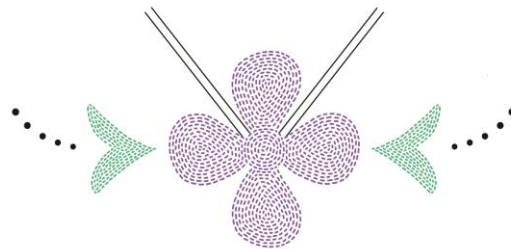


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 I Statement Gathering
Holiday Inn
Moncton, New Brunswick**



PUBLIC

Friday, October 19, 2018

Statement – Volume 532

V.P., In relation to her Mother

Statement Gatherer: Kerrie Reay

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II

ORDER

Pursuant to Rule 7 of Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller ordered that all names in this transcript and any related documents be rendered anonymous. This order was made on January 14, 2019.

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Documents submitted with testimony: none.

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Moncton, New Brunswick

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--- Upon commencing on Friday, October 19, 2018 at 6:35 P.M.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. This is Kerrie Reay. I'm a statement taker with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Today is October the 19th, 2018 and we were -- we are at the Holiday Inn Express Dieppe Airport in Moncton, New Brunswick and the time is 6:35. Today [V.P.] is here to share her truth of the loss of her mother, [Mother] in or about 1983 in St. John, New Brunswick lost her life and she was murdered. In the room for support for [V.P.] is [Sister-in-Law]. And [Sister-in-Law] is [V.P.]'s sister-in-law.

And in 1973 your -- your mother, [V.P.], was about 34 or 35 years of age at that time. And [V.P.], you understand that we are audio taping you?

MS. [V.P.]: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And we are videotaping you as well?

MS. [V.P.]: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And that you're here voluntarily.

MS. [V.P.]: Yes.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. When you're ready.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 Take your time and you can begin when you're ready.

2 MS. [V.P.]: All right. I'm here to talk to
3 you about my mom that was murdered. I had a woman contact
4 me this year regarding my mom's murder and it opened up a
5 lot of emotions. I never got to know my mom. And then to
6 find out the truth about my mom, how she -- how she died
7 was a shock as well.

8 I did get some information that the police
9 records are -- were wrong about how the police messed up
10 the case of my mother. It wasn't revealed the guy's name,
11 like, his crime. I was told some things like how the crime
12 scene was messed up. There was picture that was there one
13 day of the mail, suspect and my mother together, and then
14 the following day -- when they went back the picture was
15 missing and was told that -- how she died.

16 Supposedly she got thrown down a flight of
17 stairs and she had a lot of head trauma. That's how she
18 died. Also landlord was involved, the occupant that lived
19 there, the suspect of the one that murdered my mother said
20 that he just took her in because she didn't have anywhere
21 to stay and then he just get to know her, but that was a
22 lie because you just get to know somebody, you're not going
23 to take pictures of them together, you know.

24 So -- but -- and then they found bloody bed
25 sheets and a garbage bag and stuff like that. So I don't

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1 know, there was three constables or police -- three police
2 officers up on the case and they all fumbled it up instead
3 of doing their job.

4 But again, I mean, I guess I'm not the first
5 Native woman to tell you that, you know, Indigenous women
6 go missing because we're, you know, Native women. And I
7 don't feel like the police really have their heart in it.
8 I mean, if it was any other nationality I imagine that they
9 would have went full blown.

10 Like, I don't think that this suspect that
11 was involved in my mother's murder would have walked. They
12 would have been, you know, handcuffed and put in jail. But
13 we have this scenario of Native women, you know, and if we
14 take more time to figure out that we're just as equal as
15 any nationality and that we deserve the utmost police
16 protection and recognition that they would given anybody
17 else no matter what nationality they are. And that's what
18 hurts. It hurts because I wasn't -- you know, my mother
19 didn't ask to be born Native American woman. She was just
20 born just like African American or Hispanic or Italian or
21 German. You're not asked to be born. You're just
22 conceived and then you're born. And that discrimination
23 thing, like, it's really got to stop.

24 When we got younger women that are being
25 brought up in this world, you know, we want them to be

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1 strong women. Strong women. Native women. You know, to
2 say that we can have what any other nationality can have if
3 we put our mind to it. We can have a good education. We
4 can have great jobs. We can have, you know, if we
5 persevere and want it, standing there somebody else to give
6 it to us. I mean, we can get it.

7 But that's the thing about society and not
8 much has changed because we're still having missing
9 Aboriginal women. And what are the cops doing about it?
10 They're not doing any -- very much about it. You see it on
11 the news, you hear it on the media, you see it.

12 And, you know, yeah, I'm a little bit angry.
13 I'm a little upset about it. But most -- most of the ones
14 that we've lost are Indigenous, beautiful, young women.
15 Our daughters, our mothers, our grandmothers, our sons, our
16 fathers, you know. Those are the ones that we have to cry
17 out for because nobody -- cops didn't do it.

18 I mean, you have to be the voice and you
19 have to be the one to stand up and say, "Hey, we're --
20 that's enough." You know. And we'll never get
21 compensated. We'll never get compensated. All the money
22 in the world can't bring back our loved ones.

23 And those that get the chance to address --
24 address the one that took their loved ones away from them,
25 they get closure. But the ones that never get to address

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1 their killer, we got to live with that and we got to become
2 stronger and healthier, physically, mentally, emotionally,
3 spiritually. We have to do that. We have to grow up in a
4 society on welfare, put in different environments and
5 different homes and -- and be brought up in a society we
6 know nothing about.

7 We lose our culture. We lose our language
8 all because someone chose to take the life of your loved
9 one, you know. Your mom or you aunt or what it may be.
10 And the side effects of that is long term. It doesn't go
11 away. It -- it stays with you. It stays with you for a
12 long time. And your relationships and your family.

13 We can get stronger by doing what we're
14 doing and we have that Indigenous women movement now, you
15 know, where we're going to fight and we're going to try to
16 find some closure, you know. We're not going to sit back
17 and just say, "Oh well, you know, just another Native that
18 died." We got to get our voices out there and got to be
19 heard and we got to be seen and we got to be saying, you
20 know what, we're not -- we're just as good as any other
21 nationality. You would do it for anybody else. You would
22 go above and beyond to find their killer that killed your
23 loved ones. And why can't we have the same?

24 Because mentally and emotionally,
25 psychologically at a young age, like I was told how my mom

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1 supposedly died, and I thought, "Okay, well, my mom just
2 overdosed. Yeah, okay." But then here I am 54 years old
3 and I find out in 2018 how my mom really died. So I mean,
4 that -- that psychologically and mentally does -- does
5 something to a person yet again because all women -- all
6 women of all different nationalities of all race of all
7 kinds deserves to have the same respect and the same effort
8 put into any murder.

9 Just because we're Native doesn't give the
10 cops or the government or anybody else to say, "Okay, you
11 know, your loved one is not as important as the East Indian
12 or the African American or the South Westerns or the"
13 whatever. We're all equal. We all bleed, we all cry, we
14 all get sick and we all die. So what -- what's -- what's
15 the difference that we have to be not as important as your
16 family members. Let's say if your daughter died or your
17 mother got murdered or your son got killed, you'd want the
18 cops to fulfil it, to see it through, to go above and
19 beyond. You guys wouldn't stop until it was completed.

20 But back then, I mean, they didn't have
21 means that they have today. I mean, they have forensic
22 science, they have more now than they ever had and you can
23 catch a killer [inaudible response]. They didn't have DNA
24 as much as they do today. But still, they did have
25 something, you know. Just because, you know, Indigenous

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1 women, we go missing all the time, constantly. But yet
2 we're supposed to turn our heads the other way and not look
3 over their -- they're not helping anybody else, but those
4 that we've lost, I don't know.

5 It messes you up. And people say, "Oh, get
6 over it." Until that's then, until you lose someone you
7 love, you tell them, "Get over it." Not going to be able
8 to get over it. So I mean, you got to give the dues where
9 the dues are, you know, where the women of empowerment,
10 Indigenous women, a missing women, the program of doing
11 their job. You got to give them credit. It's not an easy
12 walk. And we have to be strong women. We have to be -- be
13 the bullies literally of our -- of our -- the [inaudible
14 response] ones, they can't talk. And the cops didn't go
15 above and beyond to make sure that the -- you know, they
16 say that -- that bodies can talk. Really? No. No.

17 I don't know about anybody else but I don't
18 want it happening to anybody else. I want it to stop. I
19 don't care what nationality it is. It's not right, you
20 know. And they say, "Oh, they had mental stuff and this,
21 they were this or they were that." Or you know. No.
22 Nobody has a right to take anybody's life. Couldn't care.

23 And like I said before, those that get the
24 closure to see the ones that took your loved one's life,
25 and you know, it's still painful that they're gone, yeah,

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1 but you guys still get that closure. You guys still get to
2 address that person that did your loved one wrong. I don't
3 get to have that.

