

# **“DIVIDED WE FALL, UNITED WE STAND”: INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION AND ITS AFFECTS ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITH ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES**

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“For an idea to change the world, it must first of all change the life of a person bearing it. It must be transformed into an example” (Camus, 1966).

## **INTRODUCTION**

Community development starts with community healing. This is not a new idea, but one that is needed in order for Native and non-Native communities to peacefully co-exist within Canada. In order to initiate developing new initiatives in a community, that particular community must be *ready* for new initiatives to be developed. Some communities are not at that level because of factors related to alcohol and drug abuse. Some communities are not yet capable of fully understanding the concepts of “community development” and “community healing.” Many people, both Native and non-Native, ask these questions: “Why can’t things change in Canada for Native people? Why can’t ‘they’ (meaning Natives) get anything done within their communities? This paper explores these questions. The hypothesis is that, in order to get anything done, whether it is political, social, economical or personal, within this country, Aboriginal people need to stand together as a nation, not just merely independent communities, reserves or cultures. There are theories explaining how people can heal and come together to work towards one common purpose. The ones that will be discussed here are Empowerment Theory, Aboriginal Theory, Community Development Theory and the National Coalition Building Institute Theory. These theories have their strengths and weaknesses when it comes to community development, but

how they deal with the internalized oppression that holds people back from their full potential as human beings is a common theme in all of them.

## **DIVIDED WE FALL...**

What needs to be realized here is that Aboriginal people are just as diverse and multi-cultural as those from immigrant ancestry who now reside in Canada. Not only are Aboriginal people culturally diverse, they also have different social and economic issues that separate them. As Peter Erasmus and Geneva Ensign claim in their book, *A Practical Framework for Community Liason work in Native Communities* (1991), "Natives also do things differently among themselves...There are many differences from community to community or from Reserve to Reserve...To describe all of them would involve a whole book in itself...That is not my field, and it would be wrong for me to pass judgment, saying "this" or "that" is cultural or not cultural."(Erasmus & Ensign, 48). From coast to coast to coast, there are tremendous differences between Aboriginal nations. There are three main groups that are recognized within the term "Aboriginal," at least as it is defined by the Canadian Constitution. They are Indian, Inuit, and Metis. There are numerous "nations-without-states" in this country now known as "Canada," which all have their own diverse cultures, traditions, and languages. There are on-reserve people, the diversity within this group is that there are reserves that are closer to southern urban areas and remote reserves that are much farther away; then there are the urban or off-reserve group of people including those who may have lived on a reserve at one point in their life but no longer do, as well as those who never have lived on a reserve but are registered and hold status with a First Nation.

Which, brings us to the next set of differences. Some Native people are registered as Indians and hold status cards that give them treaty rights. However, there are also those who have Bill C-31 status, which means that the status was given back to them because they lost it at some point. Then there are those who do not have status at all, but whose parents or grandparents have status. Due to the laws and policies that were forced upon Aboriginal people, such as the residential school system and the 60's scoop, many Aboriginal people were adopted into non-

Native homes where, in some cases, they lost their status and their identities as Native people.

Another difference between Aboriginal people is their spirituality or religious beliefs. Some people were brought up and raised in the milieu of traditional spiritual practices such as the “sweat lodge ceremony” or the “sun dance ceremony,” while others were brought up with Christianity. Some were brought up Christian and are now going back to the traditional spirituality that their ancestors practiced. These are a few differences that exist between Aboriginal people living in Canada. Other disparities may include class, socio-economic conditions and education. These differences and categories are described humourously by Native Author and Playwright Drew Hayden Taylor in his book, *Oh, Just Call me an Indian* (1992):

We'll start with the basics: status, non-status, Metis. So far, painless. I guess next would come the already mentioned Indian, followed by native, aboriginal, indigenous and First Nations. Pay attention, there's going to be a test afterward. From there we can go to “on-reserve,” “off-reserve,” urban, treaty. Got a headache yet? How about the enfranchised Indians, the Bill C-31 or reinstated people, the traditional Indians, the assimilated Indian? I'm not finished yet. There are the wannabe's (the white variety), the apples (the red variety), the half-breeds, mixed bloods and of course, the ever popular full-bloods. My personal favorites are what I call the Descartes Indians. “I think Indian, therefore I am Indian.” Get the picture? Right—There are a couple dozen separate names for our people. Where does it all stop? I want to know just who keeps changing all the rules (Taylor, p.18).

