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Movements Toward Living Relationally Ethical Assessment Making: Bringing Indigenous Ways of Being, Knowing, and Doing Alongside Narrative Inquiry as Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT

As teacher educators deeply committed to relational narrative inquiry and the centrality of living in relationally ethical ways alongside co-researchers, our initial turns toward living narrative inquiry as pedagogy in teacher education were inspired by wanting to live in relationally ethical ways alongside undergraduate and graduate students. Following the sudden passing in 2015 of Singing Turtle Woman—*Anishinabe kwe* Elder, scholar, and long-time friend and research collaborator Mary Isabelle Young, we often told and retold stories of how her teachings of *Pimosayta* (learning to walk together) and *Pimatisiwin* (walking in a good way) were continuing to guide us. We realized Mary's teachings opened potential in our desires to live/practice relationally ethical assessment making alongside students. As we engage in autobiographical narrative inquiry into our recent coming alongside undergraduate and graduate students, in two *Assessment as Pimosayta* courses in two differing teacher education programs in Canada, we show how our bringing Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing alongside our practicing narrative inquiry as pedagogy supported our movements toward living relationally ethical assessment making.

KEYWORDS: Narrative inquiry as pedagogy; Relationally ethical assessment making; Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing.

Movimientos Hacia La Posibilidad de Vivir Relacional y Éticamente la Evaluación: Traer Modos Indígenas de Ser, Conocer y Hacer Junto a la Vivencia de La Indagación Narrativa Como Pedagogía

RESUMEN

Como formadores de docentes profundamente comprometidos con la indagación narrativa, la aproximación que desarrollamos en el presente artículo tiene que ver con los modos en los que la indagación narrativa es vivida como pedagogía. Este modo de concebir la indagación narrativa tiene que ver con el deseo de querer vivir de manera relacional y ética junto a nuestros coinvestigadores y estudiantes de pregrado y posgrado. En 2015, tras el repentino fallecimiento de Mary Isabelle Young, *Singing Turtle Woman, Anishinabe kwe Elder*, erudita, amiga y coinvestigadora, a menudo contamos y volvemos a narrar historias de cómo sus enseñanzas siguen guiándonos. Enseñanzas de *Pimosayta* (aprendiendo a caminar juntas) y *Pimatisiwin* (caminando en el buen sentido) que se nos hacían presentes en nuestras clases e investigaciones. Compartir las enseñanzas de Mary potenció nuestros deseos de vivir y poner en práctica la creación de evaluaciones relacionalmente éticas junto con nuestros estudiantes de grado y pregrado. Asimismo, en este artículo mostramos nuestras indagaciones narrativas autobiográficas como formadores realizadas en dos programas de Formación Inicial del Profesorado en los que ponemos en juego la evaluación como *Pimosayta*. En ambos programas, situados en dos universidades canadienses diversas, reconocemos y honramos formas indígenas de ser, conocer y hacer junto con nuestras estudiantes. En este sentido, la indagación narrativa como práctica pedagógica apoya nuestros movimientos hacia la realización de evaluaciones relacionales éticas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Indagación narrativa como pedagogía; Creación de evaluaciones relacionales y éticas; Modos indígenas de hacer, pensar y ser

Introduction

Before I had quite finished my dissertation writing I applied for and successfully achieved a position as an assistant professor. When Mary heard about this, she called me. I was nervous but excited, as were all those who celebrated my success with me, but Mary was more subdued. She congratulated me but she cautioned me as to how difficult this journey I was on would be. She instructed me to be careful and to not lose touch with who I was or what I knew as a Cree/Métis woman. (Trudy's reflective writing, fall 2019)

I have long felt that assessment needs to be more relational. One year a group of disgruntled students approached me because they were

unhappy with the course being offered as part of their program. I suggested a course on assessment and Indigenous children/youth in schools, and with their support developed *Assessment as Pimosayta: Attending to experience in relational ways*. (Shaun's reflective writing, fall 2019)

In fall 2016 ... as I engaged in conversation with Marsha (pseudonym)¹ as part of a narrative inquiry into her experience of readying her young daughter Lizzy for, and during, Kindergarten, Mary's earlier teachings of the importance of attending to intergenerational narrative reverberations once again surfaced. This happened as Marsha taught me her Métis Cree understandings of *kakwe instew eemak*, try to understand someone, and the interwoven concepts of *nisitohtamowin*, understanding, and *kiskitohmawin*, knowledge, as she shared stories of herself as a child alongside her parents, family, community, and the land she is from in Northern Alberta. (Janice's reflective writing, fall 2019)

This above autobiographical narrative inquiry and this chapter comes out of our recent experiences teaching an *Assessment as Pimosayta* course. This course was originally developed for a graduate course offering but subsequently became a course for undergraduate and graduate students together.

