**Virtual Panel Presentation and Community Conversation**

**Victims and Survivors of Crime Week 2020: Hosted by IRIS and WAVS**

Note: Transcript of community discussion begins after Kelly Johnson’s video.

>> Doris:

Hi. This is Doris Rajan live this time. It's so great to see everybody here today. We're just going to take a few questions after each speaker, and we're going to limit it but we're going to open it up at the end so if anybody has a question for Kelly, just send me a quick chat and I can announce your name, or comment. Is there anyone? Well, maybe I will start.

Wonder if you could tell us a little bit more, Kelly, about Thunder Woman Healing Lodge.

>> Kelly: yeah, so welcome, everybody, that was able to join the panel.

So, I work for an Indigenous organization called Thunder Woman Healing Lodge society, and what we do here is we deal with the Indigenous women that are coming out of incarceration, so most of the time, they get let out, they're left to defend for themselves

So, get your own rides, get your own supports, they're on their own.

So, where we come in is, we're there to greet them at the time of coming out of incarceration.

So, starting the process then at that point when we first meet them, giving that relationship to interact with them to help them transform into society.

The lodge is still being built at this time but there is staff that is on site 24 hours a day to give these women the support that they do need.

So far, the few clients I’m proud to say, we housed our first client who has only been out for a month so that was a big transition.

We have another client as well who is working on getting her GED so that goes to show how very important these relationships, from the start are when they come out.

I will keep it very short because we're limited for the time that we do have to speak.

But if anyone has any other questions, Doris, feel free to give my contact information out, and I can talk further on what we do at the thunder woman healing lodge society.

>>Doris Rajan: great, thank you so much, Kelly.

And we can roll the video.

Fran Odette’s video playing.

>> Doris Rajan: thank you so much, Fran.

I just want to let you know, you don't have to write your question in the chat, just indicate that you would like to ask Fran a question.

So, does anybody have a question for Fran?

Fran, you can't ask yourself a question.

Oh, okay, Anna, please go ahead.

>> Anna: hi there.

Thanks so much, Fran and to everyone involved with the panel and the event today, I really appreciate it.

Fran, I just wondered if you might want to talk a little bit more about what a good response to people in crisis, particularly queer and trans folks and the folks that you have talked about in your piece there that are feared by so many and attributed with, you know, immoral criminal --

You know, people who have been criminalized and particularly queer and trans people.

What does a response - like, if we defund the police and we are not responding in that way - what are the elements of a good response to people in crisis? With mental health disabilities?

>> Fran Odette: well, I think one of the ways that we want to think about a response is really not recreating systems that do, you know, enforce certain kinds of standards and structures that ensure that people have to seek support within particular, you know, timelines.

So, I think a response is having community outreach and having people who have the lived experience, doing this work. And supporting individuals in their communities. I think it's incredibly powerful to be able to talk to somebody who has had a similar experience, who has had the opportunity to perhaps navigate through the system and can provide that support, not from, you know, an outsider perspective, where that experience hasn't been part of their way of being able to respond.

Yeah, I think absolutely, compassion. I think we can do this work. I think we don't need the police to do this work. But I do think we need to have funding to support organizations that are on the ground to do this work.

And I also want to say that I think that there's a history for queer and trans communities that is not -- that we also need to recognize and why people might be fearful of accessing supports that have been tied to the justice system.

>> Doris Rajan: thank you, Fran. And we're going to go to the next speaker now.

Quinn Saretsky’s video playing

>> Doris Rajan: thank you so much, Quinn.

Does anyone have a question for Quinn? And again, you don't have to write the question, just indicate to me privately in the chat that you would like to ask a question.

I wonder if I can call on Cheryl. You had a question at the beginning that might also -- it was -- I think you had it after Kelly, but it might also fit some of the stuff that Quinn was talking about as well.

>> Cheryl: sure, Doris, hi. This is Cheryl.

