



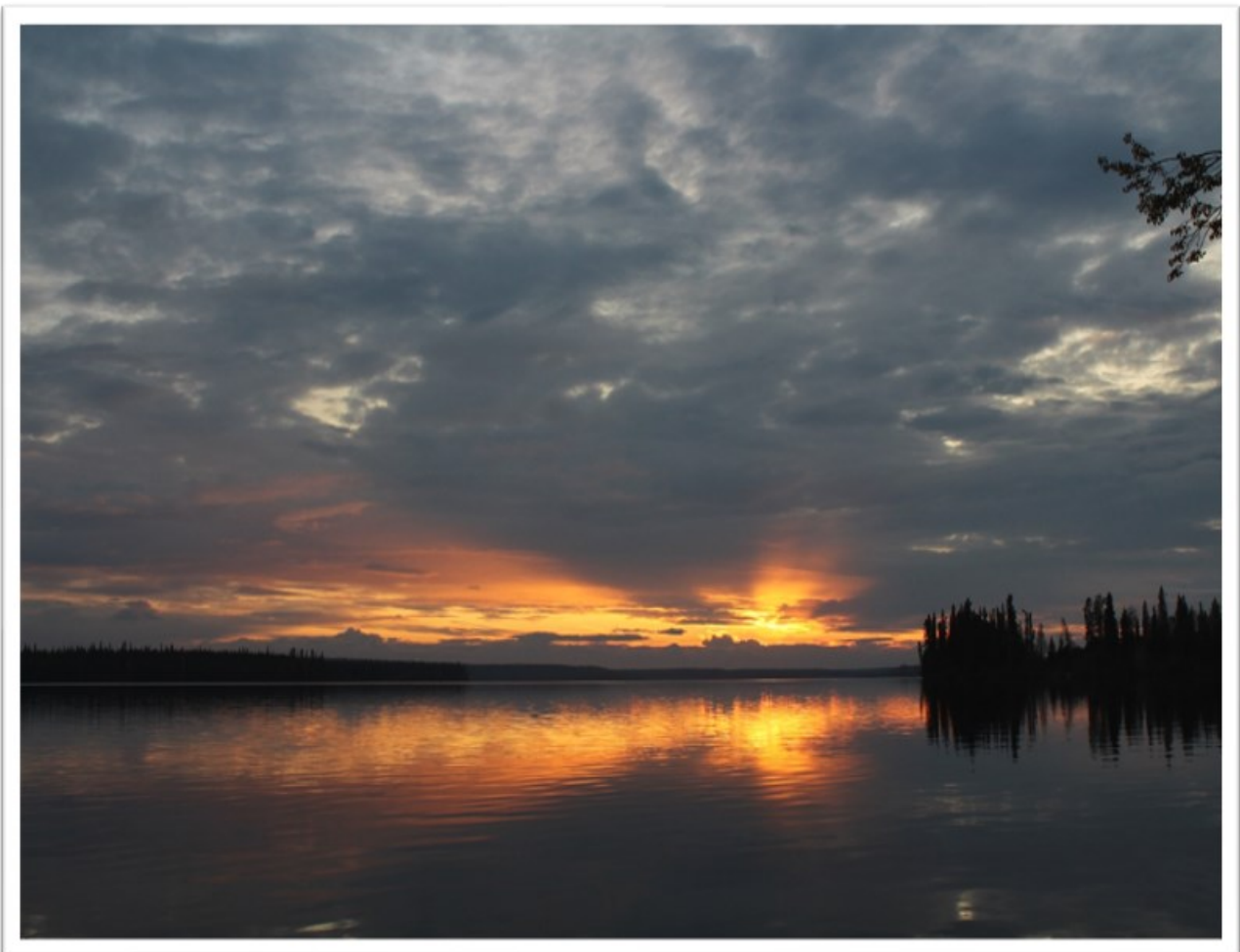
Compassionate Inquiry Circle Course Evaluation Report

Prepared for the Yukon Women and Gender Equity Directorate - Victims Support Project

Prepared by Liard Aboriginal Women's Society and Beringia Community Planning

Kaska Territories / Watson Lake, Yukon

March 28, 2024



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1. Introduction

The Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) is a non-profit and community based Indigenous organization that provides social development services to the Kaska Nation in the Yukon and northern British Columbia. LAWS has been in operation since 1998 and has a mandate to address the needs of Kaska and Indigenous women, with a mission of restoring their dignity and safety. As an organization, LAWS aims to strengthen the health, relationships, and way of life that have been damaged by intergenerational trauma, addiction, oppression, and violence.



As part of their work to provide counselling and healing programs within Kaska communities, LAWS applied to and received funding YWGED to hold four Compassionate Inquiry Circles for Kaska and Indigenous women. The YWGED has a goal of supporting existing gender-based violence prevention programming during Government of Yukon fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25. LAWS received funding for both program years. This report is for Year 1

Gender Based Violence (GBV) has a direct correlation to historic and ongoing impacts of settler colonialism. In Kaska territories, there are disproportionately high rates of GBV and a lack of culturally relevant social service programming to counteract and help those impacted by GBV. LAWS programming helps to fill in these service gaps by running programs and activities that work to support those healing from the impacts of the settler state. The Compassionate Inquiry Circles (the Circles) will specifically focus on filling a gap where local, continuous, and culturally connected counselling and healing treatments for Kaska women are not adequately available.

Outside of personal growth and healing, one hope of the Circle workshops is for the healing experienced by people to have additional benefits of helping them support other Kaska women in their communities, all of whom are working through settler state inflicted trauma, and some of whom are victims of GBV. Several of the participants work in counselling type roles within LAWS or in Watson Lake, and some are connected to LAWS as Elder advisors or board members. One participant is an employee at the Watson Lake Women's Shelter - Help and Hope.

2. Compassionate Inquiry Course Purpose and Program Description

The Compassionate Inquiry Circles are interactive, facilitated, and experiential group sessions that introduce participants to key concepts and practices of the program model and initiate the process of self-inquiry. The approach developed gently uncovers and releases layers of childhood trauma, constriction, and suppressed emotion embedded in the body, which are believed to be at the root of illness and addiction. The course is highly effective in a group setting when people feel safe in their relationships and connected to their bodies and each other. It is within this group dynamic – or the ‘container’ – that they can connect to their deepest self and be open to vulnerability and emotion to discover and express what is true for them; it is this expression that heals them. Participants are encouraged to reflect, journal, and share their experiences and insights with the group.

The Circles help participants to:

- Learn techniques for self-regulation;
- Befriend the nervous system;
- Experience safety within the self;
- Understand personal behavioral patterns and coping strategies;
- Explore the origin of personal emotional and physical pain;
- Learn to work with internal triggers;
- Develop self-compassion for all the part of our being.

3. Compassionate Inquiry Circle Course Delivery in Watson Lake

LAWS hosted two Compassionate Inquiry Circles in Watson Lake from February 12 – 16, and March 24-28 – 2024. Métis Compassionate Inquiry facilitator Michelle Peddle lead both courses. Michelle has a master’s degree in counselling psychology, and a post-graduate diploma in addictions counselling. Her theoretical models also include mindfulness-based therapies and body somatic psychotherapy. Participants had the opportunity to travel from Kaska communities to attend both Circles. Thanks to the funding from YWGED, travel costs, hotel stipends, and per-diems were provided to those who travelled from afar. The Circles ran from 9am-4pm, with a one-hour lunch break. The modules in Appendix D are the teaching guide, and the facilitator works with the group to understand which teachings are best suited to the individuals and the group. The facilitator will tailor the program the curriculum accordingly.

4. Evaluation Methodology

Beringia used a mixed methods approach to evaluate participant experience. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected before and after the Compassionate Inquiry courses. Questions for participant surveys and the sharing circle were designed based on course content and feedback from the program facilitator.

The data collection methods were as follows:

1. Participant Intake Survey (x 2)
2. Debrief phone calls with course facilitator (x3)
3. Participant Outtake Survey (x1)
4. Participant phone call to go through Outtake Survey with evaluation coordinator
5. Sharing Circle (x1)

The intake surveys (Appendix A) asked quantitative and qualitative questions to answer the questions of the YWGED Data Collection Plan, aimed to gain an understanding as to why participants decided to take the course, and asked them what they hoped to gain from the experience. The Outtake survey (Appendix B) and the Sharing Circle questions (Appendix C) focused on understanding how the course impacted participants well-being, which parts of the teachings were the most significant to them, and attempted to understand how the course will help them to support those in their family, friendship circle, and community.



5. Compassionate Inquiry Circle Evaluation Results

The following sections and findings are based on information collected from surveys, participant interviews, communications with the program facilitator, and 1 sharing circle.

