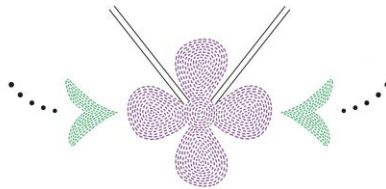


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process – Part 1 Public Hearings
Riverlodge Place
Thompson, Manitoba**



PUBLIC

Tuesday March 20, 2018

Public Volume 73: Lillian Cook

Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette

Commission Counsel: Shelby Thomas

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APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Stuart Wuttke (Legal counsel) Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs	Non-appearance
Government of Canada	Lucy Bell (Legal counsel)
Government of Manitoba	Samuel Thomson (Legal counsel)
Manitoba Moon Voices Inc.	Non-appearance
MMIWG Coalition (Manitoba)	Non-appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada & Manitoba Inuit Association	Non-appearance
Winnipeg Police Service	Non-appearance
Women of the Metis Nation	Non-appearance

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Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

1 Thompson, Manitoba

2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 5:27 a.m.

3 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** -- Audette, this
4 afternoon we will be hearing we will be hearing from
5 Lillian Cook, who will be sharing her personal survivor
6 story.

7 Mr. Registrar, Lillian would like to promise
8 to tell the truth in a good way.

9 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Good afternoon, Lillian, do
10 you promise to tell your truth in a good way this
11 afternoon.

12 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** I do.

13 **LILLIAN COOK, Affirmed:**

14 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Okay, thank you.

15 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Lillian, could you
16 introduce yourself to Commissioner Audette, and tell her
17 where you're from.

18 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** Okay. Hello. I'm from
19 Sagkeeng. My name is Lillian Cook, and I'm from Sagkeeng.
20 I grew up on the north shore. And it's a community down
21 south, and -- and the reserve is divided by a town, so
22 there's a -- on Highway 11 -- the north side, which I live,
23 so we're in between these two towns, so that's where
24 actually where I'm from.

25 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Lillian, in whatever

1 details you feel comfortable, can you share your personal
2 survivor story.

3 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Yeah, okay, sure. I grew
4 up on the north shore. I grew up in -- in a foster family.
5 I was adopted out when I was five days old and I grew up
6 with my biological mother's first cousins. So that's who
7 raised me, and -- and my dad was -- the one who raised me
8 was born in 1902 and my grandma was born in 1987 (sic) so
9 -- and my mom and my dad were 13 years apart, so I grew up
10 very -- I grew up with my language. I never lost my
11 language, I was affluent speaker, that's all they ever
12 spoke was Anishnabe -- was Ojibway in the home. There was
13 only three of us in the house -- I mean as children, there
14 was my -- my sister, she was 13 years older than me, and of
15 course, my -- my little brother, who's four years younger
16 than me. But we were all foster children. We were
17 actually adopted, I believe and --

18 But anyways aside from that, all my first
19 cousins are deceased. My second cousins, they're in their
20 70s so that's probably why I'm alone up here. And all my
21 family gone.

22 But as -- as -- growing up, where I come
23 from, on the north shore, you know, a lot of things
24 happened and I remember just listening back to some of what
25 the families were saying this morning, and it's so true --

1 like when there's sexual violence, all those things happen.

2 And when I was 12 years old and that's what
3 happened to me is that I was -- I was raped when 12 and I
4 didn't know that -- what was happening to me. I didn't
5 realize that I was being groomed as a child. That I'd be a
6 victimized. That I'm be raped at 12 by a married man. Who
7 had his own children. You know, he had a wife and he had
8 children.

9 And -- but I didn't know, like all the
10 kindness because that's the kindness that I grew up with
11 living with a bunch of elderly people. They took good care
12 of you. So naturally it was okay for me when somebody
13 offered me a -- a Pepsi. I remember the Pepsi with the
14 little -- there was two holes on top of a can, so I
15 remember that you know. And then I remember the Wigwag bar
16 that he gave me, and telling me how pretty I was, and
17 giving me bars -- different types of bars. I always
18 remember different bars like the one was -- was that
19 Eatmore bar was another one, that's an old bar, it's still
20 around, you know. So I remember all those things, and you
21 know, telling me how pretty I was, and so every once in a
22 while he'd touch my hand whenever I seen him.

23 And he was in his 20s, I was just 12. I
24 really wasn't even developed yet, you know, but -- you
25 know, and one time we were -- my girlfriends and I, we were

1 playing in the car an old abandoned car and he came there
2 and he -- I was sitting in the back seat with -- and my
3 girlfriends were in the front seat and pretending to drive,
4 and I was in the back seat and -- with my other friend and
5 you know, and he pulled the mirror down and he winked at
6 me, and, oh, how I wish -- I wanted to be his wife. I just
7 was so happy that there was this older man and he just --
8 you know, that he was interested in me, he was telling me
9 how pretty I was and how nice -- and oh, I wished --

10 You know, I remember one time he said to me
11 when I had my toboggan, hey, I pulled my toboggan and we
12 were going to go tobogganing, me and my friends and he said
13 to me, "I wish you were my wife. I'd take good care of
14 you." And I wanted that. I wanted him to look after me.
15 I wanted him to take me away. And I -- you know, and so I
16 was so happy that this older man was doing all these
17 wonderful things for me.

18 And then -- and then -- then one day you
19 know, it was like months, but there was lots of stuff that
20 was going on. He'd play with my hair. He told me how
21 pretty my hair was and you know, and I liked that, you
22 know, like all the little boys didn't do things like that.
23 You know.

24 And the last time I ever seen my dad -- like
25 my dad died in 1978, and he was 72 when he died, so I never

1 had no really any male contact after my dad to give me
2 attention and to -- to love me, but this man did. You
3 know.

4 So from there there's a lot of things that
5 happened, you know, and he never forced himself on me for a
6 long time. He just told me that he liked the way I looked.
7 I was this pretty little girl. I was this -- you know, and
8 -- and that he would take care of me. Wished he'd get a --
9 wish he didn't have his wife and -- and that I was his wife
10 and then I'd cook for him and I'd say, "Yeah -- yeah --
11 yeah -- yeah, I wish too." You know, I'd say that, and I'd
12 be so shy and he'd laugh at me and -- and then he'd touch
13 me. You know, he'd touch my shoulder, or touch my hair,
14 and then he'd leave. So -- and I looked forward to seeing
15 him all those times that he was doing those things.

16 And then one night my girlfriend and I, we
17 were down -- down the bank and we were playing marbles --
18 that's how it happened, and he called me. He called me to
19 his car. And I was so excited to go. I wanted to go, you
20 know, he -- he wanted -- I thought maybe he -- I don't
21 know, that he'd give me another gift or just tell me how
22 pretty I was, and you know, just look after me and that's
23 what I wanted and I ran to him.

24 But this time he took me you know, and my
25 girlfriend said, you know, and I -- I just remember her

1 saying, "Don't leave, don't leave. Don't leave." But I
2 wanted to go with him so I -- I jumped in the car and away
3 I went. And then you know, he took me to the bush, you
4 know, and that's where he raped me. It was so fast. And
5 you know -- I don't know how else to tell you, just that I
6 was 12, he was a -- a man. And he just took me down so
7 quick. I -- I was helpless. I couldn't do nothing. You
8 know, and he tore off my pants. Tore off my clothes -- my
9 top was ripped. My -- I was wearing -- I always remember
10 that yellow satin shirt, that's what I was wearing, and he
11 ripped that. You know, and I wasn't even developed yet.
12 And I couldn't do nothing. I had to just let it happen.

13 And -- and then I was just crying, and he was
14 telling me, "Not to cry -- not to cry that it will be over
15 soon." That's what he said to me, "It will be over soon.
16 Don't cry. Don't cry. It will be over -- it will be over.
17 It will be okay." You know, and I -- and I was just
18 crying. I couldn't -- I couldn't help -- I couldn't help
19 myself.

20 But I always remember how -- what I did for
21 it to stop, or for it -- for it -- for me to think that it
22 was stopping is that I seen -- I seen the trees, that's
23 what I saw -- I saw the trees, and I looked at those trees
24 and then I put myself on those trees, that's what I did.
25 Just so I wouldn't feel what was happening to me, so I was

1 sitting -- well, I remember sitting on that tree, thinking
2 that's where I was. And just looking around and thinking
3 that everything is going to be okay. And then finally he
4 was done. During the time that I felt like I was on the
5 tree, I didn't feel nothing. I didn't feel no pain.
6 Because I was 12. I had never had any sexual contact with
7 any male. It was my first time that something like that
8 would happen.

9 And you know -- but it was my friend -- it
10 was my friend who -- who helped me. She was the one who
11 phoned the police. I don't -- and it was because of her
12 that they found me and -- and him. They found us. And we
13 were -- you know, I went to the police station, he was at
14 the police station. And -- and then my friend was already
15 waiting for me at the police station, and she was crying.
16 You know, and -- and I was always so grateful for her being
17 beside me during that time because of the questioning. She
18 was one year older than I was, but the police -- what they
19 said, and pretty much what the families have said, is that
20 you don't get the support. The police -- they don't care.
21 They don't care.

22 You know, for me, when I was being questioned
23 one of the things the police officer said to me was --
24 because my friend wanted charges laid on him. And you know
25 -- and -- and then he said to me -- and there I was sitting

1 there, trying to cover up -- cover up whatever I had you
2 know, this torn shirt, it was a satin shirt -- back then,
3 you know, like disco was in, and everybody wore the satin,
4 and that's what I was wearing. And I was trying to cover
5 up and then I was trying to hold my pant together because
6 he ripped by pants, my zipper was completely torn right
7 off, it wouldn't close. My -- my little snap on didn't
8 even want to work because there wasn't a button, but it was
9 a snap on -- didn't even want to work. That was damaged.
10 And I was trying to hold myself together so this police
11 officer wouldn't have to look at me sitting there naked,
12 you know.

13 And then he said to me, "I don't think
14 they're going to believe you when you go to the hospital
15 because what's going to happen to you here," he says, "Is
16 once you press charges we're going to have to take you to
17 the hospital and the doctor's not going to believe you
18 because the doctor is going open up your legs, once he
19 opens up your legs he's going to see if you're a virgin or
20 not. You might be a virgin, I don't know."

21 I was 12. I'd never had any sexual contact,
22 but for him, those were his questions, that's what he was
23 saying to me, you know. "Like are you a virgin? Did you
24 have -- did you have -- did you sleep with a -- did you
25 have intercourse,"" I think is what -- what he said to me,

1 but you know, I told him, "No -- no, I didn't." And he
2 says, "Well, the doctor will know anyway if you're a virgin
3 or not." And -- and then he says, "And what they're going
4 to do is you're going to have to lay down on the bed," he
5 said, "The doctor is going to lay you down on the bed and
6 he's going to open up your legs and he's going to examine
7 you in there." He says, "He's going to take a look inside
8 there and he'll check, he'll know for sure if -- if you're
9 a virgin, because doctors can tell." And I was like, I
10 didn't want that. And I said, "No -- no, never mind." And
11 then my mom came in.

12 And why I didn't press charges on him at that
13 time was because of my mother, and my mother said, "What's
14 happening? What's going on?" And my friend was crying and
15 I was -- I didn't even cry, I just -- I was just sitting
16 there, but she was crying and I was wondering why my friend
17 was just crying so bad and -- and here I was just sitting
18 there and hoping that they don't take me to the doctor. I
19 didn't want any -- I didn't want another man inspecting me
20 down there. I didn't want that.

21 So anyway, my mom was standing there and she
22 said, "No." Well, she -- they'll end up telling her what's
23 going to happen, they're going to examine her, the doctor
24 will examine her and this is what's going to happen, so my
25 mom said, "No. We're not going to charge him. I don't

1 want to -- I don't want to -- I don't want to take her to
2 the hospital, and I'm not going to press charges." And
3 then the police said, "Well, yeah, that's good because you
4 know after the doctor examines her to see if she's a virgin
5 or not," he says, "Then she has to go to court, and she's
6 going to have to talk about all this over again." So I was
7 like, oh, I didn't want that. And you know, my mom said
8 "I'm taking her home."

9 So I went home and locked myself in a room
10 and I didn't want anybody to see me, so it was really hard
11 for me during that time, but you know, there was other
12 things traumatic in my life -- like I mentioned my dad had
13 passed away when I was 12. Six months before I was raped
14 my -- my father was killed on the north shore road. He was
15 coming home from visiting his brother and -- and my dad was
16 72 and he barely would see but he went for a walk and these
17 two cars were drag racing and they hit him and they killed
18 my dad.

19 But the only one that was home that night was
20 me -- me and my little brother. My sister was out, you
21 know, she was drinking. My mom was at bingo, and the only
22 one old enough in the house -- I was all excited that there
23 was all these police outside, was me. And so there was a
24 knock on the door, and at that time my aunt and uncle were
25 at bingo, and the next door neighbour -- nobody was like --

1 there was -- I don't know, but everybody seemed to be
2 always at bingo.