My question when I was listening to Kelly talk -- and I guess it might be related here too -- is that you folks speak of -- trauma but also intergenerational trauma and there's some themes there between the treatment of addictions of peoples by the state of Canada and I wonder, can you speak a little bit more about the relationship between trauma, intergenerational trauma, collective trauma and how that intersects with disability or if it intersects with disability?

Thank you.

>> Kelly Johnson: so, if -- again, and that's a bigger -- I thank you for your question.

It's a broad, very broad area but i'll try to keep it short and try to make it as sense as possible and if anybody wants to talk further or questions again, you know, you can ask privately like Doris said or Doris has my contact information as well.

But so, a lot of it stems because with the traumas of residential schools, a lot of the individuals were taken at a young age so they were pulled right from the get-go away from their culture, ways of parenting, food sovereignty, you name it so they didn't have the proper upbringing.

So being put into these institutions, those government institutions that were meant to take the Indian out of the man, they grew up knowing no culture. They were beaten, abused in every which way.

That in turn, that's what they grew up knowing, then they formed that as it goes and then that -- you're looking at clients with positive for covid-19, depression, PTSD and depression and they need it with addiction too as the other individual that spoke previous before me says.

And then that presents them from accessing the services that they need so it pushes them away -- no fault of their own -- but they think there's always something wrong with them but that's where it stemmed from, was right from the get-go in childhood, being pulled away from that culture or health I upbringing and then when they have kids, it's passed down to them, they can't parent right, they're doing the same taught behaviours that they're taught so it's a constant cycle.

And I have dealt with individuals that have children in -- you know, the child welfare system and again, it's addressing to those individuals and work within the courts how important this trauma stems from the residential schools are to the supports that we offer to help these individuals get back to where they need to be in life.

It's a constant -- I said i'll keep it very short because I know we're pretty strapped for time but I can get into it more if there's anybody that wants to, you know, have a wind up conversation, then for sure.

I hop that kind of answers as short as I possibly can to give an understanding.

>> Doris Rajan: great, thank you so much. So, there's been a couple of questions. So I’m going to -- we'll run the next speaker and I think we'll -- we're a little bit ahead so we'll be able to have a fuller discussion after the speakers.

Thanks, Kelly.

Ingrid Palmer’s video playing video.

>> Doris Rajan: thank you so much, Ingrid.

Now, we're going to invite Michael and Joyce from warriors against violence to join the group. We're opening it up for questions to anybody on the panel, but I’m going to ask a couple of people that had indicated they wanted to speak, Catherine, you had a question for Quinn? Did you want to share it?

>> Catherine: oh, okay. Can you hear me? Yeah, I just wanted to know -- I know -- I work in my community and I care about my community and I see the struggles, but you know, I know getting them back to their culture and to the land is really important but I know that it's also a challenge and I’m wondering how you were thinking you might do that in Winnipeg.

>> Quinn Saretsky: miigwetch for your question. It's really I think about connecting people back to where they're from that's really important.

It's not just going to be the same for everyone so really trying to connect with folks from different communities, there's a lot of people who are really invested in this work here, so we really have that benefit of being able connect people to lodges and ceremonies that are outside of the city and that we have that access to, and so you're right, it is definitely a challenge to get people there.

There's a number of times where I’ve come to pick people up and they aren't here or they're not ready to go. And you know, we take those as they come, and we understand that it's a process and respect everybody's journey in that way moving in -- at different speed but really it's about the relationships that we have with folks who do that healing work and who have that capacity to welcome people to their space and hold that space for them.

>> ???? I just kind of had another comment in general to all of them, is I think that he RCMP or whatever police agency that's out there, they need to have this training before they even graduate from being a place man or policeperson so that they're aware of some of the issues, especially this generational stuff.

And I find of same thing. I worked in government for a number of years and you get into the government but it's afterwards where they tell you have to take some aboriginal awareness course or antiracism, but they actually need to take it before they're hired, you know, like to find out if they're even a right fit for it. I don't know if it's worth advocating for that on the training level.

>> Doris Rajan: thank you, Quinn.

Sam, are you still wanting to ask your question?

