

Resilience Among At-Risk Groups in Canada: Qualitative Analysis of Ideas of *Inunnguiniq* (Resilience) in Two Inuit Communities

Final Report

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Abstract

This paper presents results from a qualitative study of resilience in two Inuit communities: Arviat and Igloodik, Nunavut. The study was conducted in the spirit of OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession), and used participatory methods to collect, validate and disseminate the knowledge gathered. Using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (cultural knowledge) as the framework, Inuit concepts of resiliency are identified and interpreted in relation to the broader resiliency literature. Key findings describe resiliency as the process of transmitting Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit through *inunnguiniq* (creating whole human beings), and the effects of colonization, in particular the introduction of the non-Inuit school system, in breaking the traditional mechanism of *inunnguiniq* that was delivered through the highly sophisticated Inuit childrearing program. Linkages are made to historical trauma theory, and the requirement to take a social structural approach to understand the causes of the break in the childrearing program, and to identify appropriate solutions. The paper concludes by identifying key areas of focus to help grow individual and community level resilience, which include providing opportunities for individual and community level healing; developing parenting supports and educational resources grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit; and supporting efforts to reclaim Inuit leadership, authority and control over community and territorial systems.

Key Words

Subject	People	Places
Resilience	Inuit	Nunavut
Resiliency	Inuk	Arviat
Inunnguiniq	Nunavummiut	Igloolik
Well-being	Aboriginal	
Perseverance	Indigenous	
Coping	Elders	
Capacity to adapt		
Parenting		
Childrearing		
Colonization		
Trauma		
Decolonizing		

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Stephanie Potter
Suzanne Potter
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Joe Karetak
March 2011

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Executive Summary

This report took a participatory research approach with two Inuit communities in Nunavut: Arviat and Igloodik. The purpose of the study was to:

- Explore how the members of two communities in Nunavut understand resilience, and examine how this understanding relates to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit cultural knowledge)
- Identify challenges to individual and collective Inuit resiliency
- Identify strategies to support the resilience of Inuit individually and collectively
- Draw connections between the Inuit concept of resiliency and the broader resiliency literature
- Suggest areas of focus in working to support individual and collective Inuit resiliency, and areas for further research.

Introduction and Background. There is a well-understood connection between the health and well-being of individuals and communities, and determinants of health, such as unemployment, income levels, the changing family, education and literacy (Federal Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health, 1999; Mustard, 1991). In an Inuit context, additional determinants of health have been identified which must also be considered as part of understanding the challenges to health and well-being; these include colonization, globalization, migration, cultural continuity, territory, access to services and supports, poverty, food security and food safety, and self determination (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2004; National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2006, 2007). In this context, Nunavummiut are at high risk for a range of negative outcomes including addictions, low levels of interpersonal trust, violence and abuse. Understanding the interplay among these risk factors, and the ways in which some individuals or communities are able to adapt to challenging circumstances and continue to develop and flourish, while others are not, is important to being able to support vulnerable Canadians such as Canada's Inuit (Bjerregaard, Young, Dewailly, & Ebbesson, 2004; Human Resources Development Canada, 2009; Kawagley, 1999).

Methodology. Following a review of key academic and grey literature, a team of three researchers, one Inuit and two Qallunaat¹, spent a week in each community conducting a series of five focused discussion groups and key informant interviews with a cross-section of community members. Community-based key informant interviews were used with representatives of health and social services, community leaders, and experts in understanding community wellness issues, challenges and successes. Semi-structured key informant interviews were also carried out with academic and other experts working in the field of Inuit health and wellness to clarify and contextualize the research findings.

Findings. The concept of resiliency that is rooted in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit contains elements that refer both to a process, as well as to a state of being. In its most inclusive definition, resiliency is "the making of a complete human being" or of a "complete Inuk". The Inuktitut word for this process is *inunnguiniq*, a process that in the South we might refer to as child-rearing and socialization, which begins before the child is born, and continues throughout the person's life. This concept is: complex, encompassing some 19 sub-concepts; holistic; developmental; focuses on preparation and prevention of hardship, as opposed to being a reaction to hardship; and resides both *within* the individual, as well as within the socio-cultural-environmental-spiritual context in which the individual is embedded.

¹ Inuktitut term meaning non-Inuit.

There are clear similarities between the Inuit view of resilience as *inunnguiniq* and what HeavyRunner and Marshall (1997) describe as the process of nurturing, protecting and guiding children. What distinguishes the Inuit-based concept is the degree to which the process of fostering resiliency was:

- delivered as a formal program beginning before the child was born, and extending over the life time;
- overseen by camp Elders;
- deliberate, targeted, focused, and purposeful;
- integrated all aspects of being an Inuk, across all three spheres (life matters, environment, and technology), and across space and time; and
- was embedded within, and served to reinforce, the kinship/camp social structure.

Community conversations about building resiliency resonate with the 11 individual and community resiliency constructs identified by Hegney et al. (2008, pp. 91-92), with different demographic groups emphasizing slightly different elements. Elders emphasized early experience and learning (through the Inuit community-based childrearing and socialization program), beliefs, leadership, having a positive outlook, kinship relations and support, and having a sense of purpose in their discussions. In addition to these elements identified by Elders, adults also pointed to the importance of economic opportunities, access to services, infrastructure and support. For their part, youth placed a high priority on a diverse and innovative economy, services, infrastructure and support, learning – all done in a way which respects the Inuit relationship to the environment. However, they also pointed to the need to reconnect with Inuit beliefs; to develop a sense of purpose as Inuit; to reclaim Inuit leadership and authority; embrace cultural differences between Inuit and Qallunaat; and develop healthy interpersonal and community relations. Underpinning the discussions with all groups was the expressed need for opportunities to heal from personal traumas associated with addictions, violence, sexual abuse, neglect and abandonment – in essence, as a necessary condition if individual or community resiliency is to be achievable.

Directions for Future Research. The report concludes by applying a complex historical trauma approach to understanding the current challenges to Inuit resiliency, and suggests three primary areas of focus to support its growth: opportunities for healing; repairing the primary delivery mechanisms involved in *inunnguiniq* from an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit perspective; and supporting the development of community leadership, ownership and control. Ongoing efforts in these areas are identified and briefly described. Finally, a number of questions remain: foremost among these is, *What role can Qallunaat play in supporting Inuit resilience?*

- 1) Given that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is inherently an adaptive process, how far can it be shifted before it is not longer Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit?
- 2) What are the ‘essential skills’ that someone would need to be taught in order to become a complete Inuk in today’s society?
- 3) Can we articulate a community level concept of resiliency which parallels the individual concept of ‘becoming a human being’, or is that already understood within the Inuit worldview?
- 4) How can research be conducted with Inuit communities in a way that fosters their own understandings and capacity to define their own issues, and to seek their own solutions?
- 5) Is it possible to develop culturally appropriate curriculum materials and supports rooted in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, which also support Inuit to develop the skills, abilities and knowledge needed to live and work in modern Inuit society? What process should be followed? Who should be involved?
- 6) How can Qallunaat systems be shifted/adapted/removed in order to allow Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to flourish in Inuit contexts?

1 Introduction

According to HRSDC's Mission, the Government of Canada is committed to building "a stronger and more competitive Canada, to [supporting] Canadians in making choices that help them live productive and rewarding lives, and to [improving] Canadians' quality of life (Human Resources Development Canada, 2009). To do this, HRSDC develops policies that support Canadians to flourish as individuals – to participate in education, training and lifelong learning opportunities that allow them to use their talents and skills to their fullest, throughout the life course.

Yet, there are Canadians for whom "reaching their potential" is not as simple as offering opportunities, such as those living in Canada's northern and remote communities: there may also be a requirement to remove barriers, or offer additional supports. The way of life in Nunavut is unique in Canada, and in the present day represents a convergence of contradictions for many Nunavummiut. Those living in the North experience the beauty of the land and environment, and many Inuit continue to practice a way of life that is not so different from their ancestors. On the other hand, Inuit have experienced rapid social change and modernization, and in just four generations, have gone from living semi-nomadically on the land, to surfing the internet. The process of change was initiated with a few Inuit camps in the 18th and 19th centuries with the earlier arrival of whalers and European missionaries. A number of factors coincided to increase the contact between Inuit and Qallunaat in recent decades, and thereby accelerate the rate of social, economic and cultural change: the increased desire for a federal 'presence' in the Arctic to establish Canadian sovereignty; the decline and then collapse of the fur trade; forced relocation of Inuit from their traditional camps to permanent settlements; and the implementation of the residential school system (among others)(Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996b).

Although the impacts of these factors are profoundly interrelated, many researchers point to the severing of the Inuit relationship with their land and the dismantling of traditional child-rearing practices as two key elements which have lasting negative effects in Inuit communities today (Mitchell, 1998; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2006). In separating Inuit from their land, the federal government broke the spiritual connection that Inuit had with the world around them, and so too their cultural, social and political expression of this relationship: "Indigenous peoples are inextricably related to land: it sustains our spirits and bodies; it determines how our societies develop and operate based on available environmental and natural resources; and our socialization and governance flow from this intimate relationship" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996b, p. 361). It also separated Inuit from their economic livelihood, which has "contributed to a decline in living standards, social and health problems, and a breakdown of political leadership" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996b, p. 294).

Population health is an approach to health care delivery which understands 'health' to be "a capacity or resource for everyday living that enables us to pursue our goals, acquire skills and education, grow and satisfy personal aspirations" (Chomik, 2001, p. 2). It recognizes that there are multiple factors which affect health, some which work at the level of the individual, and others which act at the level of the group, or community (Frankish, Veenstra, & Moulton, 1999). These 'determinants of health' can be grouped into seven broad categories: socio-economic environment; physical environments; early childhood development; personal health practices; individual capacity and coping skills; biology and genetic endowment; and health services (Federal Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health, 1999). A large body of work exists which explains the population health approach, the many determinants of health, and how such a framework can be used as a tool to support the health and well-being of populations (Chomik, 2001; Federal Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on

Population Health, 1994, 1999; Frankish, Green, Ratner, Chomik, & Larsen, 1996; Frankish et al., 1999).

It is well understood that there is a profound connection between the health and well-being of individuals and communities and determinants of health, such as unemployment, income levels, the changing family, education, and literacy (Federal Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health, 1999; Mustard, 1991). In an Inuit context, additional determinants of health have been identified which must also be considered as part of understanding the challenges to health and well-being (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2004; National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2006, 2007):

- Colonization
- Globalization
- Migration
- Cultural continuity
- Territory
- Access to services and supports
- Poverty
- Food Security/Food safety
- Self determination

As such, Nunavut communities are at high risk for a range of negative outcomes including addictions, low levels of interpersonal trust, violence and abuse. Understanding the interplay among these determinants of health, and the ways in which some individuals or communities are able to adapt to challenging circumstances and continue to develop and flourish, while others are not, is important to being able to support vulnerable Canadians such as Canada's Inuit (Bjerregaard et al., 2004; Kawagley, 1999).

