



Season 2 Study Guide

Reconcile: Everyday Conversations is a podcast series that explores how people define reconciliation, their journey towards integrating reconciliation practices into their lives, and invitations for others to join them.

This guide was created to accompany the podcast for further reflection and discussion around reconciliation. Use it with a group of friends, a church group, a book club, or individually to dig deeper into your own perspective of reconciliation.

To begin:

We asked each of our guests the following 5 questions. How would you answer them?

1. What is your personal understanding of reconciliation?
2. What experiences have led you to this understanding?
3. Why do you feel reconciliation is important?
4. Does forgiveness have a role in reconciliation?
5. How would you invite people into the reconciliation journey?

Access all episodes, including biographies and synopses at:

<https://anchor.fm/reconcile-conversations> or

<https://mcccanada.ca/reconcile-everyday-conversations>

Or find the podcast on any podcast platform (Apple, Spotify, etc) by searching:

Reconcile Everyday Conversations.



Reconcile. Everyday Conversations is a project of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan.



Episode 1: Identity

“I think it’s important for people to really learn about what reconciliation is because it is going to become a professional competency very soon in the workplace... It [Reconciliation] is important because it is not going away, it’s going to get bigger, it’s going to get better, it’s going to become more beautiful, it’s going to flourish out and it is on the onus of people to learn it.”

Annie Battiste is a proud Mi'kmaq woman and member of Potlotek First Nations. She holds a bachelor's and master degree from the University of Saskatchewan. Committed to social justice and reconciliation within Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan, Annie has worked as a Reconciliation Consultant with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and the University of Saskatchewan. As a frequent conference presenter and community educator, she is creating awareness on the important historical and social issues pertaining to Indigenous peoples, creating bridges in communities through deep reflection on the historical roots of Saskatchewan and its possibilities for new directions in empowerment of diverse groups and peoples in Saskatchewan and beyond.

In this episode Annie explains that the meaning of reconciliation shifts depending on where we find ourselves and that it is intricately connected to identity. As Annie said, “I think that reconciliation is the definition of the Canadian identity.” Annie also challenges us to think about what reconciliation looks like in the workplace.

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you identify yourself? How does your identity connect with reconciliation?
2. Annie speaks about doing reconciliation from the head, heart or hands. Name some examples of what reconciliation looks like from each of these places.
3. How can reconciliation become a professional competency within your workplace?
4. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [Two Row Wampum](#)
2. [Treaty 6](#)
3. [Wet'suwet'en blockades](#)
4. [Charter of Rights and Freedoms – Section 25](#)
5. [UNDRIP](#)
6. [TRC Calls to Action](#)
7. [MMIWG Calls for Justice](#)
8. [ayisiyiniwak:](#)



Episode 2: Forgiveness

“The way reconciliation is, is we have to forgive each other before we can move on and start to heal. If we can't forgive people, then we're still stuck in part of the problems not the solutions.”



Stacey Swampy was born in Maskwacis, Alberta. When he was 13 years old, his father died, and he entered, what would become, 30 years inside the system – moving from foster homes to group homes to the young offender's systems and finally to the provincial correctional centre and federal penitentiary. When Stacey realized that he might die within this system he decided it was time to make changes and turned to the Elders for help. Since then, Stacey has become sober, embraced Indigenous culture and practices, graduated with a university degree, and has worked tirelessly to help people get out of the system. Stacey has worked for Str8Up, Micah Mission and is currently back at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre, this time working as an Elder.

In this episode Stacey talked about the value of learning his own story, about the importance of forgiveness and how it is an essential step for reconciliation. He noted that not only do we have to forgive those who have hurt us, but we must also forgive ourselves. Stacey puts reconciliation within a problem-solving framework. He explained how the teachings from Elders taught him to let go of all the negative energy he was holding onto and finally move forward in a positive and healthy direction.

Discussion Questions:

1. Was there a moment that made you realize you had to work towards reconciliation?
2. What does white privilege mean to you?
3. Are there other systems that are designed to fail Indigenous people?
4. Name some ways to engage men on the topic of vulnerability?
5. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [Str8Up](#)
2. [Writing your Life Story Teaching by the Medicine Wheel](#)
3. [Emotional Intelligence Toolkit](#)





Episode 3: Deep Listening

“Deep listening is a critical part of reconciliation. It isn’t just feeding back what you hear on the surface but taking things down to the depths of emotions, social understanding, intellectual understanding and moving into areas of empathy, respect and humility. This Cree teaching is an important part of who we are as a people.”

