

Sound Effect:	00:00	[Wind Rushing, Northern Flicker Bird Calls]
Sound Effect:	00:30	[Muffled Movement And Low, Gravely Beat]
Sound Effect:	01:05	[Lighter, Faster, Hammering Beat Introduced]
Sound Effect:	01:21	[Inaudible Voices]
Sound Effect:	01:32	[Faraway Bird Calls]
Sound Effect:	01:38	[Siren]
Sound Effect:	01:58	[Fire Truck Horn]
Sound Effect:	02:21	[Fire Truck Horn]
Sound Effect:	02:40	[Graveley Beat, Siren, And Other Sounds Fade]
Sound Effect:	02:08	[Wind Rushing, People Chatting]
Senaqwila Wyss:	02:50	[Speaks Skwxwú7mesh sníchim] So, good day, everybody. We are here today, we are very close to a village known in the Squamish language Skwácháʔs and that is near the False Creek mud flat area. So today we.. Where we actually are is the Strathcona Park. So I just wanted to welcome everybody in the Skwxwú7mesh sníchim, the languages of these lands that we call Vancouver is the hən̓q̓əmiñəm language spoken by the Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam. And what I speak from the Squamish language, which is the Skwxwú7mesh sníchim. So we're very wanting to recognize the original languages and the stewards of these lands and waters. And so I'm really excited to bring that name Skwácháʔs as being very close. Some of our parks are an actual village site and some of them I've chosen to choose a village site that's very close, sometimes, usually in walking distance from that exact point, today is a park.
Senaqwila Wyss:	04:43	So a lot of the mud flat areas were very rich and today they can be much more filled with toxins from human pollution. But all of our flats that are originally before were very plentiful with different kinds of shellfish and much cleaner water and thus cleaner environment for the different sea life. And so many kinds of sea otters and a variety of river otters, many kinds of animals, would have that rich abundance we, both humans relying on the inlet for food as well as different animals, parts of our ecosystem. So it's always important to think about that

relationship that even though we see a public space as somewhere for humans to enjoy and be outdoors and hang out, but it's also important to think about the wildlife and the different parts of the ecosystem that today still rely on those parts of the ocean and different public areas or forests that are part of their natural ecosystem as well.

Sound Effect:	05:00	[Wind Rushing, People Chatting]
Jaz Whitford:	05:04	My name is Jaz Whitford and I'm the artist-in-residence at Vines. Today I invite you to listen to the recordings included in this collection and ask yourself these questions and reflect on your answers.
Jaz Whitford:	05:18	How have colonial food systems impacted BIPOC healing in the past and present? How do I ensure myself and my community members grow and harvest foods in a way that recognizes and respects the Indigenous nations whose land we occupy? How can we ensure that we are giving back to the most targeted and vulnerable members of our community and surrounding communities? How does imported and processed food affect our health and the health of the land and waters that we occupy? How does food security or insecurity intersect with social justice issues, such as gender, racialization, Indigeneity, poverty, and citizenship. How are we healing our communities through food sovereignty and plant medicines? And what is your relationship with reciprocity and sustainable wellness?
Jaz Whitford:	06:10	After reflecting on what you've learned, some ways to help lead your thoughts toward paths to action could look something like journaling your thoughts and answers, creating artwork that centres what you've learned, having conversations with your family and community members, and creating plans of action to organize events or demonstrations related to what you've learned. Thanks for listening and we look forward to seeing how what you've learned reflects in your personal practice and in your communities.
Sound Effect:	06:40	[Wind Rushing, Truck Backing Up]

Cease Wyss: 06:51 [Speaks Skwxwú7mesh sníchim] and we're here live at the peñemáy Xwemelch'stn also known as Harmony Garden and I'm looking at a uni-panda right now.

Heather Lamoureux: 07:09 [Laughs]

Cease Wyss: 07:09 And it's super cute. It's watching me. [Laughs] And so how do we heal ourselves through food security and food sovereignty work? We... You know, I think the first steps are starting a garden in your community--

Heather Lamoureux: 07:26 Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 07:26 --and I think... Or starting a garden anywhere. Indigenous people growing their own foods is, is so important because everything we've been given in this modern world is, it's kind of soul-killing.

