Walking in Circles: Self-Location in Indigenous Youth Violence Prevention Research

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Four student researchers applied self-location, an Indigenous research method, to understand violence prevention research in which they are engaged with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth in Ontario and Saskatchewan. The framework 'looking twice' (Absolon & Willet, 2005) was used by the authors who share examples of their own process of self-locating. The use of this framework permitted the researchers to locate themselves, and by doing so, develop deeper understandings and heightened consciousness of the socio-economic and political conditions of violence with which Indigenous youth in Canada interact. By foregrounding the researchers' self-location, a space was opened for dialogue that positions Indigenous and decolonizing knowledges and research methods within the greater discourse of violence prevention and the authors found ways to expand their concepts of and commitments to violence prevention research.

MINOGIIZHIBAKWABIK

The Woman Who Goes Around Doing Good Things

I am lost in the forest
I don't know which way to go
I must rely on markers found in nature to find my way home
But the earth is blanketed in snow
I do not know what to look for

I have never learned this
I must try to learn using the little that I have
Or I will die out here

I think about the stories that I have been told
And the experiences that I have collected;
The things I know to be true
Can they help me now?
I need to learn all by myself
Or I will die out here

The trees are tall and dense
I look way up
I see the orange glow from the nearby town
And a dark storm rolling in towards me
I walk
West
Learning

Wait…
This place feels familiar
Have I been here before?
Oh no… (my heart sinks)

This is where I had started!
I must have been walking around in circles!
How many times have I been here before?
It has been so long
I am tired
Cold
My body is weak

I sit down and look all around me
Something is different now
I almost didn't recognize this place
But I feel it now:

I am not lost;
I am home!
Right where I am supposed to be
Right where I belong
And I am not alone…

~ by Angela (Giizhigaatekwe) Snowshoe

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis[1] youth continue to experience and endure systemic colonial violence (Wickham, 2010). Most notable is the historical trauma experienced in residential schools as multilayered violence marked by malnourishment and physical, mental, emotional, and sexual abuse (Battiste, 2005; Canada, 1996; Smith, 2009; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2011). Indigenous youth continue to encounter systemic violence, institutionalized colonization, and racialization processes and attitudes held by the dominant population (Battiste, Bell, Findlay, Findlay & Henderson, 2005; St. Denis, 2011). Consequently, to prevent violence experienced by Indigenous youth, violence prevention researchers must move beyond analyses of victims and perpetrators to address broader systemic socio-economic and political issues of colonial violence (Tuck, 2011). As articulated in Angela's poem in the epigraph, followed from a life dream, we have found that true to the demands of the "looking twice" framework (Absolon & Willet, 2005), returning to and remembering our own stories and origins can provide increase/heightened awareness needed to engage in more ethical research.

We draw from the framework of self-location as articulated by Indigenous scholars Absolon and Willet (2005) to understand the positioning of ourselves and to decolonize premises of violence prevention research based in discourse that positions researchers as experts who come to know and find solutions for Indigenous peoples. Our position is that violence prevention researchers must engage in research through a paradigm that accepts violence in Indigenous lives as historically constructed by and through colonial processes that individualize violence and regulate whose bodies, rights, and knowledge systems matter. This position, however,

1 The terms First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are used to represent the first peoples of Canada as recognized by the Canadian Constitution. The term Indigenous is used interchangeably to represent first peoples in Canadian and in international contexts.

requires researchers to be reflexive. Due to the relational ontology of Indigenous epistemologies (Wilson, 2007) and the history of unethical and exploitative research with Indigenous peoples (Baker, 2009; Menzies, 2001; Smith, 1999), an aspect of the use of Indigenous methodologies requires that researchers expose the motivation and purpose of research (Kovach, 2009). Kovach (2009) explained that this relational ontology can be satisfied through honestly articulated understandings and expressions of self—our histories, relations, motivations, and limitations. Self-location as a research method brings perspective to what is sought, how data are analyzed, and what results are deemed important for advancing community interests and goals (Wilson, 2008). Foregrounding Absolon and Willett's (2005) self-locating framework of 'looking twice,' we share some of the processes and challenges of self-location that we have found necessary in ethical research with and for Indigenous youth. As Wilson (2007) explained, "We cannot be separated from our work and nor should our writing be separated from ourselves" (p.194).