1.1 Purpose

The overall purpose of this project was to take an in-depth look at how the members of two communities in Nunavut define resilience, how this understanding relates to Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, and identify initiatives which support the resilience of Inuit both individually and collectively.

The main research questions are as follows:

1. What are the Inuktitut words that are used when referring to resiliency?
2. What are the main concepts and sub-concepts within Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit related to resiliency?
3. What mechanisms were used in Inuit society **traditionally** to transmit these ideas of resiliency?
4. What is different for Inuit now, compared to traditional times, in terms of building resiliency?
5. What challenges do Inuit identify – things that are difficult for them personally, or for their communities? How are people and communities responding to these challenges? That is, how are they adapting? Do men and women see the challenges, and the necessary adaptations, differently?
6. What are communities doing, or what should they be doing – programs, services, activities – to promote or grow resilience at the individual or community level in modern times? Are these activities focusing on particular factors over others? Are these initiatives gender-specific? Should they be?

2 Approach and Methodology

2.1 Approach

An important part of this project revolved around the Inuit-Qallunaat research partnership, and the relationship that the researchers developed with the communities that were invited to participate. Two Qallunaat researchers working as consultants with experience in Nunavut and in other Aboriginal communities initiated the research project, including partnering with Inuit experts in Arviat and Igloolik with whom they had worked previously. Together, a core team of three researchers (one Inuit, two Qallunaat) worked with community representatives to identify what information each community would like to receive out of the project, including focus group notes, community summaries, and so on. Researchers invited key contacts in each community to comment on, and make changes to, the research instruments. This was done to try to ensure that questions being asked were meaningful to participants, and that they were asked in ways that enabled participants to be engaged.

Another central part of this research was to engage community members in identifying key components of Inuit Qaujimagatunqangit as they relate to ideas about resiliency, *without giving them hard and fast definitions of resiliency to begin with*. The purpose was to give communities the opportunity to define the topic and the conversation as much as possible, without imposing a structure or content from outside.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the approach taken in this project was the role of the Qallunaat researchers in relation to the information collected, to the Inuit organizations and individuals who acted as key informants and/or focus group participants, and in relation to their Inuit research partners. Having spent the past five years engaged in various projects in Nunavut and with Aboriginal communities in the South, the Qallunaat researchers were very sensitive to Inuit concerns around ownership of the research process, data, knowledge creation, and knowledge dissemination (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami & Nunavut Research Institute, 2006; Taylor, n.d.). Not to acknowledge the effects of colonization, and the way in which those effects potentially impact Inuit perceptions of Qallunaat-driven research, would have seriously undermined the project (Tousignant & Sioui, 2009).

As such, the work was done in the spirit of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) that enables “self-determination over all research concerning First Nations. It offers a way for First Nations to make decisions regarding what research will be done, for what purpose information or data will be used, where the information will be physically stored and who will have access” (First Nations Centre, 2007).² Efforts to engage Inuit communities and individuals in the design, collection, analysis and interpretation of the research were part of what some have called the “decolonization of the research process” (Aikenhead, 2006).

² The OCAP principles were first identified by the Steering Committee of the First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey, undertaken by the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) (Schnarch, 2004). They are a response to challenges and barriers associated with research practices, “monitoring and surveillance, surveys, statistics, cultural knowledge and so on. OCAP is broadly concerned with all aspects of information, including its creation and management... OCAP is a political response [...] to colonial approaches to research and information management.” (Schnarch, 2004, p. 1)

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Overview

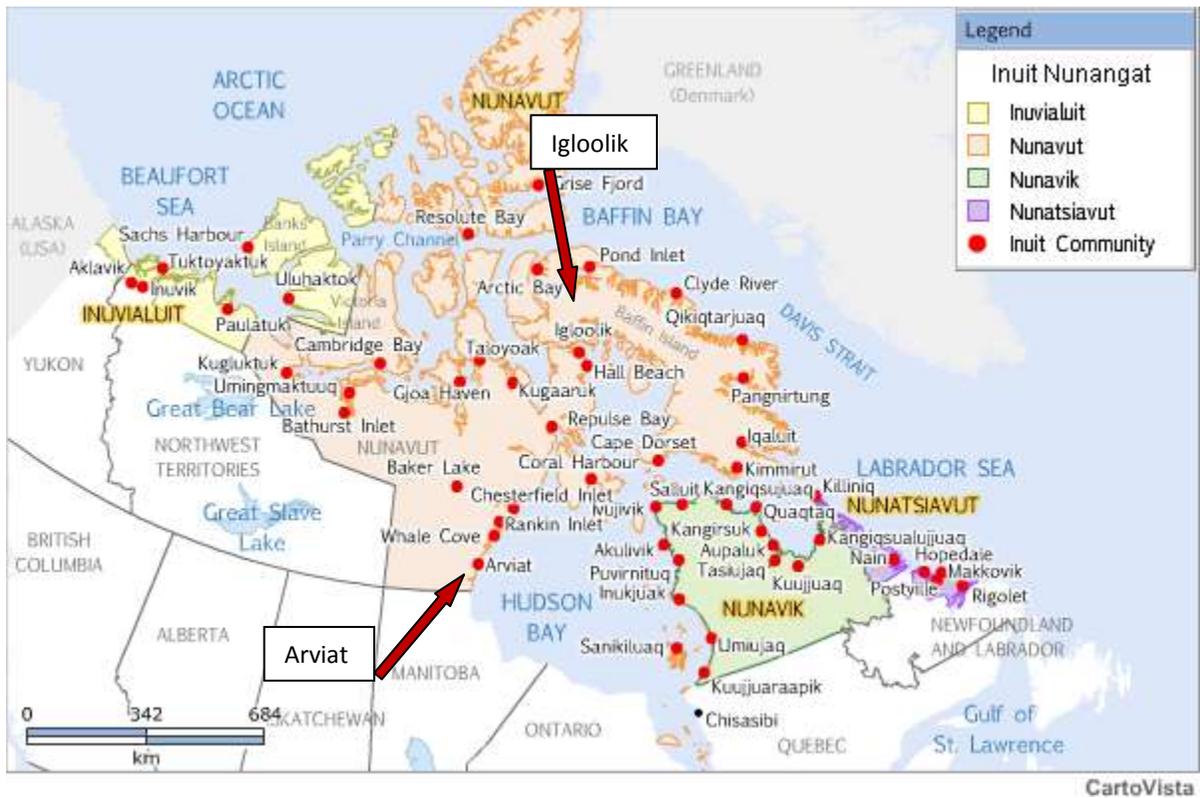
This project centres around the collection of qualitative data from two communities in Nunavut: Arviat and Igloolik.

Igloolik is located on a small island in Foxe Basin that is very close to the Melville Peninsula (and to a lesser degree, Baffin Island). Igloolik is the Baffin Region's second largest community with over 1500 residents. It is not only the geographic centre of Nunavut, but also widely considered to be the cultural hub of Nunavut and the most traditional settlement in the Eastern Arctic (Coffin, 1998). Igloolik means "the place of iglus", and residents are called Iglulingmiut (~miut meaning "people of") (Qikiqtani Truth Commission, 2009).

Arviat is the second largest community in Nunavut, with a population numbering approximately 2,060 according to the 2006 census (Statistics Canada, 2007). It is located on the west coast of Hudson's Bay, north of the Manitoba border. Formerly called Eskimo Point, Arviat comes from *arviq*, which is Inuktitut for "bowhead whale". Various groups of Inuit travelled and hunted in and around Arviat throughout the centuries; it was not until the forced resettlement that these diverse groups came to live in one geographic area (2010). Like Igloolik, Arviat is considered a community where people live closer to Inuit traditions. As well, the Inuktitut language continues to thrive in both communities.

Following a review of key academic and grey literature, a team of three researchers, one Inuit and two Qallunaat, spent a week in each community conducting a series of focused discussion groups and key informant interviews with a cross-section of community members. Key informant interviews were used with representatives of health and social services, community leaders, and experts in understanding community wellness issues, challenges and successes. In some cases, individuals participated in both the focused discussions and key informant interviews. The focus of the research was to primarily capture the perspectives of Inuit, but Qallunaat key informants have been included where appropriate. The map below shows the location of the two communities.

Figure 1: Map of Inuit Regions and Communities³



³ <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/in/irs/mp/mp-html-eng.asp>

2.2.2 Elements of the methodology

Literature Review – A *preliminary multi-jurisdictional literature review* was conducted to establish an historical understanding of the term within the academic literature, and specifically the Northern and Inuit contexts. The purpose of the review was to develop an operational definition of the term *resilience*, and examine the existing body of knowledge as it relates to the various dimensions identified.

Searches accessed peer reviewed academic literature via an appropriate selection of on-line databases, and grey literature⁴ via the web, focusing on three jurisdictions with Northern and/or Inuit populations – Canada, the United States (Alaska), and Greenland. Key research organizations in Canada were also targeted, such as Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO), the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. A *key word table* was developed (Table 1 below), and used to ensure *consistent search strings* and comprehensive probing of major databases. Searching on documents from 1990 to present resulted in 146 hits. All were examined for their relevance to the current project, resulting in a current database of more than 100 items.

Table 1: Key Words use to Identify Literature for Review

Subject	People	Places
Resilience	Inuit	Nunavik
Well-being	Innu	Nunavut
Capacity to adapt	Yupiaq	Alaska
Coping	Greenlander	Greenland
	Aboriginal	North West Territories
	Indigenous	Nunatsiavut
	Inupiat	Inuvialuit

References have been organized in an *Endnote*⁵ library. They have been coded according to eight keywords, presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Key Words Used to Organize the Endnote Library

Aboriginal	for articles with a general Aboriginal subject, mainly First Nations data or examples
Inuit	for articles specific to Inuit
Suicide	for articles specific to suicide and suicide prevention
Theory	articles proposing theories about the construct of resilience, and the factors which affect it
Methods	articles useful in designing the field work
Greenland	
Alaska	
Empirical	articles based on research with real live people

⁴ Non-conventional literature (NCL, also called ‘grey literature’) comprises scientific and technical reports, patent documents, conference papers, internal reports, government documents, newsletters, fact sheets and theses, which are not readily available through commercial channels. NCL specifically does not include normal scientific journals, books or popular publications that are available through traditional commercial publication channels. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grey_literature.