3 And I -- so I -- I seen all these lights and
4 I was so happy, and I was telling my little brother, "Oh,
5 look -- look -- look, there's something going on there and
6 they must be stopping somebody. They stopped somebody."
7 And so we're trying to see, like, what was going on. And -
8 - and anyway there was a knock on the door and it was a
9 police officer and -- and he said, "Is there anybody older
10 in the house?" And I said, "No." I said, "No, just --
11 just me." And he says, "Are you sure?" And I said, "Yeah,
12 just -- just me." And he says, "Would you come and see a
13 body -- like there's an accident would you come and see
14 this accident?" So I said, "Yeah, sure." And I told my
15 little brother, "I'm going to see an accident." I was so
16 happy. "I'm going to go see an accident." He said, "Okay
17 -- okay, go -- go -- go," so away he went, and so he's
18 peeking out the window.

19 And I'm -- and the first thing I see -- I
20 already seen what was that -- already recognized who that
21 was. It was part of my dad. His leg had been severed
22 right off and that's why -- that's what was laying on our
23 driveway and the rest of him was laying on the -- on the
24 road. And all I remember is lots of blood, that's what I
25 seen. And -- but of course, they take you and you look --

1 the police take you and -- took me right to the -- right to
2 -- to my dad. My dad was laying on his tummy, but I
3 already seen who it was, and I said, "That's my dad."

4 So -- so it was hard -- it was really hard
5 for me, so six months -- about six months later is when I'd
6 be -- when I was raped, so I missed my dad, and -- and
7 somebody else taking an interest in me, you know, an older
8 man, I felt good, somebody was going to look after me was
9 another male, and I was so happy.

10 But because of that first trauma my mom and
11 them knew that there was something wrong where me because I
12 couldn't sleep. I was staying up late. My grades fell. I
13 was just -- I knew I wasn't right. And my family knew, but
14 they did their best to try and help me, and I'm -- and I
15 was really fortunate though that I had a good support team.
16 My support team isn't here because they're all gone, but --
17 but I had a wonderful group of women who looked after me,
18 and my uncle who looked after me.

19 So you know, and helped me make it through,
20 and then when this would happen -- happen to six months
21 later when -- when the assault took place is when I fell
22 apart. I started drinking at 12 years old, and I started
23 with -- with vanilla. It said alcohol, but I had to sleep,
24 I couldn't sleep because I saw my dad and I saw the lights,
25 or I would picture myself on that tree or I'd picture him

1 or I'd smell him -- that smell stayed for a long time, more
2 so than I witnessed anything else. You know. And I then I
3 couldn't get rid of that scent. I couldn't -- it was so
4 hard and -- so I with went just with that -- all that
5 trauma and -- and then I fell deeper -- deeper I guess,
6 into depression. I did get counselling therapy because
7 there was a lot of suicide attempts, all kinds of stuff
8 going on, more drinking and -- and after the drinking you
9 know, I got better. For a little while I got better.

10 And then I encountered -- see I was given
11 away -- my biological mom had eight kids and out of the
12 eight she gave one away and that's me. She gave me away,
13 and I'm the second youngest. She kept my -- my sister, my
14 baby sister, but she gave me away, so I grew up with her
15 first cousin.

16 And I never met -- I never knew my biological
17 family in -- in a way where we would be like brothers and
18 sisters, that never happened. My brother and sister was
19 always the family that I grew up with -- those -- that was
20 my family. But I never knew who they were, or who their
21 husbands or wives were. I just knew that that was my
22 brother and that was my sister, but there was no like,
23 "Hello Lillian, how are you?" There wasn't any of that.

24 So I was walking home from my uncle's -- and
25 from down the river I was walking home and -- and then this

1 car stops and said to me, "Hey, get in -- get in." And I
2 didn't want to get in. I said, "No -- no, I'm going home.
3 I said (speaking Native language)." And he was fluent in
4 Ojibway, and he said (speaking Native language), and then
5 he made like a -- "Like, come in -- like just -- just, come
6 in, I'm just going to drive you home. You've not even
7 going to be -- it's just up the road there." And he says,
8 "And come on, they're -- her sister, I'll drive you home."
9 He says, "I recognize you."

10 And so I thought, okay, that's -- that's my
11 sister's husband, so, okay, I'll get in. So I got into the
12 car, but my instinct told me not to do it. You wouldn't
13 believe how powerful that -- that instinct was, "Don't get
14 in." But he kept saying, "Come on, (speaking Native
15 language)" and he started laughing, "Are you scared?"
16 That's what he said to me, "Are you -- (speaking Native
17 language)." And I said, "No, (speaking Native language)."
18 So he said, "Get in." So I got in.

19 I didn't want to be scared and -- so I got
20 in and -- and then we drove by my house -- we passed my
21 house. And we -- and I said, "Drop me off. Just drop me
22 off. Stop. Stop. Stop." And then he's just laughing.
23 And he says, "What are you so scared of? We'll just go for
24 a ride." And you know, and I knew that I was trouble and I
25 couldn't get out.

1 Some time -- for the longest time I blamed
2 myself because I had every opportunity, I thought to open
3 that door and flew out, full speed down the highway, but
4 because I was too chicken to do that, I endured -- endured
5 -- endured him and travelling to wherever we were going to
6 go.

7 So then he did, and we went into -- I don't
8 know -- I don't know where he took me, and it's something
9 that I'll never know because he's deceased now, so it's
10 something that I -- I don't know because he had my head
11 down all the way, so I don't know where I went. I just
12 know that I was in the bush. We went far -- far into the
13 bush, and he let me out of the car. He says, "Well, get
14 out then." So I got out of the car and I started running
15 and there was all these trees, it was just like a -- like a
16 -- like a trail -- like a trail into the bush. It was so
17 -- it was just all covered with bush, and I was trying to
18 run and he caught up to me and he tripped me and he just
19 jumped on me. He didn't bother me or anything, he just
20 jumped on me. And he's just laughing and he's just
21 kissing, you know, he started kissing me and, oh, I didn't
22 want anybody to kiss me. You know, and I was moving my
23 head and trying get away from all this -- what he was
24 trying do and he laughed and he let me go.

25 And so I took off running again and he's

1 faster than me and he caught up to me and he tripped me and
2 he just hung onto my ankle and you know, and -- you know,
3 and I was crying -- crying, "Let me go, let me go. Just
4 let me go." And he's just laughing.

5 So three times he did that and three times we
6 did that where all that would go -- happen over and over
7 again, you know, tripping me, and kissing me, and then the
8 -- you know, and then the -- you know, the touching me all
9 over, you know, and just laughing at me.

10 And then finally that's when he just -- he
11 just started like really touching me all over and he was
12 kissing me and -- and he ripped off my clothes. And I was
13 screaming all the way through, and I said, "Don't do it.
14 Don't -- don't -- don't -- don't." And -- and he just
15 said, "You know, oh, you remind me of her so much. You
16 remind me of her so much, a young her --" meaning my
17 sister, "A young her," he said, and you know, and I cried
18 -- I cried and I just told him not to, "Just don't do this
19 to me."

20 But once he was finished -- after he was
21 finished with me, he said -- he sat on the -- on the grass
22 because he rolls off me, and he sits down and I'm -- and
23 I'm trying to grab whatever I have to cover myself up, and
24 he's -- you know, he's worried -- I guess he's worried now
25 and he says, "Oh," you know -- he's swearing. "What am I

1 going to do with you? What the hell am I going to do with
2 you?" And he says, "I should Fing kill you. I should Fing
3 kill you and nobody will even know. Nobody will Fing know
4 where you are." And I said, "Don't kill me. Don't -- I --
5 I won't tell anybody. I'll never tell. I swear I'll never
6 tell." And he says, "You Fing liar. You Fing liar. Now,
7 look --" he says, "Now look at what you did." "Now," he
8 says, "My marriage is over because of you. Because of
9 you," he says, "Our -- my marriage is over. Look at what
10 you did to me. Look at what you did." And I said, "I'm
11 sorry. I'm sorry. Just let me -- just let me go." And he
12 says, "I'll fucking kill you right here." He says nobody
13 will fucking know right now." And then he -- and I said,
14 "No, I -- I -- I'm begging you." And I said his name, "I'm
15 begging you. Just -- just keep me alive -- I don't want
16 to. I'll never tell anybody."

17 And then that's where you know, I make a deal
18 for my life. And then he says to me, "Well, this is what
19 --" well, he says -- and I tell him, "I'll do whatever it
20 is you want me to do. What is it you want me to do?" And
21 he says, "Well, suck my cock." Suck my cock. That's what
22 he said to me. And I didn't even know what the hell that
23 was. You know, and so I did it. And, oh, it was just the
24 most horrible -- horrible experience in my life to have to
25 do that, and I was naked through all this. And -- and you

1 know and -- you know, and when he was done, you know, and
2 that he -- he wouldn't stop, like he -- he kept saying --
3 swearing at me, calling me down. He told me that I was a
4 whore. "You're just a whore. You know, that's all you
5 are." He says, "That's why that --" you know, and you
6 know, and then he knocked me down and you know, when he did
7 that and I was so scared. I was really just terrified of
8 him.

9 And -- and then he's -- and then that's when
10 he says, "You -- you know what you did?" He says, "You
11 know what you did?" And I said, "No -- no -- no, I don't
12 know what I did." And he says, "You've fucking ruined my
13 marriage. You ruined my marriage. You ruined my life.
14 I'm going to just fucking kill you right here. I'm going
15 to fucking kill you. Nobody will fucking know who you --
16 nobody will ever find you. I'll strangle you." He said,
17 "I'll fucking choke you. Nobody will fucking know. And
18 I'll just leave you here." And I said, "Don't do it.
19 Don't do it. I swear I -- I -- I -- I won't tell anybody.
20 I won't tell anybody. I'll -- I'll just -- I'll -- I'll
21 just forget for everything." And he says, "You liar." He
22 says, "You're a liar. That's all you are is a liar." And
23 I said, "I'm not. I'm not. I'll keep it is a secret."

24 And he's -- and then you know, I was praying.
25 I always remember praying. I was praying -- praying --

1 praying that I'd live -- to let me live. And I told him
2 that, "Just let me live. I just want to -- I -- I just
3 want to see my mom again. I want to go home. Let me go
4 home."

5 And then he said -- you know, and he had no
6 pity. That was my own brother-in-law, he had no pity for
7 me. None. You know, and -- and then he's -- you know, I
8 don't know how long we were in the bush because three times
9 he raped me in the bush. The third time is when he
10 actually lets me go after more deals. We have to do more
11 deals for me to -- for him to be happy -- to be satisfied,
12 there's more deals that have to be made, more things that I
13 have to do. That I never ever did. And a lot of the
14 things that I had to do are secret and nobody's ever known,
15 things that I had to do. And it was something that I was
16 really ashamed of for the longest time because I had to
17 survive though. I had to live.

18 You know, you don't know the amount of terror
19 that goes on when you're begging for your life after being
20 raped and then you're -- you -- and then you know, and
21 you're being tripped, you know, and you're being knocked
22 down, and then you have to run and then you're begging and
23 then there's laughter -- lots of laughter because he thinks
24 it's so much fun. For me it wasn't fun. I didn't think it
25 was funny at all. And I honestly thought I was going to

1 die that night. I really did. But instead he -- he left
2 me. He left me in the bush, and so then it was time for me
3 to -- to make my way out. He told me just to stay there in
4 the bush 'til he was gone.

5 And then I -- I let him go, you know, and I
6 don't ever remember mosquitoes or anything like that. I
7 don't, maybe I blocked it. I don't know what -- I don't
8 remember anything like that, but I made it out of the bush,
9 and it was all -- you know, in our language (speaking
10 Native language). It was all full trees and -- because it
11 was night. I was just trying to get out of there.

12 And then of course, I've got nothing on. But
13 I'm standing on the side of the road and I'm -- and a car
14 is there -- and what else stops is a man, you know. And
15 that -- and he covered me up. He gave me a what he had,
16 and then he wanted to take me to the police station, is
17 what he wanted to do. I didn't want to go there. You
18 know, I didn't want to go there and have all that happen --
19 reoccurring again. I didn't want that, so I avoided that,
20 and I said, "Just take me home." So I made it home.

21 My mom used to sleep on the couch. She
22 didn't know what happened. I mean she thought that was
23 gone to go for a sleepover. She didn't know where I was.
24 And then I came home and nobody knew, and I'd keep it a
25 secret.

1 One of the things that my brother-in-law said
2 to me was, "Don't ever tell anybody." If I ever tell -- if
3 -- "I'm going to leave -- I'm going to leave you here.
4 Don't you ever tell anybody. If you tell anybody," he
5 says, "I'll kill you. I'm going to come back and I'll kill
6 you." You know, as a kid -- as a young kid you keep those
7 secrets and you really believe them, and for me I kept his
8 story, I kept my story secret, you know, and I didn't -- I
9 didn't allow -- I didn't want anybody to know what happened
10 to me out there. The things that he did to me. The deals
11 that I made to survive because I felt responsible. I felt
12 responsible because I felt like I played it over and over
13 in my head I play that I had every opportunity to jump out
14 of that car when we were going. I should have opened up
15 that door and rolled out of the car. You know. That's
16 what I -- and then I used to blame myself, well, I
17 shouldn't have got in the car when I knew I shouldn't have
18 gotten in. I blamed myself for everything.

