



Incorporating Aboriginal Wisdom to promote Ecoliteracy

June Kaminski

Teaching & Learning Symposium

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Wednesday June 7, 2017



Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge that this session is being held on the traditional unceded lands of the

- Kwantlen
- Katzie
- Tsawwassen
- Semiahmoo

First Nations People who have been on this sacred land for thousands of years.

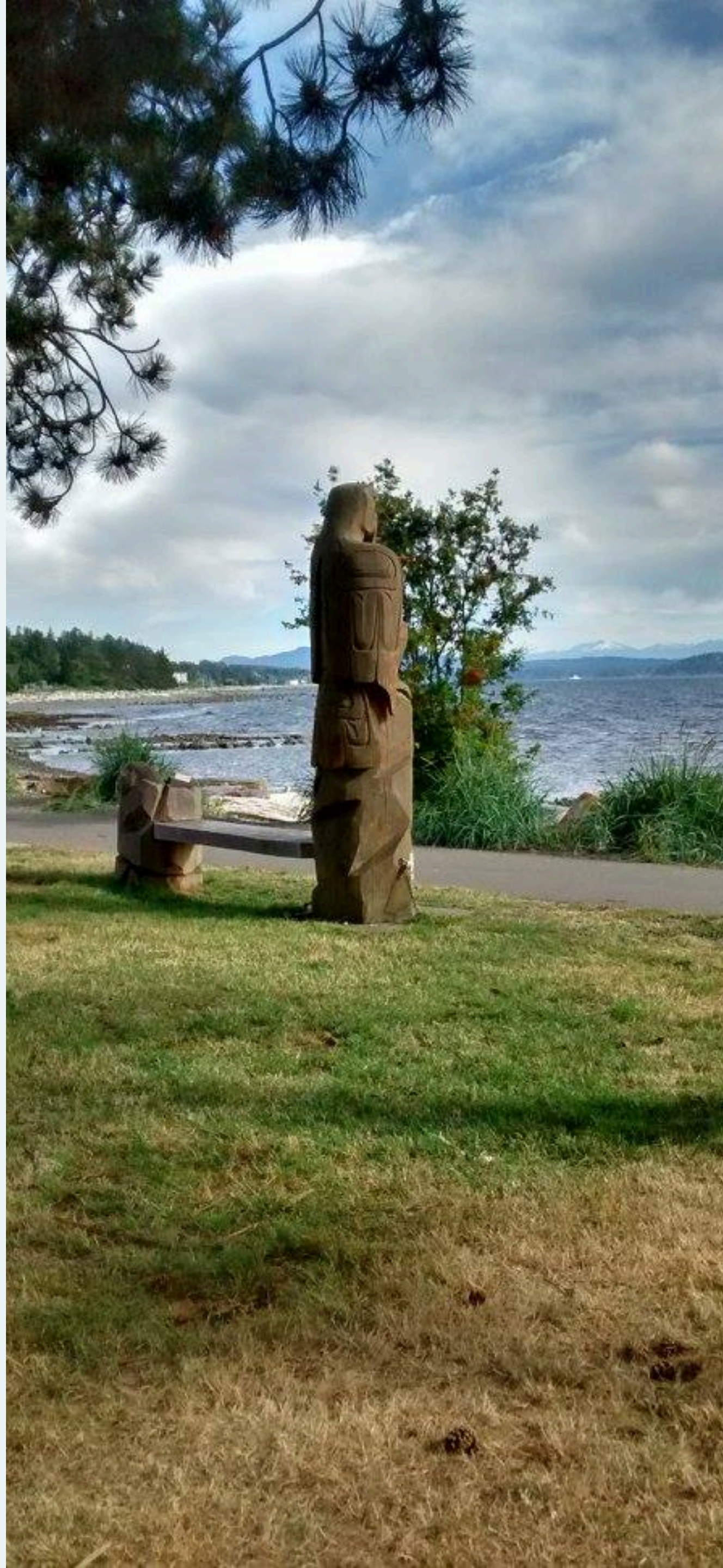
Fundamental Teachings

Overview of the Principles that Guide this Session

- Seven Generations
- All MY Relations and Interconnection
- Four Directions and Holistic Balance
- Four Pillars of Learning
- A Connection to Place
- Stewardship of the Land
- Walking Softly on the Earth
- Learning Together, Experientially
- Raising Our Voices Together, Collective Activism



Ecoliteracy



Aboriginal wisdom (meaning First Nations, Inuit, and Metis) is an important part of Ecoliteracy: the well-developed awareness of our connection with the environment and all who live there.

SEVEN GENERATIONS PRINCIPLE

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS ONE



Seven Generations

A wide-angle lens is needed
for ecoliteracy –

An Aboriginal approach to
this is to view all actions
from the vantage of seven
generations, seven to come
and the seven who have
passed.

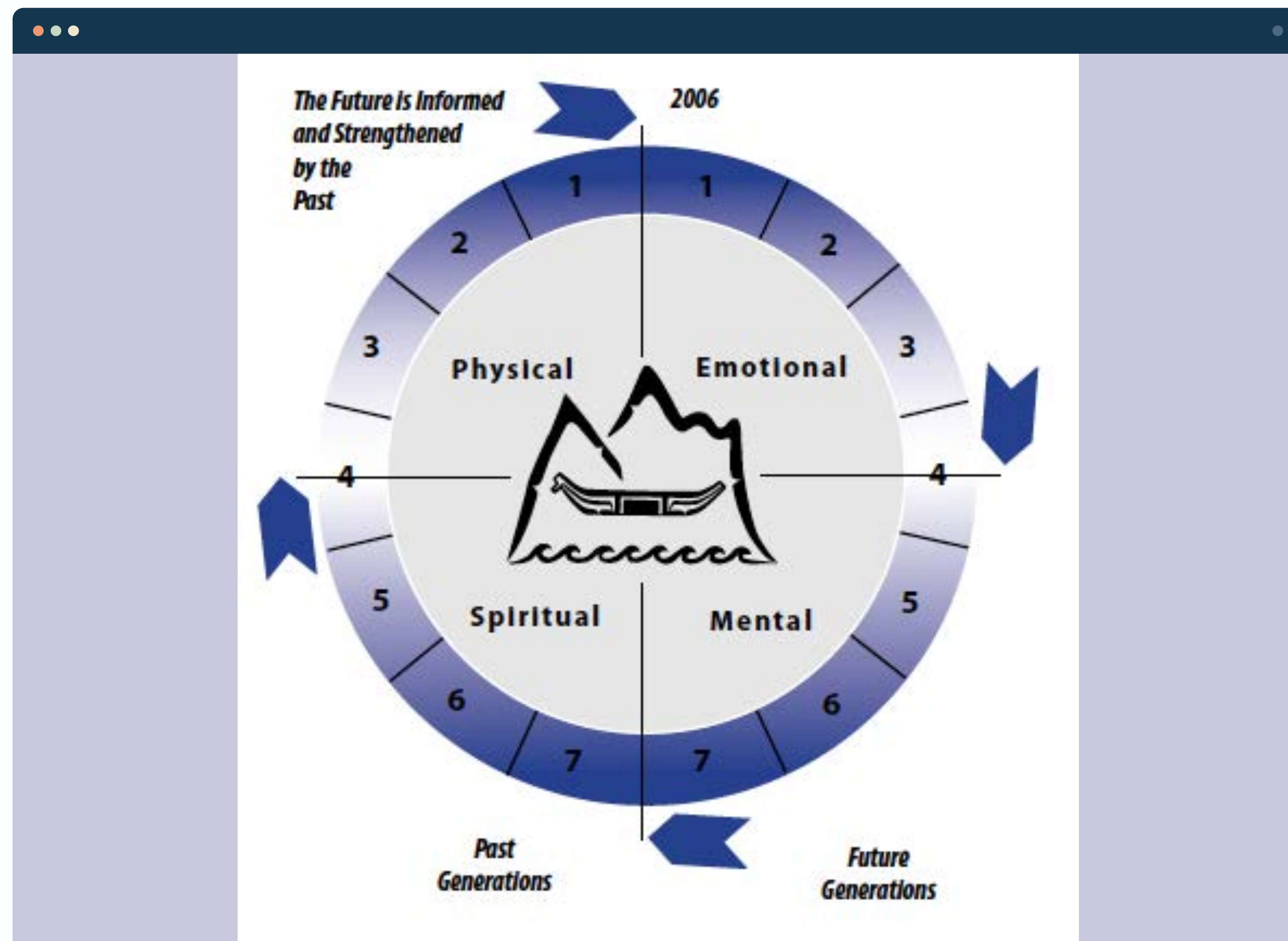
What we do ripples through
time and should be built on
the good from the past.



