

Life Stage	Personal Experience	Growth
Conception	I am the 3 rd child, my mother conceived when her tubs were tied. It was not a happy marriage.	I recognize that I was meant to be here. I can relate with others growing up in an unhappy home.
Infant <i>0 - 13 Months</i>	Caesarian birth, to a loving mom and a big extended family. I was breast fed. Mother's family went to Baptist church.	I brought my own children into this world by home birth, welcomed with drum and language and they went in Tikinaagan. I breast fed babies for 2 years each.
Toddler <i>13 Months – 2 Years</i>	Mother's family was very close, I remember spending a lot of time at my grandparents.	I wanted the same family closeness for my children. They were welcomed by community in a Baby Welcoming.
Child <i>2 – 7 Years</i>	I lived across the field from my dad's mom. She was Anglican, but still practiced Haudenosaunee ceremonies. I went to my first Sweatlodge around 6 years old.	My partner and I have raised our sons around ceremony and the drum the best that we could.
Adolescence <i>7-14 Years</i>	Turbulent time for my parents. The house was cold eventually my mom left taking me, we never went back. Up to this point in my life, I only saw my dad a handful of times.	I had a very strong connection with my mother and none with my father. I can relate to the feeling of abandonment, not being cared for or loved by him. That feeling, he not reaching out to me so why should I reach out to him.
Youth <i>14-21 Years</i>	I rebelled and took to alcohol by 15yrs, was careless and put myself in harms way. I was given too much freedom, and nothing to ground me. I was in a terrible car accident that took a good friend's life and almost took mine.	I understand how friends become the center at this time. Where freedom is paramount and making mistakes is where the learning, strength and resiliency comes from. If I had culture in my life to ground me, I can see how that would have been different. I had my moms church, but never felt connected to it.
Adult <i>21 + Years</i>	I was very independent and adventurous, travelled a lot. It was my early 20s where I found pieces of my culture that woke me to something I felt was missing. This also led me to find my soul mate, my life partner and to bring 2 sons into this world together.	I understand not growing up going to ceremonies and being directed to the church thing. I know that feeling of needing to fill the emptiness. I know the importance of LOVE, and the power it has to reroute your path. The importance of the rhythm in relationships. It all comes back to love and how grateful you are for it.
Elder	I have a lot of memories at my mothers' parents house. It was the gathering place, and how it changed after she was gone. Everyone scattered.	I understand how people deals with grief in their own way. I really feel how important the matriarch is, and how it shifts. I see the difference between processing vs dealing with grief.