4 And yeah, that's pretty painful stuff. And
5 it messes you up. Like, messes you up in relationships.
6 Like I said, messes you up trying to find out, figure out
7 who you are as a woman. Not having a mother, not being
8 taught your own language, I got robbed of that. Not being
9 tucked in bed at night by my mom and saying I love you and
10 do mother/daughter things and do each other's hair. And
11 maybe just fly a kite together. I never had that chance to
12 sit and talk to my mom and -- when I had a broken heart at
13 16, my mom wasn't there, you know. And I can feel other
14 women's pain. You know, a 17 year old and 14 year old
15 girls, your aunties and your grandmothers and your mothers
16 and your brothers and your fathers are all gone missing.
17 My heart aches for each and every one of yous. And it's --
18 it's not fair just because we're Indigenous women.

19 But I'll tell you something, what doesn't
20 kill you makes you stronger. I've been through the system
21 with the welfare, which was terrible. Was in an abusive
22 relationship. Had my nose broken and jaw broken and yeah.
23 This is the path we go down. And then we go through the --
24 that and then we go through the drug stage. And we go on
25 the cocaine stage because we want to get rid of the pain.

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1 We go down the alcoholic stage because we want to get rid
2 of the pain. And really all we really want is someone to
3 say, to scream out and say, "Okay, mom. Okay, daughter.
4 Okay, father. Okay, son. I'm here. I'm going to fight
5 for you. I'm going to go out and let my voice be heard
6 because you don't have a voice." You know. And that's
7 what it's about.

8 Then we as Native women, we have to stand
9 together in unity as one and be strong and be the warriors
10 that Creator has made us to be. Because if we don't speak
11 out our grandchildren, and we don't want it to happen to
12 our grandchildren or our children.

13 So when is enough is enough? When are the
14 cops going to find -- to give us some closure. I don't
15 care if it's back in 1950. I don't care if it's back in
16 1940. Open up the case. Give us some closure, you know,
17 so we can heal because that wound that stays open, all it's
18 doing is getting festered and pussied up and we keep
19 cleaning it out and then we open it up and get it festered
20 and pussied up again and it gets infected, but you can't
21 heal it that way. You need to move on. And we got to have
22 -- I know I do. And I know there's other people out there
23 who need it too.

24 But being strong Native woman, you know, to
25 -- I have a sister-in-law, [Sister-in-Law], and I look up

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1 to her with admiration. She's out dancing. I always tell
2 her that she's in her habitat when she's out dancing.

3 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Pow Wow.

4 **MS. [V.P.]:** At Pow Wows. And I -- you
5 know, it makes me smile and, you know, she's out there
6 dancing and the praying. Yeah, that's -- that's
7 empowerment. That's -- that's healing. Nobody showed any
8 of that growing up. I was shown how to be quiet, not be
9 seen, you know. Just speak when you're spoken to and be
10 quiet. And get through it. You know, if you have a
11 problem, go make a mud pie. Contrary to your -- you know,
12 in the welfare system, when you're on welfare and your
13 child, majority of them don't want you because your child -
14 - and they want to love you and they want to nurture you,
15 they didn't want you for that. They want you for the
16 money. I want a big \$500 cheque. That's what we're birth.
17 Back in the system get \$500. And that's supposed to be
18 enough. That's supposed to last.

19 My [inaudible response] is full of heartache
20 and when we grow up and you wonder how come we're so
21 dysfunctional. Nobody's ever asked, you know. Nobody ever
22 says, you know, did you lose anybody that you loved? You
23 know, why are you the way that you are? So I'm going to
24 say to all the Native women out there and the -- and the
25 wives and the daughters and nieces and the nephews and the

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1 ones that are yet to be born, we're strong women. And we
2 hold our head down in shame, nah. Don't hold my head in
3 shame. I'm going to hold my head up. We're going to make
4 it better for our next generation or our next generation as
5 long as I can. Got a long ways to go yet. Got a long
6 healing process to go yet. But when somebody's taken away
7 from you, that is a process. It's a lot of time healing.
8 And you don't get over in a night.

9 Like I said, my mom died when I was nine and
10 now I'm 54 years old and it still hurts today. You know, I
11 was -- I -- I was lied to how she actually died. And I
12 think it was just to save -- save my -- save me from maybe
13 hurting myself when I was a kid because if they actually
14 told me how she actually died I think that I wouldn't be
15 here talking -- talking about it with you. I don't think
16 I would have been able to -- wouldn't have been able to
17 comprehend the whole thing and probably would have blamed
18 myself somehow. And then I would have been another
19 statistic this was, you know, commit suicide or something,
20 but -- more than likely.

21 So our young daughters and our young
22 grandchildren that are coming into this world, we got to
23 stay together as a unit. Don't be judging the next woman,
24 Native woman, because she's prettier than you. And don't
25 be looking at it, you know, your neighbour next door

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1 because they got more than you. It's a long healing
2 process and some people need that material stuff to make
3 them feel better about themselves. And if they lost
4 somebody they loved too, you know, don't judge them.

5 We're only in this world once. We only get
6 a trip once around and that's it. It's what we do while
7 we're here that matters. It's how we heal. It's how we
8 embrace one another. It's how we, you know -- we got to
9 heal ourselves first and then we can reach out and start
10 healing other people.

11 And like I said, I was nine when my mom died
12 and now I'm 54 and I'm still healing. And I'll still keep
13 on healing, [inaudible response]. You know, it hurts.
14 It's something you can't get back. Somebody took her from
15 me and I -- I lost that. And I'm sitting here today and I
16 can feel every woman's pain that has ever lost a loved one.
17 Their daughter, their niece, their great-niece, their --
18 whatever it may be. The pain never stops. It just -- you
19 know, but we -- it will.

20 We have to go around and support us. And if
21 you're going to heal, you have your own to heal first.
22 Open that Pandora box open and just let it out, let the
23 pain come. That's the only way we can heal. Holding on to
24 it is just going to make us sick.

25 I mean, there's a lot of loss in my life I

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1 had to -- because I didn't have a mom. I had to give my
2 kids up. It was a choice I had to make because I -- I
3 didn't know I had -- how to love, like, how to -- I wasn't
4 shown how to nurture or take care of another individual. I
5 wasn't shown. And that's a mother's job to show you that,
6 you know. Or your auntie or somebody. But I didn't have
7 that opportunity. I was thrown in the -- no offence but,
8 like, foster homes, you know. They didn't know anything
9 about Aboriginal. All they cared about was the money.
10 They didn't care if I ate. They didn't care if I slept.

11 I wasn't taught how to love. I wasn't even
12 taught how to love myself. So if you can't love yourself
13 first, how are you supposed to love other people if you
14 can't do it. And I don't know if this rigours from not
15 having a parent figure in your life. I don't know. But I
16 think that's a good place to start maybe, not having a
17 parent, a personal parent. That was supposed to be your
18 parent, they were supposed to show you the ways of the
19 Native culture and, like I say, go to your habitat, go
20 dancing and, you know, all the good things.

21 Yeah, I wasn't taught that. And so I
22 decided I'd make a choice to give my kids up. And I gave
23 them up. And I don't regret giving them up. I mean, it --
24 that gave us some perspectives and some perspectives that
25 don't. That's something that I'll have to live with. I

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1 have contact with my kids. Like, I talk to them and I
2 reassure them that I love them but the old saying goes that
3 anybody can be a mother but it takes somebody special to me
4 a mom. You know, I wasn't capable to be a mom. But it
5 doesn't mean I love my kids less, just that I didn't know
6 how. And I think that rears from not having your own
7 biological mom. Like, I don't know. Like, you know, I'm
8 all grown up now and I'm an adult so we all have to make
9 our choices, right, because life is about choice.

10 But yeah, that's -- it hasn't been easy.
11 And like I said, the ones that get to have closure, they
12 get to speak to the one that took their loved one from
13 them, you know, they get to get all that rage out and look
14 at him or look at the person that took their loved one
15 away, they get to look that person in the eyes. I don't
16 get that. I don't get that chance. And if somebody were
17 to say to me, "Well, you wouldn't -- do you remember
18 anything about your mom?" No. "You remember what your
19 mom's voice sound like?" No. "Do you remember your mom
20 tucking you in bed and reading you bed story?" No. "Do
21 you remember her favourite food she loved?" No.

22 So you know, don't be too hard on your moms
23 out there, you know. When they tell you something they're
24 doing it because they love you, not because they want to
25 hurt you or misdirect you in life. Especially when you're

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1 16 years old and you think you know it all. They're not
2 doing it to be mean. They're doing it to protect you
3 because they love you.

4 You know, I've learned a lot over the years
5 from my sister-in-law, [Sister-in-Law]. Like I said, I --
6 I gave my kids up because I didn't know how to love or how
7 to nurture or how to take care. There's a lot more to
8 taking care of a child than feeding them, clothe them and,
9 you know, they're not a dog. They're a human being. They
10 -- they have feelings.