19 And for the times that my biological sister
20 was mean to me, my biological family was mean to me I
21 allowed it to happen because I felt responsible for what
22 happened to me -- that what I had caused him. And I
23 protected him and I protected -- and you know, allowed the
24 abuse to go on, even from my own family. Because I was
25 considered an outcast too, by my biological family. I

1 wasn't accepted. I was different. I was also disconnected
2 -- disconnected. I didn't feel I belonged, so it was -- so
3 you know, and that's how -- that's how it was for me.

4 And for the longest time I drank lots -- lots
5 of drinking, have to -- I can't go to sleep without being
6 drunk. You know, I had to have that. It's the only way I
7 would sleep because if I don't think then I'm going to be
8 seeing everything again and feeling everything, and I
9 didn't want that. I just wanted just to be -- just knock
10 out -- and just be knocked out and that was it.

11 So that's what happened and you know, and
12 then -- you know, and then things started happening to me
13 and you know, I wound up having cancer -- I'm a cancer
14 survivor. And so a lot of that stuff resurfaced when I --
15 when I had breast cancer. And one of the things that
16 happens, and I knew I had to revisit that because I'd
17 buried it and I kept things so secret for so long, was when
18 I had to undress for the -- you know, for the -- not only
19 do you have to do the mammogram, but once the mammogram is
20 done you got to see the doctor and the doctor wants to
21 examine you. So there's the biopsy that happens, well you
22 have to -- you can't be wearing a bra -- wearing a -- going
23 through a biopsy. When he examines you, so I had that and
24 I was pushing everything down as much as I could but then
25 when I would be re-triggered was when I'd go up for surgery

1 the night before surgery. I had a mastectomy and a
2 hysterectomy. My surgery was 18 hours long. So my uterus
3 was also taken out along with my -- my breast.

4 And when I stood there -- I was up against
5 the wall because the doctor has to take pictures of you, so
6 he had his nurse -- he had his camera, my husband was
7 there. And so you're in your gown, and I just had my pants
8 on, you know, and -- but I had to go up with no bra on,
9 you know, and just with this white coat -- or this white
10 little paper thing that you have to wear, and I stood up
11 against there and he says, Well, I have to take pictures of
12 you, and then once I take pictures of you then I have to
13 draw -- I have to draw the markings for where we have to do
14 -- where we have to -- where I have to make the incisions,
15 where -- you know, and all that.

16 Okay, so I'll all right with that, but when I
17 would be triggered is when I actually took off the -- the
18 -- the white little paper down and then he says, "Can you
19 lift up your breast this way?" And I burst into tears.
20 And then he's says, "What's wrong?" And -- and then he
21 says -- he says -- "You'll be okay. You'll be okay.
22 You'll be fine." He says, "I just need you to lift up your
23 breast," and he says, "And can you pull your breast this
24 way?" Because there's certain ways that you have to stand,
25 certain -- because he needs those camera shots, and I burst

1 into tears, and I said, "I can't do it," and I broke down.
2 You know, and I was -- and then he says, "What is wrong?"
3 And then he came to me and he held me. That was my doctor,
4 and him and I became very good friends. And he looked
5 after me and all the way through -- even after post surgery
6 he and I became very good friends. And was of him was how
7 I become -- do a lot of the volunteer work back home. But
8 I was re-triggered by it because of what I had to do,
9 because of what happened to be in the bush with my brother-
10 in-law, because of the things that I had to do for him and
11 the doctor was asking me do basically do the same thing,
12 you know.

13 So I did a lot of work -- I believe I did a
14 lot of work in terms of healing myself. Doing -- going to
15 ceremony -- you know, and just praying -- you know, and
16 just looking after myself, and that was one of the things
17 that my doctor said to me is, "That you need to look after
18 yourself." "Oh, my gosh," is what he used to say to me --
19 "Oh my gosh." You know, and so I did. You know, I did a
20 lot of stuff. I did lots of yoga, lots of ceremony --
21 going to that, meditating. And going into the bush by
22 myself. That was -- that was scary, but I did it. And --
23 and just being aware of my surroundings because I was
24 afraid because I -- you know, when I was taken out there --
25 twice I was taken out there. You know, and each time I

1 lost all coordination, each time. And each time I was
2 always lost. So I had to make sure that when I was in the
3 bush that I knew my surroundings and that I'd be okay.

4 So that's some of the things that I did to
5 take care of me. And I started journaling. I started
6 doing all kinds of things, you know, looking after myself.
7 You know, going to group therapy, all kinds of -- but what
8 I found -- and I felt better, is when I went to older
9 women, my grandmothers, and they were part of my healing
10 and you know, and I knew I had -- I knew I had to do
11 certain things to look after myself. And I know I had to
12 re-visit that trauma. I knew I had to re-visit each time
13 -- the -- the rapes that that I'd gone through, I knew I
14 had to re-visit that, and I knew I had to heal that part
15 where I blamed myself for even being raped, because I
16 blamed myself.

17 I mean I was 12 years old, but what -- you
18 know, I -- I for the longest time I thought -- because he
19 said, "Look at what you did to me. You made me do this."
20 I was 12, what could I do to him? He was a married man.
21 An adult married man, but he blamed me, you know.

22 And for the longest time I had to forgive
23 myself for that and tell myself that that wasn't my fault,
24 that I was never in a position of power, that he was in the
25 position of power at all times. I -- I wasn't. I was 12

1 years old. And what 12-year-old has power over a -- a man?
2 So I had to tell myself, no, that I wasn't at fault. And I
3 had to quit blaming myself for that, and I had to quit
4 blaming myself for the things -- the acts that I had to do
5 in that bush to survive. I had to forgive myself for that.
6 But I had to, and you know, that's what I tell myself, but
7 you had to -- you had to survive, so I did. You know, and
8 so I've done quite a bit of stuff for -- in terms of trying
9 to heal myself and heal those little broken pieces of me
10 every -- all over the place here.

11 But I came across -- like I said,
12 grandmothers, and the two grandmothers -- they're both
13 deceased now, these first two that I encounter, and we went
14 into the bush and we had a -- we had a fire. I had masonry
15 jars. We had -- and we had tea and we had bannock and we
16 had baloney and we sat around the fire, and then I had
17 cedar, and I had tobacco, and a journal.

18 And I said, "I need to get rid of some stuff
19 -- some stuff that happened to me." I said, "I was raped
20 and I need to get rid of this stuff." So -- and that's how
21 some of the things that we did -- like the grandmothers
22 helped me through that, was as I was writing and as I was
23 crying and doing whatever it is that I needed to do. I
24 told them, "If I'm yelling, if I scream, I don't want to
25 scare you, but don't come to me just let me do it." And

1 then they said, "Okay." We -- and then what -- what was
2 surprising was what the grandmothers said to me was, "Okay.
3 We've been raped too."

4 You know, and as I was writing I remember the
5 grandmothers would get up take turns -- get up and burn --
6 burn the tobacco and burn the cedar. And that's what
7 helped me, because I found that when I was going for
8 therapy with counselling people there was a time limit. I
9 have half an hour, I've got 40 minutes and that's all we
10 have. I've got another person to see, so I didn't get a
11 chance to get rid of all the stuff that I had inside. But
12 being with those grandmothers and being by an open fire and
13 being outside that's what helped me.

14 You know, and so there was a lot of that,
15 that -- that kind of therapy by the older -- older ladies
16 that were not qualified, that didn't have a degree. They
17 were just grandmothers from back home who had been
18 victimized as well. But they knew how to look after me,
19 you know, and that's what they did.

20 You know, and I remember when I was crying --
21 sitting there crying and -- and you know, and bawling my
22 eyes out and finally one of them gets up and she comes and
23 gives me some -- some -- in a masonry jar, some tea because
24 we didn't have no water, but she gave me some tea. And she
25 says, "(Speaking Native language) you know, here, drink

1 something." And then she sat back down. And she didn't
2 touch me, and that's all I needed because I didn't want
3 anybody to interfere. I just -- I just didn't want to me
4 touched. I didn't want that. I wanted to be alone. Alone
5 in this, you know.

6 So -- so from there, you know, I got better
7 by them and just getting all that love that I -- that
8 grandmothers can give, and I got it, you know, and
9 everything that I missed, the grandmothers gave me that.

10 So what happens is that during my journey or
11 you know, my healing, I went to -- a little girl is
12 murdered in Sagkeeng, and this little girl -- I go to her
13 funeral, and that's Tina Fontaine -- I go to her funeral.
14 And I couldn't believe the media circus, and then the
15 church was just full and people -- and the cameras were
16 just taking pictures of the -- in the front row the family
17 sitting there, and I wanted to say something, but I was
18 scared of my own people. I was scared of my own Band, and
19 I was scared of my own Chief and council, to throw me out
20 for telling the media, like, to back off, leave them alone.
21 I was scared of that because I'd make a scene for sure, so
22 I sat back down as a coward.

23 Again, I always felt, I knew it, I knew where
24 I went. I -- I automatically I knew so it never left me.
25 But I tried to bury it because that's what I was good at.

1 I could bury things and so it never left me. So it got to
2 the point where I couldn't really sleep because it was --
3 the guilt was just -- was just ugly, and so I just got up
4 and I went and seen -- knocked on Thelma's door. She
5 thought I was CFS first thing. She thought I was CFS. And
6 then -- but anyways we talked. And then from there that's
7 where I said to her that, "I'm sorry. I'm very sorry that
8 I didn't stand up for you in -- in the church. I'm really
9 sorry that I -- I was a coward that I didn't pick -- that I
10 didn't defend you and that I didn't protect your family.
11 Because I could do that. I said I could protect you, but I
12 -- but I didn't. Instead I said I coward -- I was a coward
13 and I'm so sorry. But whatever it is that you need I'm
14 here for you." I said, "And I'm help you with whatever it
15 that you need I'm -- I'm here for you." And she said,
16 "Okay. Okay." And she called me -- she called me many
17 times she called me and I'd go over when she couldn't
18 sleep.

19 You know, and from there I connected her with
20 another grandmother, which was Jeanette (ph), and you know,
21 I talk with Jeanette and I asked her questions -- I met
22 Jeanette actually years before, she told me about her
23 granddaughter, Vanessa (ph), who had gone missing, who was
24 killed, and told me about what happened to Vanessa.

25 And then prior to that I even met a --

1 another grandmother who went hitchhiking all the time. I
2 picked her up hitchhiking, she was like 80, grey hair, a
3 little granny you know, and hitchhiking, but I knew her,
4 that was my aunt. And she said -- I said, "Why are you
5 hitchhiking? Why -- why -- like -- what's -- like what are
6 you doing that for?" Because you know, I didn't want -- I
7 -- I didn't want to hitchhike because I knew what would
8 happen -- you what happens had you get -- when you
9 hitchhike.

10 So she says, "I'm looking for my daughter.
11 My daughter went missing." She says, "This is her." She
12 says, "Have you seen her?" And then you know, and we
13 started talking and she says -- she's travelled the States
14 already -- this little old lady, she travelled the States,
15 so she says, "I like getting rides with truck drivers.
16 Truck drivers go all over." She says, "And I give them a
17 picture of my -- my daughter. I've even gone to --" she
18 says, "To B.C. on a -- on a -- with trucks. I go to all
19 the truck stops," she says, "I don't -- I don't get a car.
20 I make sure I get on with truck drivers and I talk to them
21 to them if they'll find my daughter, help me bring her
22 home."

23 So I met her first, but I didn't tie anything
24 together because she was my biological aunt, so I wasn't
25 close to her and I didn't really know her. So you know, I

1 meet her, and then I met Jeanette, and then I met -- you
2 know, Thelma so from there we just -- you know, and then --
3 but I got to two grandmothers together and -- and from
4 there you know -- you know, I just got them together.

5 And -- and then one of things that -- I was
6 actually eavesdropping in their conversation, I was asked
7 to go make some tea, so I made tea for -- for them. So I
8 with was in the kitchen making tea and I was eavesdropping
9 and they were talking about one of the grandmas was really
10 worried about her granddaughter not being found. That
11 they're going to forget her granddaughter. And she says,
12 "They're going to forget Vanessa. Nobody's going to
13 remember her. She'll be forgotten," and then you know, and
14 I can hear the conversation, "Well, we can't let that
15 happen," is what the other grandmother is saying, "We can't
16 let that happen. We have to -- they have to be remembered.
17 What can we do?"

18 And then they said, "Lillian, come here." So
19 I went and -- and they said, "You know, what about a
20 headstone? Can we have a monument? Can we have something?
21 Can we have a -- where we can -- so the people won't forget
22 them." So they gave me -- well, one of them gives me all
23 -- you know, the cards and where the headstones -- you
24 know, who's ever -- you know, all these companies and here
25 she says, "You know, take this," and then the other grandma

1 who asked me to come by her place and she'll dig up for --
2 dig up hers, so that's basically how this all starts.

3 And then from there I met other grandmothers,
4 and some of them even come to me and from the six --
5 there's actually six grandmothers and we -- and all -- and
6 those grandmothers they all lost a loved one. There's 17
7 murdered and missing from Sagkeeng -- 17 murdered and
8 missing women and girls. And you know, and I met all 16
9 (sic) families, except for one, one I couldn't see. And I
10 chose not to. But 16 of them I've met and we've sat in
11 circles, I've had little sharing circles with the grandmas.
12 And eventually the families would come.