In Wayne Warry's book *Unfinished Dreams: Community Healing and the reality of Aboriginal Self-Government* (1998), one elder comments:

They say none of us belong here. There is resentment. There is always jealousy here and so it is hard to get things done. At the band meetings there is friction. Also there is religion. Some people

go to church. When you go you can feel people looking at you with resentment. Also our resources are depleting. There isn't enough houses. Sometimes you are promised a house and someone else gets it. That causes resentment. I don't go around visiting people anymore...I don't know why. There is jealousy. People say that you're no good and stuff like that. It's hard to get along. It wasn't like that before (Warry, p.215).

Warry describes this as a "...brief snapshot of colonial history only to suggest that today, community life is overlain with claims of history, cultural status, language and religious belief...In sum, First Nations are internally divided and complex."(Warry, p.215). This could also encompass other Aboriginal communities, such as urban centres, organizations or political bodies. The discrepancies that exist between Aboriginal people are drawing them apart due to the internalized oppression that colonialism has left behind. The struggle between these various groups of people will continue unless Aboriginal people begin to look at their own racism and discrimination they harbor against one another. Teaching and creating awareness towards people about their own internalized oppression is, I believe, the foundation of community development. Community development can not happen unless community healing is implemented as an integral part of development. So, in order to develop communities economically, politically and socially, there needs to be acknowledgement of internalized oppression and how it affects community development.

Creating an awareness of the internalized oppression that people carry around is essential for true community development. It is important to educate Aboriginal people of their own internalized oppression so that they will abandon oppressing each other. Dealing with internalization of past oppression is a way to build up an individuals self-esteem, and addressing internalized oppression will strengthen the Community of Aboriginal people regardless of their culture, race, class, gender, geographic location, economic condition, or education. It is hoped that Aboriginal people will begin to see each other as "All for one and One for All."

## REMNANTS OF COLONIZATION

Racism, discrimination and prejudice have existed within this country since colonization. Aboriginal people have had to deal with racism within every sector of Canadian society. Racism, as discussed by Warry (1998), is defined as "...an attitude; discrimination is an action that results in marginalization...racism, whether resting on self-interest or a belief in the superiority of European culture, continues to promote assimilation ((Warry, p.30). The assorted places that Aboriginal people have had to deal with racism are systemic, meaning that racism has been built into the institutions and organizations that operate within this country. Examples of these institutions include universities, laws, policies, as well as school textbooks that Canadian children learn history from which, "contain negative images of Indians" That impact Aboriginal students because, "...racism can color educational experiences and lead to low self- and cultural esteem" (Warry, p.31). Racism and discrimination towards Aboriginal people is alive and well today in Canada. An example of this is the poverty that exists within Aboriginal communities which is "...directly attributable to their marginalization within the economic structure of Canadian society, as well as the direct impact of racism and discrimination"(Warry, p.83). However, "The effects of systemic racism and discrimination are often subtle, and for many Canadians easily deniable" (Warry, p.31). Racism against Aboriginal people in Canada is holding them back from reaching their goals, politically, socially and economically as described by Warry:

Racism prevents understanding of the viability and integrity of Aboriginal cultural ways and inhibits governments' abilities to respond reasonably and justly to First Nations initiatives. Belief in the superiority of Western ways is revealed when government fails to recognize the pragmatic wisdom of Native people or fails to understand Native political processes that are intrinsic to community control over services. Adherence to belief in the superiority of Western institutions exists even in the face of evidence that the impact of these institutions has been destructive, or that other, potentially more viable

and culturally appropriate alternative would better service communities (Warry, p.31) .