Seven Generations

Principle

According to the In-SHUCK-ch (Lillooet) People, “this world view says that those living now have a duty to protect the values from the past, in planning for the future in a modern world” (In-SHUCK-ch Nation, 2006, p. 7).



How do we balance this with ever-growing cities – with steady industrial, urban and residential growth?

Nursing students are taught to help support sustainable urban and rural life by helping all people achieve Ecoliteracy through the support of Aboriginal wisdom.



Seven Generations

1880 Sugar Island Census showing Madeline LaGarde 86 years old, making birch bark work. Her late husband, Jean Baptiste Lesage was listed as a trader.



Seven Generations

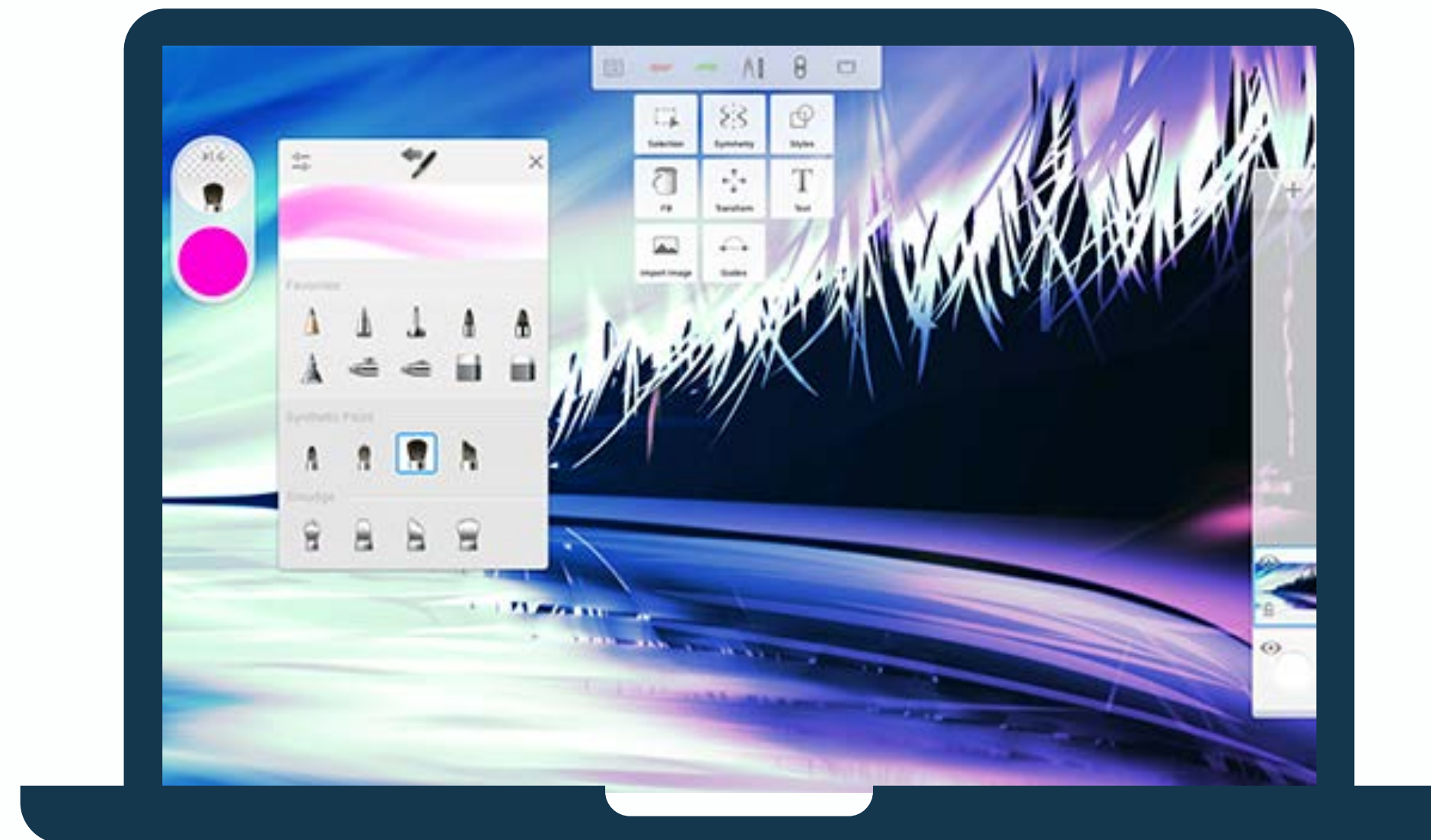
Looking at our own families and traditions can help to ground us in this work view. For instance, my own Mother was raised in the bush by her Anishanabe father and white mother. Her example all of my life was to attune to nature, eat off the land, and preserve our family's history.



Wisdom of Your Ancestors

Learning Activity

Use the creative App of your choice such as Sketchbook Pro or Penultimate to draw a graphic representation (including descriptive words) of your reflections.



Take some time to reflect on your own family's life world and culture. Consider how their knowledge and actions sustained your family over the generations. How did their actions, choices, culture, and way of life contribute to the person you are now, and your choice to become a nurse? Imagine that your ancestors had written a book of instructions for your generation on how to preserve the planet. What would be in yours?

All My Relations and Interconnection

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS TWO

INTERCONNECTION

This Squamish effigy greets all who enter the Burrard Inlet and conveys that all are interconnected and valued.

Nursing students learn to support people to live in a connected way.



