

**Towards Decolonizing and Indigenizing Teaching and Curricular Practices in Canadian
Higher Education: A Narrative Inquiry into Settler Academics' Experiences**

by

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Abstract

For some moving toward reconciliation is controversial; for others acting on decades of talk about reconciliation is long over-due. Debates about Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples have the potential to build or break apart Canada. Institutions of higher education in Canada have a critical role to play in challenging the reproduction of colonial narratives, leading the way responsibly by re-creating academic systems, centering anti-colonial epistemologies and ontologies, and decolonizing teaching and curricular practices. Building on my master's thesis research into Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs), this doctoral study contributes to a significant gap in scholarly knowledge on educational development in support of Indigenizing and decolonizing university teaching and curricular practices.

In this doctoral study, I inquired into the experiences of faculty members who had participated in one of two, year-long cohorts of a FLC on Indigenization (which were held in the academic years 2016-17 and 2017-18). This FLC program on Indigenization was facilitated by an educational developer and an Indigenous Studies professor at a Canadian university and in partnership with local Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members. Using narrative inquiry, I asked: What are the experiences of Canadian university professors who participated in a FLC on Indigenization of their teaching and curricular practices? At this relatively early stage in scholarly work on the subject of reconciliation in higher education, especially within the field of educational development, the stories of experience of the university educators who participated in that FLC program are the most impactful source of data available. Through one-on-one research conversations, I explored the FLC experiences of three non-Indigenous, settler professors. As they told and retold, lived and relived their stories of experience, the meaning they make of their learning journeys emerged, and we entered into further exploration of how they subsequently transferred that learning into efforts to decolonize, Indigenize, and move toward reconciliation in their teaching and curricular practices.

Owing to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, I met with research participants through an online video communication platform for a series of individual research conversations held in 2020 and 2021. Working individually with John, Anthony, and Molly (pseudonyms), I engaged with each of them in a co-composing process to arrive at three narrative accounts based on their respective field texts and my reflective research memos. Thinking with these narrative accounts and through the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of temporality, sociality, and place, I identified five resonant threads: 1) ongoing learning: towards empathy and social-mindedness; 2) the strengths of the FLC facilitators; 3) epistemological and ontological dissonance; 4) unsettling settlers; and 5) the urgency of settler action. These resonant threads provide insights into particular experiences that reverberated across John's, Anthony's, and Molly's stories of experience and that resonated with my learning journey into decolonizing and Indigenizing. I closed this work with a return to the personal, practical, social, and theoretical justifications for the study, as well as an exploration of new wonders that have emerged from the findings.

Key words: Indigenization, decolonization, reconciliation, educational development, faculty learning community, higher education, White settler academics, narrative inquiry.

Preface

This dissertation is an original work by Julie A. Mooney. The research study, on which this dissertation is based, received research ethics approval from the researcher's parent institution, the University of Alberta's Research Ethics Board 1, under the project title *Living Policy: A narrative inquiry into Canadian university professors' experiences as they begin moving toward reconciliation*, ID No. Pro000908956 (approved May 12, 2020; expiry date May 11, 2021) and renewed approval under the same title, ID No. Pro000908956_REN1 (approved April 19, 2021; expiry date April 18, 2022). This study also received research ethics approval for one year, with a one-year renewal, from the institutional research ethics board at the site of participant recruitment and data collection. As the principal investigator for this study, I, Julie A. Mooney, am responsible for designing and conducting this study, recruiting participants, processing and analyzing the data, and composing this dissertation manuscript. Some excerpts of this manuscript have been submitted for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals.

Dedication

To my very first teachers
My parents, John and Ruth,
My sister, Rebecca, and
My nana, Winnifred.

To my ancestors
Whose love of the land,
Passed on from
Generation to generation,
Endures.

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I wish to express profound thanks for John, Anthony, and Molly (pseudonyms) for engaging in this study with me as research participants and co-inquirers, for sharing your stories of experience so freely, in the midst of your own learning journeys, and for making the time for me, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, when our worlds were disrupted and unpredictable. I am truly grateful for your contributions to this project and for the connections we made with one another through our shared struggles as settlers who are working to engage, in a good way, with decolonizing and transforming the academy.

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Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Dedication</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Land Acknowledgement</i>	<i>xiv</i>
<i>Prologue</i>	<i>xv</i>
Chapter 1: Narrative Beginnings	1
Purposeful Narrative Beginnings	1
Locating Myself	1
What Motivates Me?	4
Being a White-skinned Settler in Settler-colonial Canada	6
White, Settler-Canadian Engagement in Decolonizing and Indigenizing the Academy	11
Faculty Learning Communities as Educational Development Practice	13
<i>Developing an Interest in Faculty Learning Communities</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Paradoxical Personal and Professional Lives</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Time Pressure and a Search for Home</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Merging Scholarship and Professional Practice</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Peace Studies and Romero House</i>	<i>17</i>
Experiential Learning as Educational Development Practice	19
<i>My Connection to Land, Water, “Wilderness,” and My Experiential Learning Journey</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Leading Educational Development on Experiential Learning</i>	<i>22</i>
TRC Calls to Action and Canadian University Strategic Plans on Indigenization	23
<i>Mis-education</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Roadblocks to Ally Engagement</i>	<i>24</i>
Pedagogy of Discomfort: Unsettling of Settlers	25
<i>Who Do You Think You Are?</i>	<i>26</i>
Research Purpose	29
Chapter 2: Conceptual Underpinnings	30
Introduction of Conceptual Underpinnings	30
Context of the Study	31
Research Puzzle	35
Justifications for the Study	35
<i>Personal Justifications</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Practical Justifications</i>	<i>36</i>

<i>Theoretical (Social) Justifications</i>	36
Faculty Learning Communities as Educational Development Practice	37
Experiential Learning as Educational Development Practice	39
TRC Calls to Action and Canadian University Strategic Plans on Indigenization	40
Decolonization, Indigenization, and Reconciliation	43
<i>Decolonization</i>	43
<i>Indigenization</i>	44
<i>Reconciliation</i>	46
<i>Land</i>	47
Pedagogy of Discomfort: Unsettling of Settlers	49
Conceptual Underpinnings Summary	50
Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods of Inquiry	52
Philosophy	52
Epistemology	53
Relational Ontology	56
Narrative Inquiry Commonplaces	57
<i>Temporality</i>	57
<i>Sociality</i>	58
<i>Place</i>	60
Touchstones of Narrative Inquiry	61
1) <i>Relational Responsibilities</i>	61
2) <i>In the Midst</i>	62
3) <i>Negotiation of Relationships</i>	63
4) <i>Narrative Beginnings</i>	64
5) <i>Negotiating Entry to the Field</i>	65
6) <i>Moving from Field to Field Texts</i>	66
7) <i>Moving from Field Texts to Interim and Final Research Texts</i>	66
8) <i>Representing Narratives of Experience in Ways that Show Temporality, Sociality, and Place</i>	67
9) <i>Relational Response Communities</i>	68
10) <i>Justifications – Personal, Practical, and Theoretical</i>	69
11) <i>Attentive to Audience</i>	70
12) <i>Commitment to Understanding Lives in Motion</i>	70
Why Narrative Inquiry?	72
The Importance of Experience	72
Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Midst of a Global Pandemic	74
The Possibility for Change with Narrative Inquiry	77
Responding to Critiques of Narrative Inquiry	78
Limitations and Possibilities within the Study	80
<i>Location and Dislocation</i>	80
<i>Avoiding Narrative Smoothing</i>	81
<i>Grand Narratives, Deficit Narratives, and Narratives of Possibility</i>	83

<i>Methods of Inquiry</i>	85
Research Design	85
<i>Purposive Sample and Site of Research</i>	85
<i>Recruitment and Research Ethics</i>	85
<i>Criteria for Inclusion</i>	86
<i>Sampling Possibilities</i>	86
In the Field	87
<i>Field Texts</i>	87
<i>From Field Texts to Interim Research Texts</i>	89
<i>Final Research Texts</i>	89
<i>Representation of Final Research Texts in Public Forums</i>	90
<i>Chapter 4: Narrative Account Co-composed with John</i>	91
Introducing John	91
Preparing Myself for Our Research Conversations	91
Beginning in the (Virtual) Field	92
Leading up to the FLC	92
Significant FLC Experience	96
Spiritual Learning - Revisiting the Sweat Lodge Experience	103
Settler Solidarity with Standing Rock	110
Experiential Learning on the Land	112
Knowledge Transfer from FLC to Teaching and Curricular Practice	113
<i>Shifts in Framework</i>	114
<i>Changing Curricular and Teaching Practices</i>	114
Collegial Community and Seminar-style Component of the FLC	115
Filtering Indigenization Through Disciplinary Lenses	117
Follow-up to Relationship with the First Nations Community	118
Revisiting Knowledge Transfer from FLC to Teaching and Curricular Practice	121
Challenge of Finding Time to Indigenize Curricula Among All Demands on Academics	122
Jarring Classroom Experience	123
Tom Longboat Curriculum Change	128
Moving Towards Reconciliation in Our Teaching and Curricular Practice	131
John's Closing Reflections on these Research Conversations	133
<i>Chapter 5: Narrative Account Co-composed with Anthony</i>	134
Introducing Anthony	134
A Global Pandemic Rages On	134
The Virtual Field	135
Beginning the Conversation	135

Significant FLC Experience	140
What is Decolonization? And What are Settler Roles in It?.....	142
<i>Parallel Between Settlers Decolonizing and Men Critically Examining Masculinities</i>	<i>144</i>
Unpacking the Work of Decolonization.....	145
<i>The Challenge of Decolonizing Ourselves</i>	<i>146</i>
Who Does the Work of Decolonization?	148
The Sweet Spot	149
Decolonizing Teaching and Curricular Practices.....	154
<i>Re-design of Comic Books Course Syllabus – Content and Representation</i>	<i>155</i>
<i>Decolonizing Teaching and Pedagogical Practices – The Circle.....</i>	<i>156</i>
<i>Legislative Work – Decolonizing and Making Space for Indigenous.....</i>	<i>159</i>
Significant FLC Experience Revisited.....	162
Changing Relationship with the Land.....	163
Nomenclature and Land Acknowledgements	166
<i>What is Indigenization? And What are Settler Roles in It?</i>	<i>168</i>
Stories of Experience through Artifacts	170
Emotional Impact of the FLC Learning Experience	172
Closing.....	175
<i>Chapter 6: Narrative Account Co-composed with Molly.....</i>	<i>179</i>
Introducing Molly.....	179
Beginning in the Virtual Field	179
Motivation to Join the FLC on Indigenization	180
Indigenizing Sabbaticals.....	183
Significant Experience in the FLC on Indigenization.....	185
Metacognitive Reflections on Research Conversations	193
Seminar-style Component of the FLC.....	195
Opening the Bundle	199
Unsettling the Settler	202
Moving Towards Reconciliation.....	205
Relationship with Grandmother Doreen	206
Changes to Teaching and Curricular Practices.....	208
Closing: Molly’s Musings	211
<i>Chapter 7: Resonant Threads.....</i>	<i>213</i>
Narrative Inquiry Analysis.....	213
<i>Thinking with Resonant Threads.....</i>	<i>213</i>
Resonance.....	214

Tuning into Resonant Threads	218
<i>Resonant Thread 1 – Ongoing Learning: Towards Empathy and Social-mindedness</i>	<i>218</i>
<i>Resonant Thread 2 – The Strengths of the FLC Facilitators</i>	<i>224</i>
<i>Resonant Thread 3 – Epistemological and Ontological Dissonance</i>	<i>229</i>
<i>Resonant Thread 4 – Unsettling Settlers</i>	<i>237</i>
<i>Resonant Thread 5 – The Urgency of Settler Action</i>	<i>246</i>
Resonant Gifts of Stories Told and Narrative Inquiry Shared.....	251
Chapter 8: Towards Reconciliation	253
A Return to Narrative Beginnings and Conceptual Underpinnings.....	253
<i>Reflective Memo - Sept. 16, 2021</i>	<i>256</i>
Unfolding Personal, Practical, Social and Theoretical Justifications for the Study	259
<i>Unfolding Personal Justifications</i>	<i>259</i>
<i>Unfolding Practical Justifications</i>	<i>264</i>
<i>Unfolding Social and Theoretical Justifications</i>	<i>269</i>
Ethical Considerations and Limitations	272
<i>Relational Ontology</i>	<i>272</i>
<i>Anonymization.....</i>	<i>273</i>
<i>Amendment to Anonymizations</i>	<i>275</i>
<i>Nothing About Us, Without Us.....</i>	<i>277</i>
New Wonders and Possibilities.....	281
Closing Thoughts.....	283
Epilogue	285
References.....	287
Appendix A: Invitation to Participate in the Study.....	313
Appendix B: Research Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form.....	314
Appendix C: Research Instrument - Guiding Prompts for Inquiry Conversations	317
Appendix D: Research Ethics Certificates from REB 1, The University of Alberta	318

List of Figures

Figure 1	Image of the type of flexible furniture on wheels	157
Figure 2	Julie's academic family tree	168
Figure 3	Google Maps image roughly situating Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park and the Majorville Medicine Wheel	172

Land Acknowledgement¹

The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous Peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. (University of Alberta, 2019)

I begin with a land acknowledgement to honour the Indigenous Peoples on whose ancestral lands my doctoral research is located. This place holds stories from cultures, histories, languages, and knowledges that were born of local Indigenous Peoples' sacred relationship with this land. As a Canadian of Irish and Scottish ancestry, I honour and respect this land.

To acknowledge the land where I live and work reminds me that Canada's economic prosperity was built on unceded land and land treaties with Indigenous Peoples that the government of Canada dishonoured. Colonization was not a single event; it is an on-going process to silence and render invisible Indigenous Peoples. If settlers are to repair our broken relationships with Indigenous People in this place, then acknowledging the land is merely a small step with which to begin (Smith, 2019). It is in taking "small steps, often" (Colin Hunter in Rundle, 2019, minute 8:06), that we can hope to learn and be changed. Recognizing and lamenting the harm of colonialization, I seek ways to enter into new relationships with Indigenous Peoples and the land, based on gratitude, respect, truth-telling, reciprocity, and justice.

¹ In preparing this land acknowledgement, I consulted several resources and spoke with both Cree and Métis colleagues within Treaty 6 territory. A list of recommendations for writing land acknowledgements that I found useful was by the Indigenizing ASHE Collective (Gonzales, 2019).

Prologue

This doctoral dissertation research is a narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), which differs from other qualitative research writing formats and styles. Readers are invited to suspend existing understandings of and expectations for the writing of a dissertation. Narrative inquiry starts with narrative beginnings, a step in the process of research design, prior to any interaction with research participants. Narrative beginnings are the researcher's autobiographical accounts responding to the question, 'Who am I in this research' (Clandinin, 2013)? This reflective writing process moves backwards and forwards in time, place, and through various relationships and contexts; it was a way to make meaning of my experiences across the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). As the study progressed, I returned to my narrative beginnings, adding new narrative passages to illuminate the evolving relationship between my experiences and the research puzzle. This iterative, ongoing, self-reflective process helped me to "become autobiographically conscious" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 46).

Narrative beginnings form the first chapter of my dissertation. Readers are encouraged to enter into my narrative journey in chapter 1, as a starting point for exploring, in subsequent chapters (4-6), the relational engagement with the experiences of participants in this narrative inquiry study, and to begin to see a "nested set of stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63) of experience shared between the researcher and the research participants. My narrative beginnings do not follow a linear, chronological sequence; the stories of experience told capture only glimpses into my experiences. The second chapter in this narrative inquiry is framed as conceptual underpinnings.

While the conceptual underpinning chapter certainly draws from scholarly and theoretical literature that was critical during the design and development of the narrative inquiry study, this

chapter is not a literature review and, therefore, does not provide an exhaustive examination of literature related to the study. The intention of this conceptual underpinnings chapter is to explore theories that are, at the time that the study begins, relevant to the research puzzle. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) referred to the tension between experience and theory in narrative inquiry when they wrote, “Formalists begin inquiry in theory, whereas narrative inquirers tend to begin with experience as expressed in lived and told stories” (p. 40). This tension between theory and experience arises when readers, unfamiliar with narrative inquiry, expect the theory or theories driving the study to be presented in a literature review chapter that identifies knowledge gaps and the anticipated value of the proposed research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). However, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) contend that narrative inquirers “frequently write dissertations without a specific literature review chapter. [Instead], they weave the literature throughout the dissertation from beginning to end in an attempt to create a seamless link between theory and the practice embodied in the inquiry” (p. 41). In this dissertation, theory is woven throughout; the reader may find that the theory develops from chapter to chapter. This second chapter also identifies the research puzzle, “called by some the research problem or research question” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 41), and explores the wonders that propel the study, and states the purpose of the study.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology and methods of inquiry used in this study. What may be unfamiliar, to some readers, about this methodology is the central place held by stories of experience. As Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) emphasize, “Stories are what keep each of us alive, able to go on with making life in ways that are meaningful” (p. 1). In narrative inquiry, the researcher and research participants share stories of experience by living alongside one another, telling and re-telling stories, and co-composing stories (narrative accounts); these

relational and nested storying processes enable the researcher and research participants to make meaning of their lived experiences, in the ongoing, midst of their lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The importance of story in narrative inquiry methodology shapes and structures the writing format and style of this dissertation.

Chapters four, five, and six each present a narrative account based on the stories of experience shared by each of the three participants in this study: John, Anthony, and Molly. Following multiple individual conversations with each of the three participants, over the course of a year or more, I co-composed their respective narrative accounts in collaboration with them. The narrative accounts in chapters four, five, and six represent both the findings of the study and the first instance of data analysis for the study – a combination of the results and a start to the discussion of results.

Chapter 7, presents the second layer of data analysis, in which I identified resonant threads that run through and across the three distinct narrative accounts (Clandinin, 2013). In narrative inquiry, the time, place, and social dimensions of the narratives inform what is understood as contingent or ‘for now’ understandings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry results are not intended as generalizable knowledge. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explain that “the narrative inquirer does not prescribe general applications and uses but rather creates texts that, when well done, offer readers a place to imagine their own uses and applications” (p. 42). In chapter 8, the closing chapter of this dissertation, I returned to the personal, practical, social, and theoretical justifications (Clandinin, 2013) for the study.

Chapter 1: Narrative Beginnings

Purposeful Narrative Beginnings

Narrative beginnings are a form of autobiographical writing used in narrative inquiry to assist researchers with exploring their stories of experience (Clandinin, 2016). The following autobiographical narrative beginnings serve to situate me in my research puzzle² for this doctoral dissertation study (Clandinin, 2016). Using this reflective and reflexive methodology (Clandinin, 2016), I weave backward and forward in time, to various places, at times as far back as my early childhood, and at other times, into my more recent stories of experience within my professional life as an educational developer in Canadian higher education (Clandinin, 2016). While situating myself in my research puzzle, I also explore how and why I came to choose the topic of this study.

As narrative inquiry invites the researcher to return, again and again, to one's own place within the study, I have written these narrative passages iteratively over time, from the early stages when I was proposing this study right to the end of the study, while revising draft versions of the dissertation. I start this chapter with a recent autobiographical narrative, in which I locate myself and identify my motivation for engaging in this research.

Locating Myself

I am a non-Indigenous, settler Canadian of Irish and Scottish ancestry. I was born and raised in Omàmìwininiwaq (Algonquin), Kanien'kehà:ka (Mohawk) and Anishinabewaki

² In narrative inquiry, a research puzzle signifies the particular wonder that has emerged in the researcher often through their experience, or through autobiographical writing known as 'narrative beginnings' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Unlike a 'research question' that holds the expectation of a clear answer to the question about the phenomenon and a 'research problem' that anticipates a clear solution at the end of a study, the language of 'research puzzle' recognizes that through narrative inquiry researchers are reformulating the puzzle or formulating multiple puzzles in line with the various understandings that emerge about the phenomenon under investigation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In narrative inquiry there is no expectation of a final answer or solution.

territories in the city that came to be known as Ottawa, in the province of Ontario (Native Land, 2021). I would not have been able to identify these lands back then. If pressed in my teens, I might have been able to say that Ottawa was on Algonquin land, but I did not receive a reliable education about the history and First Peoples on the land where I spent my early years. From what I now understand, Ottawa is part of Treaty 27 (dating back to 1819) and the Crawford Purchase (1783) (Native Land), but these treaties were unknown to me until recent years and my knowledge of them is still limited.

I spent most of my childhood and youth in Ottawa, the youngest daughter in a middle-class, suburban, nuclear family. My parents each had completed bachelor's degrees and worked in full-time, professional jobs. They were married throughout my childhood. My father passed away, when I was in my 30s. They provided a safe, healthy, and stable family life for my older sister and me, giving us many opportunities for learning and growing. When I was quite young, my sister and I got bunny rabbits as pets. Shortly after our bunnies passed away, one of Dad's work friends took in a stray dog, found during a snowstorm, along a highway. When nobody claimed the dog, our family agreed to give her a home. We named her Lady and she became one of the highlights of my childhood. I have memories of our family laughing together with Lady's gentle affection and silly shenanigans at the centre of our home.

During summer holidays in my childhood, my family would visit my maternal grandmother's house located in the small, rural community called Aroostook, New Brunswick, which I have since learned is on Wabanaki territory, part of the Dawnland Confederacy and part of the Peace and Friendship Treaty (Native Land, 2021). My mother's family, like me, are English-speaking, white settler Canadians. The time I spent in New Brunswick during my childhood holds great significance for me because my Nana and I were close and alike in many

ways. The land around Nana's house figures prominently in my memories of those summer days. I vaguely recall that there was a French-speaking New Brunswick community nearby, but the English community lived separately from the French community. Those divisions were seldom discussed; from my childhood perspective, it seemed all the adults just knew not to mix with the other side. I found it perplexing and, although I would not have articulated it as such, it troubled me. In my life in Ottawa, at the time, I was attending a French-immersion school. Nearly all my teachers were Québécois(e) or French-Canadian. I was certainly not separate from French communities, but my family in New Brunswick was. A similar divide existed between my New Brunswick and Ontario lives and the respective local Indigenous communities, but that divide was so entrenched in my experiences and never discussed among the adults in my family that I was unaware the divide existed. I don't blame my family for our silence around French communities and Indigenous communities; my parents and grandparents were also miseducated in the public schools of their generations. Sadly, these divisions and silences go back a long way in Canadian families and society.

As I reflect on my childhood ignorance about Indigenous people in contemporary Canada, and see how this ignorance has affected me in my present adult life, I feel ashamed that I have gone through so much of my life taking this land and my relationship to it for granted. I feel embarrassed that I have lived such a separate life from Indigenous communities, that I have not effectively reached out to build just relationships with the Indigenous people on whose ancestral lands I live. I also feel angry that the public education system in Canada failed so many generations, including mine, by miseducating us about Indigenous people, about how this country called Canada was formed, and what it means to be settlers living on Indigenous

homelands. I feel a responsibility to correct this miseducation by, at least, engaging in the hard, personal work of unlearning my ignorance and addressing my vast knowledge gaps.

Those in charge of the curriculum that was implemented in my early schooling in Ottawa wasted so much of my time reinforcing colonial knowledge and hierarchies, without making any room for Indigenous knowledge systems and holistic, land-based learning. Although I find that, at best, short-sighted on their part and, at worst, infuriating because of the damage and injustice it has perpetuated, I cannot change their past decisions. What I can do is pick up the task of correcting that miseducation to the greatest extent possible. What I can do is take personal responsibility for my ignorance and take steps to unlearn it. What I can do is reach out to Indigenous colleagues, neighbours, and communities to work towards building just, reciprocal relationships, if/when they are willing to engage with me. What I can do is journey along new learning pathways that open my mind, heart, body, and soul to living and learning in decolonizing ways. I say ‘decolonizing ways’ to emphasize the *process* of decolonizing; it is a continuous verb, a continuing action.

What Motivates Me?

I have lived a largely privileged life as a white, middle class, university educated, English-speaking, settler Canadian, with a Protestant, Christian background. In so many ways, I tick all the privilege boxes, perhaps with the exception of gender privilege. I am a cis gendered woman and have experienced systemic and individual sexism and misogyny throughout my life. I acknowledge my privilege and my experiences of systemic and individual oppression in order to provide some context for exploring what motivates me to engage in doctoral research about decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices in Canadian higher education. It might be easier for someone with my privilege to try to ignore the problems with settler

colonialism, in order to continue benefitting from this racist, genocidal system. I could pretend that Canada is a peaceful society, where human rights are upheld, and the land is respected as sacred. As much as I would like this to be a truthful representation of Canada, I know it is not yet true and I do not want to be complicit in this lie. Living as a woman in a sexist, misogynist society is my experience of what it feels like to be ‘othered’. I cannot compare this experience to what it might be like to be Indigenous in a settler colonial society. But both my privileges and my experiences as ‘other’ tune me into deep emotions and knowing right from wrong. It’s an accident of birth that I have white skin in a white-supremist world. I did nothing to earn the privileges bestowed on white people. The trouble with systems like racism and white supremacy is that they just keep functioning as long as they are not disrupted.

I am motivated to engage in this research with the hopes of contributing my part to the disruption of settler-colonialism, within higher education, and within Canadian society. I do not want to continue to be ignorant about Indigenous peoples and lands. I do not want to live in a divided world, where the white, English-speaking community is separate from Indigenous communities (or all BIPOC³ communities). I want to continue to disrupt my colonial mindset, Canada’s colonial educational systems and practices, and Canada’s ongoing racist, and genocidal policies. I want to be in reciprocal relationships with Indigenous colleagues, neighbours, and community members on a personal level and in institutional contexts. This doctoral research is part of my journey. If nothing else, this research marks my commitment to engaging in reconciliation.

³ BIPOC is an abbreviation for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.

Being a White-skinned Settler in Settler-colonial Canada

Whiteness is not intentionally foregrounded in this narrative inquiry study because it is not the focus of the stories of experience that emerged during the research conversations. Nevertheless, I understand the responsibility I have as a White, settler-Canadian educational researcher, to identify my positionality relative to the work of decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices, and to explore how my Whiteness forms a lens through which I participate in and am seen in the work towards being an ally/accomplice with Indigenous communities. As I actively engage in my re-education – unlearning colonial habits of mind and body, and learning Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and relating – I proceed cautiously, humbly, and respectfully, with a keen awareness of my multi-layered privileges within colonial Canada.

A settler of European ancestry, a third-generation Irish-Canadian, born in Indigenous territories in the nation state of Canada, the land that I know best is territory that was taken from Indigenous people to form Canada. When I travel back to my grandmother's homeland - Ireland, or to my ancestral homeland - Scotland, I feel a connection to those places, but I am a visitor to those lands, not having lived and learned with the land, language, and culture that my family and ancestors cultivated there over millennia. For the Indigenous peoples on whose homelands I was born, and continue to make my life, I am an uninvited visitor. I have prospered as a White-skinned, settler-Canadian on these lands. Adding layers of complexity, the colonial project in Canada also includes the arrival of racialized groups, either violently forced out of or economically incentivized to leave their homelands, for the promise of a brighter future in Canada (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Different experiences of racism intersect, as racialized settler-

Canadian and Indigenous communities in Canada navigate their respective experiences of this White-supremist, colonial society.

Humans have been travelling and migrating across land and water since the beginning of human history, in search of food and resources for survival and sustenance. Economic, political, and religious conflicts that force migration are troubling. When migrants arrive in new-to-them territories and reproduce the violence they fled, in order to cease land and displace local, Indigenous people, they are no longer migrants; they have become settler colonizers. In a settler-colonial society, “settlers are not migrants. Immigrants are beholden to the Indigenous laws and epistemologies of the lands they migrate to. Settlers become the law, supplanting Indigenous laws and epistemologies. Therefore, settler nations are not immigrant nations” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 6-7).

For settler children, grandchildren, and subsequent generations born in the ‘new’ territories, the relationship to one’s ancestral or familial homelands is complicated by the lived experience of ‘home’ in the place of their/our birth. I was born and raised in the ‘new’ territory; I have a complicated relationship of belonging and not belonging to this at-once stolen land and my lifelong home-land, the land of my birth. I am aware that “historical amnesia caters to settler sensibilities and the need to feel a sense of belonging to migrated territories” (Smith, Funaki, & MacDonald, 2021, p. 132). My relationship to the territory where I was born, and the various places in Canada where I have lived, learned, and worked, is evolving as I resist and work to unlearn the erasure of Indigenous experiences and the colonial miseducation of my formative years.

As a White-skinned Canadian of European ancestry, born into a middle-class suburban family, I have prospered as a result of my ‘Whiteness’ (Dottolo & Kaschak, 2015; Johnson-

Bailey & Cervero, 1998; Lynch, 2018). My life has been marked by economic, racial, social, and class privilege – White privilege (McIntosh, 1989). Tuari Stewart (2020) explains that, “White Privilege is inherent in the concept of Whiteness, since being White accrues advantages to a person, without any effort or merit on their part” (p. 296). Additionally, I have been educated in a colonial education system that made colonialism invisible to me and reinforced my privileged place in Canadian society. As Vermette (2012) reminds me, “if all we are talking about is transforming individual *minds*, ‘decolonization’ is rhetoric rather than reality” (p. 18). In my doctoral studies I have made my colonial education visible, interrogated it, and explored how I might decolonize my own worldviews and biases, towards dismantling colonialism. I continue to search out concrete actions that I can take towards this goal. Much of the action with which I am currently engaged centres around relationship-building, with local Indigenous people, communities, and lands, in the place(s) where I make my life.

While I recognize and acknowledge my skin colour and the privilege that it affords me within White supremacist (Bonds & Inwood, 2015; Dorrien, 2018; Smith, 2012) settler-colonial, Canadian society, I also problematize such essentializing of identity. Although the entire race system is artificial and is based on falsehoods under the guise of science, it nevertheless results in real life experiences of social, political, and economic divisions, injustices, and violences against racialized people, including Indigenous people. I hold in tension a position on Whiteness that may seem contradictory - to acknowledge the real, harmful impact of the construct of Whiteness, specifically, and the construct of race, in general, while also rejecting the narrow box into which racial categories trap individuals.

The supremacy of white skin seems like a simple binary construct. White skinned people on one side hold all the power, while non-white skinned people on the other side are oppressed.

However, the definition of Whiteness changes across time, space, and context, resulting in different centres of race-based power. Although Irish people also suffer(ed) colonial injustice and violence at the hands of the British, white-skinned Irish people⁴ in Canada benefit from White supremacy. The British colonial history in Ireland is long and complex, and my knowledge of it is limited by virtue of my identity as part of the Irish diaspora. I mention it because Irish history (past and present) and Irish struggle for independence and sovereignty from Britain are a part of my story, part of the stories I carry with me as an Irish-Canadian woman.

I understand that the Irish experience of British colonialism and Indigenous experiences of settler-colonialism in Canada are two separate struggles and two very different experiences of colonization, largely because of the racialization of and racism against Indigenous Peoples. Nevertheless, my understanding of Irish struggle motivates me to act in solidarity with Indigenous communities struggling for their own sovereignty. As someone working towards being an ally/accomplice for Indigenous liberation, resurgence, and self-determination, I understand that “solidarity is an uneasy, reserved, and unsettled matter that neither reconciles present grievances nor forecloses future conflict” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 3).

I recognize that my position as a white-skinned woman in Canadian society is inherently complicit with the colonial project. I acknowledge that I feel White guilt (Brake, 2021). What I do with that White guilt is channel its energy into my re-education, and into reinforcing my resolve to live, to the greatest extent possibly, in a better way, in renewed relationships with Indigenous people in the territory where I make my life. I say ‘to the greatest extent possible,’ because I also recognize the limitations of individual action within a system designed to maintain the status quo - in this case, the system of White supremacist, anti-Indigenous, colonialism. I

⁴ N.B. I recognize that not all Irish people in Ireland or in the diaspora are white-skinned, just as not all settlers in Canada are white-skinned.

understand that systemic change requires more than one individual's will and wholehearted commitment to change. Systemic change requires collective will and action on many levels and throughout all sectors of society.

Divisions between people based on skin colour or any other genetic qualities diminish us, degrade us, reduce us to simple, unidimensional creatures. When in reality people are complex, dynamic, fluid beings who are changing and growing and continually becoming, through time, space, contexts, and in relationship with one another and with the land (Brake, 2021). While I understand the genocidal policies that are wrongly justified and made possible by the persistence of White supremacist, settler colonial systems, and I realise the economic, political, and social advantages my white skin, within this system, has bestowed on me, I also envision a society in which identities are understood as inherently complex, dynamic, multifaceted, and connected to our relational identities, whether ancestral, familial, genetic, and/or chosen kinships and kith relationships. Genetic lineage is important information for various reasons, and what is referred to colloquially as 'blood relations' or 'blood ties' has significance for many communities and cultures, including mine. These markers of connection, however, are not the only valuable source of information for defining identities; genomic data should not be privileged over other identifiers such as relationship within community and relationship with the land. TallBear (2013) contends that "genomic articulations, with their greater truth-governing power, may inadvertently reconfigure indigeneity in ways that can undermine tribal and First Nations' self-determination and the global indigenous anticolonial movement" (p. 509).

Indigenous communities have the right to determine for themselves what constitutes membership in their groups. This right to self-determination is too often disregarded and violated by the unwarranted supremacy of colonial knowledge systems. Furthermore, colonial

understandings of identity reinforce individualistic values at the expense of communities.

Whereas, Indigenous community identity is formed relationally, and those community ties between individuals are significant indicators of identity (Brake, 2021).

White, Settler-Canadian Engagement in Decolonizing and Indigenizing the Academy

Having discussed racial identity, and, in particular, Whiteness within White supremacist, settler-colonial Canadian society, I now turn to a discussion of my engagement as a White, settler-Canadian conducting research that explores policies and practices towards decolonizing and Indigenizing the Canadian postsecondary education sector, particularly curricular and teaching practices at the university level. Given the history of and ongoing instances of extractive and exploitative research conducted by White settlers in Indigenous communities, caution and skepticism about non-Indigenous scholarly work on the topic of decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy is warranted. One might ask, “What motivates this White researcher to do this research?”

Tuari Stewart’s (2020) typology of Pākehā (Whiteness in the context of settler-colonial New Zealand) in education identifies:

1. Vampires - who want to consume Indigeneity,
2. Saviours - who see themselves as helping Indigenous people, and
3. Allies - who relate to Indigenous people as different but equal⁵.

Vampires might include settler Canadians who fantasize about being adopted into an Indigenous community (Tuck & Yang, 2013), as well as ‘pretendians,’ non-Indigenous people who claim Indigenous identity through a great-great-grandparent or ancestor, but who have dubious affiliations with an Indigenous community (Schaelling, 2020). Regrettably, pretendians are

⁵ Tuari Stewart’s Typology includes five archetypes, however, for the purpose of this discussion, these three are most relevant.

present within the academy, and are building successful careers on false claims of their Indigeneity, drawing from funds intended for Indigenous people, and representing Indigenous voices, all without the support of or relational connection to Indigenous community. Pretendians not only usurp Indigenous sovereignty, but also undermine the good work of building renewed settler-Indigenous relations.

Saviours look down on Indigenous people, as vulnerable, suffering, and in need of help. Settlers who assume this position may be seeking to relieve their guilt about the benefits they reap from colonialism. Settler saviours may root their engagement with decolonizing and Indigenizing in empathy, and a desire to help. But this position shows ignorance about or disregard for Indigenous resilience and strength. After all, Indigenous Peoples are still here, despite the relentless and genocidal efforts of settler-colonialism to eliminate them. Not only have Indigenous People endured, they are actively engaged in their own resurgence, reclaiming, preserving, and further developing their languages, cultures, and communities. There is an urgent need to return their homelands to them, where they can restore and strengthen their role as self-determined, care-takers of the land with which they have long-standing, sacred relationship, but saviour settlers overlook or willfully ignore this central goal of decolonization: giving the land back.

I am working toward being an ally/accomplice with Indigenous people in the territory where I make my life⁶. ‘Ally/accomplice’ is not a label I give to myself, but one towards which I am working to earn. I qualify the word ‘ally’ with the addition of the word ‘accomplice,’ and hold carefully a tension within myself over this word. ‘Accomplice’ implies the undertaking of criminal acts, which is not the meaning I mean to ascribe to this work. Such connotations might

⁶ I am not naming this territory specifically, because as my doctoral studies draw to a close, I am preparing to relocate for academic work in my field.

reproduce deficit narratives about Indigenous people as lawless and untrustworthy, with settler accomplices aiding and abetting Indigenous crimes. Actually, trustworthiness is at the heart of my use of the word ‘accomplice.’ I use this word to honour a late friend and colleague – Jennifer Ward – who taught me the importance of settler accomplices in her struggle as an Indigenous woman in Treaty 6 territory. Despite feeling uncertain and uncomfortable with this word (because of its potential to reinforce deficit narratives about Indigenous people), I put my trust in Jennifer’s guidance and conviction that allyship, for her, was not enough. As Jennifer taught me, for a settler to be an ally/accomplice with Indigenous struggle means to take risks, alongside Indigenous people, in our settler actions and ways of living. Ally/accomplice work, in territories that have Treaties, also involves allies/accomplices honouring, and where appropriate, re-negotiating treaty responsibilities, as a move towards reconciliation (Ward, Gaudet, McGuire-Adams, 2021).

In the narrative inquiry study that follows, Whiteness may not appear to be foregrounded, however, I understand the baggage I carry as a result of my positionality as a White, settler-Canadian researcher, as well as the blind spots and skewed vision I have as a result of my colonial education (both formal and informal). As I actively engage in my re-education, unlearning colonial reflexes, and learning new-to-me epistemologies and ontologies, I tread carefully, respectfully, and with an open, humble heart.

Faculty Learning Communities as Educational Development Practice

In this section I draw from personal, professional, and scholarly experiences to explore what led me towards a general interest in learning in community and a specific interest in faculty learning communities within the context of higher education.

Developing an Interest in Faculty Learning Communities

I first took an interest in faculty learning communities (FLCs)⁷ in 2009 while working as an educational developer at a college in Montreal. While facilitating an educational development series, I noticed how much faculty participants from across the campus appreciated hearing from their colleagues in different departments and disciplines about their respective teaching and curricular practices. I realized then the value of intentionally fostering the development of cross-disciplinary relationships among faculty members within a large postsecondary institution (Mooney, 2014). My experience with that group was also meaningful because of the socio-constructivism⁸, and elements of experiential learning⁹ in action among us. From there, I became particularly interested in FLCs as a format for fostering this kind of cross-campus professional learning.

Paradoxical Personal and Professional Lives

As I piece together that time in my professional experience, I recall that the few years leading up to that turning point, a turning towards FLCs, were years in my personal life fraught with change and grief from significant loss. In September 2004, my maternal grandmother, Nana, passed away. She lived a long life and died of heart failure at 91 years old. Her death was not unexpected, but losing my Nana was hard for me. She and my Dad were the family members with whom I felt I could relate most easily at that time. And although she lived in rural New Brunswick all her life, and I was living in Toronto when she died, we kept in touch through

⁷ A FLC is a cross-disciplinary group of faculty members, with a shared interest, who engage in collective learning processes, usually for one academic year or more (Cox, 2004; Goodsell Love, 2012; Price, 2005; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002; Wenger, 1998).

⁸ Building on Piaget's theory of cognitive development, and constructivist learning theories, that understand learning as a process of individual interaction with a problem in order to construct new knowledge, Vygotsky (1978) proposed that social interactions are central to this knowledge construction process (Hall, 2007). Furthermore, Vygotsky's theory included the influence of cultural artifacts, such as language, on learning (Kolb, 2015).

⁹ Kolb's (2015) experiential learning theory (ELT), draws from James' (2010/1912) philosophy of radical empiricism, Dewey's (1958) philosophy of experience, and Lewin's (1951) field theory in the Social Sciences. ELT contends that learning occurs cyclically and involves resolution of dual tensions between two sets of actions: 1) action and reflection, and 2) experience and abstraction (Kolb, 2015).

regular phone calls, email, and old-fashioned letters. I missed Nana terribly, and once she was gone, I felt that my personal community was left with a huge vacancy, one that could never be filled by anyone else.

That autumn, after Nana's passing, I completed my first master's degree thesis (in the field of International Peace and Development Studies), dedicated it to her, and graduated the next spring, just months before my Dad suddenly took ill. He died of an incurable cancer in December 2005, just three weeks before I started my first job teaching at the postsecondary level. This loss was a shock to our family. He had been in good health his whole life. He had only just reached his 64th birthday, days before he died. I was unprepared to lose my dear Dad. The shock of his passing blanketed my experience for a long stretch thereafter, during which I threw myself into work, and discovered for the first time in my life how much I love teaching. The paradox between the joy I felt in my professional life and the numbing shock I felt in my personal life did not occur to me at the time. In hindsight, I'm not sure how I got through those early years in my college teaching life – perhaps I have more grit than I realized.

Time Pressure and a Search for Home

Once I had found my way through much of that grief, I realized that I had been 32 years old when my Dad died at 64 years old – exactly half his age. I started to consider what I would do with my life if I had already reached middle-age, if I really only had 32 years remaining. An urgency rose within me; there was so much I wanted to do. I had at least one book to write and publish, a new career in academia to build, a partner to find and marry, children to bear, birth, and raise, and, somewhere squeezed in there, a PhD to start and finish, not to mention the house with a garden and a dog in the backyard, and all the places to which I still wanted to travel. I am aware that these life goals are a product of White, liberal, individualistic values. I list them here

in a somewhat self-deprecating tone, laughing at myself in retrospect, for having thought that if I achieved all, everything would be okay. I understand, now, that those urgent goals were part of my grief response, a frantic attempt to relieve the pain I experienced from losing my father.

Despite my grief-blurred vision at the time, that urgency – created by the realization that I may have a shorter life than expected – was very real and motivated me into a frenetic pace of striving. But life is what happens when we're planning something else (Saunders, 1957). All these big plans had a way of sending me in many directions, disconnected from a rooted sense of community and a place that is home, like I had once known.

Merging Scholarship and Professional Practice

In 2012, I returned to graduate school on a part-time basis, while continuing to work in educational development. When I began my thesis research into FLCs (Mooney, 2018; Mooney, 2017; Mooney, 2015), my PhD plans were somewhere in a distant future, that I wasn't sure I would ever reach ... until I moved to Calgary for an educational development and assistant professor position. Various influences converged in Calgary to nudge me closer to my doctoral studies. The atmosphere in my job there encouraged scholarship and I was inspired by educational development colleagues who were established educational researchers and scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) scholars. In January 2017, I applied to two PhD programs in Education, in order to further my scholarly inquiry into FLCs and fulfill my PhD life goal. Within a few months thereafter, I had completed my master's thesis on FLCs, graduated from McGill University, and been accepted to two PhD programs.

In the midst of all this graduate school work and planning for a PhD, I was leading a FLC on the topic Pedagogy and Practice. Concurrently, two colleagues joined together to lead a FLC on Indigenization, a topic that had started to gain momentum in Canadian higher education since

the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its final report and 94 *Calls to Action* (TRC, 2015). While I was taking the Pedagogy and Practice FLC on field trips to state of the art, tailor-made, active learning spaces, in order to get our hands and bodies engaged in learning about active-pedagogies, my colleagues leading the FLC on Indigenization were accompanying their FLC participants out onto the land, for land-based learning with local Indigenous communities, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers. Our respective educational development approaches to designing learning within the format of a FLC both relied on principles of experiential learning. When I realized we had this approach in common, I was starting to prepare my research proposal for my PhD applications and, simultaneously, I was working with another group of faculty members, from across the disciplines, who were engaged in offering experiential learning opportunities to their students, through a variety of formats such as field schools, study abroad courses, field research, and community-service learning.

The convergence of FLCs, experiential learning, active-learning pedagogies, and Indigenization felt easy and seamlessly integrated with who I was and still am. I understand that the ease I felt with this integration of experiences was undoubtedly facilitated by my privilege within academia. Underpinning all these elements of my professional and scholarly practices were philosophies of teaching, learning, and educational development that align well with who I am as a human being.

Peace Studies and Romero House

My first Master of Arts degree in International Peace and Development Studies was inspired by prior work in refugee resettlement, as part of an intentional community and not-for-profit organization, in Toronto, called Romero House. There, I lived in a house with families and individuals, from the moment they arrived in Canada to make their refugee claims. Resettlement

workers at Romero House, like me, welcomed refugees for their first year in Canada, offering them instrumental services such as connecting with trustworthy refugee lawyers, language interpreters, government agencies, health care, and schools for their children. The ethos of the organization was one of neighbourliness and the politics of the organization embodied social, political, and economic justice (Romero House, 2018a). We not only provided instrumental services for new (refugee) neighbours, we also built a community with them, and engaged in political advocacy and activism to bring about more just and equitable policy-level and legal changes to the refugee system in Canada, and to ask probing questions about the international relations and political forces that produced refugees in the first place. This work was grounded in an understanding of interconnected communities, aligned with theories of local globalism, and global localism (Rathburn & Lexier, 2016).

The Romero House understanding of “neighbour” had expansive scope. For instance, Romero House welcomed Eritrean and Ethiopian refugee families, who lived in the same house, after having fled a war in their home territories, on which they stood on opposite sides. Our work extended solidarity to Latin America, from whence came the organization’s namesake, now canonized, Salvadoran, Archbishop Oscar Romero, who spoke out against human rights abuses, extra-judicial killings, and political corruption, and who was assassinated in El Salvador in 1980 while giving mass (Romero House, 2018b).

From those formative years I spent working with and serving my neighbours through the Romero House community, my moral character was crystalized and I started to find language and theory to support the experiential knowledge and ethical orientation of social justice I had carried in my blood and bones since childhood.

Experiential Learning as Educational Development Practice

In this section, I write reflectively about my relationship to experiential learning, as a learner, an educator, and an educational developer.

My Connection to Land, Water, “Wilderness,” and My Experiential Learning Journey

Dewey’s (1938) eloquence about experience, expressed when he wrote, “there are sources outside an individual which give rise to experience. It is constantly fed from these springs,” (p. 40) inspires me to explore my relationship with the natural world. For many years in my childhood, summertime with my family meant visiting my Nana in New Brunswick and going to a family camp on Golden Lake in Ontario. At Nana’s, I remember exploring the field behind her house and taking long walks along the river and railway tracks. We would pick wild berries that Nana turned into the best jam I’ve ever had and fiddleheads that we would steam and slather with butter, salt, and vinegar for supper. At summer camp, Dad would take us canoeing, sailing, and swimming out on the lake. On land, we’d explore the plants and animals of that area. I saw fireflies for the first time with my Dad and sister at that summer camp and, right outside our camp cabin, we fed chipmunks from our hands. These immersive experiences outdoors left a lasting impression on me. These early childhood experiences in “nature” would become significant touchstones for my life, always bringing me back to the awe, wonder, and humility of which Wagamese (2016) wrote, “To be struck by the magnificence of nature is to be returned again, in all-too-brief moments, to the innocence in which we were born. Awe. Wonder. Humility” (p. 102).

By the time I reached adolescence, I was hooked on the outdoors. I signed up for every opportunity I could find to get out of the city and explore the land and water: junior forest ranger, summer camp counsellor, lifeguard and swimming instructor, canoe trip guide, winter camping

organizer, weekend ski trips, leadership of youth retreats in the bush, and the list goes on. I took courses and got all the necessary certifications. I felt at home in the forest, swimming and boating on lakes and in rivers, and hiking through the varied landscapes of eastern and northern Ontario and western Quebec. Wherever I travelled, I was most interested in getting outside, and preferably out of the city. I developed a deep sense of peace and of spiritual connection with the land and water whenever I was alone in the natural world, and my philosophical orientation increasingly centered around caring for what I thought of then as the earth and as all her species, and what I would refer to now as the land and all the more-than-human beings, which encompasses the water, wind, rocks, trees, mountains, sun, moon, stars, and all the beings that live in their midst.

I studied Kinesiology at the University of Calgary for my undergraduate degree. All my favourite sports were outdoors: soccer, hiking, camping, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, cycling, skiing, snow shoeing, and so on. In my bachelor's degree, I took a *Wildlands Ethics* course as an elective and was captivated by the mountain-based, environmental activism with which many of my classmates were engaged. I learned about predatory species like wolves and coyotes, how they need large territories for hunting, most of which have been disrupted by human infrastructures that divide up the "wilderness" and cut off these roaming pack animals from their hunting and migratory corridors. During the years that I was studying in Calgary, I fell in love with and developed a strong sense of home in the place where the Western prairies and the foothills meet the Rocky Mountains. This landscape of vast blue prairie skies, of endless starry nights, and rugged, formidable mountains, forests, and glaciers fed my need for the outdoors, a need for relationship with the land.

Despite my sincerity in this narrative of connection to the land and water, I am sensitive to a counter-narrative that challenges the Western construct of “wilderness” as a pristine landscape, untouched by human activity (Cronon, 1996), and the effect of erasure this has on Indigenous Peoples’ relationship to and dispossession or displacement from the land (Coulthard, 2010). Rooted in my love for the land and water, my relationship to the land, as a non-Indigenous settler, needs to be critical of and attentive to tendencies to romanticize “the land” as a special place outside the city. “Place-based educational initiatives have the potential to intercept settler ignorance about Indigenous-settler histories and current relations,” (Sloan & Castleden, 2014, p. 14) reminding me that connection to the land is not just about camping trips and star gazing; it is also about building respectful relationships with Indigenous communities and Peoples, based on principles of reciprocity and mutual obligation (Coulthard, 2010).

In my second year of Kinesiology, I went into the university book store looking for my course textbooks and stumbled on a book called *Experience & Education* by John Dewey (1938). It was a required text for a course in the Faculty of Education, for which I was not registered. I bought the book anyway. I wanted to know more about this idea called experiential learning. I had a hunch it was the right kind of learning for me. I had not studied any of the educational theorists and, at that point, had not yet heard of Dewey. This book was initially a tough read for me. I had no body of knowledge in Educational Studies to contextualize Dewey’s theory. After reading the concise volume, I put it away, but I held onto it and took it with me every time I moved, and I moved many times from my undergraduate days onward. Over 20 years after I first purchased *Experience & Education*, I pulled it back off my book shelf and put it to use in developing my application to doctoral studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Without realizing it, Dewey’s ideas of experience and education had become

foundational in my educational philosophy. Now when I read Dewey's words, "[...] education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based upon experience – which is always the actual life-experience of some individual" (p. 89), I hear an affirmation of my own experiential learning journey. Throughout my childhood and youth, and now well into my adulthood, my most memorable and influential learning has been experiential and, often also, place-based or land-based.

Leading Educational Development on Experiential Learning

It is no wonder, then, in my professional role as an educational developer, that I would be drawn to experiential learning approaches to educational development. Knowing the short-term nature of my Calgary-based job, that started in 2016, I understood it was my responsibility to learn the culture and norms of the institution as quickly as possible, to assess the educational development needs and gaps that I might be able to fill, and to apply this new knowledge to planning and implementing relevant and timely educational development programming. When I initiated a speaker series on experiential learning by and for professors at that institution, and that speaker series then grew into a community of practice and an advocacy group for improving institutional supports to faculty members offering these high impact (Kuh, 2009) educational opportunities to students, I received favourable feedback. What I think they were noticing was simply that I was a good fit for that place, for the culture of that institution¹⁰. There were so many exceptional and committed educators among the faculty members and many of them were employing experiential learning strategies and philosophies to their teaching practices. Because

¹⁰ Being a "good fit" for an institution that is founded on White supremacist, settler-colonial values, points to the White privilege I experience within the academy. Nevertheless, when I wrote this reflection, I did so partly as a comparison to my experience working in multiple academic institutions in settler-colonial Canada. My notion of a "good fit" in this particular academic institution is based on my experiential understanding of other times when I did not feel my particular gifts were as well suited to the needs and/or workplace culture of another academic institution. Thus, I was comparing White privilege spaces to White privilege spaces.

of my own philosophical and practical approaches to educational development, I noticed their work easily, and found a way that my skills, knowledge, and professional philosophies could serve their needs.

This feeling of being the right person for the job was further reinforced by my experience of place. When I returned to Calgary in 2016 to take this position, I felt that I was coming home. Returning to that place re-ignited in me a part of myself that had been somewhat dormant during my years in Montreal and Toronto. In the first few months after my return to Calgary, and every time I caught a glimpse of the Rocky Mountains on the horizon, I thought to myself, “I don’t know what took me so long to return to this place.” I felt my heart lighten and my body relax once I was settled into life and work in Calgary. This feeling of home is significant to my doctoral research because the site of my study is in Treaty 7 territory (see Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods of Inquiry). I am already connected to and care deeply about this land, place, and people and I know from experience that I belong there.

TRC Calls to Action and Canadian University Strategic Plans on Indigenization

In this section, I explore my early school (mis)education, the way in which I learned very little about Indigenous struggle from media and family sources reporting on the Oka Crisis, and some professional experiences within academic hierarchies, in which I sought to engage in supporting Indigenous colleagues, students, and Indigenous educational initiatives.

Mis-education

As a child, I was ill-educated and un-educated about Indigenous Peoples and their cultures. The French Immersion curriculum of my generation and in my community presented “les autochtones” (Indigenous Peoples) as warriors, sensationalizing their tactics of war. I remember emphasis on Iroquois scalping practices and the violence that was inflicted on Jesuit

priests. The stories were taught from French-Canadian and Québécois perspectives, with such a skimming over of other regions of Canada, that I didn't have any consciousness of the different histories and cultures of Indigenous communities in Western Canada. What's more, the curriculum made no mention at all of contemporary Indigenous Peoples and their (at the time of my public-school education) 20th Century realities.

