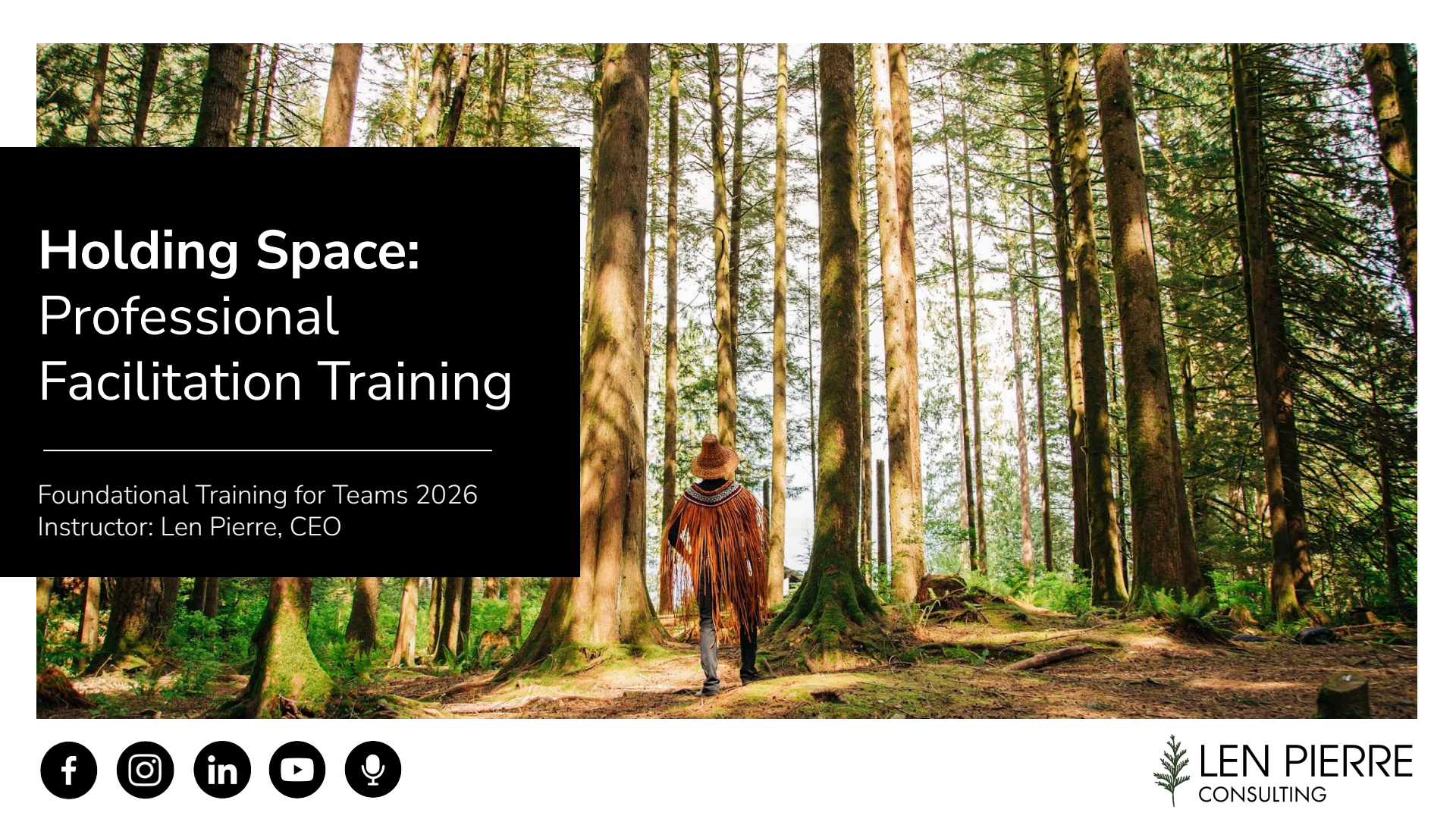


A person wearing a brown fringed poncho and a straw hat stands with their back to the camera in a forest of tall, moss-covered trees. The forest floor is covered in ferns and fallen branches. The scene is bathed in soft, natural light.

Holding Space: Professional Facilitation Training

Foundational Training for Teams 2026
Instructor: Len Pierre, CEO



LEN PIERRE
CONSULTING



Intention Setting

Our intention is to create a safe space for exchanging knowledge, conversations, and to support one another in solidarity. We come with an open heart and open mind and hope to be received in the same way.

We welcome questions throughout the session but will also leave time to address them at the end as well. You can do both!

Positioning Our Voice

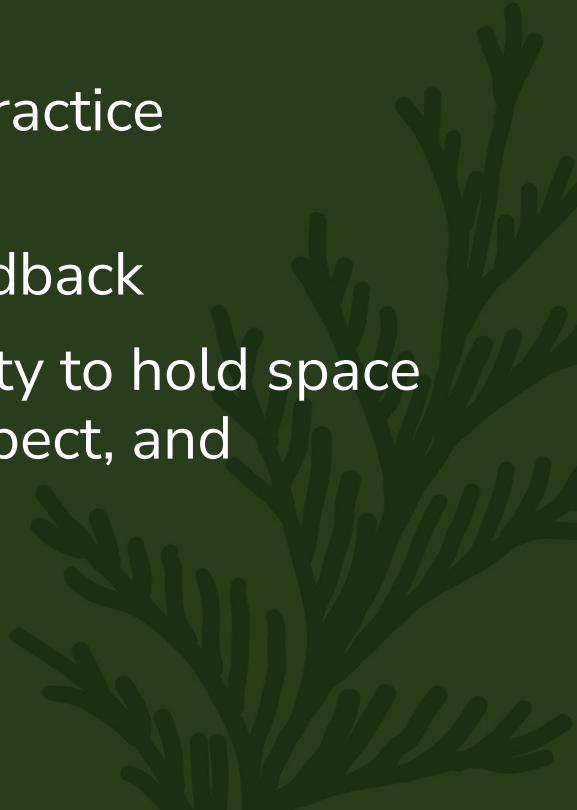
Our consultancy is based on Coast Salish Territory and includes people who belong to many nations. We pull on the wisdom of many colleagues, allies and relatives of diverse histories to support people in the work of decolonization.