⁵ Endnote is proprietary reference management software.

Key Informant Interviews – Key Informant Interviews were used in two ways:

1. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with academic and other experts working in the field of Inuit health and wellness. These individuals were primarily identified as part of the Literature Review process. Inuit organizations targeted include the Arctic Health Research Network (AHRN), Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO), the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the Inuit Children's Centre. Two Interview Guides were prepared, one for use with research organizations, one for use with service delivery organizations.
2. Key informant interviews were also conducted with community members in the two selected Nunavut communities. Individuals identified as having particular experience, expertise or knowledge concerning the challenges their community has faced, and the ways they have met these challenges, were invited to participate.⁶ In order to capture gender differences, researchers tried to identify both men and women in the community, as well as Elders and youth where appropriate. Due to time constraints in the communities and respondent availability, interviews were all conducted in English by one of the two Qallunaat researchers. All but two respondents were Inuit, and all were fluent in English. Due to time constraints and lack of availability, one interview was conducted over the telephone.

Community Visits and Focused Discussion Groups – Community visits were conducted in Arviat (September 27th- October 1st) and Igloolik (October 4th-8th), 2010. In each community, two Qallunaat researchers worked with the principal Inuit facilitator, with additional on-site support provided by local community researchers.

Focused Discussion Groups were held with a cross-section of community members representing Elders, youth, men and women. Five discussion groups were held in each community, in the following order: Elders; Women; Men; Youth; Final (mixed) discussion group. In the first four discussion groups, up to eight individuals were invited, with an average of five attending each focus group. For the Final (mixed) discussion group, participants from each of the Elders, Women, Men and Youth focus groups were invited to attend a final discussion group. One Final discussion group had 12 participants, the other 11. Researchers purposefully started with the Elders focus group: as keepers of Inuit traditional knowledge, it was expected that the Elders would be able to articulate the central ideas connecting Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and concepts of resiliency. This proved to be a useful approach, especially because the majority of Elders in both Arviat and Igloolik had worked with the principal facilitator on other Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit-related projects.

- **Building the Sampling Frame and Recruitment of Participants:** Researchers worked with existing contacts ('coordinators') in each community to identify participants for discussion groups and key informant interviews. Given the qualitative nature of this study, sampling relied on key contacts in each community, supplemented with purposive snowball sampling. That is, sampling was done to ensure that those with community expertise or experience with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, wellness and healing initiatives were targeted. In addition, the coordinators in each community also targeted participants who would be willing and able to participate in the discussion. This approach was combined with quota sampling to try to achieve equal representation of men, women, Elders and

⁶ On-site support was provided by local community researchers. These individuals worked with the Principal researcher and lead facilitator to identify local experts that could act as key informants.

youth across the discussion groups and key informant interviews with community members.

Preliminary arrangements were made prior to arriving in the community to ensure that participants had been invited using the invitation and consent form, as well as to make arrangements for meeting space and hospitality (refreshments). Once in the community, researchers worked with local contacts to further identify interested participants for key informant interviews and for discussion groups: in a small number of cases individuals who had planned to attend were prevented from doing so due to personal or work-related issues, and the researchers worked with local contacts to find replacements.

- **Discussion Group Process:** A discussion guide was developed to investigate and build upon information gathered during the literature review and preliminary interviews, and was translated into Inuktitut. All of the focus groups were facilitated primarily in Inuktitut, with organizational and note-taking support provided by the lead Qallunaat researcher. Focus group participants were invited to express themselves in their language of choice (Inuktitut or English); the majority chose to speak in Inuktitut.

All of the discussion groups began with a prayer in Inuktitut (except for one group, where the prayer was conducted in English). The facilitator then reviewed the purpose of the project and the consent forms, and reminded all participants that their comments would remain anonymous, and that the audio tapes would be erased at the conclusion of the project. All discussion group participants received a \$40 honorarium for their time, which was distributed at the end of each discussion.

- **Interpretation:** As noted above, the first set of discussion groups took place in Arviat. There, simultaneous interpretation was provided for 4 out of 5 discussion groups; consecutive interpretation was provided by the Inuktitut facilitator in the fifth discussion group. In Arviat, Qallunaat researchers were present at all five discussion groups, and took notes of the English translation. In Igloolik, the research team dispensed with interpretation with the aim of encouraging a better conversation flow. This decision was taken part-way through the Elders' discussion group. In addition, Qallunaat researchers attended only the focused discussion group with Elders. The research team found that the conversation flowed more freely with these two adjustments.⁷

Table 3 below summarizes the number of individuals that participated in the collection of primary data.⁸

⁷ The decision to proceed without interpretation was made for several reasons: the interpreter in Igloolik was ill at the time of the discussion groups, and so the lead facilitator would have had to do consecutive interpretation. This would have been especially challenging given the differences in dialect between Arviat and Igloolik; moreover, the time spent to summarize and interpret would have negatively impacted on the amount of information that could be covered. There was also a sense that by allowing the conversation to take place without the presence of the Qallunaat researchers, participants might feel more ownership over the process, and express themselves more freely.

⁸ All but five individuals that participated were Inuit.

Table 3: Summary Primary data collection

Method of Data Collection	# participants	Avg length	Language	Interpretation	Ethnicity	Age Range
Focus Groups - Arviat	21					
Elders	8	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	Simultaneous	Inuit	60-80
Women	5	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	Simultaneous	Inuit	50-60
Men	4	2.5 hours	English & Inuktitut	Consecutive (by facilitator)	Inuit	25-55
Youth	4	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	Simultaneous	Inuit	15-20
Final	12	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	Simultaneous	Inuit	15-80
Key Informant Interviews – Arviat						
Community experts/leaders working in Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, health & wellness	5	1 hour	English	No	1 Qallunaat, 4 Inuit	20-60
Focus Groups - Igloolik	19					
Elders	5	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	First half consecutive (by facilitator); second half no	Inuit	60-80
Women	4	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	No	Inuit	50-70
Men	4	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	No	Inuit	50-60
Youth	6	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	No	Inuit	20-25
Final	11	2.5 hours	Inuktitut	No	Inuit	20-80
Key Informant Interviews – Igloolik						
Community experts/leaders working in Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, health & wellness	5	1 hour	English	No	1 Qallunaat, 4 Inuit	25-55
Key Informant Interviews/discussion group						
Academic and other Northern experts, research & service delivery organizations	20	1 hour	English	No	1 First Nation; 2 Qallunaat; 17 Inuit	Not collected

2.3 Data Management and Analysis

Key informant interviews were captured directly on the questionnaire, and then compiled in an online database to facilitate analysis. Focused discussion groups were recorded by a note taker and using flip-charts, and any visual outputs developed by focus group participants were captured using a digital camera. Audio recordings were made of all ten focused discussion groups, after which English translations were prepared by the team's Inuktitut facilitator. In Arviat, two English-speaking note-takers recorded the translated conversation; in Igloolik, note-taking was performed in Inuktitut by the research team's local coordinator. Finally, a graphic artist was hired in Arviat to record the conversations, and digital photographs were taken of the images produced. A key informant interviewed

earlier in the research project suggested that a graphic artist might be able to assist in translating the very abstract conversations, and in bridging the language barrier and ‘worldview differences’ between focus group participants and the Qallunaat researchers. Researchers were unable to identify a graphic artist for the discussion groups in Igloolik.⁹

Data from key informant interviews and focus groups were analyzed in two ways: during the data collection process, the team met face-to-face to identify themes and patterns, and to develop preliminary interpretations of the findings. In addition, focus group and interview data were compiled and analyzed electronically using *NVivo*, qualitative data management software that incorporates coding, indexing and key word retrieval and sorting capabilities. The principal investigator conducted initial coding and analysis using the software, which was then examined and refined by the principal facilitator and other team members.

2.4 Plan for Dissemination

In keeping with the participatory approach to this work, a report of community findings will be presented to each community for their own use. The full report will also be distributed to all of the key informants and organizations involved in the data collection process.

2.5 A Note on the Focused Discussion Groups

Participants wrestled with articulating key Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit concepts, which are very much rooted in each individual’s life experience. They also wrestled with how they would define the concept of ‘resiliency’ in relation to these other Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit concepts. In keeping with the Inuit way, the conversations were multi-layered, organic and dynamic as participants worked to articulate non-linear, holistic concepts. The facilitator nurtured and guided the conversations, probing where necessary, in order to cover as many research questions as possible. On principle, however, the focus groups were conducted in a way that reflected the Inuit way of seeing and investigating the world, rather than using a Qallunaat, linear approach. Focus group participants were encouraged to ‘share what was on their mind’ concerning Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, resiliency, challenges in the community, and so on. Conversations unfolded in an organic way, circling around, towards and back on the various issues in question, as participants developed a comfort with the topic, and with sharing their experiences and insights with the group.¹⁰

The participants’ approach to answering the questions is well-summarized in a comment by the lead facilitator. In keeping with the Inuit view of knowledge, he notes that each person will have her or his

⁹ Due to the remoteness of the communities, researchers were unable to meet with the artist to describe the project in great detail, as well as their expectations or aims, prior to the discussion groups. The artist worked off to the side and generated images depicting many of the stories and life challenges expressed by participants (e.g. a bottle of alcohol; a baby being held; a Christian cross). Participants were unable to view the illustrations, and as a result these did not act in a way to support or develop the conversations. In order to be effective, in future it would be important to engage a graphic artist with experience in graphic facilitation techniques, and for the illustration to occur in a space visible by all participants.

¹⁰ The final focus group in each community, which brought together a cross-section of participants from each of the gender and age-specific discussion groups, was somewhat more structured. Having participated in one discussion group the previous day, and having had some time to reflect on the topic and the concepts being discussed, participants were better prepared to answer the discussion group questions.

own ideas about resiliency, and in the end, the process of asking these kinds of questions as part of the research process can never achieve a full or complete answer, because in reality life is not static. Indeed for those who are actively living and working on issues of resiliency at the community level, the quest for understanding and knowledge is a continuous, lifelong, process:

[I]f we were to go to all the people to ask the question “what is resiliency”, [you would find that]the Inuit language or perspective [does not lend itself to examining such a complex idea with one question. Resiliency within the Inuit worldview is not] a one question concept. [There are many questions and sub-questions] that[...] must be all viewed, and [in this case]eventually place in a report. But the true answer is a continuous answer, and also a continuous question (J. Karetak, 2010a).

