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Aboriginal people comprise the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population.

# BRIGHT NEW DAY RECONCILIATION *circle*

RECONCILIATION IS A RELATIONSHIP MORE THAN IT IS A DESTINATION

## SKO-MISH VALLEY ELDERS ADVISORY CIRCLE Bright New Day / Chenchenstway Skwxwu7mesh Lil'wat7ul Cultural Centre | July 19-20, 2016



### THE BRIGHT NEW DAY RECONCILIATION CIRCLES

Lately we've seen a variety of messages that touch on the relationship between Aboriginal people and other Canadians: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report and *94 calls to Action*. The Government of Canada launched a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

In 2013, Vancouver's Walk For Reconciliation and the TRC hearings on residential schools drew tens of thousands of participants, and the unprecedented Idle No More movement began.

Meanwhile, Vancouver City Council voted to acknowledge that the city is on unceded Aboriginal territory and Canada's highest court granted a declaration of Aboriginal title over a tract of Crown lands to the Tsilhqot'in Nation of the west central interior of BC and for the first time in Canadian history Aboriginal title was definitively established and affirmed. Further, in the recent Daniels decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that tens of thousands of Metis and non-status Indians are now under the jurisdiction of the federal government and, finally, the Government of Canada announced its commitment to adopt and fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In the midst of all these activities Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles continue to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together to engage in dialogue that highlights our shared

history and helps dismantle the walls of isolation that so often define our communities. The Bright New Day Circles encourage us all to revisit the founding of Canada – to go back to how it actually began, understand the history there, and find ways to move forward as equals in the manner first intended.



*"The workshop was an unparalleled opportunity to gain a better understanding of Aboriginal people through open sharing and learning. I feel we have taken first steps toward bridging the gap that has so often existed between our communities."*

— Keith Knudsen, BowArk Energy Ltd.

## CHENCHENSTWAY

“Chenchenstway” is a Skwxwu7mesh Snichim (Squamish Language) word meaning to uphold one another or to support one another.

Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles Ltd. is working with the SKO-mish Valley Elders Advisory Circle, Chief Dale Harry of Aboriginal Economic Solutions Inc. and Cultural Chief Leonard Andrew of the Lil’wat First Nation to implement *Bright New Day /Chenchenstway* on July 19-20 at the Skwxwu7mesh Lil’wat7ul Cultural Centre in Whistler.

This will be the third such circle in the region and is a continuation of the Squamish Nation / Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles hosted at Totem Hall in Squamish in 2012 and 2014.

The Squamish Nation and the Lil’wat Nation have co-existed respectfully as neighbours since time immemorial. They have thrived on the bounty of the ocean, the rivers, and the land – living in close relationship with the world around them. Their cultures are

grounded in rich, ancient traditions, and continue to grow and evolve in a modern world.

Together the two Nations built the Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre (SLCC) to preserve their cultures and share them with others. They have treated the site with respect, building on the northern side of the property – leaving the forested area mostly untouched. The building is designed to evoke the longhouses of the Squamish people and the Istken (traditional earthen pit houses) of the Lil’wat people with a modern architectural interpretation.

In 1997 the Resort Municipality of Whistler met with the Lil’wat Nation to consult about opportunities for the Nation’s participation and presence in Whistler. Out of these discussions, the idea of a world-class cultural centre was born and a relationship in the spirit of goodwill and cooperation evolved.

Mindful of the historic precedence of shared lands and the overlapping interests in land stewardship, the

Lil’wat Nation met with the Squamish Nation in 1999 to discuss land use and planning in areas of traditional territory overlap. As a result, in 2001 the two Nations signed an historic Protocol Agreement, which formalized their mutual relationship. The Protocol Agreement commits them to continued co-operation in matters of cultural and economic development, and co-management of shared territory. The only agreement of its kind in Canada, the Protocol Agreement formalized the two nations mutual relationship.

The Squamish Lil’wat Cultural Centre in Whistler (where mountains, rivers and people meet) embodies the spirit of partnership between two unique Nations who wish to preserve, grow and share their traditional cultures. It stands as testimony to their proud heritage – from time immemorial to the present.



## CO-FOUNDERS: CHIEF DR. ROBERT JOSEPH & JOHN MCCANDLESS



All those who participate in this historic dialogue should do so with a keen sense of purpose and a clear understanding that a great deal is at stake.

Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles are the mainstay of an innovative program begun by Chief Dr. Robert

Joseph and John McCandless in 2009. These two co-founded a unique process that they thought could break down longstanding walls of isolation and result in a series of reconciliation circles being enacted by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people throughout British Columbia.

Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, O.B.C. is a true peace-builder whose life and work are examples of his personal commitment. A Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation, Robert has dedicated his life to bridging the differences brought about by intolerance, lack of understanding, and racism at home and abroad. His insights into the destructive impacts these forces can have on peoples’ lives, families and cultures were shaped by his experience with the Canadian Indian Residential School system.

Chief Joseph is currently the Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada and a member of the National Assembly of First Nations Elders Council. He has an open invitation to join in our Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles as a keynote storyteller whenever he likes.

John McCandless has extensive experience with community engagement processes, drawing on over 30 years’ experience working directly with community organizations and First Nations in BC. John has been instrumental in the organization of many collaborative meetings between First Nations and non-Aboriginal community leaders including the First Nations Futures Luncheons, the Business at the Summit meetings, the Certainty After Delgamuukw Forums, the Stein Valley Festivals and the Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles.

*“The Bright New Day Workshop provided an excellent opportunity for those interested in the well-being of the Lytton First Nation - and members of the first nation itself - to put their hearts and minds together in respectful, creative ways to support a sustainable future.”* — Nathan Matthew, Executive Director Aboriginal Education, Thompson Rivers University

# 4 FOUR STRANDS



*Bright New Day/ Chenchenstway* will be a highly interactive, friendly experience in cooperation and collaboration.

Participants will be roughly half of Aboriginal descent and half of non-Aboriginal descent and they, themselves, will be the “presenters” and the “experts”.

Four thematic strands will be woven together throughout the two days: (1) *All Come In, All Sit Down* (2) *Telling All Our Stories*, (3) *Imagining A Future Together*, and (4) *Taking Action On Reconciliation*. Interwoven with these strands will be the knowledge that the

land has always sustained the people and the people, in return, have sustained the land.

## 1. All Come In, All Sit Down

Each of our reconciliation circles begins with ceremonies to create a sacred space. We invite all Canadians into a safe space where they can explore ways to belong in this time and place together.

Duncan McCue, an Aboriginal Reporter with the CBC says: “As a reporter in Indian Country, it won’t be long before you come across spiritual ceremonies. From sweat lodges to sun dances, memorial feasts to spirit dancing,

different First Nations have different ceremonies – and they’re an important contemporary connection to ancient cultural traditions. To Aboriginal peoples, ceremony is about community; ceremony is a way to acknowledge the interconnectedness of everything; ceremony is how values and beliefs are taught and reinforced. Some ceremonies are sacred and private. But sometimes, at Aboriginal gatherings, everyone present is asked to participate in a cultural ceremony, a prayer, a dance or a feast.”

## 2. Telling All Our Stories

Participants will prepare for *Bright New Day / Chenchenstway* by looking back at the story of Canada. This will be a time when each participant can search for a better understanding of the history that produced our present. In the reconciliation circle itself, we’ll think of the laws, traditions, and customs of the First Peoples as the posts of a house where we can all sit down to tell our stories. If we bring a deep sense of humility and listen very carefully, we can faintly discern, like a school of fingerlings glimmering just beneath the



surface, who we have been and who we are now.

As Richard Wagamese, an Ojibway author, puts it:

“All that we are is story. From the moment we are born to the time we continue on our spirit journey, we are involved in the creation of the story of our time here. It is what we arrive with. It is all we leave behind. We are not the things we accumulate. We are not the things we deem important. We are story. All of us. What comes to matter then is the creation of the best possible story we can while we’re here; you, me, us, together. When we can do that and we take the time to share those stories with each other, we get bigger inside, we see each other, we recognize our kinship – we change the world, one story at a time...”

### 3. Imagining A Future Together

Telling all our stories and listening carefully to others’ stories enables us to enter the sanctuary of our common humanity. It is only when we understand who we have been and who we are now, that we can begin to imagine who we can be. Imagining is a critical part of seeing our way forward and the world our youth will live in tomorrow is limited only by what we are unable to imagine today.



