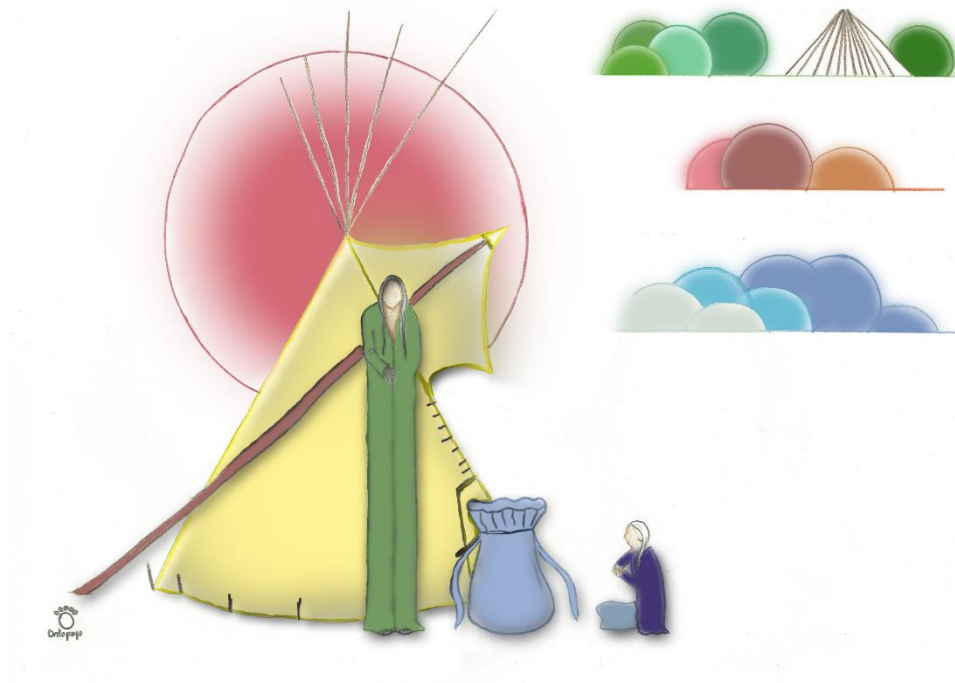


# Using Traditions to Prevent and Treat Substance Misuse



11/12/2017

Exploration Project by Jo-Ann Saddleback

It is the purpose of **Using Traditions to Prevent and Treat Substance Misuse** to visit healers and medicine people who still know the medicines used to help people suffering with substance misuse. Therefore, knowledge and information will be gathered from healers and medicine people about how they want to see traditions used in the healing of indigenous peoples.

# Using Traditions to Prevent and Treat Substance Misuse









## PÎKISKWÊTÂN (LET'S TALK)







### Methodology of the Project

We are required to find innovative ways to connect to the wisdom and intelligence inherent in the “Knowledge chest” of Cree Country. The need for cooperation, insight and coordinated action has never been greater. Our Old People tell us that we need to visit one another again and talk about important things concerning our community. They also tell us that when we gather in a circle to speak openly and honestly, wonderful things can happen. The Exploration Project was our chance to visit, to create a common purpose, share knowledge, make more intelligent decisions, and call forth life-affirming action together to address the prevention and treatment of substance misuse.

### Exploration Project on Using Traditions to Prevent and Treat Substance Misuse

followed recognized Indigenous community-based research philosophies and practices:

-  To give our own processes of research (i.e. cultural), value and credibility
-  That controlling our Life starts at birth and Culture will guide us from there
-  Culture promotes good Health and prevention of all social ills.
-  Culture-approached ethics in community-based research, means an active inquiry into our issues.
  
-  Community-based research is not about program dollars; rather, it is about identifying a community concern which requires more information, to get the attention of decision-makers and to get appropriate action taken.
-  Indigenous ethics in community-based research means we must have ‘Ownership and Possession’. For instance, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has called into question the inappropriate research of Statistics Canada and Health Canada concerning FAS/E (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effects) because the research was done outside of the Indigenous community but about the Indigenous community.
-  Research in, and about, Indigenous communities must come from those communities to be relevant—knowledge is intergenerational. If research is not owned and possessed by Indigenous peoples, then all we have done is create gatekeepers to our knowledge and information.
-  Research allows/should allow Indigenous communities to create processes, policies, strategies, programs and practices relevant to those communities.

