UNSETTLING OURSELVES: SETTLER ENGAGEMENT WITH TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

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Unsettling Ourselves: Settler Engagement with Truth and Reconciliation

5 mins  Introductions and Purpose
15 mins  Fundamental Beliefs
10 mins  For Settlers who say that they support decolonization … but wish it weren’t so hard.
5 mins  Considerations for Social Work
“Settler” refers to those of us who are not indigenous to this land - to those of us who can trace our ancestries back to people who came from other places and ‘settled’ on the land we call Canada.

As Settlers, we hold some fundamental beliefs which are foundational to our work toward Truth and Reconciliation:

Settlersinfo.org is not working – these links are active:

www.truepartnership.org/settlers-info-project-donations/
www.facebook.com/groups/Settlersinfo/
We assert that relationships among Indigenous and Settler peoples, communities, organizations, governments, and nations frequently have been, and continue to be, fractured and full of misunderstanding, suspicion, distrust, and oppression.
We believe that Settler peoples have not adequately recognized and accepted our role in creating these fractured relationships. Furthermore, we have not carried our share of responsibility for learning about or mending them, or creating new relationships.
We are encouraged by the current indications that Settler people may be willing to “Step Up” to the challenge of creating new relationships. The fact that you have signed up for this webinar is one such indication.
We appreciate that the creation of new relationships is difficult, especially given the above context. As Settler peoples, we must cultivate humility and enter into any new relationships with awareness and intention.
An essential aspect of developing awareness and attention is turning our gaze inward – including seriously considering the aspects of our own world view, culture, and practices that have contributed to the current state of the relationship between Settler and Indigenous peoples.

While anyone is welcome to be part of this webinar, our focus is on the growth of Settlers who wish to participate in decolonization and reconciliation efforts.
We acknowledge and respect that we cannot speak for Indigenous peoples. We are committed to ongoing reflection and analysis to ensure that we are ‘doing our own work’.
We understand reconciliation to be grounded in relationship - relationship at multiple and intersecting levels (personal, community, organizational, governmental, national). Our relationship to and with The Land is fundamental to reconciliation.
On, To, or With The Land?
Indigenous thought understands The Land as the sustainer of life, as central to identity, as a pharmacy, as sacred, and as home.

An Indigenous world view engages “land not as a machine, but as a community of respected non-human persons to whom humans have a responsibility... Restoring land without restoring relationship is an empty exercise” (Kimmer, 2013, p.338).
Settler thought understands land as capital, as property, as a commodity, as a natural resource to be exploited.

“...it is long established law that if one lives openly on unoccupied land without confrontation for a minimum of 20 years that land belongs to the claimant” (Reid, 2018).
The Doctrine of Discovery

This *Papal Bull* stated that any land not inhabited by Christians was available to be “discovered”, claimed, and exploited by Christian rulers. It declared that “the Catholic faith and the Christian religion be exalted and be everywhere increased and spread, that the health of souls be cared for, and that barbarous nations be overthrown and brought to the faith itself.”

This *Doctrine of Discovery* became the basis of all European claims in the Americas...
For Settlers Who Say That They Support Decolonization ...
But Wish It Weren't So Hard.
by Sheri M McConnell

Modelled after Pat Parker's 1970s poem, For The Straight Folks Who Don't Mind Gays, But Wish They Weren't So Blatant.

This piece is intended to challenge Settler peoples’ beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, and, most importantly, privilege. It was written for Settler peoples by a Settler - because we, as Settler peoples, need to take responsibility for cleaning up our messes and doing things differently.
Don't cry, decolonize!

Guilt is not a Spiritual Gift
"Privilege is when you think something is not a problem because it's not a problem to you personally."

"Sorry means you don't do it again."

"I still benefit from institutionalized racism and discrimination!"
I can’t do it

Action Changes Things

Never stop learning

Be the change you wish to see in the world.
- Mahatma Gandhi
IF YOU ARE NEUTRAL IN SITUATIONS OF INJUSTICE, YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE SIDE OF THE OPPRESSOR

- DESMOND TUTU

SPEAK从 THE HEART

Root Down Rise Up

SPEAK UP! AND BE HEARD
SPEAK UP! AND LISTEN
SPEAK UP! AND EXPRESS YOURSELF
SPEAK UP! AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE
true humility is staying teachable, regardless of how much you already know.

be humble, be teachable and always keep learning.
we are all related

We are all equal in the Great-Circle-Of-Life. No one is in front of you, no one is behind you. No one is above you, no one is below you. We are all related.

Milky Way Over Monument Valley
One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.

— BRYANT MCDILL

Change is a process, not an event.
Social Work “has originated out of and been heavily influenced by white colonial settler ways of doing, being, knowing, and relating” (Carlson, 2016, p.169).

“Social work and social workers have played (and continue to play) key roles in the colonization process in Canada” (Carlson, 2016, p.174).
Social work “has not been critically reflective of its Euro-Western assumptions, beliefs, and values, and has therefore failed to deconstruct and decolonize its own modernist professional culture” (Baikie, 2009, p.44).

Social work values, ethics, regulations, and professionalization are connected to colonizing practices in that the “universally applied code of ethics and standards of practice do not account for the contextual, cultural, and political realities for Indigenous social workers” (Baikie, 2009, p.44).
Comments
Questions
Thoughts
"THE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES BEGINS WITH A SINGLE STEP."
- LAO TZU