13 A lot of this stuff that I've done, and that
14 we've done is just volunteer. I'm just so fortunate to
15 have very good -- very good women who -- who are very
16 supportive, who think that we have to have -- we have to
17 start doing something at home.

18 And so what we started was just like little
19 sharing circles and -- and, but aside from hearing the
20 grandmothers share their stories of their -- of their loved
21 one and how they -- what happened to them, I've heard the
22 stories of how they were murdered, and the stories of when
23 the police don't take their stories seriously that they're
24 just considered runaways, that they're considered
25 prostitutes, those kinds of stories I've heard, as I sat in

1 the circle. And it got to the point where with we actually
2 had a mom who lost her son. She asked if she could get
3 that support and be with the grandmothers, so I said,
4 "Okay. Come." You know, and she come and sit with the
5 grandmothers.

6 And the grandmothers, each of them have a
7 role, and I was like their gopher because, that's what I
8 said to them. "I survived. I could have died. But I --
9 but I survived for a reason." So I thought, well, I owe
10 them. I owe them something.

11 These grandmothers are searching for their
12 loved one. They're searching for closure. What can I do
13 as a Band member? As a community member? What can I do?
14 How can I -- how can I help them, and I felt because I
15 survived -- I felt obligated and I felt I had to do
16 something for them. And that's what I told them.

17 They know my story. You know, and I told
18 them, "I survived but your granddaughters didn't and I'll
19 do whatever it that I can to help you." And I -- and so I
20 became their advocate. I became their little gopher,
21 whatever it is that they need, I'm there. You know. We've
22 done a lot of things, but everything, like I said, is
23 volunteer.

24 A lot of times I was on social assistance and
25 I would take them one time we took them to a -- or I took

1 them to -- there was a private screening for missing and
2 murdered women in Winnipeg, and I took two of the
3 grandmothers there, you know, and -- and -- and you know,
4 it was the first time you know, Knowella (ph) -- one of the
5 grandmothers cried. You know, and she never cried before
6 and there she was you know, and -- and so those kinds of
7 things you know, I'm so grateful for, for knowing them and
8 for them helping me and for them teaching me. One of the
9 things that I learned from them was to be patient. You
10 know, you have to be patient. And you know, and -- and --
11 but they taught me so much. They taught me much more than
12 that.

13 You know. Like I said, like those
14 grandmothers each of them have a different -- they had
15 different roles, one of them was -- was really -- I was
16 really close to her, I wound up being very close to her and
17 I seen her angry, you know, and trying to advocate for
18 support from our own leadership, for the things that we
19 needed, the things that they needed, what needed to be
20 done.

21 And one of the -- the things that made it --
22 made them angry and that upset them and that hurt them, and
23 I've seen that anger now I've went to, you know, our own
24 leadership when they were at the state that they needed
25 things from their community -- from my community, and it

1 was never given. Not only do not get the support that we
2 were supposed to get like from -- like when I listen to the
3 stories of -- of the families back home, but they don't get
4 the support from -- from the police. They don't -- you
5 know, they're neglected. But you know, they don't get it.
6 They don't get that -- that don't get it from -- from the
7 leadership at all too.

8 And one of the things why I decided to share
9 my story was you know, was because of what I endured and
10 how I come across -- like how I came across these
11 grandmothers and how I managed to -- you know, work with
12 the 17 families. There was only one family that I didn't
13 work with. You know, but -- and then I've worked with the
14 other -- with the men, you know, their -- their -- their
15 families. And it's a lot of work. It's a lot of work.
16 And it's a lot -- very costly too, when you're -- when
17 you're just a volunteer -- a community member, but we don't
18 get the support.

19 Four years ago the grandmothers wanted a
20 walk, that's what they wanted, "We want a walk," but
21 they're -- you know what, they're in wheelchairs, and some
22 of them are not only in wheelchairs, but they're in
23 walkers. And they wanted to walk so bad and I was trying
24 my best to convince them not walk. We don't need to walk,
25 well, let's do some of the things. We need to walk. We

1 have to walk. And not one community organization came to
2 help the grandmothers as they walked from the catholic
3 church to the powwow grounds -- none. Nobody came. But
4 the grandmothers loved it. We went into the arbor. The
5 grass -- nobody even cut the grass. I even asked, "Can you
6 cut the grass?" Nobody cut the grass.

7 But the grandmothers made do so inside there
8 was a center and -- and we got some flowers you know, and
9 so there was flowers on four -- four you know, well four
10 doorways, we'll say, and inside we had lawn chairs that we
11 put and -- but prior to that the grandmothers -- we
12 fundraised to bring some healing to them because we don't
13 get the support -- the families don't get the support from
14 the health centre. The families don't support from these
15 other agencies and organizations. That's not true.
16 Because the grandmas have raised -- the families have
17 raised the money on themselves.

18 And what we -- and what we were able to do
19 was have a flower ceremony for them. And the flower
20 ceremony has to do with the flowers and the water and
21 there's some songs and they got fanning the flowers are the
22 ones that fan the families, you know, and -- and it was so
23 nice, but the grandmothers paid for somebody to come and --
24 and even for the food -- like things like that that were
25 done that night, that was covered, you know, and -- but you

1 know, but the community I suppose did help, but mind you,
2 they didn't show up. But there was food that was donated.
3 That was --and they would send somebody to just bring the
4 food, but no -- we didn't have no -- nobody come. Nobody
5 came, the grandmothers were alone. The families were
6 alone.

7 And you know, and that was on June 21st that
8 they had their walk. And it was so powerful to see because
9 like one of them, like, she was in a walker, and the other
10 one was in a wheelchair, and the grandma -- she was in her
11 wheelchair, and you know, and they bring her close to the
12 powwow arbor and she's with her husband and her husband is
13 holding her, you know, and -- and she says out loud, "No,
14 (speaking Native language), I'm going to walk." She got up
15 from her wheelchair, her legs were shaking, her body was
16 just trembling, and she walked to the arbor.

17 And you know, and I couldn't believe all
18 these old ladies pushing their walkers down that road --
19 down to that dirt road they pushed their walkers and there
20 were and they made it. And some of them with their -- one
21 of them -- had her tank -- her breathing tank and she was
22 walking you know, and just witnessing that I was -- it was
23 so strong and just couldn't believe what -- what they did,
24 and they were so happy, you know.

25 And there they had a blanket ceremony -- we

1 had a blanket ceremony for them. They also had -- that's
2 where they had a sacred fire too, and they burnt their --
3 their tobacco ties and had a you know, a spirit plate, they
4 each made a spirit plate on their own. It wasn't made for
5 them. It was specific for their own family. They made
6 their own spirit plate for their loved one and they then
7 took it to the fire. And they walked to that fire, and
8 I've never seen that before. Other than that, they're
9 always on their wheelchairs or they're pushing their
10 walkers. You know, and it's so amazing to see that, but
11 you know, we do try -- we did try so hard, and it is so
12 hard to go against the way people are conditioned to be.
13 Because back home we don't get that support -- the
14 grandmothers don't get the support, mind you, you see it on
15 media. They have the opportunity to be there and they're
16 up front saying we need to do this. We need to do that.

17 One of the things that the grandmothers
18 wanted was -- was -- was to have their stories shared, but
19 they also wanted support, that's what the grandmothers want
20 is support. They wanted support for their -- for their
21 extended families to get counselling. They wanted support
22 for some -- for a team to go in to help them -- to help the
23 families because the grandmas were already in a better
24 state.

25 Four years I've worked with them, for years

1 we sat like this in a little circle, and these little old
2 ladies -- and so they were at a different state, but the
3 younger ones weren't. There was a lot of anger. A lot of
4 -- you know, there's a lot of energy, you know, and so they
5 were different, but they wanted that support.

6 But how do we get our own organizations from
7 back home -- how do we get them to give the families
8 support when the organizations say "No, we don't want to do
9 that. Oh, God no, send them somewhere else." That's what
10 the families get. And that's the truth.

11 One of the things that I found hard -- like
12 even what I just shared with you, was my own truth. My own
13 story about what happened to me. Same thing with the
14 grandmothers, it's really hard for them to get their truth
15 out, and it's really hard to talk about the truth. It's
16 hard when you have to say, but it's also hard for somebody
17 to hear your truth because they don't want to hear your
18 honesty. And that's from me from my own leadership, it's
19 hard for them to accept to hear what they've done and how
20 they don't to support.

21 One of the things that I've asked for the
22 families -- like I've tried to fundraise. They shut down
23 the fundraising. They said, "There's absolutely no
24 fundraising. You can't do that." You know. There was
25 even a threat of people losing their jobs, that happened.

1 If they help me or help the families or help the grandmas.
2 "No, absolutely no fundraising you're going to have to do
3 this on your own, but without fundraising."

4 So we're bullied like that. The grannies are
5 bullied like that. The families are bullied like that.
6 You know, but that's the truth. That's not a lie.

7 What you see on media, what they do is that
8 they're upfront and they're saying they're going to provide
9 all these -- I wish. The families wish. When there was
10 that -- when they had a walk a few -- a few weeks ago. A
11 couple of weeks ago. Three of the families come to see
12 (indiscernible) at my house and I sat with one of -- one of
13 the -- one of Tina's aunts at home and we watched it on
14 media. We watched it on -- we watched it on -- in her
15 living room, watching the news. One of the things the
16 family said was, "Why are they over there when we're here?"
17 You know, "Why did our leadership have to go to Winnipeg
18 and go to the legislator and say, "Hey, we're in -- we
19 don't want this. This has got to stop. The violence has
20 to stop." But their families were grieving at home.

21 The families were all left -- all 17 of them
22 were at home. Both from the north shore and from the south
23 shore. But, hey, our -- they went, they -- they took off.
24 You know, but for the rest of them -- like one of the
25 families -- not really 17, so 16 of them went -- I mean 16

1 of them remained, one family goes, but not all of them.

2 You know, when we watched everything unfold
3 on TV and -- and what was -- what triggered the families
4 was just the unresolved stuff. The lack of support, the
5 lack of services. Not from -- like the Inquiry here, but
6 just from the support from home. Where is the counselling?
7 Where is the sacred fires? Where is that team to help the
8 families? Where is that when the grannies -- you know, one
9 of the things I asked and I was told, "No, you can't do
10 that, just take them to a sweat." I said. "The
11 grandmothers --" so that's why we fundraised, to have the
12 -- the flower ceremony, to bring somebody over, and to have
13 the feast for them and then to have the walk.

14 You know, one of the things that the council
15 told me at that time was, "Why do you want to do that?
16 Just take them." That's what I -- that I was -- I was so
17 hurt, I couldn't believe I was actually -- I couldn't
18 believe it. I still don't. And even when I tell people
19 today, they're like, "Oh, my -- are you serious?" "Well,
20 yes."

21 One of the things I -- I said was -- well, I
22 was confronted that this was happening. That you know,
23 "What are you doing? You shouldn't be doing this. You
24 know, you shouldn't be -- I should be doing this." Is what
25 the council said to me. "I should be doing -- they should

1 be doing this." "Well, go ahead." I did say that. I even
2 passed tobacco. "Go ahead, do it."

3 But aside from that what was said to me was,
4 "Why do you want to do this? Why do you want to do that
5 flower ceremony? You don't need to do the flower ceremony.
6 Like what -- what the hell is that?" That's actually I was
7 told, "What the hell is that? And why do you need to do
8 that blanket -- like what's -- what's with the blanket
9 ceremony? What do you need to do that for? Why don't you
10 just take them to the sweat? There are sweats here. Let
11 them do the sweat. What about those sun dances? Take them
12 to those sun dances. You can take them there."

13 "Some of them are 80 years old and they're in
14 a walker and they're in a wheelchair, you want me to take
15 them into a sweat lodge? You want them to go into a sun
16 dance? Like what are you thinking?" And that's what I
17 said. So we did the work, you know, we did a lot of the
18 work by ourselves, but that's just -- that's the truth.

19 In our -- in -- in my language we say
20 *debwewin*, *debwewin* is -- is truth, and it's so hard to tell
21 the truth. Because nobody likes the truth. My leadership
22 doesn't like me telling the truth. My leadership doesn't
23 like hearing the grandmas tell their truth, but you know
24 what we have to be silenced. We're always being silenced.
25 The grandmothers are being silenced.

1 How can we do prevention? I always say
2 anybody can pick up a sign -- any one of us can pick up a
3 sign and say, I want justice. I can run around outside and
4 say I want justice, but what about action? What can you
5 do? As a leader back home -- that's what I -- that's what
6 I says, as a leader what can you do as a leader to bring
7 some resolution to help the families? What can you do to
8 prevent another young girl being killed? Another young
9 girl being raped? A child being murdered? What can you
10 do? How can you protect our young men? How can you
11 protect our young men?

12 Like the one who raped me, how can you help
13 him? You know, how can you help another person not be like
14 him? How can you do that? By holding a sign and say I
15 want justice? Absolutely not. Not for me. Doesn't work
16 for me.

17 What I say is those young girls -- 17 missing
18 and murdered in Sagkeeng, well, that's just one community,
19 we're not from all over, we're just like -- that's just us.
20 That's not even including the men that -- and the boys that
21 have been victimized -- that have been murdered. You know,
22 what do we do?