- 10 intake surveys were filled out by participants for Circle Course 1
- 8 intake surveys were filled out by participants for Circle Course 2
- 6 outtake surveys were filled out by participants for Circle 1
- 1 outtake surveys were filled out by participants for Circle 2¹
- 8 participants were a part of the sharing circle on March 28, 2024

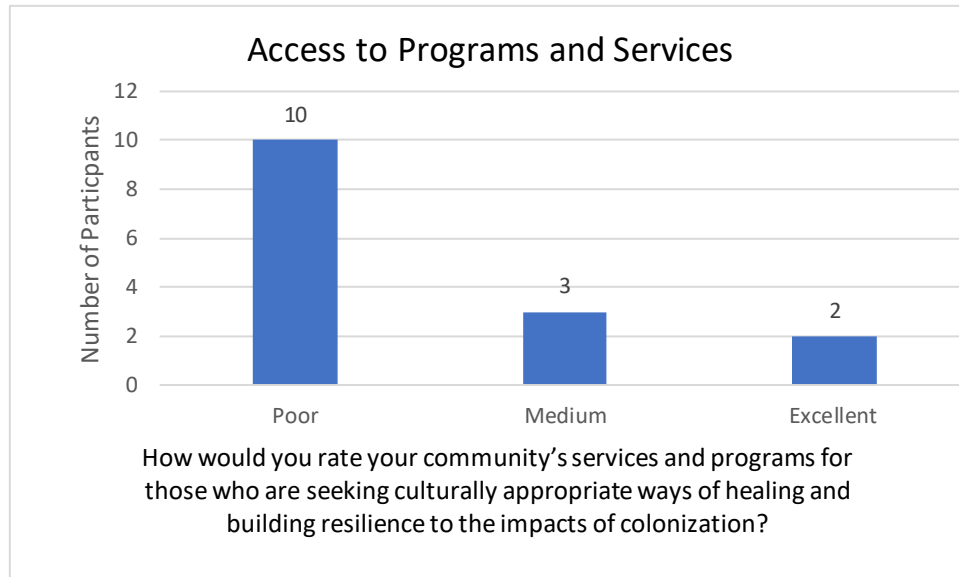
5.1 Gender, age, location, and Indigeneity of participants.

Numbers of workshops, participants and home community		
	1 st Workshop: February Circle	2 nd Workshop: March Circle
# of participants	10	8
Gender and Indigeneity	All Kaska women	All Kaska women
Ages	83 71 74 66 55 27 74 52 65 58	65 71 74 66 75 57 83 55
Location	Ross River x 4 Watson Lake x 5 Good Hope Lake x 1	Ross River x 3 Watson Lake x 4 Good Hope Lake x 1

¹ The LAWS staff that was meant to administer the second outtake survey misplaced the printed documents. We went over the survey questions in the final Sharing Circle, and were able to gain all of the information we needed through this evaluation method. 1 survey was completed by a LAWS staff over the phone.

5.2 Access to Culturally Appropriate Healing and Mental Health Programs and Services

Participants were asked: How would you rate your community's services and programs for those seeking culturally appropriate ways of healing and building resilience?



5.3 Culturally Responsive and Relevant Social Services in the communities

Participants were asked: Do you feel there are adequate opportunities for culturally appropriate Kaska services for mental health and healing modalities in your community?

Answers included:

- No, there are lots of mental health issues for people in our community. We need a space in our community to provide mental health services. We need people in training to provide these services. We need new leadership, people who care and understand healing issues.
- Somewhat. LAWS just recently got counselors coming to town to talk to our people.
- Yes, there are camps out on the land. No one is teaching, I might teach in the school.
- No, there are some, but not enough. I love sweats and traditional medicine men, and they are hard to come by, no one here in Watson Lake.
- No, we don't have the services. And we are losing more of our Elders.

We can determine through the survey answers that Kaska women living in Watson Lake, Ross River, and Good Hope Lake need and deserve far better counselling and culturally connected social service support. This data also helps to inform and understand the impact and value of the Compassionate Inquiry Circles, as they have a strong cultural component, can be led by an Indigenous facilitator, and facilitate healing in the realm of dealing with past trauma and becoming more resilient in everyday life.

5.4 Initial Interest in the Compassionate Inquiry Circle Course

In the intake survey, participants were asked: Why did you decide to take the Compassionate Inquiry course? Answers included:

It sounded like something I wanted to compare to my Kaska teachings	My healing journey	It sounded great, it sounded like it would help us	So I can help myself, take better care of myself	To build awareness of my path and let go
To learn to be happy	Better tools towards healing my inner child	Part of my work program	To learn more on how to take care of myself	To learn more about myself and my trauma

What are you hoping to get out of the Compassionate Inquiry Circle Course?

