

**UPLIFTING L'NUISATION UPLIFTING  
L'NUISATION MEANS THE UNIVERITIES CAN  
BE BETTER**

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- 1. UNLEASHING LEARNING SPIRITS**
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Can we talk of integration until there is integration of hearts and minds? Unless you have this, you only have a physical presence, and the walls between us are as high as the mountain range (Dan George (Chief) *Tsleil-Wauthth*)

Having survived five centuries of catastrophes, L'nu peoples (Aboriginal or Indigenous people of Atlantic Canada) have the duty of imagining a new destiny. We have to place vision over memory, love before anger.

Out of the tragic ambiguity of human consciousness and life, every generation of L'nu peoples must renew or discover its cognitive heritage, languages and generated new visions and its pathways.

Every generation must struggle with either fulfilling its heritage and language or betraying it.

Every child must begin a process of blending oral traditions with the desire that creates, changes, and diminishes the very conditions of heritage, thought, relationship and life.

The task of rebuilding our families, our peoples, and our nations after our imposed catastrophes is entrusted to this generation of L'nu peoples. The endless cycles of fate have thrust us into this situation. We must recognize our people's arduous struggle to transform the catastrophes into a liberating and nurture their teachings in new situations.

If L'nu peoples want a better life, we must not be afraid of dreaming the seemingly impossible. Every impossible dream grows out of our spiritual and knowledge systems about the implicate order.

We must articulate the visions that guide us and the visions that flow naturally from the ecology and our teachings, as we understand them. Our ecological traditions breathe substance into our visions and life and give them meaning.

We have succeeded in dreaming the seemingly impossible in the constitutional reforms, United Nations human rights law and in difficult court decisions. These achievements structure renew the older visions and create a transformation in all of the Canadian institutions. The generation the Indigenization movement or most appropriately called the L'nuisation in all aspect of Canadian society, but most importantly to the faculties of the colleges and Universities of Atlantic Canada.

Faculties at the colleges and universities of Atlantic Canada and beyond have assisted in uplifting L'nuisation to a place of prominence. L'nuisation is a particular form of Indigenization. From an L'nu perspective, the gesture of uplifting (open hands, palms up, raised arms) conveys value, openness, honour, trust, and relationship. L'nu knowledge systems and languages capture the importance of the principles of uplifting L'nuisation to bring newness, depth, complexity and the unexpected to our shared understanding of knowledge systems.

Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Passamaquoddy nations and their ways of knowing, being, and performing – teaching, ceremonies, protocols, pedagogies – are a source of inspiration and uplift for our students, faculty, staff, and community partners. By uplifting L'nuisation and self-determination, we are welcoming ideas, knowledges, and perspectives that enrich us all.

L'nuisation challenges us to amplify the forces of anti-racism and decolonization as a remedy for systematic injustice and racism. Decolonization practices contest divisive and demeaning actions, policies, programming, and frameworks. To learn new narratives of liberation from oppression from the L'nu nations in Atlantic Canada.

L'nuisance is healing, balancing force; it calls us to action, invites a rebalancing of relationships, inspires opportunities for mutual cultural understanding, and helps us to find comfort in the discomfort transforming knowledges can generate.

L'nuisance strengthens the depth of the knowledge and talent of the faculty, the spiritual and intellectual fabric of the colleges and universities. It commits post-secondary education to the enhancement of innovative, conceptual and practical capabilities. It involves the respectful, meaningful, ethical weaving of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledges, lived experiences, worldviews, and stories into teaching, learning, and research. L'nuisance is a gift that benefits every member of our knowledge community and beyond.

## 1. UNLEASHING LEARNING SPIRITS

L'nu thought comprehends knowledge as many learning spirits. Animating the learning spirits is the lifeblood of L'nu thought and life-long learning. These spirits generate our passion for knowledge and comprehension; they are the driving force of the various cultures of meaningfulness and innovation – they are the foundation for creative problem-solving, invention, and social and cognitive justice.

