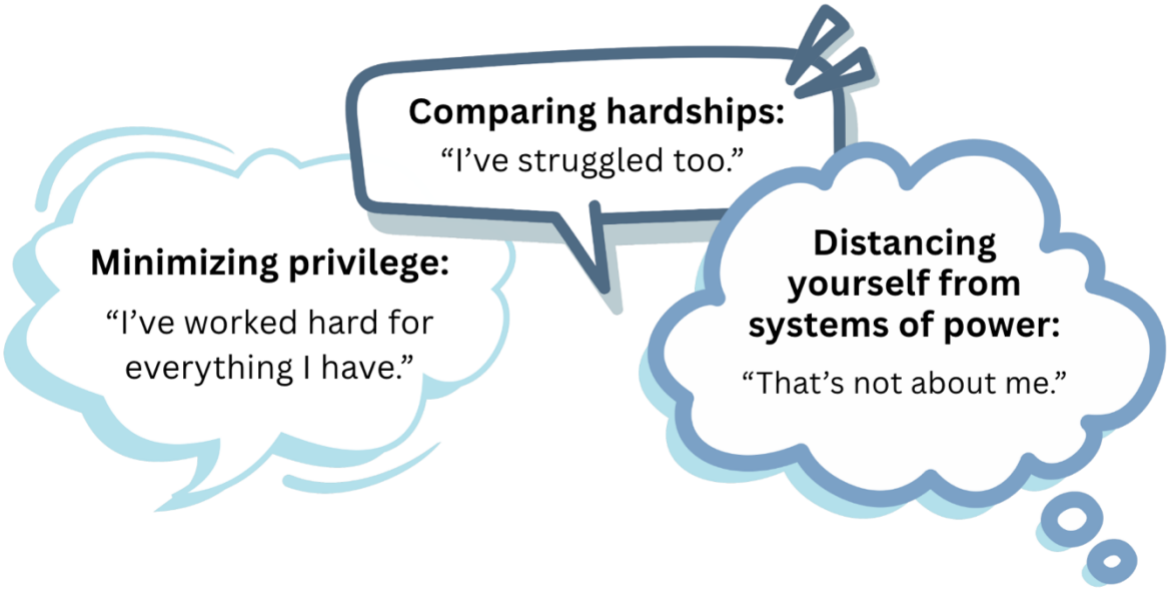
☐	I can choose the style of dress that I feel comfortable in, and most reflects my identity, and I know that I will not be stared at in public.
☐	I can be assured that assumptions about my mental capabilities will not be made based on my physical status.
☐	My parents and grandparents were able to purchase or rent housing in any neighborhood they could afford.
☐	I can look in mainstream media and see people who look like me represented fairly and in a wide range of roles.
☐	I never think twice about calling the police when trouble occurs.
☐	I can expect my name to be pronounced correctly or easily learned by others.
☐	I am rarely asked to explain or justify my culture, identity, or background.
☐	I can access healthcare without worrying that my pain or symptoms will be dismissed or minimized.
☐	I can make mistakes without them being used to confirm stereotypes about people like me.
☐	I can talk about my partner or relationships without censoring myself or worrying about negative reactions.
☐	I can assume my history and culture will not be misrepresented or erased in educational materials.
☐	I can express pride in my identity without fear of prejudice, microaggressions, or tokenism.

Reflection Exercise:

- What feelings came up for me when I thought about my own privilege?
- Did I feel the need to defend myself or compare my experiences to other people's experiences?
- What might become possible if I stayed curious instead of dismissive?

Working Through Feelings of Resistance or Defensiveness

Feeling resistant or defensive when you think about your own privilege is a common and understandable response when learning about power and oppression. It can show up as:



Defensiveness often stems from discomfort, fear of blame, or a belief that acknowledging privilege erases personal hardship. However, denying privilege can unintentionally reinforce oppression by shifting focus away from structural barriers to individual intent or effort.

Recognizing privilege isn't about assigning blame but noticing how systems operate and how we may benefit from them, whether or not we ask to. Awareness enables more equitable choices, shared responsibility, and meaningful allyship.

An **ally** is someone with privileged identity markers (e.g., race, gender, class) who actively supports, advocates for, and acts in solidarity with equity-deserving groups. Allyship is a continuous, action-oriented process focused on dismantling systemic oppression, not just holding sympathetic beliefs.

Reflection Exercise:

Think of a time when you held power and privilege in a situation. It could be with family, friends, or even your colleagues at work.

Ask yourself:

- How did I respond in that situation? Why did I respond the way I did?

- Were there things that I focused on or overlooked that may have negatively impacted the other person?
- How did my personal beliefs or life experiences influence my actions? Are they tied to larger structures (e.g., patriarchy, colonialism, ableism, race hierarchies)?

