

Healing Wounds: Sustained Dialogue in the Cowichan Valley
THE ROLE OF IDENTITY IN CROSS CULTURAL CONFLICT

By

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Dedication

To "*Mma*"

Abstract

This paper is the starting point of the Cowichan Valley community's attempt to openly address the problem of racism. The idea for conducting the study was born out of the Mayor of the City of Duncan's Advisory Committee on Racism. The will and the desire to address the racial divide offered the opportunity for a mini Sustained Dialogue process. Through this process community members systematically addressed racism. They defined what racism meant to them and were able to design ways to change the relationships that cause conflict. The process enabled the participants to make several recommendations to the City of Duncan that would hopefully, affect the city's policy on racism.

Introduction

This project really commenced with the collaboration of Randy Levine and I in the fall of 1998, when we explored the reality of the Canadian ideal of a “cultural mosaic” as it exists in our courtrooms (Serbeh-Dunn & Levine, 2000). From that beginning, through further coursework and study related to our Masters of Conflict Analysis and Management at Royal Roads University in Victoria, Canada, we developed this project. Through my experience working in cross-cultural awareness and race relations I have developed an interest in the subject of racism as it relates to the practicality of Canada as a multicultural society and the country’s ability to truly acknowledge and accept different cultures. Although Canada can be highly commended for the experiment in creating a multicultural society, my experiences suggest that Canadians are internalizing this reality at a snail’s pace.

As an African immigrant to Canada I was exposed to many fabulous things about Canada and so I had a rosy picture of being a member of my new country until I encountered racism at a very personal level. This led me to question the whole issue of leaving one’s home freely to adopt another home and be welcomed at some levels and not others, purely based on skin color. My only personal exposure to the concept of racism was in a high school literature class when we read a novel called *Cry the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton of South Africa. This exposure was only intellectual and so when I encountered practical aspects of this phenomenon it was with shock and anger. I resolved to obtain an understanding of racism and to further do my best to minimize and if at all possible help to eradicate it. I also

developed an interest in understanding the experiences of aboriginal peoples of Canada with racism as their stories echoed those of many South Africans I knew.

My interactions with aboriginal peoples along the way have been very positive. In fact, I have bonded easily with them because of our shared experience of colonialism and our shared threat as direct recipients of racism. Not only that, having very similar cultures served to unite us. Unlike myself, natives trace their histories to this land, and like myself they are categorized as visible minorities. In short I share an interest in minimizing and or eradicating racism therefore, my interest in conducting this study goes beyond academic purposes.

Through my affiliation with the Cowichan Valley Intercultural and Immigrant Aid Society I was invited to participate on the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Racism in the Cowichan Valley. I felt that this was a good place to start a dialogue process on racism in the Cowichan Valley and further the work Mr. Levine and I started in the fall of 1998. Initially we understood that the racism to be studied was between the dominant white culture and the Cowichan First Nations band. Our idea was that we would co-facilitate the initiation of a Sustained Dialogue over a period of approximately three months.

We launched the project with certain expectations; however, the end result was not exactly as we had anticipated. The group that was put together for the initiation of the Sustained Dialogue was itself multicultural and the focus of the dialogue ended up being much broader than simply First Nations/White issues. This added considerable value to the process and made it much richer than we anticipated. As the object of a Sustained Dialogue is to largely

let the group decide the direction and course of the dialogue, we did not have the discussion of the historical roots of racism that we initially anticipated. Instead, we heard personal anecdotes that both directly and indirectly confirm the hypothesis that I utilize and develop in this paper. And it is against this backdrop that this research was conducted.

Chapter one outlines the methodology that we used to conduct the dialogue process itself and some of the approaches we used to understand the phenomenon of racism in general. The use of the medicine wheel and the analysis of the concept of reconciliation as a peace - building tool in the community are presented. Furthermore, a theoretical analysis of identity and social identity theories are offered as the foundations for further illustrating the links between identity and racism.

In chapter two we provide a historical overview of the relationships between aboriginal peoples and European colonizers. This chapter outlines the policies that have been largely responsible for the racism that we witness today.

Chapter three offers an analysis and definitions of racism and identity conflict. Additionally, in this chapter I attempt to show how identity and social identity theory explain the phenomenon of racism. Case illustrations are utilized to demonstrate how identity and social theories provide an understanding of the racism.

Chapter four offers an in-depth analysis of the elements of the relationships and how Sustained Dialogue provides the foundation and building blocks for creating positive

relationships. The six elements that can change conflictual relationships are discussed as well.

In chapter five the tenets of Sustained Dialogue are outlined and discussed. Additionally, the usefulness of Sustained Dialogue as a strategic approach and its applicability as an intervention method to the problem of racism in the Cowichan valley are illustrated. The shortcomings of this particular dialogue process are also discussed.

In chapter six a number of recommendations are put forth. The participants of the Sustained Dialogue process arrived at the initial set of recommendations. The second set of recommendations are made based on my personal and professional experience, as well as the MACAM training and the dialogue process. These were arrived at after reflection on my part of the exercise that I co-facilitated and participated in.

Chapter 1 Methodology

In this chapter I outline the methodology employed to analyze the dialogue process. And the theoretical framework as well as approaches to understanding the particular conflict is discussed in detail. The rationale for adopting the medicine wheel as a model for analyzing the concept of reconciliation is explained.

1.1 Why Sustained Dialogue?

Our model for Sustained Dialogue is based on Saunders' definition and model that describes the process as:

A systematic, prolonged dialogue among small groups of representative citizens committed to changing conflictual relationships, ending conflict and building peace. It is more structured than a good conversation; it is less structured than formal mediation or negotiation. It has purpose, destination and product. As a microcosm of their bodies politic, participants absorb events in the communities around them and together learn to design ways to change the relationships that cause conflict (Saunders 1999, p. 12).

The notion of Sustained Dialogue appears to be gaining widespread acceptance by many academics, although the nomenclature is at times different. For example, Fisher (1997) refers to the process of discussion amongst opposing parties to a conflict, executed by influentially placed persons rather than leaders, as "Interactive Conflict Resolution".

Hansen, *et. al.* (1990) refer to essentially the same process simply as “consultation” and apply it to educational settings (although without as much emphasis on sustaining the dialogue as Saunders and Fisher suggest). For all intents, however, the process is the same. I prefer the Sustained Dialogue term because I consider it to be more precise and to the point.

Azar (1990) and Burton (1990) have identified that protracted social conflict, being dynamic in nature, makes it difficult if not impossible to objectively determine concise starting and termination points of conflict involving groups. Consequently such conflicts are not likely to have a clear single factor or event that starts the conflict, although it may be a single event that breaks inherent conflict loose. I postulate that if conflict has no clear beginning or terminus, then theoretically a conflict resolution process based on objective, empirical factors that purport to make a final judgment or determination ending the conflict ought not to work, at least with social conflict.

In presenting the Sustained Dialogue we borrowed almost exclusively from Saunder’s “Organizers’ and Moderators’ Manual” for Sustained Dialogue as found at the appendix to his book (Saunders, 1999). Some modifications of this model were necessary given the brevity of time that we had available to us, (approximately three months for the actual dialogue) as well as the time constraints of various members of our dialogue group. Saunders suggests individual dialogue sessions of a number of hours with meetings shortly spaced between larger group meetings. This offers the moderator an opportunity to build trust and mutual respect and to allow the moderator some insights into where individuals are coming from. At the onset of the Sustained Dialogue we found that we could only set up six

meetings for the three months we had, basing the meeting requirement of twice per month. Mondays were the chosen day of the week. Initially the time set for the Sustained Dialogue was one hour between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. As a testimony to the success of the Sustained Dialogue, the meetings, although always starting 10 to 15 minutes late, never ended before 6:30 and gradually grew to take place between 4:00 and 7:00.

In the beginning our group was comprised of 10 individuals including Mr. Randall Levine and myself. The breakdown of the group by birth and ethnic/social categorization is as follows:

Table 1-1 Sustained Dialogue Group Members

| Ethnic/Social Group | Total | Female | Male |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| White Christian Canadian | 3 ½ | 1 ½ | 2 |
| First Nations | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Black Christian Ghanaian | 1 | 1 | |
| White Jewish Canadian | 1 ½ | ½ | 1 |
| White Christian American | 1 | 1 | |
| Hindu Indo-Canadian | 1 | | 1 |
| Totals | 10 | 5 | 5 |

These categorizations were self disclosed or discerned from the dialogue.

One of the ten individuals who attended the first couple of meetings did not make it to any further meetings. This individual did indicate a continuing interest in taking part in the dialogue, but simply had too many other commitments to attend the meetings. This is mentioned as it further illustrates that all who initially committed to this process maintained at least some interest in the process throughout the time period.

We were pleased with the initial and continued turn out to the meetings. Saunders suggests twelve individuals as the optimum number to commence a Sustained Dialogue for

community relations (Saunders, 1999). The ten that we initially had, even though it was effectively reduced to nine, was a very good number to work with, particularly given our time constraints. There appeared to be sufficient people at the table to bring up the issues concerning racism that we wished to address, and yet there were few enough people that the environment could easily remain somewhat more intimate than would be the case with a larger group. This added to the ability to establish the relationships in the short period of time available, which after all, is the ultimate goal of a Sustained Dialogue.

Participants came from the members of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Racism in Duncan. The idea of conducting a Sustained Dialogue in Duncan was put to the mayor and he brought the idea to the committee, giving us the opportunity to explain our intent at a meeting of the Advisory. As a member of this particular committee, I was familiar with the issues that the committee was dealing with and could adequately explain how Sustained Dialogue fit into the approach the city was looking at. Interested members of the committee were invited to participate in the dialogue group. We then contacted each participant by telephone and provided a brief overview of the process.

The facilitators did not have to select the participants, as they were already involved in a committee that was established to examine the problem of racism in the Cowichan Valley. The committee was mandated to identify processes and approaches that could begin to alleviate racial problems; their goals were similar to those proposed by the research team. They were already interested and involved in addressing the issue of racism and were open to exploring other avenues for attaining their goal. As facilitators we had to be clear about our

expectations for participants, particularly in terms of time commitments. We asked participants to commit an adequate amount of time to the process knowing that they would also be attending advisory committee meetings. We had complete agreement on this matter from all members. Only one member of the group was unable to attend all meetings because of circumstances that arose once the process had begun.

Although we could have held the meetings at City Hall or at one of the participant's homes, we decided to utilize the facilities of the Cowichan Valley Intercultural and Immigrant Aid Society, a venue known to all participants and which appeared to be the most neutral location.

With the limited number of meetings available to us, our goal with respect to this project was simply to get the dialogue process started and assess the participant buy in. An additional goal was to assess the usefulness of the Sustained Dialogue process to address racism in the Cowichan Valley. Saunders evaluates success of a Sustained Dialogue on the following criteria, judged from the end of the process:

- Probed the misperceptions, fears, mistrust and suspicions that they see as lying at the heart of their group's relationship;
- Experienced changes in their own relationships within the group by talking openly and listening carefully and then by working out a scenario of interdependent steps that they think could begin to change the foundations of their groups' relationship; and,
- Shared their dialogue with a wider number of community members and begun implementing the scenario (Saunders 1999, p.260).

Saunders defines a five- stage approach to conducting a Sustained Dialogue. The stages are listed below:

- **Stage One:** Deciding to Engage in Dialogue
- **Stage Two:** Mapping and Naming Problems and Relationships
- **Stage Three:** Probing Problems and Relationships to Choose a Direction for Change
- **Stage Four:** Scenario Building – Experiencing a Changing Relationship
- **Stage Five:** Acting Together to make Change Happen.

