

VERBATIM

Angie Amagoalik

My name is Angie Amagoalik. I am originally from Resolute Bay as a daughter of Simionie and Sarah Amagoalik who were the original relocates from Inukjuak; back then Port Harrison, to Resolute. I've lived in Iqaluit for the past 13 years. I'm a mother of five and I have a beautiful grandson. I've been here for the past 13 years.

Question 1: How was it growing up in Resolute?

Life in Resolute was very difficult. I'm sorry I will get emotional. This is kind of the very first time ever that I'm able to express how it was living in Resolute Bay and growing up in Resolute Bay. It was very difficult; of course like anybody else in life there were ups and downs. There is happiness, there is a lot a sadness but more to me, it was very, very sad. It was scary, it was horrific, it was... it was a very scary place to live in. I was born here, raised in Resolute.

I don't know how many, I think I could count with my finger how much happiness I had there. There wasn't a lot. I was adopted out to Simionie and Sarah Amagoalik, my biological mother was Sarah Amagoalik younger sister. My biological mother had kept me for three months and decided that they were gonna give up, my mom was gonna give me up to the Amagoalik's family. Never found out till I was about between 7-8-9 that I was adopted, learned who was my biological mother. I lived in a very abusive family. A lot of violence. There were just a lot of violence and was scary living.

There were some days here and there that you know I was able to enjoy with some kids. My parents were very, very strict. Being at my age now, being a mother, a grandmother, I could say I'm not happy about it but I a sense where I'm happy how I was raised. It taught me a lot who I am as a female and a human being. It taught me to respect, to be equal with anyone. There is not a lot I can say about Resolute where I was happy. I any way I could think of, I'm a victim: abused, molested, and raped. I took all that.

Question 2: Why was Resolute such a terrible place?

I think when the relocate happened; I think that's where it all happens. They were angry, they were angry at the government. It wasn't towards us, the younger generation, it was to the federal government when my family was relocated. They weren't there to get that torture but we ended up getting that from them. That's my understanding. I thinking that's what happen from the relocates. They're were angry, they were lost.

There was a lot of drinking problem, I wouldn't remember maybe late 70's, they had a bar in Resolute. I don't know how many years it was open. I cannot really tell. I only remember

you know, my parents would go every single night. My dad was a carver; he would exchange carvings for booze. Don't get me wrong there was always food in the house. My dad was a hard workingman regardless. But my whole family was affected by alcohol and that's where all the violence came from, He drink and drink. My dad was a supra alcoholic, very alcoholic. He was very violent, he was very abusive. He's never abused me, he's never abused any of my brothers. I guess in a sense where he abuses us was when we watched him beat up my mom, in front of us.

As I got older my mom would kept me up in the middle of the night. I was like a bodyguard for her at the age of 7-8-9-10. I would be up in the middle of the night to make sure my mom was not getting beaten up by my dad. My dad was a big man then. What am I suppose to do here? How do I stop this man you know? He's much bigger than I am. I don't know it was funny though when I wasn't around the living room, I mean when I was in the living room, my dad never touched my mom. But outside the living room that's where my dad abused my mother. That part I was always wondered, like why?

Question 3: Did you ever ask your dad why he was doing that?

I've never had the courage to ask my dad even when he quit drinking. I've questioned him some questions, you ask why you know and he gave some answers. I apologize that's for me to keep, sorry. As I got older and older and thought about a lot of things growing up in Resolute, I became independent and what's the words...I was not gonna judge my dad. After the fact that would of everything that happened. He had apologized to me. That's all I got, that's all I heard from my dad.

Yeah, before he passed away. He had apologized to me. I'm gonna go backward a bit. My mom too, it was in July 6th 1994. Me and my mom were sitting down, she was diagnosed with lung cancer. I took care of her. I bathed her, I did everything for her. But right the night before she lost her memory, she was on her deathbed. The night before she told me she apologized to me too for everything. And if I'm there I knew, I knew why she apologized. Never, never had an apology from my mom and that's all I got from her. I think that's all I needed to hear from her. She never told me she loved me, she said it once in my life. It made a big impact difference in my life, I think this is who I am today. All I needed to hear was I'm sorry and I love you. That's when my mom totally lost her memory and she died July 9 1994.

Question 4: Have your parents ever talked to you about the relocation?