23 So one of the things -- well, our young girls
24 -- you know, our leadership always say, "Well, it's the
25 government's responsibility. It's their fiduciary

1 responsibility for them to protect our people. It's their
2 responsibility. They have to do it."

3 But am I responsible -- but is the government
4 responsible for looking after my own children? I have two
5 sons. Are they responsible for looking after my sons and
6 to raise my sons? No, it's my responsibility. So what I
7 say to the -- my leadership at home is this -- it's your
8 responsibility. It's not about you picking up your sign
9 and being in front of the camera. No. What it means is
10 this, you have 17 missing murdered women and girls from
11 Sagkeeng. So how do you prevent that?

12 You take a look at what we have today. You
13 take a look at -- we just had a -- you know, a few years --
14 well, maybe about three years ago, four years ago, four
15 years ago we had -- I forget her name now, my -- my
16 memory's going here, but we had this young -- we had this
17 young First Nation woman from Saskatoon or Saskatchewan,
18 and she won -- like she won this beauty contest, right, and
19 so she's known all across Canada. She's known all over the
20 place, you know. And she's -- so what does that say?
21 Okay, so there's a role model there.

22 So what do we do? How do we protect our
23 young girls? Should we -- you know, our -- I know my -- my
24 home territory all they want is teachers and social
25 workers. Oh, my gosh, do we have ever lots. We have so

1 much and we have so many teacher assistants you wouldn't
2 believe. But is that saving our young girls?

3 Can our young girls -- you know, there's
4 social media today, it's you know, and I think why can't
5 they -- our Chief and council, our leaders, our big
6 leaders, like AMC, you know, and all these other areas, and
7 even our national Chief, why can't they just push or guide
8 those Chiefs and say, you know what you have a lot of young
9 people there. Why don't you just protect your girls and
10 how you protect your girls -- why don't you just bring some
11 courses back home. Have some courses back home, save your
12 girls. Don't tend them to Winnipeg. Don't send them to
13 the big cities. What about having some courses at home?
14 Something to do with hair? What about hair? What about
15 make-up? What about doing nails for manicures, pedicures?
16 Can -- can that work for a reserve? Can these young girls
17 get the training? Can these girls actually make a living
18 so that they don't fall victim to violence? You know, can
19 they become therapists -- like massage therapists? Is that
20 possible for our young girls? Could we actually do that
21 kind of training on the reserves?

22 What about how do we protect our young men?
23 And how do we protect our young women? Can our men
24 actually protect our young women? Well, it what about if
25 they go into policing? I was thinking do the police have a

1 lot of -- you know, lack of responsibility, a lack of
2 interest in terms of murdered and missing women, you know
3 when our young girls go missing, our young boys go missing
4 the police don't take it seriously. So how do we protect
5 them? How do we do? Why don't educate our young boys?
6 Why don't they go into the policing? How do we support
7 them to get that? Can we bring that -- maybe pre-training
8 to the communities? Can they be taught a little bit of
9 their language? Can they be taught about colonization,
10 Indian residential school? Can they have that
11 incorporated? Can they be trained to actually honour women
12 and girls? Can they learn that? And who can teach them?
13 What about our Elders? Can they take them to the land a
14 little bit? Can they take the men -- these young boys out
15 to the land? These young recruits?

16 When my dad took me out on the lake to pick
17 wild rice, one of the things my dad said to me was --
18 because I was 12 and there was lots of stuff going on at
19 Lone Island, and all the families went out, you know,
20 except for the kids, I don't even know who watched the
21 kids. We're always alone. But one of the things that they
22 did was -- was leave us behind and somebody went up that
23 big rock at Lone Island, we're not supposed to go on the
24 rock, everybody knew not to go on the rock, but apparently
25 some kids went on the rock and meant everybody was now in

1 trouble, including me. I didn't even go on the rock. I
2 was too scared to go on the rock. Because one of the
3 things my parents said was (speaking Native language),
4 which means don't go there. The little people live there.
5 You don't want to disturb them. Well, I didn't want to
6 encounter no little people back then, so I didn't
7 -- stayed clear from the rock and we all did. But
8 apparently somebody was up on the rock and adults seen this
9 and so now I was in trouble. As much -- I remember begging
10 and whining not to get up so early in the morning but I was
11 taken on to the lake. My dad put me on the canoe, he was
12 paddling -- he was going to paddle, I sat in the back. I
13 had these two sticks. I was going to trash the rice. And
14 I saw my dad hold tobacco -- I never heard his prayer,
15 nothing, I'd -- yeah -- I'm be lying if I said I heard his
16 prayer. I didn't hear him pray. I just seen him holding
17 it for a bit and then he put it in the water and he went.
18 And I was trying to pick, and you know, and one of the
19 things I heard older people -- and I so embarrassed, but
20 older people were saying, "Oh, no, there's somebody out
21 there, just breaking that rice, just hurting that rice."
22 That's because you know, that's what they say in the
23 language, hey, you know, and "They're breaking that rice.
24 Oh, it must be a young one. It must be a young one on that
25 lake --" like, because you don't know anything when you're

1 young, I guess, and so that was me, and they came to check
2 me out, check out this kid that was breaking all the rice,
3 and so by noon because I was starving, my dad already knew
4 that I wasn't a picker. So he said, "You're going to
5 paddle." So he put me on the canoe.

6 And this is what I always think about our
7 young men, they have to honour our young women and how do
8 we teach our young men to be men to take care of the women?
9 You know they say women are water carriers, but we also
10 have to teach our men. And my dad taught me that. You
11 know, and one of the things that he did was -- when I was
12 pouting, because I was pouting because I didn't -- I asked
13 my dad, "Where do I go?" "(Speaking Native language) I
14 don't know," is what he said. "Like, where do I go, Dad?"
15 "I don't know." And then I said, "Dad, do I go this way?"
16 "(Speaking Native language) I don't know." Or, "Well, this
17 way?" "(Speaking Native language) you know," and so those
18 are some of the things he said and so what -- what I did
19 was I -- anyway I pouted, I got mad. I took a little bit
20 of a temper tantrum in the canoe, and he was always so
21 quiet and kind and gentle, never said a word. He just sat
22 in the back smoking.

23 And so finally what happens is that after I
24 take -- for a very long time I'm going to try -- I try to
25 you know, out time him, I guess, you know, I was going to

1 make sure that he would bow down to me, that I -- that he'd
2 paddle me around, but that didn't happen. And then finally
3 he says to me, "Well, if you would just be quiet and just
4 listen," he says, "The water will -- the water will teach
5 you, the wind will teach you," he said, "And the rice will
6 teach you." He says it in the language.

7 And I'm 12 years old. Or that -- or 11 years
8 old and I'm thinking -- I just thought it was ridiculous,
9 and then I took another tantrum, I remember taking another
10 tantrum and -- and he didn't say nothing. He just let me
11 get mad and didn't give me heck, nothing -- my dad was
12 nothing like that. And he was quiet, you know, always
13 quiet.

14 And so finally after my pouting and then --
15 then I felt something. And I felt the wind. And I'll
16 always remember feeling that wind, so when I go outside you
17 know and I feel it, and I felt the wind touch my cheek, not
18 all over I -- you know, I didn't feel all -- I touched --
19 and felt it. It was just a small little piece of touch and
20 then I looked and then I could hear the water. I heard the
21 water like my dad said, "Well, listen to the water." I
22 heard the water slap the canoe. It was so loud it was
23 (unreportable sound) like that, and then I saw the waves,
24 and the waves were going, and then I saw the wild rice,
25 that's how it was going. That's what it was doing. And so

1 I picked up my -- my paddle and I paddled in the direction
2 the rice was going, the way the water was going, and I went
3 and I went into that rice field and I heard my dad pick --
4 I heard him thrashing the rice, (unreportable sound) like
5 that, so it was my first time making \$50 that night, but --
6 that day, but anyways, but that's what I mean.

7 Our young men need know those kinds of things
8 and who else better to teach them than our -- than our
9 Elders -- than our men -- our older men can take the
10 younger men out. How to be respectful. How to listen to
11 those kinds of things in nature. How to be quiet. How to
12 be still. That way, if they go into policing, that's --
13 because that's my hope, that's the only way I think we're
14 going to start giving that sensitivity if something happens
15 to our young women or something happens to our -- our young
16 men and when you go to the police that way your men -- our
17 own men, our Native men, will have that kindness and maybe
18 will do a proper investigation, but they need to be taught
19 by our Elders. We need to put them in those policing. We
20 need to put them in those kinds of environment, that's the
21 only way we can make change. That's what I think.

22 Because just believing on -- our holding up
23 signs saying we need justice, I'm just thinking like okay,
24 the Commissioner is going to do everything herself. She's
25 going to protect all of us. It's not going to happen. We

1 have to look after ourselves, but we have to come up with
2 ways of how do we it? How do we -- how do we -- how do we
3 protect our young ones? How do we protect our people? But
4 those -- that's -- that's what I -- that's the only thing
5 that I can come up with because of mine own experience.

6 Nobody's been there really to help me. I've
7 really had to help myself in terms of trying to find
8 healing. In terms of reaching out, but who better to help
9 me was old ladies. Little old ladies. You know, they
10 didn't have a degree. They didn't have anything like that.
11 And my dad, he was 72, he couldn't even speak any English,
12 and he was going blind, but who else taught me?

13 You know, so that's -- you know, that's --
14 that's what I feel and that's the only way I think we'll
15 protect our -- our young ones, is if that -- we give them
16 something. Not -- not all necessarily push them towards
17 always it become a social worker, pushing them towards
18 education, or to become a lawyer, because we have a bunch
19 of lawyers too, at home. So we -- you know we need -- how
20 do we make them -- maybe they're not all lawyers. Maybe
21 they're not all teachers, but we can't force them because
22 that's part of colonization. That's part of the whole
23 intergenerational trauma. That's part of Indian
24 residential school. We have to break out of that. And
25 make room for openness.

1 What can we do with this younger generation?
2 How do we keep them safe? So for me that's what I think --
3 how these young girls today they just love to fix their
4 hair. They love going to get their nails done. You always
5 see them with their nails -- especially back home, that's
6 what they like to do is show off their nails. Well, for me
7 when I look at that, I think they're telling me something.
8 This is what I want. This is what I want to do. And how
9 do we become self -- how do we get that self antonymy
10 again? By pushing everybody towards social workers? By
11 being teachers? No, they need something else. They need
12 to nurture their own spirit, that's part of who we are. We
13 weren't all -- you know, in our own -- like, thinking back
14 a long time ago, everybody had a different responsibility
15 you know, and to look after the community.

16 And those young people they need to look
17 after their own. You know, they're the next generation and
18 they need to look after a younger generation. And so we
19 need to take care of ourselves and that's where you know,
20 that's -- that's my message is that and that's just by
21 working with the grandmothers and what -- what they want.
22 They want walks. They want a monument.

23 You know, that's something that they wanted
24 -- remember I mentioned that they wanted a headstone.
25 These two little old ladies wanted a headstone. So one of

1 my helpers, there's another lady that likes -- that helps
2 me all the time and I'm so glad because I'd be falling
3 apart all the time -- mind you I fall apart lots of time in
4 front of the grandmothers because I feel like I failure
5 because I can't get anywhere. I can't get the help and the
6 resources that I want for them.

7 So -- and -- so what we do -- so what we did
8 was -- anyway she saw something on -- on the internet, and
9 she saw -- she came across a monument that was done in
10 Saskatoon -- in Saskatchewan, and it was Lionel Peyachew's
11 work. And then there was another one that was done in
12 Ontario, and it was a young girl that was killed, you know,
13 and she was an activist, and her name was Shannon (ph), I
14 can't pronounce her last name, so anyway and then I thought
15 well, okay, let's do this, so I got all the families
16 together, and we all sat in a big circle.

17 And I did a lot of research, I had to track
18 down Lionel Peyachew and I couldn't get a hold of him. But
19 I contacted the detachment. This the Saskatchewan police
20 detachment and I talked to the corporal -- I talked to the
21 staff sergeant, and then I the corporal and they both told
22 me the story about how the fancy shawl dancing monument
23 would -- came about, and the story behind it that the girl
24 that that's dancing was actually a fancy shawl dancer and
25 she was considered one of missing and murdered.

1 And the police -- they told me, was that they
2 felt responsible for her death because they didn't believe
3 the family. They didn't believe the family when the family
4 came to them and told them that this young girl was
5 missing. And they basically shoed them away. And so when
6 they found her dead, you know -- and then there was another
7 incident he was telling me that happened and that was when
8 that same time the young girl goes missing, there was a
9 young man that was incarcerated and so at around midnight
10 is when the police took him out of -- out of jail, out of
11 his cell and they brought him to the Manitoba border and he
12 froze to death. He didn't have anything, he wasn't -- he
13 didn't have any winter clothes, nothing, the police just
14 took him out and just left him there to freeze. So there
15 was an outrage, he said, and so there was a lot of changes
16 right after that, like right after those two incidents and
17 so they had to try and make amends to the -- to the
18 communities.