Learning in Action

What is one concrete action to address your own privilege that you could commit to trying in the next week?

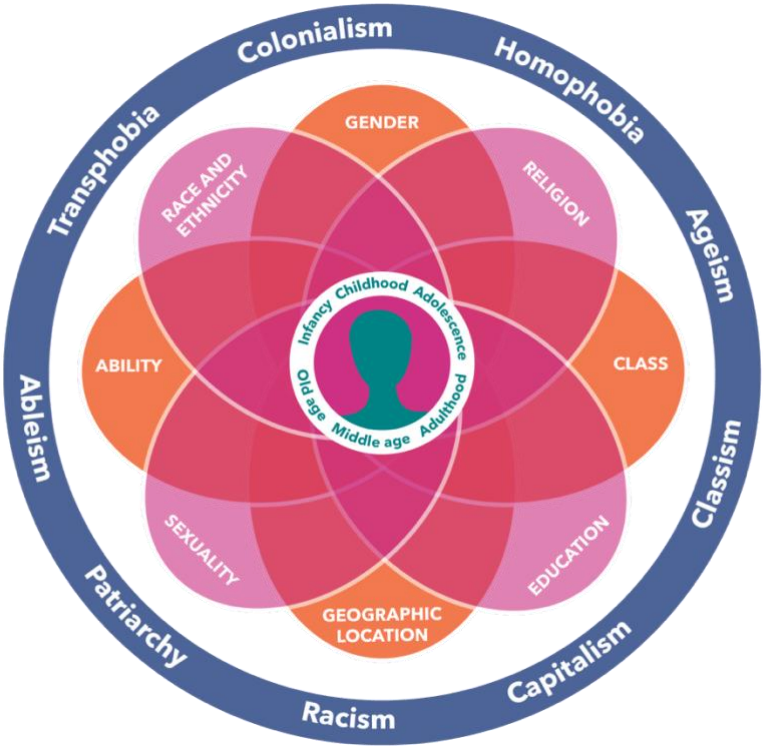
Self-Care Break

Pause for a few minutes to recharge. Stretch, breathe deeply, grab a drink, or step outside, whatever helps you reset.

Privilege and Intersectionality

Intersectionality, a term coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, offers a framework for addressing issues from multiple perspectives and recognizing each person's unique social identities, which shape how they experience the world. Because we live in a world that is built upon systems of oppression, this means that some people experience more privilege, and others experience more barriers to equity.

Below is an illustrative example of one way to view intersectionality.[19] At the center is the individual, whose life changes over time (from childhood to older age). The flower petals show some of the parts of people's identities that make up who they are. Notice how they overlap and intersect with each other. The outer ring represents the bigger social systems and forces that influence how people are treated based on their identities.



Reflection Exercise:

Consider the different factors that make up YOU (e.g., gender, age, race, ability, sexuality, etc.).[20]

- What do you think people notice about you when they first see you? What assumptions do you think they make? What would you like people to know about you when they first see or meet you?
- Which pieces of your identity do you share with others? Which pieces of your identity do you choose not to share with them? Why or why not?
- Reflect on a place or a time in which you felt you belonged. What and who created belonging for you?

[19] Taken from My Racial Identity
[20] Taken from My Racial Identity

Power and Identity

Another way to conceptualize intersectionality is through the lens of power and identity. Read the description below that compares power and privilege to a mountain.

I see power and privilege as a mountain.

The people with privilege can be white, male, wealthy, educated, able-bodied, or heterosexual. They are at the top of the mountain. This is backed with a long history of systemic oppression. It would be paved, there would be lighting up the property, it would be accessible to vehicles, have structurally stable housing, and continued maintenance.

The people with some privilege are people with lighter coloured skin, cisgender women, middle class people, and those with some formal education. These people are struggling to get up the mountain, but they have a better chance. It has strategically placed lighting, maps of where to go, and simple structures to take comfortable breaks. The path is, for the most part, clear for people to walk, cycle, or use small, motorized vehicles.

And finally, the least privileged. These people would be living on low-income, have limited education, are living with disabilities, have darker coloured skin, and fall under the 2SLGBTQIA+ umbrella. This part of the mountain would be the most difficult. A jagged trail that you believe goes up the mountain, but you can't tell. There's no lights, there's no maps, there's no services. So, people spend their time either trying to survive at the bottom of the mountain or making the most out of a difficult situation as they attempt to slowly make their way up the trail with limited resources.

Intersectionality and Cultural Safety

Intersectionality explains how aspects of identity (such as Indigeneity, gender, disability, class, or family status) interact to shape their experiences within systems. These identities overlap and influence each other, often intensifying vulnerability to harm. For example, an Indigenous woman with a disability may face barriers that are not experienced by Indigenous men, non-Indigenous women, or people with disabilities who are not Indigenous. Intersectionality helps us understand why "one-size-fits-all" approaches often fail to create cultural safety.