All My Relations

Interconnection is a central core of Aboriginal worldviews and ways of knowing. Some First Nations sum this up with the phrase “All my relations”. This mindset reflects people who are aware that everything in the universe is connected. It also reinforces that everyone and everything has a purpose, is worthy of respect and caring, and has a place in the grand scheme of life.

First Nations relationships fully embrace the notion that people and their families are strongly connected to the communities they live in, their ancestors and future descendants, the land they live on, and all of the plant, animal and other creatures that live upon it.



All My Relations

- Aboriginal wisdom teaches about All My Relations that includes all beings who live on this planet, including fish, plants, animals, birds, insects, and so on.
- A deep respect and protective caring is needed to stop species extinction and improve the quality of life for all.

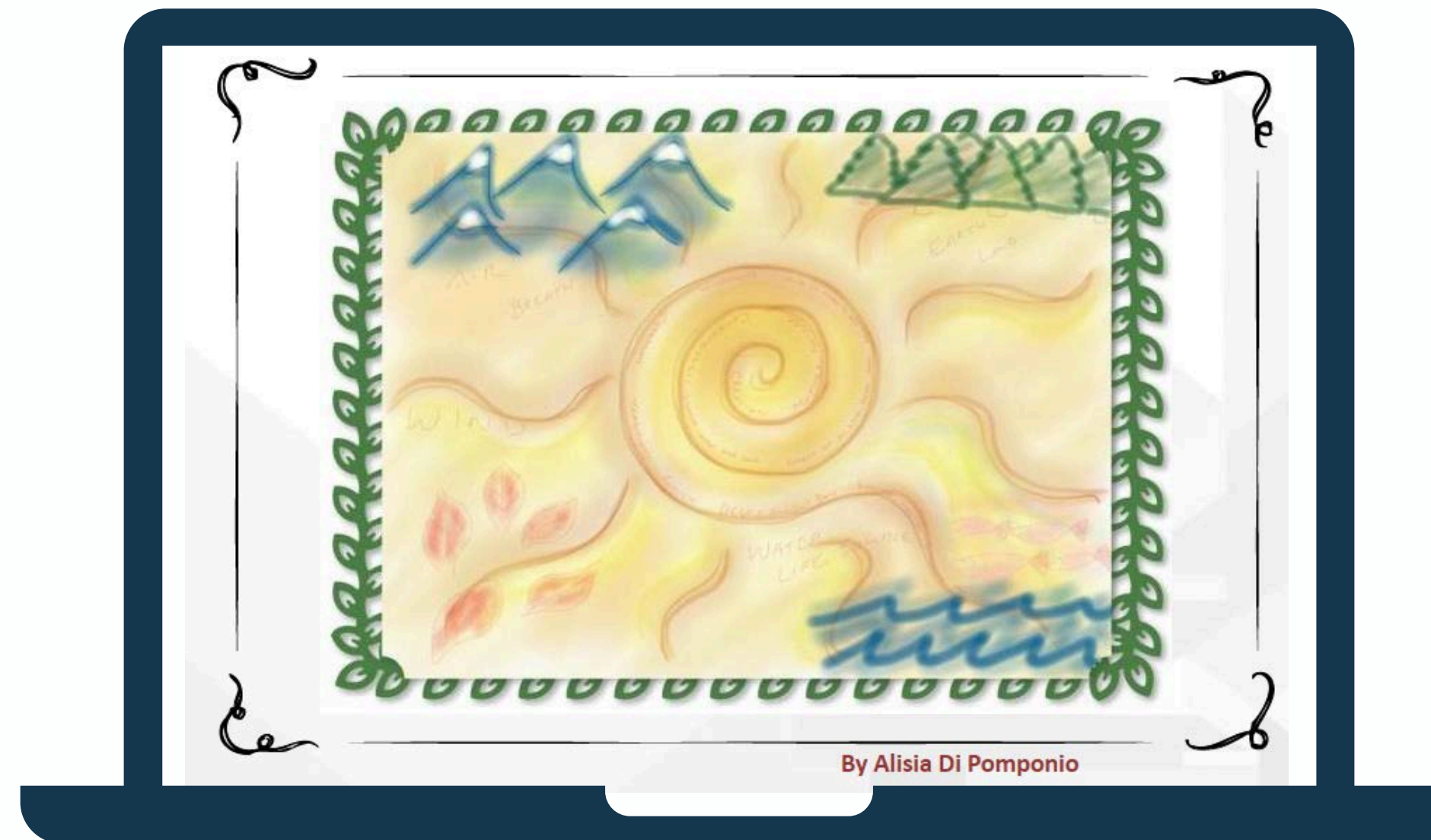
All My Relations



All My Relations

Learning Activity

Use the creative App of your choice such as iPastels or Sketchbook Pro to create a visual mandala that illustrates the Aboriginal philosophy and world view of “All My Relations”.



Include how nursing can apply this worldview to more effectively work with clients in a relationally engaged way.

How can interconnection support ecoliteracy in both nurses and their clients?