My parents never ever told me about this relocation. I've only been learning this ten years ago through news from my two aunts. They both passed away Dora Padluq and Rynee Audla. Rynee was Terry'smson. Just getting information from them here and there. That's what I learned about the relocation. My parents never, ever talked about it.

Why? All I can say maybe they were angry. They were angry with the government. Too much pain, too much anger, too much frustration. You know they lost, lot of their family members, they were suppose to go back two years after. They never did. They had an option. My dad never wanted to go I think, I have no idea. But today though, I'm very grateful that they never left Resolute.

Why? I wouldn't be here today. I wouldn't be who I am today. My biological mother wouldn't ever had been conceive with me. I would not have my beautiful children. The life I'm living now...finally I'm loving my life. I could say I'm very grateful that they were relocated. There aren't probably would be a lot of people who agree with me but the younger generation...

Question 5: How do you feel about the healing process?

I'd like to see more of that. I know there are a lot of us in the younger generation we need that because it affected us a lot too. All my cousins we've been affected by this. We've never ever been in a group, which I'd love to see someday. Just the young, I would love to see that and I hope someday it happens. A family reunion with all our first cousins and second cousins.

We are all scattered everywhere. And I would love my children to understand too of what happen to our family. Yeah my two older girls I have not with my young ones yet. A little too young to understand but I will tell them someday.

Question 6: Do you think part of the suffering comes from the silence?

I broke my silence. I had to break that away from me and I kind of carry it over to my two older daughters and I only learn that from a year and a half ago, it's difficult but it's a process that we are having right now. And it's good process, we are doing good! But I get mad at myself...I should have you know... why did I have that silence between my two daughters when I had that ugly silence between my mom. And it was not, it wasn't fun. I wish I had that bond with my mom because I'm just slowly having this beautiful bond with my two girls. Whatever how I was raised and taught I carried with me and took it over my two daughters. But I broke that. I'm not gonna be how my parents taught me and I don't have to teach them how they taught me.

Question 7: Do you think people should embark on a healing journey?

I'm encouraging, they should. Although it's hard, very difficult to face. But you are doing it for you and for your children. You are not doing it for anybody else. I know I have cousins out there who have a lot of issues and they need to face it, they need to work on themselves. The most important part is...I believe in forgiveness so I've forgiven my both parents of what kind of action or emotional of what they taught or what they showed me, how much

abuse they showed me. Make me watching my mom getting beating up. Watch all that. Been there but there is always a time in life where you have to say ok: "do I want a better me? Yes!" My grandma always taught me to forgive. Forgive will pretty much, you know set you free and I still believe in that.

So I have a lot of cousins that I try to encourage to speak up. You know you are mom now you are not that seven years old little girl anymore. You may feel you are but you could break that. You have a voice now. There are people out there that can listen to you. You shouldn't be afraid, I'm not afraid anymore. I can't. I have children and they need to know too. They need to speak up for themselves and which they have and I'm very, very proud of. They are correcting me now.

Question 8: What have you learned from having children?

Patience and more love. I love my kid. I've learned to just... I'm gonna say ten years ago, I never told my girls I love them, never. I would think to myself. I grew up too wanting to hear I love you from my mom and I never got that for many, many years until the day, 3 or 4 days before my mom died. I have to tell my girls I love them because they wanna hear it and they are feeling exactly how I'm feeling when my mom never told me she loved me. And it's every day I love you, first thing in the morning. I love my kid. They are my world. They've fixed me, they've helped me so much. My kids!

Question 9: Do you have any advice for young people?

My advice to the young youth now, it's very different from when I was younger. Keep your chin up. You are always gonna hear you know violence and abuse... You (stick up) for who you are. No don't take, the word scrap, from other people. Just defend who you are, a female or a male. We are all human being and we are equal. There is no difference here, there isn't.

After having my one-day healing in Inukjuak, it really opened my eyes. There is more to do for me and there are sometimes that I have hard time asking. But since I've been back I've learn to ask for help, which is ok. I shouldn't be ashamed or embarrassed or scared or nervous. It's ok to ask for help. I'm learning that. I've always been the big girl, the big lady, the big mom doing everything by myself. But it's ok to ask for help. And for all my family and friends out there, my cousins. It's day one for me. It's an everyday learning life.