In the intake survey, participants were asked: What are you hoping to get out of the course? Answers included:

A course that might blend with some of my Kaska teachings	How to look after myself	To reset, to learn to let go	Tools to help me with my trauma	To be true to myself	Tools for everyday issues	
Planning for self-care	Self-help & Coping skills	Tools to help me heal from my trauma	To learn more about myself	More knowledge to take care of me	More knowledge and skills to help with my own healing	
To understand myself	To be aware of my emotions, to acknowledge where they are coming from		Tools for working on my own healing, Tools for everyday issues	Support and understanding	How I will be feeling after it's over	To learn to love myself

6. Yukon Women and Gender Equity Directorate Indicators

The following three indicators were set out by the YWGED to be explored and answered via project evaluation and reporting out.

6.1 LAWS / Indigenous Partners Report an Increase in Capacity

There is an interest in Kaska women and LAWS staff to work through difficult emotions, self-regulate, communicate more clearly, and move through / heal from traumatic experiences caused by historical and current colonial forces, one of which is gender-based violence in Kaska communities. New self-awareness tools and personal healing acted to increase participants' capacity to support others in their family and community in working through trauma and GBV.

6.2 Projects Serve Indigenous Communities that are Culturally Appropriate and Indigenous Lead

Compassionate Inquiry Circle Administrator Jill Forsyth spends much time building a solid foundation when working with Indigenous communities. Her focus is on building the relationship, learning about the community practices and traditions, and then relaying that information to the team. Jill works to make a plan that tailors the Circle to the needs of the group, ensuring that the services offered are culturally sensitive and in line with best practices. Compassionate Inquiry recognizes best practices and the literature available demonstrate that Indigenous groups respond best to Indigenous teachers / facilitators (Milligan, 2019). They do their best to provide an Indigenous facilitator. In line with best practices to serve the Indigenous communities, Compassionate Inquiry recognizes that programs must incorporate cultural identity aspects so Indigenous participants can connect culturally (Thiessen et al., 2020; Toombs et al., 2023; Wilk et al., 2017). All of the Compassionate Inquiry counsellors that work with Indigenous People have received the San'yas Anti-Racism Indigenous Cultural Safety Training (<https://sanyas.ca/core-training/ontario/core-foundations>).

Métis Facilitator Michelle Peddle lead the Compassionate Inquiry program and wove in various cultural traditions appropriate for Kaska members. Many participants commented that Michelle brought in elements of Indigenous and Kaska culture, which was powerful for them.

The cultural pieces that Michelle wove into the 2 Circles included:

- Language - Michelle encouraged the Kaska women to speak in their native tongue and learned a couple of words, which made the participants happy. Many participants spoke in their Kaska language;
- Michelle invited all those who wanted to bring their sewing, beading, and drawing material to the Circle, which 4 participants did;

- Singing - some traditional songs were incorporated;
- Prayer - Michelle asked that every day start and finish in a good way. An Elder led morning and evening prayer, and those who wanted to, smudged;
- Natural foods and medications - Michelle suggested that traditional foods such as be provided, which they were;
- Land-based activities: Michelle asked that a ceremonial fire be built, and a ceremony around the fire took place on Friday morning of the first Circle;
- Talking circles - many talking circles took place;
- Cultural instruments (drums). The Kaska people taught Michelle that it is typical for only men to play the drums in their community. As such, they incorporated this piece by listening to it.



6.3 Project developed and implemented that support victims of GBV

LAWS has been working on several project since their inception that support victims of GBV, and has been focused on creating systemic political and institutional change in this realm. For example, the 5-year *Following Our Peoples' Way: Building a Circle of Dignity/ Gūdené' K'éh Gūs'ānī: Dene 'A' Nezen Gedí' Gūtīe Sū'āī dege* project aims to address gender-based violence in Watson Lake and surrounding Kaska communities by building a team of community Advocates as anti-violence leaders in their families and communities. The LAWS Advocates are engaged in capacity-building activities based on two distinct strengths-based and culturally

appropriate approaches: 1) Kaska cultural principles, protocols and teachings of dignity, justice and healing or *Dene Ā'Nezen Kaska as Kēdzéntēdé Kedzedī*; and 2) Response-Based Practice (RBP)². Two staff of this project attended the Compassionate Inquiry program.