>> Sam: yeah, sure. I was wondering from Quinn about how to be maybe the best part of my question is how to be the best ally possible in terms of the transition from -- for defunding the police, like would you imagine it's an immediate change or would it be phased in and as an ally how would I be supportive of it?

>> Quinn Saretsky: well, I don't know that I can tell you how to be a good ally. That's something to you have to find out for yourself. But in regards to your question about defunding the police, I think that it does need to be something that happens relatively quickly and like Fran was talking about, a lot of that unfortunately is related to funding. And so, you know, i can share that in our organization, if we had more capacity through funding and more resources available to us, our program would look a lot different and we would have a lot more opportunity to do these types of interventions.

Now, how that looks in terms of a timeline is really difficult to say, because we know that this type of advocacy is really important but it's also very difficult.

And Kelly, I’m not sure if you are seeing airport trail your program that you run, but a lot of programs of our type really rely heavily on the police and that's something that we have taken a stand against in terms of our response to different situations.

And so, i think we collectively can do it on our own, by not relying on the police as a first resource when a situation arises. Like there are things that we can kind of do individually and organizationally to prevent that. And then there's also a lot of awareness raising in Winnipeg so we have -- there's another organization here that's called bar none that does trainings on alternatives to calling the police. So, for different areas and different folks, that's something that I would encourage people to look into, is to look at, you know, getting people trained in how to do that work and then offering those trains to different organizations and different groups of people so that people are aware of what those opportunities are.

>> Doris Rajan: great, thank you. I'm going to take a question from Andrea.

>> Andrea: so my question is until the police is defunded, you know, as a black person, one of the things that happens with us is the police is automatically called. I know I’ve had someone call the police on me because they assumed that I was shoplifting and you know, I was like, you know, I was really worried, because you know, they tend to want to kill us, right. So is there -- you know, can you speak to one maybe antibias training even in schools, so that you know, people are coming through society that are going into these jobs already are -- have a basic fundamental training in that through the schools, including all those teachers who we see around racialized people, like the suspension rates, the expulsion rates are very, very high.

And thirdly, you know in recruiting of the police until we no longer need them, what background, you know, should we be recruiting from -- not just people --other racialized people but people with like social work backgrounds or stuff like that? So, could you speak to that a bit?

>> Doris Rajan: I wonder if I could ask Ingrid if she has any comments or response to that.

>> Ingrid: thank you, Doris.

Thank you so much for your question. And the points that you brought up are so relevant. So, in education right now, in our school boards, we are increasing bias training and antiracism -- particularly antiblack racism training.

I would like to see that training extended across society in general.

We do, as you brought up, need to incorporate that even more in our education system, in our academic learning, right from the beginning of school, in kindergarten and hopefully even before that in preschool and daycares.

All the way through every education system and level. But I also want to see antibias training extended towards every single workplace, every single organization, business whether it's retail, whether it's restaurant, no matter what venue or genre of workplace it is, but our whole society needs to be increased in cultural understanding, and cultural connectivity.

And there are many ways that we can go about this, whether it be through workshop or group facilitation, personal development that are done through workplaces or taking on your own, but even to have within every organization, whether it's sports, whether it's a cultural group, churches, everyone needs to take ownership or responsibility about whatever community and organization that you have, that we are increasing this type of understanding, this type of connectivity and this type of understanding.

That's how we build societies that are more inclusive, that are more understanding and I think you had another point to your question that I have --

>> Doris Rajan: Ingrid, can I just ask you, when you're talking about antibias training, can you talk a bit about what that looks like with an intersectional approach?

>> Ingrid: well, that is going to be looking at -- well, if we're talking about adults, I’m going to say it's going to be looking back on the cultural norms that you were raised with, the perspectives that you were raised with, where your unconscious thinking and unconscious bias has come and stemmed from.

And that's something that has to be intentionally looked at and I’ve run workshops where we deliberately look back on, you know, your childhood and what was important in your culture and what those norms were, that you were raised with, and how those feed into biases, and that can be bias whether it's bias towards race, whether it's bias towards gender, towards ability, and all those different intersectionalities that different. Individuals bring with them as they grow.so antibias training is more than just looking at race, as you mentioned Doris, it's also about looking at the perceptions that we have on gender, on ability, on what a person is capable of, of their value in society.

And that's why it's so important in education to have representation of everyone that makes up society and that includes not only different races and different genders and different identities but foster kids, for example, to see more representation of that within society and within education and the -- just learning how to value everybody for the gifts that they bring and recognizing that everybody brings gifts to the table... And we can increase that through education the better society that we will build in the future.

>> Kelly Johnson: can I say something, Doris? Lived experience is huge in this field. Given my experience, I’ve talked to clients, they would like to talk to somebody like whether it be indigenous, black, you know -- people with experience is so looked at in these fields so I wanted to touch on that, not everyone needs an education but like it's important to offer those individuals that have been through these experiences.

>> Doris Rajan: super important point, Kelly. Thank you so much. Going to take a question from Melanie

>> Melanie: hi, everyone. So, i first want to thank everyone for this. This is amazing. And a special thanks to Kelly, my family is from six nations as well, so that was really touching to hear.

My question is around the building relationships piece --part. So I’m indigenous as well and have a disability. And I know that finding elders, to and healers to work with us find someone that identifies as a wheelchair user and so on, it's t takes times to build those relationships with our elders and healers and knowledge keepers and I’m just wondering if you could speak to that building relationships within the community as well as connecting folks that have gone through the social justice system a bit more. Thank you. Miigwetch.

>> Doris Rajan: is that to Kelly, Melanie?

>> Melanie: um, I -- I’m not sure who wants to speak to it.

>> Doris Rajan: anybody? Okay. Any of the panel or Joyce want to respond to that? Joyce, do you want -- I see -- you need to unmute.

>> Joyce Fossella: yes, well I think that -- in our program, we work with one another, we've all gone through the life experience that our participants have gone through, so there's an understanding and for what they're going through as well, and I believe that it's difficult sometimes when someone hasn't gone through the experience to understand and maybe this is part of what is, you know, the judgmental part. So, i do believe that, you know, including your culture and including our beliefs and values, you know, spirituality and you know, the connection to the earth and those sorts of things is so important, to the people that we provide the services to so -- I don't know if that's your question, but that's what we do here at warriors.

>> Ingrid Plamer: could i add a little something to that, Doris? I just want to say in terms of building relationships, both within your community and across communities, that's why I believe in the importance of sharing our stories and sharing our narratives and how that helps.

It helps to take down misperceptions and to build understanding and awareness, because the truth is that people just don't know what they don't know, and those of us who are willing and who are able to share our experiences, to share our knowledge, we add that gift to the community of building the community and showing people those gaps between what other --

[…] microphone muted for a few seconds. […]

Just saying that sharing our stories helps to build connectivity and to build understanding and to close those gaps, lack of knowledge and lack of understanding both within and across communities.

>> Doris Rajan: great. Are there any other questions for anybody that you heard speak today? Let me just see -- Fran, you had a question earlier?

>> Fran Odette: well, I mean, I did and I think it was really asking -- it was directed at Kelly but definitely I think everyone has responded to it around, you know, the importance of lived experience, doing this work, and being able to, you know, be able to have those connections with others who have perhaps similar experiences and the importance of that.

I did want to just quickly respond to the question about allyship and I appreciated Quinn what you said in that I think that it really is up to those of us who are not part of the community to really, I think do our work.

And I also think that you know, allyship is not just this sort of noun, it really is the action that we take, and the degree of commitment we make to working with communities that don't have the same resources, that don't have the same access to supports without taking over.

And someone said to me -- and I’m sorry, I don't remember -- but you know, really to be an ally you actually have to be named an ally by that community.

You don't get to name that you're an ally. And I think that's just important for us as we sort of bring closure to today.

>> Doris Rajan: thank you so much, Fran and thank you, everyone for joining us today.