The learning spirits are both a privilege and responsibility. They are linked to the ecologies and its many gifts; to our inherent dignity, and our willingness to share our insights and commitments. They give the learner the inspiration and courage that allows them to question, ask tough questions and push boundaries. They are resonances of the curiosity, optimism, pragmatic skepticism, scholarly discipline, and aspiration to make the earth a better place for all life forms.

The learning spirits have given voice and vision to every knowledge system to overcome nihilism and meaningless in life situations. In rebuilding the communities of nihilism and their horrific statistics after the imposed catastrophes, the L'nu peoples have found that return to the teaching of their ancestors has been the most effective way to generate meaning. Often, this results in having a vision, acquiring a guardian spirit, learning spirits or prophecy. The nature of these visions and the action required by them provide meanings. While other vision and teachings usually make sense of the present by relating it to the past. Prophecy anchors the present in the uncompleted future. The making sense of the future is the core of the meaning of l'nuisation or indigenization.

At its core, the faculty of colleges and university are a creative organism that reflects the interrelationship of the learning spirits. The learning spirits are often called the principle of creativity generating our endless curiosity about the unexplored possibilities for growth, enrichment, and justice. They are attentive to the needs and opportunities for change that inspire imagination, invention and intentionality about the future to which we aspire to contribute. The learning spirits are experiential; they invite participation in individual and collective journeys to discover truthing and seek balance within the flux of the universe. They require both discipline and optimism – knowing that our striving can bring to fruition the possibilities we envision for learning and discovery.

These learning spirits make the faculty play a vital role in nurturing, empowering, and generating a brighter, more inclusive future. L'nu thought comprehends knowledge as many learning spirits. Animating the learning spirits is the lifeblood of L'nu thought and life-long learning. These spirits generate our passion for knowledge and comprehension; they are the driving force of the various cultures of meaningfulness and

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## 2. EXPERIENCING COGNITIVE RECONCILIATION

“Reconciliation,” said Senator Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “is about forging and maintaining respectful relationships. There are no shortcuts.” Achieving cognitive reconciliation will be like an old Canadian mountain waiting to be climbed – we must proceed a step at a time. It will not always be easy. There will be storms, there will be obstacles, but we cannot allow ourselves to be daunted by the task because our goal is just and it also necessary. “As commissioners, we have described for you a mountain,” Sinclair said. “We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing.”

Whether the faculty of the colleges and university are willing to climb this oldest Canadian mountain range that has created cognitive apartheid in education is unresolved, or if they are, how far they will get. Nevertheless, cognitive reconciliation is yours to achieve.

We owe it to each other to build a Canada based on respecting the knowledge system of the ancestral territories where we work and live, generating our shared future, a future of healing and trust. This is a post-colonial Canada that we all need; that the world need to comprehend can exist. We can get along together.

Cognitive reconciliation is about Canadians respecting the inherent human dignity of Aboriginal peoples of Canada and their quests for self-determination.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has also taught us that reconciliation from destructive, forced assimilation in a mandatory educational system is a goal that may take generations to realize. As a knowledge community, faculties have a shared responsibility to honour and inspire the journey of reconciliation. These relationships have been fractured in the past and present; they require repair, redress, and healing.

The tragedy of residential schooling and mandatory education exploited the spirit of transformative education and learning. Forced assimilation as a tool of cultural genocide and cognitive imperialism was intended to destroy L'nu knowledge systems and languages and to replace it with British or European knowledge systems.

As a learning institution, the faculty should use its influence to celebrate cognitive diversity and self-determination to bring to the forefront the strength and beauty evident in L'nu knowledge systems, languages, and insights: to move forward "in a good way."

The faculty need to understand that cognitive reconciliation is an enduring journey and orientation to generate meaning in life. It requires the steadfast commitment to thought and actions that contribute to respectfully enabling the balance of relationships between L'nu and Canadian peoples. Enabling this balance requires us to generate and nurture a new ethical space in which we can explore how we relate to each other through the two-eye seeing, two-ear hearing of knowledge systems, languages and lived experience.