In 1990, when the Mohawk people defended their territory and the Canadian Army was sent in to stop them, I was working as a Junior Forest Ranger in Northern Ontario, completely cut off from television, radio, and newspapers (internet and smart phones did not yet exist). I didn't hear about "the Oka Crisis" until the end of August, when I went home to Ottawa, and my Dad made some joke about how I went into the bush up north for the summer and our country nearly went to war. Though he tried to reassure me, his joke shocked and upset me. I was already a peace activist at 17 years old; I think Dad was proud of that, but he also liked to tease me about it. I wanted to know more about this near-war between Canada and the Mohawk people. I looked it up in the newspapers and tried to find out what had happened, but I struggled to figure out what the crisis had really been about.

Roadblocks to Ally Engagement

From 2013-2016, I coordinated the establishment of a centre for peace education at a college in Montreal. Around the same time, a group of colleagues at the college started discussing and acting on the dearth of supports available to Indigenous students. I saw their work as consistent with the values and mandate of the peace centre. But when I suggested collaboration between these initiatives, one of the college's senior leaders, a woman of European ancestry, told me that Indigenization initiatives are not for me. Aware that such initiatives must be led by Indigenous Peoples, I was nevertheless surprised by this exclusionary stance.

Grounded in my theoretical and practical understandings of peace building, it seemed to me that Indigenous struggle for justice in Canada is not and cannot be solely the work of Indigenous Peoples. Settlers need to engage in this work alongside Indigenous people, to earn trust in order to fill the role of ally (Chung, 2019), and thereby contribute to the peaceful and just healing of Indigenous-settler relations. When the TRC final report was released in 2015, it became clear that settler-Canadians and Canadian academic institutions have a role in this move toward reconciliation with Indigenous people and communities. By 2016, draft versions of university strategic plans to “Indigenize the Academy” were circulating. Many of these draft documents were subsequently criticized for reproducing and reinforcing colonial narratives.

In recent years, I have reflected further on the exclusionary posture assumed by my senior colleague at the college in Montreal, asking myself what might have motivated that stance. In 2018, Dr. Evelyn Steinhauer described to me what I consider extreme acts of resistance to the mandatory Indigenous Education course at the time it was implemented in the Bachelor of Education program at the University of Alberta (Steinhauer, 2018). When I shared with her my experiences of being excluded from working in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples, Dr. Steinhauer warned me that some people in the academy will oppose this work and oppose me for engaging with it, while others, may be motivated to protect me from it. I can only speculate, but this protective motivation may have been behind my former director’s decision to assign me to the FLC on Pedagogy and Practice, when I was keen to work with the FLC on Indigenization at my job in Calgary.

Pedagogy of Discomfort: Unsettling of Settlers

In this section, I explore my discomfort as a White, settler-Canadian seeking to learn about Indigenous people, and their ways of knowing, being, and relating, in order to engage in

renewed relationship with the Indigenous communities in the place(s) where I live, learn, and work. This reflective writing excavates the White fragility at the heart of my discomfort and examines the importance of asking myself, paradoxically, “Who am *I* to write about decolonizing and Indigenizing Canadian higher education?” and “Who am I *not* to work towards reconciliation?”

Who Do You Think You Are?

Before I began exploring Indigenization and decolonization, oriented towards reconciliation, I tried to stay safely in a less contested, less complicated, and less controversial area of research. Subconsciously, I think I feared the alienation and disruption such research might cause, which was a fear based in White fragility (DiAngelo, 2018). White fragility is experienced by White people when even a minimal amount of race-related stress feels unbearable, “triggering a range of defensive moves,” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 54) such as arguing, remaining silent, or leaving the situation. Front and centre, I feared I was bound to offend, fail, or cause further harm by exploring this subject matter. But settler silence supports the theory of the perfect stranger (Dion, 2007; Dion, 2019). “Dominant stories that position Aboriginal people as, for example, romanticised, mythical, victimised, or militant Other, enable non-Aboriginal people to position [ourselves] as respectful admirer, moral helper, protector” (Dion, 2007, p. 331), which maintains settlers’ position of power and authority in relationship to Indigenous people. Silence also has the potential to offend, fail, or cause further harm. Nobody ever said this would be easy. But as a White woman, I need to overcome my White fragility.

Since deciding to engage in this research, I have experienced resistance from both Indigenous and settler academics. Settler colleagues who resist this work often warn me that it is not valued scholarship and it may damage my career prospects. Others question what right a

White woman like me has to engage in this work, given how much I benefit from the colonial systems that harm Indigenous communities and individuals. Indigenous colleagues who resist my engagement with this work often ask questions along the lines of, “Why should you have access to our knowledges, our land-based learning, our stories, our pedagogies, our Elders, our Knowledge Keepers? They belong to us. Who do you think you are?” These are legitimate questions of critical importance for settlers, like myself, to ask of ourselves.

Exploitative and extractive research by Western academics in Indigenous communities has demonstrated a lack of respect for Indigenous Peoples and has had damaging effects on settler-Indigenous relations (Hunt, 2018; Kuokkanen, 2007). Furthermore, how can I presume to be able to know and understand Indigenous Peoples and their ways of being? According to Kuokkanen, “In Indigenous scholarship it is often argued that other peoples (or cultures) cannot be known from the perspective of cultures based on entirely different assumptions and worldviews” (p. 99). Feminist, antiracist, and critical theorists agree with Indigenous scholars’ critique of the Eurocentric arrogance that assumes we can know the “other” (Kuokkanen). How can I, a White woman educated in a settler-colonial education system possibly understand or learn Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies? How can I see any other way of knowing, being, and relating, without it passing through the lens of Whiteness that has shaped every aspect of my life experience?

Who *do* I think I am to write about decolonizing and Indigenizing curricular and teaching practices in Canadian higher education? As a White woman of Irish and Scottish ancestry, I am known as a White settler in Canada. This identity construct is problematic in that it is reductionist and essentializing. Not all non-Indigenous people in Canada self-identify as settlers. Not all settlers are the same. Nevertheless, the word ‘White’ identifies my Whiteness and

inherent White privilege within settler-colonial Canada, and the word ‘settler’ situates me within this context.

Throughout Canada’s history Celtic people have migrated from Ireland and Scotland (and elsewhere) to these lands to make a new life and to prosper in ways that were not possible in our ancestral homelands. While my family members and ancestors’ experienced and (some) fled English colonialism in our homelands, Irish and Scottish people also benefited from historical colonialism that made way for waves of Celtic people to arrive and settle on these lands, that became known as Canada. Moreover, Celtic, White settlers continue to benefit from the ongoing colonial project, that privileges Whiteness (white skin), English-language (albeit English was not originally ours, but was a colonizing language in our homelands, as well), Christian heritage, and Western institutions and knowledge systems. Given these privileges, what could *I* possibly know about decolonization, Indigenization, and reconciliation? What could I have to offer? I ask these questions with genuine concern. I do not wish to cause further harm. Paradoxically, while I have personally benefited from my Whiteness and from settler-colonialism in Canada, I am also a descendant of people who fled English colonialism and occupation of Ireland. This personal, family history has separated me in distance and time from my ancestral homelands, my original culture, language, and people. It has fractured my family over generations and dispersed us across an ocean, and beyond. Deep within, I still feel a longing for connection with my Irish and Scottish homelands.

Inversely to my initial question, ‘Who do I think I am to write about decolonizing and Indigenizing curricular and teaching practices in Canadian higher education’, I must also ask myself, “Who am I *not* to work towards reconciliation?” If we are all treaty people – and, within Treaty territories, we are – then it is my responsibility to contribute to repairing and rebuilding

the broken relationships between White settlers and Indigenous Peoples in the territory where I live, learn, and work.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of professors, at a mid-sized Canadian university, who participated in one of two cohorts of a faculty learning community (FLC) on Indigenization, and to learn what meaning they made of their experiences.

Simultaneously, this study inquired into my experience, as the researcher in the midst of the narrative inquiry process. The research purpose was thus a reciprocal and relational study of experience, through the researcher's and participants' nested stories of experience.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Underpinnings

Introduction of Conceptual Underpinnings

Typically referred to as a theoretical framework, in this section, I have borrowed from Maxwell's (2013a, 2013b) language of *conceptual framework* in order to align this section more closely with my methodology: narrative inquiry. As an interpretivist, qualitative methodology, narrative inquiry seeks emergent phenomena; to this end, the researcher searches for alternative ways of understanding and making meaning of data (Butler-Kisber, 2010). The theory explored in this chapter will not necessarily frame the data analysis that follows in subsequent chapters. At this point in the study, the narrative inquirer has not yet encountered the emergent meaning made of the research participants' experiences. Acknowledging that researchers are necessarily influenced by existing scholarly literature, Maxwell (2013b) warns that important and often neglected sources of theory come from research participants and researcher experience. Narrative inquirers tune into the tension between theory and experience, opting to incorporate theory throughout the written work – rather than concentrate it into one literature review chapter – and to place experience at the centre of the work (Clandinin, 2013). As such, this chapter is not a literature review, but rather a – for now – exploration of conceptual underpinnings.

To explain the place of theory in this study, I have named this section *conceptual underpinnings*. “Conceptual underpinnings” is a more suitable phrase for this study because the term “framework” suggests a fixed set of boundaries, which may prevent or hinder understandings from emerging beyond “framed” delineations. My choice of the language and the research design that it represents affirms that no study is void of theory (Maxwell, 2013b); nevertheless, the researcher's responsibility is to extend beyond existing understandings and

frameworks, to make room for new understandings to emerge (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Maxwell, 2013b).

Narrative inquiry invites the researcher, research participants, and readers to explore experience and encounter what meaning emerges from that experience. To this end, in this section I discuss my research puzzle and draw a picture of the context of this study, particularly the recent push to “Indigenize” Canadian universities. I present my research wonder along with my personal, practical, and social justifications for this study. These justifications serve to explicitly and intentionally situate me within my research, not as a neutral outside observer, but as an inevitably present observer in the research. Once I have set this groundwork, I introduce key concepts that underpin, and are therefore relevant to the study, namely: a) faculty learning communities (FLCs) as a form of educational development practice, b) experiential learning as an approach to educational development, c) the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s *Calls to Action* and university Indigenization strategic plans, and d) a pedagogy of discomfort as it relates to non-Indigenous, settler professors engaged in Indigenization.

Context of the Study

Canadian professors today face one of the most challenging initiatives of our time – reconciliation in higher education. To counter-act a legacy of forced assimilation (Battiste, 2013) left by the Indian Residential Schools system, the 60s scoop, the child welfare system, systemic and lingering poverty, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and, most recently, the locating of unmarked children’s graves at the sites of several Indian Residential School, and other structural forms of ongoing settler-colonialism, Canadian universities must awaken to the urgency of moving toward reconciliation. Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) offered a useful theory for Indigenizing higher education, which they coined “the Four Rs” (respect, relevance,

reciprocity, and responsibility¹¹); yet little has changed structurally or relationally at postsecondary campuses in the intervening years.

Following release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015) *Calls to Action*, many Canadian universities developed plans to "Indigenize" (Universities Canada, 2017). But what does it mean to Indigenize a centuries old institution, such as the modern university, founded upon Western colonial values and in which the ongoing colonial project persists? Is Indigenizing the academy possible? If so, how can Indigenization strategic plans in Canadian postsecondary institutions be operationalized in teaching and curricular practices?

Because moving toward reconciliation is fraught with challenges, there is a risk that well-intentioned professors risk failing in their efforts by tokenizing Indigeneity through superficial expressions of inclusion, by mis-representing Indigenous Peoples, and by simultaneously mis-educating (Dewey, 1938), reinforcing, and reproducing colonial violence (Schaefer, Lessard & Lewis, 2017). This lack of capacity among university educators and scholars is compounded by the current reality that university faculty positions in Canada are largely held by academics of European ancestry, who experience White privilege, and who have often been educated exclusively in Western, colonial institutions (Todd, 2017). Through the TRC *Calls to Action* and institutional strategic plans to "Indigenize," both White and non-White settler academics are being called upon to demonstrate a "willingness to explore their own knowledge [...] as necessarily contingent upon the history and structure of their own communities, rather than an immutable 'truth' or 'best practice'" (MacLean & Wason-Ellam, 2006, p. 29). Given the serious

¹¹ "What First Nations people are seeking is not a lesser education, and not even an equal education, but rather a better education — an education that *respects* them for who they are, that is *relevant* to their view of the world, that offers *reciprocity* in their relationships with others, and that helps them exercise *responsibility* over their own lives" (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991, p. 14, emphasis added). "Kirkness and Barnhardt's article continues to draw attention [...] because it frames the discussion around what the academy can do to transform itself rather than how Aboriginal people should adapt and assimilate to the needs of the university culture" (Marker, 2004, p. 171).

harm caused by the Indian Residential School system, to the extent that reconciliation is possible, non-Indigenous, White, settler scholars, like myself, have a responsibility to educate ourselves, to work towards meaningful change to systems, practices, epistemologies (Kuokkanen, 2007), and ontologies, and to work alongside Indigenous colleagues. The university has a responsibility to support us all in this work.

In Canada, Indigenous people seeking a university education are largely being taught by non-Indigenous educators, who are often miseducated and uneducated about Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and relating. First Nations youth are the fastest growing population in Canada (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010, in Assembly of First Nations, 2012; Kirkup, 2017) and they are increasingly seeking a postsecondary education at Canadian universities. From 2006-2016, Indigenous people earning a bachelor's degree increased by 4 percent (Chiose, 2018). This demographic shift on Canadian university campuses is not matched by hiring policies and practices. Only 1.4 percent of full- and part-time professors identify as Indigenous (Universities Canada, in Shen, 2018). Because Indigenous scholars continue to be a minority within Canadian postsecondary institutions, they are often over-relied upon to be the experts on Indigenization. Out of respect for these colleagues, to honour and support their well-being, and to retain Indigenous scholars in academic institutions, we must not depend solely on them to educate settler academics.

Settler scholars need to take initiative to unlearn the stereotypes and misinformation we have acquired about Indigenous Peoples and, to the greatest extent possible, to fill our vast knowledge gaps on Indigenous ways of knowing, pedagogies, cultural practices, languages, values, histories, contemporary experiences, and spiritualities. When settler and Indigenous scholars do work together to Indigenize postsecondary education, we may encounter challenges.

As a result of the historical subjugation and devaluing of Indigenous knowledges (Smith, 1999), settler and Indigenous educators may hold vastly different epistemological, cultural, and professional attitudes towards education (Peltier, 2017). Nevertheless, settler scholars need to face these challenges by opening our hearts and minds to new ways of approaching and engaging in teaching and curricular practices if we are going to meaningfully respond to the TRC's *Calls to Action* and the university policies that call us to Indigenize and decolonize teaching and learning. More importantly, white settler scholars, like me, are called upon to change the balance of power, to forgo our privileged status in the academy, and re-center Indigenous colleagues and Indigenous pedagogies, in order to truly move towards reconciliation and renewed relationship with the Indigenous people in the territories where we live and work.

Universities committed to the process of moving toward reconciliation must support both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars to engage in this work. One example of this kind of support takes the form of professional development opportunities offered through centres for teaching and learning (CTL). Educational developers working in CTLs are expected to provide teaching and learning services and to assume a leadership role as change agents within the university (Lieberman, 2011; Schroeder, 2011). Faculty learning communities (FLC) are one format through which educational developers offer professional development opportunities to professors (Beach et al., 2016; Condon et al., 2016; Cox, 2004). A FLC is a cross-disciplinary group of faculty members, with a shared interest, who engage in collective learning processes, usually for one academic year or more (Cox, 2004; Goodsell Love, 2012; Price, 2005; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002; Wenger, 1998). Each of the FLC cohorts, at the centre of this study, explored Indigenization in an experiential, co-inquiry process, for one academic year. Within this context, I explored the research puzzle.

Research Puzzle

In narrative inquiry, a research puzzle signifies the wonder that emerged for the researcher through their experience and subsequent autobiographical writing called ‘narrative beginnings’ (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through the process of exploring and writing about my experiences working in higher education, the following research puzzle emerged: What are the experiences of Canadian university professors participating in a FLC on Indigenization of their teaching and curricular practices?

Justifications for the Study

In keeping with the narrative inquiry approach built into this study design, I need to be explicit about my ontological perspectives (beliefs about the nature of being) and epistemological perspectives (beliefs about the nature of knowledge) (Butler-Kisber, 2010). To situate myself, as I am at this time, in this study, I present my personal, practical, and theoretical (social) justifications for this study (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Clandinin, 2013).

Personal Justifications

As an educational developer, faculty member, or instructor in postsecondary education in Canada for the past 15 years, I am dismayed by my miseducation about Indigenous Peoples in the territories that have come to be known as Canada – a miseducation that spans from my kindergarten through grade 12 schooling, into my undergraduate studies. In my undergraduate years, I took an elective course that started to uncover for me my own ignorance about the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples of Turtle Island. I began to learn about the harmful actions and complicities of the Canadian government against Indigenous Peoples. I felt ashamed of my country of birth, its history, and its civic and church leaders.

In the years and months leading up to the release of the TRC's final report, the urgency to remedy my miseducation compelled me to personal, social, and professional action. I could not justify my own complicity in the injustices against Indigenous Peoples, nor my deficit-oriented ignorance about their cultures, histories, families, and communities. The implications for this new commitment in my life led me to seek out opportunities to learn the truths of Indigenous histories and contemporary experiences, and to explore, ask, and figure out what I can do to move towards reconciliation in renewed relationship with the Indigenous people in the territories where I live, learn, and work.

Practical Justifications

This new direction in my personal journey coincided with a professional opportunity to get to know an educational developer and a faculty member who were developing a FLC to support professors interested in Indigenizing their teaching and curricular practices. The timing was ripe, as educators across Canada began clamouring to learn how to respond ethically to the TRC's *Calls to Action*. While I did not have the chance to participate in the FLC on Indigenization, I kept my ear to the ground about how the Indigenization FLC was unfolding. The educational developer who was co-facilitating the FLC on Indigenization gave me their reading list, and I read the scholarly articles and chapters that formed the theoretical, seminar-style component of the FLC program. These experiences and motivations, as well as my ongoing professional identity as an educational developer, propel my interest in this doctoral research. I hope that my research journey through this study will inform and further cultivate my educational development practice.

Theoretical (Social) Justifications

As a narrative inquiry, this study is not explicitly framed as social action research. But there is an undeniable societal change element to any exploration of Indigenization and decolonization. While I consider this study exploratory in nature, I also hope that it may serve to advance understandings in support of changing the academy and in so doing, influence change on a broader societal level. Although narrative inquiry methodology does not lead to generalizable research findings (see Chapter 3), the results of this study offer insights that are relevant to students, faculty members, educational developers, senior leaders, and policy makers in the higher education sector in Canada. Readers of this dissertation are invited to consider their own experiences with respect to university policies and practices towards Indigenizing and decolonizing teaching and curricula.

Faculty Learning Communities as Educational Development Practice

Learning as a community first emerged in higher education in the 1920s, but did not prove effective or become prominent until the 1990s (Brownell & Swaner, 2009; Meiklejohn, 1932). Lenning and Ebbers (1999) explain that “learning communities can be philosophically related to Deweyan principles – that education is most successful as a social process and is deeply rooted in our understanding of community and democracy” (p. 11). A faculty learning community is a group of faculty members, at a postsecondary educational institution, who share a common interest, often rooted in professional practice, and undertake to inquire about it together (Mooney, 2017). This doctoral research builds from my previous research into professional learning communities in higher education, where faculty, staff, and students joined together to form learning communities around their shared interests. In one study, I found that “Learning communities [...] served as sites for professional development, formed microcultures within the institution, and a rhizomatic cluster of non-hierarchical microcultures influenced

improvements to educational and organizational policies and practices” (Mooney, 2018, p. 50). Cox (2017) reported that organizational and cultural change agents emerge from FLCs. In my own work, I found that a cluster of professional “learning communities transformed the institutional culture from one focused primarily on credential-granting toward a genuine learning organization” (Mooney, 2018, p. 50). I concluded that,

Integration of educational development practices within faculty- and staff-initiated professional learning communities significantly benefits the institution by effectively responding to the professional development needs of all actors. This cross-institutional, integrative approach, using a project-based emergent professional learning communities model opens new pathways for thinking about and designing faculty development programming. If faculty development aims to support and celebrate a culture of scholarly teaching and learning across the institution, perhaps the one-time teaching strategies workshop and the singular one-on-one consultation approaches to faculty development are insufficient. (Mooney, 2018, p. 50-51)

Steinert’s (2010) model of educational development emphasized the value of both formal and informal, both individual and group-based faculty professional development. She advocated the synergistic benefits of experiential learning, mentorship, and a reflective practice to improve and professionalize teaching in higher education (Steinert). One example of informal, group-based professional development in Steinert’s model was communities of practice (CoPs). Wenger’s (1998) concept of a ‘community of practice,’ identified “mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire” (p. 73) as key properties of the community. While CoPs emerged from industry and business contexts (Wenger), the format for professional development known as faculty learning communities (FLCs) developed in the context of higher education. As

explored in chapter 1, some of the highlights of my professional experience as an educational developer have been when facilitating and engaged in co-inquiry with a group of professors, as part of a FLC on a topic of shared interest to them.

Experiential Learning as Educational Development Practice

Applying an experiential learning framework to faculty professional development, particularly in the context of designing and facilitating FLCs is an area of educational development research (scholarship of educational development or SoED) that has not been explored. FLCs in educational development contexts draw on professional practice to support learning, however, many such groups do not explicitly use experiential learning approaches, opting for seminar-style discussions, reflection, and text-based learning instead. While these seminar-style sessions and reflective practice are proven approaches to facilitating deep learning among faculty members (Cox, 2006; Cox, 2004), applying an experiential learning framework to FLCs may help to advance Steinert's (2010) goals of increasing capacity and professionalizing teaching in higher education.

Experiential professional learning originated in Europe, with the work of *Outward Bound Europe* in 1913 (Burke, 2013). Burke (2013) identified that high-quality educational development must be embedded in professional practice and involve peer collaboration, over a sustained period of time. Rooted in the professional teaching and curricular practice of postsecondary educators, the educational development consultant role is often one of drawing out and facilitating an inquiry-based learning process for faculty colleagues. Important to this process is keeping the facilitation plan flexible enough to incorporate participant involvement in determining their individual and group learning outcomes and deciding for themselves how they will achieve them (Petroni & Ortquist-Ahrens, 2004).

This doctoral research begins to explore the pairing of experiential learning and educational development through the experiences of the research participants who took part in a FLC on Indigenization, which incorporated land-based, experiential learning opportunities with local Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Bundle Keepers, and community members. Further inquiry and discussion of the pairing of experiential approaches with educational development practice is needed, beyond this study.

TRC Calls to Action and Canadian University Strategic Plans on Indigenization

This doctoral dissertation fulfills program requirements towards a Ph.D. in Education, through the Department of Educational Policy Studies, with a specialization in Adult, Community, and Higher Education. In this section, I explore the relationship between university policies (strategic plans) to Indigenize and the implementation of such policies in teaching and curricular practices.

Following the release of the TRC's final report and *Calls to Action* in 2015, many Canadian universities and colleges engaged in the development of strategic plans to Indigenize their institutional policies and practices. Often these aspirational strategic plans provided little guidance for concrete action, but nevertheless made claims that teaching and curricular practices would be Indigenized and decolonized. Postsecondary educators were left on the front lines, to figure out how to implement these plans in their course and program designs and in their classrooms. Understanding that colonial institutions need to climb a steep learning curve towards Indigenizing, decolonizing, and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, I will not name particular strategic plans. However, Raffoul, Ward, Calvez, and colleagues (2022) found in a nation-wide

scan of 68 Canadian universities, more than 85% [had] published strategic plans that articulate a commitment to Indigenization; and 63% [had] produced and posted Indigenization plans. This is a jump from a review undertaken by Pidgeon (2016), who found that a considerably lower number of public colleges and universities in Canada had specific institution-wide Indigenous plans. (p. 165)

Problematizing the term “Indigenization” compels questioning about what epistemologies and ontologies underpin it, who benefits from efforts to “Indigenize,” and who is impacted by these efforts? Are university strategic plans to Indigenize written with these critical questions in mind?¹² Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) contended that “the Canadian academy has *rhetorically* adopted an aspirational vision of reconciliation Indigenization, but [...] postsecondary institutions are attempting to merely increase the number of Indigenous people on campus without broader changes” (p. 219, original emphasis). This inclusion approach to Indigenization neglects the deeper need to change the culture and epistemes of the academy. According to Kuokkanen (2007), “the call for the recognition of Indigenous epistemes in the academy is a call for new paradigms and epistemic relationships that will transgress and subvert the prevailing logic of hegemonic rationalism and colonial superiority” (p. 157). This paradigmatic change is expressed in pragmatic terms through TRC *Calls to Action* such as 10.iii, which addresses the need for culturally appropriate curricula, 11., which identifies the need for funding to provide access to Indigenous students seeking a postsecondary education, 62.ii., which calls for postsecondary institutions to educate teachers on integrating Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies into their teaching practices, and 65., which summons a federal research funding program, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), to advance

¹² According to Pidgeon (2016, p. 83), “of 124 post-secondary institutional plans published across Canada, only 35% have developed institution-wide strategic plans that had specific Indigenous initiatives.

understanding of reconciliation in collaboration with Indigenous communities (TRC, 2015). The TRC report emphasized that truth and reconciliation are not only about reconciliation; it categorized its calls to action as “Addressing the Legacy” and “Towards Reconciliation,” delineating the work of learning truth from Indigenous Peoples, as the primary and foundational work, and the work of moving towards reconciliation, which implies an on-going process, rather than a fixed destination.

Within the field of educational development, Canadian universities, that invest resources into the implementation of their strategic plans to ‘Indigenize,’ often only hire one educational developer to specialize in all the Indigenous Knowledges, which assumes one person holds knowledges from across the over six hundred Indigenous communities in Canada (Raffoul, et al., 2022). Moreover, this hiring practice expects the educational developer to serve an entire campus community, “seemingly requiring that a single individual have an impossible breadth of disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge, as well as time and ability to affect thousands of programmes, courses, and instructors” (Raffoul, et al., 2022, p. 165). This resource allocation approach not only burdens the solitary educational developer specializing in Indigenous pedagogies, but it “runs counter to many Indigenous cultures’ emphasis on relationality and community as drivers of collective decision-making and adds to racist attitudes in tasking the colonized with educating the colonizers” (Raffoul, et al., 2022, p. 165).

To remedy the problems with university strategic plans to Indigenize, and to implement these plans “as working towards the transformation of the academy” (Pete, 2016, p. 1-2), Raffoul and colleagues (2022) issued seven calls to action for postsecondary institutions, namely:

1. Hire additional Indigenous educational developers and increase educational development resources and support;

2. Minimize the amount of other duties as needed that pull Indigenous and non-Indigenous EDs away from Indigenization work
3. Develop a framework that supports collaboration and community building between post-secondary institutions and Indigenous communities
4. Stop conflating Indigenization with internationalization, equity, diversity, and inclusion
5. Invest in campus-wide personal and professional development focussed on local Indigenous epistemologies
6. Through collective action, change faculty and leadership mind-sets—from their understanding and value of Indigenization to their approach to teaching and learning
7. Increase Indigenous hires across all faculties, departments, and staffing units within the academy. (p. 167-170)

Decolonization, Indigenization, and Reconciliation

In this section, I explore the inter-related concepts of decolonization, Indigenization, and reconciliation. I close this section with a sub-section about the land because it is often overlooked in discussions about decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation.

Decolonization

Disrupting existing settler-colonial epistemologies and ontologies in the academy is essential in order to make room in our thinking for the work of decolonizing, Indigenizing, and moving towards reconciliation. While “the journey toward decolonization can be transformational on many levels, [...] settler colonialism is not easily unsettled” (Yeo, Haggarty, Ayoungman, Wida, Pearl, Stogre, & Waldie, 2019, p. 29). Decolonization involves dismantling

of colonial systems, structures, policies, practices, epistemologies, beliefs, and values that dominate, marginalize, and control subaltern peoples¹³ and their ancestral lands (Battiste, 2013). Colonialism is a quest for and seizure of land and resources; it is rooted in imperial ideologies, violence, and an ongoing intent (Cote-Meek, 2014a). In Canada, the racialized hierarchy, imposed by the White supremacist, colonial project, placed Indigenous Peoples at the bottom (Cote-Meek, 2014a), disconnecting them from and dispossessing them of their homelands. To decolonize is perceived by some as revolutionary, invoking the language of war and warriors against the dominant culture and state (Alfred, 2004). The Indigenous warrior icon has been misappropriated by colonial narratives and European languages that strip it of its Indigenous spiritual meanings, which are understood in Indigenous languages to refer to ‘carrying the burden of peace’ (Alfred & Lowe, in Regan, 2010, p. 219). Decolonization requires transfer of power, land, resources, from the settler state to Indigenous communities, in order that they may return to full self-determination (Todd, 2017). In the context of higher education in Canada, decolonizing and Indigenizing are terms sometimes used interchangeably. However, “universities and colleges are inherently colonial. They’re inherently anti-Indigenous. [...] It’s hard to decolonize a space that’s rooted in that” (Rizza, 2018, n.p.). And the two terms, decolonizing and Indigenizing, do refer to different processes.

Indigenization

Indigenization can be described as "incorporating Indigenous ways of knowledge and having Indigenous community members come into the space" (Rizza, 2018, n.p.). However, institutional strategic plans at Canadian universities and colleges have been critiqued for oversimplifying the work of decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation, for instance, by

¹³ “A subaltern is someone with a low ranking in a social, political, or other hierarchy. It can also mean someone who has been marginalized or oppressed” (Vocabulary.com, 2020).

implementing these strategic plans through the hiring of more Indigenous academics, without putting in place necessary supports for Indigenous faculty, students, and staff (Todd, 2018). Postsecondary institutions maintain and protect assimilationist, colonial education when their Indigenization plans fail to address the underlying problems of racism on campus (Rizza; Todd) or fail to disrupt the “entrenched assumption of most postsecondary curricula [...] that Eurocentric knowledge represents the neutral and necessary story for ‘all’ of us” (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002, p. 83). To date, “‘Indigenization’ efforts tend to be surface and to steer away from delving into the painful, deeper violences that universities and — settler society more broadly — have enacted on Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous lands” (Todd, n.p.).

Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) acknowledged the complex process of navigating Indigenization in Canadian academic institutions by proposing a model for assessing actions. This model proposed a continuum-relationship between ‘Indigenous inclusion,’ ‘reconciliation Indigenization,’ and ‘decolonial Indigenization’ (Gaudry & Lorenz). Although all three approaches to Indigenization may use similar terminology, they represent three distinct understandings of Indigenization, that are not always compatible (Gaudry & Lorenz). Indigenous inclusion involves increasing the number of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff, with the expectation that they adapt or assimilate into the current Canadian academic culture, which is often alienating for Indigenous Peoples (Gaudry & Lorenz). Reconciliation Indigenization is characterized, by Gaudry and Lorenz, as finding consensus or common ground between Indigenous and Canadian knowledges, ideals, and Peoples. Decolonial Indigenization requires fundamentally reorienting knowledge production in the academy, balancing power relations between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians, and re-creating the academy into something completely new (Gaudry & Lorenz).

Reconciliation

‘Reconciliation’ is also a contested term, largely because it is not often used by Indigenous Peoples themselves to describe their community processes (Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, & T’lakwadzi, 2009). In this study, I discuss ‘moving toward reconciliation,’ understanding that this process requires continual interrogation; it is a dynamic, relational process in which non-Indigenous academics must work alongside Indigenous academics towards a better way, or as Nēhîthâwâk of Reindeer Lake (Cree) scholars might say “in a good way” (Michell, 2005, p. 39). But even among pro-active, change-oriented academics, how to actually move toward reconciliation in postsecondary education can be “frightening and counterintuitive” (Regan, 2010, p. 19).

Reconciliation can be understood as rebuilding relationships by admitting to wrongs of the past and present in order to prevent them in the future (Bear & Gareau, 2015). Much like decolonization, “reconciliation emphasizes changing institutional structures, practices, and policies, as well as personal and professional ideologies to create environments that are committed to strengthening [settler] relationships with Indigenous Peoples” (Hare, 2019a, Introduction, n.p.). Especially for settlers, reconciliation tends to be an easier place to start than decolonization or Indigenization. As a settler, I need to refrain from moving hastily into what *I* think of as reconciliation, to ensure that my efforts are conceived from and respond to Indigenous-identified priorities (Hare, Introduction).

The truth about reconciliation [is that] it’s not a second chance at assimilation. It should not be a kinder, gentler evangelism, free from the horrors of the residential school era. Rather, true reconciliation is a second chance at building a mutually respectful relationship. (Knew, 2012, p. 3)

Moreover, I need to search for authentic ways to decolonize my own mind and ways of being, to learn, as best I can, about Indigenous Peoples, and to deconstruct settler nostalgia – such as notions that romanticize the rugged individualist or the frontier man conquering the ‘wilderness’ (Cronon, 1996). These actions to decolonize may contribute to reconciliation. Nevertheless, it is important to understand reconciliation not as an end goal, but as an ongoing process of restoring justice and building renewed, reciprocal relationships of mutual respect with Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Land

For Indigenous Peoples, at the centre of this restoration of justice is the land, which is often forgotten by non-Indigenous actors, in both policies and practices, aimed to move towards reconciliation. Colonization is fundamentally about disconnecting, dispossessing, and alienating Indigenous people from their land; and thus, to decolonize requires restoring that connection and returning the land to Indigenous Peoples (Alfred, 2016). As Simpson (in Adams, St. John, Belcourt, O’Connor, & Brady, 2016) asserts,

I don’t think we’re having the right conversations in this country. We’re talking about reconciliation but we’re not talking about land. We’re talking about missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, but we’re not talking about the land. Where the root causes of every issue that Indigenous people are facing right now in Canada comes from dispossession, and it comes from erasure, and it comes from the system of settler-colonialism that keeps us in an occupied state. (n.p.)

In addition to this disconnect between settler and Indigenous understandings of reconciliation are incompatible notions of forgiveness. As long as injustices against Indigenous

Peoples persist, reconciliation cannot be achieved simply by settlers seeking forgiveness through symbolic apologies or even genuinely contrite hearts.

The relationship's the problem. [...] My father went to residential school and he was desperate for exoneration. He thought what happened to him was his fault. [...] Because when [Prime Minister Steven] Harper apologized, at 88 years old, [my father] said, 'Well at least I know it's not my fault.' He needed white people to tell him. [...] We need to be exonerated from blaming ourselves, when we were in those institutions, that we must have done something wrong and that our parents did something wrong in sending us there.

The second hornswaggling that we're getting is that reconciliation is us forgiving them. Well, I would forgive anybody for standing on my feet if they got off. [...] And stop doing it. But it doesn't end. They agreed that they separated us from our teachings. They agreed that they separated us from our language, and thus the language was pretty much destroyed in ourselves. They agreed that they separated us from our culture, and so we are culturally fractured and destitute. But nobody's going to help us bring it back together. And it's about establishing education in the culture, in the language. [...] They're educating us in *their* schools, in *their* culture, and in *their* language. It's still going on. They're still squarely on our feet. (Maracle, in Adams, St. John, Belcourt, O'Connor, & Brady, 2016, original emphasis, n.p.)

Reconciliation needs to be about action for real change. In the context of decolonizing and Indigenizing postsecondary education, settler scholars need to learn about the land in relation to Indigenizing curricular and teaching practices. What does it mean to develop land-centric, place-based curricula (Chambers, 2006; Thomson & Hall, 2017)?

Pedagogy of Discomfort: Unsettling of Settlers

Well-intentioned, non-Indigenous settlers may be tempted to rush to reconciliation in order to ease the pain and discomfort often felt when encountering the truth about the wrongs that settler-colonial society has committed and continues to enact against Indigenous Peoples. It is human to experience empathy and compassion when witnessing violence and injustice against another. However, this empathy may compel settlers to act too quickly, without first understanding and living into the painful truths. In rushing to reconciliation, there is a risk of remaining complicit in colonial relationship with Indigenous Peoples, thus maintaining power and privilege, a phenomenon that Tuck and Yang (2012) have named ‘settler moves to innocence.’ Dion (2009) identifies this settler tendency as ‘the perfect stranger.’ When a non-Indigenous settler responds to settler-colonial injustices against Indigenous Peoples with statements such as, “I didn’t know that happened,” “I wasn’t even born then,” or “I don’t even know any Indigenous people,” it is an attempt to relieve oneself of the guilt and shame for having benefited from these injustices, rather than take responsibility for one’s complicity in them. For White settler Canadians, the guilt, shame, anger, and defensiveness experienced in these moments are expressions of White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011). An entrenchment in White fragility leads to justifying stereotypes and deficit thinking about Indigenous people (Hare, 2019b).

Regan (2010), who identifies as a settler and a non-Indigenous Canadian, urges us not to situate reconciliation in feelings of empathy. Rather, Regan, in her commitment to critical hope, implores us to live with ethical intent, to build just and peaceful relations with Indigenous Peoples, and to change ourselves, individually, in order to also bring about societal change, on political, social, and cultural levels. Regan describes this inward-focused and outward-oriented

work as peaceful resistance that compels us to take personal and political responsibility for decolonization.

In educational settings, engaging in this work may be approached using a pedagogy of discomfort, which pushes learners beyond their emotional and intellectual ‘comfort zones’ (Zembylas & McGlynn, 2012). Although Zembylas’ and McGlynn’s study focused on the risks and rewards of this pedagogical approach for teaching children, it also applies to this study in terms of educational development, for adult professional learning. When educational developers invite faculty members to engage in reflection about Indigenizing teaching and curricular practice, are faculty participants leaning on ‘settler moves to innocence’ or identifying themselves as ‘perfect strangers?’ Or, are educational developers and faculty members able to push beyond these tendencies into unsettling ground, where we can be changed, and, from there, change our ways of being in relationships, and our ways of teaching and curriculum making?

Conceptual Underpinnings Summary

In this chapter, I have explored key concepts that underpin this study, specifically: a) faculty learning communities (FLCs) as a form of educational development practice, b) experiential learning as an approach to educational development, c) the TRC’s *Calls to Action* and university Indigenization strategic plans, and d) a pedagogy of discomfort as it relates to non-Indigenous, settler professors engaged in Indigenization. Running through these concepts is the issue of non-Indigenous, White, settler Canadians working to unlearn miseducation about Indigenous Peoples and knowledges. A tension is held between White settler efforts to re-educate oneself and the colonial and White privilege lenses clouding and affecting how White settlers engage in decolonizing, Indigenizing and moving towards reconciliation. In keeping with the narrative inquiry methodology for this study, these conceptual underpinnings represent only

part of the theoretical explorations in this dissertation. Issues and concepts raised in this chapter, as well as additional theories will be explored further in the narrative accounts (chapters four, five, and six), the resonant threads (chapter 7), and the closing chapter of this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods of Inquiry

Philosophy

Significant philosophical underpinnings of narrative inquiry draw from Dewey's (1938) criteria of experience: continuity and interaction, in situation. The principle of continuity of experience recognized that every experience has been influenced by a past experience and will influence a future one (Dewey).¹⁴ Applying this understanding of continuity to education, Dewey contended that learning from experience occurs within an individual, shaping one's attitudes, desires, and purpose. Inversely, the principle of interaction in situation (internal and external conditions) acknowledges learning from experience as individual and social, contextual and relational (Dewey). An individual's experience occurs in interaction within oneself (internal) and in interaction with others and situational contexts, place, or environment (external) (Dewey). Narrative inquiry, referred to as, "the study of experience as story, [...] is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477). Building from Dewey's principles of continuity and interaction, narrative inquiry, both a methodology and a phenomenon¹⁵ (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), is grounded in a three-dimensional space: temporality (connected to Dewey's 'continuity'), sociality (connected to Dewey's 'interaction'), and place (connected to Dewey's 'in situation') (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

¹⁴ "the quality of the present experience influences the *way* in which the principle [of continuity] applies" (Dewey, 1938, p. 37, original emphasis). By 'way,' Dewey (1938) was referring to the direction in which and limitations under which an experience occurs. The directions and limitations may (educative) or may not (mis-educative) lead to learning and growth (Dewey, 1938).

¹⁵ In narrative inquiry, 'narrative' is "both the phenomenon studied, that is, a narrative view of experience, *and* the method used for the study of experience" (Burwash, 2013, p. 44).

Given my focus on experience in this study, narrative inquiry is the methodology I have used to address my research puzzle^{16/17}: *What are the experiences of Canadian university professors participating in a faculty learning community on Indigenization of their teaching and curricular practices?* In order to explore this puzzle, I first identify my epistemological views – what I understand as the process and sources of knowledge creation – and my ontological views – how I understand existence, ways of being, and becoming.

To ask ourselves these questions and reflect on our answers is more than an intellectual exercise, for our basic assumptions about the nature of truth and reality and the origins of knowledge shape the way we see the world as participants in it. They affect our definitions of ourselves, our sense of control over life events, our views on teaching and learning. (Belenky, Clinch, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 3)

Epistemology

As discussed in Chapter 1: Narrative Beginnings, my work in educational development, which is often with groups of faculty colleagues from across the disciplines, has reinforced the usefulness of socio-constructivist learning theory and co-construction of knowledge, theories that grew out of Dewey's (1938), Piaget's (1954; 1970), and Vygotsky's (1978) foundational learning theory research. This philosophical position aligns well with narrative inquiry as methodology.

I began developing field texts for this study in the midst of my own and research participants' ongoing lives, to listen to, tell, and retell our stories of experience (Clandinin &

¹⁶ See description of 'research puzzle' in Chapter 1: Narrative Beginnings

¹⁷ In narrative inquiry, the language of 'wonder' describes tentative curiosity about the phenomenon under inquiry. Narrative inquiry tends to avoid the language of 'research question' because it implies that the direction of research conversations is pre-determined by the researcher, rather than emergent during the research conversation, and that the study aims to answer a question, rather than explore a phenomenon.

Caine, 2013). Individual research conversations with participants in this study facilitated a process of living alongside one another's stories of experience, as we made meaning of our experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Morehouse, 2012). The telling of our stories of experience was not intended as a legalistic, objective recording of past events. Telling and retelling our stories provided a process through which we co-constructed understandings of experience (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). This process of collaborative meaning-making was intentionally employed for its potential to change both participant and researcher (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). This possibility for personal change can translate into shifts in beliefs, discourses, and practices; as such, the impacts of narrative inquiry can extend to standards of practice within professional fields, at institutional policy levels, in relevant community contexts, in socio-political and theoretical realms (Clandinin & Caine, 2013), and can affect our very epistemological understandings about the nature of knowledge production.

In narrative inquiry, by the process of their co-construction, stories of experience are emergent and specific to time, people, and context (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In this study, research conversations took place over a series of weeks and months in the summer and autumn of 2020, followed by conversations to co-compose and finalize narrative accounts in the summer and autumn of 2021. In the interval of time between the initial series of research conversations and the follow-up, co-composing conversations, the three dimensions of time (temporality), people (sociality), and context (place) could be easily identified, as our stories of experience transformed in the intervening year between these two phases of research. The collaborative, co-inquiry process between researcher and research participant, in which the research participant's emergent stories of experience guide the focus and direction of the inquiry, exemplifies the

epistemology and ontology that underpin the methodology (Caine, Estefan, & Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Murphy, 2009).

Stories of experience do not lead to generalizable research results (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Morehouse, 2012), but rather the process of telling and retelling, of listening to, living, and reliving stories allows us to make meaning of them (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)¹⁸. The new understandings of experience that emerge, which are situated in and may bump up against larger narratives, often hold important insights for broader systemic considerations, as well as for other local (particular) contexts. These insights with broader implications also influence possible personal change within the researcher and research participants, as our stories of experience evolve and weave together. Thus, the epistemology underpinning this narrative inquiry views knowledge as emergent, evolving, and socially or relationally constructed. This study did not follow the research convention to investigate a problem and identify a definitive solution. I treated knowledge creation in this study as emergent, as situated in time, relationship, and place, and as an influence on the development of selves (researcher and participants), the composing of lives in-the-making (Greene, 2000). While this study foregrounded the research participants' stories of experience, the co-construction of meaning in this study meant that its epistemological underpinnings attributed equal value to the research participants' and the researcher's experiences and ways of knowing. The meaning made from our respective experiences were thus negotiated through conversations and co-composition.

¹⁸ Understanding *situated* human behaviour, interactions, and experiences is the purpose of social science research. Once a researcher has presented a systematic analysis of a phenomenon, any applications of these understandings, to different places or situations, are at the reader's discretion (Morehouse, 2012). "Narrative researchers question whether anything can truly be generalized when context plays such an important role in understanding" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 64). As Morehouse (2012) explained, although scholarly inquiry offers only "a partial and tentative" (p. 23) view of phenomena, these insights are nevertheless helpful at presenting important relationships within complex systems.

Relational Ontology

The purpose of a narrative inquiry is to allow our stories of experience, shared and exchanged between researcher and research participant over time and in place, to change us and build new understandings together (Caine, Clandinin, & Lessard, 2017). In this study, the narrative inquiry process required me to examine myself reflexively in order to gain insights into my own tacit knowledge and to remain open to changing my subjective position, as I engaged in collaborative inquiry with research participants. It also required that I attend to the societal and institutional (grand) narratives in which personal stories of experience are constructed (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007) because these grand narratives influence the meaning we make of our experiences.

A commitment to a relational ontology in narrative inquiry is fundamental to the methodology. The ontological commitment in narrative inquiry is grounded in relational ethics (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018), in which the researcher is not an objective observer and interpreter of human phenomenon, but an intersubjective participant in relationship, living alongside the research participant(s) and their stories of experience (Clandinin, 2020). Ontologically narrative inquiry is also shaped by a Deweyan-inspired notion of experience (Clandinin, 2020) - current experiences lead to future experiences, and present experiences grow from past experiences, also known as the theory of continuity (Dewey, 1938). Far more than a narrative way of representing qualitative research findings, this relational ontology, that understands experience as continuous, is critical in understanding how to engage in narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2020).

As researcher, I sought to actively engage in ethical, dialogical (conversation), and experiential (living alongside) relationship with research participants (Clandinin, Caine, &

Lessard, 2018). Together, research participants and I explored the relationships between our individual experiences and the significance and meanings that we attribute to them, while also attending to the relationship between our experiences and the broader social, familial, institutional, cultural, and political narratives in which our experiences occurred (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018). By adopting this relational way of being for this doctoral research, I inquired into both the research participants and myself, as they and I made meaning together of our stories of experience (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018). Thus, this narrative inquiry shaped and reshaped me, as well as research participants (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018).

Narrative Inquiry Commonplaces

Stories have the power to affirm and re-affirm, to shape and re-shape identity and meaning (Mishler, 1999; King, 2003). In narrative inquiry, sharing experiences through stories allows both research participants and inquirer to make meaning over time – how our experiences inform who we were in the past, who we are in the present, and who we imagine ourselves becoming in the future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry is especially useful for study of human experience (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin, 2007; Huber, Caine, Huber, & Steeves, 2013; Smith, 2008). The three commonplaces in narrative inquiry are temporality, sociality, and place (Clandinin, 2013).

Temporality

Knowledge generated from this study captures moments in time as I entered the inquiry in the midst of lives lived – my own life and the research participants' lives (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). We travelled together back and forth in time through stories of experiences, in the recent and distant pasts (backwards and forwards) (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), to engage in tentative meaning-making, specific to time, place, and relationships. We worked together to acknowledge

or overcome the limitations of our blind spots, biases, and tacit knowledge, which we had previously failed to see or were not yet ready to address. In our sharing of stories of experience back and forth in time, I worked to give attention to the complex, dynamic, and changing nature of human lives in the making.

Temporality in narrative inquiry also refers to the inquiry process taking place over time (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). The research participants and I created field texts and co-composed narrative accounts over time, through multiple interactions (Clandinin & Caine, 2013) that were spread out across approximately one year, with variations on the number of meetings, depending on each participant's availability.

Sociality

Building relationship based on mutual trust with research participants allows for the safe exploration of inner thoughts, feelings, and moral positions (a turning inward) and of external experiences and actions (a turning outward) (Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This directing of our attention inward and outward is known as the commonplace of sociality (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

The participants in this study hold professional positions that rank higher than mine, since they have completed their doctoral degrees and have been in continuous, if not tenured, faculty positions for several years. Although I do not *yet* have my PhD, I have over 15 years' experience in adult and postsecondary education. Nevertheless, given our different positions within the hierarchical university system, I worked to build mutual trust, common ground, and to identify reciprocally beneficial purposes for our time together. This helped to create conditions that supported the inward and outward explorations involved in the narrative inquiry's commonplace of sociality. This process varied from participant to participant. Prior to this study, I had had

collegial interactions with two of the participants, whereas, this study was the first time I had met one of the participants. In all three of these research relationships, I chose to demonstrate my trust in them by sharing, at appropriate moments, my own stories of struggle and vulnerability related to the topic of our exploration.

The commonplace of sociality in narrative inquiry invited me to travel to another's world(s) through deep listening and "loving perception" or openness to the research participants' experiences (Lugones, 1987). I practiced imaginative playfulness (Lugones) and oriented my thinking around possibilities, while remaining open to the emergence of difficult stories of experience. When participants shared difficult stories, I worked with them in subsequent conversations to determine whether or not they wished to include those stories in the final versions of their narrative accounts. I communicated to them that they had the choice to determine what would be shared publicly in this research study, and what would remain private. This on-going negotiation of consent is an example of my commitment to relational ethics in this study. It involved remaining attentive and responsive to the research participants' needs and the constraints of their situations (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018).

Throughout these research conversations and while listening to and watching the video recordings of them afterwards, I paid attention to silences, pauses, tone of voice, facial expressions, hand gestures, hesitation, and uncertainty (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018). I adapted to participants changing schedules and life circumstances. I responded with compassion when a participant expressed fears or regrets about stories shared, and respected their wishes when they had changes of heart, determining that some of their stories must be omitted. I reiterated to participants that I understood this study as happening in the midst of lives lived, that we were inquiring into a part of our lives in the making, and that we could not reduce our lives to

single or fixed stories. This recognition of complexity and the ongoing nature of experience highlighted that the narrative inquiry commonplaces are interconnected; time, relationality, and place intermingle in this work (Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard, 2018).

Place

The narrative inquiry commonplace of “place directs attention to places where lives were lived as well as to the places where inquiry events occur” (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, p. 167). Moving imaginatively back and forth between places where our stories of experience occurred and places where the inquiry conversations are occurring to some extent disrupted my own sense of location, as participants and I recreated past experiences through narrative and made sense of experience as seen in the present (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Later in this chapter, in the section ‘Limitations and possibilities,’ I discuss a sense of dislocation, as it relates to the study and my connection with research participants.

The digital platform through which research conversations took place also influenced the study. I would have preferred to meet in person, to share a coffee and/or food with research participants, to perhaps meet in the place where they teach and make curriculum, to walk the halls and the campus where they are working and learning. These in-person plans had to be changed when the COVID-19 global pandemic imposed travel restrictions and limited us to small groups of people with whom we could have close contact. Instead, we met via an online, video-conferencing application. The loss of in-person contact challenged me, in the way I am accustomed to building relationships of trust. However, the participants seemed open and willing to put their trust in me from the very start, and this digital platform did not end up being the hindrance I anticipated. Furthermore, one of the participants explained that they suffer from an anxiety disorder that makes it challenging for them to be in an enclosed space, where it might be

awkward or impossible to leave. They explained to me that meeting online was much easier for them than meeting in person. Unexpectedly, this digital way of meeting may have actually facilitated the ease with which they and I developed mutual trust in our research conversations.

Touchstones of Narrative Inquiry

The touchstones of narrative inquiry can be understood as qualities that “test the excellence or genuineness” of the research (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, p. 169). The touchstones, when used to test narrative inquiry, reveal marks left by this methodology (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). These twelve touchstones are: 1) relational responsibilities, 2) in the midst, 3) negotiation of relationships, 4) narrative beginnings, 5) negotiating entry to the field, 6) moving from field to field texts, 7) moving from field texts to interim and final research texts, 8) representing narratives of experience in ways that show temporality, sociality, and place, 9) relational response communities, 10) justifications – personal, practical, and theoretical, 11) attentive to audience, and 12) commitment to understanding lives in motion (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

1) Relational Responsibilities

The relational ethics of narrative inquiry call upon researchers to engage in self-reflection, to remain open, and to embrace complexities and uncertainties (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Clandinin & Caine, 2013). A narrative inquirer “must examine carefully what she brings to and contributes to the process” (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 65). Relational ethics are understood as an ethics of care (Noddings, 2013/1984) and involve attentiveness, responsiveness, collaboration, negotiation, and staying attuned to issues of power, voice, and injustice (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Throughout this study, I engaged in reflexive practice, using autobiographical and reflective writing between research conversations with participants and during the draft composing of narrative accounts. My reflective memos became part of the field

texts informing the study, and guiding my next steps through the process. At times, my reflective memos identified new wonders and questions I hoped to explore in a subsequent conversation. Other times, I reflected on ethical considerations with regards to negotiating anonymization of participants' names, and what I might do if some participants chose to be identified in the study, while others chose to be anonymized. I explained the relational ethics of narrative inquiry to the research participants, so that we could navigate any challenging terrain together, living alongside one another and co-composing narratives of our interwoven experiences. I discuss the conundrum of anonymizing in the section on the touchstone 'Negotiation of relationships,' below.