Heather Lamoureux: 07:42 [Bitter Laugh] Yeah, totally.

Cease Wyss: 07:42 It's taking away our strength and our resilience and we're not touching the earth. So even though most Indigenous people aren't necessarily agricultural people, I think that we are all earth people. [Overlapping, Inaudible Talking In The Background, Heather Lamoureux To A Baby] And so touching the earth is important to us and everything we learn about gardening starts to tell us... It starts to bring back genetic memories from our, our ancestors' time-frame. And we start to have these genetic memories come back and help us [Baby Sounds] to feel connected to the earth and feel good about that activity. And so then other things are being on the land and, and, you know, even just looking at meadows of wild flowers and learning to identify them, that's food security, too, and food sovereignty. And going, going on the land, going to the water, identifying... The identifying of species of plants and animals helps to reignite our, our sovereign souls and our connection to Mother Earth, [Skwxwú7mesh sníchim Word]. And through that work, we, we build our, our personal relationship with the earth and with everything living.

Heather Lamoureux: 09:08 Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 09:09 And so, you know, the, the things that come after that, the more that we garden, the more we... It takes us, it's like roots. It takes us in different directions or branches that reaches out. And so then we start to build those connections and see what we have to do in our, in our communities or even in our yards.

But in our gardens, we start to look and see the soil for what it is. I mean, we see dirt and we see how it's removed and void of all life, you know, and that only a few things can, can thrive in there at all. Then we see soil and it's lush and, and it's producing so much life. So we, even, when we just look at those two things, we can see how for ourselves, at one point, we were colonized, we were like dirt, and we didn't have the nutrients to feed us. And then as we become more sovereign through, through food security, because food is just like water, food is life.

Heather Lamoureux: 10:16

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 10:18

So Indigenous foods, even a small handful of berries can last us for hours compared to something that was processed in a factory and turned into a jam or something. So a spoon full of jam isn't gonna take us as far as a handful of huckleberries or handful of wild berries and that, I think... All those things are what make us feel more connected to the earth and to our sovereign selves and our spirit. And, and we start to see... It motivates us to look at how to take action in other ways around us.

Heather Lamoureux: 10:55

Mhm, cool. That's great. And then... Which goes into the sec-- the next question is what are colonial food systems' impacts on BIPOC healing?

Cease Wyss: 11:10

Ooh.

Heather Lamoureux: 11:11

[Laughs]

Cease Wyss: 11:12

I say that, I think they're severe because just the fact that we have to package things that we make and buy in stores, like we go into a store and everything's packaged and it has a bunch of labels on it.

Heather Lamoureux: 11:24

Mm, yeah.

Cease Wyss: 11:25

It's in different languages, there's chemicals. So we start... The first, one of the first things we see on labels is chemicals.

Heather Lamoureux: 11:32

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 11:33

We're like, "Oh, ugh. [Laughs] Wow, if I just went home and made that myself, I wouldn't have to put nitrates and all these other things that actually start to not only preserve that food, but preserve our bodies." So it, it halts the movement of our blood vessels and our heart and the circulation slows down. So

all those things by eating store-bought canned goods and packaged goods and dehydrated, not often in a healthy way, dehydrated foods [Crow Caws] that sit on shelves with silicone packages. So all those things become super unnatural to our bodies and our minds. And, and I think just even that we have to go get a job--

Heather Lamoureux: 12:20

Mm.

Cease Wyss: 12:20

--to make the money, then wait for the money, and then go buy the food when, as Indigenous people, we're used to, "Oh, oh, look!" I mean, I'll say, "Look, look at my watch," but it mean, it's more like, "Look at the sky and look at the air." It's salmonberry season, let's go pick salmonberries. Oh, now it's fishing season, let's go catch some fish. Oh, it's hunting season. So in all of those things we're, you know, we're being back in by the earth and we're doing, we're doing our jobs, we're gathering foods, and we're exercising. So in being out on the land and getting our foods, we're taking care of everything. Whereas when we're looking at accessing the foods that are available in stores, they become unattainable--

Heather Lamoureux: 13:07

Mm.