By providing opportunities to bring people together to share their experiences, faculty members can generate

new levels of cognitive justice and will contribute to individual and collective healing and nourish more profound expressions of cognitive reconciliation.

Many layers of reconciliation are required for cognitive justice to exist and flourish. It is about constitutional reconciliation, trans-systemic knowledge reconciliation, and human rights. There is no natural beginning or sequence to reconciliation. The movement must take place simultaneously and on many fronts. Advances on one front may occur before advances in others. However, the lasting commitment to cognitive reconciliation is integral to all the layers.

The commitment to cognitive reconciliation, however, is merely the gateway to two other tasks. The first is the creation of a post-education system that equipping the students with the instruments of resistance to racism, culturalism, and similar discriminatory attitude of the social and historical inheritance of Eurocentrism. No one should have to live in a society in which public law and policy and institutional arrangements express the knowledge systems and outlook of a particular part of the people against other parts. A strong presumption must weigh against all arrangements that prevent the many forms reinventing life. In place of the illusion of neutrality in the post-secondary education, faculty should instill the real goal of openness to the reverence for learning in divergent and novel ways.

The second is the strengthening of Canadian society an idea of the greatness of ordinary men and women through inclusive learning. To this end, education should help nourish a climate of opinion and experience in which people are more readily able to reimagine their relations to one another and to act upon what they have imagined.



### 3. EMBRACING INHERENT DIGNITY

Respect for the inherent dignity of every person and knowledge system, continuous renewal of values and actions that support healthy reciprocity in relations and connections construct an emphatic and good relationship. The L'nu interpretations of inherent dignity embody humility and speak to the spirit of inherent dignity and rights of humans, ancestral rights as well as unique treaty responsibilities and rights. It is an invitation to walk alongside, to travel down a path, working together to realize goals and a vision that strengthen all cultures.

L'nu teachings are drawn from the knowledge systems, languages, stories and songs of Elders and traditional knowledge keepers. They cannot rely on the various Eurocentric concept of respect.

Deep understanding of inherent dignity demands experiential cultural and language learning, and inquisitive learning spirits. We cannot achieve respectful relations passively; as faculty, we have both an ethical obligation and a vital opportunity to nurture the sharing of stories that will awaken understanding and inspire our community toward relationships uplifted by our histories, cultures, and lived experiences.

The comprehending the inherent dignity of L'nu thought reveals a suppressed prophetic knowledge tradition and creative freedoms. It presents varieties of vision and judgement at some critical distance from the contemporary thought. Eurocentric sociologist Max Weber remarked that inspiration for many of the greatest cultural accomplishments has often come from being placed at the periphery of a civilization. In the past, the ideal of classical education emphasized an intense study of an ancient culture standing at some

distance from the now dominant beliefs of the society. The distance allows students to see the familiar as strange, to find insight and inspiration where ever they reside. It strengthens them in the capacity and the willingness to examine modes of thought, conduct and sensibility that seem at first unassailable. It gives them the imaginative nourishment that can come from being simultaneously insiders and outsiders in a society. It formulates and encourages a world of initiatives that previous have been thought impossible.

The L'nuisation of contemporary education operates in the same way as classical education operated in Eurocentrism.

#### **4. TAKING UP AN INNOVATIVE TRANS-SYSTEMIC SYMBIOSIS METHOD**

Life and knowledge is perpetual movement and change – an unscripted flux and journey of expanding awareness, understanding, and “coming to know” – and no two journeys follow quite the same path or trajectory. Through the principle of cognitive diversity and academic freedom, each faculty member is a site for diverse knowledge systems and journeys. In our minds and hearts, we can become a prototype of a global village in the new knowledge civilization. Our strength derives from our respect for and belief in the tapestry of the ways of knowing and being that enrich our humanity and bring us closer to an enlightened understanding of the world around us.