John Lennon, an English songwriter, said in his famous song *Imagine*:

*“Imagine there’s no heaven  
It’s easy if you try  
No hell below us  
Above us only sky  
Imagine all the people  
Living for today...”*

*Imagine there’s no countries  
It isn’t hard to do  
Nothing to kill or die for  
And no religion too  
Imagine all the people  
Living life in peace...*

*You may say I’m a dreamer  
But I’m not the only one  
I hope someday you’ll join us  
And the world will be as one*

*Imagine no possessions  
I wonder if you can  
No need for greed or hunger  
A brotherhood of man  
Imagine all the people  
Sharing all the world...*

*You may say I’m a dreamer  
But I’m not the only one  
I hope someday you’ll join us  
And the world will live as one”*

### 4. Taking Action On Reconciliation

Reconciliation is an action word that describes measures people can take to create relationships

that lead to equal life chances. This means different things to different people and what’s most important is discovering what reconciliation can mean to you.

Participants can expect *Bright New Day / Chenchenstway* to:

- ⌋ Engender a better understanding of our shared history and the deeper backstory underlying that;
- ⌋ Build bridges between Aboriginal people and those around them;
- ⌋ Stimulate the ongoing growth of active relationships between those of the Squamish and Lil’wat Nations and those who are guests on their traditional territory;
- ⌋ Help participants depart from out-dated and discredited perceptions to create sustainable relationships based on equal life chances;
- ⌋ Introduce a lived experience of the protocols and ceremonies belonging to this place;
- ⌋ Create a network of friends with a high capacity for achieving positive change; *and*
- ⌋ Turn good intentions into actions that promote reconciliation and support development of stronger, healthier communities.

# Bright New Day: A JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION



and spill down the far side, our glimpses of land are fleeting and few.

In order not to capsize in these vast waters, we must first learn to laugh together and let the waves roll through us. We must learn to paddle in the same direction and, for certain essentials, learn to pray, sing, and ask, with one voice.

We need to consider the timing and length of our strokes and figure out how to coax our paddles into the water without that tell-tale splash. And when the large muscles in our backs tire, we need to be mindful that reconciliation is a relationship more than it is a destination.

Our boat is a 60 foot ocean-going canoe carved, burned, chipped, shaped, sung and prayed painstakingly from a massive old growth western red cedar, a tree 300 feet tall and at least 6 feet in diameter at its base. By any standard it is a monstrous tree and it was only a tiny

seedling when Captain Cook's ships Discovery and Resolution were guided into the shelter of Yuquot in 1778. When this tree first heard the songs of its master carver, it was over 200 years old.

It is, in fact, the vessel that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians have paddled together from the time of first contact. It is composed of layered impressions, policies, legislation, treaties, promises, pledges, understandings, intentions, agreements, covenants and experiences - all glued together by relationships.

We have paddled this vessel from friendship to mutual dependency, to partnership, to the Indian Act, to reserve systems, to residential schools, to assaults on Aboriginal culture and language, to white papers, to assimilation, to power and privilege and finally to an atmosphere of utter disparity where communities are often divided between two solitudes - Aboriginal and the rest of Canada.

We are First Peoples and settler societies in one canoe, Canada. Our purpose is to learn to paddle together and show others how we do it. When we climb impossible towering swells,

## From the grassroots up and the PM down

Eight years ago a former prime minister stood in the House of Commons to offer Canada's apology to Aboriginal people. He said "Today we lay the first stone in building a new monument, a monument dedicated to truth, reconciliation and a better future."

Problems so ingrained in our social fabric cannot, however, be solved by governments and leaders alone. Reducing disadvantage and improving the life chances of Aboriginal Canadians

requires people from all walks of life working together to collaborate and coordinate their efforts over the long term.

To reach its fullest potential, a top-down initiative like the former prime minister's apology needs to be met by a groundswell emerging from the grassroots up - and that's what the Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles are all about.



