

Dawnland (54) Transcript
Dawnland Broadcast Cut 6-12-18

James Abourezk: 00:09 These hearings on Indian children's welfare is now in session. Would you uh, pull that microphone up as closely as you can?

Margaret T: 00:27 They went into my home and uh, picked up my children and placed them in a foster home, and uh, I think that they were abused in a foster home.

Anna: 00:39 Well my brother, he was, he was mistreated by Mr. Kelly and he, and he slapped him and he smoked right in his face and puffed right in the face, and he-

James Abourezk: 00:51 Oh Anna, just a minute. Just a minute, Anna. If you, you know, if that's too hard for you to talk about it now you don't have to. Cheryl, I'll leave it up to you uh, about your children coming up with you. Perhaps it's better that they don't.

Cheryl Spider D: 01:11 Well I was pregnant with Bobby, and the welfare kept coming over there and asking me if I'd give him up for adoption.

James Abourezk: 01:15 You mean while you were pregnant with him?

Cheryl Spider D: 01:17 Yeah.

James Abourezk: 01:18 Before you- [crosstalk 00:01:19]

Cheryl Spider D: 01:18 My social worker-

James Abourezk: 01:19 Before he was even born?

Cheryl Spider D: 01:20 Yeah.

James Abourezk: 01:40 The federal government for its part has been conspicuous by its lack of action. It has chosen to allow the Child Welfare Agency to strike at the heart of Indian communities by literally stealing Indian children, with the premise that most Indian children would really be better off growing up non-Indian.

gkisedtanamoogk: 02:29 The question about indigenous peoples and North Americans is the fundamental question of this land. Maybe if all the fractiles in creation since the arrival of, of Columbus have finally accumulated enough power to create the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This is the first time that any

government in the United States is seriously engaging with indigenous peoples over crucial matters of uh, what this relationship is supposed to be about. We are speaking with state officials um, state agencies, people who are experienced in the, in the child welfare system, as well as Maine's five Wabanaki communities.

- Chief Joseph S.: 04:58 It's nice to actually meet in person and very, very satisfied with, with the process and, and who's been selected, so ...
- gkisedtanamoogk: 05:06 You know, this commission is here for the community you know, and that whatever it takes for this commission to be of service to the community is - were here for that.
- Chief Joseph S.: 05:15 Yeah.
- gkisedtanamoogk: 05:15 We have we're hear for that.
- Chief Joseph S.: 05:17 And I, I truly believe that.
- gkisedtanamoogk: 05:19 I'm gkisedtanamoogk. I'm Wampanoag by birth. I come from a community called Mashpee located on what's now Cape Cod, and I'm one of five commissioners, one of two who are Native American.
- Matt Dunlap: 05:42 As a leader, what do you want my community to understand about your community in this process?
- Chief Joseph S.: 05:50 We have customs and ceremonies, a language, a way of life that is very different, and to pull us away from that I think is what's most concerning to me, but this is a great opportunity for our community to, to move forward and to recognize what happened and ensure that it never happens again. It's scary, scary to hear some of the stories.
- Janet Lola: 06:28 Feel free, if anybody would like to introduce themselves, or anything you would like to ask them.
- Georgina S.: 06:37 Some of the wounds are so deep. How do you propose that we're supposed to be healing?
- Sandy White H.: 06:43 When we bring that out and open that wound, it is a wound. We have to put something back in at that very same time, and that's our medicines. I see that you do use sage. I know that cedar is used out here. The most incredible thing though for that healing is each other because when we went through that

experience, we experienced that alone. We experienced it in isolation, and we've kept it that way. And then when we open it, if we open it and we're with each other, healing does come.