We always welcome the wisdom of other experiences and of the territories on which we gather as we do this important work together.



Course Certification Requirements



- Attendance
 - Completing practice facilitation
 - Receiving feedback
 - Showing ability to hold space with care, respect, and intention
- 



Training Overview:

Day 1 - Facilitation Responsibilities

- Values
- Roles & responsibilities
- The Facilitator Mindset

PART 2 - Facilitation Teachings

- Tools and tips
- Involving your audience
- Timing, pacing, and energizing

PART 3 - Facilitation Protocols

- Facilitation with holistic safety in mind
- Culturally Safer Strategies
- Trauma-informed facilitation



1

Facilitator Responsibilities



"A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer. It sings because it has a song.."

-Maya Angelou



What makes good facilitation?

Think about a time where you had attended a facilitated session.

What makes for a great facilitated session?

What makes for a terrible facilitated session?





What is Facilitation?



Facilitation is the process of guiding learners to acquire, apply, and retain knowledge by acting as a "guide on the side" rather than a lecturer.

It shifts focus from content delivery to active, learner-centered experiences, fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and self-discovery to achieve specific educational goals.

-Association for Talent Development





Why Facilitation Matters

The Value of Facilitation in Today's World

We live in a time where many people are struggling to:

- Communicate across differences
- Navigate conflict respectfully
- Feel heard and understood
- Participate safely in conversations
- Build trust within teams and communities





Why We Need Skilled Facilitators

Safe Spaces

- Welcoming
- Respected
- Valued
- External presence
- Shifts power dynamics

Courageous Conversations

- Conflict
- Racism
- Community issues
- Organizational change
- Helps move through tension

Validation

- External presence
- Perspective
- Seen
- Heard
- Validated
- Celebrated

Relationships

- Strengthen relationship
- Communication
- Strengthen teams
- Enhance communities

Participation

- Dialogue
- Even participation
- Trauma-Informed
- Culturally Safer





First Peoples Principles of Learning

- Supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational
- Involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.
- Is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Involves patience and time.
- Requires exploration of one's identity.
- Involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred





Principles of Adult Learning

Problem
Oriented

Must solve a problem (Otherwise, why are we here?)

Experienced

Must include my existing knowledge and experience

Relevance

Must relate to my personal or professional life

WIIFM

Must give me tools and applications

Autonomy

Must respect my autonomy/agency
(self-directed)





Two-Eyed Seeing



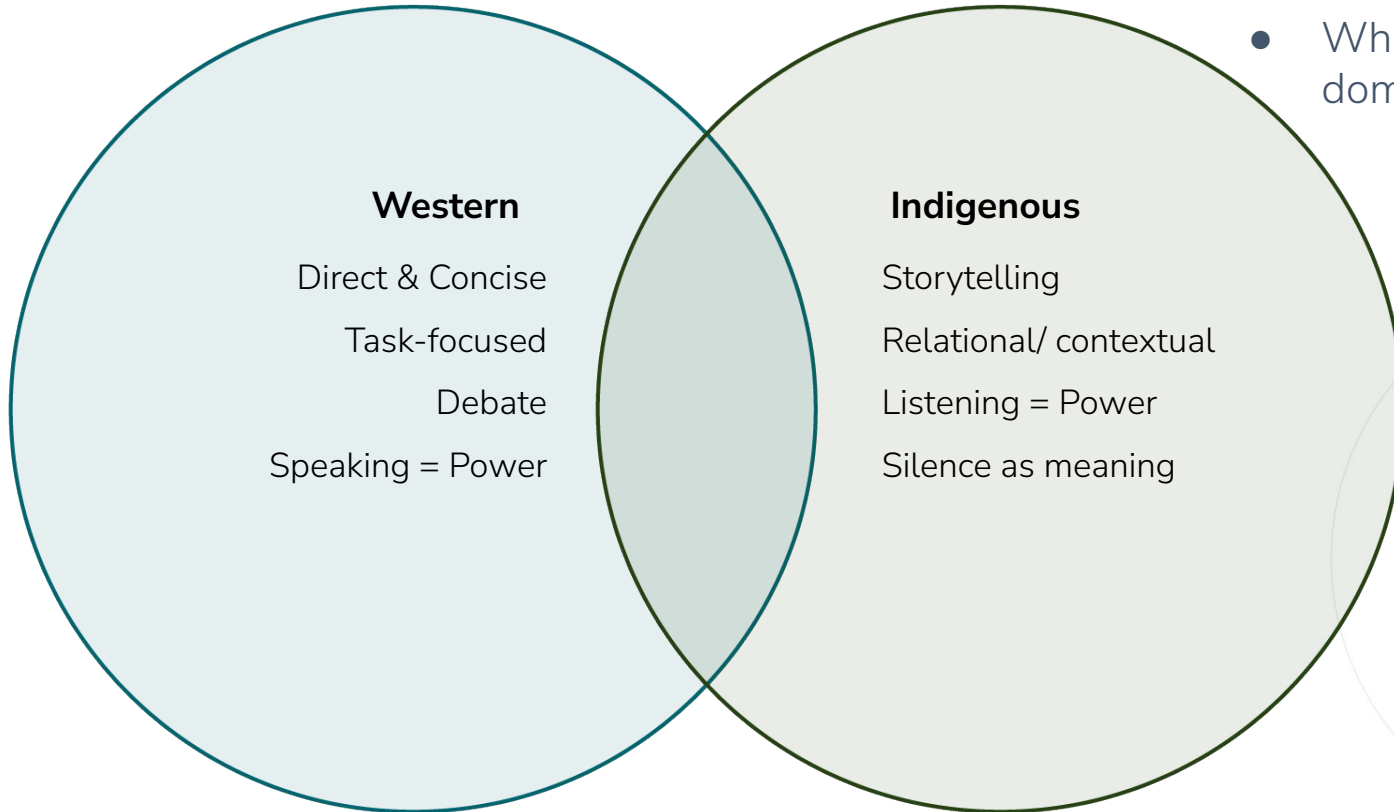
Two-Eyed Seeing embraces “learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all”.

