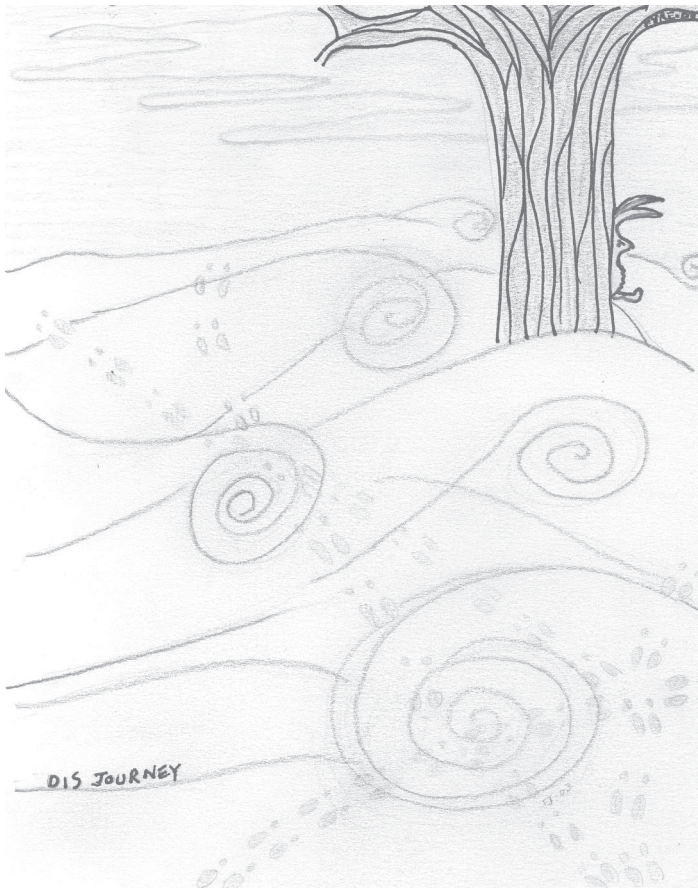


GETTING STARTED. ON DIS HEALING.JOURNEY.



Dis Journey.

Travel with me. like Mahe'kun tracking Wapoos (Rabbit). in Snow.Storm.
sometimes Trail will be hard to See. maybe lose Tracks. of where we are goin'.

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StoryTelling.

Nehiyâw'ak Teaching.Healing. tool.
a Medicine.

Strengthening. Connecting.

Individual and Community.

we understand Power of Language.

to Heal. Regenerate. Create.

Words give Life.

we open ourselves to others with Words.

we make Questions. Ponder. Meditate. Dream.

Communicate powerful Truths.

Enrich our Imaginations.

Deepen our Desires to Live.

StoryTellers are Seed Bearers.

Plant images in our consciousness that take Root and Flower.

Stories Grow out of our Lives. like Roots grow a Tree.

Stories grow us. Grow us into who we are.

these MedicineStories are Twinned. Twisted. Braided.

are Shaping. Shifting themselves and me.

are images of possible histories.

present realities.

unfolding futures.

Stories contain Incoherencies. are Trickster tales.

Wisakecahk is with me. side by side. as Witness.

when I land flat on my Face.

Be Aware.

Falling Down is a very efficient way to learn.

Accept me. Share my Fallibility.Vulnerability.

Free me to be Wrong. Foolish. Weak.

to be Whatever. Whomever I am.

this Freedom allows me more Self Respect.

more Self Love.

less Shame.

Our Ancestors Teach.Heal. with MedicineStories.

show us Right. and Wrong. ways to Live.

weave together Mundane and Arcane.

Everyday and Supernatural.

compel linear thought processes. to Chase. Bite. their own Tails.

like Coyote. or Mahê'kun.

Transform from one Place. Condition. Reality.

to another.

Healing is enabled through MedicineStories.

by amount of Self that I am willing to Sacrifice. put into it.