In cultural safety practice, intersectionality reminds us that risk, harm, and safety are unevenly distributed. Systems that do not account for intersecting identities tend to favour the powerful and harm those who are not. Culturally safe environments, therefore, require listening to people's full lived experiences, not just single aspects of identity. **It also means designing policies, services, and workplaces that respond to complexity, rather than assuming neutrality or sameness.** When privilege and intersectionality are understood together, cultural safety becomes an active, ongoing responsibility.

Examples of Intersecting Identities

Indigeneity + Gender	Indigenous women are more likely to experience having their credibility questioned, their leadership undermined, and their concerns minimized, especially when raising issues related to racism or safety.
Indigeneity + Disability	An Indigenous person with a disability may face racism *and* ableism simultaneously. For example, being excluded from conversations, denied accommodations, or assumed to be incapable or unreliable.
Indigeneity + Living Off-Reserve	Indigenous people living off-reserve may be told they are "less Indigenous," denied access to services, or excluded from decision-making, while still experiencing racism and colonial harm.
Indigeneity + Parenthood/Child Welfare Involvement	Indigenous parents (especially mothers) are more heavily monitored and judged, with assumptions made about their fitness as caregivers, affecting employment, housing, and service access.
Indigeneity + 2SLGBTQQIA+	A queer Indigenous person working in a public-facing role may experience layered forms of harm that are not visible to others. They may encounter racism related to being Indigenous, while also facing homophobia or transphobia in the workplace. In some spaces, they may be tokenized as "diversity" when convenient yet excluded from meaningful decision-making or leadership opportunities.

Activity: Same Space, Different Experience

Imagine a community health clinic. Everyone in this space is there for care. The rules and routines are the same for all: forms to fill out, waiting times, and staff interactions.

Some of the patients in the waiting room are:

Marie

Marie is an elderly Métis woman. She uses a walker, and primarily speaks Michif and some French. Today, she has her English-speaking daughter with her, who is familiar with her needs.

Ravi

Ravi is a young newcomer and has English as an additional language. Money is tight for Ravi because he's paying for school by himself, and he doesn't have any family in the area.

Silla

Silla is Inuk, Two-Spirit, and living with a chronic illness. They struggle with navigating their multiple medications and use a name that is not on their health card.

Eliza

Eliza is a middle-aged white woman who regularly visits the clinic and is familiar with the staff. Today, she is in a rush because her husband didn't have time to pick up their children from school.

Reflection Exercise:

- What barriers might each person face?
- What privileges or support might they have?
- Who is expected to adapt to the system?
- Are there moments when the system benefits one but harms another?
- How can the receptionist, nurses, or doctors attend to each person's needs in a culturally safe way?

Unpacking Systems and Identities

Continuing the discussion from the previous activity, there are systems at play that can influence how each patient experiences the waiting room.

Colonialism: Marie may feel anxious about engaging with a Western healthcare system because of historical trauma (e.g., **Indian Hospitals**) and ongoing racism today. Silla may also experience discomfort due to systemic bias or lack of culturally safe care, especially as a Two-Spirit person.

Xenophobia: Ravi may face discrimination based on his race, language, and immigration status. This could mean impatience from staff or other patients, or feelings of anxiety about being judged for his accent or immigration status.

Classism: Ravi is paying for school and living on a tight budget, while Marie relies on her family to support her in her older age. While the clinic itself may be free, costs like medications, transportation, or specialized tests may limit access to care.

Patriarchy: Eliza is rushing because unpaid caregiving responsibilities often fall on women. Further, her health needs may be deprioritized or dismissed because of societal assumptions about women's health.

Racism: Marie, Ravi, and Silla may face racism in subtle or overt ways. Staff assumptions, microaggressions, or stereotyping can make them feel unwelcome or mistrusted in the clinic.

Homophobia and Transphobia: Silla may face barriers if staff use the name or gender on their health card rather than the name/identity they use, or if they make assumptions about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Ableism: Marie uses a walker, which may make navigating the waiting room, exam rooms, or narrow clinic spaces challenging. She may also face assumptions about her cognitive or physical abilities, or experience delays if accommodations aren't proactively offered. Silla, with a chronic illness and multiple medications, may struggle with complex care routines that aren't designed for people with long-term conditions.

Tips for Managing Uncomfortable Learning

We know that engaging with privilege may surface discomfort, guilt, or shame, particularly for non-Indigenous learners. These reactions are common and can be part of the learning process. It is within these moments of discomfort that real learning and personal change happen. When we actively choose to reflect on what these feelings reveal, they can lead us to meaningful, accountable action.