-  Culture-approached research allows Indigenous communities to rebuild systems for our health and safety; it values our knowledge, experience and skills.
-  If Indigenous peoples are suffering the consequences of the issue(s) of research and Indigenous peoples are doing the work to prevent or develop the topic of research, then Indigenous peoples need to do, and own, the research.
-  Gift giving, feasts and other offerings are part of the business of doing Indigenous research.
-  Indigenous people hold 'storytelling' as a sacred cultural role; therefore, non-Indigenous researchers must earn the right to tell our story.
-  Indigenous research and researchers must recognize the relationship Indigenous communities have with the natural world. Measurements and analysis may consist of the teachings of animals, of dreams, of visions and intuition.
-  A profound part of Indigenous peoples' research is having elders around the researcher – our Elders ensure s/he is doing things in a good way and following proper protocols.

### Elders/Healers visited from Treaty Six Territory and Metis Settlements:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Name</b>
Germaine	Ralph W
Clara	Enis C
Louise A	Celina C
Herman C	Louise C
Gary S	<u>August T</u>
Ron L	Willie E
Darcy G	Gloria L
Jerry G	<u>Bradly R</u>
Rose C	Melvin R
Leonard J	Irene M
Jim A	Rose
Earnest C	Joey D
Violet C	George S
Peggy G	Selina S
Joyce S	George P
Raymond P	

## What they said:



### Discussion/Visit Questions:

- 🏡 What are the biggest barriers to health and wellness when it comes to Substance Misuse?
- 🏡 What is the Cultural capacity of your community to address Substance Misuse?
- 🏡 Are there Elders and Healers in your community available and accessible to help substance misusers?
- 🏡 How do people access traditional ways of healing and wellness?



### Main Themes

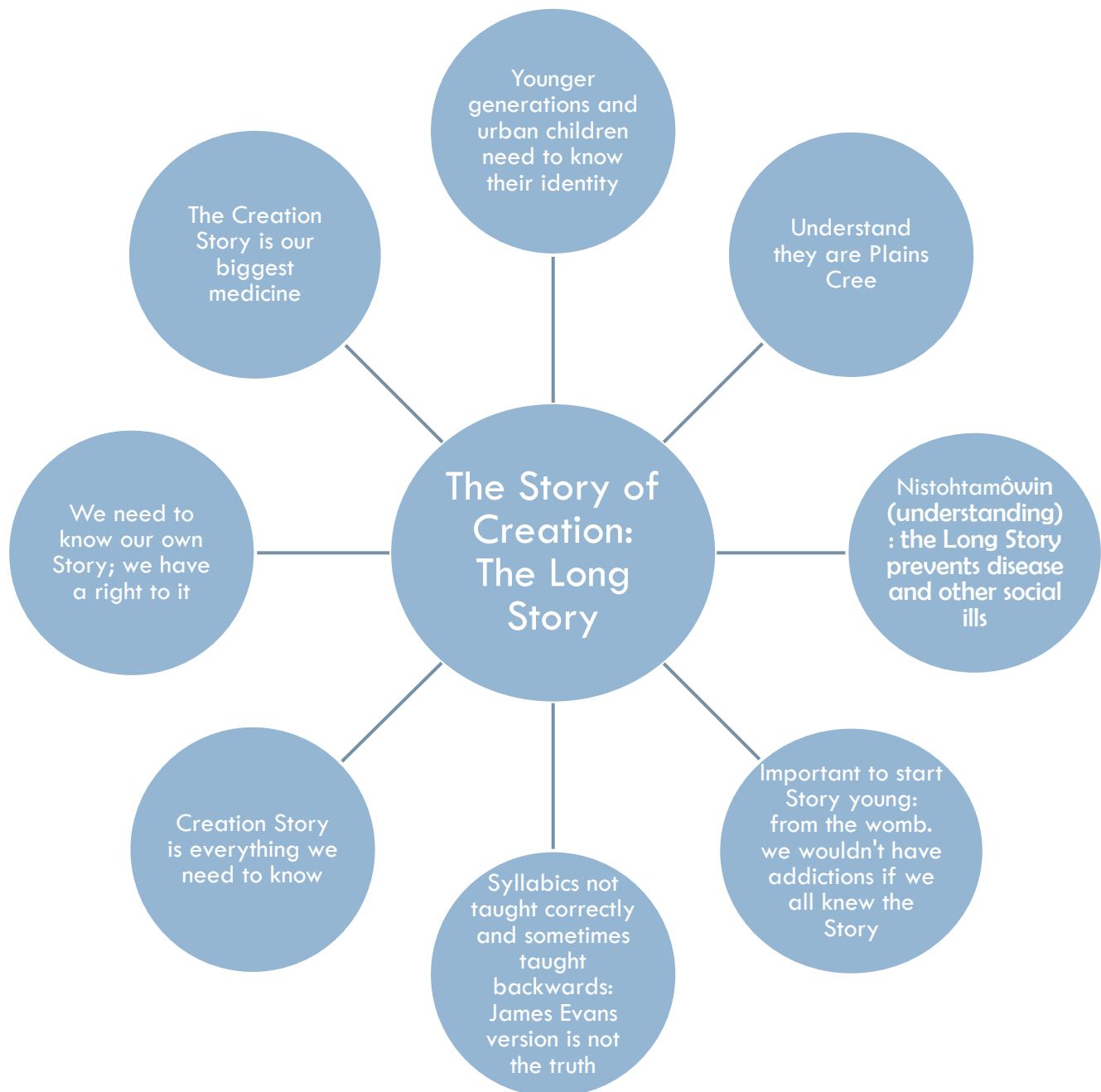
- 🏡 Medicines – including language
- 🏡 Spirituality – ceremonies
- 🏡 Protocol and Process
- 🏡 The Story of Creation: The Long Story