“There must be a little spilled blood on every Story if it is to carry the medicine.”

teaches venerate StoryTeller Clarissa Pinkola Estes.
MedicineStories must be worked with.
Watered with Blood. Sweat. Tears.
Sprinkled with Laughter.
when my Stories Bloom.
I myself burst into Bloom.
Look. See what Medicines. Stories make.
Learn where and when to apply Them.
that is work. my work. This Work.
these MedicineStories happened.
are happening in my Life.
some in educational institutions.
they are accounts of actual interchanges
I am choosing to illustrate. How. When. Where. Why.
Personal growth. Systemic metamorphosis
was. is. will be required.
I give my Breath. Voice.
Blood. Sweat. Tears. Laughter.
in these Stories.
some are about my Healing.
some are about my Teaching.
All I use to Heal. and Teach.
to plant Seed-Thoughts.
to shoot Light Arrows.
this collection is my Speaking Place.
my re-memoried Experiences.
woven with TraditionalTeachings of my Elders.
my Stories are Not Traditional.
it is not my place to decide.
When. Where. by Whom. Whether.
TraditionalTales belong in public realms.
my Stories are Traditional.
they are a statement of Cultural Identity.
my memory continuously Adapts received Traditions.
in present circumstances.
I am re-inventing My.Our. capacities to Survive.
I teach what I know. learn.
careening down dusty. bumpy. curvy. Road. GoodPath.
my Healing.Teaching. Journey.
I know. Live. Difference. between Nehiyâw'ak.
Indian. Bush.
Communal. We Consciousness.
and
Mooniyâs.

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White. Cowboy.
Industrial. University. I Consciousness.
I Live. savour Life every Day. in intersecting. parallel. planes of reality.
fifteen years in Recovery. through Ceremony.
twenty-five years in educational institutions. of Higher Learning.
thirty years in WomenCircles. getting my consciousness raised.
almost fifty years of my Life.
through three generations of my MétisAncestors.
I know both Worlds. I know each of them.
how they Collide. Blend together.
I am Weaving. Spinning. fragments of Memory.
into a Coherent. Circular. Cosmic whole.
All details. a full Story.
I believe Stories are Sacred.
meant to be Spoken. to be said Out Loud.
when honouring Oral Tradition.
I choose each word carefully.
aware of Significance. Truth. Beauty.
I re-create Dialogue. Meaning. Events.
for relevance in Telling. Now. in this immediate moment.
I empathize with Dori Laub. as She struggles to craft her Story of Incest.
“There are never enough words or the right words,
there is never enough time or the right time,
and never enough listening or the right listening
to articulate a Story that cannot be fully captured
in thought, memory and speech.”
Stories always change. Each telling is Different.
Teller. Audience. Occasion. Time. All creatively combine.
as my Daughter insightfully accuses.
“You change your Story each time you tell it!”
Each audience demands a New version.
Each a True version. as true as Truth can be.
Writing MedicineStories
can drive a Wedge.
between experience as I Live it. as I verbally express it.
can establish distance. between mySelves. my Experiences.
my Community of listeners.
as I struggle to Externalize an Internal understanding.
of a SociallyConstructed reality.
to capture a moment. in Words to last Eternity.
in this One and Only telling.
Storying holds. enfolds. a multiplicity of experiences.
casts Reflections. Connects across Time. Place. Space.
Word Images carved in Stone are solid.

no longer Fluid. Transparent. Flowing.

Shifting as sands of Time slip.

Writing can move me further.

further away from Heart. Soul.

Writing requires Re-inventing. EnemyLanguage.

as I re-place Words on page in these ways.

Expected. Assumed. thought flow. is Interrupted.

I draw on an innate sense of Artistic. Dramatic playfulness.

Spacing. Punctuation. Capitalization. Grammatical Incorrectness.

become Tools to foreground questions.

of Authority. Power. Privilege.

carefully craft Words. Lines. to Create different perspectives.

to Transform. to Surprise. your consciousness.

into new ways of Seeing. Believing.

Linear text flattens out Reality.

my Words paint pictures. my Art talks.

describes. makes sense. re-presents experiences.

Wounded. Healing. Hearts.

as I tell Stories of my Person. my Lives.

I blend Political. Social. Cultural. Spiritual dimensions.

I create Reality. I use accurate details.

Settings. People. Events.

and I don't.

I fictionalize as much as possible. whenever possible.

bend everything. In. and Out. of shape.

can be seen as creative Misinterpretation.

I locate MySelf. my Words. within contemporary Nehiyâw'ak dialogues.

I face. Voicelessness. Stereotypes. Appropriation. Ghettoization.