1. Normalize Discomfort

- Recognize that discomfort is part of the learning process, not a sign of failure.
- Reframe “feeling uncomfortable” as a signal of growth and self-reflection.

2. Practice Self-Awareness

- Notice your reactions without judgment.
- Reflect on why certain topics trigger defensiveness, guilt, or resistance.
- Use journaling to process difficult topics.

3. Stay Engaged

- Try to stay present with challenging content, even if it feels uncomfortable.
- Take short breaks if needed but return to the material with intention.

4. Listen and Learn

- Focus on understanding different perspectives, especially Indigenous voices and experiences.
- Prioritize listening over responding or defending your viewpoint.
- Normalize asking questions, even if they feel awkward or uncertain.
- Don’t expect Indigenous people to answer your every question or do the work for you.

5. Practice Humility

- Accept that you will not have all the answers.
- Be open to feedback, correction, and new ways of seeing the world.

6. Learn together

- Consider having an “accountability buddy” to commit to learning alongside you.
- Be open with each other about what learning support could look like together.

7. Take Care of Emotional Wellbeing

- Use grounding techniques, seek support when needed, and respect the emotional experiences of others.

8. Focus on Growth and Action

- Approach learning as an ongoing process. Use insights to inform your actions, choices, and interactions. Perfection is not the goal.
- Supporting Indigenous-led initiatives and the communities around you.

The Good News

The good news is that we can use privilege as a tool, not hold it as a burden. Coupled with intentional reflection, privilege and power can be used to challenge inequity and open space for Indigenous voices.

Case study: When Respect Looks Different

The situation

An Inuk staff member, Anna, attends a regional meeting with mostly non-Indigenous partners. At the start of the meeting, participants go around the room introducing themselves. Each person shakes hands firmly, makes steady eye contact, and shares their name, job title, and organization.

When it's Anna's turn, she offers a brief greeting, avoids prolonged eye contact, and speaks about where she's from and her family connections rather than her job role. She does not repeat her name.

After the meeting, Anna overhears comments that she seemed "unprepared," "not confident," or "unprofessional." At the same time, Anna leaves the meeting feeling uncomfortable and judged. The interaction felt rushed, impersonal, and out of alignment with how respect is shown in her community.

What's happening here?

Both groups are acting respectfully in accordance with their own cultural norms.

- In many Western professional settings, respect is shown through direct eye contact, firm handshakes, stating credentials, and efficiency.
- In Inuit contexts, respect may be shown through humility, less direct eye contact, not repeating names, and situating oneself through family and community relationships rather than job titles.

This situation can be named as cultural dissonance. **Cultural dissonance** can be defined as the psychological discomfort, conflict, or confusion experienced when an individual's cultural norms, values, or behaviours clash with those of a new or dominant culture.

In this situation, cultural dissonance emerged when one set of norms was treated as the default or "professional" norm, while the other was misinterpreted as a shortcoming. When these differences are not acknowledged, they can manifest as exclusion, racism, or oppression, even without malice.

Tools to Manage Cultural Dissonance

For the individual experiencing dissonance:

- **Name the disconnect internally:** Recognize that discomfort may come from conflicting norms, not personal failure.
- **Choose flexible strategies:** Decide when to adapt for safety or access, and when to stay grounded in one's own cultural practices.

- **Connect with your community or trusted allies:** Connect with someone who understands both contexts to help reduce isolation.

For those from the dominant culture:

- **Expand the definition of "professional":** Make room for multiple ways of showing respect, confidence, and competence.
- **Normalize setting the context:** Invite introductions that include community, place, or relationships, not just job titles.
- **Hold off on judgment:** Notice assumptions before labelling behaviour as disengaged, rude, or unqualified.

Cultural dissonance isn't about right vs. wrong; it's about power, context, and whose norms are treated as neutral. Managing it requires curiosity, humility, and shared responsibility — not assimilation.

Celebrating Indigenous Reclamation & Identity

As we've learned in Modules 2 and 3, some Indigenous people face erasure of their identity and culture through colonialism, assimilation, dispossession, and policing of identity. This incredibly painful process deeply impacts Indigenous people's relations and how they move throughout the world.
At the same time, Indigenous people have (and continue to) reclaim their power, identity, and communities. Indigenous resistance is happening in many ways, through language revitalization, land defence, cultural practices (art, music, dance, and ceremony), and political movements.