Cease Wyss: 13:08

--before we do two other steps. So we have to make two steps happen and then wait [Crow Caws] before we can get to the third step. And whereas just living is... It's literally getting up and going out and gathering. We can walk out and eat a couple of flowers or some leaves, or, you know, we can already nourish ourselves when we have food growing around us.

Heather Lamoureux: 13:30

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 13:31

And when we have allowed ourselves to have a relationship with the environment around us. So I think that there's so many ways that we could sit and just talk about that one--

Heather Lamoureux: 13:41

Yeah.

Cease Wyss: 13:42

--but I wanted to simplify it to those terms [Plane Passing Overhead] and say that as sovereign Indigenous people and People of Colour, we have the ability to get up and walk out [Crow Caws] into the environment and get what we need immediately, but also take care of everything else, our mind, our body, spirit. But with commercialism, capitalism, we're forced into being a cog, a wheel that doesn't get fed until, you know, we've done all this work and it... We need, we need the food to get up to go and do the work. So if we're... If we already

have to take two steps without it, we're already harming ourselves severely before we even get to that place of being able to come home [Crow Caws] With a bag of groceries and put it on the table, cook a meal with our family. So yeah, it's, there's no freedom there. And there's also, there's just so many barriers that prevent us from just...being. And that in itself creates a need for healing.

Heather Lamoureux: 14:49

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 14:51

Whereas being on the earth and having things accessible, that's healing by even being on the earth. So we're already, we've already taken care of the first [Crow Caws] two steps by the time we get up and walk out of our tent or our door or whatever, to, to put things in to nourish ourselves.

Heather Lamoureux: 15:09

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 15:14

Yeah. So it's too many steps--

Heather Lamoureux: 15:15

[Laughs]

Cease Wyss: 15:16

--in a modern world to get to what should just be there, that everybody, every living person should have, should have food at their disposal, that they're not paying for. Because money is not... I mean, money is a new thing. And it's like... Senaqwila said to me when she was a lot younger that money was alchemy and that it wasn't real.

Heather Lamoureux: 15:39

Mmm.

Cease Wyss: 15:40

And from that point on, I, I don't know why it took that moment to really change my thinking, but I realized that money really had zero impact. You know, I could go make money, but it didn't mean I was attaining what I needed. And I was really never seeing the money I made because it was coming and it really wasn't tangible in my hands. Whereas, you know, I thought about if I was working for food, that I'd be always, at the end of the day, carrying home a bag of food. But when I do a job, I have to do that job for several weeks before I see the money to come home and do what I really need to do, which is sustain myself and my family. So it's...yeah. It's a, it's a complicated--

Heather Lamoureux: 16:26

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 16:27

--question, but it's... And it's a complicated series of answers, but those are the simple perspectives that I see that [Crow Caws]

Several Times] it's like, we have to work so hard just to put food in our body.

Heather Lamoureux: 16:40

Mhm.

Cease Wyss: 16:41

And we wouldn't, we never did that. And I think that's the hardest part for Indigenous people and People of Colour living in this capitalistic society is that this was not, you know... They have ancestors that, that haven't left that long ago, that knew that other life. And we all have ancestors that had a different way of life, that have been with us and have departed over the years. But in our lives, we've all had those people that have known [Crow Caws] that freedom and known that, that pathway to, to less complicated life, life-ways and ways of being, right?

Heather Lamoureux: 17:27

Yeah.