Linguistic. Cultural. Sexual. and Colonial Cages.

surround my Experience. my Self-Expression.

in concert with my Sisters. I am called to address my Womaness.

Birthing. Mothering. Nurturing. Vulnerability.

Fear of Violence. Sexual Assault. Sexism.

Tensions between Male-defined Traditions and Women's Power.

Loss of Innocence. Hypocrisy. Betrayal.

I Story times I face Black. Cavernous holes. Depression.

Devastation. Death. Discrimination.

BurnOut. Backlash.

I Story how Ceremony. Dreams. Ancestors. StrongWomen.

help me Survive. Thrive. Heal.

to Live another Day.

to tell another Story.

this collection of MedicineStories.

sets out different kinds of information.

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Intellectual. Spiritual. Emotional. Material.
Diverse. Disparate sensations are described.
Seen. Heard. Smelled. Tasted. and Touched.
Historical. Contemporary. Futuristic are combined.
Local. National. International. Supernatural.
following examples of Traditional Tellers.
Patterns. Boundaries. Connections. are not sharp or distinct.
barely discernible to some for long stretches.
may be Invisible to you.
use your Nose. to sniff out faint Trails.
in Grasses. Forests. left by small Creatures.
Be. like Wolf. tracking Rabbit through Snow.Storm
Communicating these ways.
is closer to how I experience realities.
Multifaceted. Mobile.
Moving. through many layers. Simultaneously.
this Text. is a Balancing act.
I want to reWeave. Learning with Living.
Cultural contexts with Political realities.
Personal Lives with Societal structures.
Humans with AllBeings.
in Ordinary and NonOrdinary Worlds.
some Beings are friendly towards Humans
who adventure among Them.
many are Unfriendly. Hostile. Dangerous.
my Spiritual Growth evolves by Need.
to court positive helpers.
to avoid or protect against others.
I want to reConnect Heads. Spirits. Hearts. Hands.
Critical. Creative. Art. Academia.
I Resist. Challenge.
prevailing patterns of Alienation. Fragmentation.
that Confine. Define. Shape me.
I make Time to Connect. Words. Images. History.
when words Create. Thoughts are Embraced. Shared.
Connections all happen at once.
HealingWoundedHearts is a process. a flow.
MedicineStories chart movement.
towards Wholeness. Love. Truth. Forgiveness.
taught Not to fight back. turn another Cheek.
too many times. in too many ways.
I know. Now. Truthful words are Medicine.
I choose to carry as WarriorWoman.
Language can be an EnemyWeapon.

used to perpetuate Racism. and Hate.
I must bend and shape language to make Truth.
recreate new ways. to Wordsmith. to Heal. Grow. Love.
Healing does Not occur when I try to Be. what I am Not.
happens when I Live. more of Who I Am.
Ripples move though Water. once Stone is tossed.
when I am Whole. my Heart Voiced.
Healing Ripples. into Ocean of All human experience.
Healing is Inevitable. Vast. Iridescent.
I toss this Stone. deliberately crafted with LovingCare. Conviction.
to open Doorways. create Pathways.
Ripple from centre to periphery. to Heal.
Deep Scars. Stories. Water. Sky. Fire. Earth.
Desire. for a deeper Life. a fuller Life. a saner Life.
All are Doorways. Pathways. to Healing.
Stepping through Doorways takes Courage.
I reach for my WarriorWoman within. to stand beside me.
as I renegotiate old Wounds. Scars from Traumas.
Free myself from a painful past.
Stand up to Tyrants. Abusers.
Internal and External.
Individual and Collective.
be Accountable. Self-disciplined.
willing to serve a Cause bigger than myself.
willing to do whatever it takes to Grow.
willing to Change myself.
my Words. my Worlds.
through MedicineStories I teach and I learn.
I heal and I am healed.
I tell and I listen.
both Teller and Listener are necessary to Story.
both Telling and Listening are Intense. Intentional.
Giving. Receiving. Giving.
complete Circles of Nehiyâw'ak Truth.
Be. Aware. Listen and Learn.
what can you be Surprised into Seeing? Believing?
Watch Out! Land mines are strewn across StoryTelling Paths.
Pay Attention. to how you Hear.
how you take up Stories of my Life.
will you be an innocent bystander to my painful recollections?
will you judge my Life too chaotic? too dysfunctional?
or will you awaken to see yourself. your process?
reflected like Rainbow Light through a prism.
Multifaceted. Beautiful.

