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Building a Fire

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Building a Fire

Listening, Cups of tea, Trust, Relationships, Connections, Community

Matches

Sparks of energy to infuse the fire, people willing to take chances and put themselves out there to move forward.

Clearing a space

Opening our minds, Opening our hearts, Learning, Asking questions, Making room for new ideas, Different ways of thinking, Alternative Knowledge Systems

Making a circle of rocks

Foundations for future fires

Gathering Kindling

pieces of dry tinder, strips of birch bark paper, small sticks, tiny steps to build connections, tiny necessary steps to create a strong fire that will keep burning.

Chopped Dry Logs

Logs that have been cut and dried and piled in preparation. The continual need for this work and for the work of Reference, Respect, Relationship, Responsibility

Stories around the fire

The Storyteller is also the learner (~Deborah Lee)

Keeping the fire going

The fire provides a home for the stories, a place for people to gather and meet and share, the fire gives warmth, light and can provide for nourishment. The fire feeds the soul.

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Reflection for March 2 Visit from Nancy Cooper

For this week I decided to make a mini zine. The question that I posed during class stayed with me, especially when another classmate shared it was also a questions for them. So I decided that was my title.

One of the readings for the discussion: "Our Way Forward", was in my mind as we discussed the problems of staff turnover and training needs. It made me wonder if the amalgamation of the Southern Ontario Library Service with the Ontario Library Service to form one organization is a wise one.

The numbers are discouraging: Out of 133 First Nations Reserves, there are only 46 FNPLs. The Needs Assessment study gives recommendations but it's hard to optimistic about these being taken seriously and better funding models being created to help more libraries open and keep them sustainable.

Nancy's 10 000 cups of tea to form relationships and connections where real work can begin was the main takeaway for me. I tried to draw my Grama's teacup because when Nancy talked about having the cups of tea, she also stressed that we have to be patient and when I used to have tea with my Grama in the cups I now have, I remember it being a very relaxing and comfortable ritual where I could find out more about my Grama and our connections. Nancy reminded us that we are the ones being developed and not the other way around.

The water reminds me of the Water Walker Josephine Mandamin and her commitment to her people and their right to clean water. The water also represents Lake Huron and the Thessalon First Nation which is very close to me. I'm still not sure if I am welcome and that's ok. I don't believe it is really my right to be welcome. I might have to check out the library and librarian from one library person to another and perhaps see if there is anything that I can contribute or help out with but I will wait to ask until I've had at least a few cups of tea.

References

First Nations Public Library Strategic Plan Liaison Committee. 2004. *Our Way Forward: A Strategic Plan for Ontario First Nations Public Libraries*. Sudbury, ON: Ontario Library Service North

Ontario First Nation Public Libraries - *Needs Assessment*. 2017.