



WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT BRYCE

Courageous Conversations with Bobby Henry and Guests

- EPISODE #3 -

EPISODE #3

HOST: BOBBY HENRY

Stanley (Bobby) Henry, OCT, is of the Ball Deer Clan. He is a member of the Cayuga Nation, a nation of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. He is a community member of Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and has spent 15+ years of his life in K-12 Cayuga language immersion education. He is a Ph.D. student in Trent University's Ph.D. program in Indigenous Studies and holds a Master of Education degree in Indigenous Education from Lakehead University. Bobby is an Assistant Professor in Brock University's Faculty of Education. His research interests are issues in Indigenous education, Indigenous language pedagogies and regeneration, and decolonizing and Indigenous PK-12 education.

GUESTS: DR. GAIL LAFLEUR AND DON COUCHIE

Dr. Gail Lafleur, Gitigaaningkwe-Garden Woman, is a member of Nipissing First Nation, Mink Clan. Her understanding of the importance of sharing our gifts comes from our original teacher and Elder-Shkagamik-kwe (Mother Earth). She would like to honor her traditional teachings from the Elders through sharing this gift of hope to future generations.

Don Couchie is a member of Nipissing First Nation. He has been an Anishinaabemowin language teacher for the last twenty years and continues to teach for the York Region District School Board. He has been active in the art, music and language communities for most of his life. He continues to be active in Anishinaabemowin art, literature and music projects with friends, family and community.



KEY THEMES DISCUSSED:

Intergenerational Trauma:

When we speak about how intergenerational trauma affects Indigenous Peoples, what we refer to is the multigenerational “cumulative, and chronic trauma, injustices, and oppression” experienced by Indigenous individuals, families, and communities (National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health [NCCIH], 2023). The impacts of chronic trauma “reverberate through individuals, families, communities and entire populations, resulting in a legacy of physical, psychological, and economic disparities that persist across generations” (NCCIH, 2023).

It is essential that we take the ongoing effects of Canada’s history of residential schools seriously in how we understand the persistent impacts on Indigenous peoples and communities. Such recognition must include listening, learning, and actively putting effort and resources toward supporting the mental health, well-being, material living conditions, and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples living in Canada.

Residential schools intentionally disrupted elements of Indigenous peoples’ culture, language, traditions, and familial stability. Today, many Indigenous peoples living in the country called Canada, are working to “rebuild their bundle.” The resiliency of Indigenous peoples living in Canada is profound and complex. As educators, we must ensure that all people at every age are being nourished mentally, physically, and spiritually in their own ways. This reflective understanding is the pathway forward. It is time to “put down the magnifying glass and pick up the mirror” (Gail Lafleur, personal communication, 2023); non-Indigenous people must look in that mirror to reflect on their positions and privileges, and to think what they are doing to answer the calls of Indigenous peoples and communities to be in solidarity with them. Educators must also engage in the nuanced work of recognizing the impacts of intergenerational trauma while highlighting the joys, resistances, and strengths within generations of Indigenous peoples.

A Strengths-Based Approach to Education:

As Dr. Lafleur says in this episode, intergenerational trauma is experienced differently by everyone. There is no “defined” experience. The experiences of residential school survivors can look, sound, and feel different. The experience of trauma can look, sound, and feel different across the generations that follow residential school survivors—their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and beyond. Dr. Lafleur highlights the power of Indigenous voices and the importance of elevating them. This episode emphasizes that when we discuss intergenerational trauma and Indigenous education in the classroom, it is also important to highlight that trauma is not the only experience of Indigenous peoples and communities: there is joy, strength, community, resistance, power, and brilliance — in the past, present, and as there will be in the future.

For Non-Indigenous learners in the classroom, engaging in this learning involves centering and prioritizing Indigenous voices and stories as told by Indigenous peoples, whether that be listening to their Indigenous peers or members of their wider community. Non-Indigenous educators should be conscientious and intentional about including Indigenous perspectives in the classroom that are not always centred on trauma and pain.

Centering Indigenous voices and experiences is also critical for Indigenous students, who must also be able to see themselves reflected within the narratives, perspectives, languages, and approaches they learn about and through.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. How does Canada’s colonial history, including residential schools, continue to impact the mental, physical, and spiritual health of Indigenous peoples and communities today?
2. What do you think is meant by the phrase “rebuilding the/your bundle”?
3. Based on what the guests shared in the episode, how can non-Indigenous people support the “rebuilding” of Indigenous bundles?
4. Why is it critical that we understand Indigenous peoples’ experiences as varied, rather than assuming that their experiences with intergenerational trauma are exactly the same?