### Where they're from:

- 🏡 Saddle Lake Cree First Nation, Alberta
- 🏡 Beaver Lake First Nation, Alberta
- 🏡 Sturgeon Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan
- 🏡 Poundmaker, Saskatchewan
- 🏡 Kikino Métis Settlement
- 🏡 Enoch First Nation
- 🏡 Samson Cree First Nation
- 🏡 Ermineskin First Nation
- 🏡 Louis Bull First Nation
- 🏡 Montana First Nation



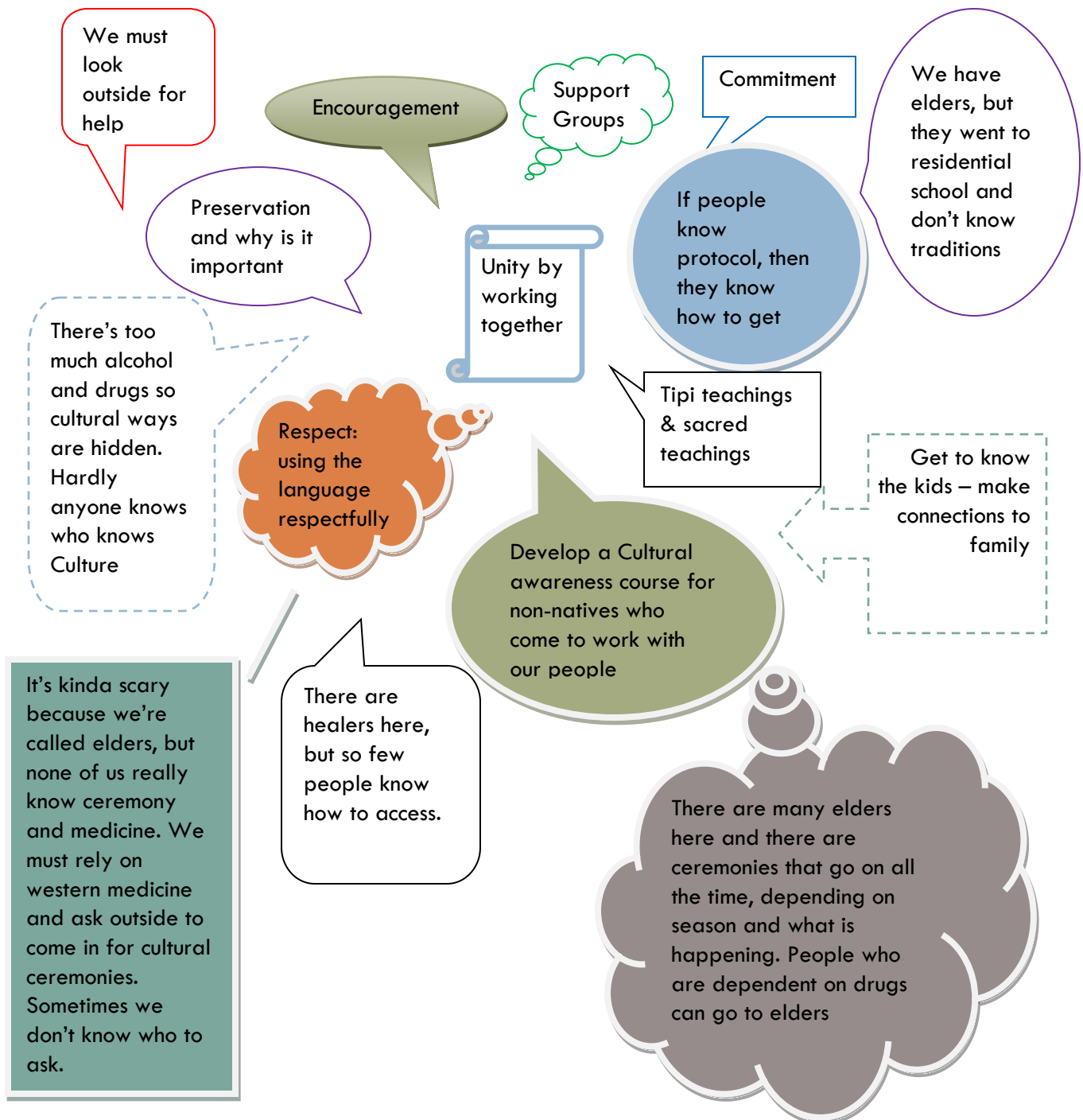






## Discussion Question:

What is the Cultural capacity of your community to address Substance Misuse?