In commencing the Sustained Dialogue, our anticipation was that we make it to the completion of Stage Two and lead into Stage Three. By ending at this point, we postulated that the group would be eager to carry on yet not be at a stage where they may be left hanging if the dialogue did not continue. Having done some mapping and naming of the problems and the relationships, we hoped the participants would be at a stage of greater understanding of the root of the issue in their community, even if they had not proceeded to look for solutions. We were prepared, however, for the group to move at a faster pace than initially contemplated and for them to enter Stage Three of the process.

In a prior study the Cree Medicine Wheel was adapted to portray the cycle of reconciliation (Campbell et al MACAM 1999). This application worked very well for an analysis of the conflict in Rwanda. We had also tested it in respect to the South African conflict. Both of these prior conflicts centered on what has usually been described as genocidal or cultural conflict. We thought the Reconciliation Wheel a good fit for the Cowichan Valley Sustained

Dialogue project, as well as a model of reconciliation to provide to the participants of the Sustained Dialogue and assist them with creating a visual model of the conflict.

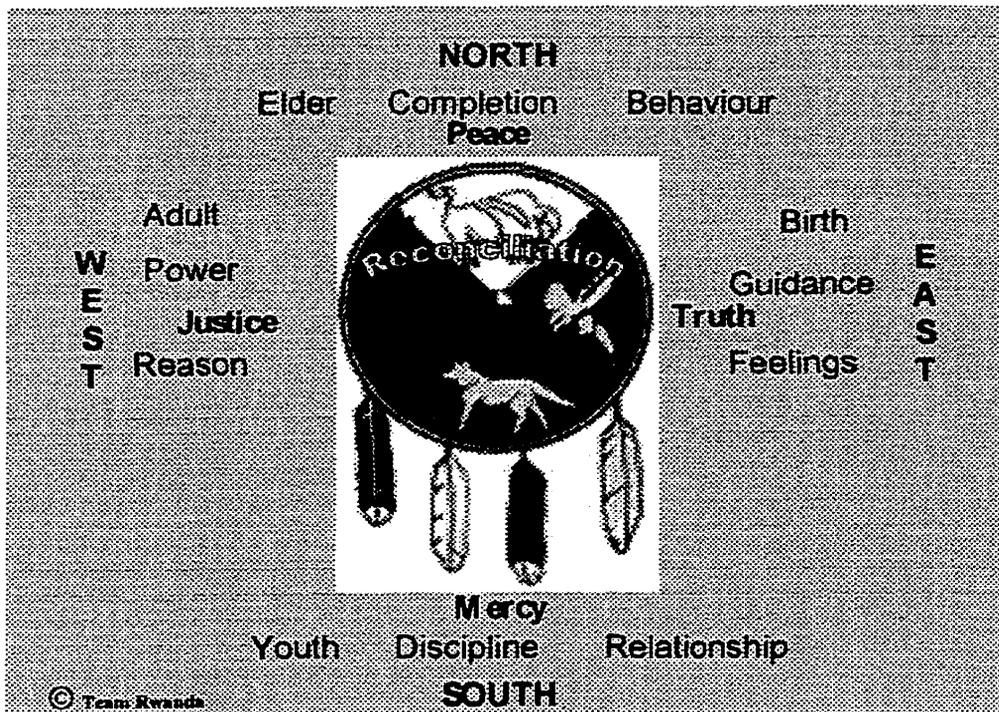


Figure 1-1 Reconciliation Wheel

The Reconciliation Wheel is an international indigenous symbol of life. The Wheel starts with birth, innocence and truth. By Truth, we mean acknowledgement. For a reconciliation movement to be born, there must be acknowledgement of all of the parties to the conflict of their part in the conflict. In this regard, we adopt the idea of “community” wherein any criminal action is not just between offender and victim, but an action against community. To address the act requires the entire community to come together to determine what ills of the community led to the offender committing the offence. This is different from the individualistic Western adjudication system where focus is solely on the offender. The Reconciliation Wheel model is a systems approach to reconciliation. It presupposes that each

party to the system has a part to play in the system breakdown and the reconciliation. The Truth stage is the first step in the reconciliation.

Once all parties acknowledge their part in the conflict, Truth would serve as a guide to forgiveness, which we refer to as Mercy. Forgiveness is not an automatic response; it takes a great amount of discipline in order to forgive trespasses we perceive as being against us. “In the act of forgiveness we are declaring our faith in the future of a relationship and in the capacity of the wrongdoer to make a new beginning on a course that will be different from the one that caused the wrong” (Tutu 1999, p.220). As Tutu suggests, the opportunity for a new beginning and for building a different relationship is inherent in the act of forgiveness. Additionally, the ability to ask for forgiveness and be forgiven paves the way for reconciliation.

With forgiveness, the parties can move to Justice. Justice is not associated with punishment of the accused. Instead it is meant here as a remedy, atonement or change to the system to ensure that future breakdowns of this sort do not occur. This is not a retributive justice but a reconstructive and restorative justice. The ideal here is not to point fingers in blame, as it is assumed and acknowledged in the Truth stage that all parties share the blame in their own unique ways. Instead Justice simply implies the parties’ combined and concerted effort at repairing the community. There may be times when this fix may require a special apology by singled out members of the community, or for singled out members to make up more than others for their part in the community breakdown. For Justice to work it requires power, which is not power over, but power with the community such that reason prevails.

The final pole of the Wheel is “Peace.” When the parties have acknowledged their part in the system breakdown, forgiven each other and moved on to implement a remedy for future breakdowns, they will have fully accepted and dealt with their past. The final stage of the Wheel is enlightenment where the parties have completed the circle and created Peace through truth, mercy, justice, and a change in their behavior.

At the center of the Wheel is the community, individual or entity being reconciled. The community, or individual(s) involved are the focal point; without their involvement, it is difficult to move through the four poles of the Wheel. The reconciliation can only occur when there is rotation through all four poles or seasons of the Wheel. If there is Truth but no forgiveness, there cannot be Justice that will work for the parties.

Applied to the Cowichan Valley Sustained Dialogue on Racism, the Reconciliation Wheel was used to express the various stages through which the co-facilitators would be taking the participants. The Reconciliation Wheel was described and distributed to the participants early in the Sustained Dialogue and the stages adhered to throughout. The Reconciliation Wheel and its four stations compare very closely with Saunders’ Five Stages. Like the Wheel, Saunders’ five stages include agreeing to engage, mapping and naming problems, probing problems to choose a direction, experiencing and changing relationships and acting together for change (Saunders, 1999).

The co-facilitators commenced the process with an explanation of Sustained Dialogue, its theory and goal, as well as explaining our theories of the application of the Reconciliation Wheel. We met with no resistance and in fact with unanimous approval of the process and adoption of the Reconciliation Wheel. We explained to the participants that the process would be concentrating on the individual life experiences of the participants. In this regard we explained our desire that they speak only for themselves and not from any representative capacity, whether as a member of an organization or cultural/ethnic group.

In-as-much as the participants were not randomly selected or chosen to be representative of the general population, this research is entirely ethnographic in methodology and makes no attempt at insinuating the results of this study will have any necessary association or application to another group similar to what was experienced with the subject group of this study.

An action research methodology was employed. This methodology assumed democratic participation that enabled everyone in the group to participate equally. According participants the opportunity and the time they required to share their thoughts and feelings proved to be an equitable process that acknowledged each participant's worthiness. Furthermore, the group discussions were liberating because each person found the opportunity for individual expression and freedom of thought. Additionally, the goals of the group included the development of practical strategies that would be used to combat racism in the community. To this end one can conclude that the dialogue process was also life enhancing (Stringer, 1996).

The action research approach fosters what Stringer terms ‘inquiry in use’ (Stringer 1996,p.15). The dialogue group generated ideas described in this paper as recommendations to the Mayor’s Advisory Committee that could serve as a basis for guiding the design of the city’s policy on racism. The research findings go even further by suggesting practical ideas that would effectively combat racism. For example, the members of the dialogue group agreed that various educational tools could be used in the schools as well as in the community to address racism. Examples of effective ways to communicate across cultures were also delineated. In line with the tenets of action research, the dialogue group utilized a collaborative approach to inquiry that provided the group with the “means to take systematic action to resolve specific problems”(Stringer 1996, p.15).

The researchers served as facilitators of the dialogue process, acting as catalysts to assist the “stakeholders in defining their problems clearly and [supported them as they worked] toward effective solutions to the issues” (Stringer 1996, p.22) of racism. Additionally, the facilitators ensured that the participants were the focus of their attention. Decisions about how to proceed were entirely those of the participants.

Finally, the research employed a qualitative methodology that allowed us to engage in the research without necessarily testing and measuring the experiences of the participants of the dialogue process. We borrowed from the feminist approach therefore making the research exploratory. This methodology, also known as participatory research, insists that the results of the study be utilized as a tool for social change and shared with the participants. We

intended, through the dialogue process that was participatory, to “develop critical consciousness, to improve the lives of those involved in the research process, and to transform fundamental societal structures and relationships” (Maguire 1987, p.3).

1.2 Theoretical Framework and Approaches

This section of the paper offers a road map for the direction in which racism would be analyzed. It stands as a section because it offers an in-depth look at identity and offers a framework within which racism is examined. The theoretical framework and approaches delineated below provide an understanding of the link between identity and racism.

Identity theory provides a basis for analysis of conflict and in particular the conflict that emerges due to racism. Of relevance to this paper is the principle that “when peoples essential identities, as expressed and maintained by their primary group affiliations, are threatened or frustrated, intransigent conflict almost inevitably follows” (Rothman 1997, p.5). It was evident through the Dialogue Group that racism is rooted in identity conflict. It was clear from participants’ articulation of the phenomenon of racism that peoples’ underlying human needs and values are threatened when racism occurs. Those who exhibit racist behavior often do so because they feel threatened as well. People at the receiving end of racism experience a threat to both their self-identity as well as their social identity, thus making racism an identity conflict.

In addition to the above, Rothman points to the fact that “identity-driven conflicts are rooted in the articulation of, and the threats or frustrations to, peoples’ collective need for dignity,

recognition, safety, control, purpose, and efficacy “ (Rothman 1997, p. 7). The participants of the dialogue process indicated the above to be a central element of racism and that it is the need for peoples’ dignity and recognition that motivates their desire to act to address the problem.

Northrup also defines identity as “an abiding sense of the self and of the relationship of the self to the world. It is a system of beliefs or a way of construing the world that makes life predictable rather than random” (Northrup 1989, p. 55). The aboriginal system of construing the world certainly changed with contact with Europeans, and that too has been one of the roots of conflict between the two cultures. For other individuals who experience or witness racism this factor is ever present because one’s self is often violated when racism occurs. Furthermore, racism invalidates the sense of self therefore creating situations of threat that can easily result in conflict. It is for this reason that identity is important in any analysis of racism.

Coupled with identity theory is the theory of social identity developed by Tajfel that provides a framework for understanding inter-group conflict. Social identity theory is defined as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which is derived from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel 1978, p.63). In situations involving intergroup conflict, such as racism, social identity becomes more important than personal identity. This is because racism tends to be directed towards people because of group membership. This makes one constantly cognizant of this group membership at all times. As Northrup points out “ the

constant presence of threats, danger, discrimination, or potential harm is likely to heighten the importance of maintaining and protecting a person's social identity, that is, it is much more likely to be a core construct (Northrup 1987, p.66). These factors were clearly demonstrated as shown in subsequent chapters and in the dialogue group as well.