The principle of emergence requires the faculty to become a global, rather than a keeper of European traditions. The continuing hallmark of the faculty is disciplinarity and interdisciplinary. These disciplines and paradigms are derived from imported European knowledge systems and their quarrels about the forced marriage of method to subject matter. The Eurocentric knowledge systems and languages generate a

monologue of unreflective superiority. It has generated cognitive imperialism or mental colonialism in L'nu peoples of the earth that have denied and belittled different knowledge systems about humanity and nature.

After generations of forced irrelevance, the l'nu knowledge systems, languages, and ceremonies have imbued faculties with a future in ways that were unimaginable even a few decades ago. At last, this potential future blend together knowledge system in respectful, parallel paths and uplifts all traditions in the space of peace, respect, and friendship. The vibrant global movement of Indigenous peoples, ecologists, and social justice that Paul Hawken called the "blessed unrest" describes how the largest movement in the world came into being and why who one saw it coming has operated within and outside the Academy. This movement of the blessed unrest is tied together by shared values, shared intentions, and a commitment to sharing our diverse stories in a place of mutual dignity, respect and learning. The emergence of the connectivity is a global source of resilience, and the interactions that bring us closer together are energized by wonder and a playful spirit. Together, faculties have the flexibility to flourish in the face of change – and the confidence to take our place in an unfolding history, emboldened by the unity of the thought and community we carry with us.

This trans-systemic framework for mutual learning and reconciliation will make the future immeasurably stronger and more resilient. Trans-systemic symbiosis among knowledge systems is an emerging model for understanding the relationship between different knowledge systems and their orientations that is essential to an ethical, global village. It is a symbiosis that is emerging and has a long way to go. Finding the overarching principle and ceremonies that link various knowledge system is a remarkable journey.

## 5. SEEKING SUSTAINABLE COGNITIVE JUSTICE

The uplifting L'nu knowledge systems are based on a commitment to animate and applying knowledge that addresses challenges of the local and global communities. The learning spirits and trans-systemic symbiosis applied to problem-solving can generate and sustain a sought after just society of peace and friendship. It can create cognitive and social justice free from the prejudices of the past. The heart of seeking sustainable cognitive justice is the transfiguration of the actual by the imagination of the possible.

The principle of sustainability is an ecological and epistemic touchstone to just solutions. It ensures that we take care of the relationships with which we've been entrusted – with the land, with the air and water, with our students, colleagues, and neighbours – guided by mindfulness, respect, and reverence.

The L'nu idea of sustainability is more prominent, extending to the attention we pay to protect and honour the wellness of all humanity and creation, the integrity of our cultural identities, and the stories embedded within the language of our students, staff, faculty, and partners bring to our community.

By placing l'nuisation within post-secondary education, faculty can give tangible expression to the idea in science or knowledge, that there is more in humanity, more in our capacities of insight, invention, and association than currently exist in Eurocentrism.

L'nuisation is related to the process that natural and social science has come to understand how and why things work by discovering the conditions under which each thing can become something else. It is related to the ability of art and technology make other worlds. The detachment of the status quo with the imaginative empathy has long been the context for wholehearted

engagement and action in post-secondary education. In all these ways, faculty members make the practical world of society as well as the imaginative arts creative, innovative and sustainable.

Sustaining and amplifying this learning spirit of just and sustainable solutions will strengthen the connections link to sustainable transformation required by justice and fairness. And we will become increasingly comfortable with the mindset of experimentation, taking informed risk-taking, innovative knowledge translations and the possibility of failure as a way to learn how to advance.

At the same time, the pursuit of solutions will require institutional focus to reward faculty inventiveness and creativity; to enable innovation; to facilitate knowledge translation, exchange and commercialization; and to foster the community partnerships essential to co-learning, co-development and implementation of discoveries and new knowledge.

These principles give an enriched sense of mission, truth, and life to the spirit of the transformation of the universities and colleges. The change will bring the creativity and courage to pursue a more sustainable future – and we will instill the reverence for individual expression and identity to embrace humanity’s complexity and realize this future connected in our diversity.

Behold this day. It is yours to make (Black Elk)