

VERBATIM

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It's hard to actually get back to the way I remember it when I was little, 'cause when we left I was about six years old, so I remember bits and pieces of you know the life we had over here.

And the parts that I do remember a lot is when it was winter time, like on the dark season time, us little kids we were not scared of anything. We'd literally walk out of the village and we'd go to Mexican Hat or to the base or to the rivers and we're all just kids, there was no adult supervision and nobody was scared of Nanooks, no bears no nothing, we had fun anyhow. We did practically everything just to enjoy our time, that much I remember anyhow.

Question 1: What were the adults doing?

Most of the time they were working and the ones who weren't working, they were drinking so it was us kids most of the time. I had fun with it anyhow; we learned a lot of stuff out there instead of being in school. In school, you're just stuck in a house. You don't see nothing but numbers, but outside, oh my goodness, you see so many things, you learn things in life that you have to know to be able to survive in the middle of nowhere. Learned what I could eat on the ground so it was good for me, I had fun anyhow. I think I had more fun out there then at home.

There is nobody upset, nobody screaming out there, it's nice and quiet. All you see is the animals and the animals don't give you a hard time if you don't bother them. You know, if you watch them you could actually learn what you are able to eat because they eat only the safe things. So I'd be trying all sorts of different things and it was good. I had fun anyhow.

Question 2: When did you learn about the relocation?

I didn't know anything about it until my grandparents moved back to Inukjuak, when they took me with them. They used to tell stories about, they were picked up in Inukjuak and Puvirnitug, by the ship, I think it was the C.D. Howe. They had to go through like big waves and everything and they just dropped the people on the point, they just dropped off a whole bunch of plywood and two by four so they can make their own houses. That's pretty much about it. They went through hungers because there's barely any animal they're used of eating up there and there is barely anything over here and they went through famine a little bit, but a lot of people survived anyhow. They started learning how to hunt for the polar bears and the seals, the fish they knew

how to do but they didn't know where to find some, so the people from Pond Inlet and Grise Fiord were moved over here too and they started showing them how to hunt around here where there is nothing.

Question 3: What was the relationship like between the people from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet?

I think there is still a lot of negative feelings about it because they're from totally different district areas and when they actually mingle together they couldn't understand each other so they had a hard time. They had a hard time mingle with each other and start being neighbors and everything, it took many years for them to actually start learning and understand each other.

Well, in Inukjuak and Puvirnituk they have more animals, animals are more free to actually... you don't have to go very far to find some animals, but over here, like Pond Inlet they have to travel so much distance to actually hunt so they have... so from these people and Northern Quebec, Inuit, when they started mingling together, they started showing them how they can find animals, through tracks how far it might be and how far they might have to travel before they can stop.

When my grandparents took me to Inukjuak from here, I had no friends and I couldn't speak the Northern Quebec inuktitut language, because they're different dialects. So most of the time I spoke English, and I've been speaking English since I was two, so it was actually easier for me to actually try to communicate. But kids didn't speak English at all so you know, so I had a hard time trying to make any friends for a while and they used to tease me and say: « You're a little whitey, stay away from us! ». So I had a really really hard time. So I forced myself to learn to speak their dialect and once I learned how to speak to them I started to make friends here and there, but not very much though, I was more a loner then anything. I'm still a loner, but I mingle more then I use to.

Question 4: Did the heavy drinking of the adult make life difficult for the children?

I think it was actually better, because nobody was being hurt, nobody was being beaten and tortured and molested, kids were happier when they were alone, when they are all drinking. Everybody would be able to play outside and when everybody's leaving, the ones who were having a party, when everybody's leaving, us kids would go back inside, would go to bed.

Question 5: Weren't you scared?

Oh no, not me. My mother was too protective. Even though she was drinking, she would make sure us kids would be fine before she would be doing anything, so I think she's the best mother that anybody could find because with all the hardship she's been through, with all the beatings that she was going through and my grandparents were keeping her scared and everything, in her own way she made sure us kids were happy and we were not hungry and dirty and we were warm. So she was very protective that I know about.

Question 6: Were your grandparents part of the relocation?

They were original people that were moved to... my dad was already a pre-teen, when they moved here.

Question 7: They moved back to Inukjuak?

They were informed that they could go back if they want to, and I think the plane ticket was not paid or anything but they did have to pay for everything.

Between me and my brother, the hardship that we were going through with our grandparents, it was just like just me and him, we're the only family, so we would be watching out for each other.

By the time I moved to Montreal, I was able to defend myself, so you know that's when I started showing my anger... So if anybody talked back to me I would like attack them and everything. I'd beat them up and everything and people would be like: « It wasn't that bad, why did you attack? ». «Well you know what, I've been treated really really bad all my life, nobody is going to talk like that. Try that again and I'll hit you again. » I got to be a bully.

I was angry at the world, you know because a lot of people knew what was going on in my life and nobody would do anything. So when I learned to defend myself I showed my anger to the world. And I made sure that nobody would touch me again and I'm still like that up to today.

I've got more patience and calmer and I can think before doing anything.