Sound Effect: 17:28

[Wind Rushing]

Eddie Gardner: 17:30

Hi, my name is T'it'elem Spath, it means Singing Bear. I'm from the Skwah First Nation. And we [Clears Throat] have been in this beautiful part of Mother Earth of ours for thousands and thousands of years as a people. And we really have, have inherited so much in our land and our waters that has sustained us for thousands and thousands of years. And that, that relationship that we have with the land and the river, the mountains, is, is sacred. And we as Indigenous people, as Stó:lō or as Skwah, have [Clears Throat] conducted our ceremonies that have been handed down to us, that cultivates that, that relationship that we have with the land and the river and the salmon, cedar, medicines that are in our territories. And in today's society, we, we are all conscious now of climate chaos that is been triggered by the industrial storm, mainly by the fossil fuel industries and irresponsible mining. And on our coast, there's a, there's a very, very serious threat to our salmon with the epidemic of diseases, like [Inaudible] and also the amplification of, of sea lice caused by open-net pen fish farms.

Eddie Gardner: 19:12

So they're threatening our salmon because the salmon that swim up our rivers past our villages have to swim past those open-net pen fish farms. And so they're threatening our, our salmon. Our salmon are an integral part of who we are as, as river people. We, we consider ourselves salmon people and river people. And because, because they're relatives, we have

that deep care for them. And because we've had this relationship with, with our salmon for, for thousands of years, we [Clears Throat] annually conduct our, our first salmon ceremonies and the first salmon that come up the river to signal that they are families coming to feed the people and the birds and the bears and then the other animals. [Clears Throat] We have, we take that first salmon and we bring it into their longhouse and we cook it over an open fire. And in ceremony, we, we have people who carry the salmon into the longhouse and we call on witnesses to share that relationship that we have with the salmon. And we, we do this because we have a covenanted agreement with our salmon. It's all about reciprocity. It's all about giving back to the salmon. And we as humans don't have much to give back, but what we... What is essential for us to give back is our gratitude, our love, and our respect, you know, for, for our salmon. And we have that agreement with the salmon that if we continue to show this to them, then they'll come back each year. But nowadays we have this shared responsibility with our salmon with other people, many people from many parts of the world have come to, to live in this beautiful part of Mother Earth of ours.

Eddie Gardner:

21:36

And so we all share this responsibility now. So we continue with our ceremonies. We continue to cultivate that, the right relationship with, with the river and the salmon and the land. And that's a, it's a, it's a tall order because that's very challenging because people don't know how to develop that, that relationship because they haven't had that, that kind of relationship that we have with the salmon. So we invite people to participate, even though they're not Stó:lō, we invite them to participate so that they can, so we can help contribute to raising the consciousness of how important our salmon is, not only to us as human beings, but also to the, to the bears and the seals, the salmon, the orca in the ocean. And even when the birds and the animals eat, take the salmon out of the river and they drag it into the forest, the, the salmon remains that are left there are left to nurture the, the forest all along the river system, the ecosystem. And it's the salmon that, that enriches the, the forest, the trees, the trees that provide us with the oxygen that we need to breathe. And so we look now upon the salmon as a, as a climate regulator. So not only does it, is it necessary for, for the salmon to nurture, nurture our physical well-being, our cultural well-being, our spiritual well-being, but it also is something that is very important, you know, to continue to restore, you know, do all our efforts to restore salmon, to, to salmon runs that that can sustain, you know, life along the ocean and the communities on the coast and all along the rivers. We need, we need strong salmon runs to do that.

Eddie Gardner: 24:05 And governments and corporations have to, have to come to understand how important the salmon is to everyone. And we have a saying that "as the salmon go, so do we." And so in our territories we're, we're competing, you know, with, with the sports fishers and the commercial fisheries. And we have to, we have to foster and develop a collaborative approach to, to making sure that we have enough salmon, you know, for future generations. And I'm also a president of the Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance. I'm also working with, with Dawn Morrison, Secwepemc. And we, we have organized a Wild Salmon Caravan to raise the awareness of the importance of wild salmon to everyone, to the world. And [Clears Throat] so we're, we're never gonna give up on our salmon because our salmon is so critical to, to life.