Furthermore, “ social identity theory assumes a person to be part of a group when he or she identifies with that group, rather than when some “objective” criterion or criteria for group membership have been met” (Taylor & Moghaddam 1987, p.60). Added to this factor is the notion of interdependence of fate (Northrup, 1987). Northrup argues that sharing a similar fate creates a sense of common belonging that predisposes group members to be supportive of each other. In the dialogue group it was evident that group membership played a huge role in the way people defined themselves and also racism, seen as a common threat tended to bind people together.

These theoretical foundations are threads that run through most of the literature reviewed for this paper therefore making these theories the most relevant for addressing this particular conflict.

1.2.1 Approaches

We utilized the medicine wheel as an approach to addressing conflict transformation because inherent in this approach is the notion of reconciliation and peace building. The dialogue process, we hoped would offer meaningful relationships between and among participants so

that together they can make positive change in the community. The emphasis of this approach is on relational reconciliation (Lederach 1995, p.17). The Wheel, as explained in the preceding chapter, provides a reconciliation model that begins with acknowledgement and leads through forgiveness, justice and peace. The Sustained Dialogue process has these principles embedded in it and is therefore a useful tool for conflict transformation. Rooted in the process as well as in the approach of reconciliation is the fact they offer

social space that permits and encourages individuals and societies as a collective, to acknowledge the past, mourn the losses, validate the pain experienced, confess the wrongs, and reach toward the next steps of restoring the broken relationship. This is not remember, justify, and repeat. True reconciliation is to remember and change (Lederach 1995, p.18).

Additionally, the approach of reconciliation is most relevant to the experience of racism in the Cowichan Valley because the different ethnic groups that are in conflict all see themselves as permanent residents of this valley. If this community were to successfully address the issue of racism it would generate a reduction in conflict and tension that would create a better quality of life for all.

Systemic racism alienates individuals and groups from full participation in the larger community. This not only deprives the individuals and groups concerned, but also deprives the entire community from benefiting from their talents, skills and abilities.

1.3 Literature Review

Azar in his paper offers an analytical framework that sees conflict as a “generic social phenomenon involving individuals, societies, states, and their collectives” (Azar 1990, p.5). A focus of the paper is protracted social conflict. These types of conflicts are evidently dynamic and therefore do not clearly show starting and terminating points. The above factors provide this particular research project a basis for analyzing the racial divide in the Cowichan Valley. Of particular relevance is Azar’s analysis of human needs, especially those of security and recognition and how these contribute to protracted social conflict.

Conflict Resolution: Resolution and Prevention by John Burton echoes Azar in the discussions of human needs and how these, when ignored, can contribute to protracted conflict. Like Azar, Burton argues that conflict is a “universal phenomenon affecting all cultures, at all stages of political, social and economic development, and at all societal levels from the interpersonal to the international” (Burton 1990, p.1). These themes, delineated by both Azar and Burton, provide a foundation from which to analyze the conflict to be examined in this research.

“Social-Psychological Process in Interactive Conflict Analysis and Reconciliation” by R. Fisher addresses destructive and protracted conflict and the proliferation of these conflicts. Fisher argues that the “vast majority of these destructive conflicts are between different identity groups defined in racial, religious, ethnic, cultural or ideological terms and most

have a long history” (Fisher 1999, p.81). These conflicts are therefore rooted in identity that involves basic human needs such as security, participation and recognition. Generally, Fisher terms the methodologies utilized in building peace in such conflict situations Interactive Conflict Resolution (ICR).

A variant of ICR is the inter-communal dialogue that this project hoped to use in addressing the racial divide of the Cowichan Valley. Fisher’s views are most relevant to this research project to the extent that it offers some ideas of how to facilitate a dialogue between conflicting groups in order to build understanding and trust and ultimately to influence public opinion or policymaking. Furthermore, the article “spells out some of the requirements, processes and outcomes of conflict analysis and dialogue that underpin subsequent reconciliation” (Fisher 1999, p.86).

Lederach’s analysis in his paper, “Beyond Violence: Building Sustainable Peace” addresses post-conflict situations (Lederach, 1995). These situations, he suggests, indicate that the conflict does not necessarily disappear during this phase but that it takes different forms and expression. The key arguments he makes for effective peace-building are: firstly, the need to develop a set of lenses for examining the peace-building process that would enable peace builders to identify the problems and dilemmas posed by particular moments of that process: Secondly, it is important to address peace-building as a system, one with a design and architecture. To this end Lederach offers a peace-building model, which he terms a ‘Time frame for building peace-building’. The model is relevant to the research project at hand because it is organic and offers a framework for analysis.

Fisher's article 'Towards a Social-Psychological Model of Intergroup Conflict' offers a broad analysis of the literature and theories on intergroup conflict and intergroup relations. Fisher also reviews the existing contributions to the study of intergroup conflict. He shows that most of the literature in the field focuses at an individual level of analysis. The paper provides a starting point for understanding the phenomenon of intergroup conflict. In Fisher's words, "the overview of social-psychological contributions demonstrates that a multilevel, interactive, and phenomenological approach can contribute to interdisciplinary understanding of the causation, escalation and resolution of intergroup conflict" (Fisher 1993, p.120).

A reading of Lederach's "Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures (Lederach, 1995) provides an in-depth understanding of the purpose and practices of training in a cross-cultural context. Lederach illustrates that cross-cultural conflict resolution goes beyond technique, cultural sensitivity and transferability of skills. He argues that cross-cultural conflict resolution training "requires a critical examination of training as a project, a socially constructed, educational phenomenon comprised of purpose, process, and content and inherently encompassing culture and ideology" (Lederach 1995, p.6). The author provides a theoretical analysis drawn from the fields of popular education, appropriate technology and ethnography. These are particularly relevant to the research project in that it would borrow from oral culture as well as traditional knowledge. Therefore these theoretical frameworks can provide a foundation for analysis. Lederach addresses a spectrum of training models including the prescriptive and the elicitive conflict resolution training models.

Lederach cleverly illustrates these models in his descriptions of experiments and experiences, thus providing the reader with practical aspects of the framework he describes.

“Why Minorities Rebel: Examining Ethnopolitical Protest and Rebellion” by Gurr (Gurr, 1993) follows both Azar’s and Burton’s theme of the relevance of human needs in protracted conflict. Gurr’s emphasis is on group identity and exclusion of minority groups by dominant ones. He postulates that identity and exclusion are key factors that shape mobilization by minority groups. Mobilization leads to the expression of grievances that can also become sustained conflicts. Although Gurr’s overall focus is on the dynamics of international conflict, his analysis, focusing on group identity and exclusion, is useful in understanding the particular conflict to be addressed in this research project.

Northrup ’s paper “The Dynamic of Identity in Personal and Social Conflict” outlines for the reader, the theoretical underpinnings of identity conflict. She illustrates in the paper the role identity plays in tractable and intractable conflict and uses a five-component model as an analytical tool of identity based conflict. Northrup, like other identity theorists, sees identity as dynamic, one that is in constant relationship to the world. To this dynamic she adds, “if the events of one’s life in relationship to the world invalidate, or threaten to invalidate, the core sense of identity, then the individual or group would respond energetically to attempt to maintain the identity”(Northrup 1989, p.68).

Razack’s book *Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race and Culture in the Courtrooms and Classrooms* raises interesting issues of power and control and the

submissive or minority's ability to articulate its needs in the face of a dominant power during dialogue. Combined with Hyde's fascinating look at the inability or refusal of Western legal process to take into account human emotional issues is anticipated to present a conflict in process between the dominant culture's desire to maintain objectivity and the submissive culture's need for subjectivity. The conciliation of these two processes is thought to be possible through the utilization of the Medicine Wheel Model presented by Campbell, Levine, *et. al.* (MACAM 1999).

Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts by Saunders offers a practical approach to changing conflictual relationships over time. The main premise of the dialogue process as illustrated by Saunders is that "first it focuses on the dynamics of the underlying relationships that cause divisive problems, not just on the problem. Second, it focuses on changing those relationships, not just on choosing a policy direction or on dividing material goods or power in dispute through formal mediation or negotiation" (Saunders 1999, p.81). Saunders delineates a five-stage model for designing and implementing dialogue. Although the model appears linear, it is circular in that various elements of the stages are fluid and reappear in different stages at different times depending on the dynamics that emerge through the dialogue. A critical lesson offered by Saunders is that facilitators of dialogue must be prepared for resistance during the dialogue process. That resistance to moving forward by participants must be treasured at all times because that could be "a concentrated opportunity to unlock another door leading to progress" (Saunders 1999, p.93).

In *Resolving Identity Based Conflict in Nations, Organizations and Communities*, Rothman discusses The ARIA Framework, (Antagonism, Resonance, Intervention, Action). He provides examples of both international and national conflicts and argues that the root of those conflicts is in primary group identity. He says that when group identity is threatened conflict is inevitable. He, like Saunders, shows that dialogue can be used to address identity-based conflict. The ARIA framework delineates conflict as a source of creativity. In fact, Rothman says that “the ultimate goal of the ARIA framework is to foster harmony and resonance from adversaries’ full and honest expression of the deeply felt human motivations that lie beneath their conflict” (Rothman 1997, p.18). Like Saunders, Rothman offers concrete ways in which one can initiate dialogue and through dialogue engender reconciliation.

Healing Racism: Education’s Role is a collection of articles that deal with racism and education’s role in healing communities experiencing racism. Nathan Rutstein and Michael Morgan discuss in the introduction the importance of every educator’s role in the elimination of prejudice. The book as explained by the editors, “provides educators and parents with penetrating insights into the nature of the problem, and practical approaches on how to solve it” (Rutstein & Morgan 1999, x). For the purpose of this particular research project, several chapters in the book deal comprehensively with the topic of racism. Although examples in the book are typically those of the United States, several lessons can be drawn for the Canadian experience. For example in the United States it is often admitted that racism is a disease whilst in Canada our identity as a peace keeping nation makes us uncomfortable about admitting to the racism in our society. Additionally, the variation in topics and the

tools offered by the contributors' will be a starting point for the discussion of racism in this research project.

1.4 *Limitations of the Study*

The research faced several limitations, the first being the time span available was much shorter than is recommended for a Sustained Dialogue. The process of the research was rather too short making it impossible to completely analyze racism in all its different dimensions.. Although the topic of racism was discussed extensively more of that would have been useful had the process being ongoing for a year for example.

Also, the study initially hoped to address the relationship between the Cowichan peoples and Euro-Canadian population. However, we found that it was better to address racism as it affects all members of the community. Our Sustained Dialogue process focuses on the community, and the various racial divisions existent within it. Therefore, it was important that the citizens who participated in the dialogue process reflect the racial diversity of the community. We had to change our thinking immediately to suit the multicultural make-up of the participants. The discussions around racism were general although several examples of specific situations pertaining to aboriginal and Euro-Canadian populations were offered. In writing the final document it seemed more relevant to focus on the divide between the aboriginal community and non-aboriginal community since those experiences of racism mirror the general experience of the non-European immigrants to this valley. Additionally, it was agreed that when another dialogue process occurs the central parties would be the

aboriginal peoples and the Euro-Canadians. This would not necessarily preclude participation by non-European immigrants such as the Asian and African-Canadian residents.