TEACHER NOTE:

Trauma-Informed Teaching Practices

Teaching with a trauma-informed approach is critical when integrating topics such as intergenerational trauma into the classroom setting. Educators should be aware when they are teaching that all students have the potential to carry past or present trauma. Teachers should know their student's learner profiles and work to develop relationships with their students to help them best feel supported in the classroom, emotionally, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

When using a trauma-informed teaching approach, educators are encouraged to think critically about the content they are teaching, who is consuming the information, and how their environment can be adaptive and supportive of students' triggers. Educators should be aware that trauma plays a role in the learner's experiences, and therefore, when using a trauma-informed teaching practice, educators are being reflective practitioners who continually think about how to mitigate triggers and eliminate inequalities in the classroom environment.

Educators should think about how activities such as the one listed above would run with their students, and adapt the exercise as necessary. A trauma-informed approach does not eliminate challenging conversations. Instead, a trauma-informed teaching practice recognizes teaching as an ongoing process of reflection and adaptation. By utilizing a trauma-informed

teaching practice, all students should feel a sense of trust, safety, support, collaboration, empowerment, and responsiveness (Trauma-informed Care Implementation Resource Center, 2021).

For more information about trauma-informed practices, please see the **LEARNING GUIDE FROM EPISODE TWO (2) in this podcast series.**

Teachers should be reminded that even when teaching with a trauma-informed approach, we cannot predict the emotions or potential hidden trauma and experiences of our students. To ensure that you are prepared as an educator, it is important to provide time after the lesson for a debrief. In this debrief students should have the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment, as well as have access and space to use mental well-being supports. Provide students with a list of mental health and well-being strategies and resources they can access within and outside of the classroom, including supports such as their families, their community, guidance counsellors, homeroom advisors, etc.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES **BEFORE** LISTENING:

Part 1:

Provide students with chart paper and divide them into small groups of 3-4 students. Ask students to set up a **Frayer Model** organizer on the chart paper. Ask the students to **define the word “intergenerational trauma”** as they understood it based on the podcast conversation. Give students 10-15 minutes to complete the organizer. Encourage students to discuss their ideas with each other and collaborate to develop a definition, characteristics, examples, and non-examples. Ensure that for the first 10 minutes, students are using their current knowledge to complete the organizer, not information collected from new research beyond the podcast.

Part 2:

Following the 10 minutes, allow students to add new information that they have learned from brief research about the term. Ask students to write these **new ideas in a different coloured marker**. Be sure to remind students that they are not to write their names on the chart papers.

Part 3:

Ask students to post their chart papers on the classroom walls. Have students participate in a **gallery walk**. Encourage the students to think about the similarities and differences between their group’s ideas, and other groups’ ideas.

Allow students to have a small group and/or whole group discussion about what they noticed. In this conversation, clarify and ensure students leave the room with an accurate understanding of the term, and note down for yourself as a teacher any questions they have that you haven’t been able to answer or that require further conversation. Be sure to return to the students to further discuss these as a group or individually, as necessary.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES **WHILE** LISTENING:

(Suggested Grades: 6-12+)

Have students practise active listening and critically thinking about what they are listening to. **Have students create a chart to organize their thoughts during the podcast.**

Some of the possible headings could include:

- New ideas
- Ideas I already knew about
- Ideas that surprised me
- Ideas that made me [insert emotion]
- Ideas I want to learn more about

Have students write words and/or small sentences, or draw pictures to organize their ideas. When the podcast is complete, ask students to finish writing or drawing any outstanding ideas they have, or to take a few minutes to add some reflections about the podcast to their notes.

Allow students to share some of the key points they highlighted. Depending on the comfortability of your students, you can allow them to share in a whole group,

small group, or pair-and-share setting. Remind students that they have a “right to pass” of sharing their ideas. **The main goal of the activity is for students to participate in the active listening and reflection elements.**

As students practise this activity in later lessons, encourage those who felt uncomfortable sharing, to find strategies that help them act on the ideas they recorded. **Remind students of a supportive classroom environment, and that unlearning and relearning is a process that takes time.**

TEACHER NOTE:

Think about **Susan Dion’s** (2009) concept of thinking which discusses what we know, don’t know, and refuse to know. Scaffold students to think about Dion’s thinking, and reflect on how our conscious and unconscious understandings contribute to continuing or dismantling the systems we live in today.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES **AFTER** LISTENING:

(Suggested Grades: 6-12+)

Part 1: Discussions

After listening to the podcast, discuss the key themes and/or questions from above. As a whole class or in small groups, draw connections between the themes and questions and the information presented in the podcast.

TEACHER NOTE:

Encourage students to understand the perspectives being presented by Dr. Lafleur and Don Couchie in the podcast episode, the importance of listening to survivors, and the importance of storytelling.

It is critical that students understand the difference between acknowledging others' lived experiences, and reflecting on their own perspectives/lived experiences: sometimes these overlap and sometimes they don't. Try to help students recognize that intersectionality shapes our lives, our relationships with people, how we experience life, and how we interpret events and stories.