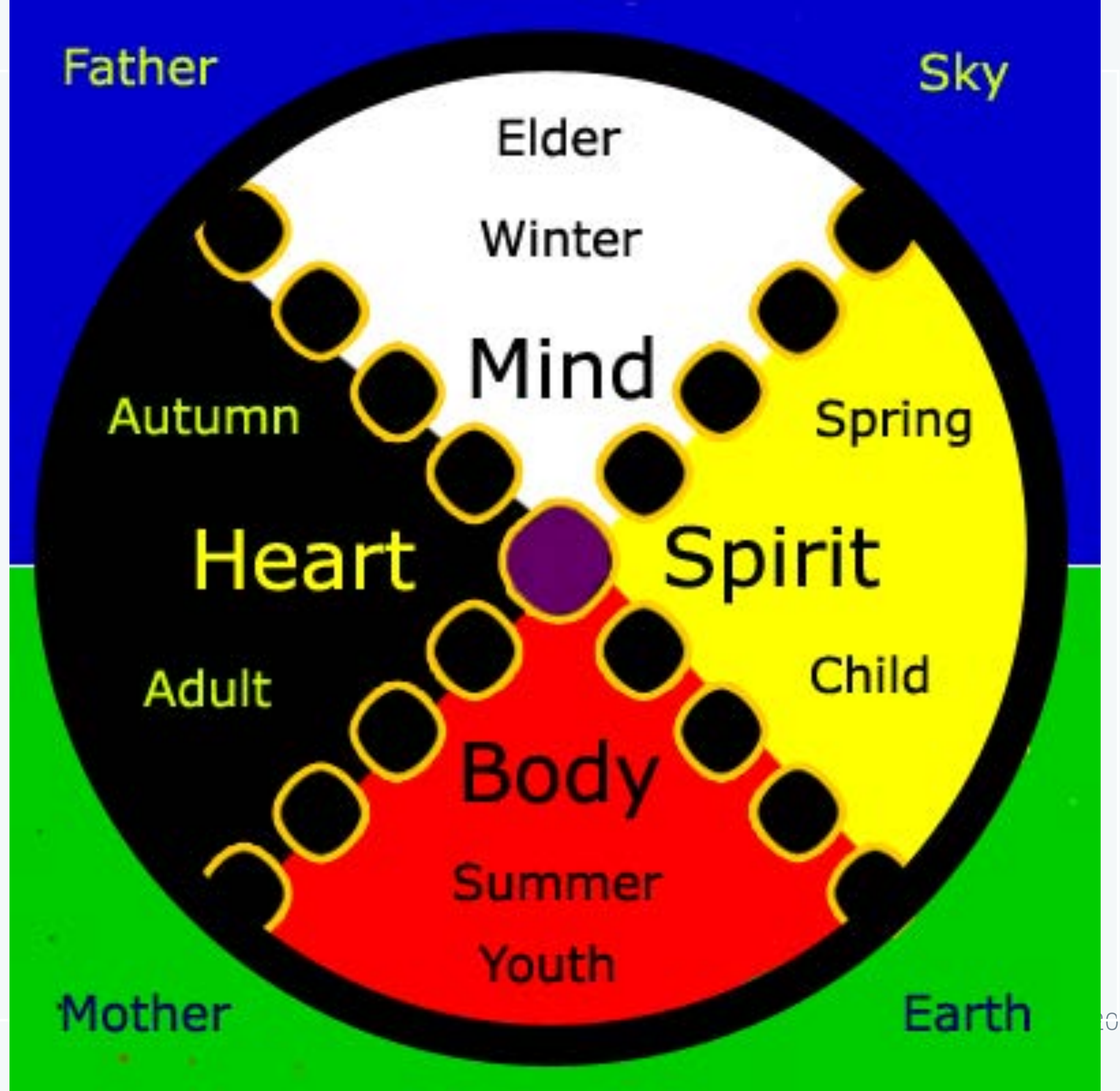
Four Directions and Holistic Balance

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS THREE

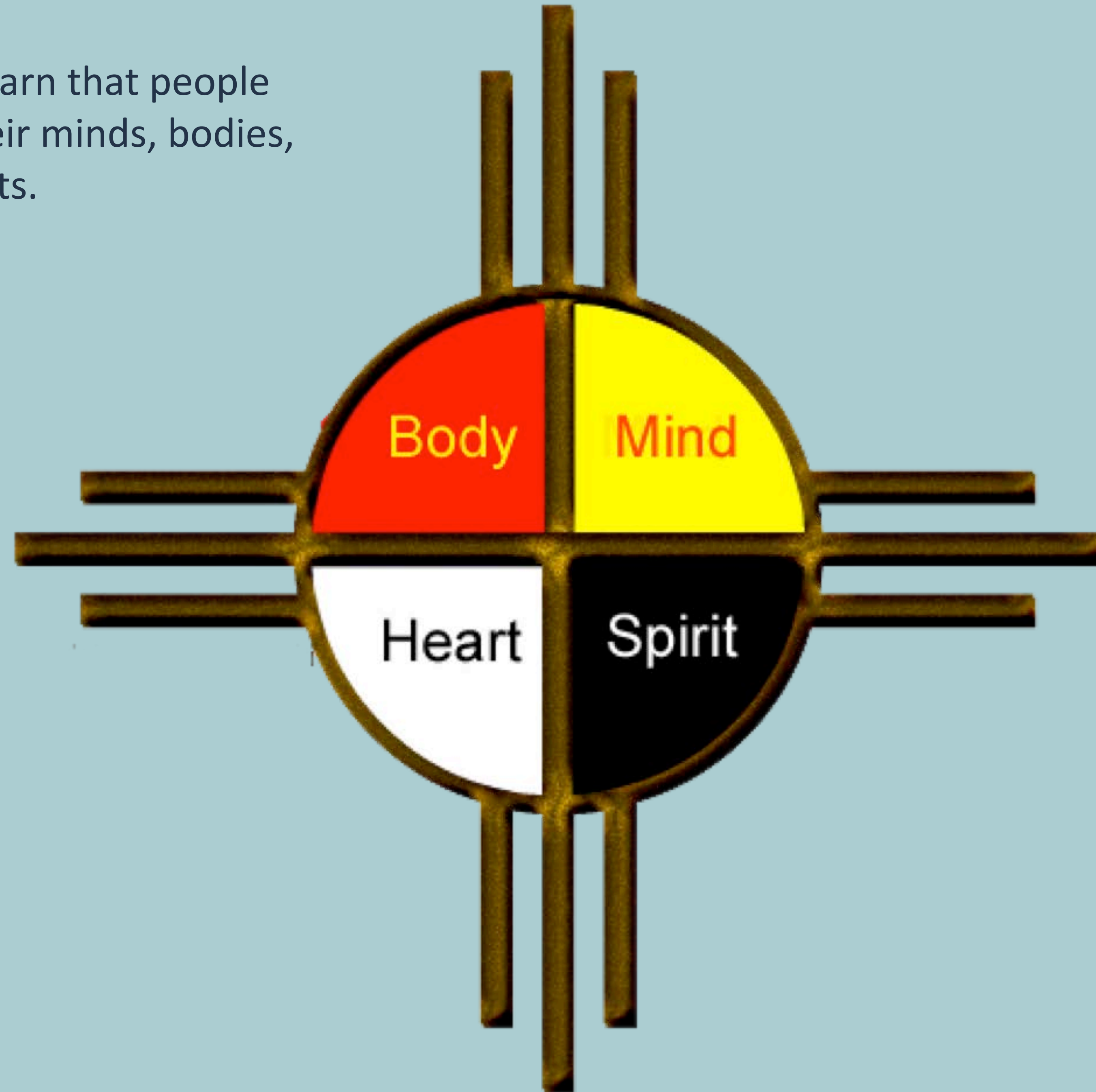
Four Directions

The illustration demonstrates a visual representation of the teachings related to the four directions, showing the growth and development stages (child, youth, adult, elder); the seasons; the four directions; the body-mind-heart-spirit quaternity; including a purple centre that symbolizes the Self.

There are many different models of the four directions teachings in First Nations cultures across Canada and the world at large; as well as newer modified renditions used by various healing groups. This version originates from the Anishanaabe, the original peoples of the Great Lakes area in Eastern Canada and the US.



Nursing students learn that people need balance in their minds, bodies, emotions, and spirits.



Four Directions Teachings

Web Resource

This beautiful animated resource presents elders who share the four directions from:

- Blackfoot Teaching
- Cree Teaching
- Ojibwe Teaching
- Mohawk Teaching
- Mi'kmaq Teaching

FOUR DIRECTIONS TEACHINGS.com

FourDirectionsTeachings.com is a visually stunning audio narrated resource for learning about Indigenous knowledge and philosophy from five diverse First Nations in Canada.

FourDirectionsTeachings.com est un ensemble visuellement saisissant de ressources avec narration audio permettant de découvrir les connaissances et les philosophies de cinq Premières nations canadiennes distinctes.