Finally, a Sustained Dialogue process requires extensive time commitments from all participants and one of the drawbacks of the mini dialogue process is that we could not always guarantee full attendance. We often crossed our fingers and hoped that all the participants would be present at each meeting. As mentioned above, one member of the group was unable to attend all the scheduled meetings due to several constraints on time. The issue of full attendance would have to be addressed were a Sustained Dialogue process implemented in the Cowichan Valley community.

Chapter 2 Historical context of relationships amongst and between cultures

To understand racism in the Cowichan Valley one has to understand the history of the contact between aboriginal peoples in Canada and the European settlers of the North American continent. It began in 1492 when Christopher Columbus, under the aegis of Spain, and while attempting to find a passage to India, undertook a voyage that found him in a place that he named Hispaniola, in what is now called the Americas. Columbus' arrival can be termed the first wave of European contact. The British and French subsequently arrived on the continent in the 1490s and 1524 in search of new wealth. This search led to a history of colonization of the North American continent by the Europeans (Brizinski, 1993).

Colonialism took various forms but it had certain basic components.

...beginning with forced integration of the indigenous people into the dominant society on terms controlled by the dominant society. Second, under this definition of colonialism the colonizing power carries out a policy that constrains, transforms, or destroys the culture (and, we might add, the economy of the indigenous people). Third, racism is a system of the dominant power, especially in such a way as to be managed and manipulated in terms of their ethnic status (Ponting, 1986, p.84).

The colonialist policies, framed under the paternalistic guise of improving the lot of the indigenous populations through the process of so-called 'civilization' were aimed at controlling the aboriginal population through acculturation and assimilation and at directly bringing their land under the jurisdiction of the colonizers. In addition to this policy,

directives were formulated that dismissed aboriginal peoples as little more than impediments to be removed in the interests of progress and settlement. As Fleras and Elliott say of this process:

Through assimilation, the dominant sector sought to undermine the cultural distinctiveness of aboriginal peoples both from their own noxious cultural habits and from the vices of the outside world. In an effort to shield aboriginal peoples from dealing with unscrupulous whites, laws were enacted that prohibited the consumption of liquor, the private sale of land, and economic transactions with Europeans without the approval of Indian Affairs (Fleras & Elliott 1992, p.41).

It is against this general backdrop that the Cowichan peoples came into contact with European settlers. In pre-contact times, the Cowichan were settled in several villages along the full length of the Cowichan River and prospered greatly from their relationship with the sea. All this changed by 1843 when Fort Victoria was founded, bringing with it territorial expropriation and the Douglas treaties. (Paterson, 2000). Additionally, settlement in this region expanded due to “an immediate legacy of the Fraser River and the Cariboo gold rushes... the Cowichans never signed a treaty relinquishing their rights to the land and resources, nor have they been paid for it” (Paterson 2000, p.5).

As mentioned above the Europeans came in search of wealth. It is no wonder therefore that the Hudson’s Bay Company had prominence and a leadership role to play vis-à-vis contact with the Cowichans. The establishment of Fort Victoria in 1843 led to the company relocating its centre of operations to the southern end of Vancouver Island. (Marshall, 1999). As a result of the Cowichans asserting themselves against this hold the Europeans established

through the company, several confrontations ensued. To this end an uneasy partnership existed between these two peoples and continues to this day. Trade relations continued, the Europeans obtaining furs and the Indigenous Peoples seeking European trade items such as blankets and trinkets. The Cowichans respected the space claimed by the Europeans in Fort Victoria but they never ceded their territory to the Europeans. In fact it was due to “the determined proprietorial actions taken by the Cowichan peoples” (Marshall 1999, p.113) that no treaties were signed and most concerted efforts to take the land failed.

The Europeans did eventually make forays into Cowichan land and were helped immensely by the influx of more Europeans to the Fraser River due to the gold rush. As well, the introduction of infectious diseases such as smallpox wreaked havoc on the Indigenous population. With the blessing of Sir James Douglas , head of Fort Victoria, the largest number of European settlers (78 of them) arrived in 1862 in the Cowichan Valley on the “Royal Navy vessel HMS Hecate with a view to colonizing the ancient and as yet untouched land” (Norcross 1975, p.11). This was the beginning of the implementation of colonial policies in this part of the vast land of what we now call Canada. The settlers sought gold and land that were effectively stolen from the original inhabitants and presented to them (the settlers) as ‘untouched land’ available for farming and logging. Some of the Europeans believed that Indigenous Peoples had the same concept of land ownership as was the case in Europe. Based on this, there were many misunderstandings concerning the transfer of land; settlers were not aware that there had not been a formal transfer of ownership (as they understood it). They assumed that the government had legitimately acquired the land from

the Indigenous Peoples. This misunderstanding continues today and has been cause for much acrimony between the two peoples.

Furthermore, the relationship between the two peoples was formalized as colonizer and colonized when “in 1871 the United Colony of British Columbia joined Canada as a new province and the responsibility for First Nations peoples was transferred to the federal government” (Marshall 1999, p.130). The components of colonialism as described earlier all manifested themselves in the relationship between the two peoples. And the Cowichan Peoples have always protested and resisted colonialism formally and informally.

In 1906, three Salish chiefs made an epic journey to London, England to seek redress for the many inequities that had occurred to First Nations peoples since the creation of the two colonies of Vancouver Island (1849) and British Columbia (1858). For the Cowichan tribes, much had happened since the arrival of the HMS Hecate in 1862, and relations between a succession of colonial, provincial, and federal governments had only served to make social, economic, and political conditions worse. (Marshall 1999, p.2000).

The Europeans on the other hand, insisted that contact with First Nations brought them the value of civilization and would improve the lot of the indigenous populations. This view led to the need on the part of the Europeans to acculturate and assimilate the Indigenous Peoples. Gibbins and Ponting have noted that:

If there has been a central pillar to Canadian-Indian policy, it has been assimilation. While the terminology has varied from “assimilation”, “integration”, “civilization”, and “moving unto the mainstream”, the policy has

remained virtually unaltered; Indians were to be prepared for absorption into the broader Canadian society. It was expected that eventually Indians would shed their native languages, customs, and religious beliefs and become self-sufficient members of Canadian society (Gibbins & Ponting 1986, 25-26).

The roots of racism and the seeds of the conflict were evidently sown very early on in the history of the relationship between the Cowichans and settlers. It is therefore important to contextualize the conflict between the races that we presently witness in our community, recognizing the historic roots..

It is against this historical backdrop, and a relationship designed by colonialism to be unequal that we attempt to introduce Sustained Dialogue. A process that, we hope, can begin to change the past relationship from one of mutual disrespect to one of mutual respect and understanding.

Chapter 3 Analysis of the Phenomenon of Racism and the Role of Identity in this Conflict

This chapter will attempt to define racism and conflict and to delineate identity theory, demonstrating how these are connected to the phenomenon known as racism. Case studies will illustrate how racism and identity interlock and how each of these elements can explain the conflict between the races in our community.

Racism, as we discovered in the dialogue process, is not an easy phenomenon to define. The dialogue group members settled on the definition of racism as a concept that *one race is superior to the other based on race*. The group said that a number of identifying-words came to mind when they thought of racism. These include: fear and power, power imbalance, intolerance, bias, exploitative, superiority, hatred, anger, ignorance and ‘us and them’ (Sustained Dialogue Group, 2000).

In their book, Bolaria and Li attempt to refute, through their analysis and evidence, the “erroneous view that race is a biological question and that racial conflicts arise from cultural misunderstanding. The oppression of racial groups is by no means a historical accident, but is rooted in the social and economic development of Canadian society” (Bolaria & Li 1988, p.14). When addressing racism, it is critical that we are clear about the distinctions between institutional and individual racism. According to Bolaria and Li, individual racism refers to the attitudes of individuals and is distinct from institutional racism which “involves both a racist theory and a social practice embedded in institutions that systematically exclude

subordinate members from equal participation and treatment in society” (Bolaria & Li 1988, p.30).

The conflict addressed in the dialogue process has been termed protracted social conflict. Protracted social conflict as Azar notes, is the focus of this type of conflict “religious, cultural, or ethnic communal identity, which in turn is dependent upon the satisfaction of basic needs such as those for security, communal recognition and distributive justice” (Azar 1990, p.2). Azar’s definition is appealing to me because it addresses the issues of security and identity as central elements. The threat of security and of identity are evident in the phenomenon of racism and as is discussed in this paper is salient to any analysis of racism.

Identity theory postulates that the dynamic of identity is the “tendency for human beings, individually and in groups, to establish, maintain and protect a sense of self-meaning, predictability, and purpose” (Northrup 1989, p.63). Identity plays an important role in conflictual relationships; hence, its application to racism as a phenomenon in our community. Northrup illustrates further that identity is considered to be very important in conflictual relationships because it is an “ abiding sense of selfhood that is the core of what makes life predictable to an individual” (Northrup 1989, p.64) and to a group.

The evidence of the relationship between the Cowichan peoples and the settlers as illustrated in the historical chapter of this paper indicates that their sense of selfhood was threatened by the colonial policies of the Europeans and that the seeds of racism were sown through the assumptions made about the people as uncivilized and requiring change. And, on the other

hand, the European settlers felt that rejection of their values by the aboriginal peoples had threatened their identity and when necessary force was used to maintain and even impose that identity on others. The assimilationist policies are a clear evidence of this factor. The salience of identity also lies in the fact that:

identity is conceived of as more than a psychological sense of self; it encompasses a sense that one is safe in the world physically, psychologically, socially, even spiritually. Events which threaten to invalidate the core sense of identity will elicit defensive responses aimed at avoiding psychic and/or physical annihilation. Identity is postulated to operate in this way not only in relation to interpersonal conflict but also in conflict between groups (Northrup 1989, p.64).

Two tenets of social identity theory are particularly relevant to this discussion; social identity seems to supercede personal identity because racism is directed towards aboriginal peoples as a whole, therefore, in the discussions, group membership was more frequently emphasized. Identification with a particular group throughout the dialogue process made social identity a core construct. For example people defined themselves in relation to their group/communities, that is as whites or aboriginal or East Indian.

The other tenet of social identity that is relevant in understanding our conversations about racism in the dialogue process is the notion of common fate or shared threat. The sense of a collective identity was most apparent in the discussions as well.

3.1 Case Illustrations

The following case illustrations provide a vivid picture of the role identity plays in the conflict of racism. Several examples of racism were provided by participants four of which are clear indications of how racism and identity are intertwined. They include the following:

3.1.1 Example 1

An aboriginal participant in the group indicated that the term “minority” seems to be widely accepted to describe those who are not members of the dominant group in Canada and that for him the term connotes someone who is lesser than. In this case it implies that as an aboriginal person he is lesser than those who are of the dominant group and are termed “white.”

The term minority indicates a threat to this person’s being. From the lens of his experiences and culture, he sees this terminology as a put down therefore diminishing his sense of self. As an aboriginal person of this land he does not wish to be lumped in with the new immigrants on the basis that his skin color is similar to those immigrants, particularly those from non-European backgrounds. By lumping aboriginal people in this group, their identity as the First Nations and distinct peoples is obscured and in some cases even diminished.

From the perspective of one of the group members who is an immigrant from a non-European background the term, minority, only means a numerical identification by the

government to indicate the number of citizens who are immigrants to the country and that this terminology is not seen in any way as a threat to his identity. The discussion serves to highlight the point that aboriginal peoples see their relationship with the dominant Euro-Canadian culture in terms of power imbalance. The historical relations that were established at contact obviously affect the reactions and interactions between these communities.