Eddie Gardner: 25:27 It's a life-giving force, the same way as the river. We have to take care of the river. We have a covenant and we have a sacred trust. We have a, a right to an Aboriginal fisher--, a salmon fishery. [Clears Throat] And not only do we have a right, but we, we also have a duty and a responsibility to all do our part, you know, to protect our wild salmon. And we... Some of our people have recognized so many threats to our wild salmon, that they're even thinking of what would it be like to have no more salmon? And that, that would be quite a nightmare, but people are, are looking at different ways to, to cope with such a, such a horrifying situation. And we're also looking at what we need to do to reduce our dependency on, on California, China, and all the other different countries that are producing food and sending it to Canada.

Eddie Gardner: 26:52 What Indigenous people need to do now is to, to look at how can we protect the land as well as the waters so that we can [Clears Throat] we can go out and continue to get our medicines, can continue to harvest [Siren] food from the land, whether it's hunting or fishing or gathering berries, gathering medicines that we need, we need to continue to, to protect and defend the land. So that we will have enough, you know, not only for ourselves and in this day and age, but also for future generations. And we always think of that, you know, future generations, we're always standing at the centre of our, of our lives as a generation. When we, when we look at our duty and responsibility to take care of everything that belongs to us in a good way, we do it in honour of our ancestors and we do it for the well-being of future generations.

Eddie Gardner: 28:08 So we, we can never forget about, about what we inherited, you know, from, from our ancestors, but also we need to

contemplate and reflect. How do we live our lives, how are we gonna conduct ourselves, how are we gonna cultivate the values, how are we gonna cultivate the principles and live the principles and the laws that have been handed down through so many generations, so that, so that future generations can benefit from this? And that's a prayer that we say to ourselves every day. That's a prayer that, that... And that's a way of life that we need to follow. And if we don't follow that way of life, then there's no hope, you know? So as Indigenous people, we have a lot to offer, you know, the world, in that sense. And that's why when you talk about reconciliation, we cannot talk about reconciliation unless we talk about our relationship, our sacred relationship, with the, with the land and the waters and the resources that sustain life. People call them ecosystem services, but we call them our relatives. And so as, as president of the Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance, as a member of the Skwah First Nation, I will continue to do what I can to, to mobilize as many people as possible, to to continue to do the work that needs to be done for the greater good of all who's here. [Speaks Halq'eméylem]

Sound Effect:	29:53	[Wind Rushing, People Calling To Each Other]
Alisha Lettman:	30:07	My name is Alisha Lettman. I am a Sindhi-Jamaican youth, the director of the Legacy Growers Collective, an outdoor educator, and a body worker.
Alisha Lettman:	30:20	People of African descent have a very rich and beautiful history with the land. We are very skilled at growing food and that's one of the main reasons why African people were taken as slaves, because they were so skilled at growing food. Europeans didn't understand how so many ecosystems on Turtle Island were just giant, giant, complex, intelligent food systems, but they didn't understand food systems in that way. So they stole African people and brought us to work in the fields because of our skill. And our project is growing a lot of those plants, which we have complicated, but also very beautiful and very rich histories with. There were some plants that we were forced to grow without our consent and without the consent of the plants, perhaps. But we are reclaiming that history by having an intentional, consensual, reciprocal relationship with the plants and with the land. Some of the culturally important varieties that we're growing are the fish pepper, garden eggplant, callaloo, red and green okra, kousa squash, pumpkin squash.