- Georgina S.: 07:18 I can't get over the, the nightmares. And what do they wanna do? They wanna give you a pill and another pill and another pill and another pill, where you can't even think sometimes because of the medicine, just to try to get that out of your head. You can't heal someone that's gone through hell. My baby sister and I sat in a tub of bleach one time, tried to convince each other that we're getting white, and then we knew they would accept us. The boys in our school, they said we were dirt and we were used for one thing. Where was the state? Where was the state? that was supposed ... They were supposed to have been our guardians, but where were they? They weren't there for us, but we didn't know. We knew nothing else but foster people. And how come it took so long for y'all to get a group together to see if they can help us?
- Sandy White H.: 08:32 What's your first name again?
- Georgina S.: 08:35 They didn't ask for all this crap that's going on.
- Stephanie: 08:37 Georgina.
- Sandy White H.: 08:38 Georgina.
- Georgina S.: 08:39 And I still suffer and I'll always ... Oh, god bless you then, Stephanie. God bless...
- Sandy White H.: 08:55 You told your story among your relatives and they heard you. They heard you. Let that love and acceptance come into you. And remember that whenever we're gathered in that way, our ancestors are present with us at that time.
- Navajo Children: 09:19 four little five little six little Indians, seven little eight little nine little ten little Indian boys
- New Speaker: 09:19 Do I start now? I am Pueblo, and a graduate of the Albuquerque Indian School.
- C.L. Walker: 09:55 Here we are on the Western Navajo Indian Reservation in northern Arizona, among our friends, the Navajo Indians. Through the agencies of the government, they are being rapidly brought from their state of comparative savagery, barbarism, to one of civilization.

Esther Anne:	10:21	In the late 1800s, the federal government gives money to start boarding schools, to forcibly remove Native children as young as four and five years old from their homes and their communities. Bring them thousands of miles away to an institution. They're forbidden to speak their language, forbidden to communicate with each other, cut their hair, take away their clothes, don't let them go home.
C.L. Walker:	11:37	Here on the one hand, we have the children as we find them before we bring them to the government school. Few of these boys and girls have ever seen a white man. We bring them in, clean them up, and start them on their way to civilization.
Esther Anne:	11:55	It was seen as very progressive and had a lot of support, and that filtered its way into the child welfare system. You know, Native children are better off raised in white homes. You know, let's save those poor Indian kids.
gkisedtanamoogk:	12:54	Everything that state policy and federal policy is doing is about the eradication of us from the earth. Probably the softest examples of eradication is social integration. But the results are the same. No more treaties. No more Indian rights. No more lands. No more Indians.
Heather Martin:	13:54	Usually when a truth commission happens, there's a great deal of unrest in the society that's surrounding it. Everyone is aware, and everyone is trying to figure out how to solve this moment of crisis. And here, the dominant culture is largely unaware that there's conversation that needs to happen. And now we have the chance to go back and say, "This is what went wrong. We own it. We see it. We acknowledge it. We're gonna pay homage to it, and we're gonna start something fresh that's not based upon that wrong. We're gonna start a new foundation, and we're gonna try something different." I genuinely believe this is the most important thing the state's ever done.
Rachel George:	14:51	I know that this isn't the first time that we've heard parts of your story over the past two days, and I really appreciate that you took this extra step to make it official so that the commissioners can look over it. Once your statement is in TRC possession, we're gonna use it to write a final report and make recommendations. It might be used for research. You have six different consent options for accessibility. So the first is public accessibility, non anonymous. So that means your name, face, voice will be attached to your statement. This TRC statement gathering process provides a forum where someone can be

really heard and have their experiences acknowledged, and that's a very empowering thing to a group of people that have largely been marginalized. I'm gonna start the recording, and I will open up the floor to you to begin your statement wherever you want. Okay.