## Discussion Question:

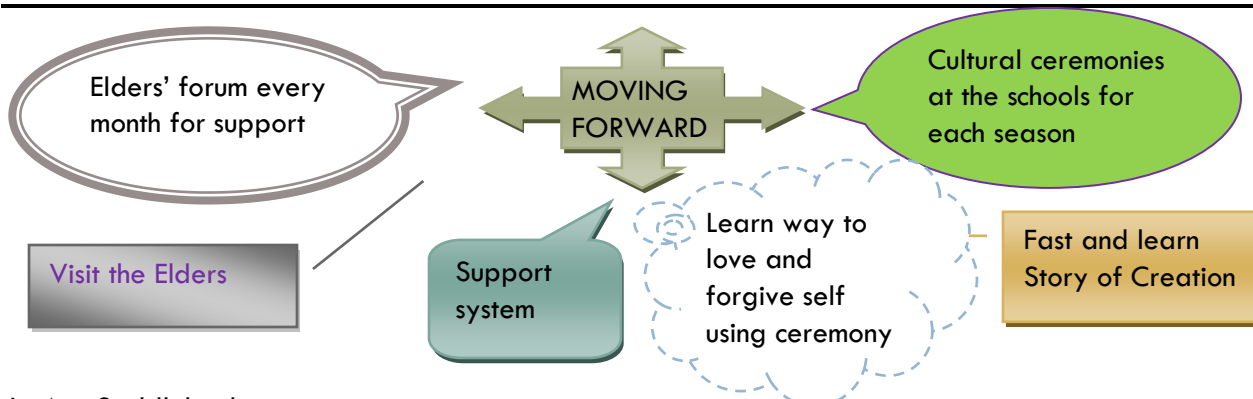
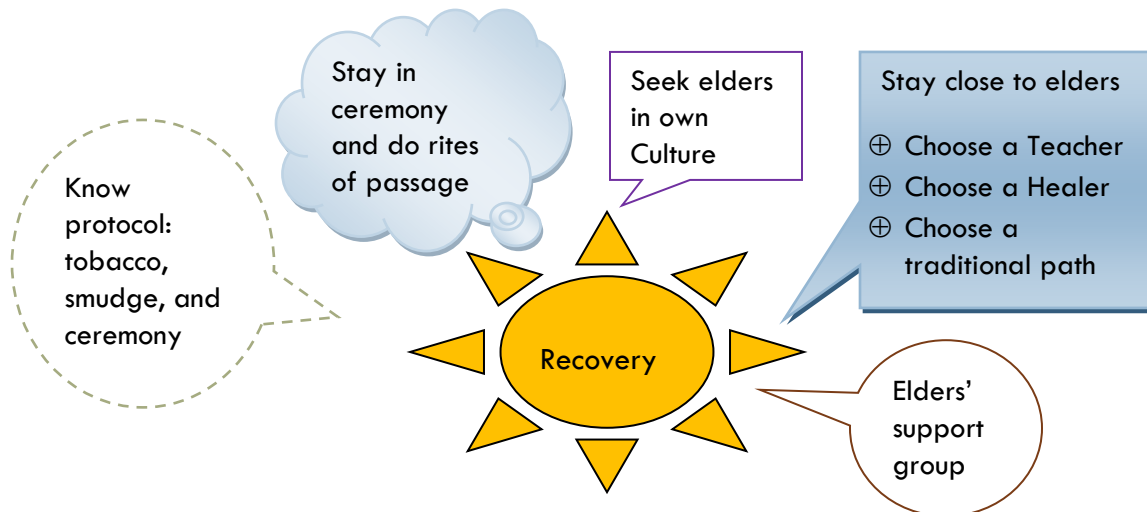
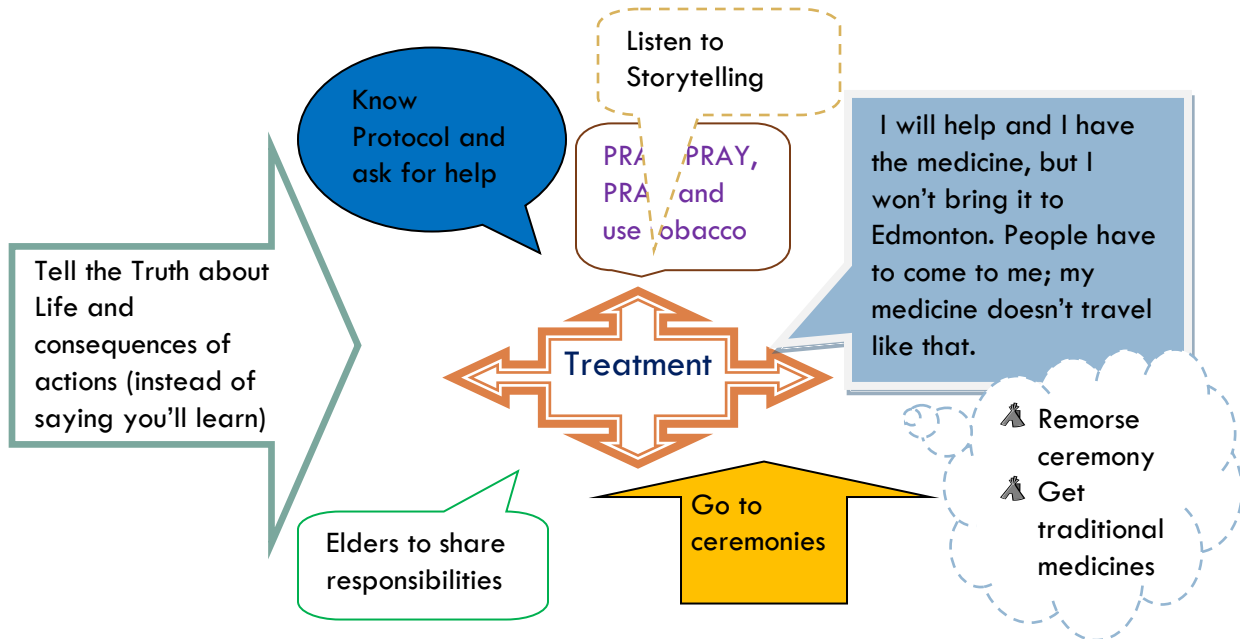
Are there Elders and Healers in your community available and accessible to help substance misusers?





## Discussion Question

How do we access traditional ways of healing and wellness?