For all participants except several Elders, this was the first opportunity that they had ever had to reflect on their communities, their traditions, their present situation, and their future, in this structured way. At times, participants were filled with emotion as they recounted traumatic experiences growing up: for some, these experiences related to residential school, forced community relocations, or periods of starvation; for others, they recounted personal challenges with sexual and physical abuse, addiction, the effects of being touched by suicide, or the difficulties associated with inadequate housing, lack of employment opportunities, and poverty. The recorded conversations are filled with personal stories, as well as myths and taboos that have been passed down through the generations. They are also filled with indirect messages concerning the topic of discussion, and are a rich source of insight and reflection on the challenges and opportunities facing today’s Inuit as represented by two communities. The topic of Inuit knowledge is explored further in the next section.

3 The Research Environment: Defining Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

3.1 Traditional Versus Indigenous Knowledge

Writers wrestle with various words to describe the kind of knowledge referred to by *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. Some writers refer to this knowledge as *indigenous* (Anderson & Ledogar, 2008; Battiste, 2002; Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council, 2006; Kuptana, 2005; Smylie et al., 2003; Tester & Irniq, 2008; N. J. Turner, Davidson-Hunt, & O’Flaherty, 2003), others *traditional* (Bonny, 2008; Healey & Meadows, 2008; Johnson, 2009; Korhonen, 2006; Kuptana, 2005; Oosten & Laugrand, 2002), or *traditional environmental knowledge* (TEK)(N. J. Turner et al., 2003; Wenzel, 1999). Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is variously translated as “traditional knowledge” or “knowledge that is still relevant” (Laugrand & Oosten, 2009a, p. 27), the latter referring to a more dynamic, current, relevant set of ideas and ways of knowing than the word traditional invokes (Kuptana, 2005; Tester & Irniq, 2008). In fact, an interpretation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit as ‘traditional knowledge’ in the sense that the knowledge is from the past and of the past is inaccurate: as knowledge that is belief and value based, with guiding principles which Inuit believe will never become outdated, the word ‘traditional’ does not apply.

Regardless of the word used, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit must be understood to have the following central characteristics:

- Values-based
- Experiential

- Rooted in context (of the person sharing the knowledge; of the situation in which the knowledge is being shared; of the community from which the knowledge comes; and so on)
- Orally-based and transmitted
- Holistic in orientation
- Dynamic and evolving
- Shared

As stated previously, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit has been understood to be an orally-transmitted body of knowledge which has been passed down from one generation to the next. For many Inuit, seeing their worldview expressed on educational posters and in government documents is jarring. De-contextualized and generalized, these fundamental Inuit truths do not carry the same force as those that would have been transmitted between Elders and youth in the oral tradition – in which the knowledge transmitted would have been rooted in the life experience and authority of the Elder sharing that knowledge, and would have been transmitted within a particular context, with a particular purpose, and tailored to suit the recipient of that knowledge (Laugrand & Oosten, 2009b, p. 126).

Kuptana (2005, p. 2) identifies some of the challenges involved with the process of writing down the knowledge that has been orally collected and transmitted among Inuit for centuries. In her view, putting to paper what has been an oral body of knowledge interferes with the essence of that knowledge:

To remove it from this oral context is to remove its meaning. Dynamic knowledge such as Inuit Indigenous Knowledge cannot be written down, as written information has a permanence that does not reflect the true nature of Indigenous Knowledge. Furthermore, Indigenous Knowledge is rarely communicated in a direct manner; instead, it is communicated in stories, events, dances, song and dreams.

This is a unique period in Inuit history – a period of transition, and even of transformation. Understanding the context in which this research is undertaken is important, because it helps to explain the nature of the conversations in the community focus groups and in key informant interviews. Understanding the context also helps to explain some of the challenges in collecting this information. For example, it was challenging for participants to respond to a more Qallunaat-style set of questions which asked them to pull apart ideas which are integrated in their minds and in their lives. It was also difficult for the researchers to put the information gathered to paper, for some of the reasons described by Kuptana (2005) above.

3.2 What is Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit?

As a set of core beliefs embodying the Inuit way of living, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit has been understood as an orally-transmitted body of knowledge which has been passed down from one generation to the next. It is only since the creation of Nunavut, and the subsequent need to articulate a set of governance principles for the Government and other institutions, that the process of identifying, labelling and recording this oral body of knowledge in written form has been undertaken in earnest (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007; Laugrand & Oosten, 2009b). Over the course of the last decade, there have been a number of concerted efforts to interview Elders and record their life histories, thoughts and views on all aspects of Inuit life, from culture, values, language, life skills, social customs and structure, to their thoughts on the present and future of Inuit.

The following description of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is adapted from materials compiled over the course

of more than ten years working with Elders (J. Karetak, 2010b).¹¹

Inuit Elders were asked, “What is Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit?” “What definitions do Inuit have or use frequently, in their day to day lives, and what purposes do these serve?” Their response was to describe what has come to be known as the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles. However, when we look at Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles holistically, we also need to look at where the principles stem from. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is rooted in Inuit Elders’ perspectives of their way of living and existing as a people. The Inuit culture and philosophy view existence from a holistic perspective. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is a lifelong program which evolved over generations and which describes the Inuit cultural beliefs and practices. When combined with Inuit language it represents the Inuit way of being. Living in a harsh environment such as the Arctic required having this holistic view of existence. It is what helped Inuit to survive harsh conditions, by viewing the world through interconnectivity and relationship. When nothing is certain, or the only certain thing is that the weather can become worse at any given time, it is necessary to take a holistic view, and it is this system which has enabled Inuit to survive successfully in this harsh environment. The natural elements and weather conditions of the Arctic require a human being to have very specific skills and knowledge in order to survive. Over generations, Inuit developed these skills, which they taught to all who came into the North, ensuring their survival. The Inuit world view enabled them as a group to survive, but also made them vulnerable to non-Inuit, which is why Inuit ultimately lost control in their own land.

When first asked what Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit consists of, Inuit Elders came up with these 6 principles:

- **Pijitsirniq** – serving and providing for family and/or community
- **Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq** – respect and care for the land, animals and the environment
- **Pilimmaksarniq** – development of skills through practice, effort and action
- **Piliriqatigiinniq** – working together
- **Aajiiqatigiinniq** – decision making through discussion and consensus
- **Qanuqtuurniq** – being innovative and resourceful in seeking solutions

Two additional principles or ways of being were added later¹²:

- **Tunnganarniq** – fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming and inclusive
- **Inuuqatigiitsiarniq** – respecting others, relationships and caring for people

All these principles are integrated, all impact one another, each is a strand woven together like a rope and, in this way, provides the strength of Inuit belief as a holistic view. The principles themselves are the cultural driver and come from the Inuit main 4 laws: the Inuit

¹¹ The Canadian Council on Learning recently compiled a list of Inuit values and beliefs which form Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit; they also worked with Inuit Elders (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007, p. 20).

¹² These Principles continue to be refined and updated. According to a recent paper by Laugrand and Oosten (2009b, pp. 125-126), seven principles were added following a review of Nunavut Bill 35, and another two by the Nunavut Education Act.

maligait.

Inuit Maligarjuat

There are four Inuit laws that form the basis for the Inuit worldview.

Working for the common good: Inuit worldview is strongly grounded in social accountability and unity. All individuals have a responsibility to those around them. This includes sharing what they have, serving and caring for others and contributing to the collective well being through their efforts and activities. Working for the common good is an expectation for all ages and is central to why Inuit were such a successful society. Unity speaks to the importance of collective identity and collaboration across time.

Being respectful of all living things: Inherent in this law is the belief that there is a power greater than oneself that operates in the world. It was regarded a folly to try to set oneself up above others or in dominance to the natural world or environment. Being humble and respectful of the rights of all things helped Inuit to maintain balance in their relationships.

Maintaining harmony: Living in balance and maintaining harmony were viewed as essential practices. Balanced harmony provided for the well being of the group and showed respect and responsibility. If issues arose, practices were well defined for dealing with these so that harmony within a group would be quickly restored. Resiliency was highly valued and dealing with issues promptly assured that unresolved concerns would not hinder relationships with others or be passed along.

Continually planning/preparing for a better future: Strong social organizations have a strong focus on the future and on continual improvement. Inuit social teachings and child-rearing practices were directed at the big picture views of the future. The development of a good human being was central to this focus. Becoming a capable and contributing human being was an expectation for everyone. Honing skills that demonstrated excellence in your area of expertise and enabled you to provide for others was a core goal in the lives of all Inuit. The ability to improve on something and to make life easier for those around you, as a result, was considered high achievement.

Elders have identified three key fields to describe how this holistic relationship between the *maligait*, and the processes to implement the *maligait* as defined in the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Principles, is organized:

- *Innusirq*, which translates to life matters – life before us, life with us, life without us;
- *Sila*, or the environment – living in connection with nature; and
- *Pirkutiniit*, which refers to technology – which includes all of the material, tools, and technology requirements for life that make life possible, and help Inuit to meet their needs (please see Figure 1 below).

For Inuit, every person begins life not knowing all the things they will need to know. In order to become self-sufficient, they are taught from the beginning cultural values and beliefs, to value all life, and to respect the Elders. Inuit also exist in a natural environment which provides all that they need. Once game is caught, Inuit convert what is not used for food into

technology, including clothing, shelters, and tools. Without the things that Inuit get from the environment, they could not survive, so the environment sustains them, and in return Inuit respect and honour it. Inuit laws ensure that harvesting is done to promote balance, and there are strict guidelines to ensure that game is processed well and stored properly for future use.

Each field has rules or laws that Inuit need to learn to respect and follow. Inuit need to be aware of all three fields at all times in order to live a good life.