- Huyanna: 15:57 I was two and a half when I was taken from my mother. I was taken away.
- Josh: 16:04 I got taken away.
- Dawn: 16:06 All of my brothers and sisters were taken from her.
- Ann: 16:10 The state had taken my children and put them in foster care and they separated them and put each one with a white family.
- Joshua Gagnon: 16:19 Between five and 18 years old, it's been group home, group home, foster parent, hospital, a crisis unit, group home, group home, foster parents, hospital, group home, group home. I counted 26, but I'm sure like there's gaps in my memory.
- Peggy Pottle: 16:40 I found early on that when I got high and when I drank the feeling, those bad feelings went away. Anything so I didn't have to feel that hurt.
- Georgina S.: 16:50 I know one thing that scarred me bad was our foster father taking us out to the shed. Back then we had a shed attached to the house. And he would tell us to strip. I could see him now, that filthy, rotten, dirty man.
- Ann: 17:09 I don't know why I'm weepy over it. You know, how long, it was over 50 years ago. 55 years ago. And I never ... It's just something I put behind me.
- Esther Anne: 18:02 All the tears are collected in the tissues throughout the day, and those tears are sacred, and we wanted to um, they wanted to burn them in the sacred fire at the end of every day to make sure those tears um, reach the ancestors, and uh, so we honor them that way. The Wabanaki are the people who are there to greet the light. So we're the people of the dawn. 13,000 years, Wabanaki people here in this territory. At one time, we had over 20 tribes in our confederacy. Now in Maine, there are four tribes left. My tribe, the Passamaquoddy tribe has two locations, then there is the Penobscot Nation, the Aroostook Band of Micmacs, and the Houlton Band of Maliseet. 8,000 Wabanaki people left in the United States, but we're still here.

We know that silence and keeping these stories in is not working for us, and we have faith that this is the only way to heal our communities.

- Pentheia Burns: 19:58 I'm the co-director of Maine-Wabanaki REACH. That stands for reconciliation, engagement, advocacy, change, and healing. In 2008, this idea came to our attention about a Truth and Reconciliation Commission process.
- Dan Rather: 20:30 One country is trying a bold experiment, to kill off the ancient hatreds by yanking them into the light.
- Desmond Tutu: 20:37 I now declare that the hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is now in session. Do you solemnly swear that-
- Pentheia Burns: 20:46 In South Africa, there was this process after apartheid that helped bring some healing and some justice.
- Desmond Tutu: 20:53 There is something called restorative justice, and this is the option that we have chosen.
- Esther Anne: 21:01 We decided to go for it.
- Pentheia Burns: 21:04 All right, happiness.
- Esther Anne: 21:07 Maine-Wabanaki REACH conceptualized the TRC, established the TRC, saw them through to the selection process.
- Esther Anne: 21:16 Our role is to advise the TRC, connect them to people who wanna provide statements and provide healing opportunities and education around this.
- Pentheia Burns: 21:26 Smile back.
- Esther Anne: 21:27 The TRC process is just one of the tools that reach, one of the things we've done and plan to do towards this, hopefully this decolonization, or this, you know, we really need to bring people together.
- Matt Dunlap: 21:42 Okay. All right, sounds good. All right, you too. Bye. The governor was very concerned about me being on the commission. He was concerned that someone could use the findings of the commission to demand reparations for past wrongs. They can dismiss it, you know, as one of those New Age talking circles. But with the Secretary of State on there, it's gonna gain some currency with folks that probably wouldn't

otherwise care. And it's not right. It's not the way it ought to be, but I think that's what they ... A lot of people are very afraid of, you know, that uh, we may say too much, we may use the G word, you know. And that's, that's a dangerous word to reflect on, genocide.

James Abourezk: 22:40 Would you like to come up to the witness stand?

Cheryl Spider D: 22:52 I'll start with my oldest boy, John. Um, I had a babysitter watching him, and I went to get him, but they wouldn't give him back to me, so I went to my social worker and I asked him if he'd come with me up there, (laughs).

James Abourezk: 23:08 Now uh, you were taught ... That's great. You're doing very good now. Uh, when, when did this take place? Can you tell us the month and the year?

Cheryl Spider D: 23:19 That was in um, December 1970. And um, I asked him if he'd meet me at the store.

James Abourezk: 23:28 You asked the social worker?

Cheryl Spider D: 23:29 Yes.