- Alisha Lettman: 32:05 The growing, the cooking, the eating, and the sharing of food is always a celebration in our community. And this is central to our project and also to our healing and our liberation. It's to maintain our ancestral ways. We are using traditional agrarian methods, such as raised beds, polycultures, composting. We grow okra, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and basil all in the same bed. We grow amaranth, sunflowers, corn, bean, and squash all in the same bed because that's the way our ancestors have done. And these ways are very intelligent in ways that science has yet to appropriate.
- Alisha Lettman: 33:00 And maintaining our ancestral food ways and our ancestral knowledge is so important to well-being because oftentimes within a colonial food system, these techniques are white-washed. They call them permaculture, they call it regenerative agriculture, they call it organic farming. But so many of these things have their origins in the agrarian traditions of people of African descent. Ancestors like George Washington Carver, among many, many visionaries in the food system, are what have offered us amazing tools and essential tools like polycultures, like the hoe, the seeding stick. And this is such an empowering knowledge to have because at the end of the day, it's human.
- Alisha Lettman: 34:10 To work with these plants activates a level of ancestral memory, of body memory, that is very, very beautiful and very humbling to see because sometimes when we forget our language, when we are--, when our language is erased from us, when we are not able to pray the way we know, to dance the way we know, to gather the way we know—as it was in slavery and in, you know, white psychosis cultures—our minds can forget. But the plants hold a level of memory that is timeless. And that's really the power and the beauty of healing and working with the plants because just by being with them, just by spending time with them, we remember those skills that are essential. Communicating with the land, respecting the land, being reciprocal to the land, and to the plants that also want to be with us and also want to grow with us.
- Alisha Lettman: 35:33 Plant medicine has always been an essential part of our traditional well-being practices from bush teas to body washes. And, but they are not always available or easy to access. And so to grow them here on unceded territory is a great privilege and also an honour that is not afforded to everyone. Temporary foreign workers are heavily relied on by the colonial food system to produce things like blueberries and cherries, which can make some farm owners millionaires, but temporary foreign workers all often are working in unethical and oppressive

conditions, which do not allow them a long-term relationship to the land because of immigration laws and visa loopholes that do not value them as much as their counterparts.

Sound Effect:	36:37	[Wind Rushing, Crow Caws]
Sound Effect:	36:45	[Running Water]
Sussan Yáñez:	36:48	[Speaks Mapudungu] My given names are Sussan Yáñez, yet I have invited the name Kallfümalen to be my guide. As I have been reclaiming my Indigenous ancestry from the Lafken Mapu, the land which meets the sea, [Begin Music: Slow Drum Beat] and the central coast of the Chilean colonizing country, South America. [Running Water Stops].
Sussan Yáñez:	37:23	Whenever I think about my ancestry, my body remembers. My body remembers the connection to the lands that brought me to be. My body remembers the way we would feed from the land. My body, my body remembers a day [Drum Beat Becomes Louder] from which there was no money to be charged because the land is ever-giving; it freely offers its fruits, its gifts for us to take only, [Music Changes: Slow Drum Beat Joined By Vocalizations] only if we offer it first respect. Respect to protect it, respect to see it and recognize it as sacred, as a relative that is taking care of us and that we must take care of...
Sussan Yáñez:	38:19	My body. Whenever I feel the conditions that my body has been through, I think about three, four generations of malnutrition. Malnutrition, [Music Changes: Vocalizations Become Louder] not eating enough vitamins and nutrients because of a colonizing country that prioritizes the industry, to offer foods that are [Pause] stolen from their spirit. Foods that are so processed and go through so many chemicals, different reactions, and packaging and machine-treated that they have no love. Conditions such as a liver that was intoxicated, conditions such as my acne that's lasted for such a long time, conditions such as my skin, who is itchy. Here I look around me and I realize that I am on unceded Coast Salish territories and now that I live by a creek, on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh lands and waters and winds and fire, I listen to the ancestors speaking through the waters, the way in which they feed the land and the land that is now giving berries, so many berries. All the names that I may one day learn, one day [Inaudible]. All the names that speak so deeply to my <i>gut</i> , my <i>womb</i> , my inner intuition that knows that balance works freely. [Music Changes: Vocalizations Become Quieter, Drums Fade And Stop] There is no cost to

being healthy when we eat from the land because we are not only taking from the land. We are taking care of it that by harvesting the fruits that the land is offering, we are being grateful for what it has to offer. Yet so many companies now, today, are even working for [Music Changes: Vocalizations Fade And Stop, Soft String Instrument Begins] organic foods that are unaffordable to the current human being because there are nonsense licenses that people need to supply with when, for thousands of years, our way of eating has been organic. And now we are being charged three, four times the effort. Because to eat healthy, you need to be wealthy. That is not balanced. That is not real. That is not truth.