11 But if you're feelings are cut off and you
12 have no feelings, you have no emotion. You know, you bring
13 forth this life into the world and this little life is
14 looking at you, like, their whole life depends on you.
15 More than just food and clothing. Depends on you as mental
16 well-being, as spiritual being. You're going to be there
17 to protect them, to nurture them for better or for worse,
18 you know. You're going -- you're going to have argument,
19 you're going to have fights, yeah, but you get through it.
20 That's what you do. It's what -- what parents do.

21 But I wasn't taught that. I learned that
22 later on after I gave my kids up. I learned that through
23 taking care of somebody else's kids. And kind of pissed me
24 off because I missed out on my kids. And I love [Son 1],
25 [Son 2] [inaudible response]. And I don't know how to say

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1 sorry. I guess I don't know if sorry is enough.

2 You know, I had -- sorry.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** It's okay.

4 **MS. [V.P.]:** I -- pain that all goes through
5 when they lose their loved one is never ending. It just
6 keeps going and going and going and going. And I can
7 understand even saying you're -- I understand full well
8 because, like I said, it doesn't matter what nationality
9 you are, the cops should've went above and beyond and did
10 their job. Doesn't matter if they're Native, Hispanic,
11 German, Italian, I didn't care, East Indian, whatever.
12 They're flesh and blood and we're created by the Creator
13 doing all same. We all hurt.

14 I wonder myself how those cops, when they
15 did the investigation for my mother, if they allowed that
16 guy and they fully knew probably that he was number one
17 suspect, but he walked. I wonder if it was their loved one
18 how they would sleep at night. I wonder what kind of long
19 term effects it would have on them mentally. How would
20 they have turned out? I bet you they had a beautiful
21 family. They get to spend time with their kids and go, you
22 know, camp trips and spend time with their loved ones. I
23 bet you they never gave a second thought about my mother.
24 And that hurts.

25 But as women, as I'm learning, you know, and

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1 we're always going to be learning, I've learned that even
2 though I didn't have a mom, you know, Creator sent along
3 some other people. Maybe it's not what I wanted at the
4 time and -- but because I was young I didn't have a choice
5 so I was -- forced into foster homes where I was beat and I
6 was abused and I was starved. But at the same time I was
7 told I was loved.

8 So anyways, so I gave my kids up and that's
9 a good thing. Not a bad thing. Because if you love
10 somebody, sometimes you have to give them up. It's called
11 selfless love. Yeah. They come first before you do. And
12 you know, and I see all these young women having babies and
13 probably -- probably a lot of them love their kids but in
14 this society that we live in today, you know, I wonder how
15 they have the kids because they love their kids or they're
16 having kids because financially they're going to help them.

17 I've seen love over the years. I've seen
18 how kids are supposed to be raised. I get that opportunity
19 to be part of that. It's amazing. It's a great feeling
20 when you see them all grown up. It's a great feeling being
21 able to take part in a family that, you know, that was full
22 of love and caring and nurturing and -- it was nice. But I
23 wasn't able to give it to my own kids because I didn't have
24 that growing up. But I was able to get it back. Yeah.
25 That's something that, you know, been a wonderful

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1 experience raising my nephews. It was great. I enjoyed
2 it. I was blessed to have that opportunity because it
3 taught me a lot. How to be patient, how to be kind, how to
4 be -- struggling how to be still, how to [inaudible
5 response]. I wasn't able to get those -- give that to my
6 kids. But I was able to give it back.

7 And today even though I gave my kids up,
8 each and every one of them -- well, except for one but
9 it'll come in time. My two boys can say to me today they
10 love me. You give your kids up, you don't get that
11 opportunity too often in every case to say, "Yeah, I love
12 you, Mom." So I've been blessed. But I don't think it --
13 I mean, it's a long term healing process. You know, going
14 without -- going without anyone that has been taken from
15 you out of your life, snatched out of your life
16 unnecessarily, whether they're two or that they're 102,
17 when somebody murders your loved one it's a long term
18 healing process. And I don't know we ever get there. But
19 I know that we can get stopped from not to get there. I
20 know I'm not. I know that everything I've been through,
21 through mental, physical, psychological abuse, I'm still
22 here.

23 And -- because we were called warriors.
24 Women can be warriors too. I mean, they go back way back
25 in the ancestors' days. Who's the one that took good care

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1 of the kids? They did. Who's the one that kept the fire?
2 They did. Who's the one that cleaned the meat, made the
3 clothes? Women. We did that. Not much has changed. We
4 still do our -- so we're called warriors. We -- we can do
5 it.

6 Like I said, my heart goes out to those that
7 are still going through it today, that still want the
8 answers for their missing loved ones. Let's not forget
9 that. That's what it's about. That we have to stay in as
10 a -- you know, as women united, as Native women. Strong,
11 bold, fearless. That's what's going to make us stay new.
12 That's what's going to make us make a better world for the
13 ones that are coming into the world through our nieces,
14 through our aunties, through our -- you know.

15 I mean, our kids in our community, they look
16 up to us. They're watching. You don't think that they are
17 but they are. They hear. I know a little fellow and they
18 say that kids learn by example. And I believe that's true.
19 Because even when I was growing up I wasn't allowed to be
20 around the table when adults were talking. I was told to
21 go outside and play because adult talk should be kept as
22 adult talk and the littles shouldn't be around it.

23 But yeah, it's -- it's -- it's not -- it's a
24 long healing process. So if you recently lost -- lost a
25 loved one, don't think that overnight you're going to get

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1 over it. Because like I said, my mother died when I was
2 nine and I'm 54 so -- but if you reach out to the ones --
3 you know, the better thing that you could do for healing
4 for yourself is get into a program of self healing first
5 for yourself. Get stronger and then, you know, maybe join
6 an organization or something, like, where you could appeal
7 to help somebody else. That's the beginning and the
8 process of healing.

9 It's not going to take away the pain.
10 You're not -- there's not a day you're not going to stop
11 thinking about your loved one, your daughter, your brother
12 or your sister, your mother, your auntie, your father.
13 You're -- you're not going to stop thinking about them.
14 And like I said, no matter how long it is, it's an ongoing
15 process. It's an ongoing healing process. You would just
16 take it one day at a time, you know.

17 Yeah, there's a lot of anger. I still have
18 a lot of anger. Not going to deny it. I do. I wish that
19 I would have had an opportunity if the cops would have did
20 their job, I wish I had the opportunity to look at the guy
21 who took my mother's life. But I don't get that. But my
22 case doesn't make your -- your case any easier either
23 because we're all Native women and we're fighting for a
24 cause here. The cause is we deserve to be recognized. We
25 deserve the cops to put as much effort into finding out who

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 killed our loved ones. Like I said, if -- whether you're
2 Hispanic, Italian, German, French, doesn't matter. Because
3 I know that if it was their loved ones, I'm quite sure that
4 they wouldn't have walked. I'm quite sure that it was a
5 cop family member they would have had the guy handcuffed,
6 thrown in jail, throw away the key no questions asked.

7 And it shouldn't make a difference whether
8 you're African American or anybody else. And that's the
9 thing, like, you know what I mean, that's the thing about
10 different cultures. You know, it's like Arabians or
11 whoever, I mean, when they were at that thing when they're
12 raided, it was out B.C. somebody like that, they're like,
13 "Huh", you know, "Oh, they're probably planning a bomb
14 somewhere or something." You know, that sort of thing to
15 think. But how do you know? That's racist. How do you
16 know?

17 So why does it have the right for the cops
18 to do that to us as the Native women? They don't. Because
19 I'm quite sure if it was their wife or their mother or
20 their daughter or their brother or their father got
21 murdered, they would have did their job. So yeah, healing
22 is a long process. And anger is even a longer process.

23 But I can't get my mom back, you know. She
24 was taken from me and I can't get her back. So I went
25 through the system of home, home, home, home. I'm like a

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 stray, little doggy. You know, it's like a cute little
2 puppy, eh. And the little puppy is so cute, you bring it
3 in your home and it's all cute and everything. And then
4 when it gets older nobody wants to pay any attention to it.
5 And the puppy gets -- you know, the dog gets kicked outside
6 when it's wet and cold and shivering but oh not when it was
7 a puppy. Oh yeah. See that puppy goes by and love it and
8 play with it and now that it's old and all grey and
9 whatever and it stinks, stick it outside.

10 I mean, it's the same thing now that I look
11 at it. You know, when I was in foster home when I was
12 young I was cute and sweet and everything, but when you get
13 older and you have these issues and you have this
14 dysfunction and you're rebellious, you know. You don't
15 know where it comes from. I didn't know where it was
16 coming from.

17 So yeah, don't get too hard. Like, you know
18 what I mean, don't be too hard on yourself. You -- you
19 have a right to be angry. We do have a right to be angry
20 for our sisters and for our mothers and for our fathers and
21 for our uncles and our sons. And they have a right. And
22 it's just -- you know, it breaks my heart. It does.

23 Even, like, so I'm getting up there in age.
24 I'm -- I got to find out -- I'm still learning trying to
25 find out who I am, you know, and I am getting there,

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 getting there. I just got to realize that I had a long
2 process of healing and until I get to the point of healing
3 and realizing that life's not fair, it's not, but I got to
4 keep going. I got to keep going for the sake of my mom to
5 make her proud. And I think that's what we got to keep in
6 mind. Even though they're not with us physically, they're
7 with us spiritually.