James Abourezk: 23:30 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Cheryl Spider D: 23:32 And um, he didn't come, so I went up, I called him from that store there, and he says that they already went and they took John, and they took him to a foster home, and that I couldn't get him back.

James Abourezk: 23:44 Did the welfare department um, ever prove that uh, that you weren't uh, being the best mother for that child at all?

Cheryl Spider D: 23:54 Well-

James Abourezk: 23:54 Did they-

Cheryl Spider D: 23:54 They always come to me and said that I wasn't, I wasn't a very good mother and everything, and that my children would be better off if they were in a white home or if they were adopted out, and that this home, wherever they were, that would buy them all the stuff that I couldn't give them and give them all the love that I could never give them.

James Abourezk:	24:08	Did, were they ever able to prove that in court, or did they give anybody a specific example of why you weren't a good mother?
Bert Hirsch:	24:20	The answer, Senator Abourezk, is no. It was never proven in court that she was unfit.
James Abourezk:	24:32	It appears that for decades, Indian parents and their children have been at the mercy of arbitrary or abusive action of local, state, federal, and private agency officials. It is the responsibility of the Congress to take whatever action is within its power to see that the American Indian communities and the families contained within those communities are not destroyed.
Frank Reynolds:	25:02	Several hundred Indians and their supporters walked from the Lincoln Memorial past the Washington Monument up to Capitol Hill today, their destination, after a cross country walk all the way from California. The Indians held a rally this afternoon to protest a number of bills now pending in the Congress, but they are also here to support certain legislation, including one proposed law that will affect their right to decide what can happen to Indian children.
Esther Anne:	25:32	In 1978, Congress passed the Indian Child Welfare Act. The premise of ICWA is that it's in the best interest of children who can't live with their parents to be placed with Native families.
Roger Peterson:	25:46	The issue is not whether some Indians are unfit parents, but who decides their fitness. Many Indians are upset because those decisions are made by social workers and judges who are applying white middle class standards to what is in effect a foreign culture.
Esther Anne:	26:08	So when a Native child is in state welfare custody, there's a set of preferences of placements. Number one is with the child's extended family. Number two is another family in the tribe. Number three is family of another tribe. And then four is any foster family. Congress recognized that the child has a birthright to their tribe and that the tribes continued existence depended on children being able to be who they are and know who they are, and that transfer of knowledge to generations, cultural knowledge, spiritual knowledge, those things that make us who we are. In 1999, the State Child Welfare Department was found to be out of compliance with ICWA, the Indian Child Welfare Act. That was really the impetus for the, the TRC.

gkisedtanamoogk:	27:15	I never would have never thought the state of Maine would ever engage with the Wabanaki on this level. They might see it as a, as a superficial gesture. Um, but we see it as something very deep. A necessary transition from being an occupier to being a neighbor with legitimacy.
Rachel George:	27:50	It is November 19, 2014. We are here in Augusta, Maine. Is there anything you wanna say starting off, or do you just want me to jump into the questions?
Richard Totten:	28:03	Just jump in.
Marcie:	28:04	Could you please tell me about your current and/or past employment in state child welfare?
Freda Plumley:	28:12	In 1960, I began as a child welfare worker in northern Penobscot County.
Delia S.:	28:19	I'm presently a supervisor with the Department of Health and Human Services.
Jessie Briggs G:	28:23	We all got advised about ICWA, but at least the judges didn't figure this was anything we had to do much about. That if ICWA applied, one of these other players was gonna tell us about it. And so you know, we didn't ask, and actually they never told, and everybody just kind of went on our merry way.
Peter Crovo:	28:47	And it's not anyone's fault. It's a large system, and it's always, and I've worked in it for 20 years, and it always is a struggle.
Freda Plumley:	28:55	The basic notion in child welfare among the child protective people, as I understood it, was quote, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, and therefore it's a good thing to get them away from their family.
Margaret Semple:	29:10	Not just in connection with Native American families, but with all families, kind of on the theory that well, this mom clearly didn't get good parenting, and so it would be equally risky to place with grandmother.
Delia S.:	29:25	Such a different concept than American family, or, or the basic culture here, you know, sort of the tribe is the family, as opposed to this nuclear family, so it's a very different concept for someone who's been raised American.