— Elder Dr. Albert Marshall





Communication



Reflection question:

- What are the strengths of this side?
- What are the limitations?
- What happens when this dominates?

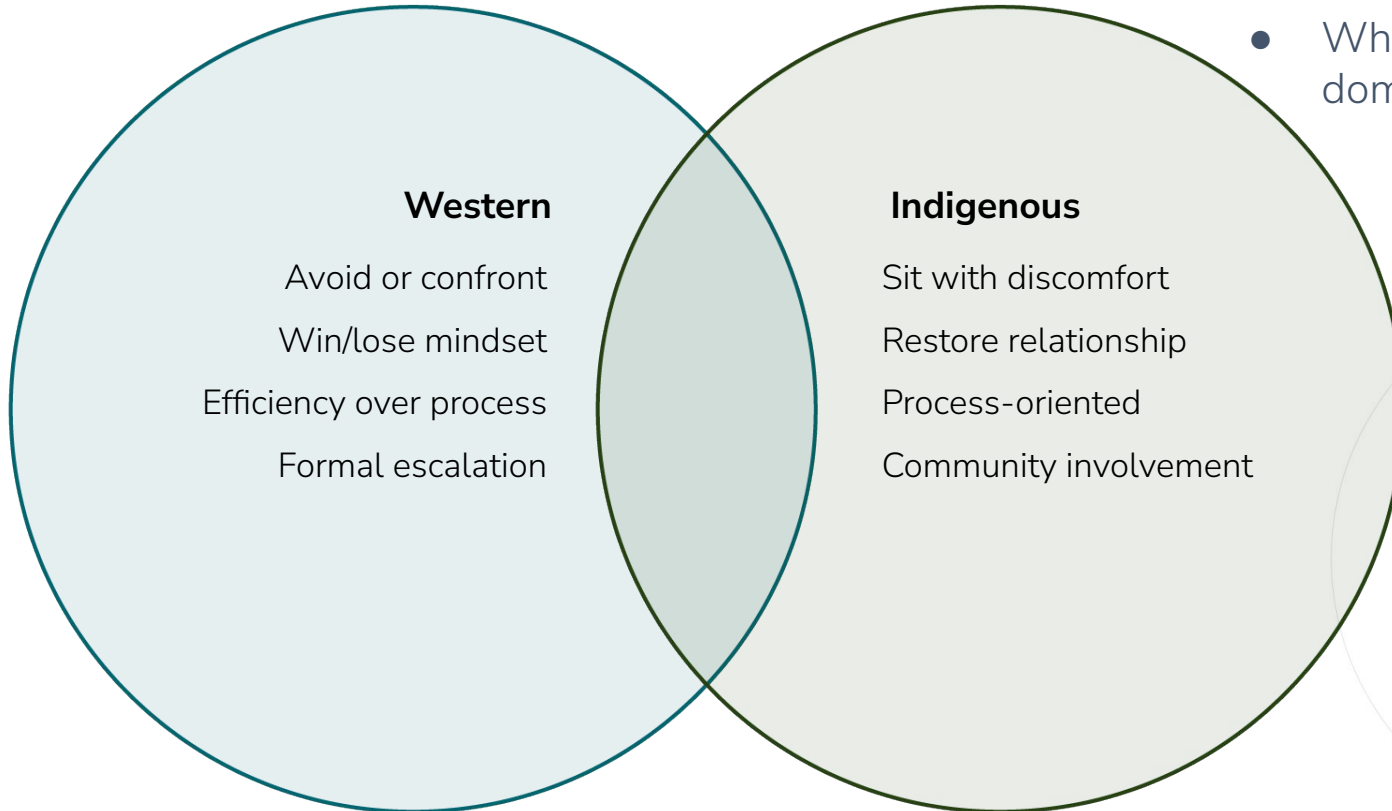




