



Honoring Elders Lived Experiences Through Their Stories of The Past

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Abstract

Elders are holders of knowledge and keepers of secrets, rituals, stories, customs, and folklore. They hold stories that are often not written down but are usually transmitted verbally through generations. Simultaneously, they are often the only holders of truth, since those who are in authority or power frequently produce a sanitized version of the truth or “their” truth. Most elders frequently are fearless and so are known to speak their truth unapologetically. They have lived and deserve the right to speak their truth without fear, intimidation, or harassment. At their stage of life, most have acquired individuation, according to Carl Jung, and are focused on life’s spiritual journey. The goal of this presentation is to share the story of three amazing elders with whom I was privileged to speak during the summer of 2022. They spoke their truth quite candidly, eloquently, and respectfully about colonialism and the period prior to their country’s independence in 1962. The powerful stories were impactful and provided historical context to some generational trauma experienced. James Hutton, an 18th century Scottish geologist, coined the phrase “the past is the key to the future.” Thus, to prevent future errors, we need to know the past. Equally, to better understand the present, we also need to look to the past. Elders can assist in these areas. Elders are essential to life’s journey. Elders are often known to provide wisdom, knowledge, and guidance. Allow me to share these elders’ lived experiences that often go unheard.

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