8 And the guy that took my mother's life, I
9 mean -- but I heard him, I mean, he's gone now. So I'm not
10 quite sure whether -- he probably had to stay in -- in the
11 spirit world and answer for what he did. And there's not
12 much -- it's not much I have to judge him. But it wasn't
13 his job either to take my mother's life either, you know.

14 So what do you do? Well, can't be stuck
15 with the past. Got to keep on going. You got to do
16 better. You got to become stronger, become wiser,
17 healthier. And just it's -- it's got to -- like I said,
18 it's a long process mentally. I don't know if mentally the
19 last stage of -- of -- of healing or not. I don't know.
20 Because I'm still in the healing process so I don't have
21 the answer to that either.

22 But as women, as the Indigenous women, we
23 got to keep the fight up. We got to be heard. We got to
24 be seen. We can't be quiet because it's got to stop. It's
25 got to stop for our next generation that's coming. For our

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 granddaughters and their daughters and their daughters.

2 It's got to stop. And when is enough enough? When are the
3 cops going to say, "Okay, women, we hear you. We know what
4 you -- we feel your pain." When? When it happens to them?
5 Because don't ever say never.

6 I mean, sometimes that's what it takes.
7 Sometimes that's what it takes to get really close to home.
8 They don't -- and I don't want that to happen to anybody,
9 you know. Just show a little humanity. We're all
10 different. There's all different nationalities in this
11 world. One's not any better than the other.

12 And we should have the equal right, the same
13 initiative the cops should have for us Indigenous women,
14 the missing ones, the ones that are murdered, that are
15 taken at a young age. All different kinds Indigenous women
16 and men and boys and our fathers and our mothers have been
17 murdered. They should have the same treatment for us as
18 they have for their -- no offence, white neighbour, African
19 American either, Italian, French, German, it don't matter.
20 The same effort that they would take into that, they should
21 put it into us.

22 And pain, you know, is a funny thing. You
23 know, my mom's not here. I don't know how beautiful she
24 was. I don't know anything about my mom. I don't know
25 what her laugh was like. I don't know what colour she

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 liked. I don't -- you know, I never got that. I never got
2 my mom to hold me and comfort me and say, you know, "Sorry.
3 Sorry. You know, it's okay. I'm here." I don't get that.

4 So like I said, my case isn't any lighter
5 than anybody else's. Indigenous women, as far as we're
6 concerned, are all equal. We all have the same -- okay.
7 Break time.

8 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Is it break time? Do
9 you want a break and have a smoke?

10 **MS. [V.P.]:** M'hm.

11 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Okay. She -- she does
12 want to have a break if that's okay.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh, absolutely. It is
14 7:21.

15

16 **--- SHORT BREAK WAS TAKEN.**

17

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay, we are back on the
19 record and it is 7:38. And we're here today with [V.P.]
20 who has been talking about the loss of her mother,
21 [Mother]. And with [V.P.] supporting her today is her
22 sister-in-law, [Sister-in-Law].

23 And while we were on the break I -- I had
24 checked in with you, [V.P.], to see if you would mind if I
25 asked some questions.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. [V.P.]**: It's okay.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And again, I'll -- if you
3 feel uncomfortable with anything I'm asking, please say
4 that you don't feel like answering it.

5 So [V.P.], one of the things that we -- you
6 were talking about, and before we had gone on the record I
7 talked about the scope of the National Inquiry and looking
8 at those systemic causes for violence in people's lives.
9 Stuff like the residential school, domestic violence, the
10 Sixties Scoop. And one of the things that you had
11 commented on earlier was that you were part of the Sixties
12 Scoop. And so how old were you when you were taken from
13 your mom?

14 **MS. [V.P.]**: Four.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: You were four years old.
16 So about 1968. Did you have siblings?

17 **MS. [V.P.]**: M'hm.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And were they taken as
19 well?

20 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yes.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And were you placed in
22 different homes?

23 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yes.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Do you know where you --
25 any of your siblings are? Have you been able to reconnect

V.P. ,**In relation to her Mother**

1 with them over the years?

2 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yes, I reconnected with all of
3 them.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Okay. Okay. And do you
5 have any understanding as to why you were taken from your
6 mom?

7 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah. Because my mother and
8 father separated.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Okay. So they separated
10 and child welfare came in and ---

11 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: --- and -- and took the
13 children from your mom.

14 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: One of the other things
16 that in terms of those systemic government involvement,
17 particularly is the residential school system and how its
18 impact of taking children away from the home, and you
19 talked about it actually quite often as you spoke about you
20 -- you didn't learn how to love, you didn't learn how to be
21 a parent, which is very, very similar to those in
22 residential school. They were taken from their families
23 and weren't shown love, weren't loved.

24 So are you aware if either of your parents
25 were from the residential school system or their parents?

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 MS. [V.P.]: No.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you have much
3 information in terms of your cultural heritage?

4 MS. [V.P.]: No.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So you spoke about
6 -- so as part of the Sixties Scoop, you were in a number of
7 homes, a number of foster homes.

8 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: What I heard you say was
10 some -- they said you -- they said they loved you but their
11 actions didn't seem to match that.

12 MS. [V.P.]: Yes.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: And can you talk and tell
14 the Commissioners a little bit more about what it was like
15 being in those white foster homes as a small Indigenous
16 child?

17 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah. First of all, when you
18 go into the home you feel really out of place. You know --
19 you know there's something different about you but you just
20 can't figure it out because you're too young to figure it
21 out.

22 I remember I was in this one foster home and
23 I was four and I had to share a room with -- with the
24 babies. I think they're twins or something. But their
25 daughter had a room of their own. I didn't understand why.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 I slept on a cot in the babies' room. Of course I didn't
2 get much sleep because babies would cry, babies would cry.
3 So me at four years old would get up and try to comfort the
4 -- the babies and I'd say, "Sh, don't cry. It's all
5 right." You know, me just little myself and I don't
6 understand, like, when they're crying, right. So the only
7 one that would get up during that episodes would be the
8 father. And the father would get up and take the twins out
9 and do what he had to do. And they'd come back and they'd
10 be sleeping, right. And I think I was there for about a
11 week and then a week after that I started getting earaches
12 and they were really bad. And I don't know if they
13 believed in taking the children to the doctor or not. I
14 don't know. But he used to scoop me up, put me in the car
15 and drove in front of a church. And he put his hands on me
16 and prayed with me and my ears would -- earaches went away.
17 They didn't come back. You know, he had to do that I think
18 couple times. And then after that I didn't have any more
19 earaches. It wasn't mother that did it, it was the father
20 that did it.

21 And then I wasn't there very long. And
22 anyways, one day the mother said to me, sat me down and
23 said, "We already have enough kids. We don't want you
24 anymore. You have to go." And at four years old how are
25 you supposed to comprehend that? Like, what did I do

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 wrong? Sorry, I had earaches, right. That's what I
2 thought it was.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You blame yourself.

4 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. So the foster -- the
5 social workers come and, you know, put you in the car. And
6 you had no idea where you're going. You know, you said --
7 like I said, like example, like a puppy. Where you going?
8 Where you going? Where are you taking me? Right? You
9 don't know.

10 So you go to another foster home and you're
11 hoping that it's going to be better than the other foster
12 home, but it's not. Be there a couple weeks and they kick
13 you out, right. And then when you're about six you go to
14 another foster home and thinking that's going to work out.
15 Don't work out. Right?

16 So yeah, you get to the stage where you
17 think you're unlovable, you're unwanted. There's something
18 wrong with you. It's affecting you, right. So my first
19 relationship when I did grow up and become an adult was
20 abusive. And I think it was my -- that I have -- I had to
21 think about it because majority of the homes were abusive.
22 I was in this one foster home where I was older. I think I
23 was 13, right, 12. Somewhere around that. Anyway, her --
24 her son was an alcoholic. And at 12 years old you don't
25 know what a hangover is. So 12 years old, I'm in the

V.P. ,**In relation to her Mother**

1 house, like, more like a tomboy, go out and play, you know.
2 Came in one day and I cut my finger. I gashed my finger
3 really bad open and the foster mother wasn't home. But her
4 alcoholic son was. And I came in and -- crying because,
5 you know, it hurt. And anyway, night before he went on a
6 big binge and he was drunk. And he flew into a rage and he
7 -- and I asked him, I said, "You know, can you fix my
8 finger because I cut it?" So he put horse liniment on it.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Horse?

10 **MS. [V.P.]:** Liniment. That you rub on
11 horses legs that have sprains.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh dear.

13 **MS. [V.P.]:** It's very potent. It's worse
14 that alcohol. And he poured it on my finger and made me
15 cry more. So I was crying and crying and crying and he
16 said, "If you don't stop crying", he says, "I'm going to
17 use that bridle because it can't hurt that bad." So he --
18 he had -- or they had -- you ever see a horse bridle? The
19 leather, how thick it is?