It is quite evident that there is systemic racism built into the very fibre of Canada. There is also overt racism that has affected many Aboriginal people in an assortment of ways. For example, Aboriginal people in Ontario who hold status cards may tell you how they get hassled whenever they present their tax-exempt status cards to store clerks. Few would argue that Aboriginal people have had to deal with an enormous amount of racism within this country, both systemically and overtly, but the question here is: how has it affected them and how will the effects of this racism affect community development? Erasmus and Ensign (1991) describe the awareness that needs to be understood when an outside person wants to go into an Aboriginal community and do community work, especially when they are faced by people who have internalized oppression, "If you are non-Native, you probably will have to prove yourself before trust and respect can be reciprocal. Remember, sometimes you are dealing with the results of years of prejudice and discrimination"(Erasmus and Ensign, 42).

There are countless theories on community development and how to address the effect that oppression and racism has had and continues to have on community development. There is the Empowerment theory that is both a process as well as an outcome. There is the Aboriginal theory that is holistic. There is the Community Change/Development theory which happens when communities change out of a 'rebellious spark'. The main theory that will be discussed and analyzed as part of community development will be the theory that is used by the National Coalition Building Coalition, which is based on re-evaluative counseling.

## **EMPOWERMENT THEORY**

The Empowerment process is a widely used as a community development theory within Aboriginal communities in Canada. This process is a means as well as an end. According to Judith Lee (1996), there was a need for an approach that "...addresses both personal and political empowerment in working with oppressed groups"(Lee, 218). Empowerment deals with the oppression that various groups experience. It focus on the

“goodness of fit” that individuals lose when they are oppressed. To get people to the “goodness of fit” level, “people must examine the forces of oppression, name them, face them, and join together to challenge them as they have been internalized and encountered in external political structures”(Lee, 220).

There is a conceptual aspect to the empowerment process that embodies five perspectives called, ‘Fifocal Vision’. They are as follows: 1) A historical perspective: learning a group’s history of oppression, including a critical historical analysis of related social policy. 2) An ecological perspective, including a stress-coping paradigm and other concepts related to coping (a transactional view of ego functioning that takes oppression into account, problem-solving, and cognitive restructuring of the false beliefs engendered with internalized oppression). 3) Ethno-class perspective: which appreciates the ceilings and lowering floors imposed by class and race and gender. 4) the Feminist perspective: the concept that power may be developed and the unity of the personal and political. 5) A critical perspective: analyzing the status quo (Lee, 220). The acknowledgement of internalized oppression is a pivotal part of the vision because,

Oppression is a structurally based phenomenon with far-reaching effects on human individuals and communities. These effects range from physical death (infant or child mortality and the death of adolescents and young adults from gang violence, drugs, other forms of homicide, and suicide) to incarceration and the death of hope. Hopelessness leads to destruction of self and others, despair, apathy, internalized rage, and false beliefs about the worth of self.(Harris, 1993). When the efforts of oppression become internalized, the maintenance of oppression may become a transactional phenomenon. Two societal institutions militate against the individual’s succumbing to or internalizing the oppressor’s view of the self: a strong family unit and a strong community. Hence, strong support networks and good human relatedness and connections are essential to developing a positive sense of identity and self-direction ( Lee, 228).

When we as Aboriginal people learn about the historical oppression that has affected us, it may give us an understanding of how our families and communities and ourselves have fallen into certain social, political and economic conditions. When the history of the events that happened in residential schools and the 60's scoop are understood, people may begin to heal from past abuses or addictions that have left them haunted and suffering. The above effects mentioned as a result of internalized oppression appear within countless Aboriginal communities across this country. Since residential schools and the 60's scoop have sabotaged Aboriginal families and communities, the building of 'positive self-identities' and 'self-direction,' has been affected. It is no wonder that Aboriginal people are afflicted with an identity crisis. The empowerment process lies within the client, not within the worker. According to Lee (1996), there are three interlocking processes of empowerment: 1) Development of a positive and potent sense of self; 2) construction of knowledge and capacity for critical comprehension of social and political realities of one's environment; 3) cultivation of resources and strategies, or more functional competence, for attainment of personal and collective social goals. The healing effects of the empowerment theory may be seen as more mental. When people learn about the injustice and oppression of their own families and communities they may form a critical consciousness, "Knowledge of oppression is power...Power also comes from healthy personality development in the face of oppression, which fuels the ability to influence others...this includes self-esteem/identity; self-direction; and competence and relatedness"(Lee, 225). This theory helps clients to see how oppression has affected their group, and how they can work to end oppression that still exists.