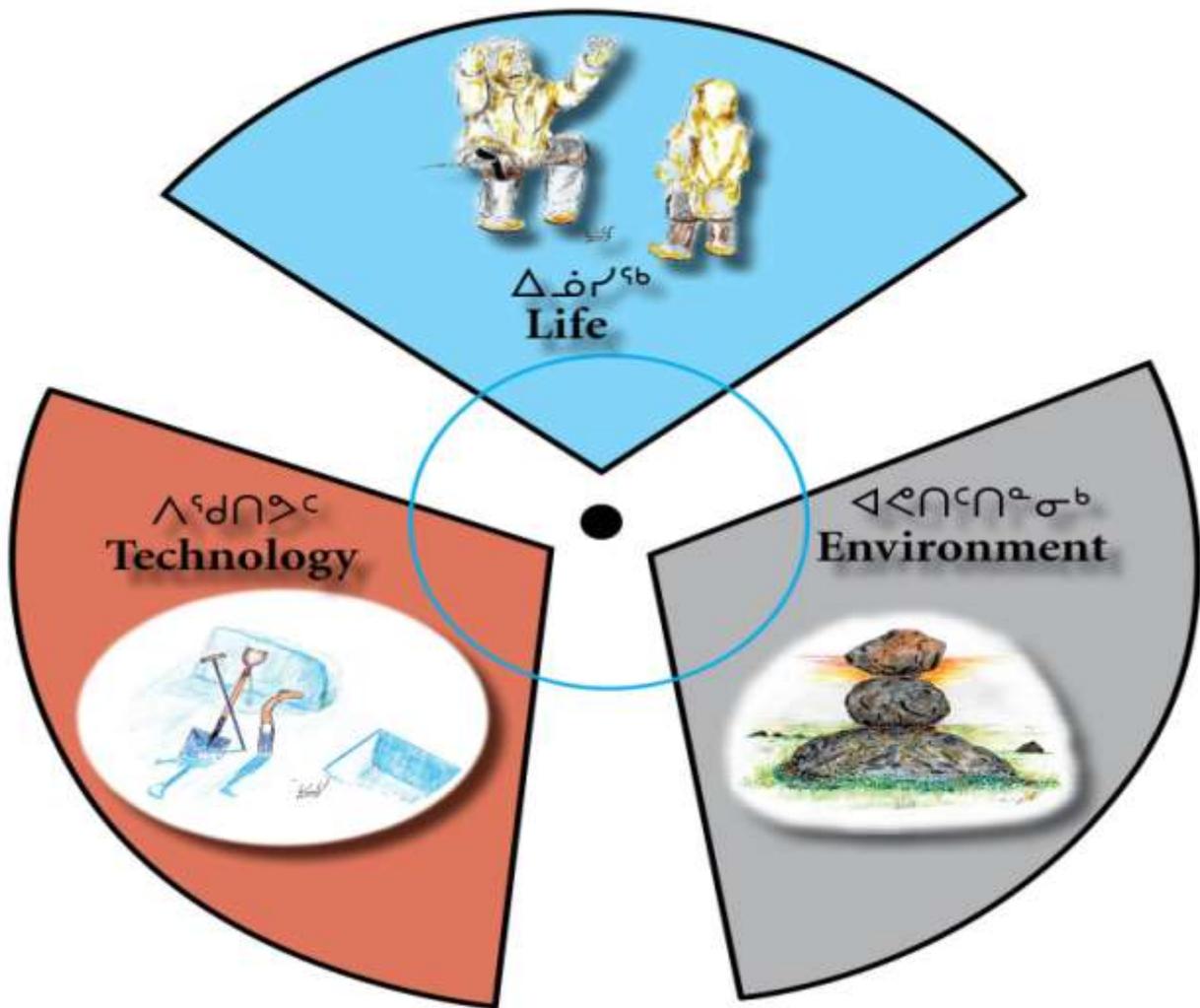
3.2.1 Inuit social structure which supports the Inuit worldview

For Inuit, life cannot be maintained outside the four *maligait*, and survival required the development of a tightly knit, highly structured social organization that reflected their way of being in the world. Without the proper leadership to uphold traditional laws and natural laws, Inuit would have never survived in this harsh land. For Inuit, the making of a human being was essential to this existence. Inuit had to be taught and protected until as individuals they could survive on their own, but this autonomy was closely supported and bounded by the social relationships in which each individual was embedded. Inuit were always surrounded by mentors and teachers throughout their lives, and it is believed that this mentoring continues long after they are gone through their words and spirit which live on within community members. In this way, all Inuit relationships exist within a continuum and are not bounded by space or by time.

Inuit social structure was tightly managed and controlled by the Elders in order to ensure balance among family or camp members, as well as within the spheres of existence. In order to live in a holistic way, every individual needed to understand the whole, and their role in contributing to the whole. Clear laws and rules of conduct were needed, as well as strong leadership that was supported by all: without this support, the leadership would not be able to demonstrate the discipline and conviction required to exist in the most difficult physical conditions. Consistency in worldview had to be developed across all generations, and was reinforced by the values and beliefs. Spirit, mind and body had to first be in harmony in order to promote harmony in the community.

When laws were broken, someone had to be in a position to address the imbalance that resulted and, in most situations, a shaman would be the one who addressed this imbalance. Shamanism was an important expression of Inuit spirituality and belief in a greater power that infuses all living and non-living things.

Figure 2: Three inter-related spheres of life



This illustration was made by Donald Ulualuak (Arviat Elder)

3.3 Generalizability of the Findings

The ideas discussed in this paper represent one of the first attempts to document the concept of resilience from an Inuit perspective, and within an Inuit knowledge framework. As noted above, knowledge is intimately personal within the Inuit worldview; for this reason, the knowledge shared in this report cannot be taken as representative of “the Inuit way of thinking”, if there was such a thing. If this research was repeated with other Inuit communities, there is no doubt that there would be variations in the terminology used to express ideas associated with resilience, in the myths and stories used to illustrate important community norms and values, and in the particular challenges, and solutions, identified to building resilience at the individual and community levels. The two communities involved are also not necessarily ‘representative’ of all Nunavut: there is much diversity across Nunavut communities, and as noted above, both Arviat and Igloolik are considered places where Inuit traditions and language are stronger. Furthermore, all of the Elders involved in this project had also participated in previous Elders’ meetings as part of the Elders’ Project (described above). As such, they had previous experience in articulating Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit ideas and principles, and in reflecting upon their personal and community experiences. It is difficult to say how participants in other communities would have responded to the opportunity to reflect, although experience suggests that given adequate time to become comfortable with the process, broadly similar results would be generated. Notwithstanding these uncertainties, the commonality in themes articulated by participants in Arviat and Igloolik, and their resonance with available Inuit-based literature and key informant interviews, suggests that this paper offers a solid foundation from which to build in the future.

4 Resiliency Concepts and Definitions: Review of the Literature

The study of resilience is a highly active research area, with an array of definitions, theories and models. Research on the concept of resiliency emerged some forty years ago out of psychology/psychiatry – that is, disciplines focused at the level of the individual (Bottrell, 2009). In more recent years, there has been a trend to examining resiliency as a collective phenomenon – one that can apply equally to individuals, groups of individuals, and communities (variably defined) (Kirmayer, Sehdev, Whitley, Dandeneau, & Isaac, 2009).

In Canada, the research on resilience is advanced, with a substantial number of studies looking at resilience in Aboriginal communities using the full range of social science methods. Several recent published literature reviews have synthesized the significant amount of available research from many disciplines, including ecology, developmental psychology, psychiatry, sociology and anthropology (to name a few) (Anderson & Ledogar, 2008; Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Fleming & Ledogar, 2008a; Lemyre et al., 2008; McIvor, Napoleon, & Dickie, 2009). The value of this more recent research as it applies to Aboriginal populations stems from broad methodological approaches which conceptualize resilience from a strengths-based perspective (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008a). This contrasts with previous research which has focused on the failures or weaknesses in the individual or community (Anderson, 2008a). In particular, there are three major initiatives looking at resilience that include a significant Aboriginal component.

- The **Roots of Resilience** project, based at McGill University, is exploring resilience in Aboriginal communities in Canada. The project is “a new interdisciplinary collaboration between researchers in Canada and New Zealand to study the factors that promote resilience in mental

health among Indigenous people across the lifespan, focusing on the response to risk factors in early childhood, school-age children, adolescence and young adulthood” (ICHRP, 2010). One project component, the Stories of Resilience project, is collecting stories from individuals and groups in Aboriginal communities that help to define resilience and identify factors which promote resilience.

- The **International Resilience Project**, based at the Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University, is exploring resilience as it relates to the health of at-risk youth populations, including some Aboriginal sites in Canada. The project is an international effort where “partners across six continents ... employ methodologically diverse approaches to the study of how children, youth and families cope with many different kinds of adversity” (Dalhousie University, 2010).
- The **Aboriginal Youth Resilience Studies**, of the Community Information and Epidemiological Technologies (CIET) network, include 11 major studies of youth resilience in a number of areas undertaken since 1995. “A substantial part of CIET’s work in Canada has been in partnership with Aboriginal peoples. Since 1995, CIET has aimed to build research and planning capacities in Aboriginal communities across Canada, so that they are able to design and carry out their own research with little external assistance” (Bourhis, Montaruli, El-Geledi, Harvey, & Barrette, 2010).

The most recent review, conducted by Kirmayer et al. (2009), is vast in scope. It reviews close to 300 documents, including works focusing on the application of the resilience concept to Aboriginal communities. It is not possible to summarize completely the breadth of information covered in this review – and as such, it is a must-read for anyone working in this area. Similarly, a series of papers examining resilience as it applies to Aboriginal populations was published in the June 2008 edition of *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health*. While more focused in scope than the review by Kirmayer et al. (2009), the researchers have examined in-depth the applicability of various concepts, models and processes related to resilience among Aboriginal populations. As such, papers in this journal are similarly foundational to our current study.

With so many researchers investigating from so many different perspectives, the research is at some level fragmented. Yet, while there is a lack of coherence to the concepts and definitions being used, there are some common threads. The following section provides an overview, but is by no means comprehensive.

4.1 What is Resilience?

The definition of resilience offered in the RFP behind this research reflects the most generally accepted definition in the literature reviewed. In its most simple form, resilience is defined as the human capacity to overcome hardship – often referred to as positive adaptation – in the face of emotional, psychological or physical adversity (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b; Luthar, 2006; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). When it was first introduced, resilience was presented as a two-dimensional construct with negative inputs at one end (adversity), and positive outputs (positive adaptation) at the other (Bottrell, 2009; Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2009). Other ways to describe this “positive adaptation” can include reference to individual or community wellness, sustainability, or flourishing, which entail a multi-dimensional understanding of resilience as a process and an outcome, and an understanding of determinants of health (Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000; Colussi, 2000; Healey & Meadows,

2008).¹³

4.1.1 Risk and protective factors

It is important to understand the relationship between risk factors and protective factors which is implicit in these understandings of resilience. Stout and Kipling (2003, p. 6) use the image of an umbrella (protective factors or assets) to protect against falling rain (risk or adversity). They note that it is not enough for individuals to possess assets, or protective factors: they need to ‘deploy’, or activate, these assets in order for them to mitigate the risk being experienced (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003). Stout and Kipling (2003) also note that risk factors may originate within the individual, within the immediate family context, or within the broader social environment. Risks, however, do not determine outcome: rather, they are seen as ‘predictive’ of outcomes, and the literature refers to the probability that individuals who are exposed to certain types of risks will at some point experience certain kinds of negative outcomes (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2009).

Understanding the potential impact of risk is further complicated by the fact that many people are exposed to multiple risks during their lives – and the most vulnerable may be exposed to multiple risks at one time. Exposure to multiple risks is seen as having an *exponential* or *multiplier* effect on the probability of negative outcomes. Researchers are concerned with trying to understand whether there are particular developmental points during the lifecycle during which exposure to risk is more likely to result in negative outcomes (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b).