THE CANADIAN PREVENTION SCIENCE CLUSTER

We are student researchers with the Canadian Prevention Science Cluster[2] [CPSC]. Funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, the CPSC aims to prevent societal violence through prevention science research and to expand understandings of such work through various frameworks and collaboration with Indigenous peoples. To nationalize the center's activities, four hubs were created: Dalhousie University and the Universities of Toronto (housed at the University of Western Ontario), Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. Each hub has its own specialization such as socio-emotional learning at the University of British Columbia and cyber-bullying at Dalhousie University. The Ontario and Saskatchewan hubs have focused on violence prevention programming with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth.

Four of the approximately twenty CPSC student researchers have come together to write this paper. Carmen Gillies is of Métis, Chinese, and Norwegian ancestry and a Ph.D. Candidate in educational foundations at the University of Saskatchewan. Dawn Burleigh identifies as non-Indigenous and is a Ph.D. Candidate in policy studies at the University of Western

2 See: http://www.preventionsciencecluster.org/

University. Angela Snowshoe is Ojibway and Métis and a Ph.D. Candidate in clinical psychology at the University of Western Ontario and David Werner[3] is of Métis ancestry and a teacher candidate at the University of Saskatchewan. We have found one another across provincial and academic borders and have became a collective through our common struggle to decolonize and position ourselves within our research.

FIRST NATIONS, INUIT, AND MÉTIS YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION RESEARCH

Many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth, their families, and communities, encounter disproportionately high levels of systemic violence (Brownridge, 2008; Brennan, 2009; Chartrand & McKay, 2006). While this is the experience, Indigenous peoples rarely report victimization due to fears of experiencing institutionalized discrimination within the justice and child welfare systems (Fry, 2011). Statistics of Indigenous youth violence are thus likely understated. Studies within Canadian contexts, however, have provided insight regarding issues such as Indigenous youth and gangs (Grekul & Sanderson, 2011; Totten, 2009), child welfare (Blackstock, 2010; Blackstock, Trocme & Bennett, 2004), suicide (MacNeil, 2008), HIV risk and sexual health (Larkin, Flicker, Koleszar-Green, Mintz, Dagninio & Mitchell, 2007), incarceration (Shantz, 2010), and youth resistance to racialized violence (Hare & Pidgeon, 2011). Prevention scientists have also measured school-based programs developed to strengthen Indigenous youth's relationship skills (Crooks, Chiodo, Thomas & Hughs, 2010).

Prevention science is an interdisciplinary field of research, relying on psychology, epidemiology, economics, education, and social work to implement effective prevention programming (Society for Prevention Research, 2011). One area of concern within prevention science is the lack of school-based prevention program success with racially marginalized youth (Greenburg, 2004; Powell & Black, 2003). Although some prevention scientists argue that program adaptations dilute program scientific integrity (Botvin, 2004; Elliot & Mihalic, 2003), others, including the CPSC, have turned to culturally appropriate programming with local adaptations (Crooks, 2008; Hurst & Laird, 2006; Penn, Doll & Grandgenett, 2008). Though prevention science is rooted in positivistic scientific inquiry (Catalano, Fagan, Gavin,

3 While writing this paper, David was hired as a teacher by the Saskatoon Public School Board.

Greenberg, Irwin, Ross & Shek, 2012), the CPSC has created space for alternate methodologies. As CPSC researchers, we have been encouraged to build upon existing scholarship and have noticed a need to examine researcher subjectivity and social positioning in Indigenous youth violence prevention research. Such inquiries are important as programming is influenced profoundly by researchers' ontologies and epistemologies. In the context of colonization, we argue that researchers must engage in decolonization processes in order to contribute to ethical and effective programming with Indigenous and all youth. We have thus turned to the Indigenous method of self-location for guidance, which differs significantly from reflexivity as used within western methodological approaches.

