

## **Kairos Blanket Exercise August 20, 2022**

On August 20, cottagers and residents gathered at the shores of Otty Lake, on unceded Algonquin Territory, to participate in the [Kairos Blanket Exercise](#). The OLA Reconciliation Working Group organized the event. Tina Vincent, from Kitiganzibi, and Michael Desautels, who is Métis from Red River but now lives in Perth, led the group through the interactive exercise.

Using blankets spread on the ground, and scripts describing historical events, Tina and Michael took participants through 500+ years of history and conveyed, in a visceral way, how colonization has impacted Indigenous peoples.

While sharing facts which laid out the progress of colonization, the facilitators took blankets from beneath participants' feet, and forced them onto smaller and smaller territory. Occasionally, they asked some members of the group to leave the exercise and take their seats to represent the death of large numbers of Indigenous people through displacement, poverty, disease and the Residential School System.

As the exercise progressed, participants came to understand how years of government policies have resulted in the destruction of Indigenous lands, resources, cultures, communities, families, and ways of life. They learned of the multigenerational impact this devastation has caused and recognized that colonization, in its modern forms, continues today with, for example: resource extraction on Indigenous lands, underfunding of Indigenous schools and the judicial system which sees an over-representation of Indigenous people in Canadian prisons. Tina and Michael also emphasized the resilience of Indigenous peoples and their continued resistance and growing resurgence

If you are interested in learning more through participation in the OLA Reconciliation Working Group please contact [editor@ottylakeassociation.ca](mailto:editor@ottylakeassociation.ca) to find out about upcoming meetings.

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