It is clear from our research, teaching, and the literature in the field that the most essential aspect of assessment for Indigenous children/youth (and we would claim all children/youth) is relationship (Murphy, 2006; Rameka, 2007; Whelan, 1999). Earlier, Huber, Murphy, and Clandinin (2011) wrote about assessment making as something that occurs within the relationship of the children/youth and teacher. We saw this as a natural progression from Connelly and Clandinin (1988) and Clandinin and Connelly's (1992) conceptualization of curriculum making as something that happens in the teacher-child / -youth relationship. We took up their idea "of curriculum as a course of life" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, p. 393), and their understanding

¹ Marsha chose this pseudonym and the pseudonym for her daughter. Marsha has read this and the upcoming reflective writing that includes stories of her and her daughter. She has given Janice permission to share, in this written form, these stories and her Cree language and concepts.

that curriculum:

Might be viewed as an account of teachers' and students' lives together in schools and classrooms. . . . [In this view of curriculum] the teacher is seen as an integral part of the curricular process . . . in which teacher, learners, subject matter, and milieu are in dynamic interaction. (1992, p. 392)

With this understanding of curriculum, the term assessment making can be tied directly to the identity making possibilities of children/youth:

In recognizing children as curriculum makers, we also see the need to acknowledge that each child is an assessment maker as well. If assessment is integrally interwoven with curriculum, then those who make curriculum also make assessment... [Therefore, we understand] curriculum making as interwoven with assessment making and identity making. (Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin, 2011, p. 120-121)

Therein lays the need to attend to assessment in more complex, particular, and relational ways – assessment influences identity making and therefore, life making.

Narrative Inquiry as Pedagogy in Teacher Education

We three, Trudy, (Cree/Métis from northern Alberta treaty 8 working in treaty 6), Janice (non-Indigenous from northern Alberta treaty 8 working in treaty 6), and Shaun (non-Indigenous from northern Alberta treaty 6 working in treaty 6 in Saskatchewan), each came into teacher education at differing times and in different places in Canada. This transition followed opportunities to carefully study and practice narrative inquiry through masters and doctoral courses and subsequent thesis and dissertation inquiries, alongside years of participation at the Research Issues Table at the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development (CRTED) (Steeves et. al., 2009). Part of our growing into living out the relational ethical commitments of narrative inquiry as we came alongside co-researchers in narrative inquiries, was our deepening understandings that “ethical relationships [live] at the heart of inquiry” (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009, p. 600). We also see ethical relationships as living at the heart of teaching and teacher education.

As a result, our Assessment as Pimosayta course began with a focus on narrative inquiry as pedagogy. Narrative inquiry is a relational research methodology based on understandings of experience as narratively constructed and reconstructed, and therefore, as continuously shaped and

reshaped across time, place, situations, and relationships (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In *Narrative Inquiry as Pedagogy in Education: The Extraordinary Potential of Living, Telling, Retelling, and Reliving Stories of Experience*, Huber, Caine, Huber, and Steeves (2013) drew on central methodological aspects of narrative inquiry to show how these aspects can be lived out in pedagogical practice:

We want to highlight key aspects of thinking narratively, which for us, include notions of co-composing, relational ethics, multiple perspectives, tensions, not fixing and replacing but evolving and shaping, slowing down, and careful, deep attending ... These aspects of thinking narratively in narrative inquiry are entangled in the living, they do not stand separate from one another. (pp. 229-230)

These considerations and that thinking narratively requires attending to temporality, sociality, and place were foundational aspects of the Assessment as Pimosayta course, supporting us and students to consider the experiences of learners in relation with others, in specific places (like schools, and too, in their families and communities), and over time. This grounding supported us to consider the relational ethics and aspects of assessment making. However, as influential in the course development were our desires to honour and respect the friendship and scholarship of Mary Young, an Anishinabe Kwe scholar who taught at the University of Winnipeg, Canada. Mary had a heightened awareness that children, particularly Indigenous children/youth, need to be supported at school in their life making:

