



Circles for Reconciliation Inc.

Dear Facilitators, Donors, and Friends of Circles for Reconciliation Inc,

I wish to announce my retirement from the Co-Leadership of Circles for Reconciliation effective Friday, June 17, 2022. I feel such a connection to you, all across the country, and I wanted you to know this.

My passion for reconciliation remains as high as ever, however, at 88 years of age several health issues simply related to the process of aging no longer allow me to carry out my many responsibilities effectively.

Because of our project, I believe I now have many “mutually respectful relationships” with Indigenous people across Canada. This of course includes dear Partners Ingrid Dowan and Grace Schedler, Board Members, Advisory Committee Members, Staff and so many facilitators and participants across Canada. I am most grateful. I have learned so much of our real Canadian history. I am humbled by the willingness of so many Indigenous people to share their often-painful stories, as I also recall many moments of tender sharing and laughter.

I am also grateful for the many non-Indigenous contacts and friends. I have frequently described our non-Indigenous participants as having an unquenchable “thirst for reconciliation.” I am in awe and admiration.

To our Indigenous friends I say: Do not lose hope, your allies are growing daily! Our small project is lighting the fire of reconciliation in the minds and hearts of Canadians from all walks of life who are learning of your vibrancy in the face of injustices, your humility, and your wisdom.

I am truly grateful to our many funders. Over the years, we have tried to be as transparent as possible in our financial matters, to build trust among our funders. For the first time, we are beginning to see some financial stability, thanks in no small part to two unprecedented, large-scale grants from the Winnipeg Foundation and the Province of Manitoba. Now, more than ever, we can allocate much needed resources to respond to the ever-increasing requests for more Circles.

There is no quick fix to bring about reconciliation. I am sometimes disappointed by how long it takes to move things forward. But as I look back on our progress from a modest beginning, I am amazed at the national response to our project - so far beyond our original expectations. I see ripples in the water expanding daily. It inspires me. Our research heartens me as we hear how often our Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants not only complete their 10-week Circle, but continue to meet sometimes up to two years beyond. To read about all the ongoing actions of our former participants tells me that our initiative is now reaching literally thousands of Canadians well beyond those participating in our Circles.

To all of you: thank you! I am fully confident that our staff, with your commitment and support, will move our Circles further toward reconciliation in even new ways.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve, and please do not forget that “reconciliation begins with each and every one of us.”

Raymond F. Currie