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Of a what? A bridle?

21 **MS. [V.P.]:** A horse bridle.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yes. Yes.

23 **MS. [V.P.]:** It's so thick, how thick it is.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** It's leather.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 mean, it got worse. And not for me but for his mom. He
2 used to beat his mom up all the time. There were five
3 other foster kids in that home and I was the youngest. And
4 I would be the only one that would get out of bed and go
5 down and try to fight this grown man off his mother. And
6 you know, choking her, beating her, slapping her and what
7 have you. And there was three older boys in the home and
8 they went out and bought a ---

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Were the police ever
10 called?

11 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah, they were called after I
12 had my beating. I wanted to leave the foster home.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And who kept you there?

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** The social workers. Because
15 they didn't have a placement for me.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Do you know how many
17 foster homes you were in?

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** Probably 12.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Twelve. It's a lot.

20 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. And you're being thrown
21 around, tossed around so much you -- you just get to a
22 point where...

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** How did you cope?

24 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, I realized how to cope
25 when I got older but I turned to drugs and I turned to

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 alcohol. And became wild, saying goes, right. Looking for
2 that love, right.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you said that you had
4 a broken heart at 16. That's pretty young to have a broken
5 heart. Do you want to share what happened? You don't have
6 to. Don't have to.

7 **MS. [V.P.]:** I went to a party with this guy
8 in high school when he's -- I thought he was a nice guy
9 because his family went to church and whatever, you know
10 what I mean. I thought he could be trusted. So went to
11 this party and -- but he was deceiving his parents. He
12 wasn't what he was pertaining to be. So we went to the
13 party and there was drugs and alcohol there. And you know,
14 he got quite smashed, quite drunk. And of course peer
15 pressure, right. You had a drink, it's not going to hurt
16 you. Smoke whatever, you know. Do -- you know. And so he
17 said, you know, "I won't -- I won't leave you here. I'll
18 take you back home." Right. "You won't be alone." Blah,
19 blah, blah. So I was in the wrong place at the wrong time
20 and of course I was drunk and stuff and I ended up getting
21 gang raped.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh dear.

23 **MS. [V.P.]:** And because of it I ended up
24 having a daughter. And so that was my heart -- first heart
25 -- heartbreak from a man.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You trusted him.

2 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. Well, you know, he was
3 going to church, he was this, he was that, right. But he
4 had that deceiving side of it, right. Kids aren't going to
5 -- always going -- they've obtained -- live up to the
6 standards that their -- their friends around on their own.
7 But you know, it's easy when you're young, you know, you
8 think your first love is your first love, right. Well.

9 But that was hard lesson learned in -- that
10 was over there -- but like, I was in a Christian foster
11 home and they -- the father was the deacon of the church
12 when this happened. And when I found out I was pregnant I
13 wanted an abortion. And the mother said, "No, we won't
14 hear of it because my husband is the deacon of the church
15 and you brought this on yourself and we won't hear of it.
16 We won't have any -- a satanic" whatever. Whatever she was
17 thinking or whatever. "You're going to have to endure
18 this. You're going to have to see this through. It's an
19 abomination to have an abortion." So I had to carry her
20 for nine months. And like -- kind of in a way it kind of -
21 - you know, I -- I didn't go to church on that whole time.
22 I was allowed to go to school but I wasn't allowed to go to
23 the church. So they kind of kept it under the table kind
24 of thing.

25 And when -- if they brought -- if they had

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 company or something like that, right, I was to be in my
2 room. And I wasn't allowed to come out of my room until
3 all their company...

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And did they know how you
5 became pregnant from ---

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** They say that -- they blame me.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The reason I ask that was
8 I was just wondering if the police were called?

9 **MS. [V.P.]:** No, because I -- I told them
10 what happened and the foster mother at the time said, "No,
11 you made a choice to go there."

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And so this would have
13 been about 1980?

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

16 **MS. [V.P.]:** So ---

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you had the baby?

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And your daughter is the
20 one you speak of having given up for adoption?

21 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** When -- and when she was
23 given up for adoption, was she taken into an Indigenous
24 home or was she adopted into a ---

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** Her mother -- her mother is

V.P. ,**In relation to her Mother**

1 Native. I remember them telling me that the mother is
2 Native and her father was a bank manager. That's the only
3 things they could say because it was private adoption.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

5 **MS. [V.P.]:** And she at the time would have
6 had a two year old. She would have two -- her brother
7 would be two years old. That's the only info they gave me
8 of it.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. And you haven't had
10 any contact with her?

11 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh you did. Okay.

13 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Because I -- I thought you
15 had but when you were talking there I thought oh well,
16 maybe -- maybe I assumed something.

17 **MS. [V.P.]:** No.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. And how is she
19 doing?

20 **MS. [V.P.]:** Fabulous.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is she?

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** She's beautiful and smart,
23 gifted, talented. She's very strong. And they have
24 Indigenous woman, very strong.

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Did she have any of the

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 troubles that you had as a young child?

2 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Is her mom actually
3 Native?

4 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

5 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Oh she is?

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

7 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Oh, okay.

8 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

10 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. She's -- she had the
11 very best -- the very best of everything that a child can
12 want. Everything.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And how do you feel about
14 that?

15 **MS. [V.P.]:** Good.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Good?

17 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Good.

19 **MS. [V.P.]:** Real good. Because I asked her
20 when I met her -- well, she actually found me and her visit
21 was very short. It was only an hour. Because she had
22 questions to ask. You know, why did I give her up for
23 adoption? Was she not good enough? Like, didn't I love
24 her? And you know, it's normal, right, because we're
25 there. I answered it the best that I could answer, right.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 I did not tell her how she came about. She asked about her
2 father. But meeting your daughter for the first time, you
3 just don't want to spill that out. I think that, you know,
4 should be almost like in a therapy session if you're going
5 to ---

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah. Handled
7 sensitively.

8 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. Right.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

10 **MS. [V.P.]:** So anyhow, and I asked her, I
11 said, "Did -- did I make the right choice?" And she said,
12 "Yeah, you did." So ---

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you have a very good
14 relationship now?

15 **MS. [V.P.]:** She doesn't want to have a
16 relationship right now with me.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Sorry.

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** At the time it was a year --
19 June -- wait. Two thousand and fourteen of -- of March I
20 met her.

21 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Okay.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh so very recently then?

23 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. Two thousand and twelve
24 of June she lost her dad. Her dad had a heart attack and
25 died. Two thousand thirteen of June I lost my husband and

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 he died of a heart attack.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Sorry.

3 **MS. [V.P.]:** So we had something in common,
4 right. I mean, a sad thing to have in common but...

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No. Right.

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** But no, she's -- she's a very
7 strong Aboriginal woman and yeah. I -- I don't deserve any
8 of the credit, you know. Like I told her, I was just an
9 incubator to bring her forth into the world, right, under
10 not very good circumstances but -- and I had to go to
11 therapy, you know.

12 They had me in therapy to talk about what
13 happened to me during my -- during my [inaudible response]
14 when I was pregnant with her because I just -- I -- I
15 couldn't understand why I couldn't get an abortion, right.
16 And -- but when you're young like that, I mean, and you're
17 in somebody else's home you have to abide by the rules,
18 right. So yeah.

19 But I don't regret it, you know. Seeing the
20 by-product now and seeing how beautiful and strong she is,
21 you know, it's not -- I always look at it this way, it's
22 not the child's fault, you know. It never was. It's not.
23 And though I can say it -- for my children I still can't
24 say it to myself, to that little girl. I still think that
25 I could have did something, you know what I mean, to

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 nurture that little girl more, but I'm doing it now. But
2 it's -- you know. I have examples. I have teachers. I
3 had to be shown, right.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right. And how did you
5 cope then after having her?

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** I gave her up for adoption. It
7 was private adoption. At the hospital they made a mistake
8 and brought her to me. They weren't supposed to. I got to
9 see her. I laid eyes on her. I fell right in love with
10 her. I wanted to change my mind at that moment, but being
11 16, I mean, no job, no income, no home.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And still living at that
13 foster home?

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And how much longer did
16 you stay at that foster home?

17 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, I think it was three
18 months after and then I -- the social workers came and took
19 me out of there. I said I didn't want to stay there.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And were you placed in
21 another foster home?

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Now, was -- was that --
24 was this in New Brunswick?

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Do they have a process
2 where you age out of the child welfare system?

3 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah, it's 19.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Nineteen. And ---

5 **MS. [V.P.]:** For me it was 19.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. And so at 19 after
7 15 years of being in a foster care system, what was that
8 transition like for you?

9 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, the last foster home I
10 was in, because they didn't approve of the guy that I was
11 seeing, so they must have seen something in him that I
12 didn't see, right. Love is blind, right. That would be my
13 second child's father.

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. And you referenced
15 that you had two boys and another one. Were they three
16 boys?

17 **MS. [V.P.]:** No, two boys.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Two boys, okay.