Knowing the educational history of Aboriginal people in Canada, as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators, we will not repeat what happened but will learn to embrace diversity in our schools and be constantly aware of what social justice means—to be respectful, to listen, to invite our students to actively participate in their learning. (Young, 2005b, p. 38)

We have found as teachers, and now as teacher educators, that the dominant narratives of assessment often fall outside the relational aspect of curriculum making earlier noted. In this way assessment becomes, in Dewey's (1938) words, mis-educative. Therefore, the challenge for us as teachers is to always consider how our assessment making practice is shaping identity-making, life-making possibilities for children/youth, adult students, and us. As we teach, we find ourselves asking what are the possibilities for storying and re-storying ourselves and one another into being; [what might be] forgotten or written over, [what are our] obligations and ways of interacting and responding to and with

one another” (Huber et. al., 2013, p. 216)?

Questions such as these have often drawn forward and supported our inquiry into our tensions (Clandinin et al., 2010) as we have asked ourselves about our immediate and long-term relational ethical responsibilities; they have also drawn us toward trying to make visible our co-composing a curriculum with graduate and undergraduate students that guides us toward educational and assessment experiences that nourish each of our learning spirits (Battiste, 2013). Encouraging creativity, risk taking, and making mistakes all become part of this ongoing process.

Too, we see autobiographical narrative inquiry as key in this process. As described by Cardinal (2011), autobiographical narrative inquiry shapes a “space...for inquiry into ... [our] stories” (p. 80) through which more than merely living out research is at work. For example:

Aboriginal epistemology is grounded in the self, the spirit, the unknown. Understanding of the universe must be grounded in the spirit. Knowledge must be sought through the stream of the inner space in unison with all instruments of knowing and conditions that make individuals receptive to knowing. Ultimately it was in the self that Aboriginal people discovered great resources for coming to grips with life’s mysteries. It was in the self that the richest source of information could be found by delving into the metaphysical and the nature and origin of knowledge. Aboriginal epistemology speaks of pondering great mysteries that lie not further than the self. (Ermine, 1995, p. 108)

As she drew on Wilson (2001), Cardinal (2011) showed that this ‘more’ is the grounding of ourselves in living in relationally ethical ways to all our relations:

As a researcher you are answering to *all your relations* when you are doing research . . . you should be fulfilling your relationships with the world around you. So your methodology has to ask different questions: rather than asking about validity or reliability, you are asking how am I fulfilling my role in this relationship? What are my obligations in this relationship? (Wilson, p. 177 as cited in Cardinal, p. 83)

In our desires to both live out alongside undergraduate and graduate students relationally ethical assessment making at the same time as we inquired with them into their coming in similar ways alongside children, youth, families, and communities, we designed the Assessment as Pimosayta course by centering Mary’s teaching us, through her lived and told stories, her Anishinaabe concept of pimosayta (learning to walk together) and the understanding that through

this learning, all beings might realize pimatisiwin (walking in a good way)². As we came alongside students, we had an embodied understanding of our need to create safe spaces as we not only inquired into relationally ethical assessment making but wanted through this process, as Mary guided us, to learn to walk together with the students and with each other. In this way, Mary shaped additional openings where we, and the student co-composers of knowledge in our courses, could take up Indigenous understandings of teaching, learning, and assessment as we collectively imagined shifting the story of education from one currently failing large populations of children/youth, particularly Indigenous learners (Bouvier & Karlenzig, 2006; Claypool & Preston, 2011), to one where teacher/teacher educator and child/youth or adult learner alike, can thrive.

Bringing Indigenous Knowledge Alongside Narrative Inquiry as Pedagogy

As co-authors, we came to our understandings of Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing in our own contexts and through our unique life experiences. As earlier noted, all three of us, were brought together initially via our connection to the CRTED and the larger international community, narrative inquiry research, and our work with narrative inquiry as pedagogy. Guided by Indigenous scholars such as Bruno (2010), Cardinal (2010, 2011, 2014), Lessard (2010, 2014), Swanson (2013, 2019), and in particular Mary (Young, 2003), we felt the resonance and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge and narrative inquiry. Mary concluded that “narrative inquiry is how Aboriginal people learn and gain knowledge” (2003, p. 25) and drew on the work of Battiste and Henderson (2000) who stated that, “Stories are enfolding lessons. Not only do they transmit validated experiences; they also renew, awaken, and honor spiritual forces. Hence, almost every ancient story does not explain; instead it focuses on processes of knowing” (p. 77).