2) In the Midst

Narrative inquiry begins in the midst of the researcher's life, in the midst of the research participants' lives, in the midst of their lives lived within the parameters of their respective institutional contexts, and in the midst of the broader societal realities (politics, culture, family, economy, law, etc.) (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Entering a narrative inquiry in the midst requires us to recognize the ongoing nature of lives lived, that the newly formed river of research activity merges with the existing rivers of lives, flowing in their time and place. The research begins in a particular time and place, in the context of particular grand narratives, as particular ways of living are in process. My autobiographical narrative beginnings helped me to articulate the research puzzles and develop the research design for this study, while also naming that and exploring how I could enter into the study in the midst of my own storied life (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). This 'in the midst' touchstone also applies to how I negotiated entry into relationship with research participants, how I negotiated living alongside them in the space in which we shared our stories of experience, and how we collaboratively composed the final

research texts, before negotiating closure of the study, which marked a change in our relationship, rather than an end to it (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

3) Negotiation of Relationships

Narrative inquirers negotiate relationship with research participants through regular discussions of the purpose and processes of the study and negotiating the texts and their implications (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Narrative inquirers also ask if and how they and the study can help participants now and, in the future (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). This kind of engagement in relationship with research participants took time and commitment to ongoing relationship and involved navigating storied relationships within the participants' circles or communities (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). In particular, participants and I reflected on and thoughtfully discussed how to ethically refer to their associates, whom they named in their stories of experience, whether the associates were settler or Indigenous colleague, or Indigenous community members. Participants, and I, all White, settler-identifying, made explicit our wish to honour the particulars of their stories, not to appropriate Indigenous Peoples' stories, and to avoid perpetuating the myth of pan-Indigeneity by using generic, anonymizing terms such as 'Indigenous colleague', while also understanding that the Indigenous-identifying individuals who appeared in participant stories were not the subject of the stories. These stories were told by White settlers about their White settler experiences engaging in relationship and learning with Indigenous people. Although in each of the three narrative accounts, the participants and I decided to anonymize people, institutional, and place names, to the greatest extent possible, in each case we discussed the problem with this Western colonial research ethics standard. This decision ensures that individuals, institutional affiliations, communities, and specific locations who/that play a part in the participants' and my stories of experiences will not be easily

identifiable. Since they were not involved in the telling and writing of these narrative accounts, we chose to exclude their names out of respect for their privacy. However, we struggled with this decision, especially when it came to identifying Indigenous individuals, communities, and places. The tension with which we grappled was our genuine wish to acknowledge and give due credit to these individuals, communities, and places, credit for the contributions they made to our experiences and our learning journeys. We were aware that in this study we were discussing the importance of place-based, land-based, relational learning between settlers and Indigenous people, and yet we were unable to ethically name the specific places, lands, and peoples. This bumping up of Western research ethics protocols with decolonizing practices is an example of the kind of challenges with which academic communities must reckon and reconcile. I further discuss the issue around omitting specific place names in Chapter 8: Towards Reconciliation.

Through relational commitment, narrative inquirers travel to unknown ‘worlds’ with ‘loving perception’ (Lugones, 1987) remaining open to being changed by the stories told and retold by research participants (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). The possible impacts of narrative inquiry are significant; as I was changed in relationship with the research participants, I allowed my own perspectives, practices, and understandings to be changed. Through public communication of the study findings, I hope my transformational experience as a White settler-researcher will contribute to further reflections, discussion, and insights within scholarly and practitioner communities (Clandinin & Caine, 2013), encouraging other settlers to engage in ‘world’-travelling, towards their own transformations.

4) Narrative Beginnings

I have discussed narrative beginnings in Chapter 1, and briefly in the above section on the touchstone ‘In the midst.’ Narrative beginnings are the starting place for a narrative inquirer to

reflect on and inquire into one's own experiences. At the same time, this self-reflective, autobiographical inquiry is an ongoing process, that helps the narrative inquirer return again and again to the three-dimensional spaces of temporality, sociality, and place and to the questions of personal, practical, and social justification for the study (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

While narrative beginnings continued to inform my research process throughout this study, not all of these autobiographical texts necessarily appear in the final research texts for the study, as they were meant as works-in-progress, and did not necessarily offer insights for public audiences (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

5) Negotiating Entry to the Field

The 'field' in narrative inquiry is understood as the relational inquiry space, which narrative inquirers continually negotiate with research participants (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). A relational inquiry space involves listening to research participants' stories of experience (through inquiry conversations or interviews, sometimes facilitated with the use of artifacts, for instance) and living alongside them as their lives and stories unfold (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Living alongside research participants, narrative inquirers enter places of importance in the participants' lives (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). In this narrative inquiry, living alongside participants had to be mediated through digital communication platforms (Google Meet App, email, and phone) because of the public health restrictions, including travel restriction, enacted in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Because of these limitations, the field in which this study occurred was entirely digital and remote, and centered around my one-on-one conversations with participants through Google Meet. Despite the limitations of remote connection, I entered the field attentive to how narratives of experience shared by the research participants are "embedded in social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narratives" (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, p.

171) and how these contextual realities complicate the process of writing and co-composing texts. As complexities, uncertainties, and tensions emerged in participant narratives, we often had to re-negotiate consent and the terms of their participation in this study. During the co-composing of narrative accounts, the conversation often returned to what the participants wished to share publicly, and what purpose their stories might serve, to what audiences.

6) Moving from Field to Field Texts

Narrative inquirers compose and co-compose, with research participants, field texts¹⁹, which may include interview notes and transcripts, field notes (such as participant observations), reflective memos, artifacts (such as images, objects, policy documents, timelines, etc.), participant texts (such as journal entries, poems, fiction, or a collection of artifacts) (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Importantly, as a narrative inquirer, when I moved from field to field text, I attended to the meaning that was made of experience through each field text and how best to represent that meaning in final research texts (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). This transition from field to field texts started with my drafting of narrative accounts based on the research conversation transcripts and my own reflective research memos. It then moved into a co-composing process, which I describe in the next touchstone: ‘Moving from field texts to interim and final research texts.’

7) Moving from Field Texts to Interim and Final Research Texts

In narrative inquiry, interim research texts are negotiated with research participants (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). The interim research texts, also known as narrative accounts, bring together multiple field texts to make sense of them (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). From these multiple field texts, I composed three draft narrative accounts, one for each research participant.

¹⁹ ‘Field texts’ are commonly known as ‘data’ in qualitative research (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

I then shared their respective draft narrative accounts with each of them, in order to initiate the co-composing process, which moved the draft or interim texts towards final research texts. This co-composing process involved individual conversations with participants in which we explored their stories again, and they had the chance to tell and re-tell their stories of experience. As we moved through this process, we attended to the temporality, sociality, and place, which sometimes involved clarifying that each story of experience merely captures a moment in time and place, and is specific to relationship with oneself (inward turn) and others (outward turn) at that time and in that place or context (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). In some cases, the interim research texts guided the inquiry down trails towards new wonders and research puzzles, that participants and I (re)negotiated in the co-composition process (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

In composing final research texts, my attention also turned to public audiences and re-examining my personal, practical, and social justifications for this study (see touchstone no. 10) (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). While final research texts are commonly written for academic audiences, they can be written to reach beyond scholarly communities, taking such forms as theatre or musical performances, visual arts, policy papers, literary works, or public education resources. I have initiated communicating some of my learnings from this study through scholarly publications and presentations. As I transition from completion of this study into public communication of its findings, I remain open to non-academic forms of communication in order to share insights that emerge from this narrative inquiry with a broader audience (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

8) Representing Narratives of Experience in Ways that Show Temporality, Sociality, and Place

Final research texts must reflect the three-dimensional space of time (temporality), people (sociality), and place (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). These, often intertwined or knotted, three

dimensions help to reveal complexity, difficulties, fragments, or silences in the stories lived and told by participants and inquirer (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). By attending to these challenging aspects (knots) in lived experience, I worked to avoid narrative smoothing²⁰, by asking participants to reflect on why they shared the stories they shared, were there stories they chose not to share, and, if so, why? This probing was not meant to elicit sacred or secret stories, but rather to invite participants to reflect on why the stories they did share were meaningful to them, and what that meaning was. By making this reflective turn inward, participants were able to consider and reconsider the meaning they attribute to their experiences. By sharing those reflections, I was able to think with them about possible alternative meanings and perspectives on their experience. Each narrative account closes with the reflective turns inward or what I call a meta-reflection on the whole of their stories shared.

Final research texts are not intended to offer conclusions, answers, or solutions (Clandinin & Caine, 2013); they invite participants, researcher, and broader audiences to situate ourselves alongside the co-composed, inter-woven narratives, in order to reconsider and inquire into our own experiences, practices, and theories (Clandinin & Caine, 2013), with respect to the three-dimensional spaces in our own lives and experiences.

9) *Relational Response Communities*

Response communities consist of trusted colleagues, friends, and/or family members who act as critical friends by responding throughout a study to the narrative inquirer's initial research

²⁰ Spence (1986) discussed narrative smoothing, "which attempts to tell a coherent story by selecting certain facts (and ignoring others), which allows interpretation to masquerade as explanation, and which [...] prevents [one] from [...] coming up with alternative explanation" (p. 212-213). While a storyteller may not be conscious of this self-censorship or selective re-telling (See prejudice and bias in Gadamer, 1993), narrative smoothing may indicate a lack of recognition for the "hermeneutic properties" (Spence, 1986, p. 213) inherent in telling stories of experience. The narrative inquirer attends to "narrative smoothing" by asking why a research participant chose to tell *this* story and not *another* story, why they told the story *this* way, and what might be missing from the story as they have told it (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The narrative inquirer may gently probe the silences in the stories told, and share wonders about possible alternative stories and alternative interpretations (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

puzzle, interim texts in progress, and final research texts (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Response community members help a narrative inquirer recognize her influence on the inquiry process, the participants, and the puzzles (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Through participation in regular meetings with response community members, I continued to learn about practices of relational ethics, as well as ongoing methodological and theoretical developments (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). In particular, my response communities throughout this study included the Research Issues Table at the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development (CRTED) in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta, that, up until the summer of 2021, met weekly on Tuesday afternoons to discuss our research journeys (including challenges), and listen and respond to one another's works-in-progress. My response communities also include my doctoral supervisor and supervisory committee members, PhD classmates, postdoctoral fellows, current and former colleagues in the field of educational development, friends, and family members. I made a particular effort to include in my response communities, Indigenous colleagues, in order to incorporate Indigenous voices into this study. I am deeply grateful to everyone who lived alongside me in this research, as response community members and have named them in the Acknowledgements section of this dissertation.

10) Justifications – Personal, Practical, and Theoretical

Narrative inquirers need to respond to the questions of 'so what?' and 'who cares?' about their studies (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). I have discussed the initial personal, practical, and theoretical (social) justifications for the proposed narrative inquiry in Chapter 2: Conceptual Underpinnings. As these justifications evolved in relationship with research participants, I revisited the study's justifications in Chapter 8: Towards Reconciliation. In Chapter 8, to document the closing of the inquiry process, I re-located myself in relationship to evolving

research puzzles, emergent phenomena, and relevant literature, using the framework of personal, practical, and theoretical justifications (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

11) Attentive to Audience

Final research texts present a challenge in the practice of relational ethics in that there comes a time in the process when the researcher writes final research texts for a public audience, through presentation, publication, or another format, and the research participant may no longer be involved (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018). At this point in the process, while the participant voices “remain the most influential” (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, p. 175), I must find balance between staying true to the negotiations made with research participants in co-composing our final research text and recognizing the context of the audience to which I am presenting the results of this study (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). This balancing act involved turning to my response communities for feedback and perspective-taking, as I made choices about what to share and how to share it for any given public distribution of this work. Ultimately, I repeatedly asked, “What is the significance of this research?” Asking this question in the context of personal, practical, and theoretical justifications, allowed insight into how reliving and retelling our stories of experience facilitated growth (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Therefore, sharing final research texts involves a practice of relational ethics, in relationship with audiences, taking into consideration the personal, practical, and theoretical (social) impacts of my communications (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

12) Commitment to Understanding Lives in Motion

Entering and leaving lives ‘in the midst’ implies that narrative inquiry happens as lives are continually in motion (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Narrative inquirers must commit to this understanding of the ongoing flow and development of lives that are “in-the-making” (Clandinin

& Caine, 2013; Greene, 2000, p. 274). Narrative inquiry does not result in a final story or a singular story; the development of lives in motion means that stories of experience, told and retold, change over time, as the people telling them, and the places and audiences also change (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). In my first year of my doctoral studies, I presented a preliminary version of my proposed doctoral research at the *Becoming in the midst* graduate student conference at the University of Alberta. Organized by PhD classmates who were also engaged in narrative inquiry, this conference title gave me permission to present my unfinished work in a formal presentation, because the idea behind these words ‘becoming in the midst’ affirmed that we are all in-the-making, always becoming. Even when we mark moments of closure or we move in a new direction, a narrative inquiry is never finished, but rather part of our unfolding lives in motion (Clandinin & Caine, 2013).

As this study comes to a close, I am grateful for the lives in motion that have connected with my life in motion, the participants who have shared their stories as moments in time, in the midst of their ever-unfolding lives and continually growing selves. The findings from this study, presented in Chapters four through six as narrative accounts, are snapshots of stories of experience, told at a particular time, in a particular place, within particular relationships, and particular grand narratives. These stories started before this study and will continue beyond this study. What these narrative accounts offer are snapshots of lived experiences, insights into a part of the participants’ and my own learning journeys towards decolonizing and Indigenizing our teaching and curricular practices, and towards on-going reconciliation in our relationships with Indigenous colleagues and communities, within and beyond our respective institutions of higher education.

Why Narrative Inquiry?

“Dewey’s work on experience is our imaginative touchstone for reminding us that in our work, the answer to the question, Why narrative? is, Because experience” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). As I designed this dissertation study, I asked myself: Will narrative inquiry best serve the exploration of my research wonders? Now on the other side, having conducted the study, I understand that narrative inquiry has served well as methodology in the exploration of my initial research puzzle, as well as subsequent research puzzles that emerged through the narrative inquiry process. Narrative inquiry has also served as pedagogy in this study, a way to guide my learning about the wonders I encountered alongside research participants.

The Importance of Experience

The human dimension of experience and the educational value of experience are best captured through narrative or personal story (King, 2003; Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin, 2007; Huber, Caine, Huber, & Steeves, 2013). King reminded me of the importance of stories to human experience and existence when he declared that, “The truth about stories is that that’s all we are” (2003, p. 2). King (2003) went on to discuss the power of stories to individuals and society. The stories we hear in childhood shape the way we understand the world and can become central narratives in our lives, whether consciously or not, shaping our beliefs, relationships, and understandings of ourselves (King). According to King, the power within stories can be wonderful and dangerous. Once a story is told it cannot be untold; it is known and has influence on those who hear it (King). Nobel Laureate Doris Lessing (2007) echoed the importance of stories when she asserted,

The storyteller is deep inside every one of us. The story maker is always with us. [...] It is our stories that will recreate us when we are torn, hurt, even destroyed. It is the storyteller, the dream-maker, the myth-maker that is our phoenix, that represents us at our best and at our most creative. (p. 11)

If King (2003) and Lessing (2007) were correct, then to dive into the complexities of human experience, we need to access the storyteller, the dream-maker, and the myth-maker, not in an attempt to uncover the capital-T 'Truth,' but because it is through the act of telling our stories of experience that we make meaning of experience and of ourselves, in relationship with one another, and in the time and places or contexts we find ourselves.

Those of us who work as educational developers in higher education contexts are engaged in exploring, with professors, teaching approaches that lead to deep student learning. When I started this study, I thought that, with respect to Indigenizing Canadian university curricular and teaching practices, it was too soon in this story to ask about impacts on student learning or to measure changes in student learning outcomes, comparing pre- and post-Indigenizing efforts, for instance. I understood that research questions we needed to pose to begin to explore this emerging postsecondary phenomenon in teaching and learning needed to be designed around the current state of faculty efforts to Indigenize, a very beginning place. Therefore, in this study, I was especially interested in a FLC that had used experiential learning approaches to support professors who were seeking to learn how to Indigenize their own teaching and curricular practices, in their own university context. To engage in these wonders, I sought to learn alongside faculty members about their experiences. Because of its generative and collaborative capacity, to co-compose stories of experience and make meaning from experience, narrative inquiry was the most powerful way to access the faculty experiences I sought to

understand. Now, at the end of the study, I have new puzzles to explore in future studies, which I will discuss in further detail in Chapter 8.

In this study, because research does not often go according to plan, I stayed wide awake (Greene, 1978) to my own experiences in relation with research participants' experiences and attentive to the relational ethics at the heart of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018). The ethos of narrative inquiry kept my agenda, as the researcher, in check by calling me to continually negotiate the purpose and usefulness of the study. For Greene, 'wide-awakeness' was not an abstract notion, but a concrete act of being attentive and alive in the real world. She argued that the conscious and deliberate reflection needed to be awake were grounded in human experience and relationship (Greene). She added that, being awake and "the quest for meaning" were critical to one's feeling alive in the world (Greene, n.p.). As a narrative inquirer, my practice of being wide awake with research participants made this scholarly work a life-giving, life-changing, and life-sustaining experience for me.

Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Midst of a Global Pandemic

Using narrative inquiry as methodology challenges the culture of speed that dominates so much of Western culture and academia (Berg & Seeber, 2016). We need to slow down, to spend time in silence, to allow for stirrings of change within ourselves, and to simply allow space and time for understandings and insights to emerge (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018). We need to give time and attention to our experiences, to the whole of ourselves and one another. Narrative inquiry as methodology is congruent with this ethos of slowing down and paying attention. Can we sit quietly long enough to hear our own heartbeat, literally and figuratively (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018)? Narrative inquiry calls us to access our present experiences, listen to our past through memories, and imagine how both will shape our future. And narrative inquiry opens the

possibility of making space for stories of experience that are difficult to tell, difficult to hear, and difficult to carry or live with (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018).

Throughout this study, I felt the tension of time; my inner critic kept telling me I wasn't going fast enough, while I tried to gently accept the pace of my progress. The COVID-19 pandemic played with my sense of time. At times, I felt as though time was standing still, as though nothing was happening, as though everyone in the world, including me, had just stopped to shelter in place. At other times, I could not keep track of time. What day was it? Do weekends even exist anymore? Working from home and staying home almost all the time, meant a loss of place changes, a narrowing of the world around me. If everything happens within my home – work, play, rest, nourishment, exercise, reflection, and remote interactions – then how do I relate to all the places that once were a taken-for-granted part of my life rhythms and routines? And without places to go and people to see in person, time both stood still and became an anchorless, abstract idea.

Although I have not been employed as an educational developer for a couple of years now, I continue to identify as one, since it is my intention to resume work in this field upon completion of my doctoral studies. In that role, I work(ed) alongside faculty members who are working to refine their teaching and curricular practices, to benefit their students' learning experiences. I carried my educational developer perspectives with me throughout this study. When I engaged in research conversations about who we are and who we are becoming, situated within the university educational system in Canada, specifically with professors²¹ who had

²¹ Note that the term 'professors' can include educational developers, depending on the institutional classification of this job/role. In the context of the proposed site of research for this study, the FLC participants were all professors in the tenure-track or tenured sense of the professoriate, while one of the FLC facilitators was both a tenured professor and an educational developer. The institution at the site of this study classifies educational developers as faculty members/professors and requires them to hold PhDs and go through the same tenure-track process as all faculty members in the institution.

engaged in a FLC on Indigenization, I did so wearing both an educational developer hat and a PhD student hat. But those hats or identities became more and more abstract to me, as the pandemic advanced from weeks, to months, into a second year, and I felt more and more remote from the work and student roles I had once understood as in-person relationships with colleagues, classmates, and professors, on actual, physical postsecondary campuses.

Although I had planned to intentionally slow down the pace of this study, relative to the pace with which projects usually unfold in the academy, I found that intention was difficult to enact. I often felt somewhat powerless to the circumstances of isolation and disconnection imposed by the pandemic restrictions. While I respected the need to observe these restrictions in order to protect our communities from the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the lifestyle that emerged as a result of these restrictions, in my experience, made it more difficult to *intentionally* slow down. Instead, I slowed down by default. The world in which I was interacting to conduct this research had slowed down. A culture emerged, one of respect for one another's privacy – especially for people working from home – respect for one another's health and the variety of challenges, arising from the pandemic, that individuals were facing. Timelines, and what used to be expectations to turn projects around instantly, slowed down by necessity. The global economy slowed down, access to each other and to our places of work were interrupted or disrupted, access to some material resources abruptly stopped. As the broader context of this study transformed, in the midst of the pandemic, I found myself wearing an unfamiliar hat, one I still don't quite know how to name. It has to do with the 'pandemic me' that emerged under these circumstances. This version of myself, shaped by a global public health crisis, was slower, more reflective, and at times, more creative. At other times, troubled by disconnection and isolation, I was unproductive and exhausted by ordinary tasks such as grocery shopping and maintaining my

home, while I spent so much more time than usual in it. As I reflect on this tension between slowing down and the pressure to be productive, I recall Schaefer, Lessard, and Lewis' (2017) work in which they described being awake to the need to slow down and live into their narrative inquiry, but that wide awakesness lived in tension with the pressure they felt from the culture of the academy to be productive and deliver outcomes more quickly than is reasonable when relationships of trust are being built.

The Possibility for Change with Narrative Inquiry

I am struck by the possibility for change that underpins narrative inquiry methodology. Several examples of this underpinning arose in Caine, Clandinin, and Lessard's (2017) description of their research relationships such as, "We show how we come alongside youth in order *to make their lives visible* in the research and, consequently, *to make their stories matter*" (p. 3, emphasis added). The authors went on to say, "what we offer as final research texts are meant to *disrupt* common understandings, perceptions, and practices" (Caine, Clandinin, & Lessard, 2017, p. 20, emphasis added).

As a narrative inquirer, I worked to make visible and to foreground the complexities of experiences that emerged in this study. Just when I thought I understood or had reached a "solution to the complexities in a life" (Caine, Clandinin, & Lessard, 2017, p. 4), I paused to consider more deeply my positionality and my role in the research, not as problem-solving interventionist, but as an inquirer interested in the tensions that arose in the telling and retelling of human lives lived, interested in possibilities and imagined futures. While acknowledging the temporary "for now" (Caine, Clandinin, & Lessard, 2017, p. 22) quality of our experiences, narrative inquiry as methodology holds hope for and makes space for personal, social, and political change through the relational process that it facilitates, and the need for change that it

reveals in the complex storied findings it presents. The changes within me and within the research participants in this study have been presented in their narrative accounts documented in Chapters 4 through 6.

Responding to Critiques of Narrative Inquiry

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) identified that critics often point to a “co-optation of voice” (p. 75) in narrative inquiry work. They explained that, “the argument may run either that voices are heard, stolen, and published as the researcher’s own or that the researcher’s voice drowns out the participants’ voices” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 75). While, ethically, narrative inquirers are beholden to prevent such co-optations in their work, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) proposed that in the field, narrative inquirers may actually experience a sense of voicelessness, as they listen attentively to their research participants. In this study, I was acutely aware of how much time I spent sharing my own stories of experience. I chose not to share many of my stories, so as to ensure the study was centered around the research participants’ stories. In the drafting of narrative accounts and the co-composing of interim research text (participant-approved narrative accounts), I continuously interrogated the usefulness of including my voice in the narrative, and in several cases omitted aspects of the research conversations that I felt were out of synch with the focus on the research participants’ stories.

Narrative inquirers are often criticized for simply collecting and recording stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Although some narrative inquiries justify a researcher-driven, audio-recorded interview format, this research method does not comprehensively describe narrative inquiry as a methodology (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry is not a fancy word for journalism. We are not recorders and reporters. Rather, “narrative inquiry in the

field is a form of living, a way of life [...It] is [...] trying to make sense of life as lived”

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 78). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) go on to explain that,

specific stories one can catch hold of like nuggets, though not unimportant, can play a relatively minor role as the narrative inquirer writes field notes about life in its broadest sense on the landscape. The narrative inquirer may note stories but more often records actions, doings, and happenings, all of which are narrative expressions. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 79)

In the narrative accounts found through Chapters four to seven, such actions, doings and body language have been included as descriptions in round bracket, to enrich the textual narrative with words that evoke the imagery of the storyteller’s body during the story telling. The research participants often used their bodies to emphasize parts of their stories or illustrate the points they were making. The video recordings of our research conversations allowed me to revisit these embodied moments in the text.

In this study, I found research participants and I engaged in reciprocal dialogue. I listened closely to stories of experience and also solicited their input on my stories of experience. Where we were most concerned about co-optation of voice was in moments when we shared stories of our respective experiences in relationship with Indigenous colleague and/or community members. We acknowledged our positionality as White settlers talking about how we learn to Indigenize and decolonize. Our learning experiences invariably involved relating to Indigenous knowledges and building relationships with Indigenous people. We named and explored the tensions within our stories, in which we were attentive to avoiding appropriation of Indigenous stories and knowledges. I often felt cautious about the level of detail we exchanged about Indigenous ways of knowing and being. For instance, I treaded carefully and named this concern

whenever a participant brought up stories of their experience that touched on sacred or ceremonial knowledges they had experienced with Indigenous communities. While these knowledges and ways of being were shared from the perspective of White settler experiences, through the lens of White settler lives, and colonial-informed worldviews, we were careful not to speak of Indigenous knowledges as our own, but rather to situate ourselves in relationship to Indigenous knowledges as outsiders, learning, to the extent that that is possible.

Limitations and Possibilities within the Study

In this section, I discuss my experience of dislocation from the site of this study, and the effect that had on building relationship with the research participants. I address concerns in narrative inquiry about narrative smoothing, and explored how narratives of possibility might serve to disrupt deficit narratives grand narrative.

Location and Dislocation

One of the research stories shared in Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) text featured Joann who wrote "her dissertation, not knowing where she will be a year from the time of writing, perhaps in another city or another country" (p. 72). This sense of uncertainty, of dislocation is familiar to me. From the moment I applied to this doctoral program, I knew what I wanted to study, and, generally, who I wanted to engage in my study. While preparing my application to the PhD program, I was working at the university that became the site of my PhD research. Following my departure from that professional role, and once I was living in Edmonton, pursuing my PhD, I started to feel the loss of my former colleagues who had become friends and a cherished community to me. With geographic distance and the passage of time, I was unable to continue to participate in that community, at least not regularly, or in person. And with this distance, I felt a "sad and wistful sense" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 72) that I was losing

the treasured intimacy I had developed in relationship with that group of people and that place. Since I moved away, I have become disconnected from the taken-for-granted knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) that I had when I was part of the community on a daily basis. Their lived experiences have continued on without me, or, if not entirely without me, because I do still keep in touch, then without me in a day-to-day sense.

Working with and being a part of that community made it easy to develop the kind of intimacy in which our storied lives were shared, and in which I was able to imagine this research study. That intimacy and a continuous, long-term relationship can be central to the work of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I worried that this doctoral research would be limited by the distance of time and location between my research participants and me. What I found was that of the three participants in this study, I had previously worked with two of them and had not previously met one of them. As a result, my worries about dislocation and distance from my site of research were only partially merited, if at all. Reconnecting in this study with the two former colleagues whom I had known before was quite seamless. Connecting for the first time with the other participant in this study required very little effort to build relationship; there was an ease and openness between us from the start.

Avoiding Narrative Smoothing

“Narrative smoothing” (Spence, 1986, p. 212-213) is the process of capturing stories using familiar, predictable, or palatable plot lines. Experiences captured in narrative accounts are not neatly packaged with a beginning, middle, and end. The “Hollywood plot” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 181) is not the goal or the point of narrative inquiry. I did not seek to tie up loose ends or explain every experience with logic and measured precision. I was interested in experience, in all its messiness, incongruence, discontinuity, and contradictions (Clandinin &

Connelly, 2000; Butler-Kisber, 2010). And, as a narrative inquirer, I navigated a variety of interpretations of the experiences told and retold by participants. In the interaction of their experiences with my own experiences, we co-compose and co-created 'for now' understandings and identities. The interweaving of my stories of experiences with research participants' stories of experiences, and the relational ethics that I practiced in this process, led me into a space of mingling facts with fictions, of disguising or fictionalizing certain facts, foregrounding certain elements, and completely hiding some aspects of our stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Some stories are sacred or private, not meant to be shared with everyone (Corntassel, Chaw-wini, & T'lakwadzi, 2009; King, 2017). When one shares a personal or cultural story it is modified for the audience and context in which it is being told; the storyteller selects elements of the story that are significant at that time, in that place, for the people present. In narrative inquiry, why one makes particular selections and what is deemed significant to tell reveals a great deal about the meaning one makes of experience. Fictionalizing or disguising a story may be done to protect and respect the people and places in the story, honouring their sacredness by keeping certain details concealed and private.

To avoid the pitfall of narrative smoothing in this study, I probed the depths and complexities, the contradictions and tension in the stories that research participants shared, and in my own stories of experience. I asked participants to share their reflections on why they found the stories they shared significant, why they chose to share those particular experiences rather than other experiences, and whether or not there were stories of experience they intentionally chose not to share, to keep silent. In asking these questions, I was not asking them to reveal what was private or sacred to them, but rather, I was inviting them to consider the choices they made

in their storytelling process. By probing this metacognitive realm in their stories of experience, I was inquiring into the meaning they made of their experience.

Grand Narratives, Deficit Narratives, and Narratives of Possibility

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explored the tensions and risks within narrative inquiry in their final chapter entitled, 'Persistent concerns in narrative inquiry.' In Schaefer, Lessard, and Lewis' (2017) study, university and granting agencies' reductionist and formalistic expectations about the outcomes of research clashed with the researchers' aim to disrupt grand narratives that portray Indigenous youth in deficit terms. Institutional research ethics protocols also clashed with the relational, collaborative approach of narrative inquiry (Schaefer, Lessard, & Lewis). These scholarly writings sparked my thinking about narratives of possibility, that challenge grand narratives and disrupt deficit narratives. By suspending judgement in order to investigate experience, and by puzzling through research wonders about what was, what is, and what may be, in a particular social and contextual place, narrative inquiry is grounded in the complexity of lived experiences and is committed to possibilities for better futures. Typically, narrative inquiry is exploratory with an emerging purpose. The end results or intentions are not clearly defined at the onset of a narrative inquiry and the process values emerging information.

Schaefer, Lessard, and Lewis (2017) highlighted the risks of reductionist and interventionist research paradigms, especially with respect to Indigenous and/or racialized communities. In particular, I was drawn to the following statement:

Many of [these] paradigms within the literature seek to perceptually or we might suggest politically, sprinkle the modelling with quasi-cultural, effervescent tones of medicine wheels and totem teachings that are at the very least mis-educative (Dewey, 1938), and at the very worst, exemplars of cultural appropriation further enhancing the colonial

relationship that at times is reinforced through research. This way of seeing the world makes certain assumptions about knowledge, whose knowledge counts, which knowledge counts, and how certain types of knowledge can be absorbed to fit Western paradigms. Given our ontological commitment to experience and in relation to the Indigenous community, reflectively it becomes easy to see how the co-created narrative inquiry space that values a storied landscape and children, youth and community experiences bumps hard at times, in many ways violently, with a model that presumes the participant and community as non-knowledge holders. (Schaefer, Lessard, & Lewis, 2017, p. 277)

In this study, while I was confronted by the colonial assumption within research ethics which led research participants and I to make difficult decisions about anonymizing people and places, I worked to attend to the issues raised by Schaefer, Lessard, and Lewis (2017). In particular, to mitigate the risk of these concerns, I maintained a practice of self-reflection. I stayed wide awake to silences and ‘counterstories’ (Young, et al., 2012a) that could reveal tensions and bumps (Schaefer, Lessard, & Lewis). I also maintained the ontological commitment to experience and the epistemological commitment to socially-constructed knowledge, described earlier in this chapter. It is in the telling of stories, meeting each other in the, at times, uneasy places of experience that stories may bump into or against dominant institutional or societal narratives (Young et al., 2012b). In these tensions, we have the opportunity to harness the power in stories and be empowered to influence change (Young et al., 2012b).

Methods of Inquiry

Research Design

In this section, I present the research design, specifically discussing the sampling, recruitment, research ethics, criteria for inclusion of participants in the study, and what sampling possibilities resulted from the inclusion criteria.

Purposive Sample and Site of Research

A purposive sample (Teddlie & Yu, 2007) of three university professors from a FLC on Indigenization were invited to participate in this study. The pool of potential research participants included professors²² from across the disciplines, who applied to and voluntarily enrolled in one of two cohorts of the FLC. Recordings of research conversations²³, participant-selected artifacts, and the researcher's reflexive memo writing were gathered as field texts to compose interim research texts, also known as narrative accounts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The research conversation recordings were transcribed by the researcher. Draft narrative accounts were reviewed and revised with their respective participants through a process of co-composing in order to create final research texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The three final research texts were analyzed by the researcher to identify resonant threads across this set of findings. Insights, implications, and possible future directions were drawn from the resonant threads.

Recruitment and Research Ethics

²² At this time, as far as I know, the FLC cohorts that form the pool of potential research participants, are comprised exclusively of non-Indigenous, tenure-track and tenured professors.

²³ In qualitative research, 'inquiry conversations' may be referred to as 'semi-structured interviews.' In this study, the term 'inquiry conversations' is used to communicate the relational ontology of narrative inquiry. Rather than collecting data by asking questions for an interviewee to answer, the narrative inquirer will enter into a co-inquiry process in conversation with research participants. For research ethics purposes, a research instrument called "Guiding prompts for inquiry conversations" has been prepared (see Appendix C).

Following approval from the research ethics boards at the University of Alberta (parent institution) and the institution at the site of the research, I asked my contact person at the research site to send my recruitment invitation by email to professors who had participated in one of the FLCs on Indigenization either in the 2016-2017 cohort or the 2017-2018 cohort. See Appendix A for the email invitation script and Appendix B for the information sheet and consent form, which was attached to the recruitment email message. I did not have access to the list of potential participants. Those who received the recruitment email and who were interested in participating contacted me directly, by email. Participation was voluntary and instructions were provided to participants on how to withdraw from the study.

Criteria for Inclusion

The FLC on Indigenization at the centre of this study was offered as an educational development program to professors at a mid-sized Canadian university in the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years. I asked a former colleague who co-facilitated these two cohorts to identify which FLC members participated in all the experiential and seminar-style components of the FLC program, in order to recruit to this study those with the greatest possible depth and breadth of experience in the FLC. The names of potential participants identified accordingly were not shared with me, but these criteria for inclusion guided my former colleague with the distribution of my recruitment message.

Sampling Possibilities

The FLC identified for this study was a voluntary program, to which faculty members had to apply and have their departmental leadership approve this program as part of their workload for that academic year. As such, I anticipated that the participants I recruited to this study would have been highly motivated to participate in the FLC and would have brought an

interest in Indigenizing their curricula to their participation in the FLC. The FLC was not intended to persuade those who oppose Indigenization efforts. These sampling possibilities affected the quality of field texts that emerged from research conversations and thereby affect the results of this study. I found research participants were highly engaged in grappling with complexities, tensions, and were open to being unsettled (Regan, 2010), as they genuinely sought to learn how to decolonize and Indigenize their teaching and curricular practices.

In the Field²⁴

In this section, I explain the processes of gathering data known as ‘field texts,’ moving from field texts to interim research texts to final research texts, and the representation of final research texts for public audiences.

Field Texts

I scheduled individual research conversations with each participant, negotiating the time and number of meetings. In addition to these meetings held online via the Google Meet App, I also communicated with participants by email and at times by phone, not only to arrange the logistics for our work together, but also, in some cases, to receive digital copies of artifacts they chose to share as part of their stories and to facilitate the co-composing process with updates to multiple versions of their narrative accounts. Following each research conversation, I wrote reflective memos about my own stories of experience that were evoked in living alongside participants’ stories of experience (Clandinin, 2013).

²⁴ In narrative inquiry, the phrase ‘data collection’ is not commonly used. Rather narrative inquirers enter the field to work alongside research participants to develop field texts (interviews, conversations, artifacts, images, timelines, etc.) that will inform the composition of interim research texts (narrative accounts) and the co-composition of final research texts. The term ‘data collection’ implies that the researcher is extracting information from the research subjects. Instead, in narrative inquiry, a relational ontology means that the research is committed to living alongside and co-composition research with participants.

The research conversations started with greetings and introductions or recapping how we knew each other, whichever was appropriate for the particular research participant. I then provided a brief overview of my research study, stated my research puzzle, identified the methodology I was using, and explained the process that I anticipated using for our research conversations. I gave participants a chance to ask questions about the information sheet and consent form I had sent them by email and then asked them for their consent to participate in the study. Signed consent forms were emailed back to me by each participant.

Once those introductory exchanges were complete, I started the research conversations fairly spontaneously, naturally. In our first research conversation, I began with the prompt: “What motivated you to join the FLC on Indigenization?” See Appendix C: Research Instrument - Guiding prompts for inquiry conversations. I did not always follow the guiding prompts that I had prepared in advance (Appendix C). After completing the first research conversation with each participant, subsequent conversations took the shape of follow-up to previous conversations. Often my reflective memos, that I wrote between research conversations, would include notes of questions I wanted to ask the next time we met.

Research conversations were recorded using Google Meet. I transcribed the recordings and used the transcripts of the research conversation²⁵, along with participant-selected artifacts, and my reflexive memos as field texts to compose draft versions of the interim research texts, also known as narrative accounts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

²⁵ In qualitative research, ‘inquiry conversations’ may be referred to as ‘semi-structured interviews.’ In this study, the term ‘inquiry conversations’ is used to communicate the relational ontology of narrative inquiry. Rather than collecting data by asking questions for an interviewee to answer, the narrative inquirer will enter into a co-inquiry process in conversation with research participants. For research ethics purposes, a research instrument called “Guiding prompts for inquiry conversations” has been prepared (see Appendix C).

From Field Texts to Interim Research Texts

I sent draft or partially complete narrative accounts²⁶ to the respective research participants for review and to initiate the co-composition process. Through this process we met via Google Meet to discuss revisions and we exchanged revised versions of their respective narrative accounts via email. During our co-composing meetings, participants sometimes retold aspects of their stories of experiences, for which we made appropriate changes to the narrative accounts. The co-composing process involved, once again, living alongside one another, as we made meaning of the stories told and re-told, lived and re-lived and made meaning of our interwoven, nested narratives.

*Final Research Texts*²⁷

Once the three narrative accounts were complete and approved by their respective research participants, I reviewed them together as a set, in order to identify resonant threads²⁸ found across the stories of participants' experiences (Clandinin, 2013). With these threads of resonance echoing across the set of narrative accounts, I searched for an image or metaphor to represent and communicate the study findings (Clandinin, 2013). Resonant threads often lead to new wonders and provide insight, in this case into how the life-composing of research participants could help to shape Indigenizing, decolonizing, and reconciliation in Canadian university teaching and curricular practices, as well as inform the design and delivery of FLCs within the field of educational development (Clandinin, 2013).

²⁶This move to draft interim research texts or narrative accounts is the beginning of what many qualitative researchers would call 'data analysis.'

²⁷ The 'final research texts' in narrative inquiry, are thought of as the 'findings' or 'results' in general qualitative research.

²⁸ 'Resonant threads' in narrative inquiry are a part of the researcher's analysis, after narrative accounts have been negotiated, co-composed, and finalized with participants (Clandinin, 2013). Resonant threads are the patterns across participants' experiences that the researcher identifies when analysing all the narrative accounts as a whole (Clandinin, 2013).

Representation of Final Research Texts in Public Forums

Writing final research texts for scholarly distribution involves weaving in relevant literature and autobiographical narratives, and setting the public version of research findings within the social, cultural, political, and institutional narratives that shaped individual experiences in the time and place in which the research was conducted (Clandinin, 2013). Some excerpts of this manuscript have been submitted for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals, and await editorial decisions. I am also interested in alternative forms of communication of the study's findings, beyond academic publications and presentations, and will consider community-based, practitioner-based (within the field of educational development and/or other relevant fields), and/or artistic formats for sharing the insights arising from this study.

Chapter 4: Narrative Account Co-composed with John

This narrative account is based on a series of research conversation held in 2020 and 2021 with a research participant named John (assigned pseudonym). The narrative moves back and forth between reflective writing and accounts arising from transcripts of research conversations. Text appearing in italics signifies Julie's reflective writing.

Introducing John

John is a Sport History professor who was born and raised in Western Canada; he identifies as a white man, and moved to the site of this study for his academic career. His FLC experience, as part of the 2016-2017 cohort, was profoundly marked by a sweat lodge ceremony, facilitated by a First Nations Elder²⁹. Over the course of research conversations for this study, John shared that he lives with a social anxiety condition that is particularly triggered by being in an enclosed space with a group of people, in a context in which it might be disruptive or impossible to leave. He found intensely challenging and memorable the experience of participating in the sweat lodge – a hot, dark, and small space in which he, his FLC colleagues, and the Elder sat in a circle around steaming stones.

Preparing Myself for Our Research Conversations

As I prepare to meet with John, I am aware that we have never met before. We have no prior connection from which to pick up or catch up. Our meeting will be mediated through an audio and video app online. I will not be able to buy John a coffee or tea in a café. We will not be able to go for a walk around his university campus, as we get to know one another. All the

²⁹ "A First Nations Elder" has been selected to respectfully anonymize the Elder's identity and his community's identity, since this Elder was not involved in the research study. Similarly, names of individuals – both Indigenous people and settlers – throughout this chapter, have been replaced with descriptions of their roles in relationship to John. While we recognize the limitations of this anonymizing process, in that it does not give credit to the individuals and communities who play key roles in John's stories of experience, we have nevertheless decided to anonymize both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals and communities out of respect for their privacy.

informal ways of interacting that I had anticipated will no longer be possible, and these informal interactions can be so fruitful. I feel worried about how we will connect. What will facilitate a deepening of our connection? How will we build trust with one another? Will he be able to open up with someone he doesn't know? What will we miss by not meeting in person? How will I live alongside him when we are in separate cities and only meeting online?

Beginning in the (Virtual) Field

On the day of our first meeting, I join the Google Meet appointment we have arranged in advance. Using my laptop computer, I connect my camera and microphone and make sure that John can see and hear me clearly. He joins the Google Meet session in a similar way, with camera and microphone on.

We begin our meeting with 'hellos' and introduce ourselves. We've had email correspondence to arrange for these meetings, but this is our first live, online encounter. I explain the process of the narrative inquiry study and we review the information sheet and consent form that I sent by email in advance. John agrees verbally to participate in the study and to have our meetings recorded on Google Meet; he will email a signed consent form back to me after this first meeting. At this point, I begin recording our session. The Google Meet App bell sounds to indicate recording has commenced.

Leading up to the FLC

Before we dive into John's FLC experience, I invite him to reflect on the time leading up to it. I wonder with him, what motivated him to apply to this faculty development program, and how he came to be a participant in it. As he begins to respond, I notice his enthusiasm for talking about this experience. My concerns about developing a collegial relationship of mutual trust

mediated through an online app melt away. It seems he feels at ease to open himself and share his stories freely. He tells me,

I could probably talk about that for a long time. I'll give you a background of myself as a person and as an academic. I grew up just outside of Winnipeg, in a small town. I went through the K-12 system and was really interested in a university education. I found myself, after a year or two in university, doing a History degree, and I was really interested in Canadian and US history. Throughout my undergrad, I got the basics of a History degree, but I never learned about Indigenous History. I didn't learn what treaties or territories I grew up on. That was just not part of my education. I found myself coming to terms with that in my grad schooling.

In grad school, I read a few books, such as: *Making Native Space* and *Medicine that Walks*. Books that are sort of Canadian History, talking about Indigenous History and really talking through the unequal power relation that existed between Indigenous people and settlers. My interest developed from there and carried on in my PhD.

When I got the [faculty] job at [university at site of research], I became friends early on with a settler colleague who became one of the FLC co-facilitators and another settler colleague faculty member. I think with the settler colleague co-running the FLC, and knowing who the other FLC co-facilitator was – at that time he was working at the office of Indigenization – and with the other settler faculty member's keen interest in the FLC, it was a perfect storm of my interest in Indigenous History, my interest in being a better professor, and teaching a more authentic, truthful History in my classroom, and then, combining that with the social reasons that one might join a learning community like this FLC, it was just a no-brainer. I applied to the FLC and I crossed my fingers! I

really wanted to be involved. When I was accepted, I joined, and it was perfect.

(Transcript, July 9, 2020)

I respond to John, saying,

That part of your story that has a major gap in your education around Indigenous histories, I think that's a pretty common story in Canada for anyone who went through the public education system, and certainly for people of a certain generation. I think that's changing to some extent now. But for people who have a completed PhD now, that would be a cohort of Canadians who did not really get any education on Indigenous people or, if they did, it was a very skewed perspective on Indigenous experiences.

(Transcript, July 9, 2020)

Reflecting again on his educational experience, John asserts,

Ya, I think you're right. I actually can't remember anything from my K-12, outside of maybe the very typical first contact, and French and English relations with Indigenous people and the fur trade. Indigenous peoples played a role in that but it's a very decontextualize history of that complicated relationship. What I remember learning is that it was more of a partnership between Indigenous, French, and English settlers. And that this beautiful country was built out of the fur trade. That really oversimplified what is actually a genocidal history. It was this very rosy version.

It was only through my Master's and PhD, and maybe my honours year of my undergrad – that fourth year of undergrad at the University of Manitoba – that I was introduced to books about the creation of the reserve system and the massively unequal relationship between settlers and Indigenous peoples. I was like, 'Is anyone else reading

these books? Like, why aren't we talking about this?' There is so much power in leaving things out of the official historical record. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

As John reflects on his educational experience, and the mis-education (Dewey, 1938) he received about Indigenous histories in what became known as the nation state, Canada, I too think back to my own educational journey through public school and university in Canada, and remark that it wasn't until I reached my doctoral studies that I had the opportunity to take classes offered by Indigenous-identifying professors. It was a stark contrast for me when I entered my doctoral studies. Of the eight courses I was required to take, I had four professors who identified as Indigenous. And among the professors on my doctoral dissertation evaluation committee, two of the six are Indigenous-identifying. It's remarkable to me and it has completely changed my experience of learning and my access to Indigenous knowledges that were previously not part of any curricula in my formal education.

John then remarks on some of the core problems in academia that exclude Indigenous academics, saying,

In my limited experience – now, five years at the [university at site of research] – going through interview processes and then being on job search committees, there are structural biases against Indigenous scholars. There's room within committees to have discussions about department needs – quote-unquote – and, to talk through maybe the visibility of Indigenous people or people of colour, and that the department needs to diversify. But, largely, in a CV-first and CV-centric place, so many people get weeded out. And I'm not saying that Indigenous people don't have good CVs. What I'm saying is that it seems to be first and foremost what committees are looking for. And then on top of that, you have largely white people in the room hiring someone who they want to be their colleague.

And I think a lot of that comes down to, ‘Who could I work with? Who do I feel comfortable with?’ [Committees choose people thinking] ‘We like this guy.’ ‘He looks like us; he reminds us of people we know.’ So, ya, it’s a problem. Some equity policies put in place to bump those numbers would be good. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

I can see how this affinity bias³⁰ could be enacted in hiring committees in subtle ways, without anyone ever saying such things aloud. I think about the epistemologies that dominate the Western academy, worldviews that value so-called objective, evidence-based, proof of qualifications, and that do not even register the existence of knowledge systems such as land-based knowledge or Indigenous practices that might be characterized as traditional. I imagine selection committee members tabulating the value of peer-reviewed publications, the monetary sum of research grants and awards acquired, and the number of credit-courses taught (meaning the number of paying and/or funded students processed through the university system). When comparing these indicators to, for instance, an Indigenous scholar’s knowledge of their community’s language, the hiring committee members might argue or surmise in silence that there is no comparison, no way of calculating the value of Indigenous language knowledge. And thus, the university system continues to structurally favour and privilege Western-educated academics of European ancestry, who build careers on the kind of evidence that can be readily quantified and tabulated within Western frameworks.

Significant FLC Experience

When I guide our conversation towards John’s experience in the FLC on Indigenization, I ask him to consider a significant learning experience that continues to resonate for him. He starts by telling me that the aspects of the FLC that reminded him of graduate school discussions of

³⁰ Affinity bias is a type of unconscious bias in which preference is given to people similar to oneself (McCormick, 2016).

assigned readings do not stand out as significant learning moments for him. He describes those seminary-style meetings as “washing in with other experiences in academia” (Transcript, July 9, 2020). What really stands out for John is his experience of the sweat lodge ceremony facilitated by an Elder from a local First Nations community. John tells me,

The thing that stands out for me completely is the experience that I got to have with a local First Nations Elder. He has a familial connection with a First Nations community member, who has a connection to [one of the FLC co-facilitators].

We went up to a lodge in a rural area. We did an overnight there. That whole experience stands out to me because it was human connection. The First Nations community member was facilitating. He brought both of his kids. And his young daughter sat and told us Indigenous stories that he had learned and had passed down to her. We sat around listening to his daughter tell these stories. And then we did a sweat with the First Nations Elder, who I think has 20 years or more doing sweats.

Everything from that stands out to me. I remember it like it was yesterday. I had a lot of anxiety doing a sweat because I have anxiety. A long time ago, I was diagnosed with agoraphobia and panic attacks. It’s a fear of open spaces. But it’s not that. It’s being in an open social setting, like a plane or a train, where there’s people. And it’s this idea of being with people and not being able to leave. I struggle mightily with this and I always have, in my life. And so, this particular sweat was going into a lodge with people and, you know, you *can* leave. And the Elder was very clear about that. But I still felt the pressure to stay, to have this experience. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

I have participated in a sweat once before and I can’t imagine going through that with the kind of anxiety John describes he has. It was hard enough for me to be in the extreme heat

and darkness of the sweat lodge, but to add the layer of agoraphobia to the experience seems to me incredibly challenging.

John goes on to describe the significance of the sweat experience, telling me, I'm not a religious person. I'm not even a spiritual person. But it was the most spiritual experience that I'd ever had. As I listened to the Elder's music and guiding words, I started thinking about my Mom and my two Grandmas. I was really struggling in the sweat. It was black and it was hot. And I was talking to my ancestors, or trying to in some way. I had *never* done that before. When we got to a window that was a bit of break, a reprieve, the door was opened and we could leave if we needed to. In that moment, I was thinking to myself, 'I don't think I can do this anymore.' So, I left and went to the teepee where a fire was going. I sat there just reflecting on myself and on my life, on everything.

I had a chance to talk to the Elder about it the next day. We had this beautiful discussion over breakfast. We talked about life and what happens in a sweat and what they are meant for. This conversation affirmed the experience I had had in the sweat. The sweat helped me to face my personal struggle with agoraphobia in new ways for me.

I just felt that it was one of the most incredible learning experiences that I've probably ever had in my entire life. I still think about it all the time. The whole thing was so rich. It brought me way closer to an understanding of more contemporary settler-Indigenous relations. And it made me confront things about myself. Maybe I was in the sweat for an hour, maximum. And I learned so much about myself. Because it was so uncomfortable for me, I had to dig deep within myself and that, for me, was very tough; it forced me to confront things that I never had before. In that very short time it was like,

‘This is you, John.’ (gestures a laying down of something on the table). It was incredible. Was it life changing? I’m not sure my life changed on the other side of it. But clarifying, yes, life clarifying. It was so powerful. I place a lot of value on that experience.

(Transcript, July 9, 2020)

At this point, I wonder with John about his social anxiety and how he managed it or experienced it during the sweat. After a long pause to reflect, he responds,

That’s a very good question. And the better way to answer it is maybe to contextualize it a little bit. My agoraphobia, since I was a young person, has improved and gotten worse, and it’s been a roller coaster throughout my whole life (motioning an up and down pattern with his hand). I think, at that point, it improved after the sweat, for sure. I think I just got to know my agoraphobia a little bit better. The sweat was therapeutic for me. It’s a weird thing, though, because right after the sweat, I was very raw. So, if you asked me about my health prior to the sweat and right after, I would have been thinking I was fine before. And afterwards, I would have said, I don’t know. Because I was a little taken aback, a little stunned. Ultimately, it was very good. It was *very* good. But I was definitely raw afterwards.

I was sitting in the teepee, and we had a fire going, but it was very cold outside. There was snow on the ground. And you sweat so much in a sweat, right? Literally, you are drenched. There are stories of people freezing to death, because they are so hot in the sweat and then they go for a walk out in the winter. They feel fine for 30 seconds, but then suddenly loose so much body temperature. You are in quite a lot of danger. You think you are hot, but you get cold very quickly because of all the moisture on your clothes. My recollection is that it was minus ten or minus five [degrees Celsius] with a

little bit of a wind. So, ya, you needed to warm up quickly. I remember warming up in the teepee and being sort of stunned and just raw, like I had run a marathon. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

I share with John some of my memories of the sweat lodge experience I had. The heat and darkness inside the lodge was overwhelming for me. I recall not being able to see my hand in front of my face. And I tell John, “That kind of darkness is unnerving. And being that hot was frightening for me. I don’t think I was in physical pain, but I was very uncomfortable” (Transcript, July 9, 2020).