3.1.2 Example 2

A second case illustration is about the visibility of a group of people who look different, for instance, the gathering of Sikhs in turbans in a particular place is taken as a threat. The question that was raised around this issue was that 'why do people feel threat and not curiosity when they encounter such visible difference'. There was some indication that those who feel this threat think that a certain place in their world would disappear and that they would experience loss if they accept such difference into their society. It was also argued that central to this is the fear of economic loss. People fear that they would lose their jobs if too many people who look visibly different come into their community. They therefore react to keep these people out of the mainstream. Northrup illustrates the above threat or perception of loss:

loss is central to the hypothesized relationship between identity conflict in both interpersonal and intergroup conflict. The loss of any central aspect of the self is threatening, since it makes living more random, makes the world less predictable and more frightening (Northrup 1987, p.66).

The reaction of the dominant group members in turn generates a loss on the part of those they affect resulting in a cycle of conflict. Fear on both sides keeps them apart from each other therefore creating a divided community and prohibiting each side from coming to know and understand the other.

3.1.3 Example 3

Another example of elements that foster racism is the reporting of news about non-dominant group members in the media that goes unquestioned. For example the media reporting of Vietnamese gangs in Vancouver, with its emphasis on their identity, created difficulties for Vietnamese immigrants to the city. For example some immigrant service organizations noted that several Vietnamese people were unable to rent apartments because they were perceived to belong to gangs. The dialogue group addressed this concern because they all agreed that this style of reporting reinforced stereotypes and generated racist attitudes towards those named in negative reporting of this fashion.

The emphasis on the identity of the criminals they said, happened because they were Vietnamese, and that when whites commit similar offenses their ethnic identity is not even mentioned. The increasing perception of Vietnamese people as criminal is dangerous, and that kind of reporting is rooted in the divisions that exist in this culture. It is clear that identity becomes a negative factor for those who are targeted in this style of reporting. The question often raised in the group was ‘are they criminals because they are Vietnamese?’ ‘And what was the point in explicitly informing the public of their ethnic identity?’

There was also discussion about prejudice against Germans because of World War II and the holocaust. Although the participants who discussed this did not have experience either directly, or through relations who experienced the holocaust, their identity as a target group of Nazism fueled this prejudice. Like the case above the German identity became a source of prejudice because of history. In fact one participant said that she did not like Germans at some point in her life because of the stories she heard as a child about German atrocities towards Jews. Those Germans felt prejudice toward were also Canadian citizens and might not even have had anything to do with the holocaust.

3.1.4 Example 5

There was one incident described by a group member that was not clearly indicative of racism, although intuitively that was his experience. It therefore goes to show that identity can be complex and not always a discernible factor in conflict. This person had worked in a home for young people and when an opportunity came up for a better position he applied for it and was denied the position after the interview. Given his qualifications and experience he felt he should have gotten the job. It was evident to him that his skin color was a barrier in this case to his promotion and he appealed it but since he couldn't prove that it was identity that blocked the opportunity his case was dismissed.

3.1.5 Summary

To conclude, the preceding examples illustrated a common thread, that of identity and social identity theories as strong linkages in the conflict of racism. It is evident that peoples' identities make them targets for racism and those who exhibit these tendencies do so because they have a certain identity that they feel is superior. And when they perceive that their superiority is threatened in any way they react negatively. The social conflict that emerges from this cycle is racism leaving us to conclude that racism is deeply rooted in identity and social identity theories.

Chapter 4 Sustained Dialogue as an Intervention Method (Relationship: The Backbone of Sustained Dialogue)

Inherent in the strategy of Sustained Dialogue is changing conflictual relationships. Relationship is thus a key concept. This chapter will address the concept of relationship and examine how the six elements of relationship relate to the question of racism in the Cowichan Valley (Saunders, 1999).

The concept of relationship from Saunders' perspective is dynamic and is the "context in which human beings bring together, apply and test in their intercourse with other human beings all of the insights about life that help them understand and act" (Saunders 1999, p.34). Relationships easily create a mutual respect and that in turn enables individuals to hear each other out. Additionally, opportunities are created for those in conflict to assess and change their relationships for the better.

Saunders suggests that the six elements of relationship that can change conflictual relationships include:

- i) Identity of the parties;
- ii) A coexistence of interests and needs that lead to interdependence,
- iii) A process and pattern of interaction;
- iv) The nature and working of effective power;
- v) Limits on behavior, and;
- vi) Evolving perceptions.

The dialogue process undertaken in the Cowichan Valley demonstrated all of these elements. Although there was no immediate incident that the group was dealing with at the time, there was a will to examine our community in-depth and to introduce relationship building as a concept to the wider Cowichan community

The first of the six elements, identity of the parties, is particularly important in this research. As demonstrated in previous chapters, identity has played a huge role in the conflict of racism in this community. The question of identity surfaced often in our group discussions and members frequently indicated indirectly that who they are often influenced their perceptions and experiences with racism. For the members who identified as aboriginal it was clear that the dominant society's inability to recognize their place as original owners of Canada, and the Cowichan valley in particular, has negatively affected their relationships with the those of the dominant culture.

Also, there was recognition that some of the members belonged to a dominant culture and with it came privileges from which others of non-dominant cultures were excluded. In fact it is at the point of analyzing identity that each individual is able to acknowledge his or her complicity in the racism that exists in the society. The group agreed that until they had a common understanding of racism and unless acknowledgement of ongoing racism was given, there was not much chance of moving forward or changing our relationships. In other words who we are influences our experiences and perception of racism. When we dealt with individual identities I felt a noticeable shift in the energy levels and the enthusiasm of the

group. It gave me a sense that the group understood the importance of the role of identity in any conflict.

The second element of relationship is a coexistence of interests and needs that lead to interdependence. This factor was also evident in our group process although the question of why we chose to participate in this process was not directly asked. The question of why any of those people was a member of a group that sought to deal with the problem of racism in this community was implicitly answered by the identities of the group members. Each participant's ethnic identity and personal experiences impacted their will to address the problem of racism. The answer was therefore too obvious and it would not have been appropriate to ask such a question. This leads me to the notion of interests and needs.

The group members, from the stories and experiences they shared, were drawn to the dialogue process by similar interests and needs. They each understood that they had goals and needs related to the question at hand that they could not address without the help of others with different and varied identities. In fact participants mentioned several times that the problem of racism was everybody's problem and that the community as a whole was required to deal with it; only then could racism be dealt with effectively. Acknowledging that the whole community had to address the problem of racism is a clear indication of the understanding that people are interdependent.. This further illustrates that in the dialogue group we recognized that we had relationships with each other and that it is through positive and strong relationships that deep-rooted conflicts such as racism can be effectively managed.

As a mini- dialogue group, we agreed that a larger dialogue process in the community would be beneficial because “when it is possible to bring one party to understand through another’s deeply felt interests and hurts-imagined or real-then relationships begin to change” (Saunders 1999, p.37). As each person in our group shared his/her stories, understanding and empathy was clearly built and we felt an affinity towards each other because of this kind of sharing.

A relationship is only possible through a process and pattern of continuing interaction.

This is the third element of relationship and the dialogue process clearly demonstrated that through repeated interaction people develop relationships. If we had met only once to talk about racism we know the results would have been different from those achieved by participating in several group meetings. Even though our dialogue process was brief, our dialogue demonstrated to us that a longer process would have resulted in much stronger relationships. Stronger relationships do not necessarily mean that disharmony would not emerge, but that disharmony would likely be dealt with differently. Stronger relationships would create an environment of trust and respect and when disharmony emerges it would be less threatening and could be dealt with more effectively. It could be argued that we were just in the forming stage and that, as more difficult issues arose, divisions would emerge, creating conflict and disharmony. However, it is my judgment that the seeds for strong relationships have been sown in the mini- dialogue group and continued, structured group interaction would have allowed them to grow and blossom.

Through interaction people influence each other and more communication occurs. The depth of that communication can reveal more of the interests and needs as well as the identities of those involved in such a process. This is a demonstration of how real and sustainable change can be initiated through the Sustained Dialogue process. In our group we discussed the fact that racism focuses on group identity and on group attributes as well as stereotypes. After one comes to know people on a personal basis one learns about their personal identity and attributes directly, often replacing formerly applied stereotypes.

The fourth element of relationship is the nature and working of effective power. Saunders argues that if power is treated as “the capacity to change the course of events or to make things happen” (Saunders 1999, p.39). Power then is not a question of controlling another or power over, but power with. By working together people also create power as was often articulated by our group members. We discovered that by working together we could change the situation as it is now with racism in our community. We recognized in our group that people do have power and that the problem of racism can be addressed effectively if we recognize that it is not legislation that would change racist attitudes, but that understanding and appreciation would enable a shift away from racism to happen. As demonstrated earlier, understanding and appreciation can come about through relationships. Thus the emphasis for change can be put on building strong relationships and changing negative relationships to positive ones. Through the commitment to change situations and events people working together will therefore create power.

Limits on Behavior is the fifth element of relationship delineated by Saunders and it emphasizes that through relationships we develop sensitivity towards each other. When people get to know one another they appreciate the identities and integrity and self-esteem of the other and learn what causes the other's pain. A good example of the limits on behavior is in the use of language that we discussed in our group. It was suggested for example that people quickly learn the use of the right language to preserve others' dignity through interaction and through relationships, not merely because of political correctness, but because language can express either disdain or affirmation.

Lastly, an evolving perception of relationships emerges through individuals discovering the influences which shapes their perceptions of the other. We all have stereotypes of other peoples because of our preconceived ideas of how various racial, national and religious groups are expected to behave. These stereotypes can be eroded or completely erased through multiple interactions with those unlike us. Sustained Dialogue offers such an interaction and the Sustained Dialogue envisaged in the future for Cowichan valley will offer such an opportunity.

Our group experience confirms the possibility for Sustained Dialogue and its accompanying benefits to the people in the Cowichan Valley. Additionally, a shared problem-solving scenario as well as the ability to solve problems together will change relationships. This is an expectation that we all have for any future dialogue process. Furthermore, our group discussed the power of language and the ability to use language to segregate and to reinforce

stereotypes. It was then agreed that it is important that we form relationships because it is through relationships that we would seize to use language that segregates us.

An interesting example offered by one of the group members was the use of skin color to describe individuals. We discussed the importance of desisting from the use of such language and to attempt not to focus solely on the ethnic origin of those we term people of color when we talk about them. In other words we should not selectively address some people by their color and others by their names because of their dominant group status. For example some people are often heard to describe others by their skin color, then their name. “you know that black woman, Jane? How about just addressing the person as Jane, the accountant. It was illustrated in this discussion that when this occurs it creates a culture of exclusion in our society. Additionally, the group discussed the media’s role in reinforcing certain stereotypes by constantly referring to gangs as ‘Asian or Vietnamese’ and not doing so when the gangs are of European ancestry. By doing so it creates the impression that only those of Asian descent are gangsters. It was agreed that when a larger dialogue process occurs in the community this should be a part of the discussion.

A further discussion ensued regarding the Canadian multicultural identity and the importance of not bunching certain ethnic groups together as the multicultural community, but acknowledging that the multicultural Canada includes all Canadians, not only the people who are designated ‘people of color’.

