

**CHAPBOOK LAUNCH – I Got It From An Elder; conversations in healing language**  
Institute for Integrative Science & Health: [www.integrativescience.ca](http://www.integrativescience.ca)

- **celebrations to launch a research publication**
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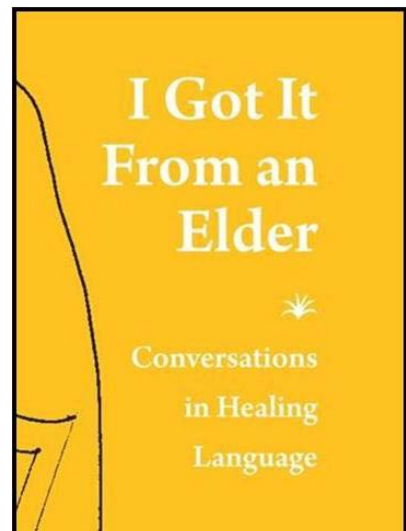


On the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2008, the Institute for Integrative Science & Health (IISH) hosted a day of celebrations in Membertou First Nation. The day honoured two significant events – the launch of a research publication and the addition of new Dreamcatchers to the giant one that hangs in the atrium of the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre.

The morning activities celebrated the Dreamcatcher Project and took place at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre. The project was a seven year creative journey in which children at the Membertou Elementary School worked with Mi'kmaw artist Nick to create personal Dreamcatchers to add to the giant Dreamcatcher that Nick had created and that hangs in the Centre's atrium. 2008 was the fifth year of the Dreamcatcher Project. More information can be found at: <http://www.integrativescience.ca/uploads/activities/Membertou-Dreamcatcher-Integrative-Science.pdf>.

The afternoon celebrations took place at the Membertou Elementary School and saw the launch of the chapbook entitled "I Got It From An Elder; conversations in healing language" (published in 2007 as No. 20, Devil's Whim Occasional Chapbook Series, by Gaspereau Press, Kentville, NS).

The chapbook was written by Dr. Marilyn Iwama, poet and Integrative Science Post-Doctoral Fellow and then Research Fellow. It emerged from Dr. Marilyn's tender loving work with hours and hours of audio tapes that had been made when Dr. Ivar Mendez (renown neuroscientist and surgeon at the Brain Repair Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada) spent a weekend discussing the Mi'kmaw language with Elder Murdena Marshall in her home in Eskasoni First Nation during Winter 2005. In particular, they focussed on what Murdena calls the "healing tense" in the language. As mentioned, Dr. Marilyn then worked with the audio tapes of these discussions. In addition, she spent many more hours in further discussions with Elder Murdena and also Elder Albert Marshall.



Two publications resulted from Marilyn's loving labours. The chapbook was one of these and it is co-authored by Elder Murdena, Elder Albert, Dr. Mendez, and Dr. Cheryl Bartlett. Gaspereau Press describes it as "a poetically shaped collage of conversations about the healing tense in the Mi'kmaw language, and an attempt to integrate Indigenous and Western ways of knowing."

The second publication resulting from Marilyn's labours appeared as an article in the Canadian Journal of Native Education in 2009 (Vol. 32, pages 3-23). It is entitled "Two-Eyed Seeing and the Language of Healing in Community-Based Research" and is co-authored by Elder Murdena, Elder Albert, and Dr. Cheryl. More of Murdena's thoughts about the healing tense and Marilyn's insights about healing words and actions can be found in the article. It can be accessed here: [http://www.integrativescience.ca/uploads/articles/2009Iwama-et-al-CJNE-Two-Eyed-Seeing-Mikmaw-language-healing-community-based-research\[1\].pdf](http://www.integrativescience.ca/uploads/articles/2009Iwama-et-al-CJNE-Two-Eyed-Seeing-Mikmaw-language-healing-community-based-research[1].pdf).

During the celebrations for the launch of the chapbook, the drum group "The Sons of Membertou" performed and chapbook co-authors Dr. Marilyn Iwama, Elder Murdena Marshall, and Dr. Ivar Mendez participated in dramatized readings. The celebrations also highlighted the personal relationship that had grown between Elder Murdena and Dr. Mendez. Dr. Mendez was also a special guest for the morning's celebrations of the Dreamcatcher Project. He shared his thoughts about dreams and aspirations with the school children, Elders, teachers, scientists, community members, university faculty, members of the Cape Breton Regional Police Service and others who had gathered for the event. Much of this same audience stayed for the chapbook celebrations in the afternoon.

Some additional information about chapbook author Dr. Marilyn Iwama can be found here: (<http://www.integrativescience.ca/People/Research/>). And, information on how to order the chapbook can be found at: <http://www.gaspereau.com/1554470501.shtml>.

*BELOW:* co-authors of the chapbook "I Got It From An Elder; conversations in healing language". Left to right: Dr. Ivar Mendez, Elder Albert Marshall, Dr. Marilyn Iwama, and Elder Murdena Marshall; missing from the picture is co-author Dr. Cheryl Bartlett