Flash Version - English

Version Flash - Français

HTML Version - English

Version HTML - Français

Subtitles Version - English

Sous-titre - Français

About Four Directions

This site was made possible through the Canadian Culture Online Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Produced by:

National Indigenous Literacy Association & invert media
it's the angle

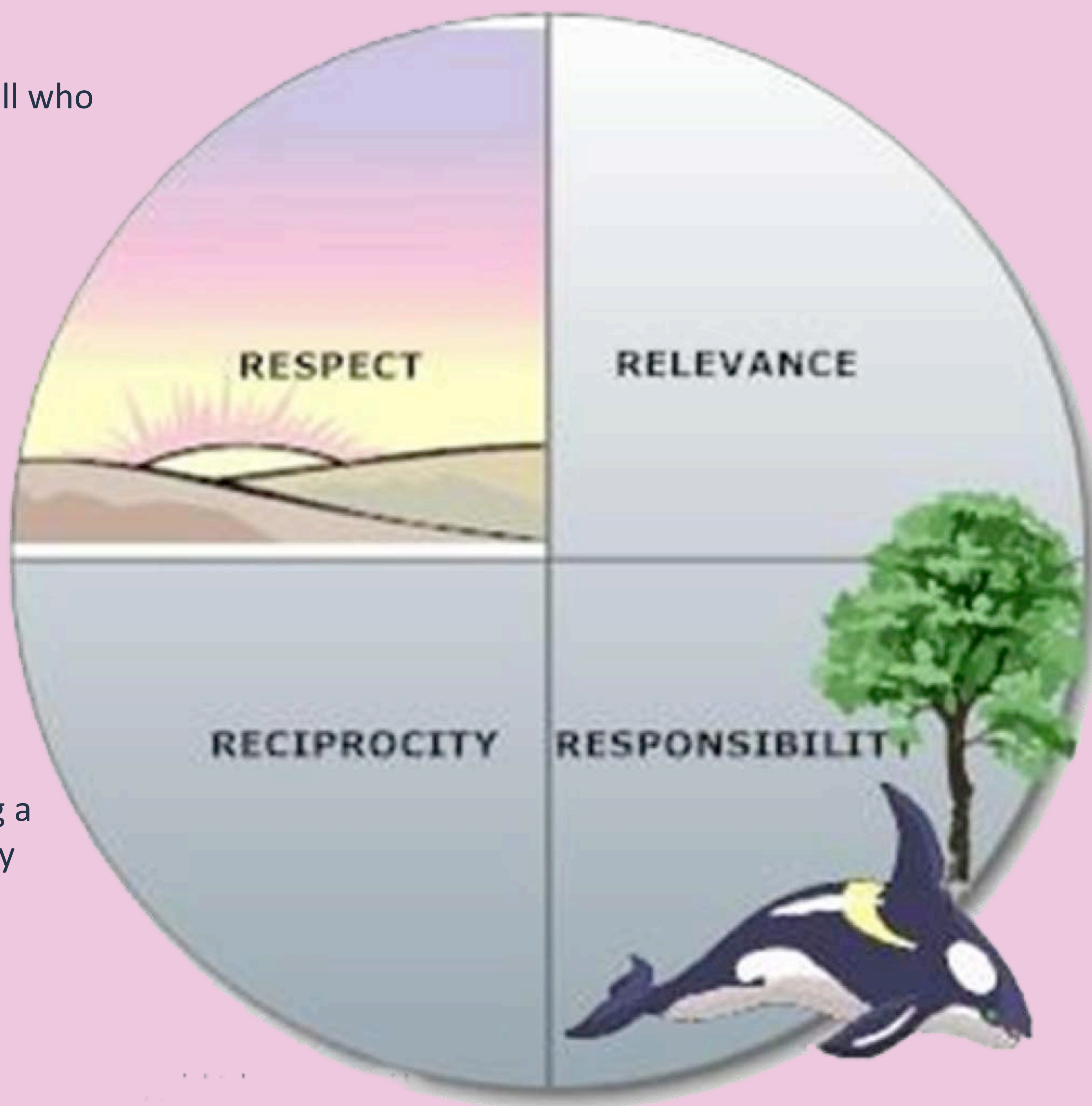
Canadian Heritage Patrimoine canadien Canada

eCULTURE CANADA'S CULTURAL GATEWAY PASSERELLE CULTURELLE DU CANADA

Four Pillars of Learning

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS FOUR

Respect – respecting all who live on this planet



Relevance- developing a relationship with nature that has personal meaning

Reciprocity- creating a dance-like reciprocity with all living things

Responsibility- becoming stewards for the earth and the seven generations – both past and future.

Four Pillars

Use this Worksheet to create a guideline table for people to develop ecoliteracy. Include at least four tips for each column.

FOUR PILLARS GUIDELINES FOR ECOLITERACY			
RESPECT	RELEVANCE	RECIPROCITY	RESPONSIBILITY

A Connection to Place

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS FIVE

A scenic view of a beach with a large log in the foreground and a forested coastline in the background. The sun is shining brightly in the upper right corner, creating a lens flare effect. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a clear, light blue. The beach is sandy and covered with some driftwood and seaweed. The forest in the background is dense and green.

A Connection to place

We need to understand our place in the web of life.

We can start by developing a deep connection to place – where we live, play and work.

People develop a "sense of place" through experience and knowledge of a particular area. A sense of place emerges through knowledge of the history, geography and geology of an area, its flora and fauna, the legends of a place, and a growing sense of the land and its history after living there for a time.



Stewardship of the Land

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS SIX



Stewards of the Land

For countless generations, the First Nations people have had unique, respectful and sacred ties to the land that sustained them. They do not claim ownership of the Earth, but rather, declare a sense of stewardship towards the land and all of its creatures.