This sparks a memory for John, who goes on to share that, There’s a couple of things about the physicality of it that I remember very well. Right at the start, someone in our group – a faculty member – was lifting the door a crack so that there was a sliver of light inside. They were not comfortable with the complete darkness. Rather than close the door completely, they chose to leave the sweat lodge. They just could not get comfortable in the pitch blackness of the lodge. After they left, the door was closed completely.

Their departure started the sweat off. It was like (makes the facial expression of a cringe). I learned later that that particular faculty member chose to leave right at the outset because they struggle with claustrophobia. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

As I listen to John share this story and watch his facial expressions, gestures, and body language (to the extent that I can see his body language in the head and shoulders frame that his camera is transmitting), I wonder about his own anxiety around leaving an enclosed space. I wonder if that moment at the beginning of the sweat when one of his colleagues chose to leave was triggering for John. Did he perceive that colleague’s departure as disruptive? Did he worry

about having to do the same himself? Was he grateful that the colleague had opened the door to let in a sliver of light? And when the door was closed completely, what was his experience of that deep darkness?

I remember my own experience of that deep darkness when I participated in a sweat lodge ceremony, many years ago. It was a powerful and intense experience for me. I was not compelled to leave as a result of it, but I remember it was a darkness like no other I had experienced before, nor have I since. And that deep darkness has stayed with me, all these years later, as having been a significant part of my sweat lodge experience.

After sharing this story about the colleague leaving at the beginning of the sweat, John goes on to recount his own physical experience of the sweat.

To me, my experience (he cringes again). It was shaky. I was like, ‘This is serious pitch black and this is hot.’ And then, of course, pouring water on the hot stones during the sweat makes it a gazillion times hotter, in your mind. I remember thinking, this is extreme. I remember fighting with myself about whether or not I would be okay if I stayed in the sweat lodge.

And this is totally my experience on a train or an airplane. If I start to think that I’m not going to be okay, then I have a panic attack or I experience an incredible amount of anxiety. And so, I’m fighting with that knowledge and telling myself I’m going to be okay. I listened to the Elder’s voice and teachings. I was asking my relatives, if they are out there, to help me. I’ve never done that before.

I remember it was so hot and I blew on my hand (raises hand and blows on it to demonstrate) and it was like hotter. My hand got hotter, because my breath was hotter and everything was just hot. So, there was no reprieve.

Nearing the end of that first window, for the first break, I was probably right at the point where I convinced myself I wasn't going to be okay, when a window was offered, the door opened up. We could leave at that point if we needed to. When the door opened, I was going through a narrative in my head; I could see the news stories: 'this Indigenous man does a sweat, kills this white professor.' Like, I was the white professor. I was feeling so bad for the Elder that I was going to die of heat exhaustion and he was going to get blamed for it. And it was my fault. So, by the time the door opened, I was just like, 'I'm going to die right here. It's too hot. I'm not going to be okay.' Right when I had convinced myself I was going to die, the break started. Myself and someone else left at that point. It was perfect timing. I made it to that window. I felt good about that.

I was absolutely stunned, *stunned* that the rest of the people stayed in there for about four more windows. Like it was an hour and a half or something. Like, my friend [a settler faculty colleague] stayed in there for hours, and she was fine (smiles with incredulity). I was just like, 'Oh, wow! The power of the mind.' I could have maybe stayed in there, felt some discomfort, but I would have been okay. The Elder's guidance and teachings kept ringing true for me. I could hear his words playing over again in my head.

I was just sitting there with my fear of the social anxiety that I've always had in my life. When I'm with people, the fear that I'll do something wrong. You know, if I'm on an airplane, I'm going to get sick, I'm going to throw up on myself, and all these people around me are going to have to deal with that. And I'll be sitting there in a panic attack.

I was confronted with the same thing in the sweat. All these things that the Elder said were just presented to me. And so, the learning experience for me was so rich. And I think about it all the time. It definitely stands out, not only in the FLC, but in all my time at the [university at site of research], as something very very valuable. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

Spiritual Learning - Revisiting the Sweat Lodge Experience

At a subsequent meeting with John, he brings the conversation back to his sweat lodge experience, telling me,

I love talking about that experience because it was so positive for me, not just educationally, or for my job, but also for my life. I think it really registers with me because it was so profoundly impactful.

Leading up to the sweat lodge, I understood it as an opportunity to learn about Indigenous culture. I thought that's what it was going to be. I'm going to experience this thing that a local Indigenous community does, that other Indigenous groups across Turtle Island – what has become Canada and the United States – have done for centuries. I was going into it, more thinking I was going to observe this thing. That's what academics do – observe. This cultural anthropology type of thing that academics have done for a long time. As though the academy is where all the knowledge is kept and we're going to go outside and observe these people. It kind of felt like that a little bit, going out and observing what a local Indigenous community does and having a chance to talk to them about what they have done and why it's important to them.

At the same time, it was really scary for me because I experience a lot of anxiety and trepidation around similar types of experiences, being trapped in a social setting

without escape. It's not like I *couldn't* leave the sweat lodge. But doing the sweat was anxiety-producing because I really don't enjoy being in a social setting where leaving would cause any sort of ruckus or cause a scene, and I really don't want to do that. So, going in, I thought about those two things, 1) I'm going to observe this culture, and 2) it's going to be anxiety-producing for me.

What ended up happening and why I think it's such a profound experience for me, is that I got much more out of it than what I thought was going to happen. It *was* anxiety-producing, but I approached myself and what is anxiety-producing about that through the experience, through the spiritual experience. I thought I was just going to observe and then, I was very much a part of it. Looking back, I was not an observer. I was a doer. I was in the sweat. And the First Nations Elder was treating it not as 'I'm going to show you a sweat,' but as 'You're going to do a sweat.' There's a difference there. You can't understand a sweat, and talk about it, and experience it, and learn about it, by talking to an Elder over coffee. Like, 'Tell me what a sweat is and why we should care about it.'

I did it. And I had to confront my anxieties about it in the moment. I really bought in, if that's a term that I can use. I went into it and I did it. It was so hot, and so uncomfortable for me to be in that pitch black, to be with people, and to be always right up against this idea of can I do this or can't I do this? I really listened to the First Nations Elder and I said to myself, 'I'm going to be okay. And I'm going to get through this and take seriously what he says.' And so, when I started struggling with not being okay, in order to work through that anxiety and struggle, I thought, 'I'm going to do what he's telling me to do right now.' It was a way of focusing my mind.

So, I'm in my head talking to my grandmothers, who are both passed away, and asking them to help me work through the anxieties I'm experiencing, to be there with me. And Julie, I'm telling you, I've never done anything like that before in my life. I didn't go to church. I certainly consider myself exposed to and part of the Judeo-Christian tradition. I have friends who go to church. I have talked with them about religion and their conceptualization of god, and through the media I have consumed, a very Judeo-Christian tradition of what god is – that sort of white, bearded male figure. I didn't really buy into it. Seeing what religion is, in my own eyes growing up, I really didn't like it. It didn't provide anything for me and I really didn't believe in anything metaphysical. The material world (knocks hand on desk) is the thing that I can know and understand. So, I never found myself talking to god or praying or doing anything like that.

Then, through this experience in this FLC, I was talking to my ancestors. And sort of doing it in a way that was authentic to me, facilitated through this sweat, and maybe helped along by the fact that I was struggling within the sweat. I was like, I'm going to talk to my grandmothers, to get them to help me through this incredibly anxiety-producing thing that I'm doing. I made it to the first window. And by the end of that first window, which in my mind is probably 30 to 45 minutes, I was ready to stop. It started off okay, feeling I was going to be okay, really concentrating on the themes, the ideas, and the people that the Elder was telling us to concentrate on and think about, and I chose to think about my grandmothers. (Transcript, July 17, 2020)

As I review this part of the transcript, I can't help but reflect on the connection between inner struggle and reaching out to something/someone greater than oneself. In a crisis moment, people often turn to their conception of the divine, whatever they may call it: god, spirit, creator,

ancestors, etc. At the time, I was curious about what it meant to John to talk to his grandmothers, who had passed away. I ask him, “When you spoke to your grandmothers, did you feel their presence? Did you hear a response in your mind, or? Did you feel they were there with you” (Transcript, July 17, 2020)?

He responds,

It’s a great a question. I don’t know how to answer that. I want to say yes and no. I didn’t feel like they were sitting beside me. I didn’t feel they were with me in a physical sense, that I could feel them in there. It was more that I was talking to them (gestures a spiralling motion upwards from his mouth) – and I’m doing that silently, I’m not speaking to them out loud. The way that I can talk about it, is that I went inside (closes his eyes and gestures towards himself with both hands). The whole exercise, I felt I was going inward. To talk to them or to access them, I needed to go inside myself, because they are a part of me.

I think it’s based on something my Dad said a long time ago. He didn’t really believe that our souls went somewhere or anything like that. He thought that he would live on in my brother and me, that he was a part of us. To me, that made a heck of a lot of sense. My Dad passed away in 1999. Since then, I’ve had that understanding of ancestry in me.

The sweat for me, was a very internal exercise. I was sitting there in the dark, in the heat, listening to the Elder’s words. I think going inward, and breathing calmly, and not worrying about the material conditions of my situation in that moment, I found myself, when I was talking to my Grandmas, going internally and resting there, and I was okay. It’s when I started to think about my physical, material self, my welfare, that’s

when I started to not be okay. Like, 'Is this okay? Am I going to die? Am I physically fit enough to weather this heat?' That's when I started to jump out of the internal-ness that I was experiencing and started to panic and experience the anxieties.

I thought, 'I'm going to have to leave and that's going to disrupt people's experiences and disrupt the Elder. So, I shouldn't do that. I've got to try to stay here, but if I try to stay here I'm going to die of heat exhaustion.' And then, the Elder created the window and there was this huge relief; I could leave without causing a fuss.

I was exhausted after that first window, that first time frame. I felt that I did not need to go back in, that the experience was incredibly educational for me. I got a very good sense, through my own experience, of what this is. And it wasn't as an observer. It was as a participant.

I'm not pretending at all. I didn't pretend at all. Nor did I think in any way that I was Indigenous through this experience. But I share something with Indigenous peoples. We're on this planet together. We're both humans. There is a core to all people. Honestly, Julie, this is going to sound ridiculous, but it shook me and brought me down to what's core about me, what is human about me. Through doing the sweat, I realized there's a connection between who I am and who Indigenous peoples are. There's a linkage that we are all, at our core, human beings. (Transcript, July 17, 2020)

When John pauses, I pause as well. We dwell in a moment of silent reflection together.

Then I begin,

The kind of learning that this experience opened up for you is not conventional higher education learning. It took you to a completely different place. It opened you to your whole self, to your inner world. And it had relevance way beyond the borders of a

university campus. It was relevant to your life, to your relationships with your family and ancestors, to your relationship with mental health. So many aspects of your being were activated in that experience.

I think that if the university is going to succeed at decolonizing and Indigenizing, we have to start recognizing the value in those pedagogical approaches, that really do take the learner to a fairly vulnerable place, and open them to themselves, open them beyond what we can even imagine them learning about. We can't write a learning objective ahead of time that says, 'Well, when John goes to a sweat, this is what's going to happen. If he succeeds at the sweat, we'll be able to see his success in these three ways.' (laughter) There's no learning objective here. It's just, go and do it, and find out what it teaches you (smiles). (Transcript, July 17, 2020)

John responds,

I agree completely. And the idea that you could take a test after, or something, and be, like, 'Oh, now I have a better sense of a sweat.' It was way beyond that.

But, it's odd for me to think about how profound this sweat was in my life. I'm also concerned with talking about its profundity and being like, 'Wooah, I went and had this one experience with an Indigenous community and now I'm changed' (spoken in the cadence of a surfer dude). I'm concerned about what that looks like, the optics of that. Here's another white person having one experience and then being able to talk about how it was life-changing. Are they really changing or are they just talking about this as a story? That is concerning to me. But, I do think that this was meaningful. So, I can come back to this and say, it was meaningful, for me. And I do want to talk about it.

I think, too, one of the really profound shifts, for me, was getting a whole new, different understanding of religion or spirituality. I feel like I was soured on religion in the past, the thirty-seven years before the sweat. I just didn't buy it. And then, through this experience, I'm a little bit more willing to talk about spirituality or understand it, than I ever have been before. I was able to ease up on or reframe my understanding of religion. I'm less likely to cast it off as bullshit or as power at play, power dynamics (smiles and laughs). This sweat experience freed me up from being so anti-Christian, which is really interesting. I didn't anticipate that as an outcome. Not at all. I just don't think I would have gone to a Christian church and listened to a pastor, the way I did with the First Nations Elder. (Transcript, July 17, 2020)

I'm struck by this last realization in John's story – that he would not have listened to a Christian pastor the way he listened to and trusted the First Nations Elder. I start wondering, aloud, whether John has continued to be in touch with the First Nations Elder and what kind of relationship has evolved from that initial encounter at the FLC's sweat lodge experience. I ask John if there might be follow-up he could still do in relationship to the First Nations community and he responds,

Absolutely. I'm sort of weary of doing that, to take their time. But, yes, I'd like to follow up with them. I'd like to talk to the First Nations Elder again. I always thought that I wanted to. Because it was so meaningful for me. Yes, I do want to follow up. (Transcript, July 17, 2020)

I suggest that perhaps John's participation in this study could be a catalyst for re-initiating contact with the First Nations Elder. I say, "It's sort of prodding you along and saying,

hey, this is important,” to which John responds, “Yes. It certainly feels like it is (smiles)” (Transcript, July 17, 2020).

Settler Solidarity with Standing Rock

We’re coming towards the end of our meeting when I ask John if there’s anything else he’d like to share with me before we sign off for today. He responds,

There’s something on my brain right now. It’s like another thing that I thought was a profound moment. After the whole sweat was done for everyone and we were all in the teepee, one of my FLC colleagues asked the First Nations Elder about Standing Rock. This faculty member felt that they should go to Standing Rock, to the events happening there. The Standing Rock stand-off³¹ was the big news story in 2016-17, when we were meeting as an FLC. This faculty member said, ‘I feel I should go down there and lend a hand. I have agency and I can do what I want. So, I want to go down to Standing Rock.’ And the First Nations Elder guided the conversation towards local struggles for Indigenous justice.

It’s kind of a simple thing, but I felt that was so profound. It didn’t have too much to do with the sweat itself, but I always think back to that moment, as well. In a global news world, where we can become so saturated with what’s happening elsewhere, I thought it was really profound for the Elder to guide the conversation towards local Indigenous land claims and justice for local Indigenous peoples, right here in our community where there are ongoing battles and ongoing calls for justice. That was on my mind, and I just wanted to get it out, (pause) into the Google Meet.

³¹ The Standing Rock Stand-off was a protest by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe who gathered on their reservation land, in North Dakota, to oppose a pipeline planned for construction in that territory. The stand-off was organized to protect “valuable cultural resources,” the water, and the Tribe’s survival (. Source: American Indian (2022) Retrieved from <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/plains-treaties/dapl>

I think when you asked me about a significant experience, I went directly to my experience of the sweat because that's a little more attached to heart and soul. But I often also think about this other point. It was a lightbulb moment. I think his point was, too, that there's a bunch of people that are paying attention to Standing Rock. You don't need to go there. Stay here. Think about what's going on in your own backyard. Ya, so, also important. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

Interested in these two experiences that John describes as significant and profound, I respond, I really like the way you've drawn the connection between the heart, the soul, and the mind – the light going on (snaps fingers) – and this sort of, embodied experience you had in the sweat that invoked your soul, as well. And, as a non-spiritual person, to have your soul invoked is like, woooh! (smiles) Major! (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

This comment moves our conversation into further exploration of John's spiritual experience of the sweat. He shares with me,

I completely agree. As a concluding point for today, I walked away from the sweat and from that experience with the First Nations Elder at the lodge, having conversations with people about spirit, soul, and religion. I have never thought of myself as a spiritual person. My parents didn't raise me in a Christian or Judeo-Christian tradition. This, for me, was the closest I ever got to getting it, getting why people would be spiritual. It was through the way the Elder was talking about it, talking about an attachment to land, and talking through what a sweat is, it just made so much sense to me. I went out into the world talking to people about spirituality and having conversations about religion, and, I don't know, taking it seriously (said with surprise in his voice).

I've had a lot of interactions with Christians and people who are actively going to church and who talk about god, just because I'm white and grew up in Manitoba, in and around Winnipeg. But, up until this point, the sweat experience, I just had no time for that. Through this experience, I kind of understood them [the Christians from my growing up years] better, a little bit. And I kind of understood what, for me, would make sense, as an understanding of spirituality, that just wasn't the formal, Western, Judeo-Christian stuff that I've learned to critique so heavily. That it was through the First Nations Elder and through Indigenous knowledge of land and stories, I was like, 'Oh, I get it a little bit more.' I don't know; it's hard for me to articulate exactly what I get. It just clicks a little bit for me. Something just shifted into place. You can ask me about that in the future. I'm sure I'll be willing to talk about it a lot more. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

I take note of this invitation to ask John about his spiritual experience again, at one of our subsequent research conversations.

Experiential Learning on the Land

As I listen to John's story of experiencing the sweat lodge with the First Nations Elder, I return to reflections I've been grappling with for a while about connections between experiential learning approaches and Indigenous land-based learning. I wonder about this with John, saying to him,

That sounds really fascinating and it actually feeds into some of my tentative theories around this FLC. I'm a big proponent, generally, of experiential learning. I think that experiential learning has a way of invoking many different parts of our being into our learning experience. So, beyond just the cognitive, intellectual learning, we can learn with our bodies, we can learn with our hearts and our emotions, and, it sounds like, we

can also learn with our souls or our spirits or whatever we want to call that – that ethereal aspect of ourselves. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

John agrees, saying, “Ya, absolutely” (Transcript, July 9, 2020).

*As I review the transcripts of our research conversations, I turn back to an old favourite book by Parker Palmer: *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life*. In it, Palmer states that one of the ordinary truths about teaching resides in the paradox in which the intellect “works in concert with feeling, so if I hope to open my students’ minds, I must open their emotions as well” (1998, p. 63).*

In conversation with John, I continue,

It sounds like the sweat lodge experience and the whole experience at the lodge was very much an experiential learning kind of program, through Indigenous ways of doing that. I don’t presume to impose the word experiential on an Indigenous approach, but, it’s the parallel that I can draw from my own Western pedagogical understandings. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

John chimes in,

Ya, and it makes you reflect on Western pedagogical methods and understandings, too. I think the best kind of word for me after the lodge experience was that there was a *shift* or a *reframing*. You see the limits of the Western classroom that you’ve gone through. The Western model of education is really divorced of any heart and soul. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

Knowledge Transfer from FLC to Teaching and Curricular Practice

When John and I meet again, we dive right into a conversation about how he applied his learning experience in the FLC to his course design and classroom practices. He begins by

explaining that his FLC learnings precipitated deep and broad change in his way of thinking within his discipline and, more globally, in his professional practice. Then, he moves on to discuss a particular course to which he has made and continues to make substantive curricular changes. He explains,

Shifts in Framework

The first thing I'll say is that it's been more of an all-encompassing change, in that I have changed my understanding of Canadian History, and what I deem to be expert knowledge about Canadian History. At some core place, through the FLC, I have experienced much deeper change to who I am and how I think of things. Canadian History is one example. Understanding the importance of the land to Indigenous cultures, how they tell their stories, and experience life. Fundamentally understanding the [university] as a colonial institution set on the land, with a long history dating back one hundred years, but on land with a much richer, much longer history, right? Approaching how I teach History or how I teach my Sociological Perspectives class, fundamentally changes with that alteration, or that shift in my own framework.

Changing Curricular and Teaching Practices

With that shift in my framework, I have made curricular changes to how I teach and how I structure my courses. That's been ongoing. My History and Philosophy course is a first-year course. It was constructed and existed on the books before I started working at [the university at site of research]. I took the structure of the course and it had a textbook that had a very History-of-Western-Civilization feel and approach. I started to openly challenge the text in class, challenge its framework of understanding, and the importance it places on certain things. I instituted a whole bunch of lectures on

colonialism, settler-colonialism, colonization. What is it? What are its essential qualities? And how has it affected life on the land here? *And*, how it is ongoing? Those are some curricular changes I made. I was still talking about the Greeks and the Romans, but I added a lot. I scaled back on those [Western] things and the last third of the course was colonialism, a lot about race, a lot about residential schools.

I think the FLC certainly helped facilitate that in terms of me understanding the importance of doing that. And I think the FLC sparked that as a possibility. I thought that was important before, but I think the FLC really expedited that process that maybe I was slow to incorporate and slow to change my course. I'm still changing my course. So, I didn't just institute a few new lectures. I thought about how I could fundamentally change this course. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

John emphasizes the link between his own change of perspective or framework and the changes he made to his course, pointing out that it was not just a matter of adding some new content to the course, but a question of completely re-orienting the framework from which he teaches. I wonder about his relationships with fellow-FLC participants, colleagues from a variety of disciplines. I wonder how he interacted with them and what it was about his participation in that collegial community that helped to show him the possibilities for curricular changes. What was it that sparked the re-orientation of his teaching approach and philosophy?

Collegial Community and Seminar-style Component of the FLC

At another point in the conversation, John mentions the group of faculty members who formed his cohort of the FLC. This turn in our conversation gives me an opportunity to share the wonder I had, arising from a previous conversation. I say to him, "I wonder if you can speak a bit

about that community. We haven't really talked about the relationships you formed with other faculty members in that faculty learning community" (Transcript, July 23, 2020). He responds,

Interesting question. The faculty aspect of the community felt very similar to department meetings, to other groups of faculty members that get together for various reasons at [the university at site of research].

What stands out for me was the leadership of the FLC, as really what I was drawn into. It wasn't really the larger community. Everyone was there for different reasons. But the two co-facilitators – I got a lot from their leadership in this FLC, especially their commitment to connect the group with people outside of [the university at site of research], the Indigenous peoples from this area that I'm living in. I see a lot of value in *that* community.

In the FLC, we did readings and we talked about the readings in a way that I was used to, like what I had experienced at grad school. It was very familiar to me. You know, I sort of rolled my eyes at certain things and I listened very carefully to other things. At times it felt sort of tedious, to be honest, the reading part of it. That part of it doesn't stand out for me as particularly effective. That's not what I'm speaking about when I speak about the dramatic change that I experienced. Of course, some valuable things come out of the seminar type discussions, but, (pause).

I'd say some individual relationships [stand out]; I got closer with [a colleague from another department]. And fostering a closer relationship with her was quite valuable. As well as my good friend who was also in the FLC, so that was good to facilitate a closer collegial relationship with her, around some shared interest in thinking through Indigenous culture and Indigenization. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

Filtering Indigenization Through Disciplinary Lenses

John continues,

It's kind of funny to think about how much time the FLC spent discussing readings. I'm thinking about how a lot of the faculty members, myself included, were constantly filtering the readings and the ideas through our own lens. We have quite rigid frameworks for understanding things. I remember wanting to take some of the things we were learning about Indigenization and about decolonization and filter them to justify critical lenses I was already using - that might be feminism or Marxism. I think a lot of us were doing that in that space. I never really articulated it like that. But that's what was going on. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

I interject, "I think changing epistemologies and paradigms is really hard" (Transcript, July 23, 2020), to which John responds,

Incredibly hard, yes. I think there's a lot of value in the FLC – that kind of learning community – being not just one year. Because I think in that one year, there was a lot of like, 'I'm just going to work within my own framework.' I think that by the end of some of those [land-based] experiences that we had as a group, we might have been more well-positioned to have conversations about epistemologies. [We were] much more self-reflective after the experiences on the land. Like, 'Holy crap! I am trying to filter this stuff on Indigenization through frameworks that don't fit with Indigenization!' So, once we have that realization, we can have the conversations that are further along, and not just stuck on our own frameworks.

To expect people to work outside of their own frameworks is a really big ask, because that's all that you have. Especially when you are an expert in a field, a critical

scholar, who has been, in a lot of cases, fighting the good fight, to then say, ‘You know, your framework might not be applicable to this particular issue of Indigenization.’

(Transcript, July 23, 2020)

Agreeing with John, I add, “And that’s humbling, isn’t it? To have built up such an expertise and then have it questioned to the point of irrelevancy” (Transcript, July 23, 2020)? John concurs, “Yes, absolutely” (Transcript, July 23, 2020).

Follow-up to Relationship with the First Nations Community

As our conversation continues, I guide us back to the significant relationships John has shared with me that he started to develop with people from the First Nations community, the weekend of the FLC’s sweat lodge experience. I ask him, “What have you done or are you planning to do to maintain relationship” (Transcript, July 23, 2020)? He is eager to discuss this question, responding,

That’s a great question. First and foremost, I haven’t done enough to maintain relationship. I have seen the First Nations community member [who is related to the Elder who led the sweat] a couple of times since the sweat lodge experience. I haven’t seen the First Nations Elder or the rest of the crew since then; I haven’t seen any of them. The First Nations community member co-taught an experiential course about the land with [a settler faculty colleague] at [the university at site of research]. He was on campus every once in a while. I’m close with that settler colleague, so the few times that the First Nations community member was there meeting with her or there to teach, I’d say hi.

I remember one time, I was so excited to see the First Nations community member and I totally accosted him in the hallway. I was like, ‘Ah! Hi!’ I felt really bad because he seemed to be quite surprised, and not in a good way. It made me think of the

institution as this Western, white thing and maybe he did not always feel comfortable within its walls. And me being like, ‘Hey, I’m John. Do you remember me?’ (motions with big hands in attack mode and makes a sound effect of crashing into something). And him being stunned and saying like, ‘Hey man’ and walking away. And I was like, ‘Oh, I did that wrong.’

I felt bad and kind of weird about that. It was a very short, brief encounter. I suppose, he might have just been late for something, and in a hurry to leave. But, I couldn’t help connect it to the broader things happening at the institution and what this FLC is getting at, that this is not an Indigenous space, and this is a very Western, colonial place, and he may not feel comfortable here. That was my own interpretation of that encounter.

I got another chance to see the same First Nations community member when I was in a small town one day with some friends who were travelling from elsewhere. He was there with the settler faculty colleague and I ended up chatting with him for about 20 minutes. I got to catch up with both of them about what they are up to. It was really good and positive, not like that encounter at [the university at site of research]. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

I find the contrast between these two encounters John describes to be so interesting. In the institutional place, the story sounds awkward and possibly uncomfortable for the Indigenous man. John describes his own way of being as ‘wrong’ in that institutional interaction with the First Nations community member. But, then, outside the institutional place, in a small town, another interaction with the same Indigenous man was perceived by John as positive. Notably, that interaction, characterized as positive, was facilitated by a settler woman’s presence, a settler

woman who is in close relationship with the community from which the Indigenous man comes, as John describes,

She is close with the First Nations community member and close with his community.

That certainly helped. I would have been hesitant if I had seen him in a small town, because of that previous time at the university. I don't know if I would have talked to him. I may have said 'hi' again. But having my settler faculty colleague there was great. She made it possible to have a casual conversation.

And that brings me to, since *we* (motioning to himself and me – Julie – in this research conversation) talked last week, that settler faculty colleague called me to talk about her research. And because of *this* (motioning to his conversation with me – Julie – and this study) jogging my brain about how much meaning I took from the experiential component of the sweat, I asked her how the First Nations Elder was doing. She sees him all the time. She spends a lot of time with his family. She said he was doing great, doing fine. She has done a few sweats with him over the last little bit. I told her I want to get in touch with him or if she's ever going to the community, to hang out with the First Nations Elder, I'd love to tag along. And she said, for sure, that he would be happy to hang out again. She is going to do a sweat with him, coming up soon. And she said I should come. And I said, yes. When she said that, two things happened: 1) I got very excited because I would like to do that again; 2) my anxieties about the physical space of the sweat came back too. So, I was excited and anxious. But, I think that I will go along with it because she said something that was reassuring. She suggested I could just come and do one session or one window of the sweat. And I thought, ya, I can do that.

I am going to reconnect with this First Nations community and I hope to facilitate an ongoing relationship with them, because I just found it so important. If there's a way to somehow incorporate something from that experience into my classroom to share with my students, like either bringing the First Nations Elder in or bringing the First Nations community member in, or something. I'm very cognizant and conscious of their time, but if I could do that in the future, I think it would be super valuable to share that with my students. So, hopefully, I can continue to cultivate those relationships.

Another thing that I'll say, it's really made me realize that the First Nations community I met during the sweat lodge are one group in this area, that I've had connection with. But [the university] sits very close to another First Nation and there are other relationships to foster. I want to reconnect with the First Nations community and Elder I met during the sweat lodge specifically, but I also want to reach out and broaden my horizons a little bit. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

Revisiting Knowledge Transfer from FLC to Teaching and Curricular Practice

The conversation returns to the topic of knowledge transfer. I ask John what changes he has made to his teaching and curricular practices since his FLC experience. He starts by sharing the institutional context of work to change curricula. At the time of our conversation, John is a pre-tenure, Assistant Professor; with that comes publication pressure to prove his contributions to the academy during the first five years of his posting. With teaching, scholarship, and service requirements in this position, John has to make choices about how much time he can spend on curricular revisions and course redesigns.

Challenge of Finding Time to Indigenize Curricula Among All Demands on Academics

Post-FLC, I don't think I snapped into action and changed my course. I think curricular changes take a lot of time. And at the institution I'm at, and most universities, there are all these concerns we have to get tenure. Curricular changes were slow for me, but they definitely manifested. It just wasn't immediate, because other commitments get in the way.

I think our institution talks a big game about Indigenization, but you still have to do the kind of things that the institution has always asked academics to do. You have to do a particular kind of research. You have to have outputs of a particular kind. They're not so rigid about what you do, now. But you've still got to produce and build your CV. The CV is still, it seems, the be-all-and-end-all in the academy. I want to make these really important changes to my course, but I have to balance that with the actual academic responsibilities and tasks. Building a CV and looking like a scholar still matter so much.

I did change things in my course, initially, just one lecture at a time. And last year I worked with the university archivist. I brought in a big archive that now takes up an entire wall in the library archive – the Sports History collection. There's a bunch of material in there that really speaks to Canadian History and, especially Indigenous iconography in sport, Indigenous mascots and logos. The archivist and I worked together to build an assignment that would introduce the students to thinking critically about some of that stuff. We ended up using rodeo magazines, and talking about how different peoples are represented in the pages of those books from the 1950s and 1960s. I thought

it was a really good assignment. I'm actually rethinking it now. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

I think the big curricular changes are a journey. One thing I started learning in the FLC was that it's one thing to do patchwork curricular changes, like adding new lectures or units in a course. I realized that my curricular changes that were parachuting in content about an Indigenous athlete or parachuting in an assignment about going to the archive and thinking about how people have been represented in media, were still replicating things that I was trying to challenge, still taking a very Western approach to all this. I realized, then, that my course needed to change fundamentally. I needed to change. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

Jarring Classroom Experience

John's realization that he and his course had to fundamentally change were partly facilitated by his learning in the FLC and partly arising from a challenging experience he had in one of his classes, when an Indigenous-identifying student spoke up about the genocide enacted by the Residential School System in Canada.

John shares this story with me, saying,

There's something that happened in my classroom, that I don't think we've talked about yet, that was really jarring for me. An Indigenous-identifying student got pretty upset when I was teaching about colonization. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

This student and I had a great relationship, a lot of talking and interaction. They were a pleasure to have in my class. And then, when I talked about colonialism, about 10-15 minutes in, they were visibly upset. And then, they put up their hand and started talking. They got really mad and upset because when I talked about what happened in the Residential

Schools, I wasn't naming it cultural genocide. I was building towards that. I thought I was doing that in a purposeful way. And once I had built the examples up, I would say, 'And this is cultural genocide. It's methodically destroying a culture through these practices.' And sport was used in that process, getting Indigenous students to play Western sports, like hockey. That was what I thought I was doing. And the student was saying, emphatically, 'It's cultural genocide. Like, hello?' And I said, 'Yes, it is.' And in that moment, I could tell my approach was not working. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

I've had a chance to talk with the student about that experience, a few times since. It's really made me think. I've come to realize that I'm teaching to people like me. And that doesn't always work when the person is Indigenous. I think I'm always trying to convince the white students to care about settler-colonialism and I'm sugar-coating it, as a pedagogical strategy. Doing this very Western approach to teaching, doing the framework that's familiar to me, that I use to teach a range of subjects, didn't work for this Indigenous student in this moment. And it was jarring for me. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

It's made me re-think that archival project and I think I may not do it again. Or I may rethink it and bring it back at a later date. And do a much more meaningful project about land, and about positioning ourselves on the land, and to think of a land acknowledgement from where you're from. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

A lot has happened since the FLC. I need to adapt what I'm doing. I re-thought my curriculum after the FLC and I thought I was incorporating content that goes with the mission of Indigenization. But now I'm like, 'I need to re-think this again.' I need to re-frame this all again because:

- Who am I teaching to?

- Who feels comfortable in my class?
- How do I do this in a really meaningful way?

Since the FLC, I've tried to keep up with and reach out to people, to share what I'm going through. I needed to figure out how to talk to *everyone* in my class. What does it mean to always, always, always be teaching to the Indigenous students in the room, never assuming that everybody is a settler? And also challenging my assumption that I need to talk to settlers and be nice to them. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

John's jarring classroom experience resonates for me. I respond to him,

Thank you so much for that story. It really speaks to me and my own experience. As I've been doing this work, for a long while I thought that my audience is other settlers, like myself. I told myself that I have nothing to teach Indigenous people because, what could I possibly say to them that wouldn't be causing more harm or re-producing the same issues? I set my focus on a non-Indigenous, settler audience. But the reality is I'm in relationship with Indigenous people and they are going to read my work. They actually are a part of my audience. I need to be writing to them, as well as settlers. What a challenge that is to bridge that divide because those two audiences have really different needs and really different epistemologies. I don't know how you do that in a classroom that is a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. That is a huge challenge. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

John agrees,

It's a huge challenge. And, it's a challenge that I'm looking forward to. We all need to do better. We all need to do this differently. We all need to learn. My immediate reaction when that happened was defence. Like, what I'm doing is coming from a good place. So,

therefore, it's fine that you experience trauma in my class (cringe facial expression). I didn't say it that way, but that was certainly the undercurrent of what I was doing. Instead of saying to myself, oh, I have to change. I have to rethink this. I have to not be so nice to settlers. But, it's tough because I don't want to lose them. I don't want them to retrench themselves in anti-Indigenous privilege. So, how do I do this? It's an ongoing learning process.

I think the FLC gave me some tools to think through that jarring experience in my class. I actually told the story to a couple of people who were in my FLC, because I looked to those people as part of this journey that I'm on. I would love there to be another FLC, that has that as its central idea: meaningful Indigenization in the classroom. Round two. Let's go again. Let's get back together with the communities of Indigenous people around here and let's chat with them about that. What is meaningful participation in education for Indigenous people at [the university at site of research]? What does that look like? How can I facilitate that? Should I facilitate that? Am I the person to do it? I would look forward to participating in an FLC like that in the future. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

Bringing the conversation back to the curricular changes to his History and Philosophy course, John continues,

This is a massive learning. The curricular changes that I'm making for this coming September are starting with colonialism and starting with who I am. Starting with a very self-reflexive positioning statement about me and a land acknowledgement. Here's who I am and why I am doing this. Here's the Treaty territory that I grew up on and never knew about in that way. Here's the Treaty territory where I now live, and how I benefit from it.

Starting there and really saying, here's how I'm going to teach this course and why. And then, going into Tom Longboat. Not just saying, this is what history is. But, actually, do history and talking about here's how history has been done here, and this is why that's problematic. And this course is an attempt to disrupt that problem. I take these things very seriously. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

As I review the transcript of this part of our conversation, I am reminded of Parker Palmer's (1998) theory that teachers who teach with heart, who bring their true, authentic selves into their classrooms, often reach their students more deeply and effectively than if they were to make of their teaching a professional performance. Bringing one's whole self into teaching supports the students to do the same when they enter the learning space. As Palmer said, "teaching is a daily exercise in vulnerability" (1998, p. 17). When teachers share our true selves, when we open ourselves to be truly seen by our students, this act of vulnerability invites the development of a safe and open learning community with students. By telling his own story, positioning himself as a white settler within the settler-colonial state that is known as Canada, John is teaching from the heart, teaching with courage and vulnerability. He is modeling to his students the importance of self-reflection, self-examination, context, and positionality in any learning experience. He is inviting his students to connect with him and one another, authentically, and to form a learning community together.

John continues,

You know, I can't change everything. I'm going to keep some things from how the class was before, but just deliver it differently. I'm still going to talk about the Greeks half-way through the course, but it's not going to be about how important they are, or our lineage to them. It's going to be from a different lens, where we've already situated ourselves and

talked about the history of this land, here. I'll have already gotten the students working on an assignment that is about a land acknowledgement from where they grew up and their ancestors. And then, I'm going to say, now we'll talk about the Greeks and the Roman Gladiators and here's why.

I'm also going to change the language of how we talk about them. I'm going to use the word 'spotlight,' saying, 'We're going to put a spotlight on the Greeks.' And here's why Western historians have valued their story, written evidence of what they were doing. I'll say, they are still kind of fascinating, we can still learn about cultures and why physical activities are linked to peoples' broader beliefs about who they are. But, I will de-emphasize the message that we need to find ourselves back in their past. We've started the course by putting the big spotlight (gestures with both hands a large, wide circle) on ourselves and this thing that we are doing here. And then we are shining (smaller circle gesture with just one hand) a spotlight on different areas of history.

(Transcript, August 2, 2020)

Tom Longboat Curriculum Change

At a previous meeting, I asked John to think about an artifact of meaning from his FLC experience that he would be willing to share in subsequent conversations. When we meet again he brings a book as his artifact: *Reclaiming Tom Longboat: Indigenous Self-determination in Canadian Sport*. He explains,

My artifact is this book here (holding it up to the camera) *Reclaiming Tom Longboat: Indigenous Self-determination in Canadian Sport*. It's written by a colleague of mine from Sport History, Janice Forsyth with the foreword by Willie Littlechild.

I want to say two things very clearly here. I sat and thought about an artifact from the FLC that I could share with you. And if I think of it in terms of material things that I took away from the FLC itself, I could not think of anything. I didn't take any *thing* in a material sense from it. I thought long and hard about it. I did a minimal amount of reflective writing on the FLC experience itself. For me, what made the most sense, were things I have picked up since the FLC experience. And that meant a lot of books, a lot of learning opportunities that the FLC sparked. I think, for me, really, I consider the FLC to be a starting point, a signpost in a journey through trying to take seriously Indigenous History, take seriously Indigenization at an institution like [the university at site of research] (Transcript, July 30, 2020). The FLC was really an engine that helped to start some more serious participation in some of these Indigenization initiatives. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

So, I brought this book, *Reclaiming Tom Longboat*, to read on my vacation, in order to introduce a new unit of lectures in my History and Philosophy of Sport course. I'm actually going to start the course on Tom Longboat. Tom Longboat is a really big name in Indigenous sport in Canada. (Transcript, July 30, 2020)

My plan is to centre the early lessons in the course around Tom Longboat, in order to introduce Canadian history through a different lens than I have before. I used to start my course with the Sumerians and talk about the Egyptians and then, the Greeks, following this very traditional history of Western civilization. Whereas now, I am going to start in Canada with Indigenous peoples, talking about what history is through that lens and introduce students to an example much closer to home, to therefore introduce bigger

concepts like colonization, settler-colonialism, that I really want students to think through. (Transcript, July 30, 2020)

The story of Tom Longboat is incredible. I decided to take some key lessons from his story, about who he was, and how he was represented in Canada when he was alive, and how Indigenous Canadians now have to reclaim his story and highlight what was great about his story, because he was so poorly treated and misrepresented at the time. At the start of the 1900s, he was a really good runner. After his time as a really significant athlete, with a lot of press coverage, the Tom Longboat Awards were created and given every year for the best Indigenous athlete in Canada. That's how I knew about him and the significance of his story. These awards were given out at the Canadian Sporting Awards, and they wouldn't even sit the Tom Longboat Award recipients at the same table with other people. If it was at an arena, or something, they would give this award before the award ceremony even started. So, my understanding of Tom Longboat is how he was taken up in Canadian sport history. I don't know a lot about him as a person. That's part of the reason to reclaim his story and educate people about who he was. I think that's the point of the book – to offer a better and more contextualized history of his legacy. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

I'm going to start my course with Tom Longboat, to do a couple of things: 1) to teach what history is and 2) who gets to tell history. I think that journey for me takes seriously Indigenization, Indigenous history. And reframing my courses this way really started in earnest during that FLC. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

Moving Towards Reconciliation in Our Teaching and Curricular Practice

As our time comes towards a close, I wonder with John about what it might mean for university settler-educators, like him and me, to move towards reconciliation in our teaching and curricular practices. He speaks from the heart, saying,

Wooh! That's a big one. I'll start by saying moving towards reconciliation is super important. It's one of the fundamental things that I think about. If I did one thing in my teaching and it was moving towards reconciliation, I think I would die happy at the end of this career.

What it would look like, what it actually means, is being open and honest about the history of this land and working past whether settler-colonialism is real, accepting it, understanding it, and then having conversations beyond the superficial. The only way reconciliation happens, in my mind, is fundamentally understanding settler-colonialism. Understanding that what we do here is a result of settler-colonialism, everything in Canada is happening within it. We need that to be the fundamental ground from which we can start to reconcile.

It would also mean having Indigenous students in my classroom feel comfortable there, and that the space belongs to them too; that would be hugely important to the project of reconciliation. I don't think we are there. I don't think we're even close. The classroom is this Western colonial thing. So, having Indigenous students come to [the university at site of research], and feel safe, feel heard, is fundamental to reconciliation. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

I go to department meetings, I go to faculty councils, I go to faculty association meetings, I listen to colleagues who vocally oppose Indigenization, and I'm like Uhg!

(sigh), this is the most Western institution, from the ground up. It always has been. How can reconciliation happen within settler-colonialism? This nation, the institutions, the media, are the result of settler-colonialism, and colonization. To reconcile that! I don't know what it's going to look like and I don't know if it's going to be possible in this context.

I mean, our provincial Premier is ultra-conservative. I don't think you could get much further away from reconciliation than voting in governments like that. That's the vast majority of people in my province that are doing that. They are not going to take something like reconciliation seriously. They don't think it's important, I don't think. So, I struggle with that.

To me, a way I don't lose hope, is that reconciliation can happen in my classroom, to some degree. Students can leave my classroom understanding that I, as a settler Historian, think that this is incredibly important, that this frames everything we do here. I think that Indigenous peoples are not served well in settler-colonial contexts. And that if we are going to reconcile, we have to change that. So, students can leave my classroom, at least, (big sigh) confronting that. They are going to have to think about this if they want to pass my class. (said with a serious facial expression, not in jest).

Reconciliation, for me, is listening to Indigenous people and thinking about who is in my classroom, from people who have been completely privileged through settler-colonialism – like me – to Indigenous students, to new immigrants. Who is in this classroom and how do I speak to all of them?

Getting down to the truth of history, trying to find the truth and talk about the truth, is how we get to reconciliation, at least in baby steps. That's why I think those

words are paired together: truth and reconciliation. There is no reconciliation at all, without truth. Always working towards the truth, hopefully that's what academia is.

I think academia right now, especially in certain disciplines, especially History, is going through a reckoning of truth. If we bring that to students, especially since change is very slow, then maybe we pass on to the students the importance of truth and being honest. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

John's Closing Reflections on these Research Conversations

As I re-read our co-composed narrative account, I became happy and even a little teary as I realized that the FLC experience had a profound impact on my academic career. The FLC curriculum, conversations, and experiences gave me tools, support, and the energy to work towards decolonizing my classroom, curriculum, department, and university. However, this chapter captures how my experience in the sweat lodge reverberates in areas that go way beyond my career. The sweat impacted my life. The sweat reframed my outlook on spirituality and religion. I don't know how many more steps I must take to decolonize myself, but the sweat brought me one step closer to that goal.

Chapter 5: Narrative Account Co-composed with Anthony

The following narrative account is based on a series of research conversations held from July 2020 to October 2021 with Anthony (an assigned pseudonym). Text appearing in italics signifies my reflective writing, interwoven with Anthony's stories of experience.

Introducing Anthony

Anthony is an English professor who identifies as a settler, queer, gay man, from a working-class background. His migration back and forth between Eastern and Western Canada has shaped his academic career. He participated in the 2017-2018 (2nd) cohort of the FLC program on Indigenization, a fairly large cohort of around 20 faculty participants, relative to only 12 participants in the 2016-2017 (1st) cohort. He was involved only in the seminar-style reading and discussion group component of the FLC because he was unavailable to join the experiential, land-based component of the program, situated in and with local Indigenous communities. As a result, his engagement in the FLC was exclusively with fellow settler academics, including the co-facilitators of the FLC, one settler-professor/educational developer and the other a settler-professor of Indigenous Studies.

A Global Pandemic Rages On

It's July 2020. The novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, continues to infect people around the world and the death tolls keep rising. Local and national governments continue to close or restrict many public and commercial services. Air travel has been at a near stand-still for months, and with many office workers now working from home, the Monday to Friday commuter traffic has been dramatically reduced. The skies and city streets have become so quiet here. In Venice, Italy, the summer tourist season has been cancelled and I hear reports that the waters in Venetian canals are clear again; fish have returned to them for the first time in ages.

Similar stories are emerging around the world. With human activity drastically reduced, the more-than-human beings are thriving. Human destruction of the planet appears into stark relief, while we are in “lockdown.”

The Virtual Field

In Narrative Inquiry, we talk about being “in the field” as the activity of inquiry alongside research participants, co-inquirers. The field in this study has been reduced to a virtual place, video-conferencing meetings scheduled and held via the Google Meet app. This place changes what it means to live alongside research participants. As I begin to explore with Anthony, the wonders and puzzles that have emerged from my narrative beginnings, I am unable to live alongside him in his world as I had initially imagined. Rather, we meet in a third space of sorts, online, remotely, with only a small window – the frames of our computer video cameras – through which to see, hear, and travel alongside one another. Each in our separate places, connected as best we can, so as to limit human to human contact, and thus, reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Beginning the Conversation

Once we have settled into our first Google Meet session, checked the technology, moved through some administrative tasks, and started the recording, I ask Anthony to tell me how he came to join the FLC on Indigenization, wondering what motivated his decision to seek out this opportunity. First, he responded by explaining that he had heard good things about the first FLC cohort from a colleague who had been a part of it. He inquired about the possibility of a second cohort and when the call for applications was announced, he applied and was accepted. But then, he paused, to consider what his inner motivation for applying had been. He recounted,

I have always been interested in the question of Indigenous people and my own research with my long-time collaborator had been leading us along that line. I had worked with the Indigenous Peoples' Centre³² to devise a job posting for an Indigenous Literatures position in the English Department. We included an Elder from the Centre on our hiring committee.

I'm interested in questions about Indigenous People and how their presence and participation in higher education might play out at the university and at the department level, more broadly. So, the FLC offered an opportunity to have that conversation more broadly because it was for faculty across the university, so I could get outside the 'Faculty of Arts Bubble' and see what everyone else was thinking about and that's really important. Within your own department and faculty, you might have your own discourse and there are certain ways of talking about these things as you move across the institution. (Transcript, July 7, 2020)

Reminded of the interdisciplinary nature of the FLC on Indigenization, I thought of the FLCs I have had the chance to facilitate in my role as an educational developer. That interdisciplinarity was often a highlight for me and for participants. There's something about bringing together faculty members from across the disciplines and from various departments that helps build a safe and healthy collegial community. I have witnessed how interdisciplinary FLCs give participants a break from the politics and hierarchical relationships they experience with colleagues in their own departments. This frees them to be honest and vulnerable about what they do not know and what they wish to learn. When they don't have to worry about members of their tenure committee judging every contribution they make, they feel more at ease asking

³² This Centre's name has been changed to anonymize it and the university at the site of this study. See my earlier discussion of the perils of anonymizing Indigenous peoples' community names.

questions that reveal their knowledge gaps and sharing their early ideas, thinking-in-progress. The interdisciplinary FLC also opens participants to a wider range of perspectives on the topic of discussion, emerging from sometimes vastly different disciplinary ways of thinking. This diversity of ideas is one of the pillars of a liberal education and, as Petrone (2004) contends, leveraging diverse thinking within the framework of a learning community “encourages necessary institutional cultural transformation” (p. 112).

This idea of institutional change comes up as Anthony elaborates on the importance of connecting beyond one’s own discipline or departmental discourses, saying,

I talked about the ‘Faculty of Arts bubble’. Even if you are skeptical or not entirely convinced of the need for Indigenization in a deep way, you sort of know the conversation, the discourse. But it’s important to hear what other people have to say and hear what their discourses are and understand as best you can what’s out there. The reason the group [FLC] was so big is that the facilitators did not want to turn anybody away. We all know that deep institutional change requires people on the ground to do the work. You can do some things at the macro level, and I’m not saying that’s easy, but in some cases change can be easier if the institutional will is there. But if you are going to really change the institution, the university, you have to change the faculty. The faculty are the university. The university is the faculty. Not all administrators agree with that. That’s an older perception of the university. But when you take it up, how is the university going to change unless the faculty change? If that is at least a premise, of course you want as many people as are interested to come and be involved. Because that means you’re going to see change on the ground and in the classroom. (Transcript, July 7, 2020)

As the conversation continues, I wonder aloud, asking Anthony, “How was Indigenization received in your area?” He replied,

To take the example of my department, there were some who had been long advocating that we needed an Indigenous scholar to address a glaring gap in our faculty complement. There was a hiring done while I was away on leave and that hire was very controversial and created a lot of fissures within the department. So, when I became Chair, when we had a position to hire, I really wanted to approach it differently. Because, the question of how to go about hiring for an Indigenous literatures course...because we’ve already got a post-colonialist, we’ve got Canadian Lit specialists, we’ve got people who are enmeshed in the conversation.

On the institutional level, we had a Provost, who was deeply committed to creating a space for Indigenous people. He was instrumental in creating and sustaining the Indigenous Peoples’ Centre. We went to the folks in the Center and asked them to work with us to create a job description that was appropriate. And what came out of that process was the importance of language, which, up until that time, I hadn’t fully understood... how crucial the question of survival of language was. We know that concept from the experience of Quebeckers; I mean it’s not really a brand-new idea. But I hadn’t really thought a lot about that in terms of the various Indigenous groups and how many have languages that are on the precipice or have already fallen off, and how many relatively-few languages there are in terms of still being vital and doing well. Maybe six, maybe.

So, when that came out, how important it was that the person be able to speak the local Indigenous language, we got nothing, we had nobody [no applicants]. So, we

changed the job posting, after talking again with the Centre. They said, well, perhaps we could go with someone who is familiar with an Indigenous language. And that opened it up, we got some [applicants]. We were in a position of having to make difficult decisions around settler scholars, so by putting the language criteria in the job description, essentially, we were saying that we want an Indigenous person. It took us a while to get that person, but we did get that person. (Transcript, July 7, 2020)

This engagement with hiring an Indigenous scholar in the English Department happened well before the FLC on Indigenization in which Anthony participated. As I think about his motivation for joining the FLC, I start to understand that, for him, the FLC was not an introduction to Indigenous knowledges or to settler approaches to decolonizing the academy. Rather, he sought out the FLC on Indigenization experience to build on his established or growing practice.

Anthony continued,

From my own experience, as a queer man, when I see the emergence of gay and lesbian studies, the move towards creating positive safe spaces in the early 2000s, all that work around creating safe space for queer people to have some space within our institutions. You look today – and it's not to say there isn't vibrant queer scholarship out there – but there's a lot of assimilation. I have been watching really carefully and I have some hope that [assimilation] is not going to happen with Indigenization or decolonization. But, the way in which many disciplines have just assimilated queer insights, some of the more radical aspects of queer got defanged and more easily taken up.

So, where does my interest come from? Well, it's from watching and being involved in that wave [queer movement] and seeing where it has gone and being equally interested

in Indigenization and decolonization. I went to a workshop at STLHE 2017 [the annual conference of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education], and it really resonated for me. This is not just another movement. There are significant differences between Indigenous knowledges and experiences. It's not easily aligned with other Western formations. And that really stuck with me.

We are being presented with another epistemology and ontology that is *not* ours. It's not to say that we can't find parallels and overlaps. But we have to recognize that the impulse to overwrite is what we've done from the outset, from first contact. And we have to say, "No." As settlers, we have got to resist what is so deeply engrained within us, to force [our ways] on you [Indigenous people and others].

I think it's important to listen and to hear other perspectives. And the FLC offered me that around this topic that is of deep interest to me. (Transcript, July 7, 2020)

Anthony speaks with conviction and emphasis. I feel somehow comforted or assured, hearing the depth of his commitment to decolonizing his practice and decolonizing the university institution. I know I will learn from our conversations and, for this, I am grateful. I feel lucky that Anthony has agreed to participate in this study.