Page | 4

Harry Lafond is from and lives on maskêko sâkahikanihk (Muskeg Lake). He spends much of his time seeking out Cree words and relearning how to speak, read, and write Cree. That is the legacy he wants to leave his 13 grandchildren, two daughters and three sons. Harry has done many things to serve the people he lives with: he has a Masters of Education, an Indigenous Languages Certificate, has served as chief, wrote some, read lots, listened to Elders, spoke many times on reconciliation and spent hundreds of hours with his children and grandchildren. His wife, Germaine and Harry believe in wâhkôtowin (building relations) and acknowledge that it requires time and energy.

Harry knit together his thoughts around the spirituality of reconciliation and the importance of language within reconciliation. He walked us through his journey of reconciling both Catholic and Cree spirituality while first learning and then teaching Cree phrases and understandings.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does family mean to you?
2. How do you practice and participate in deep listening?
3. Reflect on how culture shapes language and vice versa.
4. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

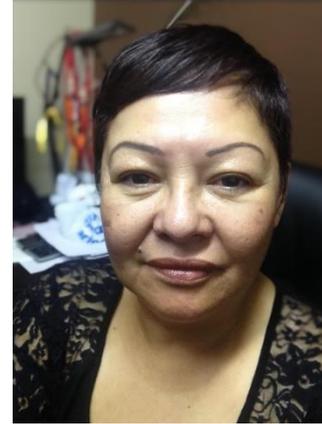
Resources:

1. [Muskeg Lake](#)
2. [Cree Literacy Network](#)
3. [OTC](#)
4. [Indigenous couple live a life of reconciliation – Catholic Register](#)
5. [Black Elk](#)



Episode 4: Resilience

“I want people to know where this is all coming from. In terms of reconciliation people say, ‘Why don’t these Indians just get over it? Move along with your life?’ How does me and my family move forward or move in any way [after] what has happened to us, as a family?”



Maryann Napope is a Cree mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She is a 5th generation survivor of Indian Residential Schools and was heavily involved in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission community gatherings held throughout Saskatchewan where she worked as a mental health support person. Maryann has facilitated the Kairos Blanket Exercise to communities throughout the province. She has a degree in social work.

Maryann shared intimately about her life and experiences overcoming abuse and a high-risk lifestyle to break the cycles of violence that had impacted her family. She spoke candidly about injustice and reconciliation and invoked settlers to do more.

Discussion Questions:

1. What lessons in resilience and trauma have you learned from your family?
2. How do you practice building your resilience?
3. Name some examples of self care and community care that you value.
4. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [STORIES FROM THE FRONT: REALITIES OF THE OVER-INCARCERATION OF ABORIGINAL WOMEN IN CANADA](#)
2. [Indigenous Saskatchewan Encyclopedia – Residential Schools](#)
3. [Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools](#)

CONTENT WARNING: This episode talks about incidences of sexual abuse. It is difficult to hear these stories and if it would be harmful or triggering for you to listen, we suggest skipping this episode.

Maryann felt the stories were important to share because she had been shameful of them for many years and has since realized that these are not secrets she needs to hold. If you need help please call 211 or go to 211.ca to find local resources including crisis hotlines, addictions, abuse, and many others. The Indian Residential School Survivors Society also has a 24-hour crisis line: 1-866-925-4419





Episode 5: Spirituality

“You have to be open to it. You might not want to listen or hear what someone has to say that has a different belief system.... God calls us to love everyone, to listen to their stories. This is what have gotten me started and motivated.”

Page | 6

Jolene Peters lives intentionally in her Saskatoon neighbourhood as a part-time hair stylist, part-time nanny, full-time mom and wife. Jolene is from the Mistawsis band and grew up in a Mennonite family as a foster child. Jolene and her family are very involved at their church, House for All Nations.