STEWARDS OF THE LAND

Stewards of the Land

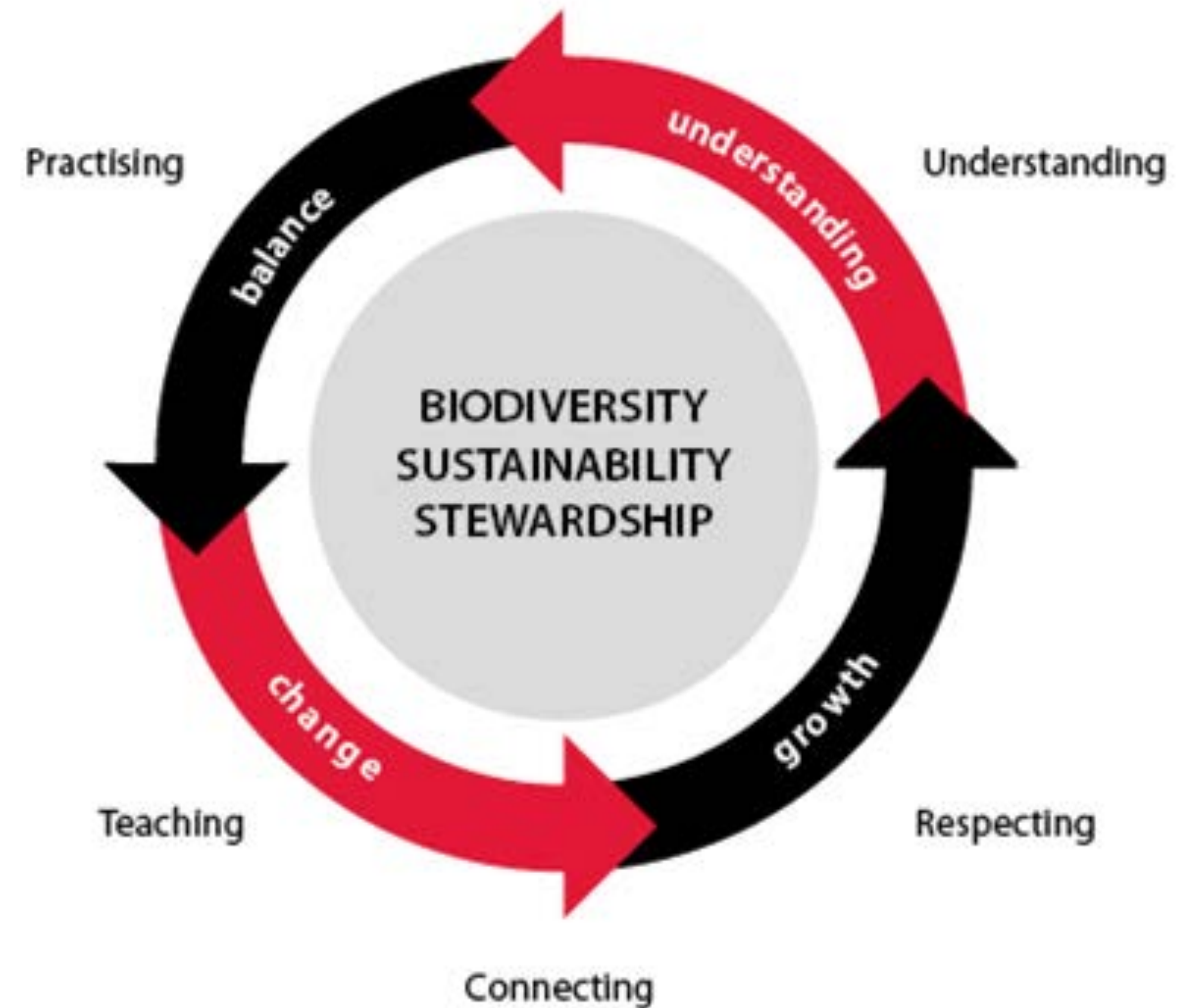
Aboriginal knowledge is strongly linked to the natural world: Indigenous languages, cultural practices, and oral traditions are all intimately connected to the Earth. Traditionally, First Nations and Inuit people see their relationship with each other and with the Earth as an interconnected web of life, which manifests as a complex ecosystem of relationships.

Balance and holistic harmony are essential tenets of this knowledge and subsequent cultural practices. Embedded too is a keen belief in both adaptability and change, but change that further promotes balance and harmony, not change that creates distress, death, and the depletion of the Earth's populations and resources. Careful observation of the seasons and the cycles of life foster an appreciation for the impermanence of things, including humans, as well as the interdependence of all life forms with each other..

Social Ecological Model

From Staying the course, staying alive

This model was designed by Brown and Brown (2009, p. 10) to illustrate the circular process of understanding the world around us, sharing this understanding, and contributing to the knowledge and health of all by cultivating universal stewardship to promote biodiversity and sustainability.



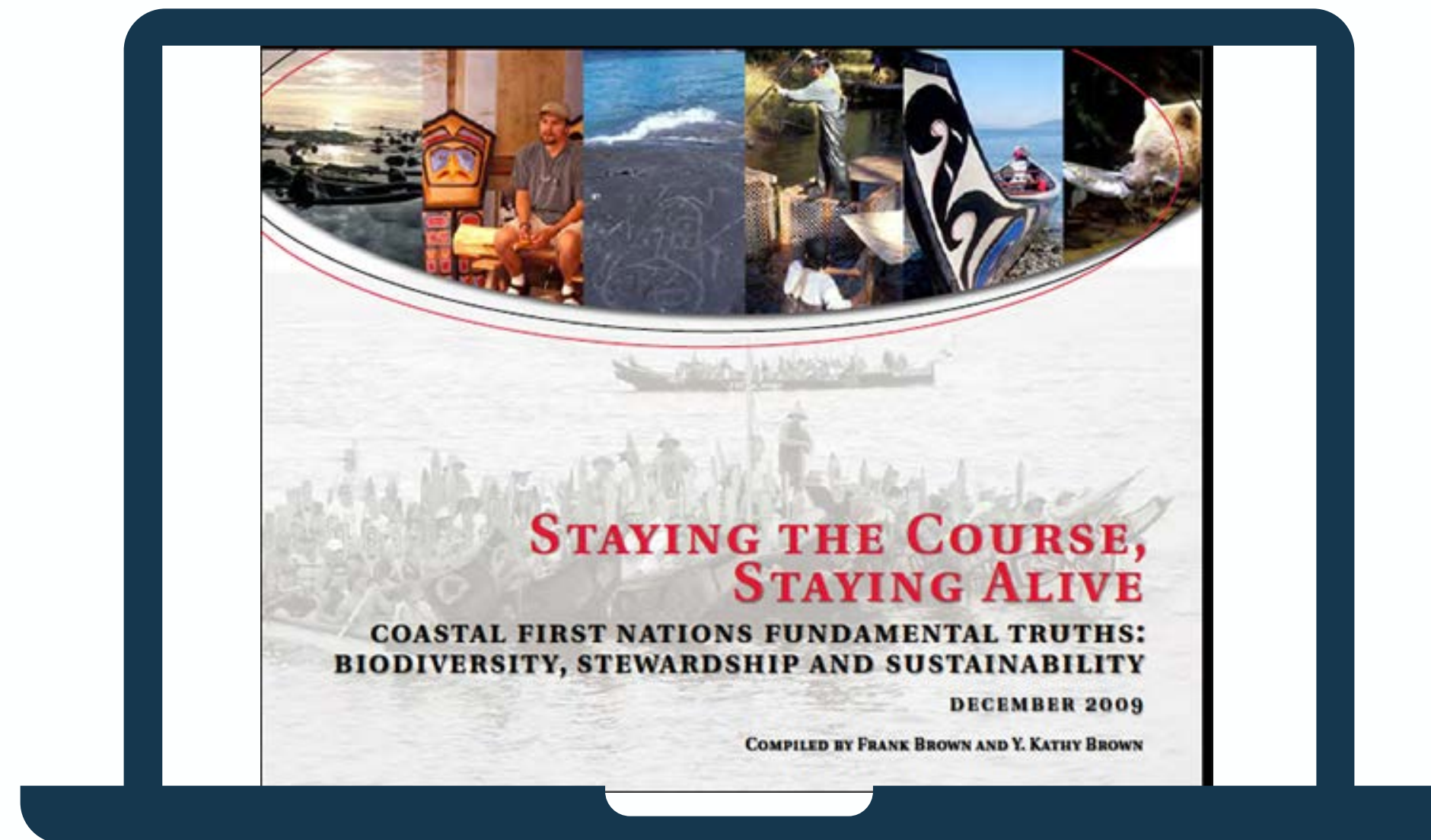
Social ecological model

Stewards of the Land

Learning Activity

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Create a visual model to illustrate the principle roles of stewardship and interconnectedness in Aboriginal knowledge. Include ways that these roles can be integrated into education for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.