Significant FLC Experience

If we were meeting in person, at this point, I might offer to get Anthony a refill on his tea, coffee, or water. I might suggest we take a stretch break or use the facilities. But, we are online, and I feel a stronger pressure online to adhere to a fixed schedule, so as not to contribute to screen fatigue for either of us. We have scheduled weekly meetings of 1 hour and 15 minutes during the month of July. I want to respect this time constraint and trust that everything that needs to be said will fit within these boundaries.

With that brief pause to reflect to myself on the time passing, I steer the conversation towards the time Anthony spent in the FLC and ask him to describe a significant experience that comes to mind. It doesn't have to be ranked as the top experience or the most significant, but something that he recalls as significant. Let's start with that.

Anthony responds without hesitation, saying,

Some things become more significant years later, when you go, "oh ya!" Honestly, I was thinking about this. So, if you ask me what was the one big take-away that I use in my classes, I think it's probably – because it's really important and because people don't know, and people in the FLC didn't know, and I sure as hell wasn't sure – was what's the right nomenclature? Because everybody is wanting to do the right thing but nobody knows what the right thing is. So, everyone knows they can't use the word "Indian" and they're pretty sure "Native" is wrong. And then you default to "First Nations." But then you hear "Aboriginal," "Indigenous," "Métis." So, in the FLC, we had a really good session on nomenclature, like how do we even talk about what we are going to talk about.

And that's something I took back to my classes. I said, okay, here's what you need to know. And here's an idea, when you are writing essays in English, you always put a capital 'C' on Canada, so, you know, do the same for Indigenous. And you see students go "Okay!" because they want to be inclusive and respectful. But it's hard to be either of those if you don't know what the word is. So, you just say nothing and hope for the best or you choose a word and hope it's right.

So, I found that session in the FLC was something I could walk out of that room and I could teach. And we had a really useful article talking about the history of these words. These are the legal terms and, in a government context, this is appropriate and accurate.

But, here's a thought, why don't you learn the local names people give themselves around your place and use that. I remember [one of the FLC facilitators] speaking to it and how careful he was and how difficult the terrain is to navigate because different folks in different circumstances may appreciate one form of address or nomination over another. And he recognizes himself as a settler, so he wasn't there to say, "This is what *they* want." (Transcript, July 7, 2020)

The discussion around nomenclature resonates with my own experience. I have recently had to back-step on my email signature and a bio I was using for my academic publications, when a Cree-Dene colleague called me in on my use of Cree words and Cree syllabics. I had incorporated these words into my email signature and bio, thinking that it was the respectful way to honour the Cree language in this place where I live and work, Beaver Hill House. Not only did I understand this to be an act of honouring the language, but also a way of amplifying it in support of language resurgence. But those intentions did not result in such a positive effect. I learned from my colleague that using one of her ancestral languages and, specifically, using the Cree syllabics affronted her and felt to her as though I was stealing her language and identity all over again, re-enacting settler-colonial arrogance and theft. I felt awful for this error and immediately changed my signature and bio, according to her advice.

What is Decolonization? And What are Settler Roles in It?

As I understand decolonization in Canada, it is a transformational process through which individual settlers must journey and it is a collective process in which settlers and Indigenous people work alongside one another to fundamentally change settler-colonial institutions, policies, structures, systems, and practices. I agree with Yeo and colleagues (2019) who contend that decolonizing journeys can bring about transformation on many levels, but

“settler colonialism is not easily unsettled” (p. 29). Despite resistance to dismantle settler colonialism and to create new ways of being in relationship with Indigenous people and their ancestral homelands, settlers have a responsibility to engage with decolonization. The journey of decolonization involves settlers transforming ourselves toward consciousness about the ongoing violence and harms of the settler colonial systems that govern Canada (Cote-Meek, 2014a). This conscientization (Freire, 2006), then, must lead settlers to contribute to the unsettling and disruption of colonial systems, in order to make way for the creation of new ways of knowing, being, doing, and relating with Indigenous communities and the land.

The FLC on Indigenization was named for Indigenization, not decolonization. I imagine this choice arose because at the time of the FLC’s creation, the institution was debating a newly proposed policy, specifically a Strategic Plan on Indigenization. I’m curious about the choice of one word rather than the other. Why Indigenization? What does that mean in this context? What’s its difference from decolonization? Do the two not go together? Is one implied in the other? I have my own understandings of these terms, but I’ve noticed that across Canadian universities that develop similar policies, these terms do not seem to be used consistently. I wonder with Anthony about the differences between these terms in his context. He shares that,

I think it’s fair to say that, at least based on the FLC sessions I attended, that there is no clarity on the difference between those two terms. Indigenization: you can’t Indigenize until you decolonize. But as you decolonize you will make space for Indigenization. And decolonization is our task as settlers and we can do that. We can do that even before we run over to our Indigenous colleagues or Indigenous communities and say, “Hey we’re Indigenizing today!” (laughter) You know? Without understanding why they may back away and say, “Um no, um, you better do some work.” Right? So, I found the FLC super

empowering. And that's why the research I'm doing in collaboration with both settler and Indigenous colleagues, is focused on decolonization. I feel very comfortable talking about decolonization, as a settler scholar, I can talk about what needs to be done there, because I'm part of that system. That's not saying Indigenous people can't and won't. I mean, that's a conversation they should be a part of. But it's ours [settlers'] to take up.
(July 7, 2020)

Parallel Between Settlers Decolonizing and Men Critically Examining Masculinities

Anthony goes on to set the work of settlers decolonizing alongside the work of men redefining masculinities. But, Anthony is more hopeful that settlers may actually do the work of decolonizing, whereas he laments that men have still not really accepted the feminist invitation to remake masculinities.

There I see the parallel very strongly with feminist insights. You know, the continuing failure I would say, uh--certainly not within critical masculinity studies--but within discourses of masculinity writ large, we have not yet totally taken up the feminist invitation to do the critical work that's necessary to change masculinity itself. And that is a sad fact. And I've been teaching young men for my entire career. I know there are many many young men who want to have those conversations but don't know how. And they can't go to or they would not go to a women's studies class, because they feel, rightly or wrongly, that they don't belong there or that they're going to be, rightly, held complicit with the structures that are under analysis.

But you know, I look around and I see the paucity of spaces for that. So, I see decolonization running the same trajectory now. We as settlers need to do some of that work. Maybe the optimistic piece is that there seems to be broader buy-in to the need to

decolonize than perhaps greeted women's studies or feminisms, in terms of how to engage the discussion around masculinities. But largely the critical masculinity stuff appears to often come from either gay men, trans people, and/or feminists. In the 25 or whatever years I've been teaching – I don't know how long it's been...it must be coming up to 30 – it's disappointing that those spaces [where men take a more critical perspective on masculinity] still don't obviously exist. So, I'm more and more optimistic about decolonization. (July 7, 2020)

Unpacking the Work of Decolonization

When we return to this conversation the next time we meet, Anthony elaborates on his understanding of what decolonization means and how he understands settlers' role in it. He tells me,

Decolonization is a process. It's not something that's a one-and-done thing. Historically, if we look at how movements towards decolonization have worked in other parts of the world, we know that it is a long and laborious, and at times backwards kind of progress.

It's not all linear. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Anthony goes on to describe that when he thinks about decolonization he thinks of three things: modernity, coloniality, and the Enlightenment. He sees all three as interconnected and explains that if we are going to decolonize, we have to unpack these three components of Western societies and Western institutions, including postsecondary education.

How are we going to move on, beyond the Enlightenment and its legacies? For me, particularly in education, in terms of capital "E" Education but also in the lower "e" sense as educated people and getting an education, those are both connected to questions of colonisation and coloniality. So, when we think about learning, so much of what we

think about gets rooted in Enlightenment precepts. What does it mean to become educated? Who is it possible to educate? And what does education mean? And we can trace that out historically.

The legacies of Enlightenment are many. First of all, the notion of the individual and the idea of the individual as an independent, autonomous subject that is separate from nature. That brings us into Science and the scientific method, which often comes to the foreground in these conversations, often in a very polarizing way. I think we might agree that the scientific method is proven to be a pretty powerful way of approaching problems. And we may even want to privilege that method in certain circumstances. But I also think that accepting these premises doesn't excuse the scientific method from all its difficult history and the wreckage that lies in its wake. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

The Challenge of Decolonizing Ourselves

Anthony tackles the work of decolonization from a settler perspective, taking responsibility for the role we settlers play in the colonial project. Once he has laid the case for the legacies of the Enlightenment and their implications in colonialism, he acknowledges how challenging this change in ourselves can be. Humbly, he admits that he sometimes finds even the small steps difficult, but the work will require more than small steps. Decolonization is about opening ourselves to entirely new epistemes. He explains,

If we are going to decolonize ourselves, decolonize our thinking, decolonize our institutions, we are going to have to look critically at: What did the Enlightenment give us? And what did it take away? And what does it hold that works in favour of continuing colonial practices? If we are going to decolonize, we have to be more open to different ways of seeing the world. This is not the first time this has been said. Feminist thinkers

have been talking about this for decades, that women's perspectives on the world are different from men's. Some feminist theorists say some of those are irreducible differences. How do you square the circle of having two irreducibly valid ways of looking at the world?

What are we going to do about that? We can say that the gender conversation is perhaps a little more open, because there's lots of talk about gender, sex, sexuality, within the frame of modernity and postmodernity – interesting insights. But when we move to decolonization and think about Indigenous ways of knowing that, for all intents and purposes, are rooted in an entirely different experience, and therefore an entirely different knowledge base...As I've said to some of my colleagues, at the very least, even if we are not willing to give up our own particular paradigm and way of being in the world, at least we have to grant the possibility – and this is soft-selling – the possibility that people who have successfully existed on these continents for many *millennia* know something we don't.

If we're talking about decolonization, there's a history we should be talking about. We have to get off of the fur trade and the railway and we've got to talk about a much more complex and sophisticated history of the Americas. And that would even start by noting that America is a European term, and it ain't what the people who lived here called it. If we are going to talk seriously, there are baby steps in decolonization and then there are the big epistemic ones. We can all start by at least acknowledging that this place we call Canada, that we call North America, are imposed nomenclature that sit beside others. And for many that's a huge step, that's like going across the chasm for some. And sometimes it is for me, and I have to remind myself. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

As I think about this chasm that decolonizing summons us to cross, I wonder about identity and authenticity. What does it mean to stay true to oneself, while rejecting coloniality, a system that has so deeply shaped the way we have formed as a society and as individuals? What does one's true self really mean, once we have stripped away the colonial circumstances and systems that are so deeply engrained in our ways of thinking, knowing, being, and belonging? It's not a question of settlers decolonizing in order to become Indigenous. That would be impossible and inappropriate. We cannot erase what has been done, where we are from, how we arrived here. Then, how do I reclaim my own ancestral identity, the pre-colonial sense of what it meant to be Irish and Scottish, before the British or the Vikings or anyone else invaded my peoples' ancestral homelands? And how can I belong to that way of being, to that identity that no longer exists in this contemporary time? Or is it about recreating a new identity, somehow knitting it to my ancestral knowledge – what has survived of it – and carving out a way of being and belonging apart from modern day colonial systems and practices? Perhaps there needs to be a transitional space, before we are able to completely dismantle the colonial project to replace it with a new world, a transitional space in which one's sense of identity and belonging are liminal, suspended, and dynamically emerging, all at once. This liminal space would allow us to move between past and present in order to imagine our new selves and to create a decolonizing futurity, while simultaneously living a decolonizing present. Is this my task as settler Canadian?

Who Does the Work of Decolonization?

I ask Anthony about the role of settlers in decolonization and he responds,

I think it's a bit like some of the other conversations that go on around equity. People who have enjoyed the privileges of colonialism and coloniality and who want a change, it is incumbent on us to start doing that work for ourselves. And we can't go and ask the

Indigenous people to tell us how to do it, because frankly, this is not their work to do.

Now, alongside that – and you asked me last time and I thought about it – that doesn't mean that Indigenous people don't have a role to play or can't participate in the project of decolonization, but it's not incumbent on them, I think. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

In my reflections after this conversation, I regret that I didn't probe deeper into the notion of "people who want a change." I'm curious about what that distinction says about settlers who do not want a change. Will they become obstacles, resisting change efforts by settlers engaged in decolonizing work? If so, how does Anthony imagine that playing itself out? Or is this question a pointless exploration because, as Dr. Friedel, a nēhiyaw-Métis professor, with whom I took a course as part of my doctoral studies, advised me, there is no point in wasting energy and burning ourselves out trying to convince people to do this work. Focus on the people who already want to and are learning how to do this work for change (Friedel, 2018).

The Sweet Spot

I interrupt Anthony at this point to take him back and probe a little further about something he said. I say to him,

That moment of men knowing when to approach women and engage with them. I've been struggling with that in my own decolonizing work. When is the moment that's appropriate for me to approach my Indigenous colleagues and neighbours and try to start building a better relationship with them or simply start engaging them in some kind of conversation about decolonization? I've received some criticism about the timing of that – too soon, too late. You know, "Why didn't you invite us to this conversation from the very beginning?" or "Why haven't you done your work yet?" Sort of implying, like, "Go back and figure your crap out before you ask us to come and contribute." So, I'm

struggling with that. And I wonder what your experience is. How do we find that sweet spot, when it's the right moment in a relationship? (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Anthony responds by sharing his own experience of research in which he and colleagues developed what they call the disrupting interview, which borrows from the decoding the disciplines interview (Pace, 2017; Middendorf & Pace, 2004). "The Disrupting Interview as a process whereby two academics on the research team interviewed a third colleague about a bottleneck that reinforces colonialism in their discipline" (Mooney & Miller-Young, 2021, p. 5).

Um, the piece, for our own project, [a settler collaborator] and I had done our thing, and then [another settler collaborator] joined us and we did some more stuff. And we talked about, like, we can't keep doing this work by ourselves [all settler scholars]. Like, we felt we were totally appropriate to at least start the work on our own, and then we were going, "No, no, no. This is going in a place, we can't do this alone." We brainstormed some [Indigenous] colleagues that we thought might be interested and then, I think we decided we would approach [an Indigenous colleague] first. And so, some of the calculations we did, I mean this is the calculus: first thing you need to know is that people from equity-seeking groups, particularly Indigenous faculty, because they are underrepresented in the professoriate, are already overworked. So, our first cut after we brainstormed, was well, that particular person is doing things *everywhere*. So, probably we don't want to go and ask that person because why would we want to put that person on the spot? So, maybe that was wrong. I mean it wasn't malicious. We are aware of that issue and we're not going to participate in it, to address it. I didn't know [the Indigenous colleague] we approached particularly well. [One of our settler collaborators] had already had some contact with her and there was already the beginning of a relationship there. So, I think

that's key; I don't think you can just show up. You know, like first contact, and say "hi!" – I think there has to be something there before. Whether that's more deliberate or just sort of connecting and talking about what you're doing. If there's interest, then go; if not, that's fine. So, I think we realized that we couldn't keep going without having an Indigenous colleague involved. So, [our settler collaborator] had a relationship already started with [the Indigenous colleague]. So, we sort of built on that. And [the Indigenous colleague] was intrigued by our project and decided to come on board.

But, I do think we would be remiss if we did not say to people who are engaged in this to expect exactly what you've experienced, right? Someone's going to say, "Well, have you done the work?" And ideally you can say, "Well, we've been working on that." And that might open the door, right? Or not. Or it might be, "Well, why didn't you?" I think we have to say as a principle, we would not approach Indigenous colleagues until we *had* done some work and felt that going any further would be just replicating the problem. I think you have to be pretty genuine in that.

I don't know what we would have done had [the Indigenous colleague] not come along with us. I think we would have probably continued, but it would have been a much smaller project. We would have been very clear that this is settler work and this is settler knowledge, and this is what we are doing. I think your project then becomes much more around not generating necessarily settler knowledge to maintain coloniality, or colonial futurity, but rather it's the necessary work that we need to do to be able to open up more doors, right? I don't think it's a fail thing. If it's too soon, then it's too soon and we sort of have to rescale and refigure the work.

So, the sweet spot: you've got to know what a sweet spot is and know that there is one. But like, it's a game of darts. You're going to do your best, and if you get the bull's eye, yay! But ideally, you're going to be somewhere close. I think we always have to be kind to ourselves, if we are operating with good intent. You know, there's lots of damage out there. And not everyone is going to thank us for doing the work. Because, "Too late, too little. Good for you." I think we have to expect that. If we don't expect that, and we get a little hurt by it, then we have to go back and say, well, what did we expect?

(Transcript, July 14, 2020)

As I listened to Anthony, I realized my question about a sweet spot was perhaps naïve and revealed my white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018). I am aware of my desire not to offend. I want to do the right thing. I want to do this work in a good way, with integrity, to act within, what Ermine (2007) calls, the ethical space. However, I often feel uncertain and tentative. I worry that I'll make a mistake, botch my attempt, and/or do something I don't even realize is wrong or hurtful. But I'm learning that these feelings of uncertainty and discomfort are likely necessary to decolonizing my settler ways of thinking and being and to engaging in decolonizing teaching and learning in postsecondary institutions. These feelings of dis-ease are part of the process of being unsettled (Regan, 2010). And as I become unsettled, I need to move away from white fragility and move towards leveraging my white privilege in order to support, amplify, and contribute to decolonizing and Indigenizing efforts.

Anthony continues, with his reflections on the sweet spot,

Do we really want to be the settler saviours? No! So, we have to realize there's going to be a spectrum of responses. I like the idea of the sweet spot. And ideally, we'll be somewhere in there. But we've got to recognize there's going to be a range of responses

and there's no way of knowing necessarily in advance where you're going to land, but you should fully expect that there's going to be that range. Does that make sense? I don't think I've said anything other than: build a little bit of a connection beforehand, do it in good faith with good intention, and don't be affronted if you don't get the response you thought you'd get. And just understand that that's part and parcel of the game. You know, it's a difficult thing we're doing. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

In that moment, I responded,

I think that's excellent advice and, I mean, this project isn't meant to be giving answers or solutions, but I think a lot of people who genuinely want to engage in this kind of work would be pleased to hear that kind of realistic approach. This is difficult work. And those of us benefiting from colonialism are bound to make some mistakes. It's kind of inevitable. We have blind spots we are not even aware of until we come up against something really challenging and that reveals to us our ignorance. All of that is what we have to prepare ourselves for when we commit to do decolonizing work. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Anthony then draws on his experience of building a collegial relationship with [an Indigenous colleague], with whom he is engaged in collaborative research. He explains the disjuncture between genuine relationship-building, from which collaborative work can emerge, and the time-driven expectations of the institutions and research granting agencies that support such collaborations.

And one of the things I'm learning from [an Indigenous colleague] is the importance of relationship. Too often, in our own paradigm, relationships can be transactional. If we are really building relationships, that means we are not going in for Goal A, and, oh, I have

to do some small talk before I get there (facetious laughter). It really is building a relationship that, then, the work is part of. Not just that transactional piece of, you know, of breaking the ice. If we take that relationship building piece seriously, then, again, we do this work on timelines. You are on a timeline; I'm on a timeline. We got a grant; we've got to do things. The world we are living in, the institution has its own rhythms. And those rhythms are not always aligned with relationship building. And, you've probably sat on ethics boards, and you know, people want to do things and then they haven't done the time and then they say, "Ah, it takes so long!" Well, ya, it does take long, right? And none of our processes are set up to take time.

And [the research grant agencies] expect you've already done five years of relationship building even though you're saying it's a new project. So, it's just, it's one of those moments of disjuncture. But part of that shift is going to be, quite literally in the society we live in, can we get the money later or during or while we build the relationships? (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Decolonizing Teaching and Curricular Practices

As our conversation meanders, we get to the point of discussing three examples of decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy in Anthony's experience. In the first instance, he shares with me the changes he made to a comic books course in the English department, where he teaches. In the second example, he talks about the tensions he experiences when deciding whether or not to use a learning circle, as a way of Indigenizing and decolonizing his pedagogical practice. His third example arises from his work in the General Faculties Council By-laws Committee, where they re-wrote their by-laws and, with Anthony's urging, incorporated

some structural changes to ensure that their Indigenization efforts would endure beyond the particular faculty members engaged in this work.

Re-design of Comic Books Course Syllabus – Content and Representation

I want to give you two examples. I'll give you the teaching and learning one first, because you can use that right away. When I revamped my comic course and also a course on film adaptation. I started to frame the whole notion of the study of comics by integrating questions of the work of Indigenous people, particularly pictograms and petroglyphs, and drawing attention to our own location and thinking about Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park. And so, presenting as part and parcel of Scott McLeod's work where he talks about hieroglyphics in Egypt and China and so forth. So, trying to round out that global perspective by including Indigenous people, as always already engaged in proto-comic kinds of drawing. So, I would say that is an example of Indigenization, but it comes from a desire to decolonize more broadly and to put Indigenous people in North America on the same level as the more Eurocentric perspective of Egypt and maybe the more global perspective of China.

The other thing I did...in the FLC, one thing that was said was that when we Indigenize we make space for Indigenous people. And so, as I thought about that, if I'm going to decolonize my curriculum, I'm going to make some space here for Indigenous artists, Indigenous comics. So, that became a required text on the course: *Moon Shot Volume 1*. It's an anthology, it's particularly good because you get lots of different artists and creators. And then, I also used another kind of comic, one that presents a counter-history: *500 years of resistance*. I did that very early on. As you know, from curriculum talk, it's not just throw stuff into a course and stir, and now you're done (laughter).

Right? You can't do that! So, what I was trying to do was make space, literally, in the curriculum or in the syllabus. And then also integrate that question of, you know, incorporate as best and respectfully as possible, Indigenous kinds of perspectives throughout the entire thing (gestures a wide span of space with his hands). It's got to be more integrated than an approach of 'Well, we've covered that.'

So, that is an example of thinking through how I am going to change what I do in my class in order to truly make space for Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous material, and questions that are raised when we start to look more critically at ourselves. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Decolonizing Teaching and Pedagogical Practices – The Circle

I did, to some extent, [use a circle]. Sometimes it worked; sometimes it didn't. I have to say, I'm out on the circle pedagogically. Here's what I can tell you about using the circle in the university classroom. First, they're square. Second, they have rows. And third, they want you to put the desks back in the square, in rows. So, you've got 5-10 minutes that's gone reorganizing the furniture. And here's the other thing, if it's a moveable desk and you want them to sit in a circle, well, now they have nothing to write on (sighing, exasperated). So, the students are just like, "Do we need to know this?" (throwing his hands in the air and laughing). What they really want to know is, "Can I write it down?" (more laughter). Because what they are worried about is whether or not it's going to be on the final exam. So, here you've taken 10 minutes of your time, maybe on either end. If you are really lucky, 5 on one end and 5 on the other. You put them in a circle where they can't write anything down even if they wanted to. And they're sitting there, anxious, wondering if they are going to be tested on this. All in the name of Indigenization! I

mean, seriously, who wants to do that? So, I'm sitting there. I like parts of it. But, so decolonizing Indigenization. Let's get out of the rows and get some decent furniture we can move around. We have a room – I think there are two – one's in the library and the other one's in another building. And they have the desks that are on little rollers (Collaboratorium). We love those! We can make circles, we can make rows, we can do whatever we want and they still get to write [See Figure 1].

And here's the other thing, just thinking that through. Here we are with our tried and true Enlightenment-tested approaches to teaching which are linear, which are written, which are often in print. And then we put them in a circle, because we want to do the right thing, we want to Indigenize. And we say, now we're going back to oral culture. We know you don't know anything about learning that way but here we are. And the students are sitting there, anxiety-ridden. It's not that they don't like it. I know the students I do this with, they like it. They see it. But I also can hear them say later that they worry, like, "What am I supposed to learn?" Because they've been told everything they need to learn is going to be on a board, or on an overhead, or online, or a PowerPoint slide. And you take them out, and say, well, actually, if we're really going to go down that road, you're going to have to listen and you're going to have to interpret this for yourself and you're going to have to make meaning. And that meaning may not come today, and it may not come later. And guess, what, I'm not going to ask you that on the exam. Because that's what they *REALLY* want to know – is it going to be on the exam?

So, there's your paradigm. That's where decolonization and Indigenization hit the road, come into conflict. Because we bring them through – children to postsecondary – we have brought them through a system that has already told them the best ways to learn.

And then they get *us* – let’s call it *us* – who want to do the right thing. We’re on board. We’re decolonizing. We explain it all to them. I do that! I tell my students, we’re going to do this in a circle because...I want to move this class into a different kind of learning space. So, we’re using the circle.

But then, I got to the point where some days I had to say, okay, today we’re not doing the circle. Stay in your rows, because I have to tell you things. But I tried to frame it in such a way that said, look, I know what I’m doing. You should know why I’m doing it. And I understand how this is different than what we’ve been doing. But, ya, you find yourself thinking all the time about what you’re doing. Because it’s not fair to the students to just show up and do stuff. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)



Figure 1. Image of the type of flexible furniture on wheels (Source of image unknown – provided by Anthony).

Legislative Work – Decolonizing and Making Space for Indigenous

As Anthony and I co-compose this narrative account, we return to the notion of time, moving backwards and forwards in time, telling and re-telling stories of experience. Anthony reminds me that situations can change rapidly and that a story told a year ago may be told quite differently now, with all that has happened in the intervening time. The story shared here captures a moment in time, based on Anthony's experience of his work with the General Faculties Council (GFC) By-laws Committee in 2019-2020.

My third example is one which I can say very quickly. We re-wrote our General Faculties Council (GFC) By-laws. I sat on the ad-hoc by-laws committee, writing those by-laws for the new GFC. Everything was just wonderful. We had some nice settler conversations about *Robert's Rules of Order*, and the role of the Chair, and who should be the Chair. Anyway, and then one day, I was just thinking – huh? Indigenization? Oh my god! And it occurred to me – it was a paradigm! We had looked at the by-laws of other universities in the province and a couple elsewhere. None of the examples we looked at had any provision for Indigenous representation. None of them had a land acknowledgement. And nobody had anything around academic committees that would look at Indigenization. And I sort of thought, well, why would they? *We* never thought about that either.

So, I wrote to the group and I said, you know, this is nobody's fault. Because we have looked around at what other people are doing and we've selected their best practices; we have inadvertently recreated a colonial system. And I said, we need to disrupt that. And we did. So, we do have a really good land acknowledgement. I mean, when it goes up you have got to have a look (spoken with enthusiasm, not arrogance. His eyes light up as though this was an unexpected achievement.) We even talk about how

the treaties haven't been observed and that we have to work on that. I'm pretty proud of it. We wrote up a draft and took it to a number of Indigenous colleagues in the institution and they did a re-write. We now have an Indigenization Standing Committee that will sit alongside other standing committees. We also have four Indigenous people represented to sit on GFC.

We recognized that Indigenization is an important enterprise. We made space and we will try to find the best way to get the right people there and not overburden them when they do get there. And, we have a pretty good preamble in the by-laws that talks about the relationship of the university and the GFC's work to Indigenize. It's a land acknowledgement, but it's more than that. It recognizes the work that's been done and what needs to still be done. And by the way, in terms of the four Indigenous representatives, that passed at GFC by 80 or 90 or 100 percent. So, it was not controversial at all. So, I'm pretty proud of that. It puts us in a good place. I wouldn't say that we have Indigenized GFC. I think what we've done is laid the ground, with a decolonizing perspective.

In this work, I was working alongside the Student Union President, who identifies as an Indigenous person, and was also advocating very strongly for not having just one Indigenous representative position on GFC. I engaged with them and ensured that this was something they were aligned with. I think that's how alliances can ideally work. We advocate for, and with their consent alongside Indigenous people. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Anthony reads a section from the By-laws Preamble:

We acknowledge that treaties have been broken and other commitments have been ignored entirely. Instead of a future together, what followed was division and discord, defined by genocide, residential schools, intergenerational trauma, economic and social marginalization, and unacceptable educational inequities. As such, we humbly accept our responsibilities of challenging systemic racism and discrimination, decolonizing the university, and building reconciliation. (University at site of research, 2020, p. 5)

He then says to me with a big smile, “Ain’t that great” (Transcript, July 14, 2020)? I want to be supportive, but something in me hesitates as I respond, “Ya, I mean, they’re great words. Let’s see how it plays out in action” (Transcript, July 14, 2020). This comment resonates for Anthony, as he responds,

Oh my god, you have no idea how inflammatory those words are for certain parts of our faculty. And I am very happy that I know that came because I intervened. I mean, I didn’t write that, I certainly put the question on the agenda. And that’s far beyond anything I ever imagined we would do. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

I then recount to Anthony my own experience in a Faculty Council, when I worked at a university, at a time a strategic plan for Indigenization was being debated. I recall witnessing some very tense moments in those meetings when some faculty members spoke out emphatically against the proposed policy. I can see how that controversy might continue for a while. I wonder how long it will take for hearts and minds to open and change. Anthony seems to understand this deep tension among academics. He concurs, saying,

Oh, that one’s going to be good for a while (laughter and hand raised to scratch head). I’m just, I am so proud of the councillors who approved that (referring to the new By-laws). I have to look back at the vote, but I’m pretty sure it was 100 percent. And I just

think that is amazing. You know, I've looked at some of the other land acknowledgements and they tend to be pretty benign. You know, we recognize that these particular groups, and that's it. So, when this came back after consultation, and then went to discussion, and went to vote, I was like, Wow! I am pretty impressed by my colleagues. That was July 2, 2020. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

I comment on the timing of that GFC meeting – just a couple of weeks before that particular conversation of ours. I mention that given what is going on in our world this year – with regards to anti-Black racism, the police murder of George Floyd in the United States, and the resounding world-wide response in solidarity with Black Americans and the Black Lives Matter movement – I wouldn't be surprised if this current political climate had something to do with swaying some faculty members on GFC towards supporting Indigenization and decolonization. Anthony responds in agreement, saying,

I think so. I think that's true. I think you're going to see some good things that come out of...there's going to be a presidential [referring to the university president] advisory committee established. And I have some hope that we'll see some more positive things come from this moment. And look what came of it! (big smile) (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Significant FLC Experience Revisited

It's another week before we meet again. In the interim, I note in a reflective memo to myself, that most of what we discussed so far has been quite theoretical, cerebral. I wonder about Anthony's emotional, spiritual, and physical experiences in the FLC. I will try to remember to guide our conversation in that direction when it feels right to do so.

This week we start by returning to the notion of a significant experience in the FLC. Anthony starts by mentioning the session on nomenclature that we discussed during our first meeting. But then he thinks of another reading that was also significant for him, a reading about relationship with the land. And then he interweaves the two: nomenclature and land as he talks about his evolving experience learning to do land acknowledgements.

Remember that I wasn't part of the whole FLC. I think there would have been other moments that would have been good. Had I gone to the sweat lodge, for example, or to the school, the Community College, which is the site of a former residential school, I think there would have been even more things there to talk about. But because of my schedule and other involvements, I wasn't able to go to those things. As a consequence, I think it truncated some of the other learning experiences. One of the reasons I come back to that particular moment [learning about the nomenclature] was because it actually was a really good one for me. (Transcript, July 21, 2020)

Changing Relationship with the Land

The other one was an article that we read, and I actually used it in one of our papers that's coming out. It's looking at Indigenous understandings of the land and the question of the relationship of settlers and Indigenous people and the different ways we view the land. Where the land is not just something that is separate from us in Indigenous understanding, but rather it is something we are a part of, it is part of us. And it's a much more reciprocal kind of relationship. I use both of those terms: reciprocal and relationship. When I was talking to you last time, I talked about paradigm shift that comes about when you've got, if you're really going to move into that paradigm, it

involves a very different understanding than I think we've been given through Western understandings between humans and the natural world.

Chelsea Vowel was speaking down at the Memorial Library. She and, Poet in Residence, Billy-Ray Belcourt, were doing a presentation down there. I went because I was a part of the FLC and some of us went to that. And one of the guilt-ridden settlers went to the microphone and said, "What can we do? What can we do?" And Chelsea said, "Well, you can give back the land, to start with." And you could visibly hear the gasp in the room. And then she said, "Oh, just joking. You're not leaving." But then she articulated the relationship between the populations of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada and the percentage of land that is actually theirs through title. Just outlining that even to move to them having the seven percent or eight percent would be a huge moment for the country.

Using the metaphor of "Give Back the Land," if Indigenous people had proper title proportionate to what their population is [relative to the non-Indigenous population] in the country [of Canada], it would be about seven percent. And currently about three percent of the Canadian land mass is Treaty Land [by Canadian law Treaty Land is under Indigenous stewardship]. Three percent is not very much. So, she was just trying to make a point. (Transcript, July 21, 2020)

I think to myself: Imagine if Indigenous people had 10 percent, that would be an improvement. But, actually, the land mass that is now Canada was 100 percent Indigenous before colonization happened.

Flowing from that, a colleague of mine was talking. He has a cabin in British Columbia and he doesn't anticipate that it will remain in his family. So, he looked at whether it

could be returned to the Indigenous people around there and discovered there's no process. Like, we don't even know how to do that. So, even if you wanted to give back, you can't. It's not easy.

So, in terms of significant learning, that talk was an outflow of the FLC and led to further discussion, revealed the problematic of how...you know, I've shifted from the notion of an Indigenous way of seeing the land that we are part of, that it is a part of us, that we are connected to it, to talking about it in almost exclusively Western terms. Who owns the land? How could I, under our system, transfer the land back to another system? Well, our system doesn't even think about that. The question would come up, "Why would you do that?" It's one of those ideological moments where, you have to know that when people say, "Why?" It's such a blind spot. (Transcript, July 21, 2020)

Anthony's story about a colleague trying to give back the land where his family owns a cabin reminds me of my own grappling with my relationship to land. Where is the land to which I belong? I am not technically a land owner; I rent an apartment on land owned by settler Canadians. But, I'm often thinking about where home is for me, in all these years I've been living and working as a nomadic academic. Where will home be for me once I finish my doctoral studies and, hopefully, find stable academic work that will allow me to put down roots in one place. And, beyond the question of ownership, I want to be in reciprocal relationship with the land where I live. I want to know deeply, in my bones and in my breath, the rhythms and changing seasons of the land where I make home. And when I say reciprocal relationship with 'the land,' I mean with all the human and more-than-human beings who live in the place where I also live.

Nomenclature and Land Acknowledgements

I looked at the date that FLC session [FLC Facilitator] lead about that article on nomenclature, and it was September. So, it was very early on in our FLC. Because, as I said before, so many people struggle with knowing...well, everyone knows you're not supposed to use the word 'Indian,' although I do know some older folk who still use the term 'Indian.' Talking about the use of 'First Nation,' 'Aboriginal,' 'Indigenous' all that – that's all there.

But, I guess in thinking a little more about that moment in the FLC, one of the things [the FLC Facilitator] also spoke to was the difficulty of getting the right understanding of how to do a land acknowledgement. And there I don't mean the relationship to the land, but rather how and whom you acknowledge. I guess I've learned, through all that, the sometimes difficult relation between different nations, because it's all about who got there first and how. And who stayed. You know, there's a whole history presented there that had hitherto been invisible, invisible to me as a settler, not invisible to the people who lived there. All of this history is invisible to settlers until, unless you're talking about this in class and you're talking about these issues.

You know, my friend [a long-time collaborator] found it very difficult when trying to do the right thing; you know, she would step on toes inadvertently. Well, how come you're mentioning that and not this? And, the thing is, she was learning. And, I think this goes back to the question around people making mistakes. You've got to be ready to make mistakes. You may inadvertently say something you didn't mean to or acknowledge something differently than perhaps expected. Even if you have the best of

intent, those are moments where you humbly accept that you may have made a mistake, you try to make amends, and you try not to do it again.

I will say along those lines, though, because I started trying to do land acknowledgements when I came back to teaching in Alberta in 2014. I don't do it at the beginning of every class; I do it at the beginning of the course. I was really surprised that a student said, "Thank you so much for that. I really appreciate that." And I was like, oh! Okay! I mean those are rewarding moments. I hope I've gotten more comfortable and competent around land acknowledgements and realizing that the emphasis is not some sort of recitation, although in a hurry it could become that, it's more about your own relationship to the land and to the people who have lived here for millennia.

So, I've tried to adapt and continue to adapt that in my new role as a leader of faculty. So, when I talk about myself in that role...I mean there are two or more reasons that I do it this way. But one of the reasons is kind of what I understand a bit about how one might approach things from an Indigenous perspective. So, I talk about myself as following in the footsteps of a number of other people. You know, I'm not the first. And these people are a part of the land and have become part of the history of the land. So, you know, some people have been around for a while. I think it's really important, one of the things that I've learned, my way of thinking about self – after exposure to Indigenous thinking – is the importance of situating oneself in relation to those who came before. That those people were also situated in relationship to the land.

So, I'm trying to make land acknowledgements more than just, you know, we share the land. But if it's going to be really an acknowledgement, it's got to be personal and situated. And, all existing in a Western framework of, "Don't take too much time"

(laughter). “Okay, that’s good. That’s good. Can you make it quick?” (laughter)

(Transcript, July 21, 2020)

Anthony’s practice of naming who came before him in this place reminds me of an assignment I did in Dr. Florence Glandfield’s course on A Curriculum of Community, during the first year of my doctoral studies. I created a collage, on the scale of a double-sized bed, that represented my academic family tree, tracing back to many of the professors, classmates, colleagues, family members, and friends who have contributed to my development in my academic journey up to that point in time (See Figure 2). As part of my class presentation of that project, I invited Dr. Glandfield and classmates to write their names on yellow papers I had cut out in the shape of leaves, in order to add themselves to my academic family tree. I designed the tree branches and roots to continue beyond the boundaries of the paper, in order to show that this tree is continually growing and expanding, as my academic family grows.

What is Indigenization? And What are Settler Roles in It?

Anthony and I then move into a discussion about Indigenization and settler roles in it, as a parallel and in contrast to the discussion we had about decolonization in one of our previous meetings. Anthony recounts,

I was talking to my friend last week and said this question had come up and she said, and I thought it was a really good way of thinking about it. She said, decolonization is going to be taking things out and Indigenization is about putting different things in.

Whose job is it? On the Indigenization front, I think if we’re going to be respectful and see it as, first of all a relationship, and second, one that has reciprocity, then I think we need to move carefully in that, ideally together. But, then when I sit down



Figure 2. Julie's academic family tree (2018).

and I think about that on the ground, and I think about my own courses, I think the problem that we quickly encounter is, well, do I have to wait, then, as I add *Moonshot* to my comic book course? I mean, I think it's important to talk to Indigenous colleagues, if you have them, about materials that they would recommend. I think inviting, if they have time – you don't want to burden them – but if you have Indigenous colleagues who would be willing to come and speak to your class, I think sharing the space is really important. And, if you are going to use Indigenous materials, you always really clearly

situate yourself as a settler, so you're not trying to explain things, but rather you're trying to understand it from the world view we are all familiar with.

I think if you say, well we have to wait until we have approval from Indigenous people. And this came up with GFC, and I said, well, this is what we've been telling Indigenous people for centuries – just wait. So, I don't think we can wait. I think you want to be careful, you want to do it respectfully. You want to be certain that when you are taking up Indigenous materials, that you are taking them up as a settler perspective, and trying to interrogate what that means. I think it's similar when you are dealing with texts that are written for women, by women, or queer texts. That doesn't mean that your heterosexual class can't read those texts. They've probably never even seen a gay text. So, you've got to start somewhere. You've got to do it the right way. I'm not expecting them to read it the same way I do, but I also can situate myself within that culture and allow them to look at it from outside and also, where are the points of connection? I think that is really important. (Transcript, July 21, 2020)

Stories of Experience through Artifacts

At the end of our third meeting, I invited Anthony to bring an artifact from his FLC experience to share at our next meeting. I explained that an artifact could be any object of significance to him, a piece of his own writing from that time, an article or book they read as part of the FLC, a photograph, etc. When we met for our fourth conversation, Anthony emailed me three artifacts:

ARTIFACT 1: A piece of his own writing *Wondering on the Prairie/Wandering in Italy* that he wrote about his experience of a road trip with colleagues to find the Majorville Medicine Wheel.

ARTIFACT 2: An academic article by de Oliveira Andreotti et al. (2015) Mapping interpretations of decolonization in the context of higher education.

ARTIFACT 3: An academic article by Cruikshank (2012) Are Glaciers ‘Good to Think With’? Recognising Indigenous Environmental Knowledge.

Anthony then recounted a story of the road trip he took with his collaborators and others out on the prairies. They received an EDGE Grant [from the Educational Developer Caucus – a professional network in Canada that was created as a part of the STLHE] for a cross-regional collaboration to do a disrupting interview. These funds allowed two collaborators from Ontario to travel to the location where they met with Anthony and colleagues. As part of their four-day collegial exchange, they spent a day in a rental van driving around south-eastern Alberta. They drove to Blackfoot Crossing, where they met with Elders and asked for directions to the Majorville Medicine Wheel. That day, many things did not go according to their grant proposal plans, but Anthony found the experience significant. He described the many attempts they took turning down one road or trail, and realizing that was not the way, turning back and trying the other possible trails. They spent what seemed like a long time looking for a landmark, an ancient cairn, that was perhaps not meant to be found, or not easily, anyway.

As I listened again to the recording of this conversation, I wonder: is Anthony’s road trip story a metaphor for settlers engaged in decolonizing and Indigenizing our teaching and curricular practices? The road ahead does seem uncertain and unclear. When we take any steps forward, we often need to turn back and try another path. We are not entirely clear what we are looking for. Is it something ancient AND something to build for the future? Is it in the present? How will we know when we get there? Will we ever get there? What does the journey teach us?

After silently considering my own wonderings, I then turn to my computer and looked up Majorville Medicine Wheel on Google Maps (see Figure 3). I have not been to this elusive medicine wheel, but I have driven along the major highway through that region, not realizing I was passing by such a significant, ancient, historic Blackfoot site. That drive, along Highway 1, offers stunning views of the prairie landscape, wide open blue skies, rolling hills and grass lands, vast prairie fields, mostly cultivated for grain and cattle ranching, and periodically marked by oil pumping jacks.

Months after Anthony's and colleagues' epic road trip, the group wrote individually and collectively about their journey to find the Majorville Medicine Wheel (Anonymized Authors mentioned in Anthony's story, 2021). When the article was published, I read it, keeping this conversation with Anthony in mind. I was captivated by the decolonizing methodology of their project and the decolonizing writing style they used in the article. It is an inspiration and I feel somehow connected to these colleagues, many of whom I have actually met, either as colleagues in higher education, through the national network of educational developers (EDC), or through an international network for the scholarship of teaching and learning (ISSoTL).

Emotional Impact of the FLC Learning Experience

Once Anthony has briefly explained the relevance of the other two artifacts – articles he read and found useful in his learning about Indigenization and decolonization, I steer our conversation towards the emotional impact of his FLC experience. He tells me,

I think for me because the way my experience intersected with the FLC, some of the big affective moments, I didn't get to experience. The moments that others have talked about having a significant emotional, affective impact on them, I wasn't able to be a part of. I

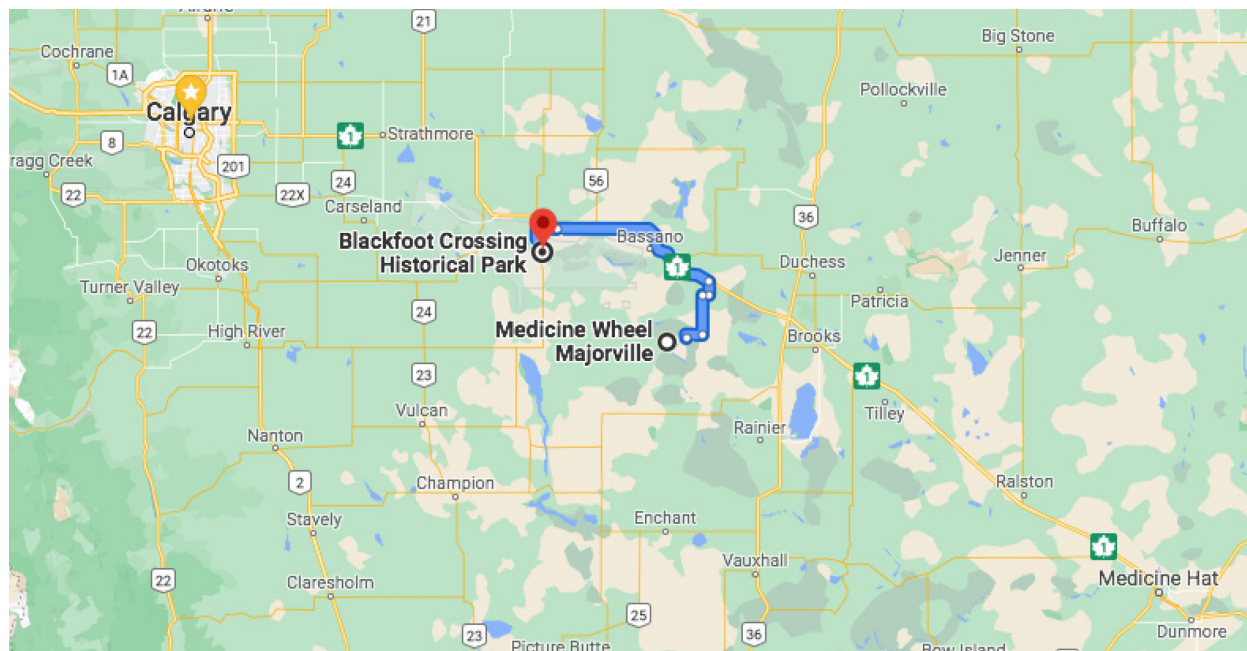


Figure 3. Google Maps image roughly situating Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park and the Majorville Medicine Wheel.

didn't do a sweat lodge. I didn't go out to the former residential school and interact with the Elders there. Those were in the second term and I didn't get a chance to do those [because of a conflict of commitments to other aspects of work].

What about since then? Have you done things of that nature?

So, I think if there's been any cost to this [FLC experience and Indigenizing/decolonizing learning journey], it's, I guess, sort of, very carefully and tentatively walking around the edges of what would be a different paradigm. And, when I talk about paradigm shifts...I was talking to another friend on Tuesday about this. I said, you know, I've been thinking a lot about this, but thinking and also feeling. For me when I moved from a kind of functionalist view, a view of language as transparent, and objective, and what we might identify as a modernist worldview, and made a shift to a more subjective, interpretivist, poststructuralist view. That was a really really difficult shift for me. Like, I was saying to her, I went for a couple of weeks when I actually

didn't talk, because I felt there was no point in talking. Everything had already been said. Everything could be deconstructed.

But, when I said that I didn't know if I had it in me to do another paradigm shift, it may have appeared to have been a statement of privilege in that, oh, isn't that nice that you have a choice. And there is that. But, I was thinking about the personal, emotional, affective, and political pieces, commitments that come with it. It's one of the reasons one might want to do code switching and one of the reasons code switching might be a transitional moment between, because, you know, you can't just go into another paradigm. When you shift to another paradigm, you don't just say, "Well, now I'll think about it that way!" (body language and tone of voice Pollyanna and mocking). It's ontological, right?

So, insofar that such movements are volitional, that is that we have some choice about such shifts. And, of course, that idea retains sort of, anachronistically or perhaps residually, more accurately said as residual belief in a free, autonomous, liberal subject. As if I *could* choose. You know, I hold on to that subject for important reasons. I think as an educator we kind of always have to hold on to that. There are different ways of seeing the learner, the learning subject, within Indigenous ways of knowing. So, this is big. You know, I'm not sure – again, recognizing all the layers involved in this, including the privilege – I'm not sure it's somewhere I want to go.

So, maybe, so, I haven't got to that point. So, what has the FLC done? Well, the FLC provided me with opportunity to, not surprisingly, the focus on the cognitive, which by the way I have lots of skepticism about, but, you know, it has been cognitive, right? In certainly, shaping of politics, in terms of the importance of decolonization. And how does

one Indigenize – to the extent that one possibly can appropriately do so? Understanding education as an important arena where social change can be and has been shown to be generative in terms of real change.

But, ya, long term, lots of things will come from this. Re-thinking my teaching, the syllabus, my commitment to decolonizing and Indigenizing, as much as possible, the actual institution. That's really important to me. Policies are nice, but you don't get anywhere if you don't change the institutional frameworks in which decisions are made. Which is why I was so adamant about what we did on our GFC. Because if you don't change the structure, once you're gone, it's gone. I hold enough of the structuralist view to know that structure is a good place to make change.

The FLC was a kind of a focal point that has since led to other things. Emotionally, ya, obviously, I'm more – and I'll put it in scare quote for your transcript – “sensitive.” A little sensitivity can go a long way (laughter). It's all part of a path. If I was doing my own memoir about all this, I would say the FLC was a focusing, focal kind of point that generated a whole bunch of other things. But, as for the big ‘aha’ moment – I mean there were a couple ‘aha’ moments – but what I think it did was it created a kind a base from which to move forward and act on a number of different fronts. And I'm pretty happy with the number of different fronts I've been able to act on and effect some changes.

(Transcript, July 31, 2020)

Closing

I invite Anthony to engage in some meta-reflections about our research conversations and the co-composing of this narrative account. I send this task to him by email, so that he may consider these questions on his own, outside of our Google Meet sessions. Specifically, I ask,

- Could you write about why these stories were significant to you?
- Why you chose these particular experiences and not other experiences to share?
- And were there stories you didn't share, that you chose to keep silent?
- If so, you don't have to say what those were, but it would be interesting to have your reflections on that choice process.

Anthony responds in writing, in the form of a letter to me:

Dear Julie,

Storytelling involves selection: which stories to tell, which to leave aside. I chose to talk about these experiences partly because they were the ones that changed my teaching practices and because I hope that these stories show how it is possible to work for change on a number of levels—the micro-level of the classroom, the department level where hiring occurs, and the institutional level where policies are made. These are all important ways to intervene, especially when even the possibility of making change seems overwhelming.

I think the challenge in telling these stories is that while they are told by me, they are really the result of collaborations and team work but the ‘personal story’ tends to exult the “I” who tells. I am proud of the impact that the FLC had on me and I am also proud that I can identify where changes have happened as a result of being part of the FLC experience. I want to share positive stories so that others will try that too. I hope that in telling these stories, it’s clear that there are no simple answers; it’s all complex and contingent. I think I also told these stories because they helped me map out my journey, one that continues. For that, I am grateful to you, Julie, for this opportunity. I appreciate it greatly.

What stories didn't I tell? So, I didn't talk about "other" stories—such as the one where I accompanied an Indigenous colleague and the FLC coordinator when she confronted the University's senior administration about their public response to the Colten Bushie verdict³³. I didn't speak about what I perceived as the administrators' responses, which ranged from the tearful to the uncomfortable, to my colleague's impassioned call for the institution to account for the impact that their public statements had on Indigenous students and faculty. The statements were patronizing and colonial. My colleague had sent out an email to many allies to attend this meeting in support. I did not tell you that only the FLC coordinator and I, as I remember, answered that call. Only the two of us bore witness to her words. I did not tell you how in disgust, I predicted nothing would change as a result of the meeting. And, that nothing did---at least immediately. Nor have I spoken directly about the resistance among some of my colleagues to Indigenization and to decolonization--although my responses bear the traces of that resistance. These are stories that evoke shame about my institution and make me at least in part complicit with the structures I have talked about changing. Shame is the flip side of the pride I mention above. Often shame emerges when we encounter what Deborah Britzman calls "difficult knowledge" and perhaps I could have talked more about that difficult knowledge rather than focus on the celebratory stories. But, I wanted to be a champion of the FLC approach and so chose those stories. As I write, I wonder if

³³ Colten Bushie, an Indigenous man from the Cree Red Pheasant First Nation, died at 22 years old when he was fatally shot by Gerald Stanley, a White, settler-Canadian on Stanley's farm in rural Saskatchewan. Gerald Stanley went to trial for murder and a jury who appeared to be entirely White, settler-Canadians, acquitted him. This verdict was met with outrage from Indigenous communities and many Canadians alike, as it highlighted the systemic racism within the Canadian legal and judiciary systems.

queer theory, and its theorizing around shame, could be a useful tool when thinking about how we choose the stories we tell. I'll leave that for you to contemplate.

Thank you, Julie, for this opportunity to reflect and to write about a topic about which I care deeply.

Sincerely,

Anthony (Transcript, October 19, 2021)

Chapter 6: Narrative Account Co-composed with Molly

This narrative account is based on a series of research conversation held in 2020 and 2021 with Molly (assigned pseudonym). The narrative moves back and forth between reflective writing and accounts arising from transcripts. Text appearing in italics signifies Julie's reflective writing.

Introducing Molly

Molly is a settler-Canadian who grew up on what she describes as “bald-headed prairies” in a small-town in Western Canada, where she spent much of her childhood outside, riding her bike, playing and roaming through vast prairie fields, across the railroad tracks, and along the creek. As a school teacher turned university Education professor, Molly had been exploring decolonizing and Indigenizing practices for several years prior to her FLC experience. She participated in the first cohort of the FLC on Indigenization held during the 2016-2017 academic year. At the time of the FLC, she was revising two courses that she teaches in the Bachelor of Education program at the university – an Indigenous Perspectives course and a Social Studies Curriculum course. Since the FLC experience, she has developed an ongoing relationship with Grandmother Doreen, an Elder in one of the local communities where Molly lives and works. Through this relationship, Molly continues to develop both her personal and professional ways of knowing and being, which inform the ways she engages in Indigenizing and decolonizing her teaching and curricular practices.