These discussions gave our group the confidence that the success of the mini- dialogue process can be replicated in a larger group and that much would be accomplished were such a process to occur in this community. In other words the seeds of the dialogue process have been laid down through that mini-dialogue process

Chapter 5 Analysis of Sustained Dialogue and Its Application to Racism in the Cowichan Valley

In this chapter the tenets of Sustained Dialogue will be delineated and the question of why this strategy would be useful for the particular situation in the Cowichan valley will be answered. Additionally, I will show how the dialogue process is a useful instrument of intervention for addressing racism. How the dialogue was implemented, its shortcomings as well as its benefits would also be discussed here.

Sustained Dialogue is defined by Saunders as:

an interactive process designed to change conflictual relationships over time-is different from the usual public policy discussions and from formal mediation and negotiation. First it focuses on the dynamics of the underlying relationships that cause divisive problems, not just on the problems. Second, it focuses on changing those relationships, not just on just on choosing a policy direction or on dividing material goods or power in dispute through formal mediation or negotiation (Saunders 1999, 2000).

It is these assumptions of the dialogue process that makes the strategy an appropriate tool for dealing with the problem of racism. Racism is a human relations problem that requires a change in relationships as well as in peoples' attitudes. Also, inherent in the dialogue process is the belief that citizens have immense power to effect change. In fact, Saunders defines power as "the capacity to change the course of events" (Saunders 1999, p.20). Sustained Dialogue offers the framework within which change can be designed and implemented by citizens to build healthy communities. This is possible because "dialogue is a process of

genuine interaction through which human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they hear. Each makes a serious effort to take the others' concern into her or his own picture, even when disagreement persists" (Saunders 1999, p.82).

Additionally, perspectives can be changed through dialogue due to the fact that minds open and are filled with new information about other people and groups. When this happens assumptions about the other can be modified based on observed behaviour and actions. Dialogue allows for exchange and better relationships can be developed through such a process. A further value of Sustained Dialogue is that an opportunity is created for people to put their minds and energies together to work towards a common goal. Most importantly, "inherent in dialogue is the potential for growth, change, movement and direction. As 'individuals incorporate others' views into their pictures of a situation, their perspectives are enlarged" (Saunders 1999, p.84). As people work together in partnership they work toward a common ground, they also change their relationships. In achieving common ground it is always imperative that the needs, fears, hopes and concerns of all involved be taken into consideration and that is an ingredient for changing relationships.

A critical element of dialogue is openness and that implies vulnerability. Furthermore, dialogue "may require one human being to recognize her or his own responsibility for part of the other's pain" (Saunders 1999, p.85). This factor is very relevant to the experiences we had in our dialogue group, as was demonstrated through the medicine wheel. For it was only after the exercise of each one of us acknowledging our complicity in the problem of racism were we able to see the value of even engaging in such a process.

Given all that is said about the value of dialogue it is relevant for the situation in this particular community. As the historical context discussed in chapter 2 illustrates, the roots of the racial divide in the Cowichan Valley extend back several generations. It was agreed in the dialogue group that there is an obvious divide between the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities that is unhealthy for everyone who lives in the valley. To this end the group would like to see something done and is prepared to be the catalyst for the required change.

The dialogue group of the Cowichan Valley is an initial attempt at community bridge building. Therefore it is useful at this juncture to show how the process was implemented and how it functioned as an intervention method. The co-facilitators expected the group to consist mostly of Cowichan members and Euro-Canadians and as it turned out the group was rather multicultural and that reflected more of the diversity of the community as well as the Canadian reality. This was particularly useful in that our group was reflective of the racial diversity of the city of Duncan, , a goal that the city (our sponsor) constantly aims at attaining.

At the initial gathering of the group members, the discussed the role of the facilitators and clarified for the group the importance of knowing that they were there as individual participants and not as representative of any group or organization. As facilitators, we outlined the conceptual framework to the group and offered an outline of the direction we hoped to proceed in. As the dialogue process is group driven, we explained to the participants the need for the entire group to design the ground rules for proceeding. At the

meeting at which the ground rules were set, each participant discussed what he/she would need to comfortably participate in the discussion. The facilitators also outlined how they could meet those needs and presented our own needs.

Through discussions around the specific stories that they shared, we tried to assist the group to understand how dialogue is a different way of approaching issues. We also assisted in keeping to the schedules that the group agreed to. When participants expressed the need to leave meetings on time we worked with the group in adhering to that. This was an important way of showing respect to the needs of the group members. And, as facilitators we engaged fully in all the discussions. In fact, from the initial meeting, we shared our experiences and stories with the group highlighting our personal interests in the issue of racism. This interest went beyond the academic requirements and, although we were motivated by the academic requirements in terms of the time required to complete the work, we had very personal reasons for participating in the project.

Throughout the process, we used the medicine wheel as a guidepost and set the direction. We took turns leading the discussions and when necessary the roles reversed during the process. Our facilitation styles are similar as we both appreciate flexibility and demonstrated that throughout the process. We did not attempt to structure our roles. This accorded us the opportunity to truly have free flowing conversations with each other. This style allowed for an easy flow of ideas and for storytelling. We usually posted the topics we thought could be discussed on a flipchart. After we reviewed previous discussions and once the group agreed to the topic at hand, we proceeded with the discussions.

We shared with the group the Reconciliation Wheel as well as the theoretical foundations of the poles of the Wheel and how we intended to use it as a road map to our destination. The poles of the Wheel as explained in the methodology chapter include Acknowledgement, Forgiveness, Justice, and Peace. We explained that our hope was to make it through to the Justice pole of the wheel and that if we were unable to make it through to the end of the pole that too would be acceptable. We started the discussion with the definition of racism and the definition had to be what we each understood racism to mean and not what the dictionary definition was. We discovered that it was not easy to define this phenomenon and in the end the group agreed that racism is a concept that one race is superior to the other based on race. And several identifying words were indicative of racism and these include: fear and power, power imbalance, intolerance, bias, exploitative, superiority, hatred, 'us and them', ignorance and anger (Dialogue Group, 2000).

Initially, the discussions were very general but, as time went on, group members shared personal experiences and stories, indicating a new comfort level with and among group members. The sharing of these stories and experiences helped each of the participants understand and appreciate the others' perspectives. As Saunders notes " dialogue is a process of genuine interaction through which human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they hear. Each makes a serious effort to take the others' concern into her or his own picture, even when disagreement persists" (Saunders 1999,p. 82). An example of individuals truly listening and appreciating other's views was evidenced in the discussion of First Nations perspective on not being addressed as minorities because of

the implication that the people termed such are minors and that the status as the First peoples of this country is eroded when that term is used. There was some disagreement on this topic and yet there was honest discussion on this subject and I believe that in the end the group came to some appreciation of the aboriginal perspective of this issue even if there was not complete agreement on the matter.

A further example of the value of dialogue emerged half way through the process when it was noticeable that the members of the group felt more comfortable with each other enabling them to share more of their stories. By the end of the short Sustained Dialogue process, group members freely joked and bantered back and forth with each other. This was clear indication that talking about personal experiences in the way that the dialogue process allowed, also offered the opportunity for collaboration on more crucial issues; people were building the relationship foundations that would allow them to confront more serious issues. There was much discussion about the role each individual could play in addressing the issue of racism. The group also realized that a broader community effort is required to effectively address the problem of racism. Most importantly, the community as a whole has to agree that there is a problem of racism and that it would like to deal with racism in a constructive way.

Although there was clear agreement in the group on the issue of racism and how it should be handled in this particular community, there was also a clear distinction in perspective between members of First Nations and that of the other group members. This was evident in the discussion of the term minority used to describe those of the non-dominant Canadian

population. As discussed earlier, the term was seen to be only an objective descriptive term with no negative or positive attributives by those group members who are not members of First Nations. For one First Nations person in particular this term implied that those termed minority are seen as minors and, by definition, unable to look after their own affairs.

Additionally, there was much discussion around the concept of multiculturalism in Canada and how that concept tended to lump First Nations people together with immigrants who are non-white. By doing so the society tends to forget that First Nations people are not immigrants, in fact the attempt to forget that all the Europeans in this country are immigrants is problematic for First Nations. To be treated as immigrants in their own land is demeaning to them and further undermines their identity as a people. It was argued that this tendency is a further attempt to reinforce the myth of the two founding Nations of Canada. That is the myth that Canada was founded by the French and the English.

The group discussed the fact that the Cowichan people do not frequently participate in committees and various activities organized by those of the dominant culture as attempts to bridge the relationship gap between the two communities. The group was informed that the nature of these invitations has been problematic for the Cowichan people. The invitations as was explained often came as a top-down affair and were reminders of the subordination of the Cowichans. It was said that decisions to proceed with bridge building were not collaborative. Also, that the dominant culture devised strategies for addressing problems that affect the whole community and only seeks input from the Cowichan. This style, it was

argued does not create true partnership but only perpetuates the unequal relationship set in place by colonialism.

Additionally, the issue of the Cowichan identity and the Cowichan way of life is said to be ignored when such hierarchical processes are undertaken. For example, to be asked to participate in a committee to deal with the issue of racism without actually talking to the Cowichan about their perspective on the matter is not collaborative. It would have been more useful to talk together to determine the need for such a committee and what this committee ought to look like. Furthermore, the place or venue for committee meetings is an important consideration, a place outside their territory was deemed to be exclusionary. We were told that so many more Cowichan people would participate if meetings were sometimes held on their territory. This confirms to me that the identity is not only about emotional space but that geographical and physical space are all critical factors that ought to be taken into account in the process of relationship building. As is evident from our experience with this dialogue group, the process offers an opportunity to share feelings and ideas and when this occurs relationships do change. It also indicates that through the dialogue process groups can work together to deal with specific problems.

Finally, several shortcomings were noted from this dialogue group. The first of these was the time limitation that the facilitators faced. The group members recognized the need for a longer process. They could see how Sustained Dialogue would have been much more useful, creating sustainable shifts in the community's attitude toward racism, if the process had been able to continue over a longer time period. This particular process was not long enough to be

called Sustained Dialogue. And more participants from a cross section of the community would have been more enriching. Although this dialogue process was purely experimental, I think the group membership could have been broader. Also because the process was not sustained we did not get an opportunity to discuss each issue in great detail . As a facilitator I felt that more time could have been spent discussing points that were raised by each member. Topics that could have been dealt with for about three or four meetings were handled in one or two due to the time constraints.

When we launched the process, we expected that there would be more dissent and disagreement than was the case. As we analyzed the potential reasons for this, we concluded that there would have been more dissent and disagreement, had the process extended over a longer period. The extra time would have ensured that people went deeper into the issues and discussed in detail the fundamental causes of racism in the community. I expect that this would have been an issue where there would have been a diversity of strongly held opinions, perhaps creating disharmony and possible conflict.

As we saw when we discussed the issues of identities and terminologies group members gave different interpretations, for example the discussion around ‘minorities’ is an indication of how more of that could have happened. Fortunately, all of the group members were receptive, respectful and open to new perspectives.

We knew from Saunders that dialogue discourages debate. Had more dissent occurred, we would have encouraged it and assisted the group with sharing their perspective through

dialogue, rather than debate. The reason for discouraging debate is that dialogue emphasizes analysis whilst debate encourages persuasion and argument with the aim of the best argument winning (Saunders, 1999).

An additional shortcoming was in the limited number of participants we had. It is recommended that a dozen or more people are an ideal number for a dialogue group and we had 10 people including the facilitators. I think that 12 plus the facilitators would have provided a wider range of perspectives. And we should have had more participants from the Cowichan Nation.