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READ: Brown, F. & Brown, K. (2009). *Staying the course, staying alive. Coastal First Nations fundamental truths: Biodiversity, stewardship and sustainability*. Victoria, BC: Biodiversity BC. Before doing this activity.

http://www.biodiversitybc.org/assets/Default/BBC_Staying_the_Course_Web.pdf

Walking Softly on the Earth

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS SEVEN



Your Footprint?

What is My Footprint?

We all need to ask ourselves,
What is MY Ecological Footprint?

Goes far beyond the notion of a carbon footprint to urging us to ask ourselves, how do I tread on this earth?

What is my impact on the health of my environment?



Learning Together, Experientially

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS EIGHT

Experiential Learning Cycle



Experiential Learning

With Our Elder in Residence

Nursing students are taught by experiencing – theory work, practical work, and experiences working with our KPU Elder in Residence.

By reflecting on their experiences, students make meaning of what they have learned and take action to apply their learning to their nursing care of clients.



About us

Cedar Harvesting

Students joined a local Aboriginal community on cedar harvesting expeditions.

They learned the Cedar is sacred, as the Elders said a prayer and made an offering to the trees before harvesting the bark.

These trees were slated to be cut down by BC Hydro but the bark was gathered and used and the logs later removed to become house posts for a new community centre.





Cedar Bark Strips

Community works together to harvest the cedar for weaving, the task became a wonderful effort as the team all worked together from start to finish.

The weavers would then dry the bark and use it for ceremonial hats and other useful items.

Ceremony

The students also engaged in Smudging ceremonies and listened to Traditional Songs and stories that reinforced the importance of an ecoliterate and connected worldview.



Sweat Lodge

This experience helped students to become self-reflective and to apply Aboriginal wisdom to cleanse themselves of old thoughts and patterns that inhibited their holistic wellness and growth.



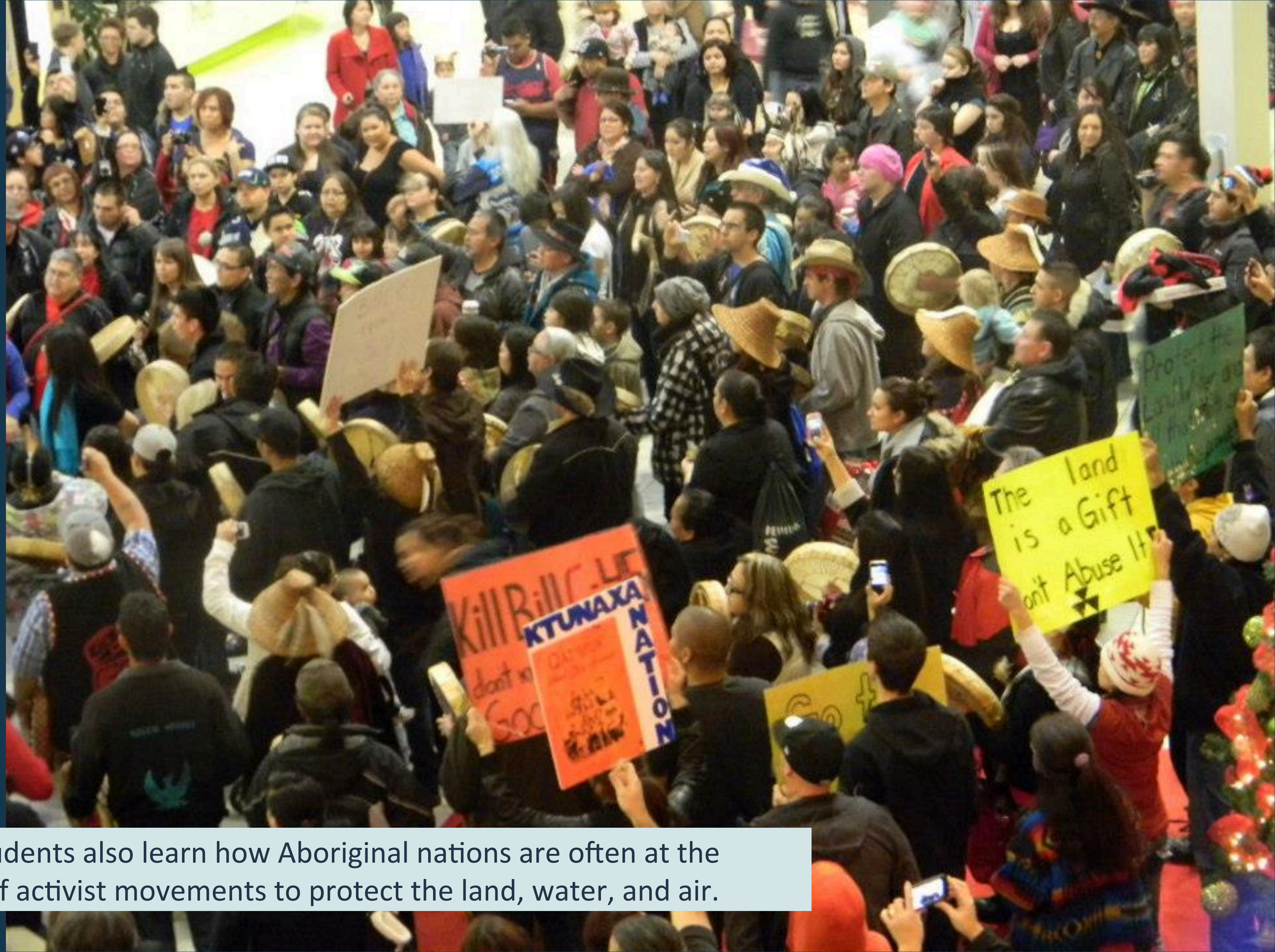


Traditional Aboriginal foods were explored, and students were encouraged to learn about local foods, to grow their own organic food and learn how to forage for wild foods responsibly.