Protective factors are similarly grouped according to whether they originate within the individual, the family context, or the larger social environment in which the person lives (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003). A well-developed sociological literature exists which examines in particular the buffering effects of personal social support networks on health and well-being (Pearlin, 1989; Potter, 1999; J. Turner & Lloyd, 1995). Besides social support, researchers have listed various protective factors, ranging from ‘good genetics’ to ‘quality parenting’ to ‘positive school experiences’ (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003). Depending on the context in which the individual lives, some protective factors may play greater or lesser roles in mitigating risk. For example, among Aboriginal communities, researchers have identified balance, life control, education, material resources, social resources, environment/cultural connections/language as important protective factors (McIvor et al., 2009; Richmond & Ross, 2008; Richmond & Ross, 2009).

Given the volume of studies and reviews, it is perhaps more useful to summarize the basic types of resiliency ‘models’ which try to explain how the protective factors work. Protective factors may ‘buffer’ or *cushion* the negative effects of adverse situations. This type of model is typically used to describe the role of personal social networks in mediating negative experiences (these may also be referred to as ‘protective models’, as in Anderson and Ledogar (2008)). Second, protective factors may *interrupt* a negative chain or risks, while a third model sees protective factors *preventing* the initial occurrence of a risk (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003). In yet another model, protective factors may *compensate* for a risk by working in the opposite direction of the risk (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b). Fleming and Ledogar (2008b) note the *challenge* model, which suggests that in moderate exposure to some risks, individuals may learn how to appropriately cope with, and adapt to, the risk without being overwhelmed by it. In effect,

¹³ In fact the interrelationship among these various concepts can be so strong that some researchers have called into question the need for a separate concept of ‘resilience’ as distinct from ‘positive adaptation’ (Luthar et al., 2000).

the *challenge* model pushes the concept of resilience as an ongoing process: ideally, when exposed to stresses or adversity, individuals positively adapt and in the process, emerge strengthened as a result. Finally, for some researchers, resiliency is an innate capacity within each individual to “navigate life well” (HeavyRunner & Marshall 2003, quoted in Fleming & Ledogar, (2008b, p. 16). In this model, stressors or adversity are not required in order for resilience to exist.

4.1.2 Resilience at the community level

Several researchers have elaborated individual models of resilience and applied the concept to the community level. Ungar (2010), Principal Investigator of the International Resilience Project, posits that “[r]esilience is both an individual’s capacity to navigate to health resources and a condition of the individual’s family, community and culture to provide those resources in culturally meaningful ways.” This definition makes a critical connection between individual and collective well-being, frames resilience as both an input and an output – a dynamic process – that takes place at individual and collective levels, and directly points to the role of organizations (and governments) to make culturally appropriate resources available as part of this process.

Another framework developed by Walsh (2007) further specifies resilience as a dynamic individual-group process, where resilience is achieved by mobilizing family, community, cultural, and spiritual resources. She identifies belief systems, organizational patterns and communication processes as key to facilitating resiliency, involving individual but also group processes that enable sharing, collaboration, coordination and mutual support among all community members, from youth to elders. These group processes can take the form of multi-family gatherings, community forums and rituals, in order to encourage what she calls “active coping” (Walsh, 2007). In this way Walsh is tapping the literature on the buffering effects of personal social networks, although those same social networks can also be the cause of significant trauma (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2009; Pearlin, 1989; Richmond & Ross, 2008; Richmond & Ross, 2009).

Work by Saul and Bava (2008, p. 5) also emphasizes the collective dimension to trauma, and suggests that where a group has shared a traumatic event, there is a need for a collective response to that trauma – a way for group or community members to collectively make sense of what happened. Jack Saul notes that a “collusion between therapists and patients, society and survivors, and among family members to avoid speaking about traumatic events may disrupt a sense of historical continuity, and may increase the disconnection of families and communities ... A collective response is a paradigmatic shift, which promotes resiliency and wellness.”

A ground-breaking study by Hegney et al. (2008) was designed to bridge the gap between individual and community level resilience. Using work by Bernard (1999), Hegney et al. (2008, pp. 91-92) worked from the premise that attempts to foster individual level resilience are at their heart ‘community building processes’. Using a mixed qualitative and quantitative research methodology, the researchers identified 11 resilience ‘constructs’ that work independently, and interactively, at individual and community levels. In order of priority, the identified levels are:

- Social Networks and Support
- Positive Outlook
- Learning
- Early Experience
- Environment and Lifestyle
- Infrastructure and Support

- Services
- Sense of Purpose
- Diverse and Innovative Economy
- Embracing Differences
- Beliefs; and
- Leadership

They concluded that “[a]ny effort to differentiate between individual and community resilience would have been inappropriate, with the intertwining of these concepts strongly apparent within the data. Individual resilience was found to be both a product of, and a contributor to, community resilience and vice versa (Hegney et al., 2008, p. 91). The study also confirmed a number of findings from previous studies – namely, that resilience is a multilayered, dynamic process that changes over time, and across contexts.

4.1.3 Links to other concepts

From the preceding discussion, the linkages between resiliency and well-being, or wellness, are apparent – to the extent that some researchers use these terms interchangeably. Similarly, qualities of individuals or communities which are called ‘protective factors’ in the resiliency literature may be called assets in the community development literature, or determinants of health in the population health literature. There is a clear resonance with what have been identified as key ‘determinants’, or ‘pathways’ of resiliency, or as ‘buffers’ or ‘protective factors’ against risk or adversity (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2009). These resonances are well-summarized in the following definition of health (Frankish et al., 1996).

The population health approach recognizes that health is a capacity or resource rather than a state, a definition which corresponds more to the notion of being able to pursue one's goals, to acquire skills and education, and to grow. This broader notion of health recognizes the range of social, economic and physical environmental factors that contribute to health. The best articulation of this concept of health is "the capacity of people to adapt to, respond to, or control life's challenges and changes".

4.2 Resilience in the Aboriginal Context

When the concept of resilience is applied to Aboriginal populations specifically, researchers consistently point to the need to move beyond the individual to include the collective and group aspects; to use the resilience model to focus on strengths, rather than deficiencies; to view resilience as a dynamic process which may be measurable at specific points in time, but which in reality is never a static state; and to take a multi-dimensional, holistic look at the various pathways by which resilience may be enhanced (or supported or mediated). As Anderson (2008a, pp. 3-4) summarizes,

most Indigenous views of resilience go beyond the individual and negative tone implicit in ‘the capability of individuals to cope and flourish successfully in the face of significant adversity or risk’ (Reid, 1996/7)... We have come to understand Indigenous resilience has a collective aspect, combining spirituality, family strength, Elders, ceremonial rituals, oral traditions, identity, and support networks (HeavyRunner and Marshall, 2003). We also understand Indigenous views of resilience to include — indeed to be based upon — a positive dimension. While the predominant (Western) “survival in the face of adversity”

view of resilience seems to hinge on a relationship with failure, we have come to understand Indigenous views of resilience to be closer to a sense of direction, wisdom, or common sense—all positive attributes (Burack et al., 2007).

This quote is important, and entails a shift in the concept being measured. If we take the concept of resiliency to mean something that is *more than* a reaction to a negative input – to a risk – we need to also shift how we talk about those factors which help promote this “sense of direction, wisdom, or common sense” (Anderson, 2008a; Pauktuutit Inuit Women’s Association, 2004). Instead of protective factors, we can talk about resources or assets that people have access too, and which they can draw from when times are good, and when times are bad.

Further, as we shift from ideas of risk and adversity to ‘resources’ which contribute to this ‘sense of direction, wisdom, or common sense’, the outcome we are talking about becomes a more all-encompassing idea of ‘living well’, community or individual flourishing, well-being, or sustainability. Indeed, much of the material reviewed uses many concepts interchangeably, including individual or community wellness, health and well-being, social capital, and resiliency (Kirmayer et al., 2009). This is because resilience is intimately connected to ideas of individual and community health, well-being, and wellness (as noted above).

Several researchers have pointed to the potential complementariness of Aboriginal spiritual and traditional beliefs with the strengths-based resiliency framework; some have explicitly interwoven elements of both in designing interventions to support individuals at risk (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008a; Gilgun, 2002). In creating the *Circle of Courage* program, Gilgun (2002) worked from the understanding that developing resiliency among children is not possible without the direct involvement of adults, and of the community – and that it is in fact in the process of creating connections between adults and children, and among adults within the community, that resiliency can take root. This emphasis on community connections in supporting children is also at the heart of how HeavyRunner and Marshall understand what they call ‘cultural resiliency’ (1997, p. 1):

We have long recognized how important it is for children to have people in their lives who nurture their spirit, stand by them, encourage and support them. This traditional process is what contemporary researchers, educators, and social service providers are now calling fostering resilience. Thus, resilience is not new to our people; it is a concept that has been taught for centuries. The word is new; the meaning is old.

At the community level, the concept of resilience is increasingly used among community developers to identify and implement mechanisms, processes and programs to promote community well-being. In the course of their work, the Centre for Community Enterprise has defined a resilient community as “one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to and influence the course of social and economic change” (2000). Within Aboriginal communities, the idea that communities can take ownership, and have *agency* or *control* over their development, is critical to overcoming many of the challenges they face (Kirmayer et al., 2009). There appears to be widespread agreement among researchers that communities that are empowered are more resilient, and have greater overall well-being. According to Kral and Idlout (2008, p. 328), “it does not appear to matter so much what the project is as much as that [the] program or initiative is the community’s own”.

The requirement to develop community capacity to take ownership over community issues and

challenges is behind a pilot project in Nunavut. Called the Nunavut Community Wellness Planning (NCWP) project, six communities are pilot testing an innovative community wellness planning approach.¹⁴ The project takes a holistic, population health approach and is based on the understanding that the major health and wellness challenges facing individuals and communities in Nunavut – addictions, maternal child health, dental health, and mental health and suicide – are intimately connected to residential school experiences, cultural dislocation, forced gathering of families into communities, as well as to opportunities for meaningful work, and political participation (New Economy Development Group, 2006). A set of principles underpin the community planning projects, including being community-centred and Inuit directed; using common resources; producing plans based on community priorities; using a holistic approach; being inclusive of traditional and Inuit service providers; being practical and realistic (New Economy Development Group, 2009). Work to date with communities has confirmed the need to surface individual and group traumas as part of promoting healing, and ultimately community well-being (J. Karetak, 2009).