19 So they -- they had \$50,000, is what he said,
20 so they had \$50,000 in their pot, and what they wanted to
21 do is donate towards some kind of monument for the family
22 if the family is willing, and so then they -- so then from
23 there they talked with the province and then a lot of stuff
24 happened, so anyway the monument comes up to about \$200,000
25 to do the fancy shawl dancer. So they connect me to a

1 liaison that worked with the families from Saskatchewan, so
2 I talked with him and he guided me as to what I needed to
3 do, and then he told me that there was two artists in
4 Canada, one of them was Lionel Peyachew, the one that was
5 doing the one in Saskatoon, and he said and the one -- he
6 says that was in Manitoba, he said, "In your own home, in
7 your home area," so I -- you know, he told me, he says,
8 "You can find him in --" he says, "I believe he's still
9 working at the University of Manitoba if you'd like to find
10 him." He says, "Because Lionel won't be finished until
11 2017." And I thought oh, my gosh, that's -- the grandmas
12 will never -- will -- you know, they -- they want it now.

13 And so he said, so I -- I contacted the --
14 the U of M. From U of M they told me where I'd find him.
15 He left his job, so he was now in Peguis. So his name is
16 Wayne Stranger, and that's who I contacted and I talked to
17 him for a bit and he said that he would be -- told him the
18 story and I told him how many Sagkeeng has, you know,
19 murdered and missing woman, so he decided, from our
20 conversation, that he would come out to Sagkeeng and meet
21 with the families. He wanted to meet with the families so
22 I had to organize that and so we did. We organized this
23 big circle, a couple of ladies and I -- actually it was
24 just the two of us after one of the ladies had a bad flu
25 and doesn't show up so there was two of us, and we had this

1 big circle. So on PowerPoint I presented Lionel's work
2 with the fancy shawl dancer and the one in Saskatoon, but
3 also a regular headstone that they wanted you know, but
4 that didn't sit well with the families that were -- who had
5 families (sic) that were missing. They said a headstone is
6 -- means they're dead. And they weren't ready to accept a
7 headstone, and they didn't want that headstone.

8 So -- so I was lucky -- very fortunate that I
9 had the two -- the -- the fancy shawl dancer and -- you
10 know, from Saskatoon and from Ontario, there on PowerPoint
11 for them to look at and oh, they loved it.

12 I even showed them the one in Manitoba that
13 -- that's at The Forks there, they -- you know, but what
14 they fell in love with was the fancy shawl dancer. So up
15 on screen that's one of Lionel's -- not Lionel -- Wayne's
16 work, he brings that in to show the families, it's a
17 hundred -- it weighs a hundred pounds and it's an eagle --
18 a bronze eagle. And so when the families saw the fancy
19 shawl dancer and the one in Ontario, they -- this one --
20 this is Lionel's work from Saskatchewan, so they fell in
21 love with her. And then they fell in love with Lionel's --
22 I mean with Wayne's work, with the eagle, and this is the
23 one from Saskatoon -- I mean from Ontario.

24 So right there the families decided, no,
25 we're going to do this. We want this, and how much is it

1 going to cost? So I already knew how much it would cost,
2 or I assumed how much it was going to cost, what it cost
3 you know, the other province. So Wayne said a hundred
4 thousand. He gave me a price earlier, but after meeting
5 with the families it dropped to a hundred thousand and I
6 was so happy. I was so happy because of what I was told
7 Saskatchewan why it was so expensive because of the rebar,
8 because of this, because of that, the bronzing, the
9 piecing, everything put together, you know. And then the
10 shipment -- having to ship it from here to there because
11 you can't do the bronzing there, you've got to set the
12 bronzing here, that -- the cost of that, going over the
13 border, coming back from the border, all this was like, oh
14 my gosh, so it was all adding up. So when -- after hearing
15 that, so I wasn't surprised, but when I was really
16 surprised when Wayne said a hundred thousand. So I was
17 really happy, and the families were of course, you know,
18 they didn't care, they just wanted -- they just wanted this
19 monument.

20 So -- but it came -- that idea came from the
21 grandmothers. It was them. You know, four years I worked
22 with those grandmothers, not only myself, but a couple of
23 other ladies, there was like three of us always working
24 with these grandmothers, and it was because of them that
25 they always wanted something for the families. What they

1 wanted was they wanted a -- they -- well, they wanted some
2 place that they could remember their loved one, they wanted
3 a place where they can go -- they can grieve in silence,
4 where they can go and think of and go and offer whatever it
5 is that they wanted to do to provide their little
6 offerings, or just to sit and talk to the monument.

7 You know, and so they did that, not me. All
8 I did was pick up the phone and I just did the chattering,
9 that's all I did. Everything is them. You know, and then
10 -- so the decision was made what kind -- what -- because we
11 don't want her to look -- the monument that you're looking
12 at -- we don't want it to look identical to the two
13 provinces, what is it that you want?

14 Well, one of the girls that was -- that's --
15 that's murdered in Sagkeeng's missing and murdered is --
16 was a jingle dress dancer, and so we thought, well, okay,
17 from there, let's -- let's do it that way. So we talked
18 with Wayne, or I talked with Wayne and told him, it
19 possible to do this? He says, Sure. Anything that you
20 want. Like how does she want it to look. So the families
21 -- I have no influence with the families, like this is made
22 out of -- like plasticine, and he did it quickly with
23 plasticine because the families wanted to see something
24 quick, and for their approval. And so he had to do it very
25 -- very fast, he said, so anyway, so you see the two ties,

1 and the two ties they're going to be a rose, it's going to
2 be a rose, and it will be made of bronze, she'll stand six
3 feet tall and plus she'll be taller than that because
4 she'll be on a base. So the ties is one of the girls'
5 names, is Rose (ph). Okay, so her name is on there. And
6 she'll be wearing a headband, you know, and that headband
7 will have -- is what represents some of the -- some of the
8 men that have been murdered and missing. Being the
9 warriors, so that little bit of the details, so there's
10 going to be a fish on there because he was a fisherman --
11 one of them that's missing. And the other one you know, is
12 a young boy who was working on his pipe before he was
13 killed, so that's on there, so there's so little symbols
14 are going to be on her. And -- and she's holding a scarf,
15 but the scarf also represents the murdered and missing men.
16 You know, like we were thinking like, how are we going to
17 because the missing and murdered men they have the -- they
18 have those little red -- those red ties that men wear. So
19 how can we do this, so the old traditional dancers held
20 scarves, so can we do that? That will represent them the
21 missing and murdered men.

22 But on her dress, she'll have -- she'll have
23 strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries. The
24 strawberries are that of the late Sharon Abraham, the one
25 that was killed at the Pickton farm, so she'll have that on

1 there, on her dress, so that you'll see it, so the family
2 will see it. And then the blueberries, that was Tina
3 Fontaine's favourite was blueberry pancakes, blueberry
4 muffins, blueberry everything, she loved blueberries, so
5 that's on her -- on her -- on her regalia, and each of
6 those little jingles that you have are going to have a
7 symbol of -- of like who she is, who -- how many -- there's
8 17 of them murdered and missing, so those 17 jiggles are
9 going to have her on there.

10 Now, it -- because it's plasticine it looks
11 like this, but the model for this is the late Sharon
12 Abraham -- the one I mentioned was killed in the Pickton
13 farm, the late Sharon Abraham's niece is the model for
14 this. So it will be her measurements, her height, her long
15 hair, all that will be on there.

16 So that's the -- you know, that's something
17 that I really had no control over, or I never really -- but
18 it's something that the grandmothers and the families
19 chose, and everything that's been done with -- with the
20 families it's been them -- it's been them. Nobody's -- I
21 didn't see you better put a jingle dress dancer -- we're
22 going to do this. It hasn't -- but I've done a lot of
23 tweaking with them, like when we do things, I've had to do
24 some tweaking, but always goes to final approve for them.

25 And I always try to give them -- because I've

1 been victimized by violence and I know what it feels to be
2 silenced and I know what it feels like to be -- to -- for
3 somebody to -- to shut you down -- to keep you quiet,
4 that's one thing I don't do with the families, and I don't
5 do with those grandmothers, every decision that we make is
6 always by them and then I do my best to try and fix it or
7 tweak it if it is, if I've gone to extreme they'll tell
8 you, they don't hold back when they tell you.

9 But there's a lot of things that those poor
10 grandmothers and the poor families have gone through. And
11 it's a lot of bullying. Bullying from my own leadership,
12 no support. Bullying can be extreme. You know, but that's
13 something that I want them to understand too is that's part
14 of colonization, that's part of the whole Indian
15 residential school thing, where you bully your own, you
16 know, you can bully our own people. You can silence them.

17 You know, but because of that, that's one of
18 the reasons why we have, I believe, the highest you know,
19 missing and murdered women in Sagkeeng because of all the
20 stuff. We never dealt with the whole Indian residential
21 school thing. There was an Indian residential school that
22 was placed in Sagkeeng. And nobody ever talks about it.
23 Those grandmothers that are -- that I worked with all six
24 of them, including Gladys, like Gladys is the seventh,
25 working with them, they're all residential school

1 survivors, you know. And each and one of them talked about
2 when -- in our circles they didn't only talk about the
3 loved one that they lost, but they talk about their own
4 trauma and their own experience, what they -- what they
5 endured, you know, and my heart just aches. And then I
6 think about the residential school program back home nobody
7 from the residential school program will even come to them
8 and say, "How can I help you?" Or even come and see me and
9 say, "Lillian, how can I help? How can I help?" Nobody
10 wants that.

11 My own leadership, you know, you take a look
12 at what happened, there was a murder. Like there was a
13 violent murder not too long ago in Sagkeeng, like, why is
14 that? Two girls from Sagkeeng killed another girl. They
15 beat her to death. Something that's not talked about. But
16 a relative of the -- own our Chief is part of it. But
17 that's not being addressed. That's one of the reasons why
18 he's not up front, that's the truth; but nobody wants to
19 talk about the truth. Nobody wants to hear it. He doesn't
20 want to talk about it. And that's one of the thing that
21 upsets the families, not only -- it's his own family, like
22 his granddaughters. That family -- because he doesn't
23 acknowledge it -- his own family members have been this --
24 are part of that violence.

25 But how do we make that change? How do we

1 stop the bullying? Well, we got to start talking. We got
2 to be honest. We got to be truthful. To be honest, to be
3 truthful, takes guts. It takes a lot of courage to do.
4 And you can be outcast. Your own community can even make
5 fun of you, and put you down and make sure that they even
6 they'll take you seriously. That's happened to me. I've
7 been ridiculed. I've been shut done. I've been
8 threatened. I've had it. I've even have had where council
9 has even threatened me. You know. So I've gone through
10 that, but I keep going.

11 But we got to just you know, it's our own
12 leaders they need to understand that the power is not
13 within themselves, the power is within the community, it's
14 with their own people, it's the people that are
15 resourceful. Where we are today, like four-and-a-half
16 years -- like today -- like those old grandmas, there's
17 only three of them that are living, and what's traumatic
18 for me was that you know, that -- that I -- I lost them.
19 And as much as they needed me, I needed them. You know, I
20 needed them so bad. Because now my parents are gone, see
21 the lady the white, she's with her little walker there,
22 that's Glady (ph), she was the one who walked -- got up
23 from her chair and went walking. And the lady in blue, the
24 blue skirt, she was the first one -- out of the
25 grandmothers she was the first one to -- to go. She passed

1 away first.

2 But this is some of the things that we did
3 back home is working with the families, like working with
4 young girls. You know, and I miss them. Like there's only
5 three -- three of them alive. And I couldn't even go to
6 Isabella's funeral my -- you know, she's so beautiful --
7 just a beautiful looking woman, and the last conversation
8 we had -- she and I, she said to me -- it was like 10:30 at
9 night, we're sitting in complete darkness, we're sitting
10 visiting, and it's no lights inside, and then I'm trying to
11 tell her my big dream, what I want. And that's our last
12 conversation, and she died. You know, and I couldn't go.
13 I just couldn't bring myself to -- to go and see her.

14 But I love them so much. You know, one of
15 the last things -- one of them says to me is, "I'm so glad
16 you're doing this," she says, "Because nobody ever talked
17 about her, nobody even knew she -- she died. Nobody will
18 -- nobody remembers her. Nobody remembers my nieces." It
19 was her sister that was killed. So she has a sister and
20 two nieces that were murdered so there's three from that
21 family. You know, and -- and she was a residential school
22 survivor, and she was so quiet, but always so elegant and
23 she'd always tell me -- correct me how to sit too, you
24 know, "Don't sit like that. You know, and (speaking Native
25 language) you're a woman, sit -- sit right. You know, like

1 that."

2 And a lot of times I'd get so angry and one
3 of the things that they would say to me is, "Don't be so
4 angry. Don't be so angry." And I'd say, "How can you not
5 be angry? I'm frustrated they're not listening. They --
6 they don't want to do nothing." "Well, we'll think of
7 something." And that was one of the last things we had a
8 conversation about. Her and I. "We'll think of
9 something." And the something was the monument you know.

10 So we're going to have an unveiling in -- in
11 July, I believe, which will be the monument so she'll be
12 placed in Sagkeeng at the powwow grounds so you know, I'm
13 so glad -- so glad that's -- that's happening, but at the
14 same time I'm sad because four of them don't get to see it.
15 You know, so that's, I'm done, and I guess that's it.