REFLEXIVITY AND SELF-LOCATION

Recognition of or accounting for reflexivity has become integral within qualitative research since the 1970s because of criticism of claims to objective neutrality within positivist research (Pillow, 2012). According to Kovach (2009), "Reflexivity is the researcher's own self-reflection in the meaning making process" (p. 32). The call for reflexivity has been taken up in numerous ways across research fields to situate subjective positions and cultivate trustworthiness with and provide ethical accountability to research subjects (Alex & Hammarstrom, 2008; Daley, 2010; Dominelli, 2002; Dowling, 2006; Finlay, 2002; Gordon, 2006; Henwood, 2008; Maxey, 1999; Wren, 2004). Qualitative researchers who have studied violence within various populations have emphasized reflexivity as a method. For example, Downe (2007) centered reflexivity in her study with young women and cross border sex trafficking in the Eastern Carribean, while Gilgun (2008) emphasized reflexivity in phenomenological research with perpetrators of violence. Reed, Miller, Nnawulezi and Valenti (2012) also stressed the significance of reflexivity as utilized in HIV prevention intervention research for young Black lesbian women. Aligning with Reed et al. (2012), we have considered seriously Pillow's (2012) warning that reflexivity can be used by researchers to absolve researcher accountability to individuals or groups served and represented. Simply put, naming one's positioning does not ensure researcher accountability to communities or the researched. Because subjectivity is dynamic and contextual, new forms of reflexivity that "account for multiplicity" and "acknowledges the unknowable" (Pillow, 2012, p. 181),

or what Pillow has termed "uncomfortable reflexivity" (p. 188), are required. We find Pillow's call for alternate forms of reflexive methods pertinent to our research. While reflexivity might lead to more accountable research, it is grounded in western understandings of being and power. In the case of youth violence prevention in colonial contexts, reflexivity has yet to address how researchers are implicated in a history of ongoing colonial violence.

SELF-LOCATING IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION RESEARCH

Through a series of independent writing sessions and conversations we have explored our relationships with violence prevention research through self-location as we seek to become more accountable to the youth and communities we serve, requiring us to walk a path of colonial resistance. For us, this path is not smoothly paved or easy to see but is at times arduous and muddied. As we decolonize our practice, we make mistakes. The following section is not presented as a guide to self-location in prevention research. Rather, what we share is how we have self-located through samples of our writing and how we connect our self-location as individuals to our collective shifting understandings of violence prevention research with and for Indigenous youth.

Indigenous scholars have described why self-locating is a necessary element of accountable and ethical research that moves beyond reflexivity and towards decolonization (Archibald, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Restoule, Archibald, Lester-Smith, Parent & Smilie, 2010; Steinhauer, 2002; Wilson, 2008). The protocol of locating oneself within Indigenous communities and research is meant to, as Thompson (2008) described, "articulate why I feel the need to do such work and how I have come to be on this journey, and to show how my research will be relevant and useful to my people" (p. 24). Through honest self-location and admitting what one does not know, researchers build trust with research participants (Weber-Pillwax, 2004). Self-location can be uncomfortable and is dependent upon researchers' willingness to embark on or continue decolonization processes that include honesty about who we are and from where we come (Absolon & Willet, 2004). Thus, "When we locate ourselves, we identify ourselves in relation to a lineage, a people and a place, signifying that the past is alive and activated in the present" (Restoule, Archibald, Lester-Smith, Parent & Smillie, 2010, p. 3). Through the process of self-location and integrating oneself into the research, certain

methodologies such as participatory action research and more community based or collaborative processes afford reflexivity within the research partnerships. Self-location affords the researcher and the researched to build a collective understanding and starting point. Ethically this approach supports new initiatives to engage and partner with communities working toward a common agenda.