Beginning in the Virtual Field

It's been a few years since Molly and I last met. I remember her fondly from my time working as an educational developer at the same university. She participated in a number of programs that I facilitated. I admired her work then and I am delighted that she is one of the

professors who volunteered to participate in my doctoral study. I'm looking forward to reconnecting with her through this project, despite the fact that our connection must be remote and mediated through the Google Meet app, in order to observe COVID-19 social distancing and travel restrictions.

Motivation to Join the FLC on Indigenization

Once we have settled into the Google Meet session, sorted out the technology, clicked "record," and gone over the consent procedure for the study, I invite Molly to think back to the months leading up to her FLC experience on Indigenization and ask her what the impetus was that led her to apply to and join the FLC.

She starts by telling me about her aunt, a settler who lived and worked in New Zealand, who was a significant influence in Molly's life. Molly recounts,

My aunt lived in New Zealand and spent a lot of time fostering and cultivating relationships with the Maori. She was a radio producer for Radio New Zealand. She actually died quite suddenly from a brain aneurism. And then ended up having a *tangi*, which is a Maori funeral and burial. And so, just sort of that experience with her and the legacy that she left, continued to inform or shape my own decisions around how and who I wanted to be, both personally and professionally. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Molly then moves her reflections into the near past, in her professional world.

I brought in and tried to integrate some Indigenous ways of knowing and being, as a classroom teacher, actually. And then, coming to the university in 2014 as a Sessional [Instructor] and then 2015 as an Assistant Professor, having the institutional narrative around Indigenization, and the opening up of professional opportunities, like the FLC, I just wanted to engage myself in as many opportunities, to understand more deeply

Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Being in the Education Department, we have a responsibility, and I would say an obligation to be informed so that we might help our students to navigate our world in a good way, in terms of, if we are coming from that colonizer or settler perspective. So, I would say the FLC was one of the first opportunities I saw to really dig into some of the larger conversations and have that facilitated. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

As I listen to Molly trace back over experiences and values that shaped her decision to join the FLC on Indigenization, I am particularly curious about the story she shared about her aunt. I wonder to myself how a settler in New Zealand came to have her funeral and burial ceremony in the Maori tradition. I respond to Molly by saying,

I don't know a lot about what they've done in New Zealand, but it seems to me they've gone a lot further with decolonizing and Indigenizing than Canada has. Just the fact that a settler could have a Maori funeral is remarkable. I mean, I can't imagine that happening in Canada, to have an Indigenous funeral for a settler. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Nodding her head, Molly replies,

Oh ya, they [New Zealand] are miles and kilometers ahead of what we've done here. But still, it was a really really big deal [referring to her aunt's Maori funeral]. It's a huge honour. And that was in 1995. She was an incredible ally and someone who just was engaged and built those relationships. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Settler engagement and relationship building with Indigenous people would come up over and over again in Molly's and my conversations over time. But, before we explore Molly's experiences as a settler engaging relationship building with Indigenous people, she and I talked about the importance of bringing our personal selves into this work.

I was struck by her emphasis on her personal life when she specified who she wanted to be both personally and professionally. When I tell her how interesting I find it that this personal element is where she started telling her story of her FLC experience, she responds, I just don't know how policies can be implemented successfully without that personal connection, that relationship, that experience. Not in a sustainable way and not in a way that people don't just see it as oppressing the Whites (laughter)" (Transcript, September 29, 2020).

I join Molly in laughing at how White people, a group of which we are both a part, can feel so threatened by policies to Indigenize the academy. I explain,

I'm doing my PhD in Educational Policy Studies, but if we're going to make institutional strategic plans at a policy level, what does it really take to implement them in a good way, with integrity, and as good allies? I think it is essential that we connect it to our personal experiences, worldviews, and belief systems and try to draw connections there.

And I think, in a context like the academy, which is an institution that has prided itself for centuries on intellectual rigour, going to a personal and affective or emotional place in our development as educators, it's asking to shift the way we think about policy. This is not just about checklists and accountability. It is about accountability, but not in the institutional sense that policies are often implemented in universities. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Molly jumps in to add, "Yes, exactly. And it requires a very different way of being, as you mentioned. It can't be prescriptive" (Transcript, September 29, 2020).

Indigenizing Sabbaticals

I concur, saying, “And everything in writing. The written word aspect of it” (Transcript, September 29, 2020). This comment must spark Molly’s thinking because, she moves our conversation forward into present time, and explains,

I’m in the middle of trying to get my sabbatical application written. I was asked by a couple to work with them and do some curriculum development. So, they offered me tobacco and broad cloth, you know? And it’s like, how do I capture that in a “letter of support” for my sabbatical application? I have another colleague who is putting a letter together based on that. I just wrote to her and said – do you mind putting it on letterhead? The colonizers like that (laughter). And she was like, okay, I’ll start the letter off: Dear Colonizers, (laughter). Perfect! That’s awesome (hearty laughter) (Transcript, September 29, 2020).

It’s simple things like that. I found it was a bit of a dichotomy. I think it’s more than a dichotomy – it’s having to still be “accountable” to the colonized world. Where the institution claims to be “decolonizing and Indigenizing,” but in reality, in the day-to-day practices of the institution, it really hasn’t changed much. Where I’m talking about Indigenous ways of knowing, and yet I’m needing to get an Elder to write a letter for me. You would never have someone write a letter for you. You know, they offered me tobacco to help them with a project. So, explaining that in my sabbatical application, and the importance of what that means.

I’m feeling that I’m having to legitimize that way of knowing, that that’s a real thing to do on your sabbatical, to “spend time with Elders” (motions air quotes). It’s a different way of doing research. For me to map it out ahead of time and say I’m going to research

this whole process, and interview the Elders, and da-da-da. It's really contradictory and not really in the spirit of what needs to actually happen. My goals are really: I'll see what happens. (Transcript, October 13, 2020). And a year later, this is still where I am...in the "I'll see what happens." (Transcript, October 6, 2021)

I think I understand what Molly means. The university is asking professors to Indigenize teaching and curricular practices, but we're still working within colonial systems and procedures, with colonial values that determine what kind of knowledge counts and what ways of being are legitimate. The way towards Indigenizing the academy requires decolonizing our ways of being as an institution, our ways of being in relationship within the institution, and our ways of organizing and communicating our academic work. I wonder how the university expects educators to learn to Indigenize while still being subjected to colonial bureaucracies and protocols. Policies indicate a will to Indigenize the academy, but the academic systems through which such policies must be enacted remain unchanged.

It dawns on me that this incongruency – and that's generous – this active obstruction to Indigenous ways of knowing and being is, in fact, what Indigenous people within the academy have been experiencing all along. How can Indigenous people be themselves and honour their own ways of knowing when they have to comply with the colonial bureaucracy, the colonial hierarchy, the colonial pedagogy, and the whole colonial academic system?

When we were co-composing this narrative account, Molly added that this 'active obstruction' "is really it. In some instances, it is really overt and in others it is subversive" (Transcript, October 6, 2021).

Significant Experience in the FLC on Indigenization

When we pause naturally in our conversation, I take a sip of water and bring us back to Molly's FLC experience, asking her to think about a significant experience she recalls from her time in the FLC on Indigenization. Without hesitating, she names the sweat lodge experience.

I mean, certainly the sweat lodge was just one of those amazing experiences. It was so cold out, as well. It was touch and go. Are we going to do this? It was so wintery. It was November and around minus twenty-ish, minus fifteen. It was cold! That contrast was amazing because it wasn't like that inside [the sweat lodge]. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Then, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, with longer pauses, Molly continues,

I think, it's interesting to be in such a sacred experience, a spiritual experience *with colleagues*, with some colleagues that you don't really know that well. And to hear their experiences of it was also quite interesting.

I mean, I just love a sweat. I think it's one of the best things I'm able to do for myself now. I just thought this is what we need to be doing as an institution. We need to have our own sweat lodge. And have our students, our Indigenous students have an opportunity to run their sweats or have Elders within the local community do that on a regular basis for students and faculty. I think that's another step. That's kind of getting ahead of ourselves (big smile).

It's very stark. You come out and it's snow on the ground. It's very cold. There's a fire going. But it's kind of like, alright we've got to get changed quickly and get warmed up. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

I ask Molly what she was wearing for the sweat. And then a back and forth of short questions and answers ensues about the clothing and transitions from inside the sweat lodge to outside and over to the building where the FLC members had their change of clothes and where a feast was shared later that night.

M: Um, good question. I'm pretty sure as women we were required to wear a skirt. [A FLC facilitator] was trying to push a bit around the gender norms in terms of some of the protocols. But, you know, you kind of have to...there's a balance with that. Ya, so I was probably wearing this grey-ish cotton skirt. It soaks it up pretty good.

J: Light clothing. Just one layer. And then, into -20 degrees in that!

M: Yes. So, wooh!

J: And was it a long distance from the sweat lodge to the nearest building where you could enter?

M: Ya, I mean, a couple of minutes' walk for sure. It wasn't *right* there. But it wasn't super far either, from what I remember.

J: And did you have a winter coat and boots just outside the lodge to put on?

M: Oh yes. So, it was like, okay, bundle up and go change.

J: Because your sweat lodge clothes would be drenched in sweat?

M: Oh yes, drenched. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

I'm curious about these physical aspects of Molly's experience, and I am also wondering how she felt during the sweat. I wonder what the spiritual significance of this sacred ceremony was for her, if any. So, I probe in that direction, asking her to tell me more about that odd feeling she mentioned having because she was engaging in a sacred experience with work colleagues. She responds,

I mean, one of my really good friends, I knew that him going in was going to be, for him, very anxiety-inducing. So, I was worried about him as a friend and also as a colleague. And then, another colleague, at the beginning, because they close everything and it's pitch black. And it doesn't matter what part of the day it's in. I mean it was night time. But inside it was pitch black. My poor colleague didn't know that that's what was going to happen and she really had an adverse reaction. And she ended up having to leave quite quickly because of that.

So, that was, like oh, kind of surprising. And also, I was a bit annoyed, to be honest. It sounds terrible, but I was like, "I'm ready to do the sweat, people! Can we just get ready? Everybody get your whatever out, so we can just do this!" (laughter) So, I wasn't very empathetic at that point, around that. I guess, a good learning experience for [the FLC Co-facilitators] and even one of the Elders, who was helping run that experience. Just to prep people. I don't know. I wouldn't have really thought about it, necessarily. But, it would be good to say, by the way, if you are claustrophobic or have any issues with complete darkness in a small space.... Just so you know. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Molly goes on to tell me that she had done one or two sweats prior to her FLC experience of the sweat lodge, and she acknowledged that that prior experience prepared her for this FLC experience. She knew what to expect and recognized, in our conversation, that that was likely not the case for everyone in the FLC. She tells me that the sweat itself lasted about 90 minutes, and it just kept getting hotter and hotter inside the lodge. So, I ask her to tell me about her own experience, her thoughts and feelings inside the sweat lodge during that 90 minutes. She recounts,

I think just really enjoying the time to just be, cleanse, and purify. That was just awesome (big smile). It always is for me. It was fantastic. And trying to be in that moment. By the fourth round, it was getting pretty hot. They weren't going easy on us, in terms of, oh, you poor little settler. You know? So, it was really good in terms of that. But it was really quite HOT! It was like okay, you know. Covering my face with the towel because when it's that hot just breathing in the heat is quite intense. It was good though. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

As I listen to Molly describe the intensity of the heat, I am reminded of my own sweat lodge experience, when I was in my mid-20s, just outside of Winnipeg. I recount that,

I've done a sweat once before, many years ago. The way it was set up was we were sitting on the floor and the fire was in the middle. And there were two semi-circles. I was in the second row, so I was a little bit further away from the heat. I also experienced this very intense heat that actually caused me to start crying. I cried for a good portion of the experience. Not from sadness or pain, but a cathartic weeping. And I was grateful to be in the second row, to be honest, to not be right up close to the fire. I am a redhead and I have really sensitive skin and extreme heat is actually quite hard for me, physically. And you know, I burn in the sun very easily. So, I'm a Nordic person. It was intense! But I came out of it feeling that something had released in me. Kind of like, when you say cleansing, it felt like something had just flushed out of me through all my tears and sweat. It was wonderful. I was so grateful to have the experience. And I think it lasted about an hour. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Molly responds by recounting the teachings that had been shared with her about the meaning of the sweat lodge.

My understanding and experiences I've had with some of the Elders sharing is that really is what the intention of the sweat lodge is about. It's actually mimicking our mother's womb. It's dark and it's warm and the sweat and the water, right. And so, it does offer that opportunity to cleanse and also have this rebirth. It can be really really powerful, for sure. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

She tells me about what happened after the sweat, after the faculty members had changed into dry clothes and were warming up in the building. They gathered for a feast and later debriefed their sweat experience. This debriefing conversation was facilitated by [a FLC facilitator], an Elder and his two children, as well as his mother, an Elder from the same Indigenous community.

Molly explains that she remained quiet during the debriefing because it had been such a positive experience for her and she could hear that a number of her colleagues had found it difficult. Molly shares with me that,

[A colleague] talked about her experience; I felt really badly for her. I know it was very upsetting for her. I really didn't say that much [during the debrief] because I felt that other people needed or wanted to share their experiences and needed to have that time to debrief more than I did. I guess looking back it was similar to what you were pointing to before. There were different levels of experience. Because of that, I wasn't able or willing to go as deep into my own experience as I might have with other colleagues or community members that had had an experience with a sweat. I don't know if that makes sense. I didn't want to be like, Oh, look at me! It was awesome (smiles). It wasn't awesome for them. It was more their needing to process. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Moving more deeply into her own sweat experience, Molly tells me about the relationship she has developed with Grandmother Doreen.

I've done, like, quite a number [of sweats] now. Quite a few. I have done maybe three, in my little bubble with my cohort in the pandemic. And quite a few before that.

I have the real privilege of spending time with Grandmother Doreen. She's an Elder who advises our faculty and sometimes runs some sharing circles and things like that, more specifically with Nursing. But anyway, I was able to connect with her and have been a part of her group and community for a year now. I guess it's only been a year; it feels like much longer (smiles). So, generally, we have a sweat every month or couple of weeks, at least, we did before the pandemic.

It's an essential part of my life. I'm really missing it right now, actually. Just because it is the chance to reset and remind myself of priorities. And reset boundaries and think about my intentionality in my life and re-prioritize things. So, it's been super helpful for me. Ya, ya, really great.

All the being. It's just that reset and reconnecting with myself. And okay, breathing. And just that you know physical release of the sweating, cleansing, purification. All of those things are just so essential in my own wellbeing. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Molly explains that she first met Grandmother Doreen, a Cree Elder who works at the university, after her FLC experience. I ask her if the FLC had any influence on her decision to connect with Grandmother Doreen and she responds,

I think, just maybe not directly. But I think through the FLC there are lots of different opportunities to connect with Elders and community members. And I recognized in those opportunities the potential for having Indigenous ways of knowing and being more

integrated into my personal and professional life. And that is really important to me. I really need to seek out and find a community group that I can join for sweats and for these practices. It's not just a one-off. So, that certainly was part of my FLC experience, that this became more of a priority and brought me back to that intentionality.

There is no separation of personal and professional me. I mean, there are in the words. But, it's not separate. This is just how I am and how I want to be in the world. And I'm also hopeful that my students see that and understand that, like, you don't just get this from reading a book. You actually have to participate and engage in these experiences. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

Relating her own learning to her students learning returns the conversation to the core of faculty professional learning, and that is to improve teaching practice in order to improve student learning experiences. Since Molly has seamlessly made this connection between her own learning and what she hopes her students will learn, I probe a little further... "I like that you make the connection to your students, that this is hopefully modelling for them another way of being, especially for your settler students. But I wonder, too, about your Indigenous students, who have varied backgrounds" (Transcript, September 29, 2020).

Molly responds,

Ya, I mean, I was really fortunate, 2 years ago, I had three self-identified Indigenous women in my class. I got a lot of feedback from, especially, the one student. She was and is very outspoken and strong. You can't, there's no BS-ing this. Not that I would anyway, but I also knew that I'll get called out. She'll totally call me out if I'm claiming something or if I identified something incorrectly. But I also knew that based on some of the conversations we had in the FLC...you know, I was teaching an Indigenous

Perspectives course at the same time and a Social Studies Curriculum course, as I was participating in the FLC.

And all three of these, no sorry, two of the three of those students were in both of those classes. So, we had an immersive and integrative experience. We have it scheduled so that all the students who are in the Social Studies Curriculum course in the morning, for the three hours, are also the same students in the Indigenous Perspectives course in the afternoon. So, we would have opportunities, generally speaking, to have full-day experiences.

But through the FLC, I was very cognizant about not relying on my Indigenous students to save me, or for them to be teaching the class, or for them to be teaching me about teaching the class, or what's right, what's wrong, protocols, things like that. You know, I had to be very intentional. Obviously, the one student who was really outspoken really felt that because, as the students were leaving at the end of the first class, she kind of turned with a little smirk on her face (nodding head upwards), and said, "Ya, this is a good class." You know? (laughter) And then, she said, though, "Thank you for not making me the token Indian." And I was like (head gives a big nod up and down), Okay, there it is. You know? I just felt, okay, ya, that's really a good starting point.

And throughout the time we just kind of grew together, but also, we certainly had some blow-outs related to practicum. So, it's very like a woven relationship we had throughout the semester. But ya, I was really honoured to learn from them [Indigenous-identifying students] and also very aware that it's not their job to do the heavy lifting. It's my job. And I need to model that, for the other students in the room. It's not just, oh, go and ask the "Indigenous student" (motions air quotes). You know? No. We have a

responsibility for our own learning and unlearning. They have enough that they are responsible for. And sometimes it is about getting out of their way or doing my work to help remove barriers or blockades so an Indigenous student or group of students can thrive. So, ya, it was a really powerful experience learning alongside them. It's pretty special. (Transcript, September 29, 2020)

I'm struck by the importance of teaching to both settler and Indigenous students in the same classrooms and how different their learning needs are around Indigenizing and decolonizing curricula. I appreciate Molly's emphasis that, as settler educators, or simply as educators, it's our job to do the heavy lifting, to unlearn our miseducation (Dewey, 1938) about Indigenous histories, and ways of knowing and being, and to learn the truths about Indigenous experiences in colonial Canada.

Metacognitive Reflections on Research Conversations

Over time, our conversation moves into a metacognitive reflective mode, in which Molly shares with me how our previous conversation has supported her thinking about what she's done up to this point and where she wants to continue growing in her Indigenizing and decolonizing learning journey. When I ask her what her learning goals are and where she is with them in this moment, she responds,

I guess, it's really focused on decolonization and Indigenization, in hopes of reconciliation, if that's possible. So, I feel like it's an endless pursuit, really. It's like teaching. It's never done. Focusing on spending more time in community and in ceremony. Obviously, working with Elders and Knowledge Keepers and bringing that to the university and to the virtual classroom. But for me, it's really about, I want to be in relation with the land. I want to learn a lot more about the traditional ways of being, the

plants, the medicines, all of those really important understandings. And just creating and developing a better sense of the curriculum of the land. And eventually, I would love to just be on the land for the fall semester with my students, and not be at the university. Helping them to understand that everything we need and want to learn is actually ... (long pause) ... outside (gesturing with hands to convey the idea of wide open space). You know, I think I'm slowly getting there. I feel like I'm continually making steps towards that.

One of the things I am working on is to create a curriculum for field school on the West Coast. I'm working with a friend from years and years ago. She's the executive director, now, for an NGO. So, we've been talking about doing something like this for a long time. And so, really focussing on Indigenous ways and Elders and you know, having our students from the university go there and do that.

And the other curriculum development [project] is here, with local Elders. And so, they are creating this giant campsite, camp ground. They just started this year. They have 54 sites that are marked out. What they want it to be is a culture camp. So, students with disabilities, specifically, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, coming there to understand traditional ways, but also K-12 students coming there to take part in learning from the land. And then, hoping to have our teacher candidates join in some way, whatever way makes sense. And they're hoping to have like 15-20 teepees, like this big conference centre. It's a massive project. I'm super excited about that opportunity. The Indigenous land is interesting; it's sort of U-shaped. So, this part [of the culture camp] is right outside of a nearby small town, along a river. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

I remember that the FLC on Indigenization was by application from interested faculty members. Individual motivation and interest would have to be quite high for a faculty member to apply to a FLC that would meet regularly throughout an academic year and involve significant time commitment to participate in both seminar-style discussions of readings and land-based, experiential sessions, often with overnight stays away from home. It makes sense that the FLC attracted professors like Molly, who were deeply committed to the work of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation, and who would continue this work in an on-going way, well beyond their time in the FLC program. I am inspired by Molly's up-coming curriculum projects on the West Coast and land near her university. I also feel excited for Molly, for all that she is learning and for the contribution that her personal and professional learning will make to the growth and development of so many teacher candidates with whom she will work over the coming years.

Seminar-style Component of the FLC

As our conversation returns to the FLC, I ask her to tell me her experience of the seminar-style part of the FLC program. She shares that,

There were a couple of very assertive voices in our FLC. And, so, I found that I didn't contribute a tonne in the seminar piece, just because the personalities and the voices were so big (laughter). So, that was kind of interesting. And just my own, how I usually am in a larger group is that I like to sit back and listen and really just get a sense of what's happening and all the players. And kind of learn, feel the pulse. That's generally how I am, not super participatory. I sort of wait and see, initially.

So, there were a couple of people who, that's just their personality. So, at times I felt they pushed the conversation in a particular way, with a particular focus. One colleague

brought up a lot of conversation around intersectionality around and within BIPOC [Black Indigenous People of Colour]. So, there was that, which was super interesting. And also, you know, because there was such a range of people's understanding of Indigenization or Indigeneity or however we want to phrase it, I felt that that conversation was two or three FLCs down the road (laughter). Let's just reign it in.

I really appreciated [the FLC facilitators] approach, where you don't feel like the horrible student if you didn't read the chapter or the article. They were like, please just come. Don't feel you can't come if you haven't done the reading. That was a very small thing but really important and generous because you're still learning a lot from the conversation. So, I think that was really helpful.

I think, too, that, [the FLC facilitators] were talking about readings and where do you want to go next, after we had met two or three times. And some people wanted to go this way, and other people wanted to go that way. I mean, they are amazing facilitators in order to try to keep things going in an open way, where I think people felt they were learning, obviously, and being heard, I think, in general. But, ya, I think it was tricky for them [as facilitators].

I think that's what stands out for me, mostly from the seminars. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

I hear diplomacy in the way Molly relates this experience. I wonder about the parts of this experience she is censoring, out of respect for her colleagues. She gives me a sense that the group dynamics may have been difficult because of the diverse learning needs and personalities in the FLC. I decide not to ask for more details, out of respect for Molly's restraint. Maybe that part of the experience just wasn't that important to her. She has emphasized throughout our

conversations that the experiential component of the FLC, and experiential learning on the land, in general, is the most important part of her learning journey to Indigenize and decolonize her teaching and curricular practices, as well as herself, in her personal life.

As we co-compose this narrative account, we reflect together on the agility that Molly witnessed in the FLC facilitators when navigating diverse individual needs within the group. This part of Molly's story reveals how challenging some of the conversations around Indigenization can be among settlers learning from different starting points.

Recognizing the experiential emphasis in Molly's story, I steer our conversation back towards the land-based, experiential component of the FLC. She starts by reiterating this priority in her experience.

I think that was the most powerful part of the FLC, for sure. And essential. And I'm learning this more and more and more, is that unless you are on the land, unless you are experiencing, or introduced to ceremony, then you are not going to actually develop that really deep and rich understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Because then it's just from a book. Not that that's not important. Obviously, as an academic, I'm all about the books and the reading. *And*, understanding the land is so essential to traditional ways. And so, I think that is where, certainly I learned the most, and I think that others did as well. And, that, I would encourage even more in other FLCs. But at the same time, then we're looking at resources, in terms of funding (shaking her head, regretfully). So, there's that aspect. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

At that point, I chime in with my own views on the question of cost, saying,

But that's a pedagogical question as well as a financial question. When you think about faculty development, of course it's cheaper to just do a one-hour lunch-time workshop,

and offer it fifty times in a year to 500 faculty members. Of course, that would be the cheaper and more time efficient way to do it. But what do people get out of that?

Probably not much. And they're probably not going to remember it three years later, to talk about it in a research study, like you are now. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

As I read this part of the transcript now, I hear the frustration in my own words, frustration at how fiscal decisions so often prioritize what is cheapest and fastest, while sacrificing quality. This colonial mindset, of speed and efficiency in order to maximize profits, is, for me, a myopic approach to education. It's the factory model of teaching and learning, or what Freire (2006) referred to as "the banking concept of education" in which teachers deposit their expert knowledge into students, who are passive receptacles, in which teachers and students function in service to the colonial project. This factory model of education seeks to produce as many outputs as fast as possible, so that those outputs – read student graduates – can start becoming productive – read profitable – members of society – read the economy (Freire, 2006; Pinar, 1992). This model for teaching and learning may cost the least in material resources, and may make the most sense in a capitalist, neoliberal Western economy. However, the human costs of this model are both colossal and unquantifiable in monetary terms. Aoki (2005) proposed the inspired curriculum, describing it as "a quality of body and soul intertwining in their fulness" (p. 359). Building on this understanding, curricula that is inspired intertwines the relational, the emotional, the intellectual, the physical, the creative, and the spiritual. These aspects of human development are essential to human life, to living and thriving in the world, to sustaining ourselves as a species, and to responsibly fulfilling our role in relationship with the land – meaning all the human and the more-than-human beings.

Molly responds to my comments about fast and efficient faculty learning with a balanced perspective, saying,

Ya, and maybe [lunch-hour workshops] are one part of it. Especially for people who are *really* new, that might be a way to invite them in, that may be less overwhelming, perhaps, for some. Ya, and you know, the language and what is this all about, kind of. But, ya, I don't know that you can do that work in a really rich way without the experience on the land. In fact, I know one cannot do this work without it being experiential. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

Opening the Bundle

Molly and I discussed this section of writing in depth and over numerous conversations. We understand that Bundles are sacred and living, and we enter into this conversation carefully and cautiously, acknowledging that we are non-Indigenous settlers and we have not been given the rights to speak about or teach about Bundles. Nevertheless, we have chosen to share this part of Molly's story because it was such a significant and powerful experience for her and because it highlights the work of building respectful, trusting, and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and individuals. As we learn together, Molly and I have redacted this story significantly, and iteratively over time, out of respect for the Bundle and Bundle Keepers, who are the rightful custodians of the Bundles and who can speak about Bundles.

As our conversation unfolds, Molly goes on to share her FLC experience of going to a local Indigenous community in the springtime. She tells me that they were taught how to set up a teepee and they had a tour of a former Indian residential school. And then, they were invited to participate in Holy Hand Games. For Molly, what was most memorable about this land-based

experience with the local Indigenous community was the opportunity to be present when the Elder and Bundle Keeper opened the Holy Hand Games Bundle.

Molly recounts,

We *actually* got to witness the opening of a Bundle. The person who takes care of the Holy Hand Games Bundle opened it and then we were able to play games with community members and our FLC. That was really incredible.

If you are the care-taker of a Bundle, it gets transferred to you, not always from ancestors, but the rights are transferred to you. There are some Bundles that are literally thousands and thousands of years old. When it's in your care, you are the caregiver of that. So, it's *very sacred. Very sacred.* And so, to be invited and to witness the opening of this Bundle was incredible. It is ceremony, a very important one.

It is important to note that I don't have the right to speak specifically about the Bundles. Only those who have the rights transferred to them to care for a Bundle can describe in detail what the rights and responsibilities are and what might be in their specific Bundle. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

When she seems to have brought her story to a close, I relate my own story of learning a little bit about Bundles.

I took a course as part of my PhD that was about teaching literacy in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit contexts. It was really cool. I remember one of our guest speakers, a Cree woman who came in to speak with us. Her talk was the first time I'd ever heard of Bundles or what they were. And she was so hesitant to even teach us about it because she didn't want to be disrespectful to the ceremony of the Bundle. She acknowledged upfront that she's not a Bundle Keeper, that the knowledge has not been passed down to her. And

she has a lot of respect for the Bundle, and she can only tell us so much about it without crossing a line, a line of respect.

So, I didn't learn very much about it, other than that it exists, that it's a thing. So, I've been curious about it ever since. And you're the second person ever to talk to me about Bundles. So, I'm very interested. But I'm also aware that it's a very sacred aspect of some communities' traditions.

As I reflect on what I said during that conversation, I hear a voyeuristic voice in my words, that I was not conscious of at the time. My curiosity was genuine, but perhaps inappropriate, since Bundles are so very sacred. Even those who have been bestowed responsibility for them, seldom speak about them. In conversations since, I have learned that Bundles are not only sacred but also considered to be living, and to be part of an oral tradition. When I learned this, I felt awkward and embarrassed about the writing Molly and I had done about Bundles. We have, therefore, gone back over this section of writing and redacted it even further, in order to say as little about Bundles as possible, and focus this section on Molly's experience. I do not want to give the wrong impression to readers of this chapter that it's somehow okay for settlers to talk about Bundles. This is a difficult line to walk, to honour both Molly's powerful land-based experience and to honour the sacredness of the Bundle.

In the early conversation Molly and I had about her experience at the Bundle Opening Ceremony, I commented that,

I think as Indigenous communities in these territories continue to revitalize their own cultural traditions and preserve some of their traditions, there are many members of their own communities who are not informed about these things. So, as a settler to witness a Bundle opening, something that maybe not even all the local Indigenous people have

seen, is quite remarkable. It really speaks to the relationship that [the FLC Facilitator] has built with the Elder and the community before that event happened with the FLC. What trust there must be in [the FLC Facilitator's] judgement and his leadership. It's a beautiful thing that he's done, really. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

Molly concurs, saying, "Oh, for sure. It really does [speak to that relationship building work]. Big time" (Transcript, October 13, 2020).

The emphasis in this section is the importance of building respectful, reciprocal, trustworthy settler-Indigenous relationships. Molly's experience of witnessing a Bundle Opening Ceremony and then participating in Holy Hand Games was made possible by what I understand were years of relationship-building work that one of the settler FLC facilitators had done with that particular, local Indigenous community. His relationship with particular members of that community was a gift to the participants in the FLC on Indigenization, a gift that Molly received, and then passed on to me by sharing her story of experience. I value that gift as sacred, and we share some parts of it in this written account with the hope that it will be valued and respected by readers, as a sacred gift.

Unsettling the Settler

As our second research conversation comes to a close, I invite Molly to bring an artifact to our next meeting, some object from the time she participated in the FLC on Indigenization that may represent her experience in a significant way. I explain that it could be any kind of artifact, such as a photograph, a piece of her own writing from that time, something she found or collected that had symbolic meaning for her. When we gather the next time, we start with her artifact.

By now it's late October, we are still holding our research conversations via the Google Meet app; the COVID-19 Pandemic continues. Molly begins our conversation,

I would say I had a more challenging time thinking about and finding something that was really powerful, only because, I would say, the in-person experiential parts were probably the most impactful.

But then I chose Paulette Regan's book *Unsettling the Settler Within*. And I think, really, honestly, just the title of the book is really powerful. Continually, I keep coming back to that notion that this is your work, Molly. There is and there has to be that disruption and unsettling process, I think, in order to really begin the decolonization work. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

I ask Molly to describe what it feels like when she is unsettled and she responds,

That's a good question. (pause) I think a lot of it is just around questioning my motives and motivation. Is it about me? Or is it about the Indigenous peoples I'm working with? Or am I doing this in the right way? Am I honouring the process? Am I honouring? So, a lot of questioning. This white settler, kind of, ahhhh! Should I be doing this work? Did I share too much? Did I give the right attribution to what I said or the story I offered? Things like that. And always that questioning (hands motioning a wavering, feeling off balance). Like there really is that feeling of, ya, unsettling. It's not like, oh, I know exactly what to do. And I know it's going to be received exactly in the way I intend.

Also knowing that every Elder, or Indigenous person, or Knowledge Keeper, or student, that I engage with, of course, is different and has different protocols and different ways of going about asking for things or offering things, or whatever it might be. So,

especially when I'm working with someone new or with someone in a new capacity, it's like, okay, I hope I don't fuck this up! (laughter).

It's a very important relationship to me. *And* a lot of times the Elders we work with have worked with the university for a while and worked with different people too. So, it's like, there's that pressure for me to honour them in the right way. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

At this point, I jump in and share some of my own experience of unsettlement.

I think for me, sometimes when I'm feeling unsettled, it's a moment of realization, after I've already made the mistake and I realize oh, that didn't go over well or that kind of shut down things. And I'm not even sure what it was I did, but I can feel that something I did wasn't right. And just the embarrassment of my ignorance. Because usually people are quite generous or forgiving. So, they don't make it blatant. But you can still feel that something has shifted and it's not as comfortable. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

Our conversation travels into our worlds as women encountering sexism. These have been omitted here because not all stories are meant to be shared publicly in a doctoral dissertation. As Molly and I continue to explore gender and sexual identity in the context of settler women engaged in relationship building with Indigenous communities, Molly raises the question of skirts and the expectation in some Indigenous communities that women wear skirts for ceremony. She says to me,

There's the whole skirt-wearing thing! I'm just like, do I *look* like someone who wants to wear a skirt? (facial expression communicates, 'No, definitely not').

I think, it depends on who your Elder is. Grandmother Doreen – I've been in lots of ceremonies with her. And so, I got lots of ribbon skirts made. I do now wear them in

ceremony. Because, part of it is how it was described to me. It's not about being feminine, necessarily. It's about the balance between masculine and feminine. And that the Creator, when a woman, or someone who identifies as woman, when you're walking through the grass, the Creator knows who you are because of the sound of the skirt in the grass. So, it's more about that, than it is about the skirt. Like it *is* about the skirt, but it's not about the skirt.

I've also been in sweat with Grandmother Doreen where there are way more women and only a couple of men. And so, Grandmother Doreen would say, if you feel comfortable, if you identify as two-spirit, if you want, you can go to the other side. And I was like, oh she's talking to me. So, I went to the other side. And it was totally fine. And if I say to Grandmother Doreen, that I want to be on the other side for this sweat, it would not be a big deal. In my experiences, it's becoming more open. Like, you go to whichever side you identify with. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

Moving Towards Reconciliation

What does this mean? I ask Molly to have a go at explaining the idea of 'moving towards reconciliation.' She responds,

I don't know. I think there's a lot around that. I think it's about...it's not just like, when I'm with an Indigenous person. It's also when I'm not. So, how I am and who I am, there are different opportunities to move towards a small act of reconciliation, whether it's using my voice against the new "recommended" curriculum for Social Studies – absurd! [referring to a new provincial curriculum that has been highly criticized and rejected by many school boards]. And, because I have that privilege of my degree and my position at the university, to make sure that that's heard and on the agenda. So, that doesn't mean

that I'm meeting with Indigenous peoples or interacting with them in order to do that, and yet I feel like that's part of my responsibility towards reconciliation.

And I guess, listening, just the act of listening with an open heart is what I've tried to do, when an Indigenous person is speaking. And try to really hear what they are getting at. And then, take that, and if that means you should really do that, but they don't say that. They just say, this is something to keep in mind. When really, they mean, do this! Make this happen, because I just basically told you how important it is. And taking their offerings to heart. And really honouring, with a good heart, what they've offered and what they've shared, their stories and their wisdom and experiences. And treasuring that and really trying to hold it carefully.

And just hopefully, the power of that colonized voice and experience is sort of muffled, so that we're listening to and lifting the voices of Indigenous peoples to inform what we need to be doing next. I guess this is circling back a bit, but just letting the Elders speak. I need to remind myself sometimes because I tend to, like, oh, and what about this? And this ties to this? And it's like, Molly, this is not that time. Their voices. Their voice. And just like, Shut Up Molly! Just let it be.

I think those are very very small things that might help in the process of reconciliation. I don't see that reconciliation is an end thing. I don't think it's ever going to be - Oh, we've done it! There it is! (hands in the air – pretending to celebrate) Because we're in relation and I don't think that's ever done. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

Relationship with Grandmother Doreen

Molly continues to share her thoughts on reconciliation through the lens of her relationship with Grandmother Doreen. I am keenly interested in her experience because,

throughout my doctoral studies, I have had a few experiences that have felt a bit like false starts at building relationship with individual Elders. Whenever Molly has mentioned Grandmother Doreen, she's shown great respect and appreciation for her and for their relationship. She's also shown me that they have a familiar rapport in which Molly can joke around a bit with Grandmother Doreen. This seems wonderful to me. And, I would go so far as to say that Molly lights up when she mentions Grandmother Doreen. I wonder what Molly has done that worked so well in building this relationship. She tells me,

It's just like with Grandmother Doreen, I'll be having a casual conversation, we'll be talking about medicine, and then all of a sudden, she talks about three different components that are in this medicine, that took her seven years to figure out from the Elder with whom she was in relationship. And so, I know that she's giving the gift of that to me. And it's my responsibility to pay attention and not just be like, oh that's nice. It's like, oh, ya, I'm picking up what you're putting down (smiles). And I don't have to say that. Right. Like, I don't have to say that. She'll know when, if I need to answer her or show her. Then she'll know and that will be part of the teaching and learning. Like, I don't need to say, oh, I know what you did there. Like, sometimes I will, just to be sassy (smiles).

But, it's paying attention. Sometimes, there's a few people around and she's telling a story. And it's like (motions a pointing finger) "You!" And I know, it's me. And another time, she'll circle back and say, oh, I noticed this (head nodding). It's like, yes, I heard you, I'm listening, I know. Sometimes, it's a test, actually. Like actually.

The first time I met Grandmother Doreen, she was doing some healing on me. This is a Wednesday. She said, what are you doing on Sunday? And I was like, whatever you tell

me I'm doing. And she was like, well, I usually don't offer this to people who haven't taken my introductory class, but if you want to, there's a sweat, and you can come to it. So, you need to go and find an assistant, who works for the Director of Nursing at the university and she'll tell you everything you need to know.

So, I was like. I have no idea who the assistant is. I don't even know where her office is. I couldn't find a phone number in the directory. So, I literally, like, the next morning, okay this is actually a test. Otherwise, why am I going to waste my time on you? So, I found the assistant and went to her office. And she was like, the Elder emailed me and said you might be coming by. So then, we met for coffee and I got all the directions and protocols. But, literally, it's a test. Because, otherwise, like Grandmother Doreen has hundreds and hundreds of people who want to spend time and learn from her. So, if you're interested, you better just... So, that was one layer of the tests. Like, are you willing to do a bit of work for this? How committed are you?

Ya, she's just amazing. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

As I listen to Molly speak with enthusiasm and humour about her experience getting to know Grandmother Doreen, I hear in her voice the genuine reverence she has for her. This enthusiasm, humour, and reverence from a settler Canadian in relationship with an Indigenous Elder is an example Molly shares of what it means to move towards reconciliation. I think to myself, 'Molly, I'm picking up what you're putting down.' What a gift.

Changes to Teaching and Curricular Practices

At this point in the conversation, I steer us towards Molly's post-FLC experience and ask her to describe changes she has made to her teaching and curricular practices as a result of what she learned in the FLC on Indigenization. She begins,

I think probably recognizing how actually critical it is to get my own students out of the university and on the land, doing. That's the most important part. To have heard my colleagues and through my own experience of being on the land and having those opportunities to experience some of the Indigenous ways of knowing and being, that that is critical. I, as a settler, am not in a place, nor should I be, to fully offer and facilitate those experiences. My students need to be introduced to and connect with Elders and Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous peoples. That is really critical. And us sitting at the university or virtually, reading texts, ya, there's a place for that. Of course, there's some foundational knowledge and some awareness and understanding that comes from that. *And*, you need to have these experiences so you can really see how what we maybe have read in a text is living out. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

It's about honouring [Indigenous community members] as humans, as people. It's not just, oh, my class is coming up, I better contact them and see if they can do this for me. I'm really trying to make sure that I'm touching base with them regularly because I'm concerned about them and that they know that. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

Then Molly contextualizes this approach for the COVID Pandemic reality, which is her teaching reality at the time of this conversation, saying,

In this COVID time, asking Elders, how are you? There is that relational commitment of caring for the Elders in our communities.

I was really fortunate, another Elder, from a local Indigenous community, was willing and able to come up and take the students out on the land near the university. But the challenge was – I mean it's not a challenge, well, I guess it is – it was just disappointing because not all the students felt like they could go because of their own

circumstances, whether they were living with grandparents that are at risk or higher risk [of contracting COVID-19], or some just getting sick, or having a [COVID] case at work that now they need to self-isolate. And then to the point where... by the time our last section went... Like, my class, how many went? I think there was 18 out of 23, which I thought was quite good. And then the other section, maybe just about half of the students. And by the time the next week rolled around, I think there was only 8 students out of 26. And, it's one of those things, we can't make it mandatory because some of the students aren't even in the city. [This was for] both the Indigenous Perspectives course and the Social Studies Curriculum course.

But then the other part of learning from the land is, because, recognizing that our block time is normally a three-hour class once a week. Well, I can't expect students to be attentive and online for that length of time. So, what we came up with, which I think is brilliant, is that they have to spend one hour a week in a nature spot of their choice and it's called learning on the land. And they document that and it's kind of like: what's happening in your spot this week? What's different? What's changed? Who is there, in terms of animals, plants? So, they do a weekly journal. That's also part of them getting to experience the land. And, I was like, out of any other time they need this the absolute most right now, just for their mental health. So, that was part of it, to literally force them outside for an hour a week. And I mean, quite honestly, if we ever actually get back to in-person [teaching and learning], I would incorporate that one hour a week outside, for sure. I think it's a very important task. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

I love this idea of continuing the mandatory one-hour per week outside on the land, even after the COVID Pandemic ends and classes resume to an in-person, in classroom format again. I

wonder if these teaching changes in Molly's practice would have come about had it not been for her own experiences on the land as part of the FLC on Indigenization and subsequently learning on the land with Grandmother Doreen. It seems to me this land-based learning has become a non-negotiable priority in Molly's teaching and curricular practice. I sense that is not the case for teaching professors who have not also experienced land-based learning themselves. It may not be the case for all academics who *have* had such experiences. But, I imagine that without such experiences, faculty members are unlikely to incorporate land-based, experiential learning into their courses. And, as Molly has asked in a variety of ways throughout our conversations: how can teachers begin to teach in this way without having these essential experiences themselves?

Closing: Molly's Musings

The stories I shared in this study were significant because they connected with how and who I was, as well as where I was both personally and professionally, when I was in the FLC. I have spent so much time in my life in books – reading about ideas and experiences and getting grounded in the literature. Whether this was for my undergraduate, graduate, or PhD “training.” I know and feel things differently now. We can live in the midst of stories and the experiences shared of others. However, I have come to know and have had my knowing reinforced by Grandmother Doreen that one has to “walk the talk.” There is no longer time to live in the shadows and the niceties and superficial support of decolonization and Indigenization. There's no room for this. Only action. And action means immersing yourself in land relational and experiential opportunities. You learn most through doing and through listening and observing.

I didn't share other stories because they did not affectively connect with me in the same way. I didn't share other stories because partly it could have (almost) been any other academic meeting. Certain people dominating, voices silenced, and the rhetoric continues. To be blatantly

honest, I'm sick of people talking the talk. I don't have the time or energy to think about these experiences any longer. I would say this also relates, in a superficial way, to why I kept other stories silent. They aren't worthwhile. Others are where they are in their own journey and they can continue in their academic world that is safe and really doesn't change much. I just cannot.

This narrative account was really interesting for me to revisit. It allowed me an opportunity to reflect and also reinforce my learning and experiences within the FLC experience. Stories, in general, for me, are a critical and important way to share. Stories are the ways we connect our experiences and have been a part of life from time immemorial. Indigenous Peoples were the first to communicate through stories and these stories have been passed down through generations. I feel stories are one of the most important ways of communicating not only my experiences, but the experiences of others.

Chapter 7: Resonant Threads

Narrative Inquiry Analysis

The narrative accounts presented in Chapters 4 through 6 represent the first level of analysis in narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). By drafting the initial narrative accounts based on the study's field texts, sharing these drafts with their respective research participants, and then entering into a co-composition process with each participant, I invited the research participants to transform into co-inquirers. Working alongside one another and alongside our shared stories of experience, we crafted the narrative accounts.

In the second level of narrative inquiry analysis, the task returned to me, to set the three completed and participant-approved narrative accounts alongside each other and think with them as a collection or three panels in a triad tapestry (Clandinin, 2013). Thinking with the three narrative accounts together, I searched for resonant threads that run through and across them (Clandinin). This search for threads that weave across the triad tapestry sets out “to offer a deeper and broader awareness of the experiences” and “to open up new wonders” (Clandinin, p. 132). I'm fond of the metaphorical tapestry and weaving of resonant threads that reverberate through “air and light, and time and space” (Sword, 2017, p. ix). Since ancient times, resonant sounds created by humans and the natural world have moved through bodies, lands, cathedrals, and cairns, whether in words, songs, or on the winds.

Thinking with Resonant Threads

While at this stage in many qualitative studies, the analysis might move into identifying themes that appear across the data, in narrative inquiry, resonant threads are not meant to reduce the narrative accounts to generalizable findings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The stories told and retold, lived and relived that appear in the narrative accounts were versions of John's,

Anthony's, Molly's, and my experiences that we told at that time, and that we co-composed into narrative accounts. These co-compositions offer a version of experience, as selected, told, and interpreted by each co-inquirer at a particular time and place, in a particular context – the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space – in the midst of our lives in motion (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). Wagamese (2016) refers to the power of stories in the midst of our lives, past, present and future, telling us that they

are whispered by the voices of our ancestors, told in ancient tongues, told in the hope that we will hear them. Listen [to] the echo of the heartbeats of those around us, our ancestors speak to us, call to us, summon us to the great abiding truth of stories: that simple stories, well told, are the heartbeat of the people. Past. Present. Future. (p. 104)

In this study, when John, Anthony, Molly and I translated our stories told into textual transcripts, draft narratives, and then interim research texts, we did not intend for these written accounts to be “reduced to positive fact,” but rather to capture a “nuanced, interpretive rendition. [...memories selected], shaped, and retold in the continuum of one's experience” (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 142) that will activate resonant frequencies, offering new insights to those who read them.

Resonance

I spent the summer of 2002 in Granada, in the southern region of Spain called *Andalucía* (Andalusia). While there, I visited the Alhambra, a medieval palatial city where Muslim royalty first lived, along with military personnel to protect the fort and the surrounding Moorish community (History.com Editors, 2018). *Alhambra* is an Arabic word meaning red fort or castle (History.com Editors). In this intricately carved stone palace, I came upon a room in which the ceiling was constructed of interconnected archways. Unlike most of the buildings on the grounds

of the Alhambra, this particular room made of stone archways was *not* intricately carved. The archways and ceiling were smooth and had what appeared to be relatively simple lines. As I entered this room, I noticed the voices of people leaving continued to reverberate clearly from across the room. The acoustics were astounding. I waited until I was alone in the room, and I began to sing, while moving about the space and listening to my voice resonate, up and over the arching ceiling and back to me. I stood in the sunlight that lit up parts of the room and then moved into the shadows, facing the walls, singing. I felt a profound peace of mind and a blissful, vibrant sensation throughout my body, as the sounds danced around and through me. A foundational tenet of Physics is that all objects (matter) have natural frequencies (Brubaker, 2022), including human bodies (Brownjohn & Zheng, 2001). Resonance occurs “when one object vibrating at the same natural frequency of a second object forces that second object into vibrational motion” (The Physics Classroom, 2022, n.p.). This understanding of resonance from the field of Physics translated into my physical body and my state of mind. The vibrating, resonating sounds filled me, and my mind felt an equanimity with all things and beings. I was tuned in to the resonance of those stone archways, and the physical space they formed.

Magan (2020) describes a similar experience he had in the Loughcrew Cairns, also known as the Hills of the Witch, located near Oldcastle in County Meath, Ireland (Heritage Ireland, 2021). The Loughcrew Cairns are the site of four Neolithic tombs that date back to 3,000 BCE (Before the Common Era), where ancient artwork etched onto stone has been preserved (Heritage Ireland). Magan tells his story of chanting in the Irish language while deep inside one of the caves at Loughcrew. He describes his experience,

Squatting there in the darkness, chanting away to my heart’s content, [...] I realised that the space was ideally suited for chanting, and I noticed that the sounds echoing at me

were different from those that had come from my mouth. They had a different resonant frequency, and I wondered if that was why these places were said to alter consciousness. [...] Altering resonant frequency can affect the brain and body, as well as the general surroundings. (Magan, p. 189-190)

Magan goes on to explain that a 1994 study in the chambers at Loughcrew, and other similar sites in Ireland and England, showed that these caves can sustain resonant frequencies of about 110 hertz, “which is the tipping point that sparks altered patterns of activity in the prefrontal cortex” (p. 191), causing a partial deactivation of the brain’s language centre while also activating the left side of the brain where emotions are processed. Magan explains that “the easiest way to create this frequency is by singing” (p. 191).

The significance of these findings, related to this doctoral study, is that words voiced at the right frequency may activate the part of the brain connected to mood, empathy, and social behaviour (Magan, 2020). In this study, stories were voiced, creating and transmitting sounds at particular frequencies. Granted, the research participants and I were not meeting in a Neolithic cairn nor in a medieval Moor palace, and the acoustics in a Google Meet video conferencing session are most likely not designed for such precise resonant frequencies. However, “words can be wedges that prise back the surface layer of thought and feeling, revealing a deeper truth. [...] The idea of resonance in language is something important in Irish” (Magan, p. 185) and likely also important in all human languages, in different ways. I understand this when I speak my first language, English, compared to when I speak my second and third languages, French and Spanish. Each language has its own pitches, cadences, and lyricism. I’ve been told by fluent English speakers in North America that I sound Irish when I speak English; Irish people do not have the same impression, but it says something about the way I speak English. Perhaps my

ancestral language resonates through my use of the colonial language that became my mother-tongue. First-language French speakers who are also fluent in English, have told me that I sound completely different when I speak French, from when I speak English. First-language Spanish speakers, speaking to me over the phone and, therefore, without any visual reference to my heritage, have asked me which part of Latin America I'm from, because they have found my Spanish accent indecipherable, and yet somehow Latin American. There is something going on in the sounds I make when speaking these three languages. While travelling on a boat off the West Coast of Scotland in 2013, a Scottish storyteller addressed me in Scots Gaelic. I replied in English that I do not speak the language and he responded, "Yes, you do. You've just forgotten it." This storyteller understood that my ancestral language had been passed on to me and still resides within me, even if I am not conscious of it or able to use it. I wonder about this form of resonance that reaches across time and space, passes from generation to generation, and is embodied in descendants, like me. I was born and raised at a great physical distance from my ancestral homelands; nevertheless, perhaps I carry the resonance of my lost or forgotten language³⁴ within my physical being.

While singing to the arching ceiling in that room at the Alhambra, I was not singing words of any language. I was singing melodies without lyrics. I wonder if I had sung in Arabic, the language of the people who built that palace, what resonance I might have encountered. Regardless, what I felt in the presence of those reverberations moved me physically and emotionally to a blissfully peaceful state of being. In ancient Ireland, "Druids and poets were all

³⁴ I understand that my ancestral languages – Scots Gaelic and Irish – have been lost to me largely because of English colonial rule that outlawed these languages for significant periods of time in Scotland and Ireland. Despite resistance in the form of such initiatives as "hedge schools" in Ireland, where the Irish language was taught and learned in secret, generations later, few Irish and Scottish descendants speak or understand either Irish or Scots Gaelic, especially those of us in the diaspora.

too aware of the power of sound, of how sounds can directly affect our bodies and surroundings” (Magan, 2020, p. 196).

Thus, as I searched for resonant threads within and across the three narrative accounts from this study, I tuned into any shifts in my emotional state and mindset that led to greater empathy and social-mindedness. I am interested in how resonant spaces and the resonance of words spoken, through stories told and retold, can alter our brains to make us more empathetic and inclined towards social justice and community wellness.

Tuning into Resonant Threads

In this chapter, I discuss five resonant threads entitled: 1) Ongoing Learning: Towards Empathy and Social-mindedness, 2) The Strengths of FLC Facilitators, 3) Epistemological and Ontological Dissonance, 4) Unsettling Settlers, and 5) The Urgency for Settler Action. In each of these resonant threads, I cite excerpts from the co-composed narrative accounts, allowing these textual passages to undulate in and out of my own interpretations or frequencies, in order to find resonance within and across the metaphorical sounds of particular stories of experience.

Resonant Thread 1 – Ongoing Learning: Towards Empathy and Social-mindedness

The experience participating in an FLC on Indigenization was unique to each of the professors with whom I engaged in this study, but one thread that ran across their stories of learning was empathy and social-mindedness. Molly, Anthony, and John shared stories of their personal and professional growth and the blurred space between the personal and professional, as they acknowledged their need to learn, engaged in unlearning and building new understandings, and applied their new knowledge to relational work with Indigenous communities and with their students, their colleagues, and the university institution where they work. The narrative accounts each presented an individual’s learning journey as an ongoing process and as oriented towards

greater empathy and social-mindedness, or what can be called relationality. The role the FLC played in the research participants' respective learning journeys differed, as each of them started their FLC experience with different prior knowledge and experience. They each identified learning about Indigenization and decolonization prior to their participation in the FLC and they each discussed how they have continued on this learning path since the FLC. For them, the FLC was a significant part of a longer, ongoing learning journey.