For some, resiliency is a political concept, and is intimately associated with colonization and de-colonization. This perspective is exemplified in the work of Lavalee and Clearsky (2006), who take issue with the direction of some resiliency studies. In their words,

[t]he notion of resilience equalizes the metaphorical equation outlining the healing journeys of Aboriginal peoples in urban communities. What does resilience really mean for Aboriginal peoples? We cannot assume to use a word whose connotations may imply Darwinian beliefs of survival of the fittest. This may not sit well with our ancestors. Why is this important? Even now, our people continue to suffer and die younger than the others. What does this mean in the context of resilience? Does this imply a genetic deficiency on our part? Does this mean that those who adapt to the system seem happy, content and productive are somehow better than those of our community who suffer needlessly? Are we able to move our individual community members into a spectrum of resilience? Does this mask a process of turning the gaze away from the systems that continue to perpetuate myths of Aboriginal inferiority? (Razack, S. H. 2001) Resiliency means self-determination. (Lavalee & Clearsky, 2006, p. 5)

Several recent projects have documented Inuit Elders' perspectives on community hardship, strengths, and their future (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Gladue & Lund, 2008; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999). Not surprisingly, the importance of tradition and culture, in particular of maintaining a strong connection to the land through land-based activities and the eating of country foods, has been repeatedly identified as key to First Nations and Inuit health and well-being (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Gladue & Lund, 2008; Healey & Meadows, 2008; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2006). More generally, the incorporation of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit has been identified as a cornerstone for future interventions aimed at supporting Inuit communities (Kral, 2003). Chandler and Lalonde (1998) examine the importance of what they term "cultural continuity" in mitigating suicide risk among Aboriginal youth. Markers of cultural continuity centre on the extent to which Aboriginal communities have control over key aspects of their communities, including education, health and wellness facilities,

¹⁴ The NCWP is an integration project supported under Health Canada's Aboriginal Health Transition Fund (AHTF), established by the federal government in 2004 as a way to close the gap between the health status of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians through the coordinated efforts of government partners, Aboriginal organizations and communities. The six communities are Arviat, Clyde River, Coral Harbour, Igloodik, Kugaaruk, and Kugluktuk.

emergency services, land, and so on. Communities that have a higher degree of control over these elements are seen to be more 'culturally complete', or stable – and offer their youth hope for the future. Like the community development approach discussed above (Kral & Idlout, 2008; New Economy Development Group, 2006), Lalonde (2005) finds that culturally complete communities also tend to develop their own solutions to problems, which enables youth to develop a 'persistent identity' despite personal or community upheaval.

Work with Inuit Elders through the Ajunnginiq Centre around suicide prevention brings together many of the concepts explored above (Korhonen, 2007). Working from the 'challenge' model, resilience is defined as "the ability to move through difficulties and maintain hope, mental wellness and positive coping methods. Highly resilient people are even often able to become stronger after difficult situations, because they develop confidence in themselves and learn new coping skills" (Korhonen, 2007, p. ii). Drawing on focus groups with Elders, Korhonen (2007) describes the personal qualities that enable a person to develop positive coping habits in response to traumatic or difficult events. While some of the qualities are unique to Inuit tradition and beliefs, the author points out that there is a lot of similarity between Inuit beliefs and the scientific literature. She summarizes these personal qualities as follows (Korhonen, 2007, p. ii):

- Optimism – the belief that problems can be solved and things will get better.
- Independence – being able to make decisions and act on your own, without always having to depend on someone else to tell you what to do.
- An inner sense of control and responsibility – believing that you yourself can do something to change a bad situation.
- The ability to form positive relationships with others.
- The ability to learn new coping skills, new ways of thinking.

Korhonen (2007, p. 7) identifies personality traits which help some people to cope better than others. Specifically, people who are optimistic, or who can see the positive side of events, cope better than others. Personality is seen as something that people are in part born with, but which is also shaped by the environment in which a person grows up (Korhonen, 2007). According to the Inuit worldview, when a child is born, the spirit of an ancestor moves into the child and acts as a protector. Once it is revealed which spirit the child has inherited, the child is named, and the ancestor's spirit can manifest itself in the child's personality, in their physical characteristics, or skills (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2006). For Inuit then, the personality trait of optimism is one that can be inherited from ancestors.

There are various ways in which people can be optimistic, and according to the Inuit worldview people can use their intellectual powers – their rational being – to choose to be optimistic (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Korhonen, 2007; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2006). People can do this by:

- Finding some positives in their lives even when things are going badly.
- Changing negative thoughts to more positive ones.
- Seeing rejection or failure as a learning experience.
- Finding some humour when things go wrong.
- Focusing on ways of having a more positive future rather than thinking of the bad things in the past.
- Understanding that bad times will pass. (Korhonen, 2007, p. 14)

These ways of being optimistic are embedded in Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit values and beliefs, as discussed in Section 3.2.

Based on a focus groups with Elders, Korhonen (2007, p. 47) identified the following protective factors that need to be stimulated.

- *Relationships* that provide ongoing and nonjudgmental support, listening, belief, kindness, and caring.
- *High expectations* that demonstrate belief in the person's ability, and encourage effort and achievement.
- *Opportunities to learn* skills and knowledge that provide a sense of self worth and personal competence, and make it possible to be a productive member of society.
- *Opportunities to participate* in positive activities and to do things that contribute to the well-being of others and the community.
- *Development of the thought patterns* that enable coping.

5 Findings and Discussion

As described above, this project tackles a complex topic. The concept of resiliency that is rooted in Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit is complex; holistic; developmental; refers to a lifelong process as well as an outcome; focuses on preparation and prevention of hardship, as opposed to being a reaction to hardship; and resides both *within* the individual, as well as within the socio-cultural-environmental-spiritual context in which the individual is embedded.

This section summarizes the key findings about the Inuit definition of resiliency, highlighting differences and similarities by gender, age and community; draws connections between the Inuit perspective outlined through this research and the broader resiliency literature; and then examines key areas of focus for individuals, organizations, agencies and departments interested in supporting Inuit to grow resiliency at the individual and community levels. In identifying areas of focus, this section draws particular attention to the importance of interpersonal kinship and community relations in individual and community resiliency, and therefore to the requirement for individual and community-level opportunities for healing as a foundation for growing resiliency at all levels.

5.1 General Overview of Community Conversations

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with a very high level understanding of the key themes that emerged in the focus groups and key informant interviews. To make the paper more readable, detailed findings, participant quotes, and analysis have been moved to Appendix 1, where findings are reported by research question.¹⁵

5.1.1 Elders

Participants in both communities expressed their thoughts and concerns primarily through personal story telling, including making reference to various Inuit legends that they were told as children growing

¹⁵ The reader who examines the full report will notice that some material occurs in both the body of the report, as well as the Appendix. This duplication is done in order to maintain the flow of ideas.

up. Elders have lived their lives in two worlds: the world before colonization, and the world since. As a result they have the most in-depth understanding and knowledge of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit and what it used to mean to be an Inuk, compared to the current reality. Their greatest concerns were expressed for the well-being of Inuit youth who are growing up in a society very different from the one the Elders knew. Working to reconnect with youth, and transmit Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit values and beliefs to them, was seen as a priority.

In **Arviat**, eight Elders between the ages 60 and 80 participated in the discussion group, four women and four men. Arviat Elders were initially challenged to define resiliency. Dominant themes included Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit principles and the three domains of existence: Life Matters, Environment, Technology. Participants shared stories of how their lives were structured when they lived in camps. Elders elaborated on the concept of resiliency as preparation for life as an Inuk, and the primary means of transmitting the Inuit world view via the childrearing program, followed by ongoing socialization. They also discussed community challenges in the form of loss of respect for Elders and Inuit ways, and associated loss of authority and leadership. Intertwined in this discussion of ‘community level challenges’ were highly personal stories of personal victimization and trauma, and the associated grief and loss associated with experiences of suicide, poverty, addictions, and cultural loss. Finally, Elders pointed to initial colonization as the primary cause of community challenges – separation of Inuit from the land, and from their source of economic independence, as a result of forced resettlement; separation from language and cultural expression and identity as a result of attendance at residential schools, and schools within the communities – as well as the impact of ongoing colonization resulting from the imposition of non-Inuit social, economic, educational, and governance structures and systems.

In **Igloolik**, six Elders – five women and one man – participated, between the ages of 60 and 80. The group was quick to discuss resiliency as the process of ‘making a human being’, and many different sub-concepts emerged during the discussion resonating with some of the ways in which resiliency is discussed in the general literature. Dominant themes included the notion of expertise, knowledge and status as accumulated life experience that can be used to inform and guide the younger generations. For many Igloolik Elders, the current reality is so different from their personal childhood or early adult experiences, many do not feel that they have the necessary expertise to guide their communities. Elders spent considerable time expressing the need for their generation to reclaim their leadership role in order to ensure a future for the youth especially.

This part of the conversation was similar to the one in Arviat around loss of respect for Elders. Just as with Arviat Elders, Igloolik Elders shared stories of life on the land, and of the interconnection between the three domains of existence. Igloolik Elders paid particular attention to the introduction of new technologies which allow Inuit to travel greater distances, hunt more successfully and so on, but which in real emergencies are not seen to be as robust as traditional tools. Several stories were shared to illustrate the need for backup plans, and for ensuring that the traditional ways continue to be taught and practiced. As in Arviat, causes of community difficulties were discussed, and centred on being separated from the land, the impact of residential and community schools, and the loss of Inuit authority. Elders in Igloolik spent considerable time talking about traditional systems of authority and highly structured social organization, and the importance of the childrearing program in transmitting Inuit values and beliefs, personal codes of behaviour, information and skill building. These were contrasted to the current community reality where in their minds, children and youth are not being prepared for life, and are experiencing significant personal challenges, while also contributing to broader community challenges.

5.1.2 Women

The discussions with women in both communities focused more closely on interpersonal challenges within the community, and the causes of these. The women identified the various ways in which traditional parenting and socialization practices were broken as a result of colonization – in particular as a result of the removal of children to the residential school system. For them, the schools fundamentally altered the mechanism of socialization, and the quality of relationships within families, and within the community.

In **Arviat**, five women participated in the discussion group, ranging in age from 50 to 60. Two of these women had also participated in the Elders discussion. The women shared many personal stories of trauma and loss, from personal victimization, to losing children as a result of illness or suicide. The women repeatedly contrasted traditional ways of being – from hunting, preparing and storing meat, to traditions around naming, discipline and maintaining social order in the family and the community – with the current reality that they are now experiencing. The large gap between traditional community leadership and authority, and life today, was of great concern for the women in the group; closing this gap was identified as a potential solution. Other solutions focused on youth, and healing the break in transmission of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit.