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where does my.your. Voice come from?
whose Histories. Political realities. forms of Consciousness.
frame my. your. LifeNarratives?
how do multiple realities Shape. Transform.
Perceptions. Practices. of Teaching.Healing.
in multiple contexts. Worlds. Global pillage.
we find ourselves. immersed in. Today.

We. AllBeings. are Interconnected in Great Web of Life.

tell me...

what is our Community? our Unity? what is our Diversity?

Listen up.

Learn Me. Learn You.

Heal Me. Heal You.

Watch. GrandMother Spider.

Weave. your Story. within my Stories.

your Lives. amidst my Lives.

as She Weaves. we'll make Fire.

and Sing again. ReNewed.

Welcome to my World. Sit Down. have some Tea.

don't get too Comfortable.

I haven't been.

this Book. is Not about Happy Endings. or Resolutions.

it is about ongoing Struggle.

I will not wrap things up.

in a tidy package. with a shiny bow.

contribute to your Denial.

it would be a falsehood. a Lie.

these Stories. are my Voice. my Truth.

I've told them True to me. True to what I know.

what my Ancestors knew. what they told me. tell through me.

a Truth.

WARNING!!!

WHILE THESE STORIES
ARE BASED ON MY TRUE LIFE STORY.
SOME CHARACTERS.
A NUMBER OF INCIDENTS.
HAVE BEEN COMPOSITED.
INVENTED.
FICTIONALIZED.
AND ALL NAMES CHANGED.
INCLUDING YOURS.

I begin ...

I grew up in Northern Bush country.
Harsh. Untamed. Isolated lands.
when Rebellions. Resistance Movements. of 1800s were squashed.
by hanging of Louis Riel. in 1885.
My People were scattered. South to States. North to Shield.
Métis are a Nation in diaspora.
as are Acadians of Eastern seaboard.
Blacks of African continent.
located throughout Prairies. there remain. pockets of Métis culture.
role models of Resistance. as a Survival Strategy. as a Culture.
Métis Culture is continuously under Creation.
shaped by Environmental pressures. Survival demands.
Remembered. Retold. Reshaped.
through Stories of Riel. Dumont.
Strong Métis Women. my Relations. Elders.
we Live through great Stories. of Culture. Race. Place.
nurture for telling Stories. comes from Those who have gone before.
Telling. Hearing Stories. draws Power from Ancestors.
joins one to another. across Time and Space.
like Trin Minh-ha. I wish to acknowledge.
"My Story, no doubt is me,
but it is also, no doubt, older than me."

A TRIBUTE TO ENDURANCE

to my Auntie Eva. to my Mother. may I Honour you in this Telling. Today.



*GentleToothSmile
feeds HungryOnes.
Re.envisioning.
in wake of
colonial Destruction.
Violence.
orphaned Children.
abandoned Women.
fend for ourSelves.
takes Strength.
Determination.
Endurance.
to Survive.
Starvation.*

this Story was told many times. by my Mother. GrandMother. Aunties. Cousins. it is a Story told to All Women. Men. and Children. but. it is a Women'sStory. this is TheWay of MyPeople. we view our past Ancestors as Guides. seek Their help. to Survive Life's problems. many times. when my Life is difficult. I am counselled—Remember Eva.

my Auntie Eva. now in Spirit World. is a Woman of Courage and Determination. Her Story is often told. when times are Rough. as a Tribute to Endurance. to let us know. just when you think. you have given. All you can give. you have to give a little bit more. just a little bit more.

when Auntie is very young. She marries a Trapper. they Live in Bush. in a Shack. this is a common Lifestyle. for Nehiyâw'ak people in general. and Métis in specific. Then. AtTheTime. they have no running Water. only Wood heat. Subsist. on what they catch. can harvest. can pack in. when supplies are brought.

Well. it is early fifties. they are “making do.” Eva. little teeny four-foot-five-inch Eva. and Arvey. and their twelve Children. it is Winter. Eva is pregnant with her thirteenth Child. this is Not extraordinary. Not considered a large number of Children.