Reflecting on our own personal lives and our Indigenous youth violence prevention research in Saskatchewan and Ontario, we have engaged in self-location as a research method foregrounding Absolon and Willett's (2005) framework of 'looking twice.' Each of us has benefitted from looking twice as individuals in distinct ways as a result of our own unique racialized identities, passions, and experiences. Yet, we have also gained collectively as violence prevention researchers from listening to and learning from each other's processes of self-location. In *Putting Ourselves Forward: Location in Aboriginal Research*, Absolon and Willett connect the construction or narritization of personal stories to self-location, stressing eight 'Re's': Respectful Representations and *Re-membering*; Re-Vising and Re-connecting; Re-Claiming (Avoiding the Extraction of Knowledge) and Re-Covering; and Re-Naming Research in Our Own Language and Re-Search Methods (Affirming Indigenous Paths). The authors conceptualize the Re's as a means to redo or "look twice." Though we did not write our stories with Absolon and Willet's (2005) framework in mind, after many conversations we as a group shared our written reflections and identified how our personal stories predominantly align with specific Re's. To create a congruency of the Re's with our stories we organized them into four groups of two, as we perceive illustrate the concepts within each of our stories. Highlighting how we have self-located through looking twice at ourselves as researchers, the proceeding section provides a brief outline of each of the four groups of two Re's followed by one of our individual stories. We recognize our interpretations of the Re's are influenced by our understandings and note that the stories we share are partial and will change as we continue to self-locate.

RESPECTFUL REPRESENTATIONS AND *RE-MEMBERING*

Respectful representations and re-membering when self-locating require that researchers resist essentializing discourses as well as desires to focus only on role models and Indigenous peoples' accomplishments

(Absolon & Willett, 2005). Such practices diminish the role of oppression, racism, and colonialism, dehumanize Indigenous peoples, and insinuate that the success of one should be attainable by all. Rather, Absolon and Willet (2005) stress the importance of not speaking on behalf of others but to locate ourselves in our own truths, including our "cultural and colonial histories and contexts" (p. 110). In line with respectful representations, self-location also requires *re-membering* stories that inform who we are and our worldview. These stories can re-*member* our family, community, and ancestors from whom we have been dis-membered through racism and colonialism. Re-membering is "healing to our recovery" (Absolon & Willet, 2005, p. 116) from colonialism, enabling honesty about who we are as researchers and more in-depth understandings of colonial violence. Carmen brings respectful representations and remembering alive in her self-location.

Carmen.

Growing up, my Dad didn't tell us much about his childhood but I knew he was different because the other dads at my school were white. I secretly wanted my Dad to be white so that we could have a cabin at the lake and name brand clothing. But he wasn't white, his mom was Métis and his Dad was Chinese. I guess my brother and I were never really white either, even though our mom is and we can pass. It took me a long time to understand that colonization and racism complicated my identity and perception of my parents' values.

My Dad's mom was a single parent. Different families raised her eight children in the foster care system. The few stories my Dad shared about his childhood were difficult to tell, though some good memories were scattered in with the bad. An image of him standing by the window for several days, hoping to see someone come home with food, has haunted me. He was eight years old and responsible to care for his younger siblings. In the past, this story caused me to resent my grandmother. It's a powerful story because it can be used to construct Aboriginal parents as neglectful and abusive. Since learning about colonization and patriarchal racism, I have stopped resenting my grandmother and have come to love her. I now see the magnitude of my grandmother and Dad's experiences.

I know my Dad loved his family but he separated himself and was separated from them at a young age. I am only now coming to know some

of my Métis family. My Dad became an art teacher and has been described as a 'Native boy who beat the odds.' To me, all Indigenous peoples have beaten the odds. I exist because my family survived colonization by whatever means possible. Though I am Métis, my experiences have been very different from many of my family members because of my whiteness and my parents' university education. Self-locating has placed in front of me a responsibility to learn from and give back to my family and community through countering systemic colonial violence. I am proud to be my parents' daughter and no longer wish secretly my Dad had been white. His spirit, compassion, and laughter guide me on my journey.

RE-VISING AND RE-CONNECTING

Re-vising refers to the ongoing need to decolonize our identities as researchers through identifying colonial and racist ideologies within the literature and resources we consult, and the experiences that inform our research. Consequently, "As our recovery from colonialism progresses, we speak about our past and present experiences with more awareness" (Absolon & Willet, 2005, p. 112). Re-connecting occurs when researchers connect with personal contexts to expose "details about…where they are from, their race and gender, who they are connected to [through which] their research intentions become revealed" (Absolon & Willet, 2005, p. 118). When researchers do not engage in revising and re-connection, research with and about Indigenous peoples can cause suspicion within Indigenous communities and thus become subject to question. David's story brings such revising and re-connecting to the forefront.