Culture in Practice: The Métis Flag

The Métis flag features a white infinity sign on a blue background. The infinity symbol represents the mixing of two distinct cultures (European and First Nations) to create a unique and distinct culture. The infinity symbol, which refers to a quantity without end, signifies the eternal, never-ending existence of the Métis culture and nation.[21]

[21] Taken from Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. – The Métis Flag

Culture in Practice: *Kakiniit*

Kakiniit are traditional, sacred Inuit hand-poked tattoos, primarily worn by women on the face, chin, and forehead to signify identity, life milestones, and resilience. After nearly disappearing due to 19th/20th-century bans from the Catholic church, this cultural practice is experiencing a major resurgence as a form of reclamation.

"Once upon a time, you could look at a woman's face [and] you could know who her family was, where she was from, what her achievements were and her place in the community [...] The whole thing was told on her face." [22]

Celebrating these connections and relations is just as important as holding space for healing. In fact, Indigenous cultural resurgence (asserting sovereignty, preserving lifeways, and challenging colonial narratives) is a rich healing process within itself.

> ***"Something that most do not understand about my people: when we stand up in acts of resistance to things that threaten our spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual wellbeing, it's not because we hate what's in front of us—it's because we love what's behind us.***
>
> ***We love our homes, our families, our communities, our nations, our ceremonies, our teachings, our cultural ways, our histories and the land that those things spring from. In that, we are like anyone anywhere throughout the course of human history who has ever stood up to injustice."***
>
> - Richard Wagamese in his book, *Embers: One Ojibway's Meditations*

Reclaiming Power Through Culture

Below are some examples of Indigenous people reclaiming their power through culture. Explore their work and consider where you can offer support to Indigenous people within your own community.

Please note that some of the items in this list deal with sensitive subject matter; it is always a good idea to check content warnings beforehand.

Authors and Books

- Robin Wall Kimmerer - Braiding Sweetgrass
- Michelle Good - Five Little Indians
- Richard Wagamese - Embers: One Ojibway's Meditations

Music and Art

- CBC Radio's Reclaimed with Jarrett Martineau
- Halluci Nation - Electric Pow Wow
- Tanya Tagaq
- Siibii

[22] Quotation taken from the CBC article "Etched on the skin." Photo of Gerri Sharpe taken by Kate Kyle.

- Billy Ray Belcourt - Coexistence
- Alicia Elliott - And Then She Fell
- Tanya Tagaq - Split Tooth
- Leanna Betasamosake Simpson
- Tanya Tagala - Seven Fallen Feathers
- Ribbon Skirt
- Asinijaq
- Natasha Fisher
- Élisapie

Film and Television

- CBC Gem- North of North
- Indian Horse
- Shadow of the Rougarou
- Reservation Dogs
- Acting Good
- CBC Gem - Michif Makers
- We Won't be Ignored
- Spirit of Birth
- Three Thousand
- Meneath: The Hidden Island of Ethics
- Arctic Song
- Bones of Crows
- Echo
- Rezervations for Two

Podcasts

- This Place
- Telling Our Twisted Histories

Games

- Never Alone (Video game)
- Kun'tewiktuk: A Mi'kmaw Adventure (Video game)
- Coyote & Crow: The Roleplaying Game

Movements

- Idle No More
- No More Stolen Sisters and MMIWG
- Land Back
- Moose Hide Campaign

Other Ways to Support Indigenous People and Grow Community

- Support Indigenous-owned businesses and restaurants local to your community.
- Uplift the stories and voices of Indigenous people.
- Donate to grassroots Indigenous organizations or political movements.[23]
- Share Indigenous art, music, and podcasts with your friends, family, and co-workers.
- Attend local Indigenous events that are open to the public (e.g., Powwows).
- Connect with others through your local Friendship Centre (a map is available on the National Association of Friendship Centres' website).

Moving Forward

As we've learned, cultural safety isn't a checklist or a destination but a shared, ongoing practice rooted in relationships, reflection, and responsibility. In this module, we've explored how power, privilege, identity, and lived experience shape how people move through systems and interact with one another.

[23] Remember, donations don't always have to mean money. Donating your time, talents, or food is also a great way to contribute.

By recognizing our own positions within power structures, we can begin to use privilege as a tool rather than a barrier. This awareness allows us to challenge inequity, respect boundaries, and foster environments where everyone can feel safe and valued.

Finally, we've highlighted how cultural safety is strengthened by honouring Indigenous knowledge, resilience, and resurgence – celebrating reclamation, connection, and shared strength, not just acknowledging harm.

Resources for Further Learning

- APTN News - Two-Spirit Inuit share their stories of growing up queer in the North (Video)
- JEDI - Elder Protocol Toolkit for the Wabanaki Homelands (Toolkit)
- The Network - Indigenous Ally Toolkit (Toolkit)
- San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety - Online Training (Paid training)
- Learning to Finger Weave with Métis artist Krista Leddy (Video)
- Reclaiming agency: Reviving the once banned practice of traditional Inuit tattoos in Canada (Article)

Module 4 Quiz: Check Your Knowledge

Answers on the following page.