- Sussan Yáñez: 41:13 When I was 18 years old, I discovered for the first time after being raised in the city, born in the city, living my entire life knowing that food could only be provided in the grocery store, for the first time walking in the Willi Mapu, close to Antuco, means sol, the sunshine, the sun. [Word In Mapudungu] means heart, so it is the volcano, which it speaks about, the heart of the sun.
- Sussan Yáñez: 41:53 And my daughter's father would take me for the first time walking the gravel paths. We would cross the fences that would scratch our skins to go to the creek so that we can find and harvest some food that no one had been taking care of yet was growing freely. Freely. That time, I didn't know about reciprocity. We wouldn't offer anything to the land, yet our gratefulness, happiness in my body, may have been enough. This complete rediscovery of how my body had the right to interact, the natural right to interact with the land, with the food, with the animals. Fishing in the creek was a common thing to do and we had dinner without any grocery store. The mushrooms, [Words In Latin] so many different mushrooms that we would harvest, going to the mountains and spending time with the cougars, knowing that they were watching from the trees. [Music Changes: Drum Beat And Running Water Fade In, Stringed Instrument Fades Out And Stops] So I urge you to think, I urge you to feel what your body is asking of you, as I have been trying to listen to what my body is asking of me and that we witness together, that we can claim our health back, not with money, but with the land. [Music Changes: Running Water Fades Out] [Speaks Mapudungu], the human being and I remains. Thank you. [Speaks Mapudungu].
- Music: 43:46 [Slow Drum Beat Stops]

Sound Effect: 43:47 [Wind Rushing, People Chatting]

Leona Brown: 43:56 Hi everyone. My name is Leona Brown. I am Gitxsan from the Fireweed House and the Killer Whale Clan. I'm a single mom of three children living in Vancouver and only recently learning how to live as an Indigenous person and living in our culture. We're gonna talk about food sovereignty and it was a term that was created around 1996 that talks of people who produce, distribute, and consume food should control the mechanisms and policies of food production and distribution. Now that's a very, a very, very, very important word, sovereignty, food sovereignty. We need to understand that at the moment, a lot of our food and retail business comes from the united states of america. If we step back and look into the, the stores, a lot of the items, the food that we get, it comes from america or through america. I've learned that about 80% of that comes through america solely... There... Leaves so much control to them. If they wanted to, we could be cut off and we can be thrown directly into a recession where the current food that we're growing right now might not be enough.

Leona Brown: 45:33 But before, you know, this Trump thing started, there had been discussions even long before I started my training as a facilitator that we needed to start learning how to grow our own food. We needed to learn not only as, you know, our own safety backup plan, but you know, when the zombies come, at least we have food, we can lock ourselves up. But you know what just happened? COVID happened. And we had to lock ourselves in our house. And many people, especially in the rural areas and outside the big cities, they struggle with food. There wasn't enough, they were scavenging, they were fighting over toilet paper. So now try to think of that same situation if 80% of our food was cut off from the americans.

Leona Brown: 46:35 And I'm so happy to, to be able to see and witness here in Strathcona Park... If you see the long strip of food, that's, it's not open to the public, like you can't visually see it, you have to go through those bushes and you have to walk the path from one end to the other and you see the amazing growth that happens at the other end of Strathcona Park. There are youth that are learning how to grow food, the importance of growing food, and they will soon, you know, grow their own food in their own homes. They have this knowledge that's handed down to them, Indigenous or not. It is such an amazing, amazing sight to see. So when we're looking at food sovereignty, we need to realize that's very important. We need to start working towards making

our own gardens in our backyard or supporting community gardens and supporting community as a whole and working together and sharing because in sharing, we eliminate money.