Although the group faced the above shortcomings, the benefits of even this mini -dialogue process made the effort worthwhile for the facilitators as well as the participants. Firstly, the process allowed us all to reflect on the question of racism in a way that a one-time meeting would not have permitted. By taking the time to really agree on exactly what we as a group meant by racism we had the opportunity to systematically address this matter. We also had the opportunity to work together for a long period of time and not in an isolated and fragmented fashion.

Secondly, the process gave us each the confidence that we have the power to change relationships and negative situations like racism. We each realized that we have the capacity to effect change. As was discussed several times in the group, the issue of racism also requires a whole community involvement and that legislation was not the only way to deal with racism. Thirdly, the dialogue process has created a body of experience that can be used

to design other dialogue processes around difficult issues that the community faces. There was expressed interest by some group members to employ this strategy for systematically teaching community members to deal with commonplace issues. In fact the intercultural society has received funding to address racism in the schools and it has indicated an interest in employing Sustained Dialogue as a strategy. That interest has been generated from the fact that, as a learning tool, Sustained Dialogue offers a new approach to teaching that is not present in the school system.

Fourthly, the dialogue process taught us a different way of relating to each other, one that aims at fostering positive relationships. Even though our dialogue process was short we have an appreciation for the closeness that participants can feel for each other by engaging in Sustained Dialogue. We each developed an appreciation as well as sensitivity to the interests and needs of the others and an understanding for their perspectives. We were also able to develop a mutual respect for each other.

Lastly, Sustained Dialogue requires an atmosphere of trust in order that participants can share their true feelings. The fact that we were all able to achieve this was hugely useful as a learning experience. The creation of a safe space and how one achieves that in practical terms became very real for us, particularly for the co-facilitators. We had to structure our discussions in such a way that this aspect of the process was prominent. Even the choice of the physical location was made based on the issue of a safe environment.

Chapter 6 Recommendations

As the project involves action research, the facilitators are sharing this project with the Mayor's Advisory Committee on racism as well as the participants of the Sustained Dialogue process.

As a result of the Sustained Dialogue process the participants developed a number of insights into the issue of racism in the Cowichan Valley. The following recommendations, divided into those that were developed by the group, and those that were developed by ourselves, the group facilitators, are offered to the community.

6.1 Group Recommendations

1. It is recommended that education should be used as a tool for dealing with racism in the Cowichan Valley. It is assumed that through education racist attitudes can be changed. The focus of the education should be in the schools particularly in the elementary schools. It is recommended that a dialogue process be structured that would not be seen by the school administrations as an interference. That the dialogue process should be multicultural and involve more social activities that include both parents and students. The group also believed that relationship building might be a better topic through which we can get to the question of racism. It is believed that such a structure would foster better understanding between and among the races and that would in turn build respect and trust. It is recognized that building relationships

minimizes negative attitudes and creates better appreciation for where the other is coming from.

2. The group was definite in recommending a Sustained Dialogue strategy for the Cowichan Valley. It is recommended that such a process involve a broader spectrum of individuals from the community and continue over a longer period. For example participants should come from the business community, schools, churches, multicultural associations, the temples and mosques, media, and Cowichan people. These individuals should be participating in the dialogue process because they truly desire to see positive and better race relations in this community. The above criteria must inform the selection of participants. The participants also have to be respectful and reflective individuals who are able and willing to talk and share ideas with others with whom they do not agree. The participants should be representative of the variety of perspectives within this community. The participants also have to realize that they have to take initiative and be willing to set the direction for the dialogue. In other words they cannot expect the facilitator or convenor to set and control the agenda of dialogue meetings. These participants must have some relationships to official channels so that outcomes decided through dialogue can be implemented both at the political and community levels. Finally, such a dialogue process must avoid at all costs those with extreme views on the subject of racism. The group ought to start the process with establishing common ground and extremists can easily derail such a process from the start. Those with extreme views who might want to participate in the

process can be brought in after the initial groundwork has been laid and common ground has been established.

3. It is recommended that citizenship education within a multicultural context should be carried out throughout the community. This can be done through workshops initiated by the city or other community groups. For example the 'Together Against Violence' organization has set precedent for this type of citizenship education from which lessons can be learned and strategies borrowed for addressing the question of racism in this community.
4. It is recommended that the community and particularly the Mayor's office commit the necessary financial and human resources necessary for a Sustained Dialogue. It was said that oftentimes communities that seriously require community bridge building to take place do not undertake such projects because too much focus is placed on the lack of financial and human resources and that this easily becomes a stumbling block for bringing about change. We know of several such dialogue groups that have taken place in the United States and have been supported financially by peace foundations. Through effective networking this community can tap into some of these resources in order to carry out its dialogue process.
5. Finally, it is recommended that the dialogue process be Sustained. Sustained Dialogue as the name implies requires an extensive period of time and if a Sustained Dialogue process is to be undertaken in this community then we must be prepared to

commit the necessary time to it. An example of a Sustained Dialogue process is one that occurred in Baton Rouge, Louisiana for 5 years. The process resulted in many positive experiences and has helped the community forge ahead in a positive direction. We can learn many lessons from the Baton Rouge Sustained Dialogue group.

6.2 *Personal and Professional Recommendations*

This project and the accompanying research has allowed the deepening and broadening of my understanding of the issue of racism and how identity plays a role in the phenomenon of racism. This understanding has therefore enabled me to develop a number of recommendations for mitigating and managing the situation.

1. I would recommend that the Mayor's Advisory Committee on racism or the Mayor of Duncan make a personal visit to the Cowichan Tribes council, and to other community groups such as the Sikh community, to present the issue of racism as a problem that it sees and obtain input as to whether the council has a similar view. If so then inquire as to how they propose the Cowichan community approach the problem. This is important because it suggests a partnership and is more of a collaborative approach.
2. A change in communication style is also recommended. It would be more useful to communicate with the tribal Council as well as community groups and organizations through personal meetings as well as by letters of invitation. This would take into

account oral and written cultures that are both prevalent in this society. People would feel more included when they recognize that culturally relevant methods of communication are reflected in the actions of those attempting to address racism in this community.

3. Any dialogue process in this community must emphasize reconciliation and trust-building. Trust is the foundation of any relationship and until trust can be established it would be difficult to improve race relations in the Cowichan Valley. Trust would mean different things to different people therefore the community would have to agree on what trust means so that people can begin the necessary relationship building from the same starting point. Given that trust flows both ways, all those concerned and willing to do something about race relations would have to acknowledge and accept this fact. The resource people required to facilitate trust-building sessions are available in our community and have indicated interest in participating in a project of this nature. For a larger Sustained Dialogue process to be successful, participants have to appreciate the notion of reconciliation. This means that the following process has to occur, acknowledgment, forgiveness, justice, and peace. As the wheel in Chapter One of this paper illustrates, by undertaking such a process participants can free their minds and can be open to dealing with each other to develop and nurture more positive relationships. The importance of reconciliation lies in the fact that it supports a culture of truth through acknowledgement of responsibility and accountability.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

This paper has attempted to delineate the historical factors that have created racism and that continue to influence the phenomenon of racism in the Cowichan Valley.

In Canada, colonization of aboriginal people and attempts by successive Canadian governments to “Canadianize” aboriginal peoples has resulted in deep divisions. These divisions have influenced the relationships between the dominant European cultures and aboriginal people as well as those cultures that are not European in origin. Although this is the root of the problem of racism, particularly in the case of the Cowichan Valley, Canada has made inroads in addressing this issue through the implementation of its multiculturalism policies. However, the notion of the Canadian multiculturalism has not been easy for many Canadians to internalize. Fortunately, it provides a fertile ground from which strategies such as Sustained Dialogue can successfully be implemented.

Chapter One outlines the methodology that the facilitators employed to address the problem of racism. The action research methodology employed enabled us to use the strategy of Sustained Dialogue to analyze and better understand the problem of racism in our community. Furthermore, both action research and Sustained Dialogue allow participants the opportunity to utilize the findings of the research as tools for change. Another approach employed to address the topic at hand was the use of the medicine wheel as a visual tool for understanding the notion of reconciliation, which is a central element of Sustained Dialogue. The reconciliation wheel as was presented to the group is presented in Figure 1-1. Although

these approaches seem sufficient for addressing racism in the way in which the research sought, a theoretical framework was necessary to provide a broader perspective of the issue. It is in light of this that identity theory was selected as a lens through which the topic of racism could be examined.

Identity theory offered a foundation from which this particular cultural dispute could be analyzed. The theory clearly explains how conflict emerges once peoples' identities are threatened. Furthermore, the analysis of the theory enabled me to conclude that racism is rooted in identity conflict. This conclusion is reached after an examination of specific case illustrations of racism and an analysis of the phenomenon of racism. In dedicating Chapter Three to the analysis of racism as a concept and by situating actual case illustrations in the context of identity theory, I am able to provide myself, and hopefully the reader, with a breakdown of how the concept is linked to the theory.

In two chapters of the paper, Sustained Dialogue and its theme of relationship building is delineated. The key element of dialogue is relationship building, which is changing negative relationships to positive ones. The importance of how relationship building can change conflictual relations is offered in Chapter Four of the paper.

The various elements of relationship are illustrated and how they can effect the situation in the Cowichan Valley is clearly demonstrated. Chapter Five outlines the tenets of Sustained Dialogue as a tool for managing and changing conflictual relationships. Application of this tool as a conflict resolution strategy, and a tool that is particularly suited to addressing the

issue of racism is illustrated. In this chapter, discussion of the subject of racism from participant's perspective is presented. The ability for each participant to address racism in this manner confirms dialogue as an important strategy for addressing very difficult and painful issues. The dialogue process offered an opportunity and created the space through which participants could express and share their feelings and stories that spoke concretely to the racism.

In the final chapter recommendations are made to the sponsors. These recommendations are derived at from the ideas generated from the discussions, and from an understanding of the Sustained Dialogue. As the research findings are intended to create social change, it is hoped that the recommendations would influence the next phase of the city's policy design on racism. The recommendations suggest that much thought and care have been given to the formulation of the interventions offered by the group. Finally, the author offers personal and professional recommendations that were arrived at after reflection on the dialogue process and personal experiences as a member of the Cowichan valley community.

The Sustained Dialogue process that we launched in the Cowichan Valley has confirmed that this process has the potential to be an effective tool to address deep-rooted and long standing issues of racism. This project did not continue long enough for us to be in a position to make an absolute conclusion as to its effectiveness. However, given the results achieved in a short period of time, we are confident that a longer time period would produce sustainable results. We will continue searching for an opportunity to apply this process over a longer period of time.

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Letter of Informed Consent

Project Title: Healing Wounds: Sustained Dialogue in the Cowichan Valley

Project Sponsor: Michael Coleman (Mayor: City of Duncan)

Project Leaders: Randy Levine & Gifty Serbeh-Dunn

Sample

Purpose of the Project:

The purpose of the project is to provide the mayor’s office with concrete information and analysis of the racial divide in the community, and identify both a direction for addressing the issue and potential leaders of the process. Additionally, the dialogue process would provide a foundation for addressing other issues of relevance to sustainable community development. This project will be used as part of a graduate level program in Conflict Analysis and Management at Royal Roads University.

Procedures for Participants:

In utilizing the strategy of sustained dialogue the research hopes to enable community members develop a relevant community peace- building process that would foster healthy relationships and address the racial divide.