Molly described the FLC as “one of the first opportunities [she] saw to really dig into some of the larger conversations and have that facilitated” (Transcript, September 29, 2020). That digging into larger conversations took her to personal places that challenged her, sometimes evoking feelings of frustration and other times opening her to new possibilities in new relationships. She elaborated that “through the FLC there [were] lots of different opportunities to connect with Elders and community members” (Transcript, September 29, 2020). For Molly, connecting with Indigenous Elders and community members and being on the land were poignant and essential to the deep learning she experienced. In Anthony's case, he explained, “the FLC was a kind of a focal point that has since led to other things” (Transcript, July 31, 2020). He related that this focal point led to important impacts in his learning, saying, “I am proud of the impact that the FLC had on me and I am also proud that I can identify where changes have happened as a result of being part of the FLC experience” (Transcript October 19, 2021). Those changes were, at times, difficult for Anthony, leading him to question whether or not he had the energy to go through another paradigm shift and commit to all the far-reaching changes in his life and work that would involve. John also discussed the changes he experienced as a result of his participation in the FLC saying, “at some core place, through the FLC, I have experienced much deeper change to who I am and how I think of things. [...] I think the FLC

certainly helped facilitate that” (Transcript, July 23, 2020). Referring to the changes he made to courses he teaches, John talked about the FLC as sparking possibility and expediting a change process that he had otherwise been slow to implement (Transcript, July 23, 2020). John also spoke about the FLC sparking learning opportunities that helped start his more serious participation in Indigenization. He expressed these interpretations of his FLC experience while discussing which artifact he chose to represent the experience. He said,

[the artifacts that] made the most sense were things I have picked up since the FLC experience. That meant [...] a lot of learning opportunities that the FLC sparked. [...] I consider the FLC to be a starting point, a signpost in a journey through trying to take seriously Indigenous History, take seriously Indigenization at an institution like [the university at site of research]. (Transcript, July 30, 2020)

In this resonant thread, Molly, Anthony, and John each referenced the role the FLC played in their ongoing learning process about Indigenization and decolonization. That meant the FLC led them into deeper engagement and more concrete action within their teaching and curricular practices, as well as within their personal lives. At different points in their stories of experience, I was invited to journey with them as they recounted emotionally, physically, and spiritually challenging moments that pushed them past their comfort zones. In hearing their stories and working with them to make sense of their experiences, I too reflected on and interrogated my own learning experiences around decolonizing and Indigenizing my practices within higher education. I struggled to find my own story as I listened to theirs, because I had not been a part of the FLC on Indigenization, and up until my decision to pursue this topic in my doctoral studies, I had not been a part of any formal community, where I could learn relationally about this work. As I scanned what seemed like my isolated, individual attempts at ongoing

learning towards empathy and social-mindedness, I was compelled to ask myself: What are the places – metaphorical and physical – of resonance that inspire healing and wellbeing, that inspire people to act with compassion, to set aside habitual scripts, to work for social justice, to change narratives? How can I help to create such resonant spaces within my research, teaching, and curricular relationships, in order to draw out generative, just, and healing research findings, as well as individual and collective learning?

When I think with this resonant thread, the ongoing learning towards empathy and social-mindedness that three professors described makes sense to me. This is not to say they lacked empathy or social-mindedness prior to their FLC experiences nor prior to the experience of sharing their stories in this study. Social-mindedness was integral in motivating each of them to join the FLC on Indigenization in the first place. The ongoing learning that was reinforced by their respective FLC experiences was always oriented towards empathy and social-mindedness. This study did not undertake to measure these emotions and mindsets. What is meant by this resonant thread is that the journey towards empathy and social-mindedness is part of an ongoing learning journey.

In my experience as an educational developer facilitating FLCs, especially interdisciplinary FLCs, I have witnessed the sparks of connection and possibility that light up among colleagues in these learning community contexts. I have seen how the in-depth and facilitated exploration of the FLC's topic helps to focus participants to engage more fully in exploring it than they would have on their own (Mooney, 2018; Mooney, 2015). I have observed how a FLC cohort converges around their shared interest and either creates their own opportunities or seeks out additional opportunities to continue engaging in the topic, not just for theoretical learning, but also for action, as creators and emerging specialists on the topic

(Mooney, unpublished manuscript). And, I have noticed that once the FLC program has ended, how former participants point back to their FLC experience as a signpost in their ongoing learning journeys; sometimes the signpost identifies a starting point in that journey, sometimes the signpost is one in a series of signposts that mark significant moments of learning over several years or possibly over the span of one's life.

While FLCs are not the only educational development activity to create sparks, focus, opportunities, and signposts, they are among a minority of approaches to have such profound learning impacts over long stretches of time, and to engage ongoing learning. The stories shared in this study in 2020-2021 were initially experienced by John, Anthony, and Molly in 2016-17 or 2017-18. Between two to five years later, their FLC experiences are still significant and memorable to them. Moreover, they are all still engaged in the work that was either sparked or reinforced by their FLC experience.

That this particular educational development program was not only using a FLC format for professional learning, but also incorporating a combination of seminar-style discussion sessions with land-based experiences, in relationship with local Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Bundle Keepers, and community members, is particularly note-worthy. Both Molly and John identified their respective sweat lodge ceremony experiences as the most significant of their FLC experiences. Molly expressed the significance of the sweat and this land-based learning with Indigenous communities when she said,

I think that was the most powerful part of the FLC, for sure. And essential. [...] unless you are on the land, unless you are experiencing, or introduced to ceremony, then you are not going to actually develop that really deep and rich understanding of Indigenous ways

of knowing and being. [...] I think that is where, certainly, I learned the most.

(Transcript, October 13, 2020)

She reiterated the importance of land-based experience in another conversation saying, “I would say I had a more challenging time thinking about and finding [an artifact from my FLC experience] that was really powerful, only because, I would say, the in-person experiential parts were probably the most impactful” (Transcript, October 27, 2020). John also expressed this emphasis on experiential learning when he spoke about one of his significant FLC experiences saying,

It just kept ringing to me what the Elder said at the start [...] I was just sitting there with my fear of the social anxiety that I’ve always had [...] And so, the learning experience for me was so rich. And I think about it all the time [...] it definitely stands out, not only in the FLC, but in all my time at the [university at site of research], as something very, very valuable. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

John demonstrated the difference between his seminar-style experience of the FLC compared to his land-based experience in the FLC when he described the seminar-style portion as somewhat tedious and not the part of the FLC that stands out for him. He explained,

That part of it doesn’t stand out for me as particularly effective. That’s not what I’m speaking about when I speak about the dramatic change that I experienced. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

Inversely, Anthony remarked on the experiential part of the FLC that he did *not* have the chance to experience. He reflected that this resulted in him not having “big affective moments” in his FLC experience, saying,

the way my experience intersected with the FLC, some of the big affective moments, I didn't get to experience. [...] I didn't do a sweat lodge. I didn't go out to the former residential school and interact with the Elders there. (Transcript, July 31, 2020)

Thus, a resonant thread of ongoing learning echoes through the stories of experience shared by John, Anthony, and Molly. Reflecting on this resonant thread, I am left to wonder to what extent the land-based learning is important, or essential, for settler learning about decolonizing and Indigenizing. Each of the research participants in this study took up their FLC learning in their own, unique ways. Not all settlers have the privilege of access to land-based learning in Indigenous community. What does it mean for settler Canadian scholars to take up decolonizing and Indigenizing if they cannot access land-based, experiential learning with Indigenous Elders and/or community members? How might the FLC on Indigenization experience have been different had this land-based component not been possible?

Resonant Thread 2 – The Strengths of the FLC Facilitators

Pivotal to my accessing the site of research for this doctoral study was my pre-existing collegial relationship with one of the co-facilitators for the two cohorts of the FLC on Indigenization in which John, Anthony, and Molly were participants. This FLC co-facilitator was the contact person at the site of research who distributed my recruitment message by email to a list of FLC participants who fit within the inclusion criteria for the study. This FLC co-facilitator and I had previously worked together as educational developers in a Canadian postsecondary institution; I had, then, and still have a lot of respect for the way in which she practices educational development. She is a master facilitator, educator, and researcher. I've also had the chance to work, to a lesser extent, with the other co-facilitator of the FLC on Indigenization and know him to be exceptionally knowledgeable and attentive to the nuanced and complex work of

decolonizing and Indigenizing. Given my prior experiences working with each of the FLC co-facilitators, it came as no surprise to me when the participants in this study expressed their admiration for the facilitators' contributions to their FLC experiences.

At one point in her story, Molly remarked about some of the challenges of facilitating a group of faculty members like the ones in her FLC cohort. She commented on the generosity and openness that the facilitators demonstrated, welcoming participants regardless of whether or not they had completed the assigned readings. "That was a very small thing but really important and generous because you're still learning a lot from the conversation" (Transcript, October 13, 2020). Molly also emphasized the consultative approach the co-facilitators used, initially leading participants in discussions about foundational knowledge from pre-selected readings and, then, inviting FLC participants to identify the directions they wished to go next with their learning. This invitation to FLC participants to engage with and determine the course of their own learning journeys is consistent with Petrone and Ortquist-Ahrens (2004) theory around the involvement and agency of professional learners in their own learning. In the FLC on Indigenization, this facilitation approach meant that the co-facilitators navigated the challenging terrain of responding to various and divergent learning needs among the FLC participants. Molly described the co-facilitators attention to learner agency, saying,

Some people wanted to go this way, and other people wanted to go that way. I mean, they are amazing facilitators in order to try to keep things going in an open way, where I think people felt they were learning. (Transcript, October 13, 2020)

From my own experience in educational development, I understand the need to foster and attend to learner agency when facilitating faculty development programs. Participants in the FLC

on Indigenization joined this FLC by choice. Granted, they had to apply to the FLC program and they had to have approval from their department chairs in order to participate in the FLC.

Nevertheless, they devoted their time and energy to this learning experience, over the course of a full academic year, because they wanted to, because they were motivated to learn and improve their practices. I wonder if learner agency was top of mind in the FLC facilitation process for the facilitators and for the FLC participants. Were they all conscious of this approach to adult professional learning? Is it only my reading of Molly's stories of experience that leads me to draw the connection between what the facilitators were doing and the theory around learner agency? Was there something else going on in the facilitators' design and approach, that I have not noticed in Molly's stories or that has not been revealed in this study?

In research conversations with Molly, when she was describing the Bundle opening ceremony, I remarked on the co-facilitators' strengths and what a rare opportunity it was for settlers to be invited to experience such a sacred ceremony. I reflected aloud, "It really speaks to the relationship that [the FLC Facilitator] has built with the Elder and the community before that event happened with the FLC. What trust there must be in [the FLC Facilitator's] judgement and his leadership" (Transcript, October 13, 2020). I wonder how that relationship building work unfolded. How did the FLC Facilitator first make contact with the Elder and community in question? Did he reach out to them? Did they meet serendipitously? What enabled that relationship to develop? Did the FLC Facilitator have the FLC on Indigenization in mind at the time he entered into relationship with the Elder and community? Or was the FLC on Indigenization an idea that arose later? How would the FLC Facilitator describe his relationship to the Elder and community? And how would the Elder and community describe their relationship to him?

In addition to Molly's comments on the facilitation of the FLC, John described the FLC co-facilitators as having connected the FLC participants to Indigenous people from the local community, beyond the university community. He viewed their leadership and role in connecting communities as valuable, telling me, "I got a lot from their leadership in this FLC, especially their commitment to connect the group with people outside of [the university at site of research], the Indigenous peoples from this area that I'm living in" (Transcript, July 23, 2020). This insight about the FLC Facilitators' role as connectors leads me to wonder: Were they facilitating learning among adult professional learners who had established their own learning goals? Were they facilitating relationship, by sharing their own relationships with local Indigenous communities and introducing FLC participants to these communities? Were they facilitating a process for the FLC participants to envision their own future learning pathways towards decolonizing and Indigenizing their teaching and curricular practices? Were the facilitators modelling a way of learning and a way of being for settler academics?

Anthony expressed his appreciation for the co-facilitators highlighting the sensitivity and agility with which one of them treated the complex and disputed area of nomenclature and land acknowledgement. Anthony shared, "I remember [one of the FLC facilitators] speaking to it and how careful he was and how difficult the terrain is to navigate [...]. And he recognizes himself as a settler" (Transcript, July 7, 2020). I wonder if settler academics engaged in learning to decolonize and Indigenize teaching and curricular practices are seeking, in this case from their FLC Facilitators, models or examples of settler academics learning to decolonize and Indigenize in a good way, in a way that honours ongoing, ethical, and reciprocal relationship with local Indigenous community members. Here, too, I wonder about the importance of empathy and social-mindedness among the FLC Facilitators. Is one of the facilitation strengths needed for this

type of FLC about relationship building with Indigenous communities and individuals? If so, I wonder what the two FLC Facilitators would say about this relationship building work? Did they share that process explicitly with FLC participants? Did they implicitly share it by living out those relationships in ways that were visible to the FLC participants? Is that facilitation strength about modeling good practice? Is there also an element of debriefing and explicitly sharing the behind the scenes processes of relationship building?

Through this resonant thread, I have highlighted elements of Molly's, John's, and Anthony's stories with regards to the facilitation of their FLC experience by two colleagues, one an educational developer and the other an Indigenous Studies professor, both settler-identifying Canadians. Some of the qualities that describe their facilitation strengths include: generous, open, trustworthy, leadership, relationship-building, making connections, and careful in navigating difficult terrain. According to the research participants, the co-facilitators acknowledged the limitations of their positionality, identified as settlers, and were clear *not* to speak *for* Indigenous people or communities.

As I review the narrative accounts and think with these parts of the stories, I am reminded of the value and importance of attentive, skilled, and contextualized facilitation, done in a good way. This is true for all FLCs, but especially when engaging with decolonizing and Indigenizing higher education teaching and learning, an area of work in which so much is at stake, because the academy and education systems in Canada have already caused so much harm towards Indigenous people and there is real risk of, even well-intentioned settlers, causing further harm, if this work is not done in a good way.

Resonant Thread 3 – Epistemological and Ontological Dissonance

Each participant in this study shared experiences of dissonance between aspects of their academic work and their efforts to decolonize and Indigenize. They each came in contact with colonial, institutional structures, policies, and/or practices that were incompatible with the Indigenous ways of knowing and being they were learning. Their examples of epistemological and ontological dissonance demonstrate the quality and scope of change that is needed in the academy in order to decolonize and Indigenize postsecondary institutions, teaching and learning practices, and campus communities. The quality and scope of change needed go deep, to move towards meaningful centering of Indigenous knowledges, practices, and relationships (Pidgeon, 2016). Tokenistic or symbolic gestures of inclusion that signal tolerance of or fascination with Indigenous ways of knowing and being are not meaningful forms of Indigenous inclusion. Meaningful centering of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies is described by Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) as ‘resurgence-based decolonial Indigenization’ (p. 224). They explain resurgence-based decolonial Indigenization as parallel movements in which decolonizing of existing institutions, structures, policies, and practices occurs in tandem with Indigenous resurgence at the institutions and in the communities (Gaudry & Lorenz). They explain that “decolonial indigenization requires universities to [...] facilitate a ‘re/connection to the land, language, and people of this land [...]’ (sic),” while recognizing land-based, community-based Indigenous intellectual traditions as authoritative (Gaudry & Lorenz, p. 224).

Resurgence-based decolonial Indigenization does not seem to have occurred in the institution at the site of this study. Rather, Molly’s, John’s, and Anthony’s experiences demonstrate where the Western academic traditions bump hard against efforts to Indigenize and decolonize teaching and curricular practices. This resonant thread of epistemological and

ontological dissonance moved through John's stories of experience in a couple of ways. In one of our conversations, John discussed his experience on both sides of the academic hiring process, as an applicant who was ultimately successful in filling a tenure-track professorship, and as a committee member involved in selecting future academic colleagues. John shared that,

there are structural biases against Indigenous scholars. [...] you have largely white people in the room hiring someone who they want to be their colleague. [...] So, ya, it's a problem. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

This default narrative – a personal script and institutional narrative in hiring practices that perpetuates homogeneity in the professoriate, privileging White, male, able-bodied, first-language English speakers of European or British ancestry – aligns with colonial hierarchies and Enlightenment-era epistemologies and ontologies (Bhattacharya & Kim, 2020). These hierarchies and knowledge systems that value the individual and the rational differ from Indigenous ways of knowing and being, which value the whole, the community, and harmony with the land (Silko, 1986). How would John's academic hiring committee experiences have been different if the members of the committee had honoured the whole person (themselves and others), if they had centered their relationships within a community of human and more than human beings, living harmoniously as a part of the land? This holistic, interconnected way of thinking and being sounds dissonant and discordant alongside Western intellectual traditions. But what if decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy could open the university beyond the constraints of Enlightenment values? How might individuals think, be, and relate differently if members of the university community understood human beings as interconnected parts of the complex systems and relationships that make up the natural world, as integrally a part of and in relationship with the land (Silko)?

John further relates his experience of the dissonance between colonial and Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies when he recounts the anxiety-induced narrative that played out for him internally during the sweat lodge, right before the Elder opened the door to give the FLC members their first break. John describes this stressful moment saying,

I was going through a narrative in my head; I could see the news stories: ‘this Indigenous man does a sweat, kills this white professor.’ [...] And it was my fault. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

Again, the default narrative is a racist, colonial narrative that assumes the Indigenous man must be to blame for the White man’s death in a sweat lodge. While this narrative was an imagined scenario, it demonstrates the extent to which colonial narratives are deeply engrained in settler-colonial culture and subconscious. John’s story from the sweat lodge showed how powerful the grand narrative in colonial culture is and how its power has influence over even someone like John, who is intentionally working to counter it by earnestly engaging in decolonizing and Indigenizing practices in his academic career and his personal life. In both these stories – the hiring committee and the sweat lodge anxiety playing out in John’s mind – the Indigenous person is seen as an outsider while the White man is the norm or the insider. The colonial perspective is the default and starkly contrasts with Indigenous epistemes.

In a subsequent conversation with John, we discuss what it might take to change these deeply engrained colonial narratives within ourselves, and within academia. I say to John, “I think changing epistemologies and paradigms is really hard” (Transcript, July 23, 2020), to which he responds, “Incredibly hard, yes. [...] To expect people to work outside of their own frameworks is a really big ask, because that’s all that you have” (Transcript, July 23, 2020).

Agreeing with John, I add, “And that’s humbling, isn’t it? To have built up such an expertise and then have it questioned to the point of irrelevancy” (Transcript, July 23, 2020)? What is hard and humbling about changing epistemological and ontological paradigms? Why are settlers so reluctant to embrace Indigenous ways of knowing and being? Is it purely about ego and the need to set aside one’s self-image as an expert, in order to become a learner again? And what sets White settlers apart from settlers of colour or racialized settlers?

When looking more deeply at this attachment to one’s identity as an expert, and the personal and professional success that has followed it, the myth of a White, liberal, individualistic society – in which everyone has equal opportunities to succeed - is laid bare. Even when accounting for the wide range of differences among settlers in Canada and among Indigenous people in Canada, non-Indigenous, White people who become professors here do not start at the same place as Indigenous people; there is no level playing field on which Indigenous and non-Indigenous, White people compete for individual success in Canada (Boler & Zembylas, 2003). White settlers start with a significant advantage that is withheld from Indigenous people, especially racialized Indigenous people³⁵. The competition is unfair from the start, in part because of the vastly different and dissonant epistemologies and ontologies between these two groups, and the cultural-political construction of dominance of one knowledge system over the other (Drouin-Gagné, 2021), but also because of the ongoing, racist, White supremacist cultural norms in the academy and, more broadly, in Canadian society. Thus, part of what makes decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy difficult for settlers, especially White settlers, is the need to acknowledge and challenge this unjust system that continues to benefit us. Are settlers

³⁵ In referring to “racialized Indigenous people,” I am acknowledging the diversity and plurality across Indigenous identities, that not all Indigenous-identifying people have the same skin colour. There are many variations in the physical appearance of Indigenous-identifying people.

willing and ready to give up this advantage, in order to make right the wrongs and move towards reconciliation and renewed, just relationships with Indigenous people? I wonder what will move settlers, – particularly White settlers – to the humility needed to give up these privileges in order to participate in building a more just society? What will it take for White settler academics to prioritize the wellbeing of the whole over the success of the individual?

This resonant thread of epistemological and ontological dissonance reverberates in Anthony's story as well. He shares how this dissonance has surfaced through what might seem like a simple move to Indigenize his pedagogical practices by having his class meet in the round, 'circle pedagogy.' Moving from desks and chairs in rows, that face 'the front' of a classroom, to seating everyone in a circle flattens conventional classroom hierarchies in which the teacher, at the front, is the only expert, and the students face forward as receptacles of knowledge transmitted by the head of the class. In the circle, everyone is seated side by side, and can see everyone else's faces. This physical formation communicates equity between all participants, inclusion of all present, and togetherness – the importance of the whole, learning together (Styres, Haig-Brown, & Blimkie, 2013). However, Anthony's experience straddles both colonial classroom practices and circle pedagogy, as he works to decolonize and Indigenize his teaching and curricular practices. He explains,

Sometimes [the circle] worked; sometimes it didn't. I have to say, [...] about using the circle in the university classroom. First, they're square. Second, they have rows. And third, they want you to put the desks back in the square, in rows. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

In Anthony's experience, impeding efforts to use circle pedagogy are the physical structure of university classrooms and the institutional expectations to restore any moved furniture back to

the standardized rows facing the standardized front. There is dissonance and discord between these two approaches to arranging the physical learning space, and the ways of knowing and being that are facilitated as a result. University systems and rules facilitate colonial teaching and learning practices while burdening anyone who wishes to apply decolonizing practices and Indigenous pedagogies. In Anthony's experience, the dissonance, or what he referred to as the conflict between the two approaches, affects student learning experiences as well. Since students in Canadian educational systems have been trained to learn using linear and text-based frameworks, when they are asked to learn aurally and orally in a circle, without a desk on which to write or type into a digital device, they express anxiety about what they are expected to learn.

So, how do we square this circle? Or, in this case, circle this square? I've been in both kinds of classroom as a student and as a teacher. I understand the change in mindset that is required of students when the rows of desks are taken away and students are asked to join a circle where they must listen and reflect and remember what they hear and think. It is a leap to move from passive learning to active learning, but it is a move that we can teach and learn. Educators can guide students through this pedagogical dissonance towards becoming proficient at learning in the circle, in relationship. Learning in relationship is facilitated by the circle, in part because the circle opens everyone's line of sight; when everyone is facing towards the middle, everyone can look at each and every person around the circle. This togetherness and ability to look at one another, opens the imagination to relational, social, and interactive ways of learning. This is another way to move towards empathy and social-mindedness. Participants are given visual cues from this circular learning formation as to how learning can occur. The circle invites participation, active engagement, as well as interpersonal and collective connections (Camilleria & Bezzina, 2021). The circle is ideal for storytelling and sharing of experiences. And

as Van Camp (2021) explains, sharing stories “gets this ancient blood of [ours] roaring” (p. 16). Stories are about connection, community, and purpose (Van Camp). The circle communicates equity and inclusion; there is no front or head of the circle, although one person may fill the role of facilitator.

Laurila (2019) acknowledges that the circle is not a neutral space. Everyone who enters the circle brings their own beliefs, values, and experiences to the learning process; this means that colonial and decolonizing approaches may bump hard with one another in circle pedagogy interactions (Laurila). Fortunately, the circle offers participants the opportunity for self-reflection while building a sense of community among peers (Camilleria & Bezzina; Peltier, 2016). The circle invites participants to engage hearts, minds, and bodies in ways that are much more challenging when learning spaces are arranged in isolated individual desks, set up in rows on symmetrical grid lines (Peltier). Through relationship building and community building, learning in a circle supports individuals and groups to develop and practice greater empathy and social-mindedness, which help to support the group when they experience conflict, such as the bumping hard of dissonant beliefs and values, epistemologies and ontologies. These two models for teaching and learning – the colonial grid lines and the Indigenous circle – are a clear example of epistemological and ontological dissonance, which represents the chasm that must be crossed when engaging seriously in decolonizing and Indigenizing postsecondary teaching and curricular practices.

This chasm also appears in Molly’s story about her sabbatical application. The sabbatical application process requires a professor to submit a written proposal outlining the scholarly and professional development activity they plan to do while on sabbatical. The application may include letters of support from key partners in the proposed project. This application process fits

seamlessly into the colonial academy's epistemology and ontology. Clear expectations and parameters are outlined in writing and sabbaticals are expected to comply with these expectations and parameters. There is a process to follow, a paper trail to create, and accountability measures in place. It's a system that works within the colonial framework. When a professor actively engages in decolonizing and Indigenizing their practices (teaching, curricular, research, and holistic life practices), they are likely to bump hard against this sabbatical application process. What would a decolonized or decolonizing sabbatical proposal look like? How would the current colonial university recognize a decolonizing sabbatical proposal as legitimate and worthwhile? How do academics learn to translate between the languages of a decolonizing proposal and a colonial application framework? Could university administrators who assess sabbatical applications also learn these two languages and develop the ability to code switch? In Molly's experience she is learning to switch between these two languages because of the dissonance she has encountered. She expresses some fatigue when she says, "It's having to still be "accountable" to the colonized world. Where the institution claims to be "decolonizing and Indigenizing," but in reality, in the day-to-day practices of the institution, it really hasn't changed much" (Transcript, October 6, 2021).

Anthony also discusses this dissonance of epistemologies and ontologies when he describes the importance of relationship building, in the context of forging collegial relationships between settlers and Indigenous academics, that may lead to research collaborations. He says,

It really is building a relationship that, then, the work is part of. Not just that transactional piece [...But] the institution has its own rhythms. And those rhythms are not always aligned with relationship building. [...] And none of our processes are set up to take time. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

Where might there be room made for a completely different paradigm, where teaching, learning, and research happen fluidly, on the land, in relationship, over long periods of time, at different rhythms, and with different kinds of accountability? What might grow from research collaborations if the university and granting agencies created time and dedicated funding over a period of a decade or a generation, allowing academics and community members to form life-long connections, to honour interconnection? I wonder what knowledge creation would be possible if such relationship building were prioritized and allowed to define the goals and directions of research. What conditions would be needed for decision-makers overseeing university priorities to develop greater empathy and social-mindedness, towards decolonizing and Indigenizing practices? Perhaps if Western colonial educational institutions were to embrace a wider perspective on relationship with local Indigenous communities, the epistemological and ontological dissonance discussed through Anthony's, Molly's and John's experiences would dissolve. Is the dissolution of dissonance a desired outcome of decolonizing and Indigenizing? Or is there something else that can be done with and learned from this dissonance? Returning to the professional learning context of a FLC, how might the format of a FLC facilitate these moments of ontological and epistemological dissonance to serve as a site for ongoing learning? How might the FLC experience challenge the default colonial narrative, and centre Indigenous ways of knowing and being? What is the role of the FLC in flattening colonial hierarchies and valuing socially-minded, collective learning?

Resonant Thread 4 – Unsettling Settlers

In resonant thread 3, I related examples from John's, Anthony's, and Molly's stories to academic systems (hiring policies and practices, physical structure of learning spaces and policies that govern them, sabbatical application expectations, etc.) that hinder and obstruct

decolonizing and Indigenizing efforts. Moving from the systems or macro, institutional level, to the micro level of individual change, in resonant thread 4, I explore unsettling settlers. As Anthony explains in his narrative account, “decolonization is our task as settlers and we can do that” (Transcript, July 7, 2020). He reinforces this point in another conversation saying, “people who have enjoyed the privileges of colonialism and coloniality and who want a change, it is incumbent on us to start doing that work for ourselves” (Transcript, July 14, 2020). In this resonant thread, therefore, I feel the reverberations of personal transformation as White settler academics open ourselves to the humbling work of facing our unknowing, of embracing uncertainty, and of being unsettled. Coming to terms with what I do not know and the uncertainty I feel in this place of ignorance about Indigenous ways of knowing and being evokes unsettling feelings in me, especially in academic spaces, where I have often felt a sense of belonging and a sense of knowing how to navigate the customs and traditions of knowledge creation and communication. This sense of belonging in academia is undoubtedly enabled by my identity as a White, Canadian settler in a White supremacist, settler-colonial educational institution. But as I explore more deeply the implications of this privileged place I hold, I understand that my sense of belonging exists simultaneously with a sense of unbelonging, unwelcome, and exclusion that many Indigenous peers and colleagues experience in the same educational spaces. As explained by Chancellor Murray Sinclair,

When I was chairing the TRC, I realized that getting to the truth was hard but getting to the reconciliation is going to be harder. We are not only calling for people to understand this truth and to accept it, but we're also calling on people to recognize that, there came with it, benefits and privileges that now are bestowed upon the settler population; that were bestowed at great cost to Indigenous people. (Sinclair, 2021, n. p.)

This realization is deeply unsettling. I cannot be at peace with this inequity; my White privilege in settler-colonialism is arbitrarily assigned because I was born into a settler-Canadian family with white skin³⁶. The anti-Indigenous, land-based racism on which settler-colonialism is founded is unacceptable³⁷. I hope that unsettling settlers – my own unsettling – will contribute disrupting and dismantling this anti-Indigenous racism. In conversation with Anthony, I describe this unsettling of settlers as follows:

This is difficult work. And those of us benefiting from colonialism are bound to make some mistakes. It's kind of inevitable. We have blind spots we are not even aware of until we come up against something really challenging and that reveals to us our ignorance. All of that is what we have to prepare ourselves for when we commit to do decolonizing work. (Transcript, July 14, 2020)

This difficult work evokes difficult emotions because it involves confronting what Britzman (1998) calls difficult knowledge. When I confront the privilege afforded to me as a white-skinned, settler in White supremacist, settler-colonial Canada, this difficult knowledge can evoke feelings of discomfort, shame, disgust, outrage, anger, and fear (White fragility). These feelings can spark my desire and motivation to work for change, but they also have the potential to influence the way I interpret my experience and the choices I make about how I tell my stories of

³⁶ This is not to say that all white-skinned people are settlers; “Indigenous Peoples” in Canada is a wide-sweeping term for a diverse grouping of nations. Some individual Indigenous people experience white privilege, because of their skin colour (Cote-Meek, 2014b). As Cote-Meek’s (2014b) study found, for some white-skinned Indigenous individuals, navigating racism becomes a challenging negotiation of one’s identity within both mainstream Canadian contexts and one’s own Indigenous community.

³⁷ While anti-Indigenous racism in Canada is partly based on skin colour and physical features, it is also rooted in settler-colonialism (Battiste, 2013). “As a contemporary settler state, [Canada] maintains legal, political, and economic systems rooted in settler colonial usurpation of Indigenous lands and the dispossession and disappearance of Indigenous peoples” (Battell Lowman & Barker, 2015, p. 47). Settler-colonialism and racism are bound together because the theft and occupation of Indigenous ancestral homelands and the genocidal agenda of the settler-colonial state are targeted at groups of racialized people identified as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. Even where land-based treaties have been reached between Indigenous communities and the Canadian state, Canada consistently dishonours treaty agreements (Gray-Donald, 2020).

experience. Pitt and Britzman (2003) highlight the crisis of representation in qualitative research, questioning how difficult knowledge impacts the data that research participants choose to share and how these data (i.e. stories of experience) are represented or filtered through the participants' emotional landscapes. A pedagogy of discomfort pushes learners and teachers beyond their comfort zones and requires everyone in the learning space to practice compassion for oneself and one another (Zemblyas & McGlynn, 2012). In the spirit of compassion for self and others, Anthony, Molly, John, and I explored the difficult knowledge that pushes each of us to be unsettled. When I explored settler unsettlement in conversation with Molly, I shared with her,

Sometimes when I'm feeling unsettled, it's a moment of realization, after I've already made the mistake [...] I'm not even sure what it was I did, but I can feel that something I did wasn't right. And just the embarrassment of my ignorance. Because usually people are quite generous and forgiving. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

And isn't that the point of unsettling settlers? Unsettlement is not meant to be comfortable for settlers; learning how I have benefited from the White supremacist, colonial system should be awkward for me as a White settler. I have not *had* to learn about any other way of being in the world other than White, settler-colonial ways, until now. There is too much knowledge, now, to claim ignorance about the urgency of decolonizing, and Indigenous people have waited far too long for justice. Resonant thread 5 will speak about the urgency of this matter.

In this section on resonant thread 4, I return to Molly's, Anthony's, and John's co-composed narrative accounts to allow this unsettling of settlers to disrupt my settled ways. Molly identifies Regan's (2010) book title *Unsettling the Settler Within* as the artifact that best represents her FLC experience. She explains, "Continually, I keep coming back to that notion that this is your work, Molly. There is and there has to be that disruption and unsettling process, I

think, in order to really begin the decolonization work” (Transcript, October 27, 2020). Molly describes the feeling of being unsettled as,

A lot of it is just around questioning my motives and motivation. Is it about me? Or is it about the Indigenous peoples I’m working with? Or am I doing this in the right way? Am I honouring the process? [...] So, a lot of questioning. (Transcript, October 27, 2020)

The inner questioning, self-doubt, and uncertainty that Molly identifies resonate within me. The way I have sometimes experienced what Easton, Lexier, Lindstrom, and Yeo (2019) call ‘moments of unsettlement,’ is expressed in the uncertainty that Molly describes above. Each Indigenous person is indeed different and has different protocols, beliefs, ways of being, and ways of entering into relationship. When I have learned these values and protocols within one relationship, for instance, in relationship with one Cree person, and then thought that perhaps I had learned about Cree values and protocols, I was humbled to later learn this is not necessarily so. I started experiencing my own unsettlement journey as one with a disappearing path. Not only do I have to walk the path to make it, but even as I have made some progress on this newly formed path, gaining some clarity and insight, I find along the way that this learning may not serve me in the next encounter. And then I’m back to the beginning, dwelling in uncertainty and self-doubt. It is especially in these moments of doubt that the FLC could be a support to my learning journey. To be able to discuss my experiences, failures, false starts, insights, progress, and uncertainties with colleagues – critical friends – who are also unlearning colonial ways, would make this work less lonely and daunting.

I am learning that unsettlement is an ongoing process because there are nearly infinite Indigenous knowledges, protocols, ways of being in relationship, values, and beliefs that I have yet to learn or even to encounter. And there will likely always be some knowledges to which I

have no access, either because they are not meant to be shared with non-Indigenous people, or because the settler-colonial history and paradigm, in which I am steeped, make some ways of knowing unreachable for me. This is one of the limitations that Euro-centric thinkers need to acknowledge. In particular, White settlers must set aside the arrogant assumption that Western knowledge systems are somehow more sophisticated than others and mastery of Western knowledge systems will give unfettered understanding of any and all other knowledge systems (Kuokkanen, 2007). As John reminded me, academics often see the world through disciplinary frameworks. It is difficult to unlearn that expertise and way of knowing. To be unsettled, as a White settler, I need to be open to the limitations of Western ways of knowing and being, to challenge, and in some instances accept, my inability to know or fully understand.

John describes moments of unsettlement in his jarring classroom experience. In this story, one of his Indigenous-identifying students spoke up in class, during a talk John was giving. The student emphasized that Indian Residential Schools were “cultural genocide.” John had intended to say as much; he was building up to that point in his talk, but it didn’t have the intended effect. John shared that,

I’ve come to realize that I’m teaching to people like me. [...] I think I’m always trying to convince the white students to care about settler-colonialism and I’m sugar-coating it, as a pedagogical strategy. Doing this very Western approach to teaching [...] didn’t work for this Indigenous student. (Transcript, July 23, 2020)

John explains how difficult and unsettling this experience was for him and what it prompted in his own reflective practice. He began to ask himself,

Who am I teaching to? Who feels comfortable in my class? [...] What does it mean to always, always, always be teaching to the Indigenous students in the room, never

assuming that everybody is a settler? And also challenging my assumption that I need to talk to settlers and be nice to them” (Transcript, July 23, 2020).

I didn’t say so at the time, but I really appreciated that John expressed that he is looking forward to this challenge, that we all need to do better, and to do this differently, that we all need to learn. John’s attitude of welcoming the challenge, because it’s important to do this work, and to do it well, encouraged me. As a White settler, I need to keep questioning myself, who I am speaking to in my role as educator. I need to challenge my own assumptions. I need to continue learning and unlearning, even or especially when it is jarring, unsettling, and humbling. Molly and John both take a turn towards self-reflection and self-questioning; in my experience self-reflecting and questioning are significant ways to engage in my learning, unlearning, and re-learning. Kolb’s (2015) work on experiential learning and Fink’s (2013) developmental model for designing significant learning experiences emphasize the importance of self-reflection as vital to integrative learning, growth, and development. This turn towards self-reflection and self-questioning can be made even more powerful and impactful for learning when practiced with supportive peers, as in the context of a FLC or community of practice (Miller-Young, 2016; Miller-Young, Yeo, & Manarin, 2018).

In this study, like John, Anthony acknowledges that this change within oneself is challenging, so much so that Anthony has questioned whether or not he wants to do it, to commit to all the personal, emotional, and political changes this paradigm shift requires. Anthony names the settler privilege inherent in being able to consider *not* engaging in decolonizing and Indigenizing; he closes this part of his story indicating that he has not given up on the work, but the extent of commitment it requires has caused him to question if he has the strength to go

through it. He explains that code switching might serve as a transitional moment in this massive paradigm shift, and suggests that perhaps this is the way forward for him. He shares,

I was thinking about the personal, emotional, affective, and political pieces, commitments that come with it. It's one of the reasons one might want to do code switching and one of the reasons code switching might be a transitional moment between. (Transcript, July 31, 2020)

I wonder if Anthony's idea of code switching might be necessary for settlers learning to decolonize and Indigenize. What role do FLCs play in this and how can they support this practice? Without having consciously decided to code switch, when I reflect back on my own experience, it seems that is indeed what I've been doing. I've been exploring my own learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being through my White, settler-colonial lens, and trying to 'translate' ideas back to a White, colonial lens, from what I am learning of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge systems. One example arose in my conversation with John when we were discussing his experience of the sweat lodge ceremony and I related experiential learning pedagogies to Indigenous, land-based pedagogies, saying,

It sounds like the sweat lodge experience and the whole experience at the lodge was very much an experiential learning kind of program, through Indigenous ways of doing that. I don't presume to impose the word experiential on an Indigenous approach, but, it's the parallel that I can draw from my own Western pedagogical understandings. (Transcript, July 9, 2020)

I recognize that this approach is limited since not everything can be translated between two vastly different epistemologies and ontologies. Wall Kimmerer's (2013) work to braid together Indigenous land wisdom, Western scientific knowledge, and her story of bringing the two

together, encourages and inspires me. As an Anishinabekwe scientist, Wall Kimmerer is fluent in the languages of both these knowledge systems. This fluency enables her to imagine their coming together in ways that are not currently accessible to me, as I am just at the beginning of a learning journey about Indigenous knowledges.

Unsettling settlers is not an easy resonance with which to reckon; these unsettling frequencies compel me to question myself, my words, actions, and fundamental ways of seeing the world. This process of unsettling settlers is deeply personal because it requires me to examine and interrogate the foundations on which my identity has been built within a White supremacist, settler-colonial society. This White supremacist, settler-colonial society has been so pervasive and insidious that for much of my life it has been invisible to me. Unsettling of settlers is a process that makes Whiteness and settler-colonialism visible and calls on me to reckon with the places of privilege I hold within these system. This process reveals my personal connection to and position within a society that oppresses Indigenous Peoples and lands.

I hear the self-doubt, uncertainty, and trepidation echoing through my experiences of working towards decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation alongside Indigenous people. As I sit with these echoes, I reflect on how to embrace the uncertainty and move beyond it so that it does not paralyse me. As a White settler engaged in this work, I need to attend to moments of my unsettlement, and I need to make sure that while everything I've learned before may be put into question, this process is not meant to destroy me. It may be humbling, embarrassing, and even emotionally painful, but it should also be a process of opening my mind and heart to the possibilities and learning opportunities that have previously not been available to me in the settler-colonial education system and Canadian society. With this vision for decolonizing,

Indigenizing, and reconciliation, I am grateful once again for Wagamese's (2016) reflections, in which he emphasized the word 'all' in the phrase 'all my relations.' He writes,

I've been considering the phrase 'all my relations' for some time now. It's hugely important. It's our saving grace in the end. It points to the truth that we are all related, that we are all connected, that we all belong to each other. The most important word is 'all.' Not just those who look like me, sing like me, dance like me, speak like me, pray like me or behave like me. ALL my relations. That means every person, just as it means every rock, mineral, blade of grass, and creature. We live because everything else does. If we were to choose collectively to live that teaching, the energy of our change of consciousness would heal each of us – and heal the planet. (p. 36)

There is a need to find a way back to or a way forward into a wholeness and connection with all people and all beings. This holistic approach to living and being in relationship with the world nurtures the development of greater empathy and social-mindedness. This holistic approach also affirms the vision for the world that I expressed in Chapter 1, under the sub-heading 'Being a White-skinned settler in settler-colonial Canada.' While I take responsibility for and work to disrupt my position of privilege as a White, settler woman in a White supremacist, settler-colonial society, I hope for a day when hierarchical divisions between people based on physical appearance will end. I believe in Wagamese's generous assertion that "we are all connected, that we all belong to each other" (p. 36).

Resonant Thread 5 – The Urgency of Settler Action

As I continue to think with Molly's, Anthony's, and John's co-composed narrative accounts, I turn to resonant thread 5 that highlights the urgency of settler action in the work of decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices in Canadian higher education. In

resonant thread 5 – The Urgency of Settler Action, I am reminded of the necessity within Canadian higher education for settler academics to put decolonizing and Indigenizing ideals into practice, and to do this in partnership with Indigenous colleagues. However, as Anthony points out, we must not wait for over-worked Indigenous colleagues to have time and energy for every step of this work with which we engage. Anthony articulates this urgency saying,

I think if you say, well we have to wait until we have approval from Indigenous people. [...] well, this is what we've been telling Indigenous people for centuries – just wait. So, I don't think we can wait. I think you want to be careful, you want do it respectfully. You want to be certain that when you are taking up Indigenous materials, that you are taking them up as a settler perspective, and trying to interrogate what that means. [...] You've got to start somewhere. (Transcript, July 21, 2020)

What is at stake if settlers wait for Indigenous approval before acting on or initiating decolonization and Indigenization in Canadian higher education? Waiting is not necessarily the problem, since waiting does not necessarily mean settler inaction. Sometimes waiting is the respectful way forward for settlers. For instance, waiting to learn critical knowledge and contextual particulars before acting may be necessary. Or, waiting for trust to be built in particular settler-Indigenous relationships before acting may be necessary and right. But, waiting for Indigenous colleagues and students to always take the lead or for Indigenous people to approve of settler actions before they are taken is not a realistic or equitable distribution of work.

The professoriate in Canada is still predominantly made up of White, settler academics (Todd, 2018; Universities Canada, in Shen, 2018). The work of decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices in higher education is onerous and cannot depend exclusively on Indigenous academics. They are often already over-burdened with heavy workloads and the

emotional labour of navigating and surviving the colonial institution that employs them (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002; Mooney, 2021). All too often, “discouragement and burnout prevail in the meager sprinkling of Indigenous faculty in Canadian universities” (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, p. 92). An Indigenous colleague within the academy is often the only Indigenous person in their department or faculty unit, making their work experience one of isolation and alienation (Raffoul, Ward, Calvez, et al., 2022). Moreover, “burdening an individual with educating a community runs counter to many Indigenous cultures’ emphasis on relationality and community as drivers of collective decision making and adds to racist attitudes in tasking the colonized with educating the colonizers” (Raffoul, Ward, Calvez, et al., p. 165). For these reasons, it is important that I take initiative in this work, which includes building relationship with Indigenous colleagues and settler colleagues, so that we can work collectively, in complimentary ways, alongside one another, towards decolonizing and Indigenizing goals. The work of decolonizing and Indigenizing invites a practice of relational ethics (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018).

Settlers need to assume responsibility in decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy. I must learn as best I can, and get on with it. In line with Anthony’s experience, I need to be careful and respectful. As I learn to decolonize and Indigenize my practices, I need to independently make teaching and curricular decisions to the best of my abilities, acknowledging the limitations of my White settler perspectives and, as Molly reminds me, not depending on Indigenous students in my classes to teach me or their peers about Indigenous knowledges, not making the Indigenous students in the classroom the ‘token Indians,’ not expecting them to be the experts on everything related to Indigenous people (Cote-Meek, 2014a; Raffoul, Ward, Calvez, et al., 2022).

Anthony's stories of experience emphasize that this work is critical within individual settler practices, in classrooms, syllabi, and courses, but that settlers can (and must) also act at the departmental and institutional levels. Through his own work in his course redesign, changing teaching approaches, collaborative hiring committees, and re-writing the faculty council's by-laws, Anthony demonstrates that multi-level change is possible. He closes his narrative account saying,

I chose to talk about these experiences partly because they were the ones that changed my teaching practices and because I hope that these stories show how it is possible to work for change on a number of levels—the micro-level of the classroom, the department level where hiring occurs, and the institutional level where policies are made. These are all important ways to intervene, especially when even the possibility of making change seems overwhelming. (Transcript, October 19, 2021)

John's stories of experience may not explicitly use the word urgency in describing the importance of decolonizing and Indigenizing, but he implies it when he describes his understanding of what it means to move towards reconciliation and how he maintains a sense of hope, even when it might be, as Anthony acknowledges, overwhelming. John explains,

[t]o me, a way I don't lose hope, is that reconciliation can happen in my classroom, to some degree. Students can leave my classroom understanding that I, as a settler Historian, think that this is incredibly important, that this frames everything we do here. I think that Indigenous peoples are not served well in settler-colonial contexts. And that if we are going to reconcile, we have to change that. (Transcript, August 2, 2020)

Molly also shares her reflections on the urgency of settler action to decolonize and Indigenize teaching and learning when she writes in the closing section of her narrative account,

I have come to know and have had my knowing reinforced by Grandmother Doreen that one has to “walk the talk.” There is no longer time to live in the shadows and the niceties and superficial support of decolonization and Indigenization. [...] action means immersing yourself in land relational and experiential opportunities. You learn most through doing and through listening and observing. (Molly’s Musings, 2021)

As I reflect on this resonant thread, the importance of settler action, I feel myself caught in a tension as two seemingly paradoxical frequencies converge: urgency and caution. While I concur that action is long overdue, that decolonizing and Indigenizing higher education is of critical importance and requires urgent attention and action – they are called “Calls to *Action*” for a reason (TRC, 2015) – I also know through my own experience the importance of relationship building between settlers and Indigenous people in order for decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation to be enacted in a good way. Acting in a good way means leaving behind settler paternalism towards Indigenous people and moving toward ethical relationship (Young, Joe, Lamoureux, et al., 2012). Ermine’s (2007) “partnership model of the ethical space” (p. 194), proposes the emergence of new rules of engagement between Indigenous communities and Canadian society, institutions, and individuals that foster a spirit of cooperation and respect, especially because the two parties in this renewed relationship come with disparate worldviews. Wagamese (2016) reminds me that “we approach our lives on different trajectories, each of us spinning in our own separate, shining orbits. What gives this life its resonance is when those trajectories cross and we become engaged with each other” (p. 38). If the beloved, late Wagamese were still with us today, what new rules of engagement for creating the ethical space might he advise? I wonder about the FLC as a site for creating such an ethical space. Can the circle pedagogy, discussed earlier in this chapter, be used within the context of a FLC to bring

Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike into Ermine's partnership model and ethical space, in the inclusive, interconnected spirit of "all my relations" as Wagamese' understands it?

While settler scholars embark on these urgent actions, at all levels of our academic institutions, we must also proceed cautiously, consciously, and carefully. Ultimately, building reciprocal relationships, in a good way, and creating Ermine's (2007) ethical space requires time and care. Thus, we do need to hurry up and act, but we also need to go slowly, to take the time necessary to do this work well. These contradictory frequencies reverberating within me in this fifth resonant thread exemplify the complexity of the work at hand. Moving towards reconciliation is at once very simple and very complex. We have within ourselves as human beings the capacity to create just, humane, and respectful relationships with one another, but White supremacist, settler-colonialism continues to fail humanity by harming Indigenous people and benefiting settlers, especially White settlers. The simple task of creating respectful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial relationships has been complicated by a history that we cannot erase, but that we need to transform by decolonizing and Indigenizing towards just and thriving futurities created by Indigenous people for themselves, and for similarly just and thriving futurities by and for each and every human community. What are the places – metaphorical and physical – of resonance that inspire healing and wellbeing, that inspire us to act with compassion, empathy, and social-mindedness, to break away from our habitual scripts and comfortable plotlines, to work for social justice, to really change the narratives, and in so doing to change our ways of knowing, being, and relating to one another?

Resonant Gifts of Stories Told and Narrative Inquiry Shared

In this chapter, I have discussed five resonant threads; these are 1) Ongoing Learning: Toward Empathy and Social-mindedness, 2) The Strengths of FLC Facilitators, 3)

Epistemological and Ontological Dissonance, 4) Unsettling Settlers, and 5) The Urgency of Settler Action. Readers of the narrative accounts may connect with entirely different resonant threads. That is one of the remarkable gifts of sharing stories of lived experience and one of the powerful qualities in living alongside one another through narrative inquiry.

Through this chapter, I have explored how the resonance of physical spaces and words expressed, through storytelling (or singing), can make us more empathetic, socially-minded, and oriented toward community wellbeing. What conditions must we create and dynamics must we enact to spark resonance that inspire healing and wellbeing, that stir us towards greater compassion? How can the FLC model for learning together assist us in creating the necessary conditions? How can we leave habitual scripts and comfortable plotlines behind, and co-compose new narratives of justice and reconciliation? How can we create such resonant spaces within our research, teaching, and curricular relationships, in order to draw out generative, just, and healing research findings, as well as individual and collective learnings? What roles do and could FLCs play?

Chapter 8: Towards Reconciliation

As I began thinking about this closing chapter, I returned to the narrative beginnings and conceptual underpinnings for the study discussed in chapters one and two. Reviewing my writing has helped me to reconsider what Clandinin (2013) referred to as the “So what?” and “Who cares?” questions (p. 35) that lead to personal, practical, and social justifications for the study. Through this reviewing and reconsidering, I began to think about the justifications for this study in light of the emergent findings. I also returned to ethical considerations that arose and to which I attended throughout this study, in order to examine some of the limitations of the findings. Finally, I considered and identified new wonders and possibilities that surfaced as a result of this study, and that may open space for new inquiries.

A Return to Narrative Beginnings and Conceptual Underpinnings

Whyte (2015) asserts that,

the defining experience at the diamond-hard center of reality is eternal movement as beautiful and fearful invitation; a beckoning dynamic asking us to move from *this* to *that*. The courageous life is the life that is equal to this unceasing tidal and seasonal becoming. (p. 166)

When I embarked on this doctoral journey, I hoped that this study would draw attention to the possibilities of experiential learning in educational development practice. I also hoped that this study would illuminate pathways for engaging in the complex processes of Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices in Canadian higher education. Now, as I approach the closing of this study, I return to these initial intentions to look for the possibilities that the study’s findings offer. I understand that the ‘unceasing becoming’ of which Whyte (2015) writes, and this unfolding of lives in motion, in the midst, that is foundational to narrative inquiry, necessarily

render study findings contingent. While Anthony's, Molly's, and John's narrative accounts have drawn attention to the possibilities of experiential learning in educational development practice, these stories of experience are particular to a land-based learning practiced within specific Indigenous communities in and around the site of this research study. Further exploration of the pairing of experiential learning with educational development is needed. As far as illuminating pathways for Indigenizing, decolonizing, and reconciliation in Canadian higher education, some pathways have been illuminated for me. Having lived alongside John, Anthony, and Molly, I am grateful for the narrative accounts that emerged from our respective conversations and collaborations. Each narrative account stands on its own, representing the particular stories that were meaningful to each of us at the particular times, and in the particular places, and social, political, and institutional contexts in which we found ourselves during this study. As I bring attention to the particular nature of the narrative accounts, I am keenly aware that the particular has great value, in that it can open space in our imaginations for possibilities not yet identified or explored. Readers and audiences who engage with these three narrative accounts are invited to leverage this opening of imagination, to relate John's, Molly's, and Anthony's stories of experience to their own place, time, and social contexts.

When I laid these narrative accounts alongside each other, and lived with them, as a triad tapestry, as resonance converging in a single space, five resonant threads emerged:

1. Ongoing Learning: Towards Empathy and Social-mindedness;
2. The Strengths of FLC Facilitators;
3. Epistemological and Ontological Dissonance;
4. Unsettling Settlers; and
5. The Urgency of Settler Action.

These resonant threads are particular to me and to the time, place, and social, political, and institutional contexts in which I found myself towards the closing of this study. The resonant threads highlight my own remaking through this research journey. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) remind me that, “Being in this world, we need to remake ourselves as well as offer up research understandings that could lead to a better world” (p. 61). My remaking, or as Whyte (2015) calls it ‘unceasing becoming,’ began before my doctoral studies and will continue beyond it, but the resonant threads that emerged for me highlight the changes I’ve experienced over the past few years while engaged with this doctoral research.