Anyways. Eva is pregnant with her thirteenth Child. when tragedy strikes. Tragedy Struck. Arvey goes off into Bush. does not return. Did

Not Return. maybe He is killed by Bear. maybe He is killed by Gun. NoOne knows. so NoOne tells Story.

what does get talked about is my Auntie Eva. LittleEva. and twelve Babies being left stranded. in Winter. up in northern Bush country. it is cold. so Cold. She has to heat with Wood. Wood is running out. Running Out. Children scavenge. and so does Eva.

they put on all Clothes they have. huddle Together. under all Blankets and Furs they have. especially at Night. especially when NorthWind blows big blizzards. Big Blizzards so white. you can't see hand in front of your face. can you believe it? couldn't See Hand in Front of Your Face. you have to tunnel out. to get outside house.

Winter conditions are nothing new to Eva. She is born to it. but. lack of Wood. No Wood! it is so cold! and No Arvey. No Arvey to go out and get Wood. is a Real Problem. She keeps hoping. Hoping that he will return. or SomeOne. AnyOne. will answer Messages. She sends out to GrandMothers in her need.

"GrandMothers please." She prays as she puts Tobacco down. but. Not only then. She prays at all Times. and in all Places. She prays with her BlackBeads too. She prays to EveryOne. and AnyOne.

it is cold. Really Cold. but. that isn't Eva's only problem. they are also running out of Food. Running Out of Food. they are getting hungrier. and Hungrier. Eva goes to MeatShack each day. cuts a Strip. hacking with SharpKnife. on frozen MeatBone.

whenever I hear Story. as a Girl. I always want to know. "how did you reach It. Auntie? how did you reach so high Auntie?" I know. how high Moose stand is. to keep out of Dogs reach. I know. how tall Auntie is. I have to know. "how did you reach It?" but. I am told. "Hush up. leastwise till She's done." Till She's Done Story. never do find out. or figure it out. one of Life's Mysteries.

Anyways. Eva cooks what little they have. melting Snow and Ice to cook MooseBoneSoup. what you cook when all Meat that can come off is stripped. Soup smell drives them all wild. even Eva. but. She does without. Eva Did Without. She gave what little they have to feed Children. to feed hungry Children. Twelve Hungry Children. Imagine. She Did Without.

That is. until she feels movement quicken. in her Belly. in Her Belly. and she knows. She Knew. She must feed herself. Her inside self.

but. this is nothing new to Eva. who Lived harsh Bush Life of subsistence for many years. She's been hungry many times. felt many Babies quicken in her Belly. delivered Them in her cabin. many times

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already by herself. by Herself and with Arvey. but. now. it is Different.

She trudges out each day to try to hunt. She shoots some small Birds. Partridge. Spruce Grouse. “they taste just like their name.” She tells it. Eva traps Rabbits. watches carefully for Trails they leave. She strips Willows. and other Plants. whatever She can find. in places Snow is not too deep.

Eva knows. Animals. Plants. give up their Lives. in order for people to Survive. Life in Bush requires an intimate survival relationship with Natural World. Sight. Smell. Sound. Taste. Touch. are all of equal importance. participating Together with Mother Earth. Bush consciousness. Eva knows Trees and Clouds. Snows and LightningStorms. Berries and Bark. Rabbits and Moose. and Bears.

but. Eva is growing weaker. and her Belly is growing larger. and her Children are growing hungrier. and still no Arvey. Still No Arvey. She doesn't know what to do. She Didn't Know What To Do. She lays huddled with her Children. All of them. in one pile. under all Blankets. and Furs. and Clothes they have.

She sings soothing Chant. to keep them safe over long cold Nights. Sacred Songs send a message for help. “GrandMothers help me. what to do? send me a Message. a Sign. GrandMothers.” She prays. She Prayed Real Hard. Real Hard She Prayed.

She dozes. She Dozed. and she Dreams. She Dreamed and she knows. She Knew what she must do. She arises before Dawn. packs what little Food is left. ties a Bundle of what they have. What Little They Had! Although. it is not near as much as what they will Need.

at first Light. of BrightRoseDawn. She awakens Children. Bundles Them in all Clothes. Blankets. and Furs. Children drowsy with sleep are Bundled. packs YoungOnes in sled. Long sled. one for hauling Moose. “I want Moose.Steak so bad.” She says when she tells it. She Really Wanted It Bad!

