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KAIROS BLANKET EXERCISE WORKSHOP

About the KAIROS Blanket Exercise

The KAIROS Blanket Exercise is an experiential teaching tool based on participatory popular education methodology and the major themes and findings of the 1996 *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Participants step onto blankets representing the land, and into the role of First Nations, Inuit and later Métis peoples. Facilitators read the script and assume the role of Narrator and European explorers and settlers.

The exercise builds awareness and understanding of our shared history as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada by having participants literally walk through situations that include pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. Participants are drawn into their roles by reading scrolls and carrying cards which ultimately determine their outcomes. By engaging on an emotional and intellectual level, the KAIROS Blanket Exercise effectively educates while increasing empathy. It reaches both the mind and the heart. It is contributing to a movement for reconciliation through education across the country.

What others have said:

"The Blanket Exercise is an excellent means of educating Canadians about the history of this land. The AFN is proud to partner with KAIROS Canada to heighten awareness and reconciliation through this very important and powerful activity."
—Assembly of First Nations

"The Blanket Exercise is essential and serves as a community tool that links participants with the past, increasing their knowledge of what took place and how it needs to be understood. From this experience, the participant can draw their own conclusions on how to move forward with reconciliation."
—Indigenous & Northern Affairs Canada employee

"I found the Blanket Exercise to be a very unique and personal way to experience key moments in the history of Indigenous people in Canada. The way that historical facts about the Indigenous experience in Canadian history were personalized for the participants was truly profound. By engaging the participants in this way, the challenges, losses and triumphs of Indigenous people in Canada were felt in each participant's heart. Their struggles became ours, their pain became ours and we also felt their strength and resilience. The support of the Elder in helping the participants deal with what they were feeling was very special. This was truth and reconciliation personified and personalized in a way that I have never seen or felt in quite the same way before, when I was simply an observer. It was a very valuable experience"

—Canadian Human Rights Commission employee

"Every student in Canada should experience the Blanket Exercise"
—Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada