

Building trust and relationship - planning to heal

Kim Chevrier, Kebaowek First Nation

In her talk, Kim Chevrier - former CCP coordinator for Kebaowek First Nation - spoke about the importance of building relationships and trust in the CCP process.

"When we meet people, there's always a reason, as there's always a reason for connection."

For Kim, *"relationships are built on trust"*, and the first step in building trust is to open up to the people we meet, which implies a certain vulnerability. Being vulnerable, however, is not an easy thing to do, especially in a context where the history of the First Nations encourages mistrust. Trust is no easy thing when our communities have suffered so much violence.

To learn how to build and strengthen trust, we have to learn to anchor ourselves in our own strengths. From personal experience, Kim noticed a difference in her relationships the moment she learned to know herself better, to create a strong bond with herself, to be able to trust herself first.

According to Kim, CCP is a story of trust. That's what's at the heart of the process. It was important for her to collaborate with her community in order to achieve profound changes. In her words:

"We need to be together and to trust one another. There's power in numbers. Working for the common good has a positive impact which attracts people to CCP."

However, building trust isn't always easy. Kim shared that at the beginning of Kebaowek's CCP process, only about thirty people would attend CCP activities. This number quickly grew to around 70, and by the end of the planning process, about a third of all community members took part in the activities.

Kim believes it is possible to rebuild the community around their collective values system. She is greatly inspired by the 7 sacred teachings:

- Love/Eagle: How can we learn to love others if we have not learned to love ourselves?
- Respect/Buffalo: Do we really know what respect is, and whether it's reciprocal?
- Courage/Bear: You have to stand up for what you believe in, even if people don't necessarily agree with you, which sometimes means standing alone.
- Honesty/Raven: Having the courage to be who you are.
- Wisdom/Beaver: Life is a journey where we acquire knowledge along the way. We all have wisdom within us, whatever our age.
- Humility/Wolf: We don't know everything; we're supposed to learn from all living beings.
- Truth/Turtle: Be true to yourself and to all creation, enjoy both the journey and the destination.

In closing, Kim shared a few key pieces of advice for engaging community members in CCP:

- Meet people where they are.
- Participate in other departments' events: it creates opportunities to talk about CCP while building relationships between departments and helping each other out.
- Be open and vulnerable to help build trust, while allowing people the time they need to feel at ease.
- When you organize events, take time to let participants know what they should expect and ask them what they need.
- Use an open communication approach: people have a right to express themselves, even if it comes out in a more negative way.

Write-up by Emie Rainville, FNQLSDI