Learning about the past and the injustice that has happened towards Aboriginal people is *education*. Universities with Native Studies programs are a prime example of this. These programs are empowering Aboriginal people all across the country. Lee (1996) claims that "...building pride in peoplehood and community is both a preventative and remedial measure. However, the problems caused by oppression almost always necessitate a dual focus on changing the environment and changing the self" (Lee, 229). Within Empowerment Theory, the clients themselves are the people who work to change the



society around them. The social workers help. As Lee (1996) states, "It was not we, a handful of social workers, against a sea of human misery. It was humanity itself building dikes, and we were helping in our own peculiar way. Empowered people themselves are the builders. We are fellow workers, and neighbors with special expertise in the struggle for social living and social justice"(Lee, 223). This is one of the strengths of Empowerment Theory in that it lets clients build themselves up by building or re-building their communities. This process of empowerment helps individuals and families and communities learn about oppression and how it has affected them. It does not deal with the true internalization of oppression that lies beneath the skin of those who have endured racism and discrimination throughout the majority of their lives.

## ABORIGINAL THEORY

This theory has been pivotal in helping Aboriginal people across the nation of Canada deal with the effects of colonialism and how it has affected them, their families and communities. Aboriginal theory, as discussed by Herb Nabigon and Anne-Marie Mawhiney (1996), is based on harmony and balance within four aspects: mental, emotional, spiritual and physical. They describe how "...spiritual knowledge helps to diminish racism..."(Nabigon and Mawhiney, 20). The Medicine Wheel is a circular way of understanding how events and issues affect our external and internal beings. At the center of the wheel is listening, which is imperative to any healing work. According to Nabigon and Mawhiney, "Cree ways of helping offer us ways to balance our inner selves by listening to ourselves, our surroundings and others...when we listen to our inner self we get in touch with our inner fire"(p. 21). The principle therapeutic goal of the Cree medicine wheel is "...to promote balance and harmony within individuals and groups of people, including communities, and to assist in taking action to relieve pain in the communities and nations of the world"(Nabigon and Mawhiney, 28).

The Cree medicine wheel theory is comprised of four aspects. A different color is represented in each aspect. The colors represent seasons as well as the various colors of the human races on this earth. Red is in the east; it is where springtime appears as well as a person's *feelings* and, "Aboriginal people

are represented in the east”(Nabigon and Mawhiney, 28). Yellow represents the west; summertime and *relationships* and Asian people, “Oriental people, represented in the south bring the gifts of time, patience, and relationships because these are so highly valued in their culture”(Nabigon and Mawhiney, 30). In the west part of the medicine wheel we find autumn, black people and *respect*. “Black in the fall also reminds us of the Black people, who understand humility”(Nabigon and Mawhiney, 30). The fourth aspect of the medicine wheel is the north which holds a place for wintertime, white people and *caring*. “White also symbolizes the white race. Caring is being moved. Have you noticed how the white race has moved, or spread all over the world? When caring was not considered during their movement, many people of other races were displaced”(Nabigon and Mawhiney, 31). This structure of the Cree medicine wheel is informative in that it speaks of the four different colors of people on the earth, and how they have to be in balance with each other. What is interesting here is that the white race is described as moving and spreading all over the world, which speaks to colonization. That is the closest that this theory gets to speaking of racism, discrimination, and prejudice that oppressed communities are faced with. It does not go far enough into *why* there is so much hurt and anger stemming from internalized oppression.