We saw relational pedagogies such as narrative inquiry as pedagogy and Indigenous approaches to living, learning, and education (Goulet & Goulet, 2014; Hanohano, 1999; Lambe, 2003; McNally, 2004) as ways forward in creating a more wholistic (Absolon, 2010; Peltier, 2017, Huber et.al, 2013) process that honours the diverse gifts of each child and adult as they co-compose curriculum on schooling landscapes. Our purposeful choice of the

² Elder and Dr. Mary Young shared her understandings of pimosayta and pimatisiwin in the public lecture, Pimosayta (Learning to Walk Together), in the Faculty of Education, University of Regina, November 2012.

term “wholistic” is best articulated by the words of Absolon who states: “My use of the spelling wholism indicated ‘whole’ as in wholistic, complete, balanced and circular” (Absolon, 2010, p. 75). The idea of “whole” also honors four directions teachings (T. Cardinal Personal Conversation with Elder Bob Cardinal) and our desires to come alongside children, youth, families, and adult students in their and our wholeness.

As Shaun first designed his offering of the *Assessment as Pimosayta* course he was drawn to Moore’s (2017) book, *Trickster chases the tale of education*, in which she quotes Sandra Wolf, one of her teachers, who commented:

We learn as children that mistakes are sacred because they remind us that we are not the Creator and we can’t take responsibility for everything that happens. We learn by making mistakes. Indigenous learners are trial and error learners. (p. 56)

As teachers we know that assessment errors have the ability to teach us what the child/youth knows, but so often, within the dominant narrative of assessment, these are taken as indicative of lack of knowledge. Further, in Moore’s (2017) work, the learning context she shaped was around hatching salmon eggs. Context is tricky, a context that makes sense for one person might not be the same for another, but we can infuse the work with meaning. In choosing salmon hatching Moore was attending to a cultural and place-based context. She also helped us understand her work by using a story form to write about the project; her talking with crow opened the sense making space even more as she drew us into wondering if our assessment making takes into account personhood, place, community, and context.

As Trudy and Janice subsequently designed their course offering, they were drawn to Meyer (2010), who supported them to continue to think about what counts as knowledge, and the importance of autobiographical reflective practice:

If knowledge is the noun and knowing is the verb and understanding is the liberating practice, what do you want to understand in your life? Isn’t that a great question? What brings you meaning? What gives you meaning? When you do that, in the practice of deep, self-inquiry, then you hit the bottom of your own regenerative spirit. We truly know that true wealth is about giving, [that] collaboration is more of an enduring practice, and truth telling is of a higher frequency than the accumulation of facts. (Meyer, 2010)

Trudy and Janice’s intention in compiling course texts (written and

video/oral/guests) was to better honor this understanding of knowledge, as well as to create the kind of “deep learning experiences” (Steinhauer et. al., (in press) that Steinhauer calls us to create:

We need students who are engaged in deep learning. Deep learning moves beyond measuring students who are good at test taking to those who can apply knowledge in the real world (Noella Steinhauer reflecting on Fullan, Quinn, & McEachen 2017). (Steinhauer et. al., in press)

As we three took up our desires to remember, to honour, and to respect and practice Mary’s teachings alongside the openings created by the earlier referenced works in this and earlier sections of this paper, which we took up as calls to inquire into our assessment making practices, we experienced and further recognized our need to live in and with our own unease/tensions at the bumps between the relational ethical commitments we hold up as narrative inquirers alongside our also striving to better honor Indigenous relational ways of being, knowing, and doing.

What follows is our showing of our ongoing unfolding autobiographical narrative inquiries into the small fragments with which this paper began.

Continuing To Show Our Autobiographical Narrative Inquiries

Trudy’s Autobiographical Narrative Inquiry

I continue to think about the caution Mary shared, to not lose touch with who I was and what I knew as a Métis/Cree Scholar, a woman, a mother, a grandmother. What Mary taught me that day, and on many other occasions, was about my living and less about the schooling task. What she wanted me to learn was more than to achieve excellence in the “assessment tasks” be it assignments as a student, dissertations as a PhD candidate, or annual reports as a professor, rather she was teaching to my whole being and about the life that she knew I would come to live. I did not meet Mary more than a handful of times, but each experience was similar in that the academic task was never the center of our interaction. This is the understanding that I hang on to now as I inquire into assessment and I consider how my own knowing informs the ways I strive to engage in assessment making in more ethically relational ways in an institutional setting.