Learning through intersectionality will serve as a helpful tool for non-Indigenous people to better understand Indigenous peoples' lived and living experiences and the stories they tell and retell.

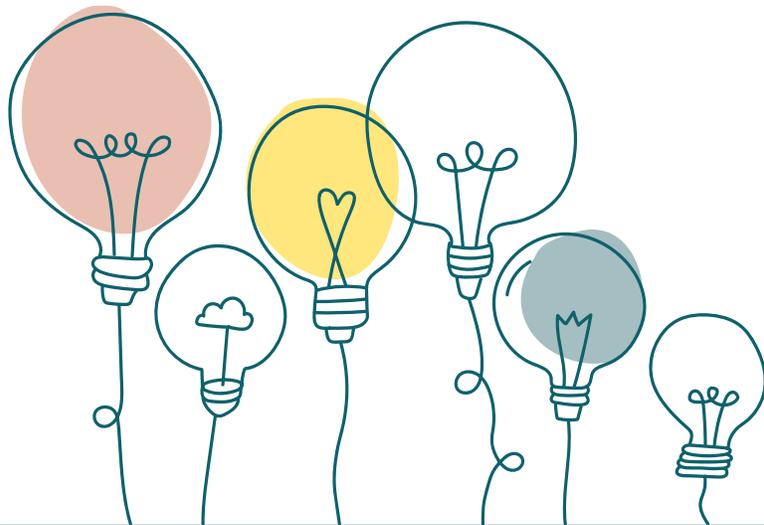
Part 2: Thinking Critically

After discussing the key themes and questions from above, have students reflect on the following question prompts. Students should aim to answer three or more of the question prompts to provide them with a wide scope of reflection. **Encourage students to write, record their thoughts, or draw visual representations to respond:**

- What does the information included in the podcast mean to me?
- What do the stories of intergenerational trauma mean to my understanding of present-day Canada?
- What does living in modern-day Canada look, feel, and sound like today? How might your experience differ from others around you? How is your experience similar?
- How are Canadians responding to Canada's historical past of residential schools and the ongoing intergenerational effects? How is this similar or different from the past? (*reference historical thinking concepts below*)
- What questions do I have and how will I find the right answers?

TEACHER NOTE:

It's important to be thoughtful with how we speak about the experiences of oppression that different people and communities experience. Support your students in avoiding comparisons between oppressions and the people who experience them. They should also avoid collapsing the nuances and differences across intersections of identities. **Non-Indigenous students and teachers should take extra care to note that Indigenous peoples in Canada face ongoing injustices and systemic barriers as a result of Canadian colonialism and its associated land dispossession, and these injustices are not the same as those faced by other marginalized peoples, even when those people are also impacted by colonialism, as we all indeed are.**



CONNECTIONS TO HISTORICAL THINKING CONCEPTS:

1. Continuity and Change
2. Cause and Consequence
3. Compare and Contrast

Suggestions for Reading:

Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit by Marie Battiste

- *Suggested grades: Grades 11-12+*

Story of Chanie Wenjack

- *Suggested grades: Grades 7-12+*

About the Medicine Wheel

- *Suggested grades: Grades 6-8 with teacher support*
- *Suggested grades: Grades 9-12+*

Oral History, Education, and Justice Possibilities and Limitations for Redress and Reconciliation by Kristina R. Llewellyn and Nicholas Ng-a-Fook (Eds.)

- *Suggested for educators*

Protecting the Promise Indigenous Education Between Mothers and Their Children by Timothy San Pedro

- *Suggested for educators and guided use in the classroom*

Braiding Histories: Learning from Aboriginal Peoples' Experiences and Perspectives by Susan D. Dion

- *Suggested for educators*

Ojibwe Elders' Experiences of Peace: To Teach Our Well-Being with the Earth by Dr. Gail Lafleur

- *Suggested for educators*

Suggestions for Watching and Listening:

Heritage Minutes of Chanie Wenjack

- *Suggested grades: Grades 6-12+*

Heritage Minutes Intergenerational Trauma: Residential Schools

- *Suggested grades: Grades 6-12+*

Additional Resources to Check Out:

Virtual Exhibition Tour-Indigenous Voice of Today: Knowledge, Trauma, Resilience

Resources Referenced in the Podcast:

- **Nourishing the Learning Spirits**
- **Picture of Thomas Moore**

References:

National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (2023). *Aboriginal Peoples and Historic Trauma. Legacy of Intergenerational Trauma*. NCCIH. Retrieved February 9, 2023.

DEFINING
MOMENTS
DÉTERMINANTS
CANADA

For more information about **Bryce@100** and other projects, visit **DefiningMomentsCanada.ca**