Jane Sheehan: 29:43 Uh, and I think that there are cultural activities available, and I think the foster families, if they wanna accept one of these children have a responsibility to follow through on that. Again, I think it's a resource issue. Two sneakers for the feet sometimes more important than-

Carol Wishcampe: 30:05 gas to the reservation-

Jane Sheehan: 30:08 Learning an Indian dance, (laughs), yeah.

Dawn Adams: 30:32 My adopted name is Donna May Adams. Uh, my friends call me Dawn. And before I was adopted my name was Neptune. We were um, we were put in a very racist home, a home where um, the foster mother was very much part of that whole 50s push to uh, kill the Indian to save the man. I think she thought that what she was doing was what was best for us. You know, after, after being in my foster home for so long and not being able to even admit to being Penobscot or talk about it or, or be curious about it or anything uh, I was like, yes, I'm finally Penobscot again.

Dawn Adams: 31:25 And I was going to my first pow wow, and uh, I did nothing but hide because I didn't know how to dance. So I think that's the biggest thing for me is the loss of identity. How um, people going from one world to another, they don't belong in either. They don't feel like they belong in either. My foster mother told me that I was at her house because nobody on the reservation wanted me, and that I was there out of the goodness of her heart um, and that she would, she would save me from being Penobscot.

gkisedtanamoogk: 32:52 Everything above our heads and below our feet, we're all connected to. Whether it's human beings or whether it's animals, whether it's stone or water, everything is connected to that light. How we apply our relationship to creation, to one another, we call that culture. Every people on the earth has a culture, a way for us to understand how we are, where we are, why we are. It, it's what causes me to be who I am, even the way that I look. I don't consider earrings jewelry. I consider them part of my, my being, the essence of who I am.

gkisedtanamoogk: 34:04 I've been molded and shaped by culture since at least my sophomore year at Boston University where young people of the American Indian Movement had really changed my life. Everything that I've learned in the process about culture is what I bring everywhere.

gkisedtanamoogk:	34:27	So right in the center, as we sit in a circle like this, right in the center is where all things sacred. And the "ogopesun", our children, right in the center of our community. It takes a whole community to care for them. We may not be related to those little ones, but we consider them our children. You know, they look at us, they look at you, and they reflect, this is the way I'm supposed to be.
Announcer:	35:06	Mahqan Aselis is seven years old. Her name means sweet angel. She's from Sipayik, and her regalia is fancy shawl made by Ivy Rose Tony. All right, thank you. Everybody give her a round of applause.
Child:	35:26	Wow, she's good, Mom.
gkisedtanamoogk:	35:31	You take away a people's understanding of who they are, their self-sufficiency, and you replace it with nothing, and it's only been the resurgence of our culture that's really helped restore us. It's really enabled us to remember.
Chief Charlie P:	36:21	So you haven't had anybody come here yet? I just was talking with a gentlemen, and he was in one of the residential schools, and I know, I said, "Do you wanna come out?" He says, "Well," he says, "no, not really."
Matt Dunlap:	36:34	Yeah.
Chief Charlie P:	36:35	And, and it's like, he was right, I was offering him a ride.
Sandy White H.:	36:39	It's not something people find easy to talk about. Being raised institutionally, if you, you know, we know that, aside from all the abuse um, and the neglect uh, no one really learned how to nurture or have a family. You just don't have any of, any of that.
Chief Charlie P:	36:57	But how long does that last? How long will that last?
Sandy White H.:	37:00	Until, I believe that it will, it'll last until we come forward and heal that in us.
Tania Morey:	37:10	I think a lot of our parents and grandparents went to the residential schools in this area, and we're kind of the product. And even though there's not a lot of physical faces we're looking at, I think that spiritually we, I think that they're here and they're, they're waiting to, they're here listening.