David.

Speaking directly to me in her soft but firm voice, my grandmother would say, "You know David, they needed someone to listen to their story." It took me a while to figure that out. My grandmother spends most of her time talking to people, hearing their stories and sharing her own. Many years later, I've realized, for me truly hearing others begins with acknowledging my own history and privilege. I've traced my Métis family back to the Red River Settlement. I found my great-grandfather's name in the 1906 Canadian Census at the Lebret Indian Residential School. My Metis family survived intense assimilation pressure and continued trapping until the 1950s. They

are resilient, passionate and drink a lot of tea. My father's side of the family fled war in Europe and moved west in pursuit of employment, they enjoy sit down family meals and any competition.

I am in between two worlds that have been at odds with each other. I identify strongly with my Métis family. I see the trauma inflicted by residential schools and the pressure to assimilate to Canadian society. I'm visibly white, I experience the benefits of heterosexual middle class affluence and the legacy of unequal opportunity afforded to the Bosnian-German side of my family. I am trying to understand and unpack my own identity, to understand how my white privilege affects my perspective while reconnecting with Indigenous ways of knowing. Over the past year I've been asking myself, which Métis ways of thinking and ways of being survived residential schools and the intense pressures of assimilation? On other days I've grappled with my own silent complicity in ongoing racism and discrimination.

Self-location has helped me to reflect on my own position in society, my internalized racism, and my community's history. I'm starting to tell my own stories and acknowledge my ancestors. By self-locating and sharing these stories I can become part of a community that creates space for caring, learning, and generosity. Through self-locating, I can hear people's stories and narratives as their own, as a truth rather than part of a larger imposed colonial-derived narrative and this process has changed me. As I listen to others and tell my own stories, I am following my grandmother's advice and, in a limited sense, countering society's hegemonic discourse.

RE-CLAIMING (AVOIDING THE EXTRACTION OF KNOWLEDGE) AND RE-COVERING

Absolon and Willett (2005) use the term re-claiming to describe the process of positioning ourselves in relation to our research topic. Re-claiming our history, stories, and experiences is anti-colonial and works to decolonize historical and contemporary misrepresentations of Indigenous peoples. As we re-claim our positions, however, it is important to remember that not all Indigenous knowledges (e.g., sacred knowledge) or experiences of individuals can be made transparent in our research in ethical ways. In re-covering, researchers uncover personal historical truths and recognize the ways that historical oppressions shape us. From these truths, we see our

strengths and recover our identities and relations with ancestors, opening a pathway to re-cover Indigenous epistemologies. For, "Only when we have decolonized ourselves can we recover, contemplate, and envision ways in which research can be used to eradicate racism and lift the oppression" (Absolon & Willett, 2005, p. 120). Dawn's story brings out some ways in which re-claiming and re-covering can and could occur.

Dawn.

It was a busy conference and as the tables fill up for the next workshop, I search for a seat. The idle chatter fills the room. Business cards and handshakes are exchanged faster than I can get my bearings. As I take a seat, a voice beckons me. It says Nishnawbe Quay? After realizing this voice, this man, is talking to me; I reply simply with no. I spend the next hour analyzing what just happened. Thoughts fly through my mind like the CNN ticker tape. Why did I say No so quickly? What was he even asking me? Why did everyone stop talking when I answered? Did I say something wrong? But most importantly the words sing in my head like a broken record. Nishnawbe Quay, Nishnawbe Quay. What does it mean?

As soon as the train pulls out of the station, the furry of the conference is behind me and again in my mind I hear Nishnawbe Quay? I hear it in the voices of all of my former students. In the voices of all the people that have asked me where I am from, what my clan is or if I had a status card. I need to know what I was being asked. I text a friend and ask her what Nishnawbe Quay means? She replies with laughter and what follows is a single line …

Aboriginal woman…

I don't know why I said 'No' that day at the conference but my answer holds true. I am not Nishnawbe Quay. I do not have a status card. I do not have a clan connection. My paternal lineage is Scottish, but my maternal side is unknown. My mother was adopted and that is her story to keep. When asked about my ancestry, I stumble, typically make a joke and change the subject. But that response is no longer acceptable to me. Silencing a response about the complexity of identity perpetuates systemic and structural racism, which I otherwise work to expose, specifically in the education sector. Violence prevention research within Indigenous contexts allow me as a researcher to explore the complexities of identity and resist the complacency in myself to avoid, deter, and ignore my privilege and power in this work.