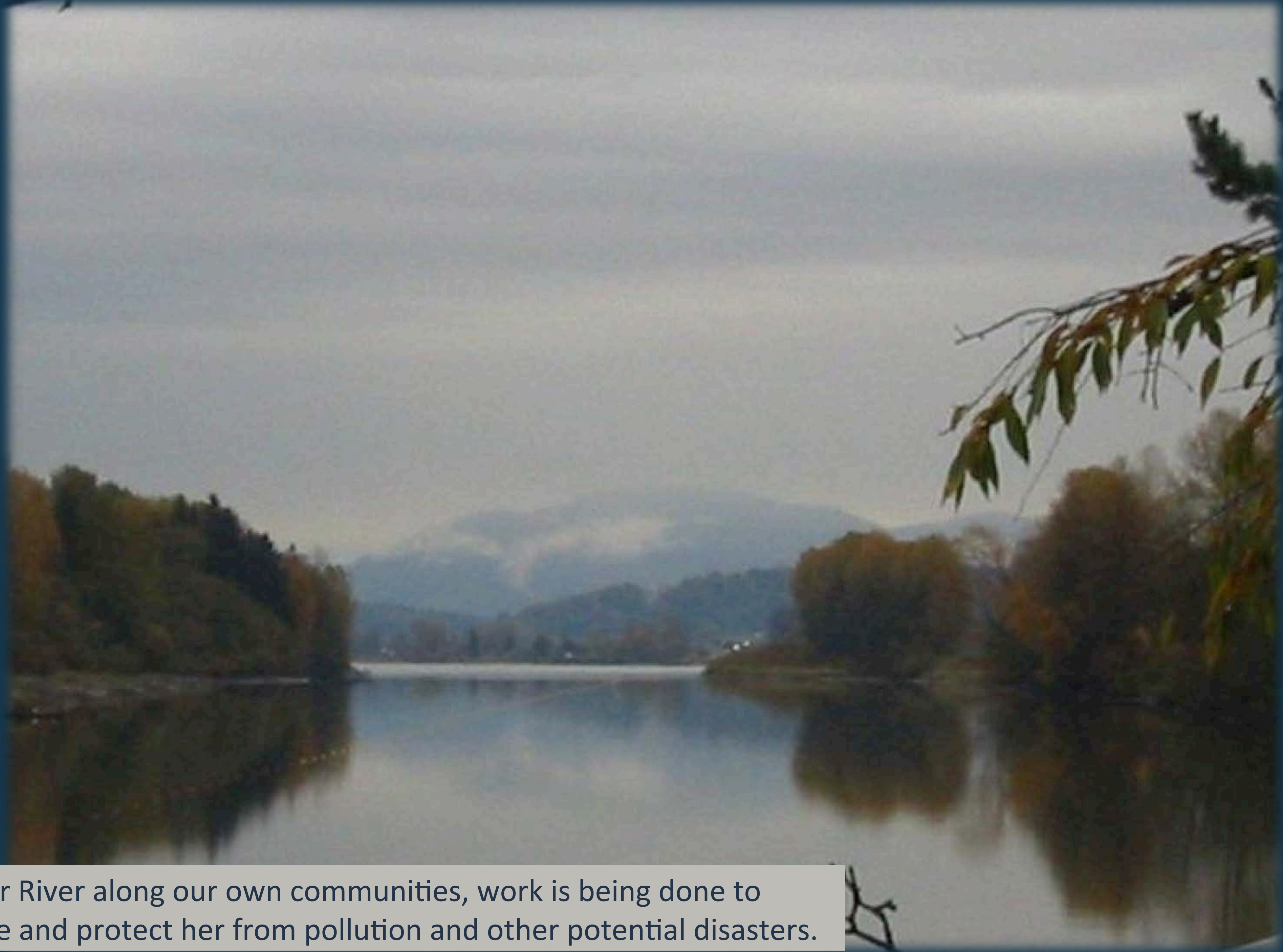
We discussed how more communities need to promote these activities to support local sustainability.

Raising Our Voices Together, Collective Activism

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS NINE



Nursing students also learn how Aboriginal nations are often at the forefront of activist movements to protect the land, water, and air.



From the Fraser River along our own communities, work is being done to preserve nature and protect her from pollution and other potential disasters.



Water Protectors

A Global Movement

Protection of the oceans, lakes, rivers and aquifers is also of high concern to many Aboriginal communities.

All First Nations from the south coast to the top of Haida Gwaii are devoted to protecting the Pacific Coast from potential oil tanker spills and other chemical contaminations.



CNHE/IISE

Canadian Nurses for Health & the Environment

Infirmières et Infirmiers pour la Santé et l'Environnement



Nurse Activism

Moving beyond nursing education, the Canadian Nurses for Health and the Environment encourages all nurses to become involved. In protecting the Earth.

The CNHE is devoted to advancing competencies and knowledge in all Canadian nurses, and is working on curriculum resources to share with all Canadian schools of nursing.

<http://www.cnhe-iise.ca>

This work promotes activism within nursing which can then be shared with communities and individual clients.

The goal is to Come together to join forces with others to promote environmental sustainability for current and future generations.

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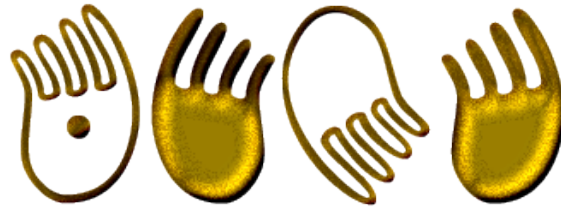
thankyou

www.nursing-informatics.com

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ACTIVITY 1: WISDOM OF OUR ANCESTORS

Take some time to reflect on your own family's life world and culture. Consider how their knowledge and actions sustained your family over the generations. How did their actions, choices, culture, and way of life contribute to the person you are now, and your choice to become a nurse or (fill in your own chosen profession)? Imagine that your ancestors had written a book of instructions for your generation on how to preserve the planet. What would be in yours?



ACTIVITY 2: THE FOUR PILLARS APPLIED TO ECOLITERACY

GUIDE: Use this Worksheet to create a guideline table for people to develop ecoliteracy.

Include at least four tips for each column.



FOUR PILLARS GUIDELINES FOR ECOLITERACY			
RESPECT	RELEVANCE	RECIPROCITY	RESPONSIBILITY

ACTIVITY 3: STEWARDS OF THE LAND

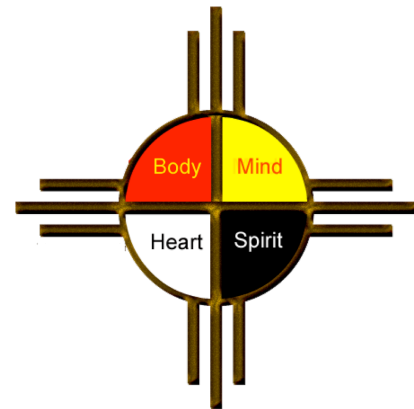
GUIDE: Create a visual model to illustrate the principle roles of stewardship and interconnectedness in Aboriginal knowledge. Include ways that these roles can be integrated into education for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.



Incorporating Aboriginal Wisdom to promote Ecoliteracy

Fundamental Teachings Covered in Session

- Seven Generations
- All My Relations and Interconnection
- Four Directions and Holistic Balance
- Four Pillars of Learning
- A Connection to Place
- Stewardship of the Land
- Walking Softly on the Earth
- Learning Together, Experientially
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RESOURCES MENTIONED DURING SESSION

- In-SHUCK-ch Nation. (2006). *The Seventh Generation Plan*.
<http://inshuckch.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/7GenerationsPlanDraft5.pdf>
- Four Directions Teaching - <http://www.fourdirectionsteachings.com>
- Brown, F. & Brown, K. (2009). *Staying the course, staying alive. Coastal First Nations fundamental truths: Biodiversity, stewardship and sustainability*. Victoria, BC: Biodiversity BC. .
http://www.biodiversitybc.org/assets/Default/BBC_Staying_the_Course_Web.pdf
- Canadian Nurses for Health and the Environment - <http://www.cnhe-iise.ca>

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