1. Which of the following best describes cultural safety? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Taking a cultural safety course
B. An ongoing practice based on respect and reflection
C. Treating everyone the same
D. Critically examining power imbalances and one's own culture

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2. In the "Weight of a Feather" story, what are key lessons about respectful engagement? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Harm can occur even without bad intentions
B. Feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable is a sign of personal failure
C. Taking time to observe, listen, and learn shows respect
D. People from outside a culture are not responsible for understanding boundaries

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3. Which statements about privilege are accurate? *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Privilege means a person has never experienced hardship
B. Privilege involves unearned benefits and access within social systems
C. Recognizing privilege allows for more equitable choices and allyship
D. Privilege is only about individual effort, not structural systems

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4. Intersectionality in cultural safety helps us understand that: *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. Identities such as Indigeneity, gender, and disability interact and shape experiences
B. One-size-fits-all approaches often fail to create safety
C. Cultural safety is only relevant for Indigenous people
D. Systems tend to protect those with more power and increase harm for those with less

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5. Cultural dissonance occurs when: *(Select ALL that apply.)*

A. People from different cultures experience conflicting norms and values
B. One set of cultural norms is treated as neutral or default
C. People behave inappropriately due to bad intentions
D. A lack of understanding can lead to feelings of exclusion or discomfort

Module 4 Quiz Answers

1. B and D
2. A and C
3. B and C
4. A, B, and D
5. A, B, and D

Conclusion: Bringing it all Together

This toolkit supports you in building a deeper understanding of colonial history and its ongoing impacts on Indigenous people and communities. Across the modules, you explored:

- How colonial systems were established and how they continue to shape workplaces, policies, and everyday interactions.
- Reflecting on anti-Indigenous racism, microaggressions, colonial narratives, lateral violence, and how government control of identity sustains inequity.
- How to recognize your own relationship to power and privilege, and how to strengthen your ability to respond with accountability, allyship, and care.

Moving forward, this work emphasizes practice over perfection. Decolonization and cultural safety are ongoing, shared responsibilities requiring reflection and action. Valuing lived experiences, honouring Indigenous resurgence, and taking practical steps to disrupt colonial harm help create more equitable and respectful communities.

Each of us carries a strand in the larger tapestry. When we act with humility, accountability, and openness, those strands come together to support healthier relationships, stronger communities, and a more positive future for everyone.

Certificate of Completion

Thank you for dedicating your time and energy to this toolkit. Learning is ongoing, and this certificate marks a meaningful commitment to that journey.

We hope you continue your commitment to learning and use this knowledge to contribute meaningfully to your community.

If you completed this toolkit offline, please email reception@abo-peoples.org with your name and the date you finished the toolkit to be sent a Certificate of Completion.

Appendix

About this Toolkit

ParriagGroup was hired by the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) to develop this toolkit. To ground the toolkit in a good way, the team learned from many different sources:

- **The Literature Review** looked at Indigenous and anti-oppression-focused frameworks, guidebooks, and toolkits.
- **The Indigenous Advisory Circle** included seven Indigenous CAP employees and representatives with distinct identities and experiences. They provided input on Indigenous priorities, issues, and solutions to be addressed in the toolkit.
- **Subject Matter Expert Interviews** were conducted with five Indigenous experts who specialized in Indigenous education, curriculum development, and/or training.

CAP Principles of Identity and Inclusion

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) represents the rights, interests, and needs of off-reserve and non-status Indigenous people, including First Nations (Status and Non-Status), Métis, and NunatuKavut Inuit living in urban, rural, and remote communities across Canada. The following principles guide the use of identity terms in this toolkit.

Respect for Self-Identification
Indigenous identity is rooted in lived experience, family, and community connections. CAP respects the right of people to self-identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, recognizing that identity cannot be fully defined by government registries or administrative systems.

Recognition Beyond Colonial Systems
Many Indigenous people have been excluded from federal recognition due to colonial laws and policies such as the Indian Act. CAP recognizes that these systems do not determine Indigenous identity or belonging.

Connection to Community and Culture
Identity is shaped by relationships, including kinship, culture, language, and community ties. These connections continue to exist regardless of whether people live on reserve, in Inuit Nunangat, Métis settlements or within traditional governance structures.

Inclusion of Off-Reserve and Urban Indigenous Peoples
A significant portion of Indigenous Peoples live outside reserve lands or traditional territories. CAP's work reflects the realities and rights of Indigenous Peoples living in cities, towns, rural areas, remote and northern communities.