LAWS leadership, Elders, board members, and staff understand that healing from intergeneration trauma, continued colonial forces, and the experience of direct gender-based violence requires a commitment to personal healing alongside systemic advocacy change and developing skills to support victims of violence. Compassionate Inquiry has a community-based, culturally relevant, and anti-violence model that supports the community safety needs of Indigenous women. Many participants who attended the Circles are survivors of GBV, and are actively working on their personal healing while fighting to end GBV in their communities.

6.4 YWGED Feedback / Table

This data was requested by YWGED and was generously shared by the Compassionate Inquiry Facilitator, Michelle Peddle.

What has gone well in the Project?	
The help from the admin team organizing and putting all of this together for us	The space and setting are beautiful and contribute to a safe learning environment
The ability to be flexible with time, with some participants arriving late and leaving early	The ability to be flexible and inviting of some participants arriving on the 2nd day
The amount of trust and safety created in the group	Everyone agreeing to the group rules
The healthy food options at breaks/lunch that are conducive to learning	The active listening and holding of space while others are sharing
The respect that each of the participants provides	The ability to speak up and ask for what they need (i.e., we need a break, need more details, time for a prayer).
The participants' willingness to be vulnerable and authentic	The amount of sharing among the participants
Participants are able to identify with one another	Sharing experiences and collaborating
Building community	Working together

² Response-based practice (RBP). RBP is an evidence-based methodology which draws from the most up to date research on interpersonal violence and is informed by Indigenous survivors. It provides an effective practical and theoretical basis for understanding and addressing violence and for supporting victims and perpetrators of violence within a social change process. LAWS integrates RBP into much of its community work due in part to the de-pathologizing, anti-racism and non-victim-blaming orientation of RBP. The practice also celebrates Indigenous resistance to mistreatment and organizes safety-planning around an individual's pre-existing knowledge.

What has not gone well in the Project?
Participants showing up on day 2 of the program who didn't participate in the program last time, and also having missed the first day of this program. This made it challenging to cover material from the last time and also material from day 1.
There is some heavy processing happening. A sweat lodge or another cultural piece might have helped move the healing.
Some people had forgotten their books and journals - we were lucky that spares were left from the first group. It might have been beneficial to have additional materials for them.

What would you do again?
Everything! Process, format, size of group, and cultural practices.

What would you not do again?
It is challenging to allow people who miss sessions to participate. Typically, if people miss two sessions, they are asked to leave the circle for various reasons. This is not done when the facilitator works in Indigenous communities for a variety of reasons, including that it is seen as a colonial approach. With a group such as this one, where everyone is somehow related, they want their family members to join and get the healing they can. The problem is that it impacts the group dynamics and makes teaching challenging, as the ones who missed classes must catch up. That being said, having the two women join late was wonderful, and they brought a lot to the circle. They were not in the same place, though, with the material compared to the others, and the facilitator wonders how that felt / impacted them.



7. Success Stories

The project was successful because participants grew in their healing journey according to the themes and modules laid out in the curriculum. The participants came to the workshop with various backgrounds of trauma and healing. Some were reluctant and nervous about what to expect, but by the end of both Circle courses, everyone enthusiastically supported the work and process. Participants described examples of growth and healing from the Circle courses and how they have learned tools to carry on the work. This is a very personal program, and each person took away something unique and different. All the participants are keen to take part in further workshops and to continue working on their healing plans. This is what sets the Compassionate Inquiry workshops apart from other workshops, in that it is designed to encourage and support ongoing healing after the course. Participants spoke of continuing to meet to support each other in their ongoing healing journeys.

7.1 February Compassionate Inquiry Circles

Participant stories of growth shared by Circle facilitator, Michelle Peddle

- One participant was able to nap; she shared that she previously could never give herself the ability to nap, and she napped on the second last day. This participant also did a lot of emotional releasing.
- A participant was able to speak up and share that she didn't understand what some of the words in the curriculum meant. She had shared that because of Residential School, she found it very challenging to speak up or ask questions; her sharing that she didn't understand was a big deal and a personal success. This Elder struggled immensely with 'perceptions' and what that meant, but on the last day she could identify when someone was sharing their perception – and everyone applauded.
- One participant shed tears about her experience at Residential School and its impact on her and her children. She shared how she was never able to tell one of her children that she loved them, and recognized the impact this has had on them. Another participant shared that she was the child of a Residential School survivor and that her mother never told her she loved her. These two participants cried while holding one another, and it was a profoundly healing moment, with very few dry eyes in the room.
- Everyone shared that they felt lighter on the last day and how helpful it was to talk about Residential School and its impact on their lives.
- One participant experienced many shifts throughout the program. For example, on the last day she shared with another participant how their words triggered her. With the

- group's power and the container's safety, we could look at her perspective and the perspective of others, find the triggers, and work through them. It was a powerful teaching opportunity for everyone and very healing for her, as it was a concrete example of how her perception and history triggered the emotions. She physically looked different at the end of the week - her eyes were brighter, her face lighter, and she even looked younger and less stressed.
- A participant could see a core belief that she doesn't matter and, throughout the week, challenged the belief by taking a night off work. The group all applauded her for it.