Jolene spoke about how the birth of her daughter propelled her to explore her Indigenous heritage and navigate how to reconcile Indigenous spirituality with her Christian faith. She spoke passionately about her desire that her daughter grow up to be a proud Indigenous person.

Discussion Questions:

1. Name some inspirational books, movies or documentaries that have taught you about reconciliation.
2. What reconciliation events have you attended? Have you ever wanted to go to a reconciliation event, but something held you back from it? What was it that held you back?
3. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [Office of the Treaty Commissioner events](#)
2. [Beaconnectr.org](#)



Episode 6:

Decolonizing the Kitchen

“The chef coat that you see is actually modeled after the Turkish army. I think there are a lot of rules, etiquette, and kitchen ways of being that are at odds with Indigenous cultures. So I’m trying to... decolonize that kitchen experience for people.”



Jenni Lessard currently works as the Indigenous Cultural Consultant for the Culinary Team at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. She has been a restaurant owner, caterer, executive chef and sees herself as a food bridge for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Saskatchewan.

Jenni reflected about how food can be a tool for reconciliation. Jenni passionately spoke about how the act of reconciliation includes acknowledgement and recognizing that cultural understandings of the land and food have been taken from people. She challenges the listeners to economically support Indigenous businesses and to eat Indigenous food.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is diversity so important?
2. Is food important to you? Name some ways you can use food in the work of reconciliation.
3. How can you support Indigeneity in your personal life?
4. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [Wanuskewin](#)
2. [Boreal Heartland](#)
3. [Indigenous culinary association of nations](#)
4. [Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada](#)





Episode 7: Responsibility

“I think now though, it’s using my voice to create safe spaces, to have tough conversations, but have these conversations in a respectful and safe way. So, we can...hear that before you get to reconciliation, you need to hear this ugly truth.”

Warren Isbister-Bear, is the Truth & Reconciliation Coordinator for the City of Saskatoon. Originally from the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, Warren has been living and working in Saskatoon since 2001. As the Truth & Reconciliation Coordinator, Warren is responsible to lead the development of an internal reconciliation strategy and policy framework aimed at enabling all city departments to strengthen relationships and consultation activities with Indigenous peoples and communities.

Warren talked about the personal and professional aspects of reconciliation. He shared about the impact of residential schools on his own life and challenged the listener to be strategic in making the workplace and work positions more accessible to Indigenous people.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about residential schools while you were in school?
2. What colonial mindsets are you learning in yourself? How are you dismantling them?
3. What are systemic policies that continue to oppress Indigenous people and communities?
4. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [City of Saskatoon Indigenous Initiatives](#)
2. [Reconciliation Saskatoon](#)
3. [What makes us healthy? Exploring the determinants of health in Saskatchewan](#)
4. [Gordon Tootoosis Nĭkānīwin Theatre](#)



Episode 8: ReconciliACTION

“Action is the part I really focus on in my understanding (of reconciliation) because we can say a lot of things and people can come to a lot of discussion tables, but if you’re not actually doing the stuff it is going to be forgotten.”



Angela Daigneault is a proud urban Metis woman born and raised in Saskatoon with roots to Ile-a-la-Crosse and Outlook, Saskatchewan. She has a passion for community development, advocacy and peacemaking. Her 13-year social work career has focused on community and relationship building in the not-for-profit sector. In the last three years, she has followed in her father’s footsteps to work for the Saskatoon Police Service, helping strengthen relations between the community and the service, as their Indigenous Relations Consultant. She is an active member of the Anti-Racism Network, Reconciliation Saskatoon and other community-led committees

Angela reflected on her experiences of intergenerational trauma, her relationship with the church and taking care of each other. With a compassionate heart, Angela asked listeners to kindly disrupt the systems and to move from the discussion tables to places of action.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you hold space for people to speak their truths? How does this make you feel?
2. What are some of the hard conversations, regarding Reconciliation, that you are having? Where in your body do these conversations sit?
3. Name some of your reconciliACTIONS.
4. Is there anything else in the episode that resonated with you?

Resources:

1. [Saskatoon Police Indigenous Relations](#)
2. [The Ethical Space of Engagement – Willie Ermine](#)
3. [The Power of Indigenous Kinship – Walrus Magazine](#)
4. [Anti-Racism Network Sask](#)