Respect for Diversity of Indigenous Nations and Peoples
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples are diverse, with distinct histories, cultures, and governance systems. This toolkit uses inclusive definitions to recognize this diversity while supporting the rights and identities of CAP's communities beyond what is outlined.

Full Glossary

2SLGBTQQIA+: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersexual, Asexual, plus those aspects of identity not included in the acronym. 2S helps us to remember that Two-Spirit people have existed long before other understandings came through colonization.

Ally: a person with privileged identity markers (e.g., race, gender, class) who actively supports, advocates for, and acts in solidarity with equity-deserving groups. Allyship is a continuous, action-oriented process focused on dismantling systemic oppression, not just holding a sympathetic belief.

Anti-discriminatory practice: an approach which calls for people to be treated with respect and holds that people should not be treated badly or unfairly because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, impairment, class, religious belief or age. It also champions the implementation of policies that fight against discrimination.[24]

Anti-Indigenous racism: the ongoing systemic and institutional racism, discrimination and stigma experienced by Indigenous people in what is widely known as Canada. It includes beliefs and practices that maintain and perpetuate the power imbalances and systemic barriers that result in inequitable outcomes in social, economic, judicial, and health and wellness of Indigenous people.[25]

Anti-oppression: refers to a range of strategies, theories, actions, and practices that intentionally challenge systems of oppression. It is a framework, lens or practice used to recognize oppression within service, work, learning, and social environments, as well as address its effects.[26]

Assimilation: cultural assimilation is the process of absorbing one cultural group into another.

Colonialism: is the violent historical practice of European expansion into territories already inhabited by Indigenous people for the purposes of capturing new lands and removing natural resources. It is rooted in acts of violent suppression of Indigenous peoples' governance, legal, social and cultural structures. It was a systematic process of forced assimilation, exclusion and degradation of Indigenous ways of life. Indigenous people were, and continue to be, subjected to institutional and legal policies and practices designed to force them to conform to the structures of the colonial state.[27]

Cultural appropriation: when people from a majority culture adopt or exploit parts of a marginalized culture. This is typically done without permission or without understanding of the context, reasons, or background of the marginalized culture and the importance of their traditions and elements.[28]

Cultural Awareness: an understanding that there are differences between cultures.[29]

Cultural Competency: an approach that focuses on acquiring skills, knowledge and attitudes to work in more effective and respectful ways with Indigenous people and communities.[30]

Cultural Dissonance: the psychological discomfort, conflict, or confusion experienced when an individual's cultural norms, values, or behaviours clash with those of a new or dominant culture.

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[24] Taken from Key Concepts in Anti-Discriminatory Social Work by Toyin Okitikpi and Cathy Ayme
[25] Indigenous Primary Health Care Council - NE IIKAANIGAANA 'All Our Relations' Toolkit
[26] Taken from M&E
[27] The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women – Colonialism and its Impacts
[28] Adapted from CultureAlly
[29] Taken from Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC)'s *The Cultural Safety Continuum*
[30] Taken from Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC)'s *The Cultural Safety Continuum*

Cultural Humility: recognition that learning to apply culturally safe and appropriate practices is a lifelong opportunity.[31]

Cultural Safety: an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances.[32]

Cultural Sensitivity: the realization that our own cultural views influence our viewpoints and biases.[33]

Decolonization: an ongoing process that aims to deconstruct settler colonial ideologies such as white supremacy, give value to Indigenous knowledge, and dismantle power imbalances. Decolonization is the active work to give back the colonized territory's independence and undo the effects of colonialism on the social, political, and economic aspects of a people's life.[34]

Displacement: the forced movement of people from their homes, lands, or places where they normally live.

Dispossession: when people or communities are forced to give up their land, property, resources, or rights.

First Nation: First Nations are the descendants of one of the original inhabitants of Canada. Various nations, beliefs, & languages exist within this group.

Indian Hospitals: Indian hospitals originated from federally funded Christian missionary efforts to provide rudimentary hospital care on some reserves in the late 1800s and early 1900s. After the Second World War, the government aggressively expanded its system of Indian hospitals, which admitted patients based on Indian status, rather than disease. Although the institutions were originally justified to isolate tuberculosis, they functioned as racially segregated general hospitals.[35]

Indigenization: Indigenization recognizes the validity of Indigenous worldviews, knowledge and perspectives; identifies opportunities for Indigeneity to be expressed and incorporates Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.[36]

Indigenous & Aboriginal: these are umbrella terms to include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada. Both terms are used internationally to define the original inhabitants of colonized countries, with Indigenous being the most favoured term. However, it is always respectful to be specific about the Nation you are referring to; use the term that they use to self-identify.