Risks/Benefits:

Participants in this project will face no unusual risks.

Participation in the project would lead to a better understanding of the issue of racism in the Cowichan Valley and will prepare participants for helping lead the work towards a solution.

Protection of Confidentiality:

Your participation in the project is voluntary and you can withdraw from the project at any time. The researchers will request your permission to include any direct quotes in the project and all information gathered for the final report will be included anonymously. To ensure accuracy you will have an opportunity to review sections of the draft report where reflections have been included.

Your signature below would indicate that you understand and agree to the terms of participation in this project.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Randy Levine

Gifty Serbeh-Dunn

Print name of participant

Date

Signature of Participant

Letter of Agreement

City of Duncan
200 Craig St
V9R 5N2

Contact Person/ Major Project Sponsor

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Royal Roads Faculty Advisor

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*Letter of Agreement between
Major Project Sponsor and
Researchers*

Roles and Responsibilities

The candidate, Major Project Sponsor and Major Project Supervisor agree to participate in the successful completion of the proposed project.

Major Project Description, Action Steps and Milestones

The Major Project goals, process and anticipated outcomes are described in the Major Project prospectus. This highlights the activities to be completed, the milestones and the involvement of the City of Duncan.

Confidentiality

The RRU graduate student agrees to honor individual and corporate confidentiality and non-disclosure guidelines. The City of Duncan agrees to allow the project team every opportunity to canvass and collect data from individual and groups identified in the prospectus.

The City of Duncan will asked to formally acknowledge that the information they provide to the researchers would be handled in a confidential and privileged manner, as described in the RRU Guidelines for Conducting Research with Human Subjects”.

Intellectual Property

The City of Duncan agrees that the final Major Project and supporting materials will remain the intellectual property of the authors (Levine and Serbeh-Dunn). The commercial potential of all products will be assessed upon completion of the project and if deemed necessary, mutually agreeable arrangements will be identified to exploit the product in the commercial marketplace.

Deliverables

The graduate students will provide the city of Duncan copies of the final Major Project. In addition, the Major Project team will provide formal briefings to individuals or groups identified by the contact person/Major Project Sponsor.

Company Commitment

The City of Duncan agrees to provide the project team with the following support:
Access to relevant records or data, access to individuals or groups essential to the completion of the project and other items identified throughout the Major Project.

Endorsement

We the undersigned agree to abide by the arrangements and statements contained in this letter of agreement.

Major Project Sponsor

Dated

Gifty Serbeh-Dunn

Randall Levine

Dated

Roles and Responsibilities**Major Project Sponsor**

- Assist Learners in identifying and articulating the problems or issues to be examined.
- Reviews and provides comments on the Major Project prospectus for investigating the problem
- Where appropriate, provides the resources, facilities, funds and personnel needed to support the successful completion of the project as described in the Major Project prospectus.
- Where necessary facilitates the timely collection of data.
- Reviews the project findings, conclusions and recommendations with the learners.
- As a member of the supervising committee, reviews the final Major Project to ensure that it meets or exceeds university and program academic requirements for these.

Graduate Students

- In conjunction with the faculty advisor, Major Project Sponsor and supervisor, develops the problem or issue into a project prospectus
- Completes the project, in accordance with the Major Project prospectus.
- Regularly communicates project progress to the Major Project sponsor and supervisor.
- Effectively lead the project and project team
- Produces a draft and final Major Project, which conforms to the university and program guidelines.

Major Project Supervisor

- Undertakes regular consultations with the learner during completion of the Major Project.
- Approves the Major Project prospectus.
- Briefs the major project sponsor on his/her role and responsibilities as a supervisory committee member.
- Ensures that learner applies rigorous research methodologies throughout the project.
- Reviews and provides comments on all drafts of all Major Project produced by learner.
- Circulates the approved draft of the Major Project to the other committee members for review and comments.
- In consultation with other committee members, assesses the completion of the competencies described in the learner's Major Project contract.
- Acts as the recording secretary for all supervisory committee meetings.
- Communicates the success or failure of the learner's Major Project to the director of the program

Principal Investigators: Gifty Serbeh-Dunn & Randy Levine

Division: MACAM

Faculty/staff Graduate Student X Undergraduate Student Other

Student Supervisor: Michael Lang

Student Supervisor Telephone: 412-561-80557

Mail Correspondence and/or approval to: Jim Bayer, Program Director

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Co-Investigators (name, position, division or other Institution)

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | 8. |

Does the project involve the principal investigator or any other co-investigators in any actual, Potential or perceived conflicts arising from personal or economic interest? If yes, please complete N/A

Short title of project: Healing Wounds: Sustained Dialogue inn the Cowichan Valley

Short Submission: Observation in public settings without intervention. Minimal risk. Complete pages 1-4

Class Project: Minimal Risk; no sensitive topics
Complete pages 1-4 and include class list

Does the project involve living human subjects or human remains, tissue, biological fluids, embryos or fetuses? Yes X No

If no, please complete pages 3 and 4 of this form only, and forward to the Vice-President Learning for Inclusion in the Royal Roads Research Date Bank. If the project involves human

remains, tissues, etc. please contact chair of the REB for more information regarding preparation and review of your proposal.

| | | |
|--|-----|------|
| Does the project involve animal subjects? | Yes | No X |
| Does the project involve biohazards? | Yes | No X |
| Does the project involve radioactive Substances? | Yes | No X |

Keywords

Provide 4 keywords and a location of where the research will take place, that describe this project. (Keywords enable the construction of a database to search by topic and location).

1. Dialogue
2. Racism
3. Community Peace-building
4. Relationships

Location: Cowichan Valley, British Columbia

Summary of Purpose and Objective of Project

The purpose of the project is to provide the mayor's office with concrete information and analysis of the racial divide in the community, and identify both a direction for addressing and potential leaders for that process. Additionally, the dialogue process would provide the foundation for addressing other issues of relevance to sustainable community development.

The research project is designed to build on the efforts that have been initiated by various members of the community to address the issue of racism. Through the dialogue process the members can unpack the term racism before they introduce community solutions. A thorough understanding of the subject matter would offer a solid foundation from which to build lasting solutions. Through the dialogue process relationships would be developed and enhanced.

Summary of Methodology and Procedures

The proposed methodology for data collection would include personal interviews and focus groups especially in the selection for the participants in the dialogue. Additionally, an action research methodology would be employed. This would enable the community to use the study as a tool for social change. Community based action research would be utilized for the following reasons:

- First, the approach enables the community active and full participation in the research and to contribute to the resolution of the identified question.
- Secondly, the approach enables both practical and theoretical outcomes; that is the results of such research approach would directly impact the lives of the community (Stringer, 1996).

Additionally, a qualitative methodology borrowed from feminist research approaches would be used. This is relevant because it makes the invisible visible by placing the focus of the interviews on them through interviewing techniques that allow them to speak for themselves (Maguire, 1987). This means that the researchers would guide participants through the use of specific questions so that they can address issues and topics that surface in the group from their own perspectives. By utilizing these methodologies the project would not engage in the testing and measuring of the experiences of the subjects in any interviews. Although questions would be developed they would be used only as a guide to the researchers so as to enable them remain focused.

Although no formal questionnaire would be utilized, several group discussions would be conducted on the topic of racism and through the sustained dialogue sessions, data would be gathered.

The participants for the dialogue process are recruited from the Mayor's Advisory Committee and are all volunteers of that particular committee. Recognizing that the members recruited for this process are volunteers they would be made aware that they could withdraw from the process at anytime that they may wish. The researchers would request permission from members to include any direct quotes in the project report and all other information gathered for the final report would be included anonymously. Additionally, the participants would be asked to sign consent forms, these would ensure agreement to participate.

THE WORLD BANK GROUP

A World Free of Poverty



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PRESS RELEASE

News Release No. 98/1805

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BUSINESS PARTNERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, June 9, 1998 — *A Georgian oil company provides land and finance for the local community to build greenhouses for fruit and vegetable production, supplying gas from the field for heat, with support from the local state government... A private water utility in Buenos Aires works in partnership with several community groups to provide affordable water and sanitation infrastructure and services to the poor living in slum areas... A company in the Philippines forges a partnership with corporate and youth foundations and the Philippine government to enhance economic and social opportunities for out-of-school Filipino youth.*

Partnerships such as these, among business, civil society organizations, and governments, will be encouraged through a new initiative within the World Bank Group.

With the approval of a US\$645,000 first-year grant from a proposed \$3 million total World Bank Development Grant Facility contribution to the three-year \$20 million program, the World Bank is launching the **Business Partners for Development (BPD)** network. This network, which intends to promote strategic partnerships that build trust and more inclusive societies, will work to benefit the long long-term interests of business, civil society, and governments.

Over the next three years, the BPD network will work intensively with 16 to 25 focus projects, spread across the world and grouped into four clusters:

- i. **youth development**—how businesses contribute to the development of the next generation of employees and consumers;
- ii. **education and training**—how companies help ensure that children and adults have access to the education and training necessary for the economic growth of their communities;
- iii. **water and sanitation**—how private operators provide responsive and affordable water and sanitation services to the poor; and
- iv. **the natural resources industries**—how oil and mining companies working together with local community organizations and authorities optimize their developmental impact on the community.

Speaking recently about the challenges of development, **World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn** called for increased partnership:

"There is no way that the World Bank or any other international institution can do this job alone. The job can only be done on the basis of partnership—partnership with the governments with whom we work as the key factor, with the other multilateral institutions, with the private sector, and with civil society."

The Bank Group has convened a range of global firms and non-governmental organizations willing to devote resources and to work in partnership alongside governments and local community development organizations.

The BPD Network will bring to bear the World Bank Group's ability to facilitate scale-up and promote

business partnerships globally. BPD will finance three categories of activities in conjunction with its focus projects:

1. *Action*: study visits to the focus projects; training programs (partnership formation, participatory project management, conflict resolution, options for local partnership agreements, and operating procedures for local government);
2. *Learning*: impact on communities, impact on national/regional development, impact on companies, delivery mechanisms (e.g. role of community development foundations), enabling environments, conflict prevention, social accounting and external validation;
3. *Sharing*: case studies, reports, global conferences, national/regional roundtables, virtual meetings, knowledge bases, website, and training modules (e.g. CDroms, videos and toolkits).

The operational costs of the focus projects will be borne by sponsoring companies, civil society organizations, and governments. The grant announced today is intended as leverage for finance from business, foundations and bilateral donors and can represent no more than 15 percent of the total program budget.

Natural Resources Industries in Angola: *potential BPD focus project*

This project was born out of discussions with government officials, community representatives and company executives who were concerned that the funds companies were spending locally on development activities often had only limited or short-term effects. As Angola continued movement from war to peace, there was a shared feeling among Government and business leaders that greater cooperation would be necessary to address the country's significant development and reconstruction needs.

With assistance from the World Bank, the parties have been discussing a series of options for public-private partnerships, including the establishment, on a not-for-profit basis, of a **community development corporation (or foundation)**. Such an organization would promote and administer community development projects on a provincial level, with project activities agreed jointly by the private sector, local Government and local community organizations. A range of project-sponsored works have been discussed including:

- training in such areas as management and accounting, aimed at servicing the needs of private sector companies, and capacity-building for local entrepreneurs and private sector contractors;
- small-scale infrastructure construction, upgrading and rehabilitation; and
- technical assistance for land and agricultural development to help local groups produce for sale to the private sector and local consumption.

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