16 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Lillian, I just have a
17 couple of questions for you. You mentioned when you were
18 sharing your personal survivor story interacting with the
19 police service, what police service was that?

20 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** That was Powerview.
21 Powerview detachment.

22 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** The RCMP?

23 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** M'hm.

24 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** M'hm. And your personal
25 survivor stories, where did those occur?

1 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** One took place in Sagkeeng
2 and the other I don't know where. I don't know where I was
3 other than -- it was dark -- like, it was dark and -- I
4 don't even

5 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Was it near Sagkeeng?
6 That you know -- Sagkeeng?

7 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** No -- no, we were on our
8 way to Winnipeg, I think, is where I was taken. Somewhere
9 on Main Street, I think, in between Selkirk and -- Selkirk
10 and Winnipeg, that's where I was taken because the one who
11 picked me up took me to St. Benedict's, the monastery, and
12 that's where they -- that's where they gave me something to
13 wear and then I'd be driven home that night.

14 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Do you have any
15 recommendations for the Commission?

16 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** Well, I think my
17 recommendations would be -- for me it would be encourage --
18 that's what it is -- to encourage -- to encourage our
19 leadership -- to encourage our national and -- you know,
20 and local Chiefs and to start bringing those -- to start
21 helping, you know, to start really -- really helping our
22 community. Like, to really take what's going on seriously,
23 and that means pushing them -- pushing -- teaching them our
24 Native ways, but pushing them to start teaching our people
25 the language, we need to know our language. They also need

1 to know -- like the services, how do you provide better
2 services? Sometimes they need direction too, our leaders
3 because our leaders may be, or is it -- maybe their parents
4 were residential school survivors we don't know. Maybe
5 they were -- their maybe intergenerational survivors, they
6 need a little bit of help, they need to get some -- some
7 kind of training, but they also have to bring that home to
8 the community, that's what I think, those are my
9 recommendations, is that the Commissioner maybe encourages
10 the leaderships, encourages the national Chief to talk to
11 the rest of the Chiefs to say, "You know what, you're going
12 to have to start fixing some of the stuff on your own,
13 you're going to have to take some responsibility because
14 the responsibility is quite -- you know, you can do it."

15 These old ladies back home they did it, you
16 know, like at where they're at -- took four years, but look
17 at where they're at today. You know. And it's -- and no
18 money other than their own. You know, I remember when we
19 went to Winnipeg like even that -- like I was on welfare.
20 But we made it with my car, you know, and they had \$20 each
21 those two old ladies and we were going to go and we went.
22 We didn't even have money for -- to go to McDonald's but we
23 bought a hot chocolate each, you know. And we came home,
24 but there they were happy. Did we get any kind of help?
25 Did they get any kind of help from -- from any resource

1 back home? No, because the resources didn't want to help.
2 You have to provide -- you have to write a letter, is what
3 they want. They want a letter and then it has to go
4 through this first before we can -- we give you -- but you
5 know what, you know, give it to another organization to do
6 it.

7 Well, that has to stop -- passing the buck
8 has to stop. It has to, and they have to kind of be
9 encouraged that you know what, start dealing with stuff at
10 home.

11 There's, you know, our institutions are full.
12 Our prisons are full with our Aboriginal men. How do we --
13 how do we fix that? How do we prevent that? Well, start
14 young and start with our middle aged men. Start giving
15 them some power.

16 One of the things that we failed back home
17 and like a -- this, for example, a gardening program.
18 There was this big gardening program, you know, they give
19 you -- they come there with their big tiller and they till
20 your land and they want you to plant your -- and what I
21 found -- because my husband is a residential school
22 survivor, was that -- that was the most worse thing that
23 anybody could have done to -- I wanted a garden because I
24 didn't know the residential school survivors had gardens.
25 I didn't know that, but I've gone to school. I went to

1 university. And this -- and I didn't know that, but where
2 my husband was triggered was because of the garden and he
3 cursed the garden. He hated the garden, but we had the
4 best looking garden. But what triggered him was -- he ends
5 up telling me was that he worked -- for three-and-a-half
6 years he worked on the garden that was his job, the big --
7 big giant garden back in Sagkeeng, he looked after that,
8 was a bunch of -- him and a bunch of kids, that's all they
9 did was garden, he said. Rain, shine, whatever they were
10 gardening. But what triggered him the most was having
11 somebody else who had never gardened to come and teach how
12 to garden.

13 So that's the lack of knowledge from my own
14 home you know, where our helpers, where our -- where our
15 organization don't do their homework and say, how many
16 people are Indian residential school survivors? How many
17 of them -- what was their jobs? What was their
18 responsibility? How many can we find? How many or Indian
19 residential school survivors that are still alive? Let's
20 go see them and let's find out what kind of work they did.
21 And let's start fixing the problem.

22 How hard is that for the -- for the national
23 Chief and for the other Chiefs to say, you know what, can
24 you maybe touch on that? Can you just see and then give us
25 back what's happening with that?

1 And how many of them actually cleaned? Who
2 were the cleaners? What exactly -- what exactly did they
3 do and how many were in the laundry department now, they
4 have certain skills. So how can we start beginning to heal
5 those residential school survivors?

6 So once they feel good, can they -- that good
7 feeling that they have once they start maybe nurturing
8 those gardens maybe that residential school survivor that
9 was really angry with his being -- you know, having a non-
10 residential school survivor coming to try and teach him how
11 to plant potatoes? Come and teach him. Or can it be,
12 let's find out how many residential school survivors -- and
13 get that residential school survivor, give him a little bit
14 of work, and let's alternate, can he go and teach him and
15 then teach him and then they'll all exchange for a little
16 bit of money.

17 But they're all -- but what's happening in
18 the end is they're all sharing, and they're all talking
19 about their experience in the residential school. They're
20 talking about what happened when they planted that. What
21 happened that night. Who else better than me or you who
22 are not residential school survivor to try and drag that
23 information out of them. They can do it themselves.

24 That's how healing starts. And once he or
25 she starts feel -- feeling good doesn't that goodness

1 trickle down to the next generation, maybe to your
2 daughter, maybe to your son? And then to your grandbabies.
3 And then how else now -- now with that skill what else can
4 you do with that?

5 And what about the people who are responsible
6 for the laundry? What kind of resources can we bring back
7 home that can, you know, that can maybe open up a laundry
8 mat, maybe open -- or even showing people again how to
9 iron, those kinds of things, how to feel good about them.
10 But start young. It doesn't have to be when they're be
11 pre-teens, they could be like ten years old and learning
12 all these little things, but they're learning how to iron.
13 If that's what she did, then say yes, you know what, I'll
14 give you a little bit of money. Can you teach -- can you
15 come and teach the young girls or the young kids that are
16 in -- in daycare or else -- not in daycare, but maybe grade
17 one -- maybe grade four, can you teach them how to iron?
18 And then they'll learn that skill by the time they're
19 however old. Those are my recommendations. Is to just
20 encourage them to start looking beyond and start opening up
21 and that's how we bring healing.

22 But walking around with a sign saying, I want
23 justice. Doesn't help anybody. So that's my
24 recommendation is that, encourage the Chiefs and -- to make
25 those changes, to look inside -- to look inside their home,

1 who else better to know your house? I know my own home. I
2 know when it's dirty. I know what needs to be cleaned.
3 Hey, but does the government know how dirty or how clean my
4 house is? But I want him or her to come and clean it.
5 It's not going to -- she's not -- or Trudeau's not going to
6 come and clean it. No matter how many signs I hold in
7 protest, he's not going to come, so we have to fix our own
8 -- our own stuff. That stuff may not have been ours, but
9 it was imposed on us and now we have to fix it. Nobody's
10 going to fix it for us. So that's -- that's all I have to
11 say.

12 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Commissioner Audette, do
13 you are any comments or questions?

14 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** We'll start
15 with the -- with the moms.

16 **MS. FLORENCE CACHEWAY:** (Speaking Native
17 language).

18 **MS. DARLENE OSBORNE:** (Speaking Native
19 language). I thank you very much for your -- for your
20 great work that you're doing for grandmothers, what you
21 went through as a little girl. You're telling my story.
22 And I understand what you went through. That you couldn't
23 tell your story because you -- you blamed yourself and
24 that's what I did. But we're survivors, and our purpose is
25 to keep on helping our girls and our women that are going

1 through the same thing. Because we see a lot of them,
2 they're very silent, they're afraid. They're afraid to
3 talk, but like you and me we're here to support any girls
4 or women or young boys and men as well. And I thank you
5 for your story, and I encourage you -- I just had tears in
6 my eyes when you were communicating with your language, and
7 that's -- I feel good when I talk my language as well --
8 talking to an Elder makes me feel good. (Speaking Native
9 language), thank you.

10 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** *Migwetch.*

11 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** *Merci.*

12 **MS. ISABELLE MORRIS:** *Migwetch.* (Speaking
13 Native language). I'm Cree, from Split Lake, and it's an
14 honour that you came this far to tell your story, because I
15 too went to your community to tell my story because I
16 couldn't tell my story here in this same building of that
17 part of when I was sent away to residential school for a
18 while. Yeah. And it's an honour for you to come this --
19 this -- this far. And -- and sharing your story, and your
20 helping a lot of people in sharing, and keep it.

21 And also, the grandmothers -- one of the
22 grandmothers I recognize. I dance with her in powwow.
23 Yeah, I'm a traditional dancer and I go to your community
24 also, so that in itself and you have that beautiful turtle
25 lodge. There was a pipe that was brought in there by Dave

1 Churchane (ph) for the grandmother council of Elders.
2 Continue to walk that way in helping people, okay. Yeah,
3 it's an honour. *Migwetch.*

4 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** *Migwetch.*

5 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** *Merci,*
6 Isabelle. *Merci,* Lillian, I feel like our paths crossed
7 somewhere or you mentioned things that you did with the
8 flowers, it's something I saw or heard about it. The
9 monument, it's something I heard, and there's many things
10 that you mention that it's either somebody shared to me or
11 we saw it on the news, but I didn't know that one day I
12 will be the one receiving your truth.

13 But most of all your courage where our sister
14 said it, we're all survivors. And somebody stole our
15 spirit one night or maybe two nights or you know, over and
16 over, and it -- we became who we are today. And I'm
17 impressed and amazed by your resilience. How clear you
18 share to Canada, but also to our leadership what was your
19 experience -- your truth; but your truth it's many, many
20 women who are, sad to say, still facing that today.

21 Last week as an example, we were in the
22 Mohawk territory they call Montreal, the City of Montreal,
23 and a woman that was a Chief for many years -- eight years
24 I would say, to a community that there no running water, no
25 electricity. And she was, I guess the second women to be

1 the Chief of that community. But when she came and spoke
2 to us, I saw her when you share your truth about the
3 lateral violence we do not hear enough about this reality.
4 We say yes, the institution are responsible or they have
5 responsibilities but us also as Anishnabe, UA, Cree, or
6 Mohawk or Indigenous people of this land who are living in
7 the community are also accountable, so your voice -- your
8 message to these very -- very important and she won't feel
9 alone anymore, that women from Kikcisakik. So thank you
10 very much. But also, to say you come with solutions or
11 recommendation not just blaming because we're used to that,
12 to blame and pass the buck, as you said it.

13 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** Yeah.

14 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Or pass the
15 basket. I'll keep my moccasin, I don't pass it. But my
16 question to you, Lillian, what do we say in 2018 -- I have
17 five kids, I'm proud of them, two girls, and I told my
18 three boys, "I don't want you to become the perpetrator,"
19 that cycle never end, has to stop, but to the girls, what
20 do we say to them if the uncle or a man from the community
21 do what they did you to, what do you say to our girls
22 today?

23 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** So what I say is this --
24 like I have two boys, because I've been a victim of
25 violence, but also because my father loved me and my sister

1 and my little brother so much, and like he was an old --
2 old man, you know, like 72 already and I was only 12, you
3 know, one of the things he loved me and loved us, and so my
4 memory of that I keep, but because I've been victim --
5 victimized, what I did with my boys, same thing, I didn't
6 want my boys to become alcoholics. I didn't want my boys
7 to -- to be addicted in drugs, how do I stop that? I
8 started very early, right after the diagnosis with cancer,
9 because I was at the stage three with breast cancer, and I
10 refused -- and I made a deal, remember I said I made a
11 deal, with -- with the guy who raped me, my brother-in-law,
12 but I also made a deal too back 13 years ago I made a deal
13 with Creator, and I said to Him, because I had stage three
14 cancer, the cancer had spread from my breast to my womb, I
15 said, "I'll make you a deal, you let me -- let me live
16 until my boys are finished high school, after that you can
17 take me." Is what I said to God. I said to the Creator,
18 "I'll make you a deal. I'll do whatever it is you want me
19 to do," because that's what I said once before, I only said
20 that to one man and I was saying that now to the Spirit,
21 "I'll make you a deal, you keep me alive and then you can
22 take me after that," that's what I said to God and I was
23 just shaking because I thought, oh, my gosh I'm -- you
24 know, who am I making a deal with now?

