

**CHERYL BARTLETT: TWO-EYED SEEING for meeting on 19 June 2017 in Edmonton of the  
CIHR Institute Advisory Board on Indigenous Peoples' Health  
(MORE INFORMATION AT: [www.integrativescience.ca](http://www.integrativescience.ca))**

**Core Objectives**

1. Understand that Two-Eyed Seeing is a guiding principle, not a mechanism.
2. Understand that Two-Eyed Seeing requires ongoing co-learning which in turn encompasses at least three additional key essentials, each of which brings challenges.
3. Know that Two-Eyed Seeing is, unfortunately, being co-opted, trivialized, or romanticized by some people and thus it is desirable that means be found to redress or preclude misuse in new research.

**Background**

Two-Eyed Seeing is embedded as a strategic direction in CIHR-IAPH's 2014-2018 strategic plan and is highlighted in "Canada's Fundamental Science Review 2017". Known as *etuqptmumk* in Mi'kmaq, it was brought forward as a guiding principle for inter-cultural work almost two decades ago by Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall (LLD – Honorary; member of Eskasoni First Nation; ex-inmate of the Canadian residential school system) to encourage working within the understanding that beneficial outcomes are more likely in any given situation if we bring two or more perspectives (worldviews, paradigms, knowledge systems) into play. In Elder Albert's words: "*learn to see from your one eye with the best or the strengths in the Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing ... and learn to see from your other eye with the best or the strengths in the mainstream (Western or Eurocentric) knowledges and ways of knowing ... but most importantly, learn to see with both these eyes together, for the benefit of all*". When introduced, Two-Eyed Seeing guided a (then) unique, new "Integrative Science" initiative at Cape Breton University wherein the vision was post-secondary science education. Dr. Cheryl Bartlett (retired Professor of Biology and former Canada Research Chair in Integrative Science at CBU) worked closely with Elder Albert and his wife Elder Murdena in this regard and also to extend Two-Eyed Seeing into the arenas of health, environment, and natural resources wherein the natural sciences are core. Two-Eyed Seeing is profoundly more than just new jargon as it requires commitment to (1) ongoing co-learning (by and with researchers and communities) inclusive of (2) knowledge scrutinization (to see "the best"), (3) knowledge validation (by peers), and (4) knowledge gardening (grounded, actionable community projects), plus willingness to acknowledge and address the many challenges within these four requirements. In the face of current misuse (e.g., co-opting, trivializing, or romanticizing) of Two-Eyed Seeing by some people, the necessity for co-learning must be emphasized. Elder Albert also passionately encourages the understanding that the essence of co-learning itself is *i'l'oqaptmu'k* (in Mi'kmaq) meaning "to revisit for renewal, in order to maintain movement in the direction that spirit intended" (using ways emphatically not based mainly in quantitative evaluation).

**Guiding Questions**

1. What benefits does Two-Eyed Seeing bring to a bio-medical research paradigm? (Note: this is different than asking the same with respect to a bio-medically underpinned health care system.)
2. What pros and cons (and for whom) would be entailed in requiring that research be via co-learning and that it embed nation-appropriate and/or community-based understandings for *i'l'oqaptmu'k*?
3. How might CIHR encourage research that supports reawakening to the traditional understanding that healing comes from within? E.g., consider the different messages conveyed by research policies or calls that used "guiding principle, grow, or nurture" rather than "framework, build, or measure".