Aboriginal theory deals with balancing a person so that they are “in-tune” with listening to their inner self. The basis of this theory has appeared within individual and community healing structures. There has been much work done around the spiritual and emotional aspect of healing; people are learning about their culture and expressing their feelings more clearly through ceremonies and Elders, but there doesn’t seem to be the same effect on the physical aspect of healing. Diabetes and obesity rates are at epidemic proportions in Aboriginal communities. Another aspect of the Medicine wheel theory that has to do with the internalized oppression of a person, is the mental aspect. However, there seems to be more emphasis on the spiritual and emotional nourishment of one’s self. There is no specific mention of how internalized oppression affects the psyche of an Aboriginal person. It simply specifies that healing and balancing of the mental aspect of a person needs to occur in order for that person to be happy and healthy.

## COMMUNITY CHANGE/DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Community Development and Planned Change have a basic theory that incorporates an ideal similar to empowerment but it is more radical. In his book *Community Development: Theory and Method of Planned Change*, Don Chekki (1979) states that community development "...provides the possibility of altering, by democratic means, the inhuman, at times anti-human directions of technology, urbanization, etc. towards more human ends"(Chekki, 7). He also quotes Camus' idea that when a people are suffering from misery and degradation that has been imposed upon them, and when they can no longer tolerate it they will rebel. "In a certain way, man confronts an order of things which oppresses him with the insistence of a kind of right not to be oppressed beyond the limit he can tolerate...I rebel-therefore we exist"(Chekki, 1979:6). The crisis that happened between the town of Oka and Kanehsatake is an example of this type of community change/development theory that has a more so-called 'radical' flavour.

A more contemporary theory of community development is offered in the book *Community Development Around the World: Practice, Theory, Research, Training* (Chekki, 1978). Within this recent theory there is a principle that underlies the practice of community development: "Those who are marginalized, excluded or oppressed should be given the essential tools that will enable them to critically analyse and become conscious of their situation in structural terms, so that they can envisage possibilities for change" (Campfens, 1997:24). It is apparent that Empowerment Theory has had an influence on the community change/development theory. This recent paradigm includes the importance of cultural respect when working on developing or changing communities. This is important not only for non-Aboriginal people to respect but for Aboriginal people to respect, due to the great cultural diversity among First Nations. If cultural differences are not accepted and respected within development, it could be catastrophic. "One word long associated with the Canadian government's policy in regard to native people is *assimilation*. This notion of progress and civilization, which is intertwined with the North American dream of the melting-pot, is flawed in a major way: it denies an opportunity for people to be enriched by learning about another culture" (Campfens, 120). The term "melting pot" is oppressive in itself. North American countries should be considered "salad

bowl," since a melting pot is where everyone is melted together and original cultures of people are cast aside in order to build a collective culture. However, if one thinks of a salad bowl, they can see that there are differences in culture, but when put together, there exists something full of diversity and uniqueness.

Recognizing and respecting cultural differences is an element of community change/development theory. However, it does not address the effects that internalized oppression has had on the members of that community who will be facilitating the community development. The awareness and healing of these mental and emotional scars of internalized oppression are a key factor in any community development process, especially for those communities which have suffered extensively at the hands of a racist and discriminatory colonial government (including policies and laws), population (systemic and overt), and society. Aboriginal people have experienced and are experiencing racism, discrimination and colonialism on a daily basis in this country. Community change and development theory does not address the effects of internalized oppression to make it a viable way to change Aboriginal communities. Community development as a process is imperative within Aboriginal communities; it acts as a healing tool to speak to internalized oppression. In order to have community development occur as a process within a community (with regards to economics, jobs, and resource development), the people within the community have to tackle their own internalized oppression.

## **RE-EVALUATIVE COUNSELLING THEORY**

Re-evaluation Counseling is a theory that helps people of all ages, races, and backgrounds learn how to exchange effective help with one another in order to free themselves from the effects of past oppressive experiences ([www.rc.org](http://www.rc.org)). This theory "...assumes that everyone is born with tremendous intellectual potential, natural zest, and lovingness, but that these qualities have become blocked and obscured in adults as the result of accumulated distress experiences (fear, hurt, loss, pain, anger, embarrassment, etc.) which begin early in peoples' lives. When adequate emotional discharge can take place, the person is freed from the rigid pattern of behavior and feeling left by the hurt.