Conflict

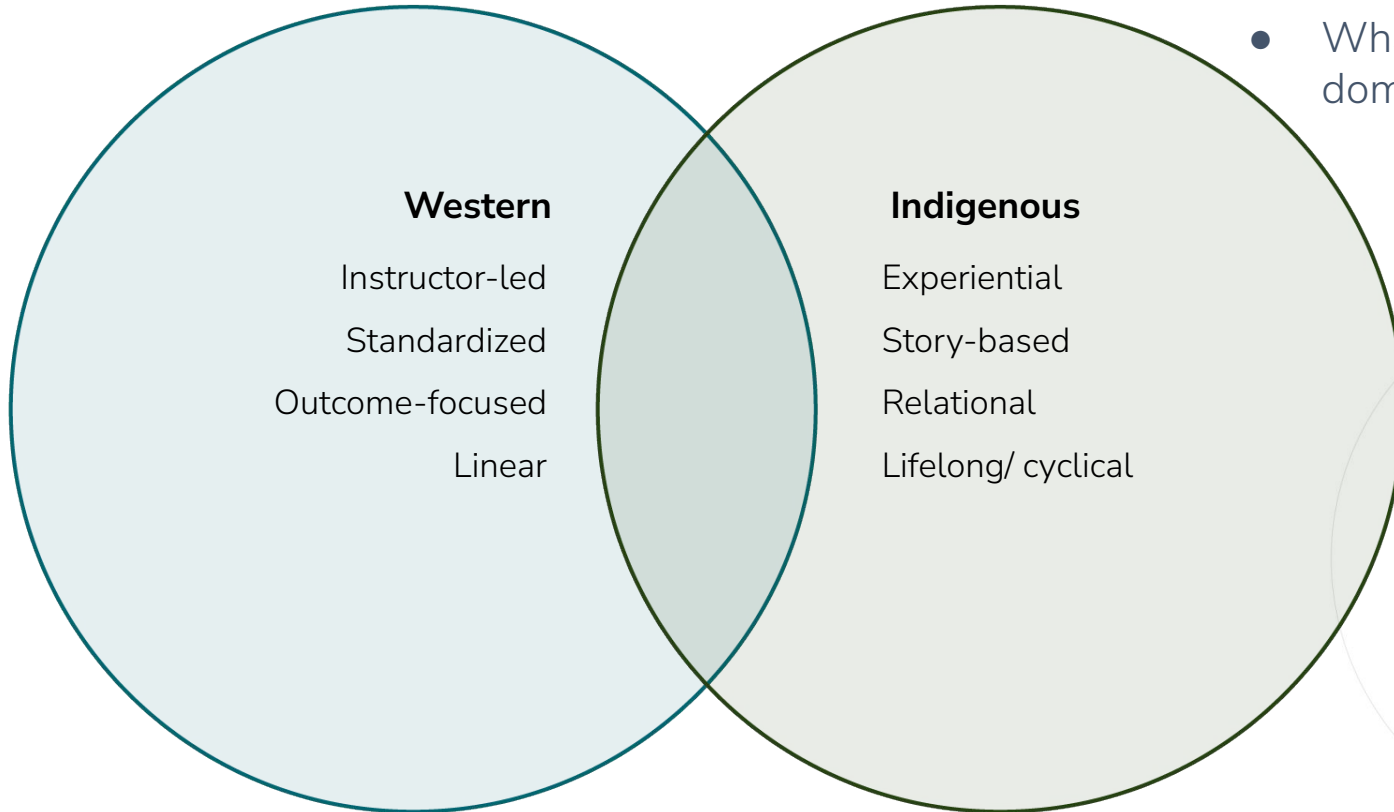
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- What are the limitations?
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Learning/Education



Reflection question:

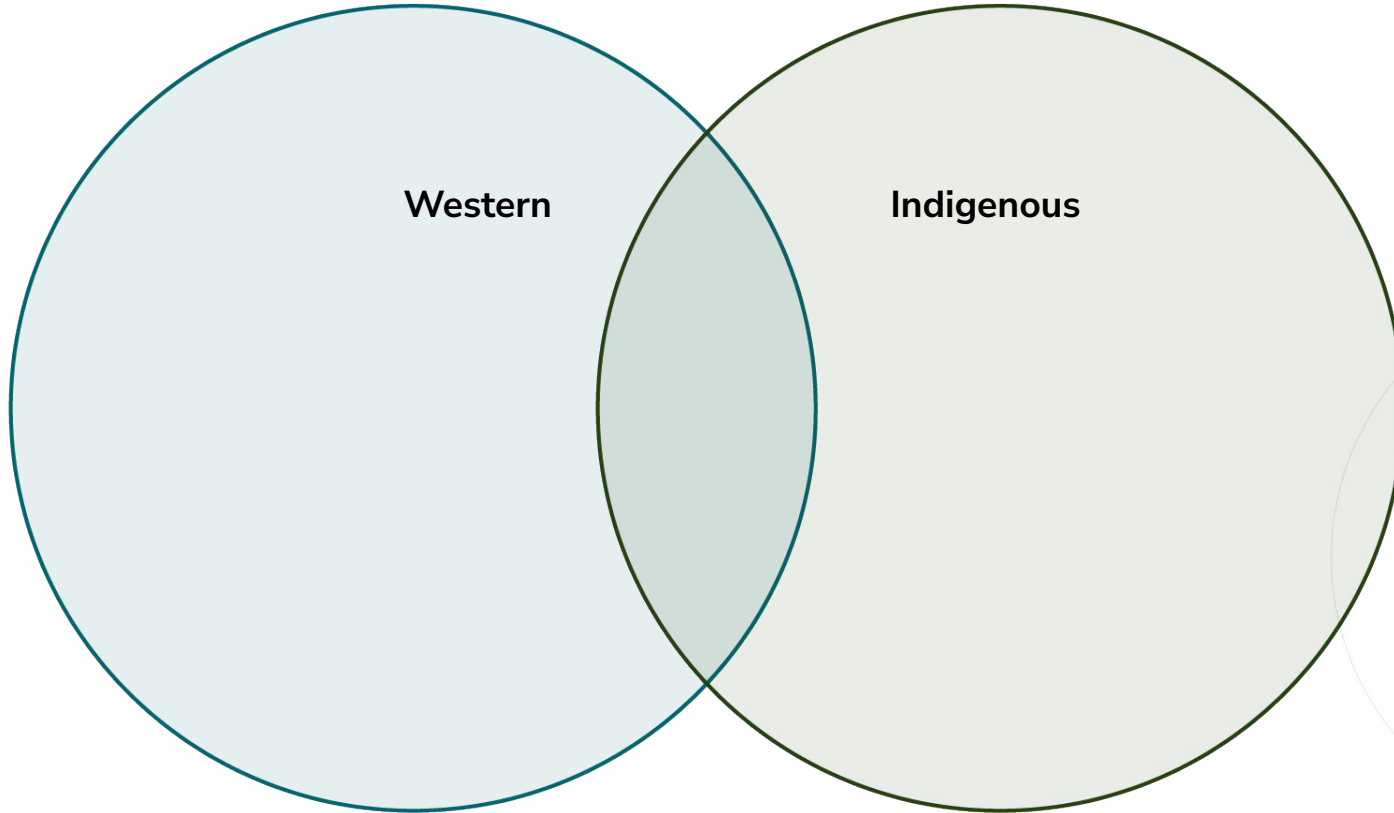
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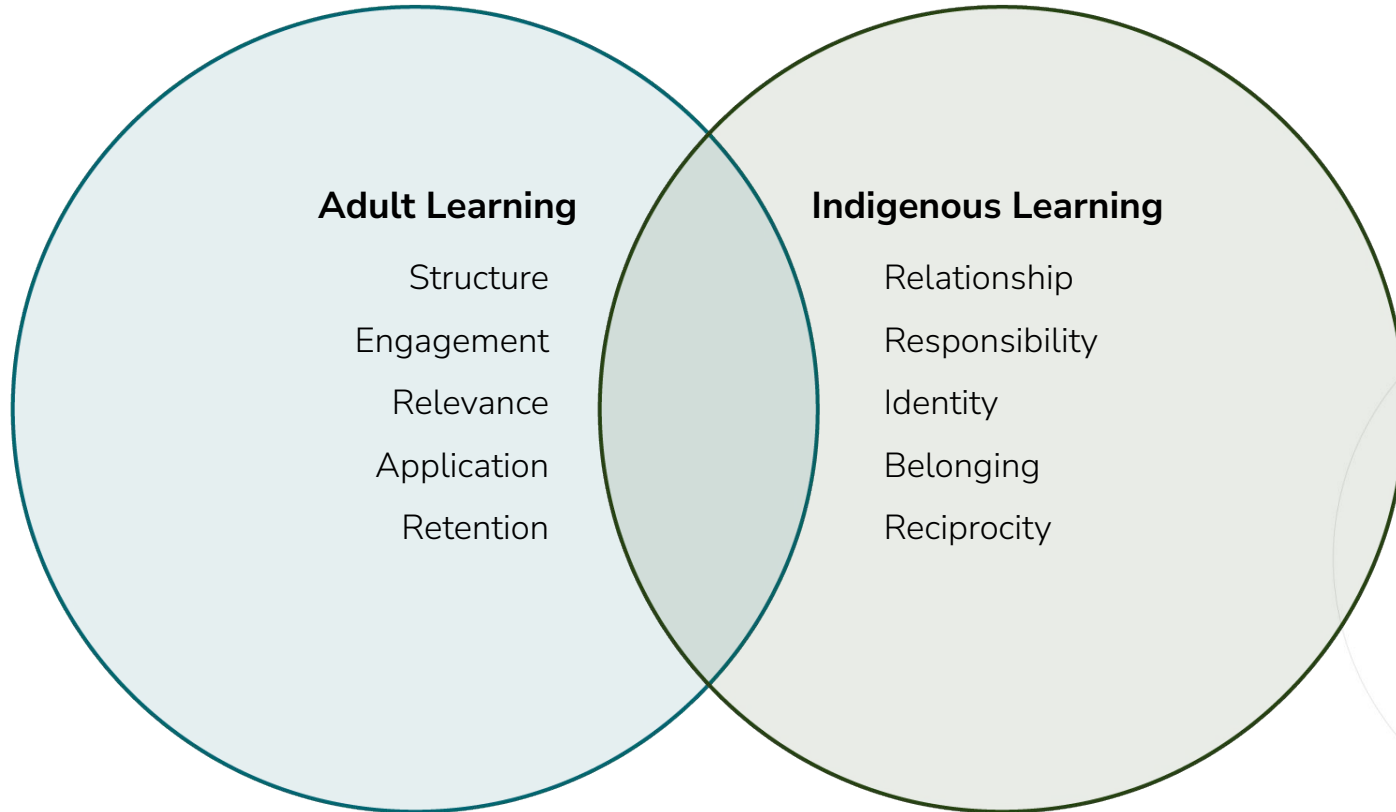
Two-Eyed Seeing Facilitation

(fill in the blank)