*"The Bright New Day conference I attended was one of the best examples I have seen in regards to creating understanding and awareness of aboriginal people, our history, our pains, and our laughter. — John Chenoweth, Dean, NVIT*

# Did you know?



## Canadian Public Opinion on Aboriginal Peoples – Environics 2016 survey found:

- ⌋ Two thirds (66%) of non-Aboriginal Canadians have heard or read about Indian residential schools (up noticeably from 2008), and an increasing majority (73%) believe the current challenges facing Aboriginal peoples today are to some extent the result of residential schools experience.
- ⌋ Four in ten (42%) of non-Aboriginal Canadians say they have heard or read something about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and few within this group can recall anything specific about the Commission's recommended Calls to Action.
- ⌋ An increasing majority of non-Aboriginal Canadians believe Aboriginal peoples experience discrimination on a regular basis, comparable if not worse than what happens to other minorities. There is general agreement that most people are prejudiced against Aboriginal peoples even if not aware of it.
- ⌋ When non-Aboriginal Canadians were asked - *What does the word "reconciliation" mean to you, when you think about relations between Aboriginal Peoples and other people living in Canada?* - the following themes emerged: equality/mutual respect/living in harmony, making amends/public apology, closure / healing, forgiveness, building better relations/getting along better, agreement/finding common ground, equality of opportunity, both sides listening to each other, acknowledgement/accept responsibility, create awareness/understanding of issues, compensation, help/counsel/care for the affected.
- ⌋ There is solid majority public support for: increased funding for Aboriginal education to match provincial levels (91%), increased funding for clean drinking water and adequate housing on reserves (90%), mandatory curriculum in all schools to teach Aboriginal history and culture (87%), funding to protect Aboriginal languages (78%), providing Aboriginal communities with full control over their natural resources on traditional territories (66%), and settling all outstanding land claims regardless of cost (60%).
- ⌋ More than eight in ten (84%) of non-Aboriginal Canadians believe that individual Canadians have a role to play in helping to bring about reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples.

*"It was one of the best of such events that I have attended and credit is due all of the organizers for having moved the agenda ahead from past occasions of expressions of pain, without much hope attached."*

— *Former Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo*

## Seeds of Wisdom

*"The planet does not need more 'successful' people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every shape and form. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these needs have little to do with success as our culture has defined it" — David Orr*



# Seven Principles

**Welcome:** Everyone will be welcomed with songs, words, ceremonies, gifts, safety and comfort.

**Inspiration:** Looking back, this will be a watershed moment when we turned to a new page in our history together.

**Education:** We'll leave with a more complete knowledge of who we have been and how that brought us to who we are now.

**Action:** This circle is about who we can be. Our goal will be to move from good intentions to actions that work.

**Recognition:** We'll celebrate each cultural group that makes its home in British Columbia today.

**Respect:** We'll bring a deep sense of humility and listen very carefully to one another's stories.



**Fun:** From the prayerful words at the opening, to the honouring ceremony at closing, you'll wonder how we could have accomplished all this and still had so much fun!

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*"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." — Nelson Mandela*

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## Location

BE SURE TO VISIT THE "WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN?" EXHIBITION WHILE ATTENDING THE BRIGHT NEW DAY / CHENCHENSTWAY CIRCLE (see next page)

### Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre

4584 Blackcomb Way  
Whistler, BC

Click here for:  
[Google Maps](#) or  
[Street View](#)