Stories of success and growth shared by the participants

The following statements were shared by participants via outtake surveys and the sharing circle. They have been grouped into themes based on the interconnection of the content.

Moving through trauma and the body

- I learned an awareness of how trauma can be stored in the body and the techniques to release cortisol; I also learned to work on being more in the moment. I have a greater awareness of the human brain and how trauma affects basic function and thinking.
- There are so many good things about taking this course, for me it's facing your trauma and sharing, then self-care. I felt a huge load off my shoulders at the end of the week.
- I am more aware of my feelings, and I know I have more work to do re: my childhood trauma, but it's not a bad thing. I feel more aware of how things have affected my body and how I still react in ways which may not be good for my overall wellbeing. I realize that I need to make time for myself, for my own story and my own healing. To sit with my feelings more often.

Healing from Residential School

- We all went to Residential School; as a group we all had a lot to deal with, and the workshop helped us work through our experiences.
- It is time for us to deal with the trauma and share with others what happened to us in Residential School, so that the children in the community will know what happened. The course helped me to understand how important it is to share with our children; that we are the way we are because of it. How we learned how to deal with our kids by what we were shown in the school, which was mostly cruelty.

Emotional and self regulation tools

- The course had a positive effect on understanding that my breathing is constricted when in a delicate situation. I have learned that the most important thing to my wellbeing would be my breathing – and how to relax. From chemotherapy last year I have long term side effects, the breathing techniques from the course material is helping me.

Tools to explore and express deep emotion

- The course really helped me with expressing my feelings.
- I am starting to recognize anger in my partner, and where it comes from.

- The teachings about feelings versus perceptions really caught my interest; the perception chart really stood out to me. It made me realize that sometimes we mistake perceptions as feelings, and I learned to say my feelings right out.

Group connection, safety and healing

- This program helped me come a long way, I felt as if I could share to the group without any worry of judgement. I'm so happy that we got the chance to take it. Michelle is an amazing teacher. I am going to keep going to see where the skills I learned will take me. I'm proud to be with the group and hold each other up. It was the first time I ever shared such personal experiences so openly with everyone. It helped me drastically. I shed a lot of tears. Happy tears, Healing tears too.
- The course really opened my eyes more about my feelings. The group was just the right size, and I wasn't worried about people telling other people. I felt trust in the room.
- People were at first quiet, until they felt safe enough to talk, to trust that everything would stay in the room. The four younger people, who are normally quiet in the meetings, eventually felt safe and they started speaking. A lot of them worked through issues this week; they felt safe telling the group a lot of things, and this was because of the skill of the facilitator.

Other (non-thematic) participant highlights

- The modules taught me that healing is complicated and simple at the same time; that things can be worked on in manageable chunks.
- I am more compassionate with my colleagues and myself. It helped me be more open with people at my job and with my peers. I'm way more open now than I ever was. The course improved my home life with my kids.



- I became more self aware - I've been working on myself ever since. Learning about personal old stories that have become patterns, which are not true.
- Hearing each other's stories, and the techniques people use; it reinforced my belief that Kaska culture and spirituality are so important for healing.

7.2 March Compassionate Inquiry Circles

Participant stories of growth shared by Circle facilitator, Michelle Peddle

Group connection and safety and healing

Trust and the safety were created within the group, and this foundation helped participants go deeper. This time around the new language is making sense, and things are starting to click - like the training wheels are coming off. Participants spoke deeply about the truth of what happened in Residential School, how the language was lost due to shame and violence inflicted on students. Group connection enabled deep healing for the survivors of Residential School.

Tools of emotional and self regulation

Tools of emotional regulation were keenly taken up. People were very interested in learning about the nervous system and are understanding the fight, flight, and freeze response. Tuning into physical sensations in the body, the last time around it didn't happen and this tells me that there is more attunement in their own body, so they can regulate faster. Lastly, different breathing techniques for calmness and self-regulation were important course teachings.

