

## Endorsements: *Listening to Indigenous Voices*

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Sometimes people don't know the questions to ask, or how to ask questions about a subject that is controversial or one that has been buried and avoided as the history of the Indigenous peoples has been till now. This carefully crafted guide involves the voices of Indigenous peoples through stories, ceremonies, songs and visual arts to reveal a world enriched by diverse Indigenous wisdom and the complex history of colonization and its impacts. It guides us in coming to know each other and to travel on pathways towards living with one another in respect and care. – **Lorna Wanósts'a7**

**Williams, Professor Emerita of Indigenous Education, University of Victoria and Canada Research Chair in Education and Linguistics. Lil'wat Nation, British Columbia**

*Listening to Indigenous Voices* is a wonderful guide to helping non-Indigenous peoples with connecting, discussing, and understanding First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada. The guide provides a step-by-step guideline to having frank and honest discussions about cultural genocide and the necessary un-learning of stereotypes and racism to start the path to reconciliation. Many Indigenous voices are interspersed throughout, allowing the reader to start their journey of truth and reconciliation. I recommend *Listening to Indigenous Voices* for every Canadian so we can move forward together as envisioned by the Wampum belt teachings; us in our canoe, and you in your ship but we move together without interference on the sovereignty of the other. - **Angela Mashford-Pringle, Assistant Professor and Associate Director of the Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health, University of Toronto (Algonquin: Timiskaming First Nation)**

Whether it's a picture, a legend, an article, or a reflection question, each piece of this remarkably inspiring and practical resource invites the reader to engage with the authors' and contributors' desire for transformation of our relationships. Each person involved in its creation reveals their commitment to work for healing and reconciliation across this sacred land. They challenge us to do likewise, joining them in the work. Generations to come will be forever grateful if we respond to their invitation to heal the land and heal each other from a broken past. - **Priscilla Solomon, CSJ, Faith and Justice Office (Ojibwe)**

I'm heartened that the calls to action of the TRC have taken root in many segments of Canadian society, leading citizens to question what can be done to hear the Truth about the relationship of Canada and Indigenous people, and work toward repairing the relationship with a goal of achieving Reconciliation. This guide can help many well-intentioned citizens and groups to begin dialogues, find activities to deepen understanding, and provide starting points on the journey to justice and respect in our relations. In short, this remarkable guide can help catalyse a more just future. - **Jean Paul Restoule, Professor and Chair, Department of Indigenous Education, University of Victoria (Anishinaabe: Dokis First Nation)**

This dialogue guide encourages listening to Indigenous voices and allowing them to be informative and transformative catalysts towards reconciliation. In this way, it is a perfect complement to the KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE), an impactful, participatory learning experience that builds empathy while raising awareness and understanding of the impact of colonization. The KBE opens minds and hearts to ongoing learning about the history of Indigenous peoples in the land called Canada and by centring First Nations, Inuit and Métis voices dedicated to right relations and living life in a good way, the guide represents a meaningful and empowering step towards a just and equitable society where Indigenous peoples' lands and rights are respected. --**Ed Bianchi, KAIROS**

*Listening to Indigenous Voices* introduces the reader to Indigenous perspectives on history, draws out the wisdom of Indigenous traditions, and points us towards a new way of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people walking together. It raises the questions we profoundly need to be asking in faith communities, schools, other institutions, and broader society. All who are committed to the healing and strengthening of relations and the pursuit of a just and peaceful society will benefit from this guide for constructive dialogue. – **Archbishop Donald Bolen, Diocese of Regina,**

Timely, insightful, informative, and inspirational, *Listening to Indigenous Voices* is a pivotal analytical and practical guide to those on the road to reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples of Canada and beyond. It is an invaluable resource for those who wish to take their commitment to deep

reconciliation and decolonization to the next step. - **Michel Andraos, Dean of Theology, St. Paul's University**

*Listening to Indigenous Voices; A Dialogue Guide to Right Relations* from the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice is the fruit of cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous writers and activists. The guide demonstrates the kind of respectful, reciprocal relations that it hopes to facilitate. Indeed "listening" and "dialogue" are key words for both its content and process. Really listening to what Indigenous Peoples are saying about Canada is a process of waking up, of change, even of conversion. With the Forum's process, Indigenous voices not only bring the user of the Guide through the complex problems of colonization and our social complicity in it, they also guide us toward what respectful, reciprocal relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can look like. The Forum's guide is an important contribution to this larger dialogue and struggle for a better shared future together that is so crucial for our faith communities and our country. **Peter Bisson, SJ, Indigenous relations assistant for the Jesuits of Canada**

This rich and inspiring text is to be commended. A team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people - elders, activists, intellectuals - take us on a remarkable journey of discovery. For non-Indigenous persons, this is not only a book about the negative impacts of colonialism in Canada; it is also an opportunity to learn how to free ourselves from the mental prison of colonialism, a doorway to a new way of looking at ourselves and at this country, its history, its present and its possible future. - **Jean-François Roussel, Professor, Université de Montréal**

Listening to Indigenous Voices is a journey through some of the most important Indigenous voices of our generation. In it, you will learn how to engage in dialogue, growth and change - all the while enacting justice and relationships from the visions, stories, and words of Indigenous artists and knowledge keepers. As Arthur Manuel states: "change cannot be done in a day but the process can start today"; reading this collection is one way to start. - **Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair is Anishinaabe (St. Peter's/Little Peguis) and an Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba.**

This resource is extremely powerful and engaging for teachers and students alike. It is a tool that will enhance understanding of the Indigenous

perspective of a shared history. It is based on sound knowledge and offers opportunity for reflective and creative responses. **Kathleen Tanel (retired teacher TCDSB)**

There's a reason why the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission described reconciliation as "an *ongoing* individual and collective process". There could be no quick fix to a century and a half of displacement, devastation and continuing harms. It was understood before we ever began our six and a half years as a Commission that the big work of meaningful reconciliation would need to outlast the temporary focal point of any TRC, outlast the fragility of any sitting government, and extend well beyond political leadership.

That's the same reason why we named our TRC conclusions 'Calls to Action', and aimed them at all sectors of society as well as all levels of governments. After nearly seven thousand survivor-experts recorded their life stories of growing up in 'Indian residential schools'; after collecting and analyzing millions of written documents from governments, churches and historians; after reaching out to individuals, leaders and influencers in Canada and beyond; the continuing disparities, frustrations and eruptions of protest make plain that the big work of reconciliation is still, even now, barely begun.

But it has begun. Books, songs, plays, artwork, curricula and experiential learning are all contributing to new awareness, new understanding, and new possibilities. Experiences such as the "Blanket Exercise" have helped countless thousands begin to re-learn Canadian history from an Indigenous perspective. As an exercise, it has left many feeling emotionally raw, yet unsure what to do next. It's time for a sequel.

This new, multi-session resource can help with digging deeper into reconciliation in the face of ongoing injustice, dispossession, and violence. Facts, photos and graphics come alive with compelling texts, videos and stories from Indigenous authors and leaders, adding to understandings of right relations with each other, and all of Creation. Provocative questions aim to fuel discussions, from boardrooms to basements to classrooms.

As we gather to contemplate next steps towards genuine reconciliation, we need to move beyond knowing and feeling. Tears and regret are not enough. Tangible change is urgent. This rich resource can help. Deep gratitude to the many collaborative hearts and minds who prepared it. -- **Marie Wilson, TRC Commissioner**