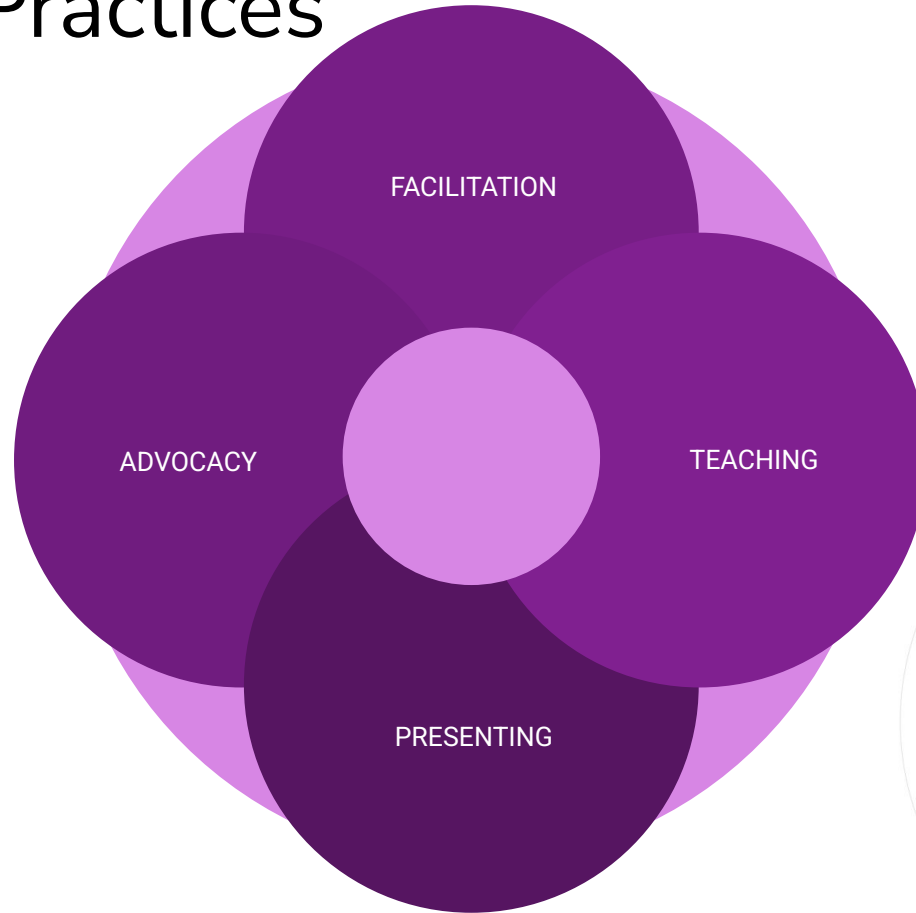


Two-Eyed Seeing Facilitation





Related Practices





Facilitating v. Teaching v. Presenting

1

FACILITATING



- ICS Terminology
- iTIEP Communication Guidelines
- Seek feedback and give feedback to colleagues on their language/behaviour

2

TEACHING



- In your team meetings
- When talking about First Nations, Metis, and Inuit
- When working in Indigenous context/projects

3

PRESENTING



- Tell your family what you learned
- Share with a colleague
- Do a social media post
- Share a social media post
- Write a reflection



Holding Space Variations

Facilitation

(Holding Space for Learning and Dialogue)

- Focuses on **creating conditions for participants to learn from each other**
- The facilitator is a **guide, not the centre of attention**
- Emphasizes **dialogue, reflection, and shared learning**
- Success is measured by **engagement, insight, and meaningful participation**

Presenting

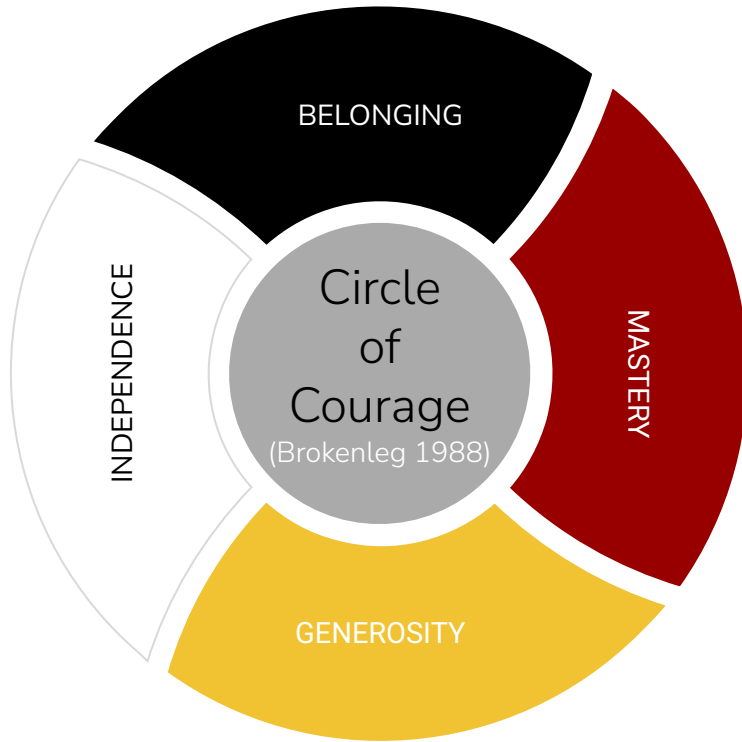
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Holding Space Through the Circle of Courage