25 So I thought well, I was groomed to

1 understand about grooming, so I knew that I was groomed by
2 -- when I was 12 years old by another man, so I thought
3 well, I'm going to groom my sons. On what ugliness
4 happened to me, I'm going to turn it around, but I'll groom
5 my sons to be a certain way so I said to my boys, my -- my
6 baby was ten years old at the time and my other boy was 14,
7 "Whenever you see a woman," I said, "It doesn't matter how
8 she looks," I said "If she's an old lady, maybe she's
9 drunk, maybe you know her as the town drunk, but you're
10 going to open that door for her. You're going to open that
11 door for her," I said, "And if -- if you're on the bus in
12 Winnipeg," because my oldest boy was always going to in
13 basketball and sometimes they'd go busing with the whole
14 team, just as part of -- I don't know what the coach was
15 thinking this is part of their experience, but when they
16 would go, I said, "To give them, give her your seat." I
17 didn't talk about giving an Elderly man a seat, I said,
18 "The women. You give her a seat. For that one day," I
19 said to my boys, "For that one moment you're her hero.
20 Because before that," I said, "Somebody treated her like
21 dirt. You're never going to do that again." I said to my
22 boys because I was treated like dirt and that's going to
23 happen. I said that to my boys -- and my boys, I said,
24 "Whenever you see any women, I don't care who it is and I
25 don't care what colour she is, you're going to open that

1 door for her."

2 My boys do that for me all the time. My boys
3 will always do that whenever we're in the mall, going to
4 the mall, they open the door whoever, if they're up ahead,
5 of course, they'll be up ahead of me, they don't want to
6 walk around with mom. But they're up ahead and they'll
7 open the door for the women always. And especially if
8 she's older. "The younger girls can take care of
9 themselves," I said, "But still if she's there and that's
10 the only one there and you're there you can open that door
11 for her. For that one minute," I said, "You're a hero.
12 You don't know what she -- what kind of a life she had,"
13 that's how we change our boys, you know. We talk to them
14 like that because of our own experience, how do we want to
15 be treated.

16 And for our young girls, you know, there's a
17 picture there with all the -- with the grandmothers and
18 where with all these young girls, and one of things that I
19 thought, how do I protect these young girls? What do I do?
20 How do I do it, and how do I get these little old ladies to
21 not just be the token Elder, just to sit there, and how do
22 I get them active? So all those girls that you see there,
23 each girl was individual -- each girl -- I had a summer
24 camp, it was called (speaking Native language) and I wanted
25 them to learn some of the things that I learned growing up

1 in a maternal home, and so those little grandmas -- and the
2 lady that I'm sitting in the back with, she's in white, and
3 she was just simply amazing and I -- we had a talk before
4 that because I knew her history, and what I said to her
5 was, "I need you to make sure that the girls understand.
6 You need to -- we need to protect them." And all the
7 grandmothers said, okay. So each grandmother had four
8 girls to a table, or three girls to a table and each
9 grandmother was responsible for every presentation that was
10 up, each grandmother had to do their own little mini circle
11 and feedback, they even had facials -- the girls had the
12 opportunity to -- with all those little old ladies, each
13 and one of those little old ladies had a facial done. Mud
14 masks, they had an avocado mask, they had their nails done
15 by all these girls. And all these girls just loved it.
16 You know, taking care of the grandma and then the
17 grandmother nurturing them.

18 But one of the things one of the other
19 grandmothers say is that when she does her presentation she
20 says, "I remember when I was just a young girl, I was 14
21 years old," she says to them. And of course, the girls are
22 scrapbooking, they're all scrapbooking with their grand --
23 grandmother at the table they're supposed to be listening,
24 but they're scrapbooking, and I'm watching. I'm actually
25 watching another presenter in the back because I was the

1 organiser so I'm monitoring what's going on, so I'm
2 watching all the kind of activity, and they're kind of
3 doodling and whatever it is that they do, and the girls --
4 and so the grandmother says, "I remember at 14 years old
5 having my first kiss. I remember what that feels like. I
6 remember that young boy when he kissed me and how I felt.
7 I remember that feeling or that funny feeling comes in your
8 stomach and inside your chest, I've felt that." And now
9 the doodling stopped. And the grandmother says, "And I
10 remember the first kiss that I got that he gave me, but I
11 also remember him going to my neck and kissing my neck.
12 And I remember how good it felt," but you know what she
13 says, "I didn't have no boundaries -- nobody ever taught me
14 about boundaries. From there," she says, "From him
15 touching me," she says, "From him kissing me came the
16 touch, he started touching me. Even though I knew it was
17 wrong, I allowed it to happen. Because of that," she says,
18 "My daughter is sitting in the back there," she said, "I
19 had her when I was 14." She said, "And I gave my daughter
20 up for adoption but, she comes with me now, she says to do
21 -- to do the work that I need to do," she said. "So what
22 I'm telling you now," she says, "Is that when you come
23 across these young boys," she says, "You need to know to
24 say no. When it feels good," she says, "Because you're
25 going to be excited and you want to be with him. I wanted

1 to be with him. I know what it feels like. I still
2 remember my first kiss." She says, "I still remember the
3 first touch. I remember my first hickey. He gave me."
4 And it was just quiet and all these girls are just staring
5 at her, "But you need to have boundaries. You need to tell
6 him no. You need to tell him that's enough. You don't
7 need to go there. And if he starts even going further than
8 that and not listening to you by saying no then you start
9 yelling and you start screaming because we're here to
10 protect you and you need to know to be protected."

11 So it took grandmothers other than if I would
12 have went up there to start telling these young girls I
13 probably would have looked like maybe their mom or
14 something or maybe you know, and lecturing, but when it
15 comes to a grand -- a -- a grandmother or a great
16 grandmother sharing so openly then you reach the young
17 people there's just something -- there's just something
18 magical, something so powerful when you speak the truth and
19 those old grandmothers are so honest and so hide nothing,
20 but that's what they say in our language, *dedwewin*, the
21 truth it's so powerful, so that's my recommendation, start
22 teaching, using our grandmothers, using our gifts to help
23 share to help the young moms to talk about their story.
24 Grandmothers are so powerful. You know, and that's why I
25 go to them, like I barely have younger people -- well with,

1 women my age, it's always with the grandmas because I learn
2 so much from them and it's because of their truth. They
3 don't hide nothing.

4 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** And you talk
5 about bullying, how the work of the Inquiry is also to
6 propose recommendation to all governments, including ours,
7 and I'm a strong believer that we have good people
8 everywhere, including our communities, so we can present to
9 -- you mentioned, the national Chief and other organization
10 this is what we're proposing after receiving all the truth
11 from amazing women and one of them, or many of them about
12 bullying, what would you recommend to us to ...

13 **MS. LILLIAN COOK:** What I -- what I
14 recommend, you know, like what you're doing now, like even
15 with the national Inquiry and your note taking, like I mean
16 you're -- you're that voice, you know, you're that voice.
17 And you have it in you to make that change. You have it in
18 you that's your gift, that's what Creator gave you. You
19 know, that's yours -- that's your responsibility, that's
20 your medicine bundle, mine is different, her is different,
21 each in one of us has a different bundle, but that's yours
22 and whoever it is within your group, that is your bundle.

23 You know, and always -- I always believe in
24 prayer, like I told you I make deals -- like keep me alive
25 till I'm -- till they're 18, well now they're 28 and -- and

1 24 you know, so I'm -- and plus I seen my own
2 grandchildren. I didn't have grandchildren back then. But
3 I believe in prayer.

4 There's something else that I want to share,
5 always believe in you. That you can do it no matter what
6 anybody says, no matter if you know, if -- if Trudeau says,
7 "No -- no you can't do this it's impossible then you take
8 it higher -- higher than that."

9 When I -- when I started my healing -- when I
10 started working on myself is, like I said I had to go out
11 in the bush because I was really terrified of being in the
12 bush after all the things that happened to me. One of the
13 things that I took was -- and I practiced yoga and might as
14 well just get rid of all this ugly stuff that I was
15 feeling, so I'd go into the bush with my tobacco, I took a
16 smudge bowl, secretly, I didn't want anybody to me going
17 into the bush -- so I took my tobacco, my smudge bowl, my
18 sage and I would -- and I made a little circle, and circled
19 , and made a little like a secret circle for myself and --
20 and then I -- I prayed -- I prayed to that wind you know,
21 and I said (speaking Native language) you know, (speaking
22 Native language) because I'm kind of scared wind, that I'm
23 here alone in the bush you know. But watch over me. But
24 anyway, aside from my little prayer as I was praying there
25 was this wind -- this is no joke, this is not even a lie,

1 that's how I believe, I believe that what you'll do if you
2 pray and if it's from here because I do believe Spirit is
3 watching you. But I was showered with leaves. Not
4 everywhere else, just where I was standing. Other things
5 have happened to me like that where I've gone into the bush
6 to pray. I've even had deer, like (speaking Native
7 language) coming to me like I -- I was trying to find a
8 good spot in the bush to pray, and to meditate, and I heard
9 something and I looked and there was this big amazing deer
10 with his antlers and I said, (speaking Native language)
11 I'll pray here. So I put my pipe there. My little bag and
12 I didn't look at him and I just took everything out and --
13 and I prayed. And I -- I said my prayers, I smoked my
14 pipe, I said my prayers, and then I looked up -- well, you
15 know, it's -- but that's your faith, you have to surrender
16 you know. You have to be honest. You can't hide nothing,
17 so when I did that and when I looked at him he -- he did
18 this with his hoof (unreportable sound) he bowed his head
19 and he went walking. He stayed with me through my prayer.
20 But that would happen another time where things like that
21 would happen to me, you know.

22 But everything that I do is I believe in
23 prayer. And I have nothing else I don't have anything else
24 you know, I'm just -- that's all I have is that faith and
25 then, but it's something that I was given I guess, you

1 know, and -- and with you that's my recommendation like to
2 help you is let things go. Your fear. Face it, take it
3 and tell him how scared you are, how deathly afraid you are
4 and how they're not going to listen. What do you do. How
5 do I -- how do I do that? You know, and it will happen.
6 You know, and I've been so lucky and that's all I could --
7 that's all else I can say because that's the government
8 that you're talking to. You know, that's it.

9 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Well, that's a
10 lot. And very -- very powerful. I would like to can you
11 if you would accept to receive a gift from us and I would
12 like to ask my strong beautiful *Kokum* to explain the
13 beautiful history behind this.

14 **MS. BERNIE POITRAS:** I just want to say
15 hello, to Lillian, and I was listening to your -- your
16 journey and that and I'm going to witness in Vancouver in
17 the next couple of weeks and that and thank you for your
18 truth. It's given me a lot of insight because I'm really
19 scared too. But I was always taught that you are only as
20 sick as your secret. And my secret is going to be spoken
21 in a couple of weeks, thank you, for your courage, but most
22 of all like your honesty and your resilience, it's amazing,
23 yeah. And I'm -- I'm really grateful that you're here.
24 I'm grateful that all the family members are here to -- to
25 help us to you know, because many people don't think that a

1 lot of the staff here -- that we're just workers. We're
2 also family members and we're survivors, there's many of us
3 that are here and all across Canada, so when the families
4 look at us like they -- I assume that they think we're just
5 here, heck, we're paid. No, we're not. We're survivors
6 too and we are family members that have been in a very
7 affected, and this is going to be my first time in over 40
8 years that I get to share my story. And it's because of
9 women like you and Hilda that have really helped to just
10 give us that strength to keep you know this going and
11 supporting the -- you know, Commissioners, supporting the
12 family most of all those, all across Canada, because a lot
13 of this is so hidden that nobody wants to talk about it.

14 I understand about the leadership too and
15 I've been on those front lines in Vancouver -- since '86 I
16 started to be involved with the murdered and missing women
17 nationally, and we fought through those doors do get
18 through those doors to some of the biggest leaders of
19 Canada and it took us over 20 years, but I also want to
20 acknowledge the grandmother that you had a picture of, I
21 think Harriet Prince (ph) she's one of our grandmothers in
22 Vancouver that we really honour too, and she does a lot of
23 work with us on the frontlines and that, so it was so nice
24 to see a picture of her, but I just want to share -- and I
25 -- you probably heard the story about these eagle feathers,

1 you know, making their way from my home territory in Haida
2 Gwaii and it's amazing you know, how the families and the
3 spiritual people have come forward to make sure that every
4 place that we come to is that the family members that they
5 receive the eagle feathers from so many different
6 territories. I -- I just am just amazing and, but I'm so
7 honoured to give one of Elders the grandmothers here to
8 give to you and say (speaking Native language) to you
9 again.

10 **MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Commissioner Audette, can
11 we adjourn the session for 15 minutes.

12 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** *Oui - oui bien*
13 *sûr.*

14 **--- Exhibits (code: P1P020201)**

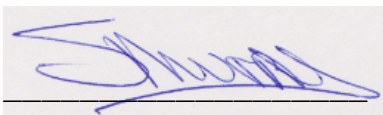
15 **Exhibit 1:** Folder of 18 images displayed during the
16 public testimony of Lillian Cook.

17 [P01P14P0102_Cook_Exh_1]

18 **---** Upon adjourning at 5:40 p.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Shannon Munro, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shannon", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Shannon Munro

May 9, 2018