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[31] Adapted from Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC)'s *The Cultural Safety Continuum*
[32] Adapted from Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC)'s *The Cultural Safety Continuum*
[33] Taken from Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC)'s *The Cultural Safety Continuum*
[34] Taken from Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*
[35] Adapted from The Canadian Encyclopedia - Indian Hospitals in Canada
[36] Taken from Indigenous Corporate Training Inc's *A Brief Definition of Decolonization and Indigenization*

Intersectionality: a term coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how social identities may overlap to create compounding barriers for people. It is described as a framework for approaching issues from multiple perspectives and understanding how multiple groups, or people with multiple identities, may be affected.[37]

Inuit: Inuit are Indigenous Peoples whose homelands are across northern Canada, including Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, NunatuKavut and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, as well as Inuit who live in urban or southern communities. Inuit identity is grounded in shared culture, language, family ties, and relationships to Inuit homelands and communities. The singular of Inuit is Inuk, meaning person.

Kinship: is the system of relationships that connects someone to their family, community, ancestors, future generations, and the natural world. Kinship in many Indigenous cultures is broad, relational, and based on care, respect, and reciprocity, not just biology.

Lateral Kindness: an approach to addressing lateral violence. It is based on Indigenous values that promote social harmony and healthy relationships. Lateral kindness uses First Nations teachings about respect, fairness, and the importance of relationships to create an environment built on a foundation of kindness.[38]

Lateral Violence: (or lateral unkindness) is harmful behaviour that occurs within marginalized or oppressed groups when internalized trauma, stress, and systemic oppression are redirected toward peers instead of the systems causing the harm. It often appears as gossip, bullying, exclusion, jealousy, or blame in workplaces and communities.

Lived experience: first-hand knowledge, insights, and understanding that someone gains in their personal life.

Métis: Métis are an Indigenous people with mixed Indigenous and European roots who have grown into their own distinct culture, identity, and way of life.

Microaggressions: everyday, subtle, intentional — and oftentimes unintentional — interactions or behaviours that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalized groups.[39]

Non-Status: people who identify as First Nations but are not registered under the Indian Act or have lost or been denied legal status through colonial policies and administrative barriers. Many Non-Status people maintain strong cultural, familial, and community connections to First Nations identities, territories, and traditions. CAP recognizes Non-Status First Nations peoples as rights-holders whose identities and communities persist regardless of federal registration systems.

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[37] Taken from Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*
[38] Taken from First Nations Health Authority's *From Lateral Violence to Lateral Kindness*
[39] Taken from NPR's *Microaggressions are a big deal: How to talk them out and when to walk away*

Off-Reserve Indigenous Peoples: off-reserve Indigenous Peoples include First Nations (Status and Non-Status), Métis, and Inuit people who live outside reserve land. This includes people living in urban, rural, and remote communities across Canada.

Othering: to "other" someone, means to view or treat someone as fundamentally different. Othering can contribute to discrimination and prejudice against certain groups.

Paternalism: the practice of people in positions of authority restricting the freedom or responsibilities of others without their consent because they believe it is for the person's own good or protection.

Patriarchy: is a social system in which men make most of the decisions, hold most of the power, and are considered superior to women (e.g., within political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property).

Power: in equally distributed access to privileges such as information, opportunity, and resources, and the ability to influence decisions, rules, standards, and policies to benefit oneself or one's social group. Power, and the level of power possessed by any individual or group, affects their ability to live comfortable, safe lives. Power is relational and it operates between people, cultures, institutions, and social group.[40]

Privilege: unearned access, benefits, and opportunities possessed by members of a social group with a high level of power (e.g., white privilege, socioeconomic privilege, cisgender privilege). Privilege occurs when structures and institutions have been historically designed for the benefit of or to be accessed by a particular group.[41]

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC): was created through a legal settlement between residential school survivors, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit representatives, the federal government, and church bodies.[42]

Two-Eyed Seeing or *Etuaptmumk*: coined by Mi'gmaw Elder Albert Marshall, the term for Two-Eyed Seeing, often described as integrating the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and Western perspectives for co-learning or inquiry.

Two-Spirit: Two-Spirit was a term introduced by Elder Myra Laramee in 1990 at the third annual Native American and Canadian Aboriginal LGBT people gathering in Winnipeg. It is "an English umbrella term to reflect and restore Indigenous traditions forcefully suppressed by colonization, honouring the fluid and diverse nature of gender and attraction and its connection to community and spirituality. It is used by some Indigenous people rather than, or in addition to, identifying as LGBTQI." The teachings, roles, and responsibilities for a Two-Spirit person differ from community to community. Not all queer Indigenous

[40] Taken from Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*
[41] Taken from Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*
[42] Taken from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

people use this term, but Two-Spirit is an identity specific to being Indigenous and can only be claimed by Indigenous people.[43]

[43] Taken from Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)'s *Glossary of DEIA Terms*