Leona Brown: 47:49 We don't, we don't need to find that dollar or so to go get a, you know, a piece of fruit. And it's organic. Like if we grow, grow, loc--... If we grow locally, it's amazing. And since COVID happened, a lot of this is, is happening now and it's, it's so amazing. I'm so happy to see it because this is important for us to survive. We need to know how to grow our own food. We can't rely on the malls. We can't rely on the shipments that come in. When the zombies come, we need to be able to know how to get to the mountains and, and grow our own gardens and, and sustain our living.

Leona Brown: 48:38 So please look up food sovereignty and let's see what it means to you. What can you do to make change more positive in this, in this city, in this country? All it starts is where you're standing right now.

Leona Brown: 48:58 Part of my journey and learning with the resurfacing history group with Jolene Andrew was learning about reciprocity. Reciprocity could mean many things, I guess, in many different ways. If you look in the definition of reciprocity, it's the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit, especially privileges granted by one country or organization. Now, to me reciprocity, I would take it as a gift from the Creator. It's whatever you're praying for, or you need, you make a journey in your life to give and then you get back in positivity. So I've, I've wanted to talk about the, the space that Commercial and, and Hastings there, an UNYA site, U N Y A.

Leona Brown: 50:05 The UNYA site was a blank space for a long time because the gas station used to sit there. So if many of you know, the, the corporation had gifted that land to UNYA, so UNYA can build a building. And I guess what they're aiming for is technology in the future, so an expansion of their organization. So what I, I happened to come across, A Constellation of Remediation project with Cease Wyss, and, and they, they had informed me that they'd been trying to get that space, trying to have a meeting with UNYA. And I was thankful to be part of this discussion and brought in on this discussion. So we got a meeting with UNYA. It took some time, but I, I really pushed and advocated for this because the idea sounded like a great opportunity for youth in a very accessible space to learn about medicines and how to grow and, you know, and how to take care of the plants and the medicines that grow there.

Leona Brown: 51:25 And I specifically wanted to be able to use the space to help teach my daughter, who also needs to learn medicines and, and about food and how to grow it and, and just learn more grass, grassroots teachings. So as a, as an independent mother, I, I really pushed my guard to, to advocate for this idea. And I really trusted that this would be something that UNYA would, you know, really consider and really... It would really be a great idea for the youth. I just seen, like in my vision, so much flourishing that would happen. So it happened. So reciprocity came, Creator, you know, in his own time would... They were granted that space and only this year, were they—in 2020—were able to start growing, even though it's not gonna be like a whole year long thing, it's still an opportunity and a space for youth to come together and learn.

Leona Brown: 52:39 Now, the only problem is that this COVID action happened. So there's not a whole lot of opportunity, but the space is still being worked on. It's still part of the A Constellation [of] Remediation thing that Cease and Anne are doing. And then I just know it's going to look amazing. So from their ideas and their creations and their visions of how to make such a wonderful garden space, I, I trust that this will continue in many more spaces around the city. And in praying in that, I know the city is now... They've did a bunch of questions and surveys about how to implement garden spaces and more trees in the city to make it more of a better place to, to, you know, to walk around rather than the tall buildings and, you know, the traffic. We do have influence and you have influence in your own backyard, your own little patio, you can do that. And everything that you grow, you can share with people. If, if you're good at growing one thing, grow that one thing and share it with everybody. Trade, do trade. We can trade. Money doesn't have to be a thing. I know it's a struggle sometimes. We're still trapped under that, that guidance. But if we're gonna trade food and medicines, let's do that. It'll, it's not as complicated as we feel. And keep advocating for those spaces in community where we can sit and look at the flowers and watch the bees and the birds and pollination happening and, and create those spaces where we can sit in silence that we're capable of being in a silent space and being able to do the meditations of healing our minds from all the noise. We need to keep fighting for these lands. And now occupation... Oh, not the occupation. That's a bad word. The...control over these lands. And we need to slow down a little bit here. Reciprocity can start in your own backyard. [Speaks Gitxsanimx] Hami yaa, thank you.

Sound Effect: 55:14 [Wind Rushing, People Chatting]