The basic loving, cooperative, intelligent, and zestful nature is then free to operate.”(www.rc.org). When a person participates in re-evaluative counseling they can be more effective in “...looking out for his or her own interests and the interests of others, and will be more capable of acting successfully against injustice” (www.rc.org). This theory describes how a person deals with their own internalized oppression and how it can have a positive effect on a person in their dealings with themselves and the oppression that they are faced with. Re-evaluative counselling focuses on eradicating the negative feelings that transpire with an individual when they are faced with years of shame from the wickedness of oppression. It is about the rebuilding of a person’s pride in their race, culture, background, etc. The simple definition of re-evaluative counseling is “...the uncovering of reality from the confusions which have been placed upon it by misinformation, oppression, and the operation of distress patterns”(www.rc.org). Re-evaluative counseling as a process for community development could prove to be effective. It could open up the communication lines between the diverse nations of Aboriginal people. People would address their own internalized oppression, which would help them to quit oppressing each other, because they could learn the destructiveness of their oppressive behavior.

### ***National Coalition Building Institute: Prejudice Reduction Workshop***

A prime example of where re-evaluative counseling is taking place is with an international organization called the *National Coalition Building Institute*. The *National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI)* is a nonprofit leadership training organization based in Washington, D.C. Since 1984, NCBI has been working to solve inter-group conflict and prejudice in communities throughout the world. NCBI’s proactive approach begins with a group of community leaders who are taught effective bridge-building skills to combat intergroup conflicts. Within the *National Coalition Building Institute: Prejudice Reduction Model* there are group exercises that deal with conflict and resolution regarding racism, discrimination, and so on. Taken from the actual prejudice reduction model, the basic theory of the prejudice reduction workshop is as follows:

- 1) Guilt is the glue that holds prejudice in place
- 2) Every issue counts

- 3) To shift attitudes...hear stories.
- 4) Skill training leads to empowerment.
- 5) End leadership oppression.
- 6) Teams are necessary for institutional change (NCBI, 12).

The NCBI Prejudice Reduction Workshop consists of a series of incremental, experiential activities that help participants to celebrate their similarities and differences, to recognize the misinformation they have learned about various groups, to identify and heal from internalized oppression (the discrimination members of an oppressed group target at themselves and each other), to claim pride in group identity, to understand the personal impact of discrimination through the telling of stories, and to learn hands on tools for dealing effectively with bigoted comments and negative behavior. The overview of the workshop which includes the five skills that are hoped to be learned and understood by the participants, consists of: 1) Identifying the information and misinformation we learned about other groups; 2) Identifying and expressing pride in the group to which we belong; 3) Learning how groups, other than our own, experience mistreatment; 4) Learning the personal impact of specific incidents of discrimination; and 5) Learning how to interrupt prejudicial jokes, remarks and slurs (NCBI, 5). This one-day workshop is an eye-opener for most people. Many people do not think that they are racist or carry internalized oppression around until they attend a workshop. Community development happens as a direct result of the NCBI workshop because community healing often happens within these workshops. This workshop is re-evaluative counseling at its finest. It builds bridges between the individuals of a community, as well as communities to communities.

### **...UNITED WE STAND**

It is evident that there is healing that needs to take place around the subject of internalized oppression within Aboriginal communities within the context of community development. Community healing is the central part of developing a community and people to their full potential, where they can interact and co-operate within their families and communities. In order to initiate the process of change within communities, change must take place within individuals. This can be done by

combining aspects of the presented theories into a viable community development plan. This notion is better discussed by Warry (1998). He writes:

Community healing starts with the individual and then radiates out into community and when other people see that it spreads...I've got three words. Ownership of self. You have to arrive at that. You can't do that through comments from others. Some people may come out and say how they see you. But the person has to pick it up themselves. We are getting stronger and people are going on their healing journeys. The more this happens the more we will heal. People must realize we need this healing and it has to begin on the individual level. Our families are like mobiles. When one makes a different move it affects the whole family. So if I start healing it will spread"(Warry, 208).