19 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. So -- so they must have
20 seen something in him that I didn't see, right. So when I
21 was 19 one day I came home and they had my bags packed on
22 the back of the deck of this foster home.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** That's how you found out?

24 **MS. [V.P.]:** And I was there -- I was -- I
25 was there and they packed my bags and left them on the back

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 door. And the father came to the back door and said,
2 "Here's \$20 for a cab. It's time for you to go and you're
3 not allowed to come back here." So I, "Okay." So here I
4 am in this safe environment, I was secure, Christian,
5 living, right. These were Christians, or these are people
6 that nurtured me, supposedly let me take -- you know. He
7 said, "Packed your bag, on the back deck and here's 20
8 bucks for a cab. See ya." Nowhere to go.

9 So yeah, I did call a cab and I went to the
10 Fredericton shelter, right. It was a roof over your head,
11 you could have something to eat. You're going to stay but
12 not really safe. And during the day, what do you do when
13 you don't have a job? And I didn't know about the welfare
14 system that you could go and, you know, get a welfare
15 cheque or maybe go to a boarding room. You know, I didn't
16 know any of that. All I knew was that, you know, being in
17 -- being in homes, right. I didn't know. So yeah, I mean,
18 and -- where was I? I was somewhere and I met -- a few
19 days -- I forget now. But he asked -- he says, "Don't you
20 have a place to stay?" And I said no. He says, "Well,
21 let's go to the shelter and get your stuff", he says, "And
22 you can come and stay with me." You know, "Imagine my mom
23 wouldn't mind", right. "I have to ask her but you just
24 stay outside until I ask her", right. So anyways, this was
25 when I met [Mother-in-Law] which she became my mother-in-

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 law, eh. And anyways, she says this wasn't a -- you know,
2 an animal shelter for stray cats and dogs she said to her
3 son. And he says, "I know." And he says, "But she doesn't
4 have anywhere to stay." Right. And she says, "Okay, well,
5 just for the night." Right.

6 So because I was so desperate to want to
7 have a roof over my head, right, and because you're not
8 shown, right, if you don't love yourself and you're not
9 shown to love yourself and respect yourself and that whole
10 saying goes fight or -- fight or flight, right. Well,
11 that's survival instinct in you that you have, you're going
12 to fight. You know you're going to do something wrong.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No. But you ---

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** But if it's going to ---

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** --- will do anything to
16 stay there.

17 **MS. [V.P.]:** Right.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah. Yeah.

19 **MS. [V.P.]:** So I ended up, you know, going
20 to bed with him. End up pregnant.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And how long were you with
22 him?

23 **MS. [V.P.]:** I think until [Son 1] was two.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** And then ---

V.P. ,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and you spoke of
2 domestic violence.

3 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. He was the one.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** He was the one. And he
5 was the one that broke your nose?

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. Yeah. Collarbone. I've
7 had my jaw broken. I had my teeth that point right into my
8 tongue. So ---

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Were the police called?

10 **MS. [V.P.]:** All the time.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And can you share what
12 happened?

13 **MS. [V.P.]:** I think the first time was when
14 I was six months pregnant and I got beaten. And he beat me
15 bad and I was afraid that he was going to kill me. It was
16 in the winter time. So again, that fight or flight came
17 in, you know. I was thinking -- he wouldn't hit my
18 stomach. He was just beating my face, eh. So I was
19 thinking, okay, well, if -- you know, if he kills me my
20 baby is going to die, right.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** So I took something and hit him
23 over the head with it and ran out the door, right. It was
24 winter time. I was in my pyjamas. Bare feet. And I just
25 booked her down the road in the snow as fast as I could go.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 And I happened to come along this house and they were
2 having a party and the door was open so I just walk in. I
3 was bloody, pregnant and of course it took a while. I
4 mean, everybody's whatever. It took a while. So the
5 people turn around and they look and here I am standing,
6 right pregnant, pyjamas on, no coat.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Bare feet.

8 **MS. [V.P.]:** Freezing out. And this guy
9 comes over and goes, "Can I help you?" I'm like, "Yeah,
10 can you call the cops?" He says, "Yeah." And I don't
11 speak the words out and my son's father was at that place
12 and two guys came to the door and said -- you know, took
13 him out and beat him. Then the cops came. But the thing
14 is, as an abusive woman, and you're pregnant, right, don't
15 have means of supporting yourself. And if he's your only
16 means of support, because they like it that way, you're
17 going to go back. And I'd go back.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And at that time there was
19 really no other options, was there, for -- for you to go to
20 a women's shelter or -- or anything to help you transition
21 to your own place.

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** I didn't think of it. I didn't
23 -- I didn't ---

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You may not have known.

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** --- know -- I didn't know,

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 yeah, those things. I just -- you know.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And with the police, did
3 they charge him?

4 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah, they charge him. He'd go
5 to jail for a month and then he'd come back out, right.
6 You know, he's apologize, as they all do, right. Honeymoon
7 stage, you know. But I mean, I didn't understand at the
8 time why -- why I picked a partner like that. Looking -- I
9 look back in my childhood, think of all the emotional,
10 psychological abuse and all the beatings I took and all the
11 neglect I endured. You don't see it.

12 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

13 **MS. [V.P.]:** You don't see it because that's
14 all you've known. So ---

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And he also took you in
16 when you needed someone to take care of you because you had
17 nowhere to live.

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So it was all just a nice
20 ---

21 **MS. [V.P.]:** So I felt -- so I felt
22 obligated as well.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And that was nice things
24 too, you know, initially.

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** You know, when you first
2 met him and ---

3 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And so you -- you left --
5 you left him when your -- your son was about two?

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** M'hm.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And -- and then what were
8 you able to do at that time?

9 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, I got my own place, you
10 know. And me and my son, we were quite content being
11 together, you know what I mean. I mean, I tried. You know
12 what I mean, I tried to be a mom, right. I ended up
13 getting again. I ended up getting pregnant with my other
14 boy. And anyway, I had him and so here I had a two year
15 old and I had a baby, okay. All alone. And you know,
16 trying to -- how -- how do you be a mom when you don't know
17 how to be a mom? How do you do that, right? Without
18 messing up, how do you do that? If you're not shown, how
19 do you do that?

20 Because I thought if I was meeting the basic
21 needs, feedings, clothing, roof over their head I was doing
22 good. I didn't think that I had to interact, you know what
23 I mean?

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The nurturing part.

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** Right.

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** The nurturing part. You -
2 - you were ---

3 **MS. [V.P.]:** Or -- or sit them in a sink or
4 something like that mentally or to interact and read with
5 them or to ---

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

7 **MS. [V.P.]:** That -- that's stuff that --
8 you know. And I didn't realize that emotional abuse, not
9 being there for your children is just as bad as physical
10 abuse. I didn't know that. But I learned that later on,
11 right. So I had to make a choice. What made me come to
12 that choice was when my son, [Son 1] -- I was -- like I
13 said, had the baby. I think I was getting \$600 a month at
14 the time. So I was trying to pay the rent, I'm trying to
15 buy the food, trying to have the TV for entertainment for
16 the kids, you know, on a limited budget. I -- my son, he
17 was only two when he came to me, he said, "Mom" -- he said,
18 "Mommy, milk? Milk? Can I have milk?" And I said, "No,
19 [Son 1], you can't have milk. That's for the baby."
20 Something went off on me and I never seen it. He's two
21 years old, he's growing. What are you doing? He needs
22 milk too, right. You just said no to a two year old.
23 What's wrong with you? You can always go down the street
24 and go get more milk, right. Why couldn't he have milk,
25 right? It hurt. Because I knew what it was like. I knew.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 I had that experience. I knew. Here I'm doing it to my
2 kid saying, "No, you can't have that milk." And some --
3 something went off and I said no. No. You're going to
4 break this. You're going to break this and you're going to
5 break this now.

6 And so the next day I called [Son 1]'s
7 grandmother and I said, "Okay, you wanted him. You come
8 and get him." She goes, "What made you change your mind?"
9 I said, "Because I said no to him. He wanted milk. I am
10 not capable of giving my son what he needs right now. So
11 you want him, come get him." And I was doing exactly the
12 same thing that the foster homes did to me.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And that's part of what
14 the inquiry is looking and wanting to hear those, how that
15 translated, how that intergenerational -- we use the term
16 violence but that -- it wasn't violence. The skills or the
17 lack of skills, how they move from generation to
18 generation, so.

19 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Yeah.

20 **MS. [V.P.]:** And now, my son, he went and
21 had a girlfriend ---

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** This is [Son 1]?

23 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** He had a beautiful daughter.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 Her name's [Granddaughter 1], right. Beautiful blue eyes,
2 dark hair. Beautiful like they all want. Beautiful. And
3 anyway, he followed the cycle.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Oh dear.

5 **MS. [V.P.]:** He doesn't have interaction or
6 any contact with his daughter. And she's turning I think
7 13. And ---

8 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is she with her mom?

9 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Was -- okay. So she
11 didn't -- she didn't go into the child welfare system?

12 **MS. [V.P.]:** No.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But she's with her mom.