Looking back to this reflective writing I see how much the whole being of the learner matters to me as I come alongside others as teacher, or teacher educator but also to me as a lifelong learner. I understand educational experiences as reciprocal (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2016) and nurtured in relationship (Cardinal, 2011). One of the ways I articulate this understanding in courses I teach is to call on the 4 directions teachings I have been learning in my coming alongside Elder Bob Cardinal and Dr. Dwayne Donald. In the assessment course (Edmonton version) we included the article: *kistikwânihk êsko kitêhk: Storying Holistic Understandings in Education* (Latremouille et. al., 2016) to articulate these teachings. In the article the authors speak about a course they took guided by Elder Bob and Dwayne which "... created a sacred place for the 'four-part person' (mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual) to emerge, as [they] learned to pay deeper attention to the interconnectivity of creation in [their] educational practices" (abstract). As the students in our assessment course followed the stories of the authors in the article, they came to understand the potential of the creation of a space that honoured their whole being. Through story, through experience, and through learning alongside an Elder, we, as co-inquirers (students and Trudy and Janice) puzzled over how this kind of deep learning could be assessed in ways that we have come to understand in undergraduate and graduate courses. How would a letter grade/numeric scale fully capture the sense of educative experiences articulated below by Dwayne?

When the Elder told me that he would like to teach a university course with me, I readily agreed. However, as we began conceptualizing the course together, he repeatedly reminded me that a course focused on holistic approaches to learning must move people from their heads to their hearts, and so must be dedicated to healing. Healing? This characterization of the course process made me uncomfortable. Privately, I worried that graduate students would not be open to a process of healing and that the Elder might be disappointed. I listened to him but nuanced the course outline with the subtitle "A Curricular and Pedagogical Inquiry," so that the course process itself would seem to be more worthy of graduate studies—at least to me. I note with humility that wisdom insights guide us to realize that we often have the most to learn at the very moment that we think we have it all figured out. In this case, I was the one who had the most to learn about healing. Thankfully, the students were eager to engage with the holistic guidance of the Elder and, once I got out of the way, the course process flowed just like water over rocks. The Elder facilitated this shift inside me by

repeatedly asking this question: kiikway ot'e-ohpinaman? (What are you trying to lift?). As I now see it, holism involves honouring ourselves by honouring the various more-than-human entities that give us life. Balance comes from that honouring and from holistic balance comes the ability to act in ethically relational ways. Thus, when we lift what gives us life, we simultaneously lift all our relations. The métissage composed ... is an expression of that lifting—of learning how to be good relatives. Together, the composers traveled the holistic meskanaw (pathway) and were guided to practice miyo waskawewin (moving in a kind, gentle, and life-giving way inspired by our more-than-human relatives) while helping each other heed the Blackfoot invocation aokakio'siit! (Pay attention! Be wisely aware!). (Latremouille et.al 2016, pp 9-10).

As we too attempted to invite in Elders and Knowledge and Language Keepers (Elder Stan Peltier, Elder Gloria Laird, and Dr. Patsy Steinhauer), and alongside them and the students to create course experiences with this same sensibility, we understood that so much more is going on than the accumulation of facts.

Shaun's Autobiographical Narrative Inquiry

I have long felt that assessment needs to be more relational. One year a group of disgruntled students approached me because they were unhappy with the course being offered as part of their program. I suggested a course on assessment and Indigenous children/youth in schools, and with their support developed Assessment as Pimosayta: Attending to experience in relational ways. The course description was as follows:

Mary Young always said, "Indigenous and non-Indigenous people might learn to walk together in good ways." Pimosayta, the Anishinabe word for walking together in good ways shapes an understanding of assessment. Experiential learning can be understood as shaping culturally responsive, inquiry-focused, and interactive learning environments and activities; it can also be understood as the lived experiences continuously shaping and reshaping children's unfolding lives. In this understanding, attention turns toward children's life curriculum making, and in particular, connections among curriculum making, identity making, and assessment making as children compose their lives in and outside of school. (Course syllabus, 2017)

I based it on conversations and the writing of Elder Mary Young who was a friend, colleague, and writing/research partner. I had just read the calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Report (2015) and thought this might be a course to begin actualizing the Reconciliation calls to action that moved it beyond words to a way of being.