RE-NAMING RESEARCH IN OUR OWN LANGUAGE AND RE-SEARCH METHODS (AFFIRMING INDIGENOUS PATHS)

Absolon and Willett (2005) explained that re-naming research includes using or creating language that distinguishes Indigenous research from western approaches. For Indigenous peoples, the term research represents a legacy of racist and colonial exploitation, not an Indigenous "process for gathering and sharing knowledge" (Absolon & Willett, 2005, p. 114). As well, because Indigenous languages cannot always be translated into English, creative methods such as poetry can express meaning through Indigenous paradigms. 'Re-search methods' speaks to the need to affirm Indigenous pathways that resist oppressive research methodologies through envisioning and expressing the distinct experiences and realities of Indigenous peoples with creative and innovative methods. Researchers are encouraged to validate Indigenous epistemologies and worldviews by breaking away from oppressive research methodologies and methods to contribute to the "emerging, yet powerful, body of literature" of re-humanizing Indigenous research (Absolon & Willett, 2005, p. 122). Angela re-names and re-searches using language and method as a means to do both.

Angela.

Boozhoo. I am a proud non-status First Nations woman of Ojibway and Caucasian heritages. Although I strongly identify with my Ojibway roots, I honour both influences. I was raised off-reserve by my mother (Ojibway) and father (Caucasian) in a small log home along the bush line north of an isolated rural town in Northwestern Ontario. My younger brother and I spent much of our childhoods at the lake with my grandfather (member of White Earth Reservation) and grandmother (Métis). They taught us life lessons through stories of the spirits. As a youth, I often turned to my family with questions about what it meant to be 'Native.' They did not have the answers and I did not understand why. I eventually turned to the formal education system for answers.

It was a difficult decision to enroll in an undergraduate program at the University of Western Ontario, 1500 kilometres from my hometown and family. I vividly recall my mother telling me, "Never forget where you came from" as I left home for the first time in my life. That first year at university, I found that my mother's words increasingly permeated my thoughts during

my classes. I took her advice and began to explore my cultural background. It has been a combination of my personal and educational experiences that has helped me to realize that my life journey must consist of walking two parallel but very different paths: one according to *the ways of knowing* of Western society and the other from a First Nations perspective.

My graduate career has since consisted of navigating these worlds in search of a common ground, where I do not have to relinquish either position but can come to understand elements of both. It has required critical reflexivity and equal commitment to scientific inquiry as to traditional teachings, ceremony, and language local to various First Nations communities across Canada. My resultant worldview can be thought of as "two-eyed seeing" (Tafoya; Archibald, 2008) using bi-nocular vision, that is, the ability to see the strengths of Western *ways of knowing* with one eye while seeing the strengths of First Nations *ways of knowing* from the other.

Student Re-search

As CPSC student researchers, we have each participated in various research projects that concern Indigenous youth. Though CPSC hub methodological approaches range from quantitative longitudinal evidence based studies in Ontario to qualitative and Indigenous community based inquiries and dialogues in Saskatchewan, each hub is committed to developing community partnerships and participating in decolonizing dialogue with the goal to prevent violence experienced by Indigenous and all youth. As individual researchers, we found that self-location through looking twice has served as an anchor to the commitments we assert in our work and have made to community partners, funding agencies, and within proposals and mission statements. The following discussion outlines with more detail the individual and collective lessons gained from self-locating in our Saskatchewan and Ontario work, providing recommendations for Indigenous youth violence prevention research in broader localized contexts.