## They [elders] deserve RESPECT





Our Elders have [knowledge] they have earned from their life-long experiences and they need to use their life's journey as an example. Our Elders should use their awareness of what they witnessed through the history of their people. They inherited the [right] to teach the people of the indigenous ways to move forward; also, to explain the purpose of retention. Share their humour and wisdom, it's contagious for the purpose of self-healing. They know which is culturally sensitive (when asked to share). Retention: the continued possession, use or control of something → wîyawâw (they) ex: "nîpîsîy" (the whip)

### Storytelling – âcimowin (story)

#### Utilize elders in **all** aspects of life starting from the womb:

-  Guidance and support
-  Traditional and Cultural knowledge
-  Reclaim traditional roles




#### True teachers:

-  Become active in the learning environment
-  Serve as consultants and advisors
-  Contribute to specialized knowledge
-  Areas of expertise
  - ⊕ Hunters – traditional female/male roles
  - ⊕ Medicines – knowledge about plants
  - ⊕ History and rites of passage
  - ⊕ Maintaining elders in a traditional family atmosphere

#### Teaching humility and humbleness

#### Model Cree identity

#### Builders of self – esteem

-  Remind us of who are
-  Use of humour
-  Kâkîsimôwin (prayer)

## **Community Meeting on Alcohol and Drugs: Drive -By Shooting in Community**

Elder says Prayer

Chief speaks about working together to find solutions. She suggests that if a member wants to speak and can't, there are paper suggestions and put in box. Friday evening event of shooting had alcohol and drugs involved. She explained that the meeting is 'open floor': all thoughts and emotions are welcome.

RCMP Staff Sargent from Lac La Biche

- Sees respect for [traditional] ways, ex: Prayer
- Worked in Maskwacîs and witnessed a lot of death/violence
- Asks people to report who've witnessed incidences therefore work with Police
- Identified rise of violence to drugs imported to community
- We will now have Police presence starting next year

Elder – Community Security need uniforms therefore given more respect

Youth – too much assumed knowledge: we think leaders and Police know. What information do Police need? How do we work with Police?

Elder – form a group, approach addicts and make them go to Treatment or have them boarded up

Youth (27 yrs. old) – it was his friend who was shot; now his family are a part

- Has good home now; turned it from drug house to good home, changed life around
- Have to stand up to relatives dealing
- A lot of youth suicide due to crystal meth
- Youth are put down – he hopes to be a voice, to be chief
- Point isn't to live, point is to quit drugs
- Trying to be good image – try to be traditional
- Right next door was shooting, not shot because he blessed his home and yard

Elder – the family isn't here in meeting today. Hiding. Tough love needs to be used; like the youth talking, kicked his family members out. We have to love our community. Jerry Saddleback knows that Culture and Story that can help us.

Youth – houses: how and who distributed to, should be more careful and use housing incentive for good living and behaviour

Jo-Ann Saddleback

Health Director – we've tried so much: sober dances, cultural camps, picnics, sports, sewing, keep going. Some don't believe in anything, have no faith. Security needs a tower for self-service. We need a strategy. Drugs sell pain, buries hurt.

Elder – theft and violence are products

- What do we with someone high? They're strong! Women assaulted
- Make our own laws, we're sovereign!
- Security doesn't have guns or protection
- Enforce our laws, alcohol is unlawful on reserve therefore not enforced
- We know the drug houses, but no law about drugs
- Residency Law – can shut down houses/parties, can shut off power/gas, need to pass this law

Jerry Saddleback asked to speak by Chief

- Maskwacîs has 5 unanswered deaths
- We have to do it ourselves, answer here
- Going back to Circular Encampment
- Sheds insight to government structures
- Chiefs Right-hand man – confrontation
- Repent > Remorse Ceremony “What are we going to do about it?” Heal our people
- Have to believe in Sacred Holy Traditions

Youth – curb behavior, especially those who want to change

Band Council Member - In a white school, except on the Reserve (DIA run school), we have no say in curriculum

- Information doesn't work: takes 4 days at least for information to travel from mind to the heart
- Profound impact of Story of Creation – lasts for Life > no quick fix to mind and emotions therefore revert back to behaviours eventually if mind/emotions and Spirit are not fed
- There no longer exist the physical system or process to welcome the Story of Creation > hardly anyone left qualified to tell this Story
- We lost the power of the Circle > hardly anyone pays attention to it; they don't even know how to sit

# Protocol: The Journey of Tobacco

(\*start from the East)

