**Transcript of Thrivival: The Fire Within
9. Situating Research
Project Lead and Speaker: Heather Simpson**

HEATHER SIMPSON:

Situating Research.

The Truths shared reflect two Indigenous Autistic learners' voices, and again, do not represent the whole of an Indigenous Autistic community and variations of our communities within oppressional intersectionality. They do, however, represent great wisdom and insight as well as immense courage, thoughtfulness, humility, and respect, all characteristics fundamental to advancing social justice and strengthening of cultural identities for Indigenous Autistic Peoples. We all have a story and there's something to learn from each story told. Within this ethic, I will also weave in perspectives, observations and Teachings from Elder Phillip Gladue, Dr. Aaron Johannes, myself and others for a more holistic, expansive exploration.

In sharing these Truths, I would like to invite you to join me in a time and space of visualization. We are coming from a place of understanding that within all our relations, including Human Beings, is a great fire within. This fire is the essence, our spirit. This great energy that is our being is always whole, formless, infinite, and powerful. It is the source of creation, of love and light. It is where we all come from and where we will all return when we're called home. It is from this knowing that we acknowledge the inherent value and place of all of our relations in the web of life. It is with grave misfortune that this reverence is diminished, often violently by human-made constructs, psychological, physical and spiritual, and many relatives, human and non-human are wounded.

This report, Thrivival: The Fire Within grounds us in the knowing that Indigenous Autistic Peoples are in constant conflict with oppressive sociological phenomena that is an attack on the fire within. They, like all our relations, are precious and need safety, peace, harmony, and community to ensure their Thrivival. It is our hope that the storage experience of participants in this project educate on the ways their fire is suffocated in a post-secondary context, at real risk of extinguishing, and ways that if they are supported, share their fire with others the way that Creator has intended.