She walks and makes OlderOnes walk. and they walk. and walk. and Walked and Walked. they pull sled. and they walk. and walk. and Walked and Walked. their Feet crunch on hard Snow. for Days and for Nights ... crunch ... crunch ... crunch.

they can't rest. they might freeze. They Might Freeze. “don't fall asleep. you might freeze.” we are all told. regularly. they sleep a little by Day. but. Never by Night. Never By Night. and Eva never sleeps herself at all. No. Eva Never Slept. Not At All.

they walk and they walk. and They Walk. Eva and her twelve Children. and One in her Belly. Hungry and cold and tired. Hungry! Cold and Tired. Eva is weakening. All Children. but One. are in Sled. She feels

she can Not go on. Can Not Go On. No! “maybe we goin’ Wrong Direction. maybe we makin’ Wrong Decision.” Her Fears speak loudly. “maybe we will All Die.”

Finally. Eva sits down. Tears freeze to her Cheeks. as they spill down her blue. white. red. patchy. frost bitten Face. She buries her self in her Fur. “Go Away. I have to sleep.” She growls to her Son. as he tries to keep her Awake. is all lost?

Suddenly. Eva hears a BeautifulSong. Bright and Lively. She looks around to see who might be singing. “it is like an Angel on High.” She tells it to her Christian friends. “it’s like a beautiful sweet. long. Bird call. many of them. all at once. over and Over again.” She tells us. “I wonder. maybe I died and crossed over.”

Eva jumps up. No. All is as it had been. All Children are still in Sled. looking real cold. Real Cold. Eva is Energized. from SweetSongs of IceFairies. She is able to trudge on. Refreshed. Tired still. but. willing to go on. to Live on.

after a long while. they finally arrive. Arrive at Road. Road to TheTown. they wait and wait. and wait. Waited and Waited. Cold. Hungry. and Tired. along comes a Truck. a Ride to TheTown. Yeah!! a Ride to TheTown. they are Happy for a ride to TheTown. crouching in Back. Wind sailing over their bowed Heads. they happily speed to TheTown.

to TheTown. our Family welcomes them. Welcomed Them All. LittleEva and her twelve Children. “my ‘ow Children ‘ad all grown. an’ OneMore in Belly. Bien! Wonderful! come in. Come In! Welcome All.” Feasted. Bathed. Warm. and Rested. Eva tells her Story.

Now. Story didn’t quite end here. because. part I like best. is yet to come. Soon. after Auntie Eva comes to TheTown. one in Belly. Cousin KooKoo. is kicking to be born. my Auntie already birthed twelve Babies in Bush. She doesn’t want to go into no Hospital to have her last one. “No Way!” She says. but. She is living in TheTown. Now. so They say. “She has to.” They Said She Had To.

Well. my Ma is just about to have her first Baby. being she is a Nurse in TheHospital. and familiar with Procedures on maternity ward. She offers. “I’ll go in wit you. Eva. to get you settled. an’ help you out. seein’ as yer so nervous.”

they do end up going in Together. but. it doesn’t work out quite as they talked about. No sireee. it isn’t Ma helping my Auntie. She already knows what she is doing. She Knew. What She Was Doing. it is my Auntie helping my Ma. KooKoo is already long outta there by time

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little JoJo is born.

“Fun-nee.” Ma tells it. “how sometimes we set out to tink. we’re goin’ to be Teacher. or Helper. an’ it ends up bein’ another way around.” Fun-nee. it’s work of Wisakecahk to teach us Reversals. UpsideDown. InsideOut lessons. to make sure we don’t take ourselves too serious. Don’t Take Yourself So Serious. don’t make yourself to be more important than you are. “don’ tink yer King of Turd Island. when yer only Fart da Messenger.” Ma would warn us. if she ever thought we were getting “too big for our britches.”

just to put this Story in historical perspective. I am still an Egg. I was born five years later. in mid-fifties. almost fifty years ago. my people were BushPeople. today. some still are.

I begin with Eva’s Story. to Honour my Ancestors. my first responsibility in speaking. Eva. Ma. and other Women in my Life teach me important lessons. a WarriorWoman has to give long and hard. before she takes even a small bit. even a little bite. for herself. what she takes she uses. through HardWork and real Sacrifice. to further and nurture Life. Nurture Lives. that she is Responsible for. including her own.