The students in the course were doing masters work with a focus on Indigenous learners. It was an online class comprised of only 10 people. Mary's (2005a) seminal book is titled, *Pimatisiwin: Walking in a good way*, and I wanted to use the Anishinabe word *Pimosayta* because I liked to consider assessment as an opportunity to walk together in a good way, and to honour Mary, who taught me so much.

Another important aspect to me was to consider narrative inquiry as a pedagogical act. I was deeply shaped in this way by the Huber et. al., (2013) paper, *Narrative inquiry as pedagogy in education: The extraordinary potential of living, telling, retelling, and reliving stories of experience*. My research methodology is grounded in narrative inquiry and I have an ontology/worldview shaped by an understanding of narrative inquiry. This paper echoed that by also situating narrative inquiry as a pedagogical act. The idea of attending to the lives of children and youth in school while being aware of how their experiences in school can be understood in temporal, social, and place ways resonated with me, and was a way to move forward in thinking about assessment.

In earlier work Huber, Murphy, and Clandinin (2011) had written about assessment making as a process act and not something divorced from the curricular lives of teachers and children/youth. Part of the title of that book contains the words *children's lives in motion* and the course is an extension of that thinking. The course was built related to the idea that children's lives are indeed in motion and one of the places they pass through in that movement are schools. Assessment is a foundational aspect in schools and the course was a way of attending to those lives in motion with a focus on the lives of Indigenous children. The articles and book I used in the class, while Indigenous in their focus were really about the lives of all children but given that schools typically fail in relation to the lives of Indigenous children, they became the centre of the work.

Janice's Autobiographical Narrative Inquiry

Marsha's gradual teaching me her Métis Cree understandings of *kakwe instew eemak* – try to understand someone – and the interwoven concepts of *nisitohtamowin* – understanding – and *kiskitohmawin* – knowledge – as she shared stories of herself as a child alongside her parents, family, community, and the land she is from in Northern Alberta caused me to experience great tension. I was deeply grateful for Marsha's teachings but, as I thought and shared with Shaun and Trudy stories of my experience of coming alongside children, youth, families, and communities as an elementary teacher, as well as adults in undergraduate and graduate teacher education, the more I wondered about the ways of knowing, being, doing, and relating that either ground or become enacted/lived out through assessment.

Tensions with assessment had been constant since my first becoming a teacher and had drawn me and numerous co-researchers into earlier narrative inquiries into assessment making (Clandinin et al 2010; Huber, 1992; Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin, 2011). Thinking with Marsha's Métis Cree language and understandings opened potential for me to travel to her worlds (Lugones, 1987), where she was now, as Lizzy's Mom, drawing on her embodied knowledge that guided her abiding attention to Lizzy, for whom she desired, similar to her own childhood, that she would understand who she was, who she was becoming, and what she was moving into. As I continued to think with how Marsha's present living of these practices alongside Lizzy began long ago – that these practices were shaped by tellings and retellings of intergenerational stories – experience, knowledge, language, and land that for generations had been lived forward – I thought often of Mary's teaching me to attend to intergenerational narrative reverberations.

I did not know Mary well when she first drew on her life experience to put into writing her knowing of "intergenerational narrative reverberations" as experience and knowledge "carr[ied] in our bodies, in our memories, in our souls" that show how our experience and knowledge is continuously "shaped by our individual history and the histories of our [families and] communities" (Young, 2005a, p. 162). Over the 15 years of our friendship Mary often retold with me the story below as we thought together about intergenerational narrative reverberations:

Because I was not allowed to speak my language in Residential School and was made to feel ashamed for being Anishinabe, I have come to understand that retaining the Anishinabe language is a significant part of my cultural identity. Emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually. I do not want to be

erased nor do I want to erase the teachings and culture of my Father and my ancestors. (Young, 2005a, p. 45)

Marsha, too, did not want to erase the language, teachings, and cultures of her parents and ancestors. As she and I continued to engage in narrative inquiry our tensions began to seep together – Marsha’s, because Lizzy, as a child of five, was tested and through which, her teacher’s earlier stories of Lizzy seemed to shift from seeing her as a ‘positive’ and ‘bright’ child with highly developed ‘etiquette and protocols’ to then only as a child whom was ‘easily distracted’ – and mine, as I remembered and wondered about my complicity in assessment practices that also, although in ways very different from Mary, Marsha, and Lizzy erased the language, teachings, and cultures of myself, my parents, and ancestors - and maybe, too - the languages, teachings, and cultures of children, youth, families, communities, and adult students.