DISCUSSION

As we venture into our communities and engage in violence prevention work and research, we've been drawn back to our own stories and histories. At some level, we are or have been the youth that violence prevention work is aimed at and the youth are us. Self-locating has influenced our individual and collective research with the CPSC and has changed our

perspective of community involvement so that we can better acknowledge our shared limitations and commonalities with others. As a collective, we know our colleagues more than before and in a more relational way—we know our motivations and driving passions that have brought us to this work. As stated by Wilson:

> This self-recognition enables us to understand where and how we belong to this world, and it has the profound effect of ensuring that whenever we may happen to be at any given time, alone or in the company of other people, that we do not feel alone. This knowledge nourishes us. (2001, p. 92)

Because the process of self-location requires us to ask 'who am I in relation to others,' the process requires a great deal of work; personal work often not recognized or valued in academia. Consequently, the space and time needed to foster relationships required for this type of writing are not valued, and such efforts are marginalized and recognition non-existent. In our research process, committing time to self-locate was at times difficult but an absolute necessary and ongoing component of working with and representing Indigenous youth, their families, and communities. We also found that patience was needed as we asked ourselves difficult questions regarding what family and personal information could be disclosed safely and respectfully with each other and in our writing. An emotional investment is required as well when self-locating as we reconnected with family, gathered stories, and retold our stories to allow deeper and clearer understandings of who we are and what we do, do not, or cannot know.

For each of us, the process of self-location has changed with time and is ongoing. Because self-locating is fluid, it doesn't always fit well with linear approaches to writing. Yet, the fluctuating nature of self-locating serves an important role in calling into question the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of positivistic research paradigms that tend to dominate literature in the field of violence prevention (Catalano, Fagan, Gavin, Greenberg, Irwin, Ross & Shek, 2012). Through self-locating we have challenged assumptions about what it means to conduct good research, as we cannot ignore the inter-connectedness of the personal and professional. Self-locating has helped us to accept we are not neutral as violence prevention researchers—nor do we want to be. By locating ourselves through our stories, and understanding ourselves through looking twice, we can now

answer questions such as 'why do you want to prevent Indigenous youth violence, what is your work's purpose, and how might your work counter colonization' with more confidence and humility.

Most importantly, self-locating has altered and expanded our conceptions of violence prevention research concerning Indigenous youth. The process of self-location, through the framework of looking twice, has made us more self-aware researchers in the sense that it has provided conceptual clarity of our purpose and direction, and courage to create space where nearly none existed previously for uncomfortable dialogue about colonial violence, race, privilege, and decolonization. This space has led to a heightened consciousness of our own motivations and assumptions, influencing our research questions, participation in projects, and relationships with community and colleagues. For some of us, the repeated process of locating has spurred the privileging of Indigenous knowledges and anti-colonial and decolonizing methods. For others, self-location has led to listening more carefully to stories shared by youth, their families, communities, and service providers. As we now see more clearly that Indigenous youth violence is normalized and reinforced by colonial processes, some of us have shifted our focus to colonial power and institutionalized discourse. Though we have each taken a varying path as a result of self-locating through the Re's, validating our individual stories as Indigenous peoples and allies has changed us, we have learned from each other, and we each see our role as researchers differently. It is our position that this step towards honesty is a step towards more accountable and transparent Indigenous youth violence prevention research. It becomes increasingly difficult to step away from responsibilities to communities and the researched when self-location is practiced as a research method.

CONCLUSION

Self-location begins with understanding who we are and from where we come, admitting what we do and do not know, and committing to an ongoing relational learning process. Conceptualizing and actualizing self-location, for us, has been a complex, personal, and cyclical method that requires time and space not always made available in academia but is absolutely necessary. We as researchers and Canadian citizens are implicated in the cycle of colonial violence navigated by Indigenous youth. We can

more effectively counter this violence when we accept our positioning and roles in it.

We acknowledge that our understandings of self-location are partial and we are grateful to the Indigenous scholars from whom we have learned. We are also grateful to our families for sharing their stories with us and we dedicate this paper to the memory of Carmen's father, Lee Baker, who passed away suddenly in September 2013. Much like Angela's poem shared in the epigraph, self-locating brings us back to where we started, reminding us why we are here, shedding light on our surroundings, and moving us forward to conduct research in more honest and accountable ways to benefit the children, youth, and communities we serve.

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