Stories of success and growth shared by the participants

Moving through trauma and the body

- I have learned to understand trauma and how it lives in the body; to acknowledge held feelings, to learn to feel the emotion in the body, to hold it – then release it. Trauma can shape your world view. It can be passed down from mother to child.
- Listening to the body's sensations and learning how the body's nervous system works when something triggering occurs.
- To understand trauma and to let go of my shame. To learn about forgiveness, and this means setting myself free.
- It has been healing to figure out how to speak my language because I see how the trauma in my body from Residential School stops me from speaking it. But I have a lot of things I need to heal first, before I can start figuring out how to speak my language.
- A lot of my emotions come from my inner child, from my childhood. A lot of triggers that I get are from when I was a little child (violence, abuse). Understanding now why there is so much trauma there, and that it came from my childhood.

Healing from Residential School

- Being ripped away from our parents, that might be the most significant trauma – and knowing this is just the tip of the iceberg in our healing journeys.
- In Residential School, we were beaten for speaking our language. The weight of this shame blocks some of us from expressing the language we have in our heads; it is really hard. Through the course, we are learning how to move through and heal from this.
- Some of us who can't speak our language due to trauma, we hold this in our bodies – my dream is we can start to heal and release the emotion and move forward to speak and teach our language. This course is the tip of the iceberg. We were torn away from our parents. Now we are trying to heal that and change our lives. I feel that now I can tell my kids about Residential School.
- We are no longer suppressing what has been done to us.
- I have reflected on all the messages that were sent to me as a child that I kept in me: you're not good enough or not smart enough – those are the messages I need to get rid of, because I don't need them anymore. I am good enough, I am lovable. I don't need to lug around these messages all my life anymore. I don't want past messages making decisions in my life anymore. This course has put this in perspective and I am more calm, I can pace myself, I know what I want, I am more in the moment. I want to focus on my physical and emotional health, and really look after myself.



Tools of emotional and self regulation

- I am learning an awareness of the nervous system. The many different breathing techniques taught are very helpful. Chest breathing, stomach breathing, nostril breathing. I will be continuing to practice this.

Tools to explore and express deep emotion

- To let emotions out – not to hide from them or push them down. To hold onto emotions and explore where they come from.
- To acknowledge gut feelings.
- How to be really present with yourself, so you can help people.

Group connection, safety and healing

- I missed the first day, but when I came in, the group accepted me, and I learned so much.
- There is no judgement here: I can say what I need to, to help myself heal. I feel loved, I feel understood here; It's a safe environment. I now know I have people in here that I can share with, and I can depend on.

Other (non-thematic) participant highlights

I am on a healing journey. I don't have to jump through hoops to heal other people.	Old patterns for survival worked back then, but not now.	Saying no – how to learn to say no. I learned how to say no. With some people you feel obligated to say yes, but now I feel I can say no, and give the reason for my no.	How to be authentic to the self. That I need to take care of myself, and get healthier, because I focus on other people to the detriment of my own wellbeing.
Investigate what happened in childhood that causes a disconnection from self. I learned all the ways we can self-abandon: not sleeping enough, not eating properly, lack of exercise, not looking after our health.	Its not what happened to you, its what happened in you.	Attachment versus authenticity. If you have a struggle between those, often attachment wins, and you lose your authentic self.	To know, I am loved, I have worth.

8. Conclusion

I believe that the 7 generations before me are going to be looking on me with happiness, knowing that I am making my life better. What my work is doing is healing the ones that have already gone. – Circle Participant

The two Compassionate Inquiry Circles were highly successful. Some participants expressed that the healing journey that started was the tip of the iceberg. Even though the work is hard, they all shared in specific ways how they each benefitted from the teachings and by the culturally competent and highly skilled facilitator. The group felt that the teachings were so healing that they are going to continue meeting to practice what they learned.



As a community, they expressed that they will be in a better position than before, and the work helps to build a strong First Nation. This course felt to many like a new journey, a new way of working with themselves that will improve the relationship within the families and communities. Being taught how to be present with the self will help them to help other people. One person spoke of how the course is going to help her children, and then their children, and the next seven generations that are coming down the line. Healing from some of the trauma of Residential School was a strong theme, and will reverberate throughout the community.

In summary, the Compassionate Inquiry Circles helped participants to:

- Learn techniques for self-regulation;
- Befriend the nervous system;
- Experience safety within the self;
- Understand personal behavioral patterns and coping strategies;
- Explore the origin of personal emotional and physical pain;
- Learn to work with internal triggers; and
- Develop self-compassion for all the parts of the being.