Empowerment Theory is beneficial in that it addresses the importance of learning about the history of oppression on a group of people in order to heal and build up a community. It addresses the importance of strengthening self-identity through family relationships and how the result of that is a better awareness of how oppression has affected those very same individuals. Various healing strategies and community development approaches are based on the medicine wheel formula. This traditional theory has "worked" in the sense that it has connected individuals, families and communities back to their cultures, traditions, languages and worldviews. It respects that there are four distinct races that live upon Mother Earth, but it fails in naming oppression and internalized oppression as a source of problems within Aboriginal communities. However, in rebuilding the self-identity and pride of Aboriginal people the medicine wheel approach and other 'traditional teachings' are desperately needed. Learning about their own cultures and histories, and putting into everyday practice what is learned, is what makes Aboriginal people distinct and proud. The community change/development theory is rooted in a 'radical' movement. However, the more contemporary theory has a correlation to empowerment theory. It focuses much-needed attention on cultural differences and how respecting cultural differences is an important aspect to community development and change. This theory mentions that people who are

oppressed will no longer tolerate mistreatment and will revolt. This is true, but in order for this theory to be turned into a successful practice there has to be more of a holistic focus that includes the recognition of internalized oppression and the effects it has on people. Re-evaluative counseling would be extremely effective in that such an approach deals specifically with the internalized oppression that individuals harbor with their minds, hearts and souls. The National Coalition Building Institute has had international success with the Prejudice Reduction Workshop. If this workshop were to be implemented in communities with the important points of the other theories, I believe that people would begin to heal from internalized oppression.

## CONCLUSION

A successful community development plan would include aspects of each theory. It would include the part in empowerment theory that recognizes how oppression affects a group of people and learning about it will help to improve communities. It would include the traditional teachings of the medicine wheel theory, particularly with reference to the importance of balance and harmony within oneself. The re-evaluative counseling theory would contribute largely to healing the internalized oppression that countless Aboriginal people are carrying around. The community development change theory would encompass all of the strong points of each theory to make up a community development plan. To take certain parts of these theories and develop them into a community development plan would work well to heal the hearts of individuals, families and communities, not just locally but nationally.

Participation amongst individuals could conceivably have a ripple effect within communities in relation to this community development plan. Linking up with Friendship Centres and implementing the NCBI: Prejudice Reduction Workshop as a monthly offered program would educate Aboriginal people about their own internalized oppression, and help them heal from it. This NCBI model and workshop would multiply into various ways, as long as Aboriginal people were trained to facilitate workshops. If a caucus of Aboriginal people was formed within the National Coalition Building Institute at a



National level, this would increase participation as well as promote future development of NCBI workshops within communities. Warry states:

It is virtually impossible to separate individual and community healing. At almost every turn we are cautioned that for structural change to occur, people need to change many basic behaviors and values. First and foremost, people need to 'end the denial' about problems that exist in their communities and that, to a great extent, are the product of colonial history. People also need to establish constructive communication processes that will foster strong and positive interpersonal relationships. By fostering a positive environment for self-expression, communities can promote greater participation in community affairs" (Warry, 207).

There is a substantial need for this type of healing around internalized oppression to occur within every corner of this country. Aboriginal people need to come together in their own communities before they can even attempt to work together as nations. There is an atrocious amount of internalized oppression that individuals are concealing. This internalized oppression needs to be addressed and ended, first on an individual level then on a community level, and then on a national level.

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## APPENDIX

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STARTS WITH COMMUNITY HEALING

#### OUTLINE

In-depth analysis of racism, colonialism, discrimination, prejudice and how it affects individuals, families and communities, and community development.

1) Background information on issue/ include within the social, political influences

- Pre-contact societies
- Contact/Colonialism
- Present situation within Nation

2) How to make changes occur?

- Individuals
- Families
- Communities
- Nation

3) Why is this a community development area?

How personal development of allies will be addressed?  
How will members deal with opposing interests among  
community groups/members/

4) Evaluation of your plan for change including how the vision  
for change was developed

- Who would participate and how would you encourage  
community participation?
- How would you deal with various group dynamics?
- How would you ensure that the initiative would continue  
and results be monitored?
- Where does the community go from here?

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