Early in Trudy’s and my offering the Assessment as Pimosayta course, we asked Anishinabe Elder Stan Peltier to guide us. We knew we needed his wisdom of pimosayta and pimatisiwin so that we could begin and continue the course in good ways. We also asked Métis Cree Elder Gloria Laird and Cree Knowledge and Language Keeper Dr. Patsy Steinhauer to share their wisdom with the students and us. Some months have now passed since Trudy, the students, and me were privileged by the wisdom Stan, Gloria, and Patsy shared. As I think more presently with their coming alongside us, I am remembering Mary’s collaborating with colleagues and me as she came to the University of Regina for a yearly visit. When Mary was with me and the students I was alongside, she always invited us into a talking circle - that often circled twice so we could live out her practicing her knowing of the relationally ethical process of narrative inquiry as drawing us into “talk[ing] back and forth” with one another’s stories as a way “to connect ... [our lives] in a respectful and special manner, in a circular way” (Young, 2005a, pp. 143-144). As I remember and think with these yearly experiences alongside my experiences alongside Marsha and then alongside Trudy, students, Stan, Gloria, and Patsy, I can almost feel the warmth of the rock Mary held as she talked and then pressed into the hands of the student to her left, which eventually came to me as the person sitting to her right side. Remembering the warmth of Mary’s rock, and the stories she, students, and I talked back and forth with and that connected our lives in special and circular ways, I now have new wonders about place~land, intergenerational narrative reverberations, language, culture, and assessment making as life making.

Resonant Threads that Support Our Imagining Forward

As is shown in our earlier autobiographical narrative inquiries, through her stories and everyday living, Mary's teachings and our relationships with her supported us to gradually bring Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing alongside our practicing narrative inquiry as pedagogy. The space shaped in this meeting of relational ways of knowing, being, doing, and relating was key in supporting our and students' inquiring into assessment making as a wholistic process attentive to sustaining children's ongoing educative making of their lives in family, community, and school places. It was also in this space that we continued to grow toward living relationally ethical assessment making alongside graduate and undergraduate students.

In the development of and in our living of the course, the work of Mary, and Mary herself, was central. In trying to walk in a good way, as Mary encouraged, we recognized that this walking is always about process - we can never say, 'There, I learned to walk in a good way,' because every situation and every person requires that we walk in a good way, but a different good way. We feel resonance between our trying to walk in many different good ways and Moore's (2017) idea of "assessment protocol" (p. 60). Her connecting assessment with protocol feels connected with assessment making as an ongoing process of staying attentive to the wholeness of each life in the making.

We see assessment making as one response to wonders about the dominant narrative of assessment in schooling landscapes. As we have taught the Assessment as Pimosayta course this is what we have been trying to do - to come alongside teachers (pre-service and in-service) to think narratively together about what walking in different good ways as we take up assessment making in many different good ways could shape, depending on each person and the context(s). It is in these ways that we imagine we might move closer to the healing and nourishing potential of education that the people who came alongside us in the course, either in person or through their writing or videos, called us to attend to. This healing and nourishing, too, is also not one-size-fits-all but a process slowly experienced through attentiveness to each individual and the stories they are living and telling, and that they imagine living and telling into the future.

Moore (2017) wrote about taking school into the community. Typically, it is the converse, with community being invited into the school, which privileges school. When schooling is privileged what does this mean for parents, families, and communities whose experiences with schooling have been miseducative?

What does it mean for parents, families, and communities whose lives continue to be shaped by intergenerational narrative reverberations of schooling as trying to destroy their ways of being, knowing, and doing? By going to them, by coming alongside them, we start to enact a different kind of relationship that shapes different ways of being in schooling landscapes for children and youth, and too, adult students. What if we think with Kovach's understanding of research and play with her ideas in relation with assessment making: "story as method elevates ... [assessment making] from an extractive exercise serving the fragmentation of knowledge to a holistic endeavor that situates [assessment making] firmly within the nest of relationship" (as cited in Moore, 2017, p. 92). It is in these directions we imagine our teaching of the *Assessment as Pimosayta* course will move in our next offerings.

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