Sandy White H.:	37:32	I understand the hesitancy. Why would they come and tell their history to five people they've never met before, and these people are part of um, an agreement with the government, and so how is that gonna help me today meet my, the needs of my family? So there's a very good example of when not many show up, we have to indigenize this process and not go at it the way um, you would typically go at observing and reporting.
Holly Cleaves:	38:42	Many of you have come here to protect the future, protect your families, heal and connect in some way. I'm just hoping that today will bring strength, wisdom, and energy.
Denise Altvater:	39:17	I remember that they took us to Old Town, there's a great big house. There were other state foster kids there, and they left us there. And um, I remember we all slept in one big room. We had bunk beds. If you wet the bed, you had to stay in that bed for 24 hours and you couldn't get up. And if you had to pee, you had to pee in the bed. And um, if you stole food, you couldn't eat for 24 hours. I never cried. I never cried. I don't know what's the matter with me. I think it was only one time we told the state worker what happened. Because after she left, we got the worst beatings we've ever had and we never told again. And we spent four years there. Every, every single day was torture. I think I need to do this in two parts. Can we stop now? I don't know what's wrong with me.
Esther Anne:	41:25	When Denise gave her statement and I was her support person in front of the commission and the statement gatherers were there, I remember the volunteer statement gatherers were, a lot of them were crying, having a real hard time. There wasn't a lot of um, a lot of tribal people that showed up, and we were real cognizant of not making there be more, more people from the outside than people from the community. And I saw a couple people from the community come open the door, you know, oh my god, it's too many people, you know, that I don't know, and leave. And so at lunch we had a conversation and it was decided that for the afternoon circle, the only people that would be in there were members of REACH, people from the community, and the commissioners. The rest of the folks that weren't gonna be in that circle went downstairs in another room to have their own gathering.
Carol Wishcampe:	42:28	I'm going to start and I don't know what I'm going to say, except that I feel like the decision to have all of REACH stay and not TRC staff felt unresolved in terms of what was the rationale behind it. I think that if we are going to reconcile, if we can't be

a community ourselves, then it's really hard to be um, in the business of reconciliation.

- Lisa Sockabasin: 42:53 We can say it wasn't white and Native, or non-Native and Native. The reality is, the majority of the people that went downstairs were non-Native and non, were white. All I could think about was, you're isolating half of who I am in this room.
- Maureen Harris: 43:12 I, I'm sitting here thinking, wow, I'm not sure where we're going to be able to gain your trust.
- Esther Anne: 43:21 As the conversation started unfolding and, and white privilege just kept coming in my head. It's like, this is what I'm seeing, this is what I'm hearing. What do you mean I can't have access to this? I can't, I can't be in that circle? I can't hear those stories? I can't be at the sacred fire? What do you mean? I wanna be there. I mean that, that's not what they were saying but that, that's what was happening. That's the dynamic.
- Margo Milliken: 43:43 I recognize that like we're not your top priority-
- Pentheia: 43:47 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Margo Milliken: 43:47 And we shouldn't have to be. But if you want allies, then there does need to be some different kind of communication.
- Esther Anne: 43:58 It's not about making white people feel welcome. It's not about making you guys feel um ... It's not about you. It's about Sipayik. It's about my people. And that's where I'm from. It's about my people feeling safe and honored and listened to and validated. So there's that moment where you choose to have your voice.
- Esther Anne: 44:23 My, my thinking was, you know, who are we serving? What are we here to do? And I'm here to serve my people. That's first and foremost. And I knew all along in this process, just as there are competing interests with truth, healing, and change, sometimes they compete with each other. So does truth and reconciliation. Because we knew from the beginning that non-Native people wanted to jump right into the reconciliation. Why can't we just, oh, you know. And the Native people, you know, want the truth, but it's hard to get there. It's hard to get the Native people to get there. And I think that being a true ally to Native people, you have to know when you need to step back and when you need to go downstairs. You know, by all intents and purposes, you represent the perpetrator.