Appendix A: Compassionate Inquiry Course - Intake Survey

1. What is your gender? Check ✓ one

Male _____

Female _____

Other _____

2. What is your age?

3. Are you / do you identify as:

Kaska-Dena

First Nations, Metis, or Inuit

Non-Indigenous

4. Do you live in:

Watson Lake

Lower Post

Ross River

Whitehorse

Other? Please add:

5. Why did you decide to take the Compassionate Inquiry Course?

6. What are you hoping to get out of the Compassionate Inquiry Course?

7. Do you feel there are adequate opportunities for culturally appropriate (Kaska) services for mental health and healing modalities in your community? Please explain.

8. How would you rate your community's services and programs for those who are seeking culturally appropriate ways of healing and building resilience to the impacts of colonization?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Poor

Average

Excellent

Appendix B: Compassionate Inquiry Course – Outtake Survey Questions

1. How did the Compassionate Inquire Program impact you, and how has it impacted your life since the course was delivered?
2. Did the program have any positive effects on your well-being that you feel you could share? Can you provide examples?
3. When you reflect upon the course material and modules, what did you learn that has helped you in your life? Please try to provide specific reference to the course content that resonated most with you.
4. Was the course delivered in a way that was culturally appropriate and beneficial for Kaska People / Indigenous People?
5. Is there one highlight that you would like to share? This can be related to connecting as a group, a special “aha” moment, something that you loved, etc.
6. If you could share one thing with a friend who is thinking about taking the course, what would it be?

Appendix C: Compassionate Inquiry Circle Course Sharing Circle Questions

1. Did you take the Compassionate Inquiry Circle Course offered by LAWS in February?
(Y/N)

Have you taken a Compassionate Inquiry Circle Courses outside of what LAWS has offered? (Y/N)

2. Can you please share up to 3 of the ways that the Compassionate Inquiry Circle teachings had a positive impact on your personal growth and wellbeing? Please try and connect this to the course curriculum, as this helps us to paint a picture or story as to how the course is helping participants on their individual and collective healing journey.
3. Can you please share one highlight that you loved about the Compassionate Inquiry Circle course? For example, working together as a group, having an Indigenous facilitator, learning tools of self-regulation. Please try and provide some details.

Appendix D: Compassionate Inquiry Course Module Summary

Module 1: Safety Through Connection

To contribute to the safety of the group and begin to establish connections with other group members; to explore what safety means within oneself and within a group; to develop an understanding of how one's autonomic nervous system works; and to learn practices that generate calmness and security.

Module 2: Access the Wisdom of the Body

To become more aware of the felt sense of the body; to discover where tension is being held within the body, to be able to identify emotions as they arise within the body and express what this emotions wants to say; to find safety within the body, and to locate a specific safe place which can be resourced when other parts of the body are activated, to learn ventral vagal self-regulation tools.

Module 3: Explore your Triggers

To recognize when you are triggered; to discover triggers originate from your childhood experiences; to identify how core beliefs make you feel, to learn to approach beliefs with curiosity and gentle handling so they can be examined; to acknowledge and hold space for your emotions, and to unhook the emotion from the belief.

Module Four: Know what Happened to You

To explore what happened to you as a child that caused you to disconnect from yourself; to recognize the adaptations or coping mechanisms that were utilized in childhood to survive and to maintain attachment, and how these coping mechanisms inform the personality; to explore ancestral trauma.

Module 5: To Express Your Authenticity

To recognize the difference between secure and insecure attachment; to establish boundaries in your life; to recognize the beliefs that suppress your authenticity; to be in alignment with your Yes or your No.

Module 6: Address Your Needs

To identify your original environmental deficits; to recognize the body sensations and emotions that are present before the craving for an unhealthy habit, behavior, attachment, or addiction; to identify healthy ways to fulfill your needs and how to integrate these into your daily living.

Module 7: Practice Self-Compassion for All Parts of You

Get to know and accept your sub-personalities; recognize the voice of self-judgement, and bring curiosity to its origins and function; recognize shame in the body, and understand its origins; enhance your capacity for self-compassion and self-care.

Module 8: Be Response-Able

To learn to recognize who you blame, and for what; to understand the core beliefs you've internalized about yourself when you hold blame; to take responsibility for your reactions, and to recognize the parts of you that are in the way of taking responsibility.

Module 9: Affirm the Possibility in You

To recognize and acknowledge the strengths you developed because of your past; to acknowledge your achievements and success; to identify the possibility in you that wants to be realized.