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. And now I have another
15 one. Her name's [Granddaughter 2]. So this one's 13. The
16 other one would be 11. And last time he seen them was
17 probably when they were two to -- two to five maybe.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Are you able to have
19 contact with your grandchildren?

20 **MS. [V.P.]:** I'd like to but I'm -- like I
21 said, I have different changes coming about in my life
22 right now. And healing is a long process. And I guess I -
23 - I'm looking forward to moving from where I'm at because
24 the home that I'm in isn't a very healthy environment I'm
25 living in.

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

2 MS. [V.P.]: So I'm hoping to go from that
3 transition to a new place.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

5 MS. [V.P.]: Right. Such as closing another
6 chapter and moving onto something else, right. Maybe once
7 that happens, because I will probably feel more -- what do
8 you call that? More ---

9 MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]: Secure?

10 MS. [V.P.]: Maybe secure or maybe ---

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Settled?

12 MS. [V.P.]: Settled. You know, something -
13 - something ---

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Stable?

15 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah. And then also too maybe
16 it might make the parents more comfortable as well.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

18 MS. [V.P.]: So ---

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Because you don't -- you
20 don't want to hear a no.

21 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah, because I always want to
22 try to make sure that the parents know that their kids are
23 going to be safe and they're in a good environment and
24 they're ---

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. And you talked

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 about a second boy.

2 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah, [Son2].

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: [Son 2]. And where's [Son
4 2]?

5 **MS. [V.P.]**: [Son 2]'s in prison.

6 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Okay.

7 **MS. [V.P.]**: [Son 2] came about because I
8 was partying. And I partied so much that I didn't even pay
9 no mind to my womanhood. So [Son 2] ended up getting fetal
10 alcohol syndrome.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Okay.

12 **MS. [V.P.]**: So ---

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: So he's -- he's had some
14 difficulties growing up?

15 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Okay.

17 **MS. [V.P.]**: And I had to give him up too.
18 So I gave one up when he was two and I gave one -- the
19 other one up when he was four.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: So you -- so you -- when
21 [Son 1] went to his grandma you managed to have [Son 2] for
22 four years?

23 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah.

24 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Afterwards. And then --
25 and then...

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: And -- and your lifestyle

3 ---

4 MS. [V.P.]: Wasn't good. Wasn't good.

5 Yeah.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: And you've talked about a
7 life later that seemed to be very settled and enjoyable and
8 happy. What -- what changed for you? What happened that
9 took you on a -- on a different journey?

10 MS. [V.P.]: How did that begin? Oh. How
11 old was I? Twenty-three, 24. I think I was 25. I went to
12 the reserve. I didn't know that it was part of the
13 reserve.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Which reserve?

15 MS. [V.P.]: [Community].

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, [Community], okay.

17 MS. [V.P.]: I didn't -- I didn't know it
18 was a reserve. I think I was 23. Because I still had [Son
19 2] with me and I went to [Person X]'s and he had -- him
20 and his wife ran a foster home.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Had they been your foster
22 parents before?

23 MS. [V.P.]: No.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

25 MS. [V.P.]: And they figure -- the foster

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 parents thought that maybe what I was lacking was to be
2 amongst my own people. That might help me be a better
3 parent for [Son 2] rather than traditional stuff and...

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** So was there a social
5 worker involved still then when you had [Son 2]?

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

8 **MS. [V.P.]:** So I was placed there.
9 Anyways, that -- that -- that did fall through. That --
10 that didn't work out. And the -- that same year I ended up
11 -- or they ended up taking [Son 2] and putting him up for
12 adoption because I was still on a path of destruction,
13 self-destruction kind of thing. You know, I wanted -- I
14 wanted to keep [Son 2] but I wanted to still -- because of
15 all the dysfunction and whatever that -- you know, I
16 thought that -- you know, I could go out and I could party
17 and still come home and be a mom. You can't do it.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No.

19 **MS. [V.P.]:** So -- yeah. It's a -- it's a
20 hard lesson to learn but -- and maybe the repercussions
21 from me not being able to be a stable person in my
22 children's life, maybe that's why the parents of the -- my
23 grandkids don't want me to have too much interaction. Do
24 you know what I mean? Because history can -- can haunt
25 you. I mean, your past can, right. People talk, people

V.P. ,**In relation to her Mother**

1 whatever, people, you know. But unless they know the whole
2 picture and the whole story. But they can because they are
3 the parent of their kids, right. They -- they get to have
4 that -- that last choice. They get to ---

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right.

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** --- to choose, right.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Do you think though that -
8 - that part and maybe perhaps the Inquiry will help so that
9 younger generations may not all understand what happened to
10 the residential school survivors. A lot of parents didn't
11 share with children their pain. And so sometimes children
12 have, even as adult children, they -- they don't understand
13 because they don't know.

14 So they -- they -- they have a lot of those
15 -- those questions of it's not that you didn't love your
16 children. It -- it was that you were raised in over 12
17 foster homes where love wasn't shown. And -- and a lot of
18 parents don't share that with their children. So the
19 children are kind of, in a way, in the dark because they
20 don't understand their parents' behaviours.

21 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

22 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And you know, when -- when
23 you shared your truth like you were sharing today, you can
24 see the pain that you had from the time you were four. And
25 so that's a long, long journey of pain.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. [V.P.]**: I still today -- the only --
2 best of the best relationships I had was with my husband,
3 [Husband].

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And how did you meet him?

5 **MS. [V.P.]**: There was a program on the
6 reserve that I attended to. It was called CATS (ph.)
7 program to get your GED. So anyways, I was attending it
8 and [Husband] came strolling in one day and he seen me
9 there and I forget who the teachers were at the time but it
10 was somebody and they asked [Husband], "You going to join?"
11 And looked right at me and he goes, "Yeah, I'm going to
12 join."

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And when would that have
14 been?

15 **MS. [V.P.]**: He said -- he -- he's 21 -- 21
16 years old, 22.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Okay.

18 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah. So he told me, he said,
19 "I wasn't going to join", he says, "but when I seen you I
20 had to." He said, "And I had one thing on my mind." I
21 said, "What?" He says, "That you were going to be mine."
22 And he got what he wanted.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: That was a loving
24 marriage?

25 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah. You know, you try not to

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 go -- go mad -- go to bed mad at each other. Right. He's
2 very traditional in his own ways. And ---

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Did that become part of
4 your way -- your way, the traditional culture?

5 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah. He showed me. He showed
6 me.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay.

8 **MS. [V.P.]:** Like, when I did something
9 wrong -- see, I -- I -- I test -- I had a test. I had to
10 push and push and push and test [Husband]. And he knew I
11 was testing him, you know what I mean. How far can I push
12 you that you won't push me away? I'm going to push you
13 again today. How far he -- can I push you? And he would
14 come and he'd say, "You know what, come here." And then
15 he'd give me a hug. Yeah. "This is what you need. Come
16 here."

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** But you learned through
18 your childhood that that was what to expect, that you would
19 be pushed away and you found somebody who wasn't going to.

20 **MS. [V.P.]:** And now, like -- now I -- you
21 know, because even as an adult when you go through trauma -
22 - when I lost [Husband] I went through a lot of trauma. I
23 ended up, you know, doing some things that -- I mean,
24 you're an adult, you don't think you can do, you know. But
25 when you're lonely -- when you're lonely and you just want

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 somebody to hold you and love you, you make mistakes, you
2 know. You make those mistakes. And not everybody in this
3 world is [inaudible response]. And I learned that when I
4 was 50.

5 And I'm still learning it. I'm still
6 learning it. I'm with a guy now and I asked him the other
7 day, I said, "Do you love me?" And he said no. And it's
8 because -- I got to learn how to love me. And I just want
9 that dysfunction to stop. And the only way it can -- can
10 stop is if -- I -- you know what, I could do more therapy
11 and I could do more what have you, but how long is therapy?
12 Right. They said -- somebody will say, "Oh, I'm at therapy
13 six weeks and I'm cured." Are you?

14 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No.

15 **MS. [V.P.]:** I don't think therapy is a
16 lifetime.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** It's a journey.

18 **MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]:** Right.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Sometimes the journey gets
20 a bit easier and sometimes the journey gets a bit tougher.

21 **MS. [V.P.]:** It's a -- somebody said to me
22 one day, they said, "You're the toughest woman I've ever
23 known." I said, "What do you mean by that, toughest
24 woman?" I'm not in bodybuilding, right. He goes, "Not
25 that way." "So what way?" He said, "For everything that

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 you've gone through", he says, "I see you every day walking
2 up and down the reserve and you smile. And you can still
3 laugh."

4 Someone once asked me, "How often does
5 suicide cross your mind?" And to tell you the truth, it
6 didn't start until I turned 50. Year after I lost
7 [Husband]. I tried when I was -- when I was 14. I took a
8 bunch of epilepsy pills. I almost succeeded. I guess
9 foster mother told me that they called in the priest and
10 said the last rites over me. But I'm still here. And I
11 tried after [Husband] died. But I didn't take enough. But
12 I'm still here.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And I know we -- that that
14 pain, very real, very deep with the loss of [Husband] and
15 when we were talking earlier about the loss of your mom I
16 had the sense that you lost her for a second time when you
17 found out that she had been pushed down the stairs.