Esther Anne:	45:20	It was a necessary interaction that needed to happen and a necessary conversation, and a grieving and healing and coming back together.
Matt Dunlap:	45:28	I think it was interesting last night when Esther was talking about reconciliation. I think we still have to get our hands around what that's gonna mean, and I don't think it's gonna mean what they thought it meant when they put the word in the title. Um ...
gkisedtanamoogk:	46:03	Well that's the long road. It's something that we can't predict. But what we do right now has to lead to the much longer, probably much more difficult work.
Matt Dunlap:	46:24	I think what we're starting to realize now is that you don't take 500 years of mistrust and wash it away with one commission.
Gail Werrbach:	46:58	What we're trying to do at this point is to hear from as many people as we can within the Native communities in whatever vehicle is gonna be the most comfortable for them. We're learning that we need to go with the expertise of REACH and the community organizers for the best way to enter their community.
Jim Sappier:	47:22	Grandfather, thank you so very much for all that is, and let it be the way that you want it. [praying in Penobscot].
Gail Werrbach:	47:27	First of all, I wanna thank you all very much for welcoming the commission to your community. I'm here really for um, for one reason, and that is to apologize for my profession. I'm a social worker. Um, I'm a white social worker. Um, I'm the Director of the School of Social Work at the University of Maine, so I educate social workers. I'm really honored to be able to represent my profession and to learn as much as I can so that the harm that has happened in the past and that I think also continues to this day, won't continue.
Dominic P:	48:18	So truth and reconciliation. The truth hurts. The truth is very painful, very painful for us. I learned very early that I had to hide my feelings, not knowing that this pain was actually destroying me as a human being. And today I'm dealing with the pain that caused me to be a monster in my life, because without me dealing with this, I can never be the grandfather that I need to be to my grandchildren.

Male Speaker:	49:07	I mean this is still a nightmare. I still dream about it. And I'm not the only one who suffered either, 'cause that's my brother over there.
Maria Girouard:	49:15	That internalized depression, you know, it seems that it's always there. And for the longest time I was really afraid to even say that I was Indian.
Joshua Gagnon:	49:24	Hearing everyone, it's kind of overwhelming 'cause I always thought I was alone, you know. But I'm, I'm not alone now, and it's, whoa, (laughs).
Sandy White H.:	49:33	The solution is, is this energy that we have when we're connected because it's not just you or just you or just you, it's your ancestors who are behind you who brought you here, and whenever we sit in that circle, that's what we have, that power and that strength.
Esther Anne:	50:10	There's been a lot of fear, and I think that that report in June, you know, when you have, you know, these, over a hundred statements from people saying, "This is my truth and this is my story," I think that is like the can opener, (laughs), because people will see the value and the power of the circle.
Matt Dunlap:	50:46	The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has just concluded its work. We've issued our report. Some of the feedback on this report, people are saying, "No, no, no, no, no, this is not genocide. You know, genocide is what happened at Auschwitz." When you forbid people from speaking their language, you take their children away and put them in totally different cultural settings, what else do you call it besides cultural genocide.
Sandy White H.:	51:30	This is nothing new to REACH or any of us, right? But what we now have, which is what white people love, is we have documentation, and we've got research.
Peggy Pottle:	51:46	I can't tell you how it feels to tell somebody this stuff, you know what I mean? It hurts, but at the same time I feel like, it's just like a breath of fresh air. It is.
Georgina S.:	52:01	It takes a little bit of a load off us and makes us realize that yes, there are people out there that really care.
Esther Anne:	52:13	We've been meeting a lot to try to figure out where we wanna go after the TRC, and that led us to create a training where

non-Native people learn about history, they learn about their privilege, and they reflect on how to be an ally.

Sandy White H.:

52:35

We've witnessed over the last 27 months the incredible strength of the Wabanaki people. Of course it starts in Maine. The people of the dawn. The people of the first light. That is where everything begins.