Nobody deserves to be treated like that, especially a little kid. Kids aren't supposed to go through that. Kids are supposed to be loved, that's why God gave people children, so people can learn to love their children, not treat them like they're animals you know. Animals are actually treated better than humans are, especially around here. People are like, wow, they literally

have no feelings. They are like that because of all the things that they go through down here, between the relocation and everything.

Everything got jumbled up I think. And there was so much animosity against each other for a long time and some people they still keep up with that. Up to today. That I noticed. I've been here for three years and I still noticed that the Northern Quebec people and Pond Inlet and Grise Fiord people, part of the families they still have issues with each other.

I don't think it will ever end. After so many years, I think people have given up on that. Too many years going through all that. And even though some people they actually tried to mingle with each other, tried to be like neighbours, because you know they're neighbours and they have to be neighbourly you know, when some people tried that and that side of the people they have so many negative things to say to these people so, they sort of back off.

If it was my choice I don't think anybody would have any animosity about each other, I prefer everybody happy and be family because it's a small community and they're practically all family anyhow so they should just try to be happy. If I had my way, oh my goodness, nobody would be able to show their anger because there wouldn't be any.

When I was a little kid, when we moved to Inukjuak, I used to find rocks of diamonds and I used to literally collect them and I made a plan, when I get older I'm gonna be rich and I'm gonna buy Resolute from the Queen, it's gonna be my land and everybody in the village are gonna be family, nobody's going to fight. If anybody wants to fight, I'll put them in a smaller community and they have to work it out by themselves without anybody else involved. I had a big plan when I was a kid!

I had so much pain and so much anger I didn't want to feel nothing. So I went to the drugs and the booze for the longest time. Amazingly my memory is still pretty good. I'm surprised. With all the drugs and the boozing that I went through and I started drinking by the time I was twelve years old and I've been drinking since. And drugs, oh my goodness. I started smoking weed and hash by the time I was eight years old, just so you know I wouldn't feel nothing. I want to feel dead inside. I don't want to feel nothing. That was my logic.

Right now, jeez I've got kids of my own, so I try to make sure they're happy, that they have a good happy life, that they have no hardship while they are growing up. With the people that, you know, I can see who are having a hard time, I try to help them out because I understand what they are going through, but it's really hard to actually talk about it to certain people so a lot of people don't really want to talk to me about anything because they don't understand why I understand that. And when I start telling them just a little bit, when I start telling them I went through this and I had to do that, they're like: « Wow I didn't know ». A lot of people who are actually dead now, they committed suicide because they went through a hard time and when I

start thinking about that I go: « Why would they do that, they went through only half of what went through and I'm still alive». I went through like... jeez maybe 100% of the evilness and the badness.

Question 8: Do you feel at home in Resolute Bay?

I don't belong nowhere. I literally don't belong nowhere. That's the way I see it because everywhere I've ever been, I've never been welcomed. There always something against me. « You don't belong here», « you've haven't been here», « this is your family and we don't like that family». So it's really hard, where ever I've been, it's not a good place because no matter where you go, you have no place. You don't live nowhere, you're like a stray animal. You know, you're here, here, here, here...that's it.

Montreal is like my home because I practically grew up there. By the time I had my kids I was about nineteen years old, I got my own family there and I've been there for about thirty year, so it's more my home then any place.

Question 9: Do you feel you've succeeded in breaking the abuse cycle?

I've calmed down a lot since I've had my kids. You've got to grown up and calm down, think before you do things and think before you say things and if you are going to do things make sure that everything is going to be proper that way you don't get a hard time with anybody. You're gonna have to have a bit of extra of everything.

I try to talk about all these things that happened to me because I don't want them dragging me all over the place anymore. I need to be myself for once. The way I was suppose to be. The way god meant that I was supposed to be. Through all the... talking to people and facing few people that gave me a hard time, I've actually worked most of it out anyhow. Yeah. Now I see everything. Please, no negativeness around me please! And with the kids, they don't listen to their mothers, fathers or grandparents and I would literally tell, if I was a kid I would have to go through all these things so you better be happy and you better listen to your grandparents or your mother because they love you, they don't hurt you. So they're like «Oh I didn't know that». I say: « You know what? When you have your own kids, you're going to think the same things, so you have to start listening. » And my mother, she's like: « Wow, how come they listen to you and they don't listen to anyone?» I'm like: « Because I went through so many things, I know how to talk to children, because it started happening when I was still a child».

Being a child going through that it hurt more then anything and the way I try to talk to kids it's like with explanations with how they're going to understand it. You know as a child how they

think, how they would feel, so I sort of play with words, with how they can understand them. So they learn to listen and... my nieces and my nephews, oh my goodness they were like super spoiled, they wouldn't listen to nobody and everything had to be their way. And now, since I've been here, they listen, they try not to argue and whatever their parents are telling them, whether they like it or not they try to follow it. Mom is like: «I'm so happy you're here!»

Everybody called me the little devil, the dangerous one, highly dangerous, stay away from her. That's how bad I was. Now everybody is like, « Go see auntie Suzie, go see auntie Susie» Everybody goes Auntie Susie, where ever I'm going if any kid sees me they literally run "Auntie Susie" and they run and give me a hug. I go "ohhhh..."