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** It's a lot. It's a lot.

20 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** Some people say that I'm cold,
23 standoffish. Cold. If I'm cold I have a reason to be
24 cold.

25 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Protect yourself.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah. But you know -- you
2 know, the -- it's funny how they say generation after
3 generation after generation, right. It don't repeat
4 itself. I just realized that yeah, it does. Because what
5 I did to my kids, my son did to his kids. He doesn't
6 interact with them. He don't talk with them.

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: He's doing what he
8 learned.

9 **MS. [V.P.]**: Right.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: But -- but that was a
11 result of having no treatment, right. That's -- that's not
12 -- it's because you talked to someone earlier ---

13 **MS. [V.P.]**: So my son -- son thinks it's
14 normal. "You did it." He said to me, "You did it." I was
15 confused of me. Don't worry about it. Mind your own
16 business.

17 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: But he doesn't understand
18 the life you had as a child. And more than likely the life
19 your mother had.

20 **MS. [V.P.]**: Yeah.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And it's ---

22 **MS. [V.P.]**: My mom -- my mom got married
23 when she was 14 and she started having babies. And my
24 father was 19. And she had eight of us. She really had
25 nine of us but she lost one. So there you are at 14, you

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 get married, bang, you got to get right into motherhood.
2 And back then I -- I don't think family allowance was a
3 lot. I think \$35.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And did you ever -- did
5 you ever get to know your father or did he pass away?

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** I didn't know my dad. I didn't
7 know my dad before he passed. He died of -- he died of
8 lung cancer I think.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And part of your journey
10 now, that resilience and that strength that you -- that you
11 have, how is that helping you in your journey now? Would
12 you like to share it with the Commissioners what you're
13 doing for yourself now to help your healing?

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, I'm open. I don't block
15 suggestions of healing when it comes to me. I want to
16 heal. So whether it be acupuncture, whether it be going
17 and talk to somebody, whether it be going for walks,
18 whether it be sitting by the river and just listening to
19 the water, whether it be sitting by myself by a fire,
20 whether it be whatever. Listen to soft music or watching a
21 show that makes you laugh. Whatever it takes to heal once
22 you get open to it. Not closed off.

23 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Have you -- have you
24 looked to your culture for -- for healing?

25 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah, I -- I've participated.

V.P.,

In relation to her Mother

1 I've gone to Pow Wows.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Because you seem very
3 pleased to watch your sister-in-law ---

4 MS. [V.P.]: Yes.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: --- dance.

6 MS. [V.P.]: Very much so. It warms my
7 heart. It -- that's something that I'll not -- can't say
8 I'm not gifted with it but it's something that it give me
9 enjoyment to see other people dancing and ---

10 MS. [SISTER-IN-LAW]: Happy.

11 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah. Brings me to -- it fills
12 me up with joy. Even just to be a part of that, to see
13 that, right. It's part of who you are as an Indigenous
14 strong woman, right. So that's something that's better for
15 me.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: And it's also a way for
17 you to take control for yourself ---

18 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: --- in making decisions
20 about what you will do to make yourself feel better.

21 MS. [V.P.]: Yeah. It's -- just when you
22 think that you've healed the part that hurts, and something
23 comes along and kind of slowly picks at the same scab.
24 Kind of reopens it. Because when you think it was healed.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 **MS. [V.P.]**: Because that -- the way I'm
2 looking at it is that the individual isn't willing to do
3 the healing that they need from themselves.

4 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Right.

5 **MS. [V.P.]**: So they reflect all that on
6 you. You know what I mean?

7 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: And you can't help them
8 heal.

9 **MS. [V.P.]**: I can't.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: You -- that energy, you
11 need for yourself.

12 **MS. [V.P.]**: I used to suck it right now.
13 Feels like it when you're how long. So I'll often -- it
14 hasn't been an easy road.

15 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: No. No, it doesn't sound
16 like, from what you've shared, this has been tough.

17 **MS. [V.P.]**: I know that [speaking in
18 Indigenous language], we say as long as you can laugh, you
19 smile, you're not done yet. So that's the way I look at
20 life.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY**: Yeah.

22 **MS. [V.P.]**: You got to turn -- keep turning
23 the chapters in the book, right. And once that book is
24 done and you've read it, you know what it's all about.
25 Once in a while go back and peek at it. Don't stay in

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 there, right. And I don't want to stay in there. I want
2 to get stronger and healthier and wiser.

3 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And that will be part of
4 that journey where you can go back to that chapter, look
5 back and say, "Yes, you know, that did happen but today I'm
6 a strong -- I'm a stronger woman and I can -- I'm -- I'm
7 moving forward." Rather than feeling like that scab is
8 being ripped off.

9 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

10 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Because that's what's
11 painful.

12 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Is there anything else
14 you'd like to share with the Commission -- with the
15 Commissioners?

16 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, I don't know, I can't
17 speak for other Aboriginal women, only for myself I guess.
18 Like I said about this -- the generation cycle, the
19 generation cycle isn't going to stop until go see -- go
20 take off those rose coloured glasses and actually see what
21 you don't want to see. Actually -- it's kind of like going
22 swimming. You know first, you know, it's probably hot out,
23 you know the water is cold. And the longer you take to get
24 in there, the longer it feels like it's colder. But if you
25 just jumped in you're going to be warm in no time, right.

V.P. ,**In relation to her Mother**

1 And I feel like when it comes to Native
2 women in murdered cases and missing women and our loved
3 ones, it takes too long. It takes too long for the
4 families to get the closer that they need?

5 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Right.

6 **MS. [V.P.]:** Investigate, get in there and
7 don't treat different nationalities different because of
8 their culture or where they come from. I think that we're
9 entitled to the utmost police protection and -- and, you
10 know, cases to be looked at just like anybody else.

11 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And it's also about, as
12 women, from what I've heard you share today, it's about
13 being there at times of violence when it's -- when you're
14 being subjected to violence by another person.

15 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

16 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** That they have a
17 responsibility to protect you.

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** Because even emotional, you
19 can't see the bruises. And mental, you can't see -- see
20 the bruises.

21 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** No.

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** But they're there. And the
23 only time the cops really do anything is when somebody
24 acts, you know, say oh well, they have to act. They have
25 to hit you or they have to punch you or they have to --

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 right.

2 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Well, and I think that's
3 part too of what the Inquiry is looking at as well as part
4 of that is -- is that -- that -- that systemic racism that
5 we've seen across the country and in the police departments
6 and attitudes towards Indigenous women and girls --
7 actually Indigenous people.

8 **MS. [V.P.]:** Yeah.

9 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And so part of the
10 recommendations is -- is for the -- the Commissioners to
11 offer suggestions to the government of Canada and how that
12 needs to change and what -- what they see from, you know,
13 from the community hearings and the statements that people
14 have given like yourself to the -- the institutional
15 hearings. So I -- I'm very hopeful that -- that we will
16 see that soon. Sooner than later.

17 How are you doing?

18 **MS. [V.P.]:** Good.

19 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. Anything else that
20 you would like to say? And then we'll -- we'll do the
21 consent.

22 **MS. [V.P.]:** Well, I think when -- like, I'm
23 an adult, I'm grown, I'm a woman. Adult. But when all the
24 -- all the thick blood flowing and all the physical and all
25 -- all the -- the bad stuff that we see in your life, makes

V.P.,**In relation to her Mother**

1 you -- it makes it harder for you to make -- I mean, I
2 tried -- I tried to keep the fact that as an adult it's up
3 to you to make the right choices, good kind of choices for
4 yourself because nobody can do it for you, right. I know
5 that. But sometimes your past comes when something
6 triggers you, like, whatever, that post-traumatic syndrome,
7 I get triggered really easily. Like, really easily. Like,
8 especially if I'm being rejected or I'm being -- whatever.
9 That all come from, you know, that stuff. And I got to
10 realize that the only person that can hold my hand is
11 Creator and help me walk through this, because everybody's
12 busy with their own lives.

13 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Yeah.

14 **MS. [V.P.]:** Right. I can't -- I can't get
15 down on the floor and do a tantrum -- tantrum anymore. It
16 don't work. So -- yeah, so it -- it's a long road.
17 Healing is a very long road.

18 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** And not easy.

19 **MS. [V.P.]:** No. No.

20 **MS. KERRIE REAY:** Okay. So you know, it's
21 taken a phenomenal amount of courage for you and strength
22 for you. I can see. And especially coming here and
23 sharing as you've done today. So I just feel very
24 privileged to have been here today to -- to help you share
25 your truth with the -- with the Commissioners.

V.P. ,

In relation to her Mother

1 MS. [V.P.]: Thank you.

2

3 --- Upon adjourning at 8:41 P.M.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Ashley Robertson, 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.



Ashley Robertson

November 23, 2018