Belonging (Creating relational safety and connection):

- How am I intentionally welcoming each voice into the space, especially those who may feel unseen or unheard?
- Open with relational grounding (introductions, check-ins, territory/context setting) to build trust and connection early

Mastery (Supporting learning, confidence, and growth):

- Am I creating conditions where participants feel capable of engaging, learning, and contributing without fear of failure?
- Break content into accessible, scaffolded steps and affirm contributions to reinforce confidence and competence

Generosity (Encouraging contribution and collective care):

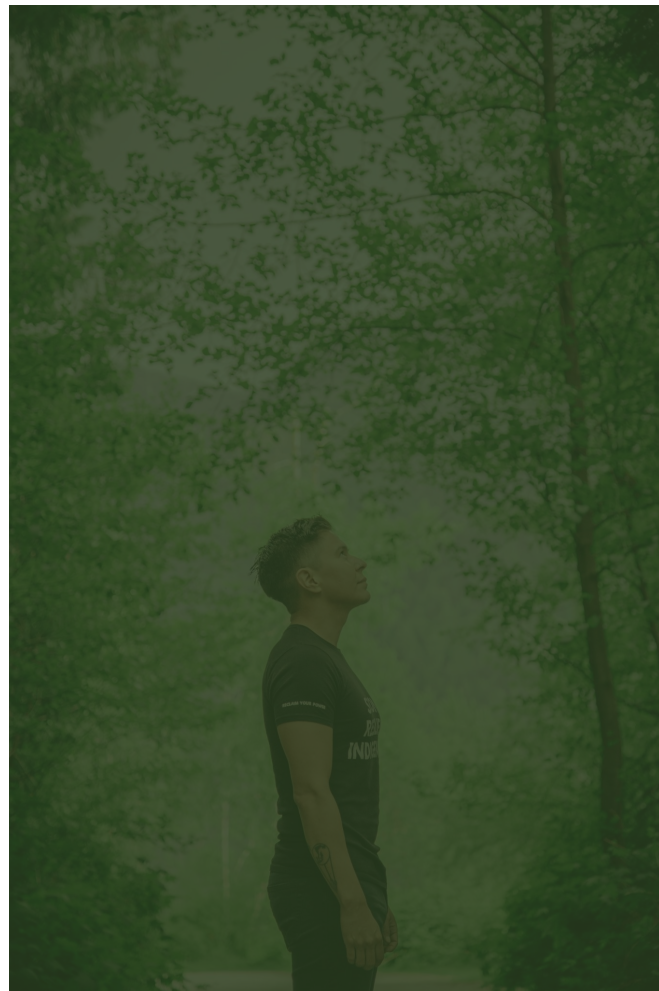
- How am I modelling and inviting a spirit of giving, knowledge, attention, care, within this space?
- Create opportunities for participants to share insights, support one another, and contribute to collective learning

Independence (Honouring agency, voice, and choice):

- Where am I holding too much control, and how can I invite shared ownership of the space?
- Offer choice in participation (e.g., speaking, writing, small groups) and invite participants to guide discussion where appropriate

2

Day 2:
Safer Learning Space &
Other Facilitation Tools





All Behaviour is a Form of Communication



Train yourself to ask these questions:

- “What is the behaviour communicating to me?”
- “How is the behaviour serving the person exhibiting the behaviour?”

The behaviour may not make sense to me, but it makes perfect sense for the person.





Trauma Responses in Workshops



Setting events can be:

- Content is overwhelming
- Dialogue tone
- Trigger words/stories
- Memories
- Loss of control
 - Not asking permission
 - No transparency
 - Talking “at” them
 - Judgmental approach



Trauma Responses



FIGHT

Defend confront,
and protect.



FLIGHT

Escape avoid
and move away.



FREEZE

Shut down,
immobilize and pause.



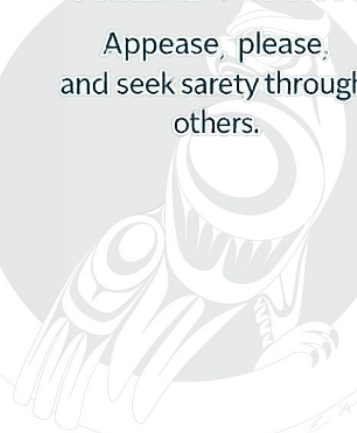
FLOP

Collapse, submit,
and bower down.



FRIEND / FAWN

Appease, please,
and seek saret through
others.

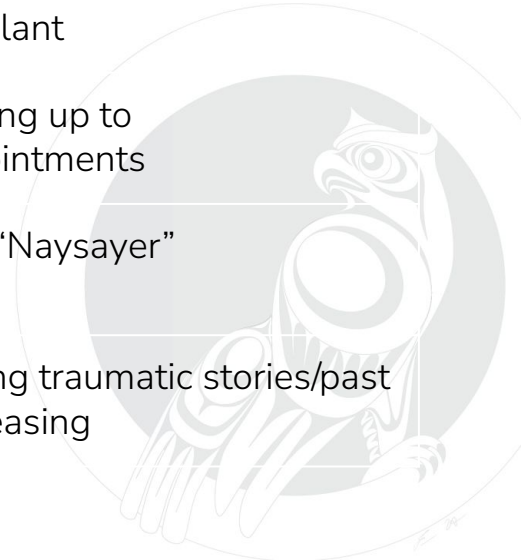




Trauma Responses

RESPONSE	CHILD/YOUTH	ADULT/WORK
	• Kicking, hitting, yelling	• Controlling behaviour • “My way or the highway...”
	• Bolting/fleeing situations	• Perfectionism • Hyper-vigilant
	• “Spacing out” or daydreaming • Learned helplessness	• Not showing up to work/appointments • The team “Naysayer”
 	• Becoming staff’s little shadow	• Oversharing traumatic stories/past • People pleasing

