

CULTURALLY RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS: SOME TERMS & ISSUES



Why does terminology matter? The words we speak are important because they carry meanings and representations of histories and power dynamics.

Cultural Safety

The goal of cultural safety is for all people to feel respected and safe when they interact with the health system. Culturally safe health services are free of racism and discrimination. Cultural safety considers how social, political and historical contexts shape health and healthcare experiences, and ask us to look at our own beliefs, practices and histories and how these might affect others.

Cultural Humility

Cultural humility is a lifelong journey of self-reflection and learning. It involves listening without judgement, being open to learning from and about others, and learning about our own culture and our biases. Cultural Humility is a building block for cultural safety.

Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness is about recognizing that differences and similarities exist between cultures. Learning about the histories that impact Indigenous peoples in Canada is an important part of developing cultural awareness.

Cultural Sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity grows when we start to see the influences of our own culture and acknowledge that we have biases. It is NOT about treating everyone the same.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence requires developing knowledge, skills and attitudes for working effectively and respectfully with diverse and different peoples. It's about reducing the number of assumptions we make about people based on our biases. Cultural competence does not require us to become experts in cultures different from our own.

Colonialism

Colonialism is the extension of a nation's sovereignty over territory beyond its borders. This happens by establishing either 'settler colonies' or 'administrative dependencies.' Indigenous peoples are directly ruled or displaced. Colonizing nations generally dominate resources, labour, and markets of the colonial territory, and may also impose social, cultural, religious and linguistic structures on [Indigenous] peoples. — based on New World Encyclopedia

Indigenous

The term Indigenous was chosen by Indigenous leaders in the 1970s to identify and unite diverse communities and represent them in global political arenas. This term is a relational word that highlights peoples' connections to territories, as well as their experiences of colonization. Indigenous is inclusive of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

Aboriginal

The term Aboriginal was introduced in 1982 Canadian Constitution by the Federal Government as an 'umbrella' term to include First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

First Nations

First Nations refers to the original inhabitants of the area now known as Canada.

Inuit

Inuit are an Indigenous people living primarily in Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland, where they have lived since time immemorial.

Métis

Métis refers to a collective of cultures and ethnic identities in what is now Canada that resulted from diverse historical instances of unions between Aboriginal and European people and has unique culture, traditions, language (Michif), and way of life, collective consciousness and nationhood.

Indian Band

An Indian Band, sometimes called a First Nations Band, is a colonial structure imposed on First Nations across Canada, through the Indian Act of 1876. A First Nations Band is the basic unit of government for a First Nation. Bands are led by band councils, which are comprised of an elected Chief and Councillors. Band membership gives band members the right to live on-reserve, vote in band elections and referendums, and share in band assets. – *Indigenous Foundations, Bands*



A note on Indigenous and Aboriginal – Collective terms like Aboriginal and Indigenous have the potential to diminish diversity and unique realities of different peoples. For these reasons it is best to try and use specific names whenever possible, such as Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Tahltan, Cree etc.

Unceded Territory

Unceded Territory is land that has not been signed away through treaty or surrendered in war. Most of the land in British Columbia is unceded, without treaty.

Aboriginal Title

Aboriginal Title is an inherent right, recognized in common law that originates in Indigenous occupation, use and control of ancestral lands prior to colonization. Aboriginal Title was recognized by the Crown in the Royal Proclamation of 1763. – *The Canadian Encyclopedia*

Self-determination

Self-determination is stated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Article 3 as "... [the] right [of Indigenous peoples to] freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established in 2007 as part of the Indian Residential Schools (IRS) Settlement Agreement. The Commission was responsible for documenting the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience. The final report released by the Commission included 94 Calls to Action to advance the process of reconciliation in Canada, with 7 of those calls relating to Health.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted in 2007 by the UN General Assembly with a majority of 144 states in favour, and four votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States). The four countries voting against have since reversed their position and now support UNDRIP. This Declaration establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of Indigenous peoples.





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