The first two resonant threads reshape my understanding of faculty learning communities. Resonant thread one – Ongoing Learning: Towards Empathy and Social-mindedness – offers me insight into how FLCs can support faculty members in different, parallel ways, as they explore complex subject matters. This FLC program provided a community of peers, with experienced co-facilitators, and the opportunity for forming relationship with local Indigenous community members, during and beyond the timeframe in which the FLC was meeting. The FLC created opportunities to engage in land-based learning with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members. For John, Anthony, and Molly, the FLC marked a significant part of their ongoing learning processes. Resonant thread two – The Strengths of FLC Facilitators – reinforced the importance of highly skilled facilitation to support diverse learners in an FLC. These two resonant threads do not attend to my own inner transformation, but they are significant reminders to carry with me into my academic practice.

Resonant threads three through five – Epistemological and Ontological Dissonance, Unsettling Settlers, and The Urgency of Settler Action – touched me more deeply on a personal level, urging me to examine and challenge White, settler-colonial narratives that I often take for

granted, in order to open myself to learning new-to-me, Indigenous ways of knowing and being. I was confronted with epistemological and ontological dissonance and learned to navigate it by code switching. Simultaneously, I opened my heart-mind to unsettling the White settler within and to attending to the paradoxical dynamic of the urgency to do this work and to take the necessary time to do it carefully. Throughout this study, I questioned my intentions, thoughts, and actions in every instance of engagement with decolonizing and Indigenizing work, and in every interaction with Indigenous colleagues, Elders, and community members. I still dwell in an unsettling uncertainty as I continue this work. In a recent reflective research memo, I wrote the following:

Reflective Memo - Sept. 16, 2021

I once heard a series of interviews with John O'Donohue in a podcast called *Walking on the Pastures of Wonder* (RTÉ, 2008). The podcast series featured stories from a lifetime of walking his home landscape known as The Burren in County Clare, Ireland. The essence of that talk that stayed with me was that we walk differently in the city than we do out on the land. Walking down a city sidewalk or down a corridor inside a building, we walk swiftly, with certainty, and in a straight line. When we walk outside, in wild spaces, on dirt paths, through woods, across fields, our footing is less certain, as the landscape is always changing. We may walk with large, steady strides as we climb upwards and, then, more quickly with small steps as we descend the other side of the hill or mountain. In the countryside, we may walk more slowly, in general, than we do in the cities, because we want to experience the land with all our senses, to smell the fragrant sage brush or wild mint, to hear the songbirds and the trickling creek, to feel the roots and stones underfoot, to taste the wild blackberries that surprise us with a splash of

sweet juice in our mouths when they are at their perfect ripeness, and to see with as much clarity as possible, while we meander a changing landscape.

This sense of walking outside on the land is, for me, an apt metaphor for non-Indigenous, settlers walking the path towards reconciliation. The path towards reconciliation is not a clear, direct, linear path on a smooth surface. In fact, it is not just one path, but many. And as a settler, I cannot walk it with certainty. I must slow down, and walk softly, attending to my surroundings and adjusting my footing to the path as I go. I will not be sure-footed on this journey and I may stumble many times along the way, for the landscape will shift and change as I walk it and the weather will not always be clement. I may find myself in dense fog or thorny thickets, unsure of how to proceed. The path may, at times, seem to disappear with each step I take, sending my senses into a panic. Where one way of walking will serve me well along one pathway, it may cause havoc along another pathway. I will find myself re-learning over and over again in each new situation. I will have to accept uncertainty and instability with humility and an open heart. I will likely experience pain, regret, frustration, shame, and a range of difficult emotions that I cannot yet predict. When those difficult emotions arise, I can honour them, take responsibility for them, and take time to process them, to heal, as necessary. I must steel myself for this journey, for it is necessarily a journey of inner transformation and a new kind of settler will emerge from the process.

Building new relationships, just relationships with Indigenous people is not a one-and-done process. It will require me to build one relationship at a time, attending to the particular landscape of that one Indigenous person's stories and experiences, and learning a new way of walking together and alongside one person, in whatever ways they are willing to share with me

who they are. And then, as though I am learning to walk again for the first time, to start anew with each new Indigenous person I meet, to honour their particular stories and experiences.

As I have learned through narrative inquiry and its grounding in Dewey's (1938) philosophy of experience, one's experiences are influenced by prior experiences and will shape future experiences. This continuity of experience shapes an individual's becoming and this becoming is shaped by interactions within oneself and interactions with other people and situational contexts (Dewey). As I go along, in this work of humbly walking the land in new relationships with Indigenous people, I have found that the path is not only uncertain, meandering, and disappearing, but it also never ends, it is continuous, ongoing. Yes, my previous experiences will shape my present and future experiences, and, the changing landscape (other people and situational contexts) will also shape my learning experiences on this journey. As a settler, my responsibility is to continue walking towards reconciliation, as an ongoing commitment.

Wall Kimmerer (2013) encourages me to trust in the process, trust that the world will be there to support me as I stumble and fall. Referring to the relevance of the Skywoman story in contemporary times, she writes, "Whether we jump or are pushed, or the edge of the known world just crumbles at our feet, we fall, spinning into someplace new and unexpected. Despite our fears of falling, the gifts of the world stand by to catch us" (Wall Kimmerer, p. 8-9). This is an optimistic, and generous vision of human relationship to the world, which inspires me, and also causes me to pause. Did Wall Kimmerer intend for this generous vision to extend to all people, including those of us who benefit from settler-colonialism? Will the world always be there to catch me as I stumble and fall? What are the conditions for receiving the gifts of the world? Must the wrongs of settler-colonialism first be righted? How can the world stand by and

“catch us” settlers, while the settler-colonial state of Canada continues to dishonour Treaties, dismiss, ignore, and abuse human rights for Indigenous People, and exploit and degrade the land? My sense of uncertainty and trepidation persist.

Unfolding Personal, Practical, Social and Theoretical Justifications for the Study

In narrative inquiry, the narrative inquirer returns again and again to narrative beginnings and to the personal, practical, social, and theoretical justifications for the study. This process engages us in ongoing self-reflection, which supports our inner transformation. Clandinin (2013) reminds me, as well, that “as we retell or inquire into stories, we may begin to relive the retold stories. We restory ourselves and perhaps begin to shift the institutional, social, and cultural narratives in which we are embedded” (p. 34). Thus, my personal transformation has the potential and the power to influence the transformation of the institutional, social, and cultural landscapes in which I engage.

Unfolding Personal Justifications

My journey through this doctoral study has changed my understanding of decolonizing and Indigenizing higher education, and with these changes, my personal justification for engaging in this work has become more nuanced, filled with more questions about how to do this work in a good way. When I set out, I was skeptical about these Indigenization initiatives. I questioned whether the Eurocentric university could ever change sufficiently to become decolonizing and Indigenizing, as an ongoing institutional way of being. I am still skeptical about this lofty goal, which is often the basis for aspirational documents such as institutional strategic plans to Indigenize. By their aspirational nature, these plans do not provide academics with a roadmap or concrete actions to take in order to decolonize and Indigenize teaching and curricular practices. Thus, questions remain about *how* to do this work well. Despite my

skepticism in the beginning, I wanted to believe that positive change was possible. At that early stage of this study, I recall a conversation with Dr. Steinhauer (2018) that explored this issue and led me to think that even if efforts fail to decolonize and Indigenize the academy, it is, nevertheless, worth trying because something good might come of earnest efforts. But are earnest efforts enough? Since that 2018 conversation, I have learned from my own experience that even good-intentioned settlers trying to engage in this work in a good way make mistakes and can cause further harm to Indigenous people. Moreover, I have learned through private conversations with individual Indigenous colleagues that the issue of over-burdening Indigenous academics and community members, with the work of decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy, persists. These realities beg the question: What are the costs of implementing strategic plans to Indigenize the academy? What are the costs to Indigenous scholars, communities, and people when universities and individuals within the universities work to implement these institutional strategies? Who is benefiting from these strategic plans?

In the midst of these growing questions and doubts, I continue to feel a personal responsibility to respond to the TRC's *Calls to Action*, and to engage in my own re-education about Indigenous ways of knowing and being. At the close of this study, these personal justifications continue to be central to and motivating for my ongoing engagement in decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices in Canadian higher education and within my personal life practices. This work is society-wide and life-long. While it is important to me to engage with these questions in my academic career, it has become a broader concern than merely a question of my own professional development. Unexpectedly, this learning process has formed a bridge between my professional (or public) life and personal (or private) life; this bridge is both welcome and an area I wish to explore further, as it evokes new

wonders in me about what it means to approach my work life with renewed authenticity and to live my life holistically.

My re-education, which is marked by unlearning my miseducation and learning truths about Indigenous people and cultures, shared by them about their experiences - must continue. This re-education is partly a process of learning on my own through Indigenous texts and resources that are available to me. My initiative to unlearn and re-learn about Indigenous ways of knowing and being is essential. However, I must also learn to engage in new relationships with Indigenous people. This relational learning, as Anthony expressed, takes time; it asks of me, a lifetime of ongoing learning. Just as I did in the initial stages of this study, I still understand my personal justifications for this study are related to my roles as an educational developer, educator, and researcher in Canadian higher education, but the work goes beyond those professional designations. The inner transformation I am undergoing, is deeply personal and invokes all of who I am.

At the start of this study I felt, and still feel now, summoned to reckon with the dearth of education and the miseducation about Indigenous people that I experienced from kindergarten through to my undergraduate university studies, and more broadly in White supremacist, settler-colonial, Canadian society. Some of this miseducation has been corrected through the very work of this doctoral research and the relationships I have had the privilege of forming with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars who care about decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy. The relational work involved is critical. In their book, *The Gatherings: Reimagining Indigenous-Settler Relations*, Hager and Mawopiyane (2021) acknowledged challenges to building renewed relationships across the Indigenous-settler divide, identifying early efforts as “often awkward, tentative, and sometimes, thankfully, humorous” (p. 145). They wrote about

how their relationships took time to grow, over a series of years, meeting in circle ceremony, practicing radical inclusion (Hager & Mawopiyane). ‘Wayne’s’ commentary resonated with my experience of this kind of inclusion and togetherness, when he explained,

There is a Passamaquoddy word, *mawiyane* – let us venture together. [...] And a word that I used to hear from the Elders when I was a kid was *mawoqekapuwiyane* – let us stand together. We have a lot of different words for “gathering,” but they all have this sense of inclusiveness: *let us, together*. When we gather we become vulnerable, and to me the lessons that we have yet to learn are hidden in that process. (Hager & Mawopiyane, p. 145)

For the past couple of years, I have been participating in a virtual circle of Indigenous and settler educational developers, who meet monthly via video conference. We are connected to one another through a national network of educational developers. I refer to it as a ‘virtual circle’ because we meet online and my experience of the group has been that we practice circle protocol. Like Hager and Mawopiyane (2021) described it, we “allow the power of the Circle to transform us, and [we] resist the urge to control it” (p. 132). The virtual circle of educational developers started out small and initially identified as a community of practice, but later, through a technical need for an official name, became the Indigenous Knowledges Action Group (IKAG). In my experience, it has developed into a close, confidential, and compassionate community of colleagues that emphasizes the need for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to work together, to work towards better and mutual understanding of one another, while also working to influence change to structures, policies, practices, and organizational culture within our respective academic institutions and across Canadian higher education. It is a group of caring colleagues who dare to be vulnerable with one another, to speak from the heart, to take the risk

of exposing our deepest struggles and pain within the work of decolonizing and Indigenizing, and to support one another on this arduous journey.

In response to a call for contributions in 2020, some members of the IKAG group came together to write about the experiences of educational developers and faculty members who are working on decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and learning in higher education across Canada. This group brought together Western research findings in the form of nation-wide online survey results with local knowledges shared by Indigenous Elders, community members, and scholars with whom some of the co-authors are in continuous relationship. The results of this Indigenous-settler collaboration was recently published as a scholarly journal article (Raffoul, Ward, Calvez, et al., 2022) that weaves together different ways of being in the academy and different ways of creating knowledge – Indigenous ways and settler ways. Thus, one of my greatest learnings through this doctoral research journey has been about coming together across the settler-Indigenous divide. As Wayne said, “*mawiyane* – let us venture together. [...]; *mawoqekapuwiyane* – let us stand together; [...] *let us, together* (Hager & Mawopiyane, 2021, p. 145).

Within this inclusive togetherness, there is a relational ethic (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018) and reciprocal responsibility to one another. In the IKAG group, participation at monthly meetings varies from month to month depending on individual availabilities. What is constant is a practice of mutual respect and deep listening within this virtual circle of colleagues. This practice is not about adhering to university policies to Indigenize and decolonize nor is it about codes of conduct that govern professional behaviour. This practice of mutual respect and deep listening to one another is a human practice, in which the emotional restraint often normalized in Western professional contexts is relaxed, so that people can be themselves, can

speak with honesty, from the heart, from their true experiences within and beyond their respective academic institutions. From this human practice of being real with one another, I have experienced this group as a safe, caring gathering, where I can learn without shame or humiliation, and where I feel that the burden of Indigenizing and decolonizing work is made a little lighter through our togetherness.

Unfolding Practical Justifications

At the outset of this study, the practical justifications that I identified overlapped with personal and professional reasons. I had worked as an educational developer in Canadian higher education. I had worked with one of the co-facilitators of the FLC on Indigenization and was personally and professionally interested in the explorations that FLC had undertaken. Now, as I bring this study to a close, reflecting on Anthony's, John's, and Molly's experiences in that FLC and how those experiences changed their teaching and curricular practices, I can see that the practical justifications for this study reach well beyond my interest in re-educating myself and changing my practices in higher education. All three participants changed their teaching and curricular practices, in the courses they design and teach (micro level)³⁸.

In Anthony's case, his theoretical learning and the connections he formed through the FLC also supported him to continue significant engagement with decolonizing and Indigenizing initiatives at the departmental (meso) and institutional (macro) levels. For Molly, the changes stretched beyond her professional practices in academia, to influence her personal life, in terms of life practices and spiritual practices. Following her FLC experience, she formed a close connection that might be characterized as a mentor-mentee relationship with Grandmother Doreen, and Molly started participating in sweat lodge ceremonies on a regular basis. These

³⁸ See Poole and Simmons (2013) for micro, meso, macro theory within higher education.

changes became a part of Molly's life. She is now on a path that integrates land-based experience into her teaching, curricular, and research pursuits, with Indigenous and settler community members who are on their own land-based teaching and learning paths. For John, the FLC experience not only impacted the way he thinks about designing and teaching his courses, but it also changed his relationship to spirituality and religion. While he had previously been skeptical about and had rejected the Christianity he learned about in his community of origin, through the sweat lodge ceremony experience in his FLC cohort and his encounter with the Indigenous Elder who facilitated the sweat, John surprised himself by opening his heart and mind to spirituality. This profound personal change happened in parallel to his experience of working through agoraphobia and anxiety about being in a social space where it might be impossible or disruptive to leave. Thus, for both Molly and John, the practical justifications for this study are apparent in their personal and professional practices; and for Anthony the practical justifications can be seen at multiple levels within his professional practice.

These impacts, from their experiences in a land-based FLC program, are strikingly similar to the holistic benefits associated with experiential education. Dewey's (1998/1897) educational philosophy engaged the whole person in preparation for their full participation in a democratic society. This holistic pedagogical approach is akin to the kind of land-based learning experiences Molly and John shared in this study, when they were learning from and with local Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members. Hahn, the founder of the outdoor educational movement known as Outward Bound, believed one of the central purposes of education was to develop individuals holistically in order to serve the community (James, 1980). Molly's and John's experiences have made visible the value of holistic learning – the engagement of the learner's mind, heart, body, and spirit. Molly's relationship with Grandmother

Doreen also made visible the importance of reciprocity in relationship; Grandmother Doreen made it clear that Molly had to do her own work and demonstrate her commitment to learning in order for them to continue working and learning together. This orientation towards giving back – or what Hahn called ‘community service’ – is a central tenet and way of being for many Indigenous people, so much so that Indigenous postsecondary student success is greater among those who are motivated to give back to their communities once they get their degrees (Lopez & Tachine, 2021). The Indigenous teaching ‘to give back’ is rooted in values of community-based relationships and reciprocity, as well as nation-building (Lopez & Tachine). Freire’s (2021/1973) philosophy of education contended that the flattening of hierarchies between teachers and students would develop the kind of learning relationships or communities that translate into society’s liberation. Non-hierarchical relationships within the FLC on Indigenization as well as between the FLC members and local Indigenous community members were demonstrated in several of Anthony’s, John’s, and Molly’s stories of experience in this study. For instance, the consultative and learner-agency facilitation approaches that the FLC co-facilitators used effectively flattened the hierarchy that might have been present among academic colleagues based on role, subject matter expertise, and years of experience.

As Itin (1999) asserted, Dewey’s, Hahn’s, and Freire’s educational philosophies converge within our contemporary understanding of experiential education, which is a holistic philosophy, where carefully chosen experiences supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis, are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results, through actively posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, constructing meaning, and integrating previously developed knowledge.

Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, politically, spiritually, and physically in an uncertain environment where the learner may experience success, failure, adventure, and risk taking. The learning usually involves interaction between learners, learner and educator, and learner and the environment. It challenges the learner to explore issues of values, relationships, diversity, inclusion, and community. (p. 93)

Itin's definition of experiential education aligns with Molly's, Anthony's, and John's educational experiences in the FLC on Indigenization. This understanding of experiential education also aligns with my experience as a White, settler-Canadian unlearning and learning to decolonize and Indigenize within higher education contexts and as a life practice within White supremacist, settler-colonial Canada.

Beyond John's, Anthony's, Molly's, and my practical learning, the findings presented in this doctoral dissertation have implications for educational development practices and faculty engagement with professional learning in Canadian higher education. The stories shared by Molly, Anthony, and John, all discuss the value of their learning experiences within the FLC on Indigenization, and they each identify the significance of the land-based, experiential component to the FLC program. Molly and John indicate that this experiential component is essential and the source of their most significant learning, while Anthony acknowledges that his experience may have been more impactful had he been able to participate in the experiential, land-based portions of the FLC program. Land-based pedagogies are an Indigenous educational practice intended to (re)connect Indigenous People with their ancestral homelands; these ways of teaching and learning are part of Indigenous resurgence movement in Canada (Coulthard, 2017; Coulthard & Simpson, 2016) and have "emerged in Indigenous higher education systems, since at least the 2000s" (Drouin-Gagné, 2021, p. 55). Wildcat, McDonald, Irlbacher-Fox, and

Coulthard (2014) call for this land-based, Indigenous knowledges resurgence alongside settler reckoning with the damage and destruction of settler colonialism. This settler reckoning is part of what Molly and John shared that they learned from their land-based FLC experiences.

Additionally, underpinning the experiences that Molly, Anthony, and John share through this narrative inquiry, is an understanding that the FLC on Indigenization filled a gap in their professional learning. Thus, how might similar FLCs, designed with land-based and experiential learning principles, in partnership with local Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members, fill the professional learning needs of academics, in Canadian higher education, seeking to decolonize and Indigenize their teaching and curricular practices? Might there be merit in partnering local Indigenous, land-based pedagogies with Western approaches to experiential learning and outdoor education, such as those practiced in Outward Bound³⁹ and Forest School Canada⁴⁰? How might these holistic educational approaches support decolonizing and Indigenizing efforts within Canadian higher education? Could the European-based outdoor education programs provide a Western-knowledge example for non-Indigenous academics learning to decolonize and Indigenize? Perhaps these examples could help settler academics during the transitional, code switching stage of the learning process. This notion of code switching might also be understood as transsystemic thinking or what Jukier (2018) refers to as transsystemic pedagogy. As practiced in the Faculty of Law at McGill University, transsystemic pedagogy is “pluralist, polycentric, non-positivist, and interactive” (p. 4). According to Drouin-Gagné (2021), a transsystemic approach invites deeper, dialogical thinking that engages different

³⁹ Outward Bound is an organization that was founded by Kurt Hahn in Europe. Outward Bound Canada is a charitable organization that tailors to youth learners (Outward Bound Canada, 2021).

⁴⁰ Forest School Canada is an initiative of the Child and Nature Alliance of Canada (Child Nature Canada, 2021). The Forest School movement began in Scandinavia and promotes holistic growth through hands-on experiences in nature (Forest School Association, 2021).

knowledge systems. Seeking to understand another mode of thinking triggers questioning of one's own mode of thinking, opening space for new insights and deeper understanding of both knowledge systems (Jukier). Code switching, a term borrowed from the field of linguistics, is a skill performed by bilinguals and polyglots; when switching between language varieties (or codes), they produce a discourse which blends or refers to two of more codes in their language repertoire (Myers-Scotton, 2017; Nilep, 2006). When settler academics learn to code switch between the Western knowledge system and Indigenous knowledge systems, it will invite critical reflection about Western frameworks and develop capacity for seeing the world in new ways. Indigenous People have been code switching and thinking transsystemically since first contact with European settlers (Hanna, 2019); the settler initiative to respectfully engage in learning about Indigenous knowledges is a move towards reconciliation, a move towards establishing reciprocal relationship with Indigenous People (Hanna).

Unfolding Social and Theoretical Justifications

In the proposal-writing stage of this doctoral work, I acknowledged that while narrative inquiry is not considered social action research, the topic of this particular narrative inquiry has an undeniable undercurrent of change for social justice. On further exploration of the literature, I found that narrative inquiry – and the process of thinking narratively with stories of experience – supports a turn away from dominant narratives and opens the imagination to new insights and possibilities (Caine, Steeves, Clandinin, Estefan, Huber, & Murphy, 2018). Because of its relational ethic and its grounding in pragmatism, when issues of injustice are shared in narrative inquiry, the process compels the narrative inquirer to consider future action that might create just conditions as the stories of experience continue to unfold (Caine, Steeves, Clandinin et al.). Once a story of suffering or injustice has been shared, this knowledge holds power, evokes

compassion, and urges responsible action (Caine, Steeves, Clandinin et al.). The processes of decolonizing and Indigenizing teaching and curricular practices in higher education not only require change within the academy, but are bound to have transformative impacts on Canadian society as well. After all, the university is situated within society, serves society, and benefits from the contributions of community members and tax payers. Once Canada has heard the truth about Indigenous experiences within the settler-colonial state, knowledge of these truths hold power, evoke emotions, and can compel careful response and responsible action. Conventional or predictable responses and actions may not be appropriate or effective. In narrative inquiry, experiences are understood as being in the midst, and that lives are always in the making, in process (Caine, Steeves, Clandinin et al.). In the midst of a life in the making, there is room to imagine possibilities and this spaciousness is empowering, dynamic, acknowledges agency, and opens towards the making of more socially just future experiences (Caine, Steeves, Clandinin et al.).

At this juncture in Canadian history, the university has the opportunity to become a leader in decolonizing, Indigenizing, and moving towards reconciliation with Indigenous people. This opportunity for universities or the higher education sector to lead Canadian society towards reconciliation is not the point or the purpose of decolonizing and Indigenizing. I now understand that the legitimacy of a university's leadership in decolonizing and Indigenizing work is contingent on the quality of the institution's renewed relationship with the local Indigenous Peoples, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community members, scholars, and students in the territory where the university is situated. Without engaging in and committing to relationship renewal, the university cannot begin to know how to lead this work. Furthermore, it is likely that for a university's leadership to be effective, it will need to take the form of co-leadership or, at

least be guided by Indigenous leaders. This kind of partnership will only be possible if and when the university does the work of building new, just, reciprocal relationships with local Indigenous communities that centre the Indigenous knowledge systems, ways of being, pedagogies, and community-identified priorities.

Given the social justice nature of the topic of this study, its findings hold implications for all members of Canadian society. At the university, this study is relevant to students because their learning and development is at the centre of the university's purpose, to faculty because they are the members of the university community who design and facilitate student learning experiences, and to staff members because they develop and implement systems in support of student learning, faculty development, and knowledge creation. In particular, this study has implications for educational developers, as it may offer insights for supporting academics who seek to decolonize and Indigenize their practices. For decision makers involved in higher education, such as mid-level and senior leaders and boards of governors, the results of this study may help to orient processes and priorities in university management and governance, in order to align them with decolonizing and Indigenizing practices. Government and elected officials, as well as community and industry partners, may wish to learn alongside universities toward the broader societal work of decolonizing, Indigenizing, and moving towards reconciliation. The TRC's (2015) *Calls to Action* hold implications for all sectors, communities, and individuals within Canadian society; thus, this study's findings may serve to support all who are engaging with and learning how to decolonize, Indigenize, and move towards reconciliation within their own spheres.

From a theoretical perspective, this study invites settlers, particularly settler academics, to actively engage, on epistemological and ontological levels, with our own unlearning and re-

education about Indigenous knowledges, to begin to build new relationships with Indigenous people – at the individual and community levels – within the territories where we live, learn, work, and play, and to question, challenge, dismantle, and replace policies, structures, and systems that uphold and perpetuate colonial relationships and White supremacist, settler-colonialism.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

In this section, I return to the ethical consideration and limitations of this study, particularly those that arose during the data gathering and analysis phases of the study. For this exploration, I return to a discussion of the relational ontology in narrative inquiry, to the question of anonymization of people and places in the study findings, and to the place of White settler scholars' engagement with decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation.

Relational Ontology

Ethical considerations in research are often mistaken for research ethics procedures established by institutional ethics boards. While the monitoring of research ethics at an institutional level is of critical importance, in narrative inquiry (and arguably in all research studies), ethical considerations are an integral part of research practice, an ontological commitment (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009) to which narrative inquirers attend throughout the study. In this narrative inquiry, the ethical consideration that left the strongest impression on me arose most poignantly during the stage of moving from field texts to interim research texts (narrative accounts) and it continued to stir within me throughout the co-composing process with research participants-turned-co-inquirers. This ethical consideration pertained to the presence and subsequent written representation of individual Indigenous people and Indigenous communities within John's, Molly's, and Anthony's stories of experience. This ethical dilemma

emerged gradually through the process of determining whether or not research participants wished to be identified themselves.

Anonymization

Specifically, while I was drafting the interim research texts, I wondered what choices Anthony, Molly, and John would make with respect to identifying themselves, their institutions, and the people, places, and communities that appeared in their stories of experience. We had briefly discussed these questions at the start of our research journey, but had intentionally left their decisions until a later stage in the research and writing process. They knew from the beginning that they would each have the choice to either reveal their own identity or have their identity anonymized. But as this process unfolded, I realized that what one participant decided might affect another participant, and I had not accounted for this dilemma in the design of the study. If one participant chose to be identified and another chose to be anonymized, because all the participants were involved in the FLC on Indigenization at the same university, it might be easy to identify the anonymized participant through the identified participant's identity and institutional affiliation. I wondered if I should have incorporated into the research design an opportunity for all the research participants to come together, and to reach a collective decision. I did not implement this research design change. Instead, I let the process unfold organically, or perhaps, randomly. The first research participant decided to be anonymized. Once that decision was made, when I met with subsequent participants to co-compose their respective narrative accounts, when it came to this part of our conversation, unprompted, they each asked me what other participants had chosen to do: self-identify or be anonymized? Because the first participant I had met with chose anonymity, out of respect for their colleague, each subsequent participant chose to do the same. Thus, Anthony, Molly, and John are all assigned pseudonyms, that they

chose for themselves. In keeping with their decisions to be anonymized, they also anonymized their institutional affiliation, as well as its specific location.

As we made these decisions in one-on-one conversations, we also discussed how to name the people and places mentioned in the narrative accounts. In particular, we wondered together about naming the Indigenous people, places, and communities. We acknowledged that by choosing to anonymize Indigenous people and their lands, we might be perpetuating the pan-Indigenous myth, a prevalent error that assumes all Indigenous people are the same. We also talked about the importance of naming specific Indigenous-identifying people by their name and community identities in order to honour their specific contributions, knowledges, and identities. Anthony, Molly, John, and I each expressed a desire to recognize the significance of the particular Indigenous individuals who influenced their FLC experiences and/or any of our experiences in relationship with Indigenous individuals, outside the FLC on Indigenization. We also wanted to name the specific territories, in keeping with a practice of genuine and personal land acknowledgements, and our settler relationships to the lands where we respectively live, learn, work, and play.

We also talked about whether or not to identify the settler individuals who appeared in the narrative accounts. Throughout these conversations, we attended to the particular relationships we each have with the individuals, communities, places, and lands about which we were sharing our stories. Ultimately, we decided to anonymize all the individuals and communities that appeared in the narrative accounts, apart from me – the principal investigator, whose name appears as the author of this study. In terms of place names and land acknowledgements, we also chose to anonymize places to the extent that that was possible, in order not to reveal the institutional affiliation of the three research participants. Thus, in the

narrative accounts, when place names are used, it is because those places were not specifically connected to the institution or the individuals in the narratives. We accepted the imperfection and limitations of all these decisions.

Amendment to Anonymizations

A change to the anonymization plan arose in the review of my draft dissertation. In conversation with my doctoral supervisory committee, two wonders were raised about Molly's narrative account: 1) why did Molly refer to the Elder with whom she is in relationship as "my Elder," and, in turn, why did I refer to the Elder as "her Elder;" 2) why is the Elder not named? While Molly and I had accepted the limitations of anonymization in this narrative account, when these questions were raised for me, I felt awful. I struggled to live into the pain of my decision, tears streaming down my face, as I listened to my committee members express their concerns and share with me the effect of a possessive pronoun used in reference to an Elder. I thought back to the conversations Molly and I had had about these issues; I tried to make sense of it without making excuses for myself. I knew I had to take responsibility for this error in judgement.

To do that, it was important for me to honour my relationship with Molly by asking to revisit these questions with her. She generously made time to meet virtually with me, on short notice, and we spent hours in conversation, piecing together how we had come to these anonymization choices. "My Elder" had been part of the anonymization process. It was not the natural way that Molly referred to the Elder with whom she was/is in relationship. "Her Elder," when used in my voice in the narrative account, was also replacing what had originally been the Elder's name. Molly and I re-discussed the problematic of anonymization. Once again, we were confronted with the dissonance between Western research epistemologies and ontologies and

Indigenous ways of knowing and being. To return to this dilemma, we delved deep into our stories of experience, our stories, as White settlers, of learning about being in renewed relationship with Indigenous people. We explored the painful work of unsettling ourselves, humbling ourselves, and learning to do better. We also discussed what it takes to sustain ourselves emotionally and spiritually through this challenging work and expressed appreciation for the friendship that has grown between us, that we intend to continue to nurture, beyond this research study. “Decolonization work needs a strong heart” (Vaudrin-Charette, Baron Cohen, & Souza, 2021, p. 99) and caring companions. And, so, Molly and I made the decision to consult with Grandmother Doreen about Molly’s narrative account.

I was not involved in that communication. Molly contact Grandmother Doreen and shared with her the narrative account based on her stories of experience. Once Grandmother Doreen had read and responded to the narrative account, Molly emailed me with her response, which was this: "Of course Julie may refer to me as Grandmother Doreen [...] Thank you for the document you shared. I loved the read and the respect you both showed through out the paper [sic]" (Personal communication, 2021). With that, Molly and I revised the narrative account, returning the text to its original so that everywhere we had anonymized Grandmother Doreen as “my Elder” and “her Elder” it now reads “Grandmother Doreen.”

I am so grateful to Molly and Grandmother Doreen for taking the time to work with me to make this part of the writing better. I share this part of the editing process here because it is a significant part of my learning journey, as a White settler, who wants to do the right thing, but sometimes gets things wrong. In these instances, I am grateful for the generosity and patience of my supervisory committee members, who continue to guide me and wait for me to learn the lessons I have to learn. I also appreciate the open-hearted way in which Molly and Grandmother

Doreen attended to my stumbling, helping me to pick myself back up again and to learn, once again, the monumental importance of relationship. I could not do this work without such kind teachers, co-learners, and companions.

Nothing About Us, Without Us

The phrase ‘nothing about us, without us’ appeared, in the English language, in 1998 as a book title about disability rights (Charlton, 1998), but the term dates back to the 1500s, and its use as part of political movements in Eastern Europe (Khedr & Etmanski, 2022). It has been adopted by several social and political movements, including Indigenous communities, and for good reason (Khedr & Etmanski, 2022). The history of exploitative research in Indigenous communities has led to justifiably strict research ethics guidelines established by Indigenous communities. The government of Canada’s Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics has also instituted Chapter 9 in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2, 2018), specifically addressing expectations for research involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada (TCPS2). However, these guidelines do not address studies, such as this one, exploring the stories of non-Indigenous settlers who are learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Thus, the ethical dilemma that arose in this study around representation of Indigenous people requires careful consideration.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the decisions about anonymization of Indigenous people and lands in this study did not come easily and we all (Anthony, John, Molly, and I) acknowledged the tensions we felt in reaching these decisions. While I stand by these decisions and the revised decisions, I am acutely aware of the inadequacy of anonymization, and the limitations it inevitably imposes on this study. Interestingly, I did not feel challenged by the decision to anonymize the settler individuals who appeared in the narrative accounts as

colleagues or friends. This is a standard practice in the Western academy – do not name people who are not involved in the research study. But what about erasure of Indigeneity? Do these Western research ethics practices account for Ermine’s (2007) “ethical space?” What would it take to do better than anonymization in this research study? Western research ethics tenets help me to make sense of the anonymization of Indigenous people in this study, but making sense of it is different from feeling fully at ease with it. We did not invite the particular Indigenous people who arose in the narrative accounts to participate in this study; we did not consult with them (with the exception of Grandmother Doreen). And for these reasons we have no right to name them. I wondered about inviting them to participate. In fact, I discussed this wonder with some of the research participants. Would it be possible to invite particular Indigenous people who were central to their narrative accounts to read, revise, and approve the texts? This invitation would have given those particular Indigenous individuals the opportunity to decide for themselves whether or not to be identified in the texts and how they would be represented. These discussions were mitigated by logistical challenges in contacting the Indigenous individuals, not least of which were the geographic and COVID-19 pandemic constraints at the time we considered extending these invitations. And, although Molly and I experienced ease in communication with Grandmother Doreen, in the case of John’s narrative account, such rapid communication via email was not possible. John did not have an ongoing relationship with the Elder who had led the sweat lodge experience in which he participated. While Molly met regularly with Grandmother Doreen, John had only met the Elder in his stories of experience one time.

In the end, this study is not about the anonymized Indigenous-identifying individuals and communities who appear in the narrative accounts. The study is about John’s, Molly’s, Anthony’s, and my experiences – all White settlers. But this reality brings into focus the fact that

this study – which is about decolonizing and Indigenizing higher education – is told by White settlers, about White settlers, through White settler lenses. The expression ‘nothing about us, without us’ rings through my ears. True – this study is not directly about Indigenous people; it is about White settlers who are learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being. But, how can I conduct a research study about four White settlers’ engagement with decolonizing and Indigenizing the academy without involving and partnering with Indigenous people?

At the proposal stage of this study, I recognized the glaring absence of Indigenous voices in this study and I wanted to address this absence by engaging with Indigenous colleagues and Elders. To this end, I engaged with Indigenous-identifying classmates and professors throughout this study, and four of them became important response community members for me. I also worked to develop relationship with Elders throughout my doctoral studies, and mentioned in Molly’s narrative account that I experienced some ‘false starts’ in the process. It’s not a simple matter of asking an Elder to work with me and having them say yes. The process involves building relationship over time, and allowing the connection with an Elder to unfold naturally. This process was especially challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic, when in-person meetings were not possible.

In conversation with my doctoral supervisory committee, the question arose about the section in Molly’s narrative account in which she shares her experience of a Bundle Opening Ceremony. Concern was raised about two White settler Canadians writing about Bundles. As with the question about anonymizing Grandmother Doreen, this question invited me into unsettling ground, to learn more deeply, to interrogate my settler choices, assumptions, and action. I learned through this conversation that Bundles are so deeply sacred even Bundle Keepers, who have permission to talk about Bundles, seldom do. Bundles are considered to be

living and the care of a Bundle is a sacred, life-long honour. Through discussion with my supervisory committee and with Molly, and especially on the advice of Dr. Steinhauer, we have left Molly's experience at a Bundle Opening Ceremony in her narrative account, because it was a significant experience for her and it came up as such, very genuinely, in her sharing. Although we made this choice, we returned to that section of the narrative account to redact it further, in order to emphasize Molly's experience, and remove any information that may be sacred, secret, or considered a teaching about Bundles. We understand that it is not our place to pass on knowledge about Bundles and we have no intention of teaching about Bundles through the sharing of Molly's experience at a Bundle Opening Ceremony.

I share this part of my dissertation learning journey because it is another example of my stumblings and inadequacies in the work of decolonizing, Indigenizing, and moving towards reconciliation. Once again, I would not have been able to learn these lessons without the Indigenous and non-Indigenous professors and colleagues who took the time to share their knowledge with me, to trust me with their stories, and to trust me to do better with what I learn.

I have been especially fortunate to have had the chance to build relationship with Indigenous-identifying classmates, professors, and Elders over the past five years, during my doctoral studies. I have listened carefully and attentively to their stories, questions, wonders, and gentle nudges. Their voices ring through me, influencing my ways of thinking and being. Their voices reverberate in my interpretations of the field texts, my drafting of the interim research texts, and my negotiating of the co-composition process with Molly, Anthony, and John. In this way, particular Indigenous individuals have indirectly influenced the study findings.

New Wonders and Possibilities

In chapter 3, I discussed Gaudry's and Lorenz's (2018) theory of Indigenization as inclusion, reconciliation, and decolonization in Canadian higher education. Inclusion Indigenization addresses the need for an increase in the number of Indigenous-identifying students, faculty, and staff, but expects them to assimilate to colonial academic culture; reconciliation Indigenization seeks consensus, common ground, and equality between Indigenous and settler knowledges; and decolonization Indigenization recreates the academy, enacting a whole scale reorientation of knowledge creation and a balancing of power between Indigenous people and settlers (Gaudry & Lorenz).

I wonder with what kind of Indigenization we want to engage? An increase to Indigenous-identifying people on university campuses sounds great, but in inclusion Indigenization the assimilationist expectations are a reproduction of colonization. Both John's and Anthony's narrative accounts addressed this problem in academic hiring processes. Reconciliation Indigenization also seems quite noble. But is equality just another word for neoliberalism, which is a system that functions in symbiotic relationship with settler-colonialism? And is consensus between Indigenous and settler ways of knowing and being possible, or even desirable? Molly's, John's and Anthony's narrative accounts attest to the significant epistemological and ontological chasms that exist between Indigenous and settler ways. That leaves us with Gaudry's and Lorenz's (2018) decolonization Indigenization.

I return to my initial wonder in this study, is it possible to decolonize the university, which is a centuries old colonial institution? John's narrative account suggests that it may be possible in small acts, such as within his own classroom, where he takes decisive action to change the way he and his students engage in learning and approach the discipline of Sport

History. Molly's narrative account acknowledges that there are people and systems actively working against decolonization Indigenization. The way she responds to that is to be clear about the work she has on her own path towards decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation. She has decided not to spent her time on the other paths, that hold her back from this work within her own practice and her own life. Anthony's narrative account also expresses a recognition of and resilience when dealing with the obstacles to decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation. He has chosen to focus his energies on concrete actions that transform his own practice, his departmental practices, and the institution's governance systems, on a pathway towards decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation. None of the narrative accounts indicates an endpoint or an achievement of a wholesale transformation of the academy, that completely reorients knowledge creation and balances power between Indigenous people and settlers. Each narrative account expresses some skepticism, some caution, and yet also, clarity and resolve, that working towards these goals is vital and non-negotiable.

As I reach this stage in the research process, I wonder how we might measure progress or success along these pathways towards decolonizing, Indigenizing, and reconciliation in the academy. I wonder what it will take for those who actively and passively oppose this work to be persuaded or moved to change their positions. I wonder what will become of the university if that opposition persists. And I wonder how long Indigenous colleagues within the academy will continue the struggle. In terms of possibilities that have opened as a result of this study, I wonder about how the changes in teaching and curricular practices that Anthony, Molly, and John shared in this study translate into changes in student experiences and student learning.

Closing Thoughts

The words of Wall Kimmerer (2013) resonate for me, when she writes, “Science pretends to be purely rational, completely neutral, a system of knowledge-making in which the observation is independent of the observer” (p. 19). Nothing about this narrative inquiry has been purely rational or completely neutral. This study has been a deeply personal, emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical experience for me. At times I have wept over the pain of my own unlearning and re-education. I have ached with the agony of my own ignorance, humbled over and over again by my inadequate knowledge, and ashamed of the miseducation I received that has acted like a weapon against Indigenous people. I have been intellectually challenged by new-to-me Indigenous knowledge systems. I have been emotionally and physically exhausted by some of the relational work with which I’ve engaged. But Wall Kimmerer reminds me that we are all connected, interdependent, and this is not just about me. This lesson ripples through John’s, Molly’s, and Anthony’s narrative accounts as well. This lesson is exemplified in Wall Kimmerer’s assertion that,

the trees act not as individuals, but somehow as a collective. Exactly how they do this, we don’t yet know. But what we see is the power of unity. What happens to one happens to us all. We can starve together or feast together. All flourishing is mutual. (p. 15)

Wall Kimmerer (2013) compels me to look at the impact of settler-colonialism from a collective, rather than an individual perspective. The ongoing colonial project in the land known as Canada has done great harm to Indigenous people, communities, and lands, including all the more-than-human creatures. These harms are reprehensible and Canada must work towards repairing our relationship with Indigenous Peoples and lands. But the wrong-doing did not stop there because White supremacist, settler-colonialism also stripped settlers, like me, of the truth about this country

that presented itself as my homeland and embedded colonial reflexes into my way of thinking, being, and relating. What costs am I paying for privilege, ignorance, and division? What will it take to learn from the unity of trees of which Wall Kimmerer speaks? How, then, shall I live?

Epilogue

As I prepare for my doctoral dissertation oral defence exam this summer (2022), Pope Francis, the head of the Roman Catholic Church, has travelled from Vatican City to Canada to meet with Indigenous communities. During his visit, the Pope was expected to apologize for the Catholic Church's involvement in the genocidal project of the Indian Residential School system and the abuses inflicted against Indigenous children, families, and communities in Canada. He delivered an apology in Maskwacis, Alberta to an outdoor gathering of "thousands of Indigenous people, including survivors" (CBC News, 2022, n.p.), asking forgiveness

for the ways in which many members of the church and of religious communities cooperated, not least through their indifference, in projects of cultural destruction and forced assimilation promoted by the governments of that time, which culminated in the system of residential schools. (The Canadian Press, 2022, n.p.)

Early responses criticize the Pope's apology for failing to acknowledge the Catholic Church's institutional responsibility, for apologizing only on behalf of individual members of the Catholic Church, and for implying that the Church was merely acting on government prompts. In a written statement, Murray Sinclair, one of three former TRC Commissioners, explained that the Catholic Church was not merely acting on the state's orders, but was 'a lead co-author of the darkest chapters in the history of the land'" (Bergen, 2022, n.p.). In his statement, Sinclair articulated that,

There are clear examples in our history where the church called for the government of Canada to be more aggressive and bold in its work to destroy Indigenous culture, traditional practices and beliefs. [...] It was more than the work of a few bad actors —

this was a concerted institutional effort to remove children from their families and cultures, all in the name of Christian supremacy. (Bergen, 2022, n.p.)

Many are calling on the Pope to denounce and repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, a 15th century papal edict that was used to justify European colonization of non-Christian people and lands, including the land that became Canada (Goodyear, 2022). According to Chief Judy Wilson of the Neskonlith Indian Band in British Columbia, the Doctrine of Discovery was foundational to many of “the genocidal legislation [and] policy” in Canada, such as the *Indian Act*, the Indian reservation system, and the Indian Residential Schools system (Goodyear, 2022, n.p. sic.). Wilson argues that the Doctrine of Discovery is still used today in support of the *Indian Act*, which denies Indigenous rights to hold title to their ancestral lands (Goodyear, 2022). Communities are now waiting for the Pope to deliver his apology in Quebec City, in hopes that he will denounce the Doctrine of Discovery and apologize for the Church’s responsibility in authoring colonisation of Indigenous Peoples and lands.

As some of these events take place, here in Treaty 6 territory, where I am currently living and working, I am compelled to add this epilogue to my dissertation. These current events demonstrate how Indigenous struggle for justice continues and how Indigenous people engage in this work with courage, resolve, resilience, generosity, and grace, despite the slow pace of change. Settlers – predominantly White settlers – and colonizing institutions, such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Canadian Government, are painstakingly slow to learn and act towards decolonizing and moving towards reconciliation in relationship with Indigenous people and the land. These realities in contemporary Canadian society, including within Canadian universities, bring to light the importance of and urgency for settlers to unlearn our miseducation about Indigenous people, knowledges, and cultures, and to re-educate ourselves.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Participate in the Study

[To be sent by email with Information Sheet and Consent Form attached]

Dear colleague,

I am writing to invite you to participate in an inquiry conversation (research interview) about your experiences as a participant in the Faculty Learning Community (FLC) on Indigenization during either the 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic year at [name of institution]. If you choose to participate, the experiences you share will contribute to my doctoral research study entitled, *Living Policy: A narrative inquiry into Canadian university professors' experiences as they begin moving toward reconciliation*.

Participation involves at minimum of two conversations of 40-60 minutes each. Following the conversations, I will ask you to review draft narrative accounts I write based on our conversations.

Further details about the study can be found in the attached information sheet and consent form. Please reply to jmooney@ualberta.ca with any questions and to indicate your interest in participating.

Thank you for considering sharing your experiences with me for the purpose of this study.

Best regards,
Julie

Julie Mooney, PhD Candidate
Adult, Community, and Higher Education
Educational Policy Studies
Faculty of Education
University of Alberta
jmooney@ualberta.ca

Appendix B: Research Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Study Title: Living Policy - A narrative inquiry into Canadian university professors' experiences as they begin moving toward reconciliation

Principal Investigator: Julie Mooney, PhD Candidate, University of Alberta, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Policy Studies jmooney@ualberta.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Randolph Wimmer, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta

Funding Sources: none

Introduction

In this study the principal investigator (PI) will inquire into the experiences of participants in a faculty learning community (FLC) on Indigenization. You have been invited to participate in this study because of your participation in this educational development program either in the 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic year.

Research Purpose

Building on existing understandings and the scholarship of educational development, with particular interest in FLCs and experiential learning approaches to educational development, this narrative inquiry will explore faculty members' experiences in a FLC on Indigenization. The purpose of the study is to gain insights into the meaning that research participants make of their own experiences in this FLC.

Conditions of Participation

Individuals from two cohorts of the FLC on Indigenization, at the site of research, will be invited to participate in this study.

Study Procedures

Participation in this study will involve meeting individually with the PI to share stories of experiences, to explore the meaning you make of your participation in the FLC, and what influence, if any, it has on your efforts to Indigenize your teaching and curricular practice. The inquiry conversations will each take approximately 40-60 minutes of your time and will be audio recorded. The number of inquiry conversations in which you participate, as well as the scheduling, and location of meetings, will be negotiated between you and the PI.

The PI will use the audio recorded conversations and her own reflexive writing between inquiry conversations to draft interim research texts (narrative accounts), which will be shared with their respective research participants for review and further discussion. This will take an additional estimated 1-2 hour of your time. The total time commitment for participants is between approximately 3-5 hours, but this will be planned and negotiated individually with each participant.

Benefits of Participation

You may benefit from participation in this study by virtue of the reflexive nature of the guiding questions that will be posed to you. If you already engage in a reflective practice, you may find value in sharing this practice in a collegial conversation. There are no monetary benefits to participation in this study. Beyond fulfilling a program requirement towards the PI's doctoral

degree, the intent of this study is to contribute to further understanding FLCs, experiential approaches to educational development, and efforts to Indigenize teaching and curricular practices in higher education.

Risks of Participation

If you choose to participate, you will determine what elements of your experience you share. No known or reasonably foreseeable harms (physical or psychological) are anticipated from participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The PI is the only person who will have access to identifiable data in this study. Every effort will be made to protect the identity of the individuals participating in this study. Your identity and your institutional affiliation will not be shared publicly. To protect your identity a pseudonym will be assigned. After your narrative account has been completed and you have approved it, if you decide that you would like to be identified in the study findings, you will have the option to add an amendment to that effect to your consent form.

Data Storage

Digital data for this study will be stored on the PI's laptop computer, which is password protected and used exclusively by the PI. Digital data files will be backed up on the PI's password protected Google Drive, through her University of Alberta account. Please note that this may mean data are stored on servers outside the University of Alberta, outside of Canada, and, as such, neither the PI nor the University can guarantee protection against disclosures as a consequence of foreign laws. Any analog data (paper copies) for this study will be stored securely at the PI's private residence.

Use of Data and Findings

The findings arising from this study will be communicated in the form of a doctoral dissertation, submission to scholarly journals for publication, and public presentations within the PI's professional networks. Other forms of public communication of the research findings may include audio and visual representations of the final research texts. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as per the University of Alberta policy.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is completely voluntary.

Freedom to Withdraw Participation

You will have the opportunity to withdraw from this study at any time prior to completion of the review process (approved narrative accounts). Once the review process has been completed and you have approved the narrative accounts, the data will be considered final. If you choose to withdraw your participation prior to completion of the review process, please contact the PI by email to request that your data be removed from the study. The PI will respond to your email to confirm that your data has been removed and all copies destroyed.

Research Ethics Approval

The plan for this study has been reviewed and approved by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta (ID No. Pro00098956) and by a Research Ethics Board at the site of research. If you have any questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can contact the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615. This office is independent of the PI for this study.

Statement of Consent

I certify that I have read the above information, understand the risks, benefits, responsibilities and conditions of participation in this study, as outlined in this document, and I freely consent to participate in the study entitled: Living Policy - A narrative inquiry into Canadian university professors' experiences as they begin moving toward reconciliation.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For the purpose of protecting my identity in the dissemination of results from this study, (please sign your initials to show agreement).

_____ I give the PI permission to assign a pseudonym to my data.

With regards to public sharing of the study findings, (please sign your initials to show agreement).

_____ I give the PI permission to communicate the narrative accounts and final research texts (study findings) in academic publications and presentations, as well as in non-academic audio, visual, and/or textual representations.

Appendix C: Research Instrument - Guiding Prompts for Inquiry Conversations

Research Puzzle

What are the experiences of Canadian university professors participating in a FLC on Indigenization of their teaching and curricular practices?

Guiding Prompts

1. Describe what led you to join the FLC on Indigenization.
2. Describe a significant learning experience you had during your participation in the FLC on Indigenization.
3. Tell me about your experience of the seminar-style discussion component of the FLC.
4. Tell me about your experience of the experiential components of the FLC (land-based, community-based, led by Indigenous community partners).
5. Share an artefact (photo, reflexive writing, object) from your participation in the FLC on Indigenization, that is meaningful to you. Tell me the story behind this artefact.
6. What is important to you about your participation in the FLC on Indigenization?
7. What does it mean for you to move towards reconciliation in your teaching and curricular practices?
8. What is Indigenization of teaching and curricular practice?
9. Following your participation in the FLC on Indigenization, describe any significant changes in your teaching or curricular practices.

Appendix D: Research Ethics Certificates from REB 1, The University of Alberta**Notification of Approval**

Date: May 12, 2020
Study ID: Pro00098956
Principal Investigator: [Julie Mooney](#)
Study Supervisor: [Randolph Wimmer](#)

Living Policy:

Study Title: A narrative inquiry into Canadian university professors' experiences
as they begin moving toward reconciliation

Approval Expiry Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Approved Consent Form: Approval Date: 5/12/2020 Approved Document: [Appendix B - Research participant information sheet and consent form - revised 12May2020.pdf](#)

Thank you for submitting the above study to the Research Ethics Board 1. Your application has been reviewed and approved on behalf of the committee.

Any proposed changes to the study must be submitted to the REB for approval prior to implementation. A renewal report must be submitted next year prior to the expiry of this approval if your study still requires ethics approval. If you do not renew on or before the renewal expiry date, you will have to re-submit an ethics application.

Approval by the Research Ethics Board does not encompass authorization to access the staff, students, facilities or resources of local institutions for the purposes of the research.

Sincerely,

Anne Malena, PhD
Chair, Research Ethics Board 1

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).

Notification of Approval (Renewal)

Date: April 19, 2021
Amendment ID: Pro00098956_REN1
Principal Investigator: [Julie Mooney](#)
Study ID: MS1_Pro00098956
Living Policy:
Study Title: A narrative inquiry into Canadian university professors' experiences
as they begin moving toward reconciliation
Supervisor: [Randolph Wimmer](#)
Approval Expiry Date: Monday, April 18, 2022

Thank you for submitting this renewal application. Your application has been reviewed and approved.

This re-approval is valid for one year. If your study continues past the expiration date as noted above, you will be required to complete another renewal request. Beginning at 30 days prior to the expiration date, you will receive notices that the study is about to expire. If you do not renew on or before the renewal expiry date, you will have to re-submit an ethics application.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Kordov, REB Specialist, on behalf of

Anne Malena, PhD
Chair, Research Ethics Board 1

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).