***Trauma responses might explain behaviour, but it does not excuse behaviour.

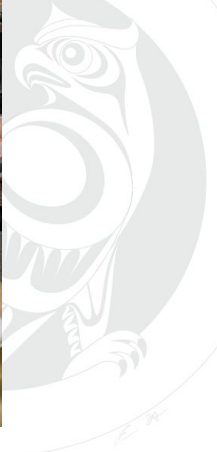




Breakout Discussion:

What Might We Notice in the Room?:

- What are potential trauma responses within a learning space?
- What are possible indicators of cultural unsafety within a learning space?

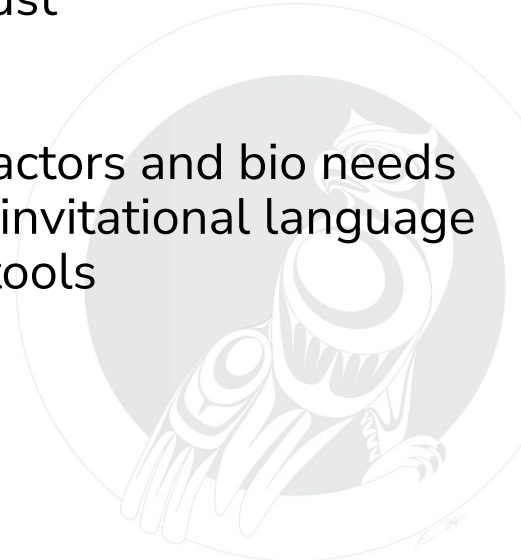




Len's Top 10 Facilitation Approaches: time & space



1. Cronos time vs. Kairos time
2. $\frac{1}{3}$ Content Delivery Rule
3. Implicit Curriculum vs. Explicit Curriculum
4. Practice “agenda humility”
5. Move at the speed of trust
6. The gift of time
7. Own your space
8. Be mindful of sensory factors and bio needs
9. Ask for permission/Use invitational language
10. Diversify your medium/tools





Participatory Learning

- Try to involve your audience every 18-20 minutes
 - Poll the room/virtual audience
 - Pose rhetorical questions
 - Pose large group questions for popcorn responses
 - Talk to your neighbour
 - Small group discussions
 - Think-Pair-Share
 - Games
 - Alphabet Race





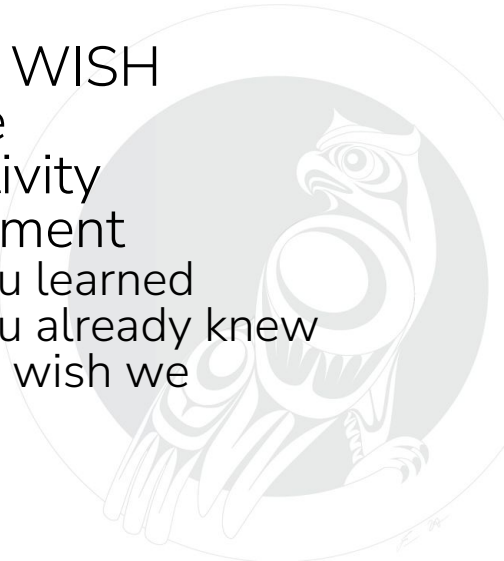
Evaluation Tools

Evaluation Tips:

- Feedback is your friend
- Look for what is TRUE, not what is wrong
- Examine only what you are in control of
- Measure the facilitator
- Measure the content

Evaluation Tools:

- Google Questionnaire
- Paper Questionnaire
- Post It Notes
- 2 Stars and 1 WISH
- Closing Circle
- Snowball Activity
- 3-2-1 Assignment
 - 3 things you learned
 - 2 things you already knew
 - 1 thing you wish we covered...





Other LPC Learning Opportunities

Registration available on EventBrite!



**When the Work Harms the Worker:
Rethinking How We Structure Indigenous
Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism**

This 90-minute webinar is for professionals, leaders, and change-makers advancing Indigenous cultural safety, reconciliation, and anti-racism. It explores Indigenous-specific psychosocial hazards and the conditions that allow harm to persist, including scarcity, unclear roles, unsafe reporting pathways, and under-resourced Indigenous leadership.

Sept 24, 12:00-1:00 PM

Registration available on Eventbrite!



Len Pierre Louis Busch

Dr. Grant Bruno Allison Balfour

**Journeying Together:
Indigenous Perspectives on Autism &
Neurodivergence**

Saturday, November 28 • 9 AM - 4 PM
Online & in-person in Surrey, BC
Community & professional rates available



2 STARS & A WISH...



POSSIBLE STARS:

- I enjoyed the part about...
- I really liked how...
- You grabbed my attention when you...
- I noticed you...
- My favourite part was...
- I learned that...

POTENTIAL WISHES:

- It would be great if...
- Next time you could try...
- I think you might want to...
- I would recommend
- Next time try to add...
- I wish we had more time to talk about...



Feedback helps us grow!

Session Details:

- Course: Holding Space
- Instructor: **Len**

CONTACT

lenpierreconsulting.com

len@lenpierreconsulting.com

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Thank You

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