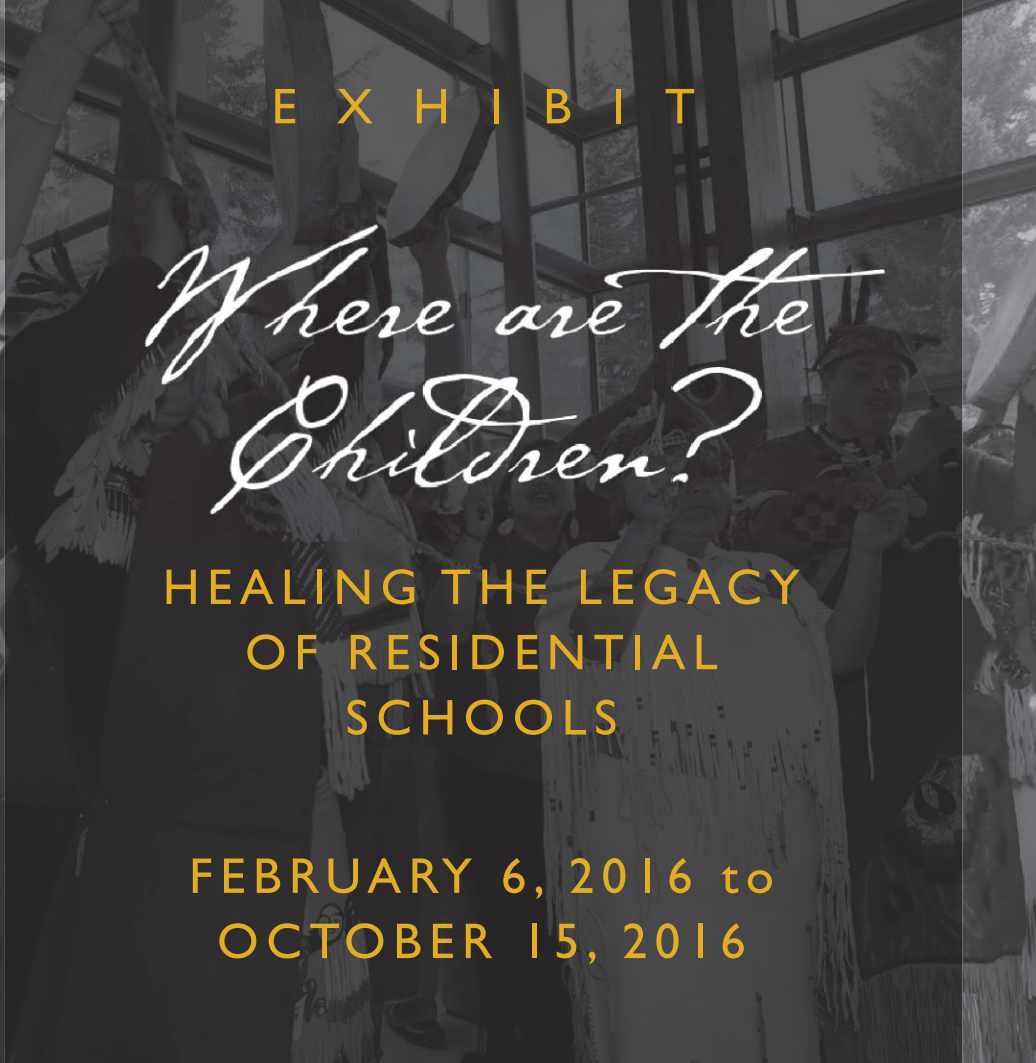


EXHIBIT

# Where are the Children?

## HEALING THE LEGACY OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

FEBRUARY 6, 2016 to  
OCTOBER 15, 2016



<http://wherearethechildren.ca/>  
<http://www.legacyofhope.ca/>

“ This exhibit is important to me because Residential School has affected every part of my life and by proxy the lives of all Canadians. This exhibit gives Residential School Survivors a chance to tell their stories. As I was growing up, my Mom would tell me stories of what she experienced while at Residential Schools and the Day School Program that followed. Even though I knew she went, and heard the stories, I didn't understand the dramatic and lonely childhood each and every Aboriginal residential school student across Canada experienced. I didn't understand how and why their childhood affected my childhood. The exhibit gives us a chance to understand what went on in the schools, how these children were treated or mistreated and now it gives us a beginning of Reconciliation. ”

*Alison Pascal, SLCC Curator*



**Skwxwú7mesh Lílwat7úl**  
**SQUAMISH LÍLWAT CULTURAL CENTRE**  
WHISTLER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

4584 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V0N 1B4

# Registration

We appreciate your participation in *SKO-mish Valley Elders Advisory Circle: Bright New Day / Chenchenstway* on July 19-20, 2016. This is an unprecedented opportunity to create relationships that will help build stronger, healthier communities. **Space is limited**, however, so we encourage you to register as soon as possible.

For more information, please contact **John McCandless at 604 984 4090**.

### Cost

\$300 + \$15 GST = \$315

GST # 81290 5628 RT0001

### Payment *(Registration must be prepaid)*

Please check method of payment:

- Visa
- MasterCard
- Cheque enclosed:

*Cheques payable to:*  
**Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles Ltd.**

#### Mail cheques to:

Bright New Day Reconciliation Circles Ltd.  
2336 Old Dollarton Road  
North Vancouver, BC  
V7H 1A8

### Contact

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title Organization

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City Province Postal Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Date

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Email

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Card Number Expiry Date

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Cardholder's Name

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Cardholder's Signature

To register, FAX this form to **604.980.9116** or email this form to [john.mccandless@brightnewday.ca](mailto:john.mccandless@brightnewday.ca)

Thanks to our friends in the community for their contributions and support!



Aboriginal Economic Solutions