In **Igloolik**, four women between the ages of 50 and 70 participated in the discussion group, which was held in Inuktitut. Dominant themes discussed included the impact of suicide on them; the difficulty in transmitting Inuit values and beliefs to their children, and the lack of control they feel they have as parents over their children's behaviours; and the big changes to their roles in the family and community relative to their mothers' and grandmothers' as a result of colonization. As wives and mothers, they were often blamed for the death of their family member. Participants expressed feelings of profound isolation resulting from the suicide of family members: none had felt comfortable sharing her sense of loss, guilt and responsibility with anyone else in the community. When others experienced suicide, they were unable to help them, because they felt too damaged themselves to help to someone else. If it was their child that committed suicide, they felt totally inadequate and incapable of parenting; where their sense of being a parent was already fragile, this experience exacerbated it, made them feel unable to parent, without authority. Several expressed how much lighter they felt having attended the discussion because it allowed them to express and unburden themselves for the first time.

5.1.3 Men

In **Arviat**, four men participated in the discussion group. Participants were between 25 and 55 years old. The men recalled being taught Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit values and beliefs through the traditional childrearing and socialization program. They were familiar with the concept of resiliency, and spoke at length about the process families would go through to invest strategically in individuals as part of their overall family survival strategy. Understanding their place and identity within the new social order since colonization was a big concern for male participants. Although all were employed, they expressed deep concerns over the lack of an overarching economic plan for Arviat, and the absence of a business development association. The men identified a number of ways in which modern Inuit life has been turned on its head, and pointed to the changes in parenting practices, and in the social structure of families and of the community, as the source for much of the current disarray and confusion. Each participant shared personal stories of grief and trauma, and the difficulty with managing their emotions as a result. The group discussed the need for a men's group which would give them an opportunity to find support, and support others, in using healthy coping behaviours.

In **Igloodik**, four men participated, ranging in age from 50 to 60. The discussion about resiliency focused on the challenges that the participants have experienced as a result of colonization, in particular the effects of residential school (Chesterfield Inlet and Churchill) in breaking the childrearing and socialization mechanisms that would have transmitted resiliency to them. As well, the men discussed the tuberculosis epidemic, and several had been sent away for treatment as children, where they experienced abuses. They discussed the loss of their culture and self-esteem as a result of these experiences; like the women in Igloodik, the men had felt isolated and unable to find help. They have felt lost between the two cultures – the Qallunaat and the Inuit – and as a result have suffered alone.

5.1.4 Youth

Youth participants were not familiar with the Inuit concept of resiliency as articulated by the Elders and adults, or of the way in which the traditional parenting program and socialization process was designed to prepare people for life as an Inuk. Instead, the conversation with youth in both communities was entirely focused on their current challenges which centre on finding employment; finding housing; managing their finances, including Social Assistance, to the end of the month; and supporting other family members who may be not as capable, or as well, as they are (including extended and immediate family members).

In **Arviat**, four youth participated, two female and two male. Youth ranged in age from 15 to 20 years old. The group discussed the challenges that many youth face, including hopelessness, addictions, interpersonal violence, and incarceration. They pointed to a lack of economic opportunities in the community, a lack of services and supports for those with addictions and mental health challenges, and a lack of strong leadership from the generation above, many of whom are characterized as ‘absentee parents’. The kinds of solutions they identified suggested a desire to connect with their Inuit traditions: these centred on working with Elders on land-based programs, either in the school system or outside of the school system.

In **Igloodik**, six youth participated, 3 female and 3 male, all in their early twenties. As a group, participants were highly sophisticated in their analysis of their history, present, and future. Igloodik youth identified the importance of strong kinship relations, of working together for the common good, and of clear leadership and lines of authority in ensuring that individuals and the community were healthy prior to colonization. They described the central role of Elders in managing interpersonal relations and conflict pre-colonization, contrasting their status historically with the current situation where Elders are largely ignored. As a group, they discussed the need for a sustainable Inuit economic plan, and rejected Social Assistance as a sustainable economic foundation. Youth also commented that the government holds too much control over individuals' lives. The need to blend traditional Inuit values with the ability to live in the modern world was discussed at length: Igloodik youth clearly identify as Inuit, and culturally different from others, but also see themselves as distinct from traditional Inuit. *Perseverance* was at the core of their discussion of resilience: they pointed out that there was too little *perseverance* at the community level, and that too often, people give up, or don't take responsibility in contributing to community well-being.

5.1.5 Final

In both communities, the Elders tended to contribute the most to the Final discussion groups, with other adults participating where they felt comfortable. Youth participated as listeners. This is not surprising, given the respect that Elders continue to be paid (at least in such formal settings). In both communities, the Elders and the youth were grateful for the opportunity to participate: the Elders, to share their

knowledge, and for the youth to listen to the Elders' and adults' stories.

In **Arviat**, six women and six men participated in the Final discussion: five Elders, four adults, and three youth. All who attended had also attended one of the preliminary discussion groups. As is the case when Elders are present, youth listened attentively but did not participate actively in the discussion. As with the first conversation with Elders, many ideas were communicated through stories and metaphorically. Participants focused on the purpose and content of the traditional childrearing program, and the kinds of individual and community challenges that exist because of the break in this fundamental socialization process. The need to re-establish parenting in the Inuit tradition, and transmit Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit values and beliefs to the younger generations, was seen as key to breaking the cycle of trauma and grief that Inuit communities are currently experiencing.

In **Igloodik**, eleven people participated in the Final focus group: 5 Elders, 4 adults, 2 youth. All had attended one of the other focus groups on the previous days. Due to differences in dialect between the principal facilitator and the participants, some time was spent identifying shared terminology to describe the status of Elders pre-colonization. Inuktitut words for 'intimidation', 'fear', 'respect', 'caring', 'honoring', 'caring for others' feelings' and 'feeling proud' were all discussed as the group worked to articulate the gap that has arisen between the Elders and youth in their community. Participants agreed that the main cause of the gap in the generations was the introduction of residential schools: many in Igloodik were sent to Chesterfield Inlet or Churchill Manitoba for schooling, and this caused a break in their family relationships, which is at the root of the many other challenges they face in the community.

5.2 Key Elements of Resilience from the Inuit Perspective

The concept of resiliency as it is understood and used by Inuit contains elements that refer both to a process, as well as to a state of being. In its most inclusive definition, resiliency is "the making of a complete human being" or of a "complete Inuk". The Inuktitut word for this process is *inunnguiniq*, a process that in the South we might refer to as child-rearing and socialization, which begins before the child is born, and continues throughout the person's life. This section presents the key terms and concepts that emerged from the focus groups.

5.2.1 Words used to talk about resiliency translated from Inuktitut

In keeping with the complexity of the Inuit worldview, there are many sub-ideas contained within the overarching concept of *inunnguiniq*. As a holistic concept, the Inuktitut term encompasses the entire process of a lifetime, as well as particular sub-skills or outcomes which are acquired along the way. Some of the Inuktitut terms used in the discussions are listed below.¹⁶

Aaquiqtuqsariniq is preparing children and youth with proverbs and instructions to follow under certain situations, but mostly to ensure they will always continue to keep their relationships intact, because no matter what you disagree with, you must ensure you don't break up your relationships or family ties.

Saliariyaq is a term that means to realign when someone needs to be straightened out, which may be due to misunderstanding or lack of awareness. This is an important part of becoming a human being – of *inunnguiniq*.

¹⁶ All of the words ending in 'niq' imply a process – so all of the IQ principles, and many of the words related to resiliency, are inherently process-based.

Naglinirq means having a belief, a will and compassion – again a key element of *inunnguiniq*.

Piniratuniq is another term to describe a person who is resilient or who perseveres, but can also be used to express a person who has good self-esteem.

Qulalijuinniq refers to one who does not lose hope, never gives up.

Qinuittok is also a word used to describe someone who does not give up easily.

In the process of translating the Inuktitut conversations into English, some 19 words were used to express various elements of either the *process* of becoming a human being, or the specific *skills* that were developed through the process. It is important to remember that for Inuit, a human being would develop all of these skills, and would work to keep these in balance throughout their lifetime. The process of developing skills and working to achieve balance is seen as a dynamic process, not a static one: every person could go through periods during which they may be out of balance, but this did not necessarily mean they were no longer a human being. It was the role of the community, and in particular Elders and other adults, to act as a buffer against personal challenges and assist in regaining balance when it was lost (such as in Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b). Some of these words were used to describe the process of developing skills, and in other cases to refer to the skill or characteristic itself. These are presented in order of frequency of mention.¹⁷

Table 4: Words used to describe ‘resiliency’, translated from Inuktitut

Words connected to process	Words connected to specific skills or characteristics
Struggle for survival To enable Investment A gift	Preparation Conditioning Perseverance Self esteem, confidence Reaction to hardship Coping Pressure Planning Patience Learning Problem solving False resiliency Emotional management Endurance Will Prevention

¹⁷ The majority of the conceptual discussion around resiliency and its component parts took place during the Elders’ discussion group, which is why the majority of the quotations around concepts and terminology come from that group. This is because Elders have the greatest knowledge and understanding of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit.

5.3 Variations in Inuit Concept of Resilience as *Inunnguiniq* by Age, Gender and Community

Each participant's approach to the topic of resilience was closely linked to their age, with some further variation by gender. There were also some inter-community variations, though these were mainly at the level of specific words or stories that participants shared to illustrate their points.

In **terms of age variations**, the following observations are important in understanding the differences in understanding of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, as well as in understanding the challenges and solutions to building resiliency that participants identified.

- For the Elders, a conversation about Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is at its heart a conversation about their personal experiences living the traditional Inuit way of life prior to, or immediately following, contact with Qallunaat – life before heavy influences of colonization (e.g. residential schools, forced relocations/resettlements; restrictions on access to hunting/traditional economy, spread of the various Churches, and so on). Elders' discussion of resiliency flows out of a traditional Inuit worldview which contrasts significantly from the Qallunaat paradigm, and includes key elements which resonate with the strengths-based perspective put forward by Anderson (2008a) and others (Lalonde, 2005; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2004, 2006). In particular, there are clear similarities between the Inuit view of resilience as *inunnguiniq* – the process of becoming a whole Inuk – and what HeavyRunner and Marshall (1997) describe as the process of nurturing, protecting and guiding children. What distinguishes the Inuit-based concept is the degree to which the traditional process of fostering resiliency was
 - delivered as a formal program which began before the child was born, and extended over the life time;
 - overseen by camp Elders;
 - deliberate, targeted, focused, and purposeful;
 - integrated all aspects of being an Inuk, across all three spheres (life matters, environment, and technology), and across space and time; and
 - was embedded within, and served to reinforce, the kinship / camp social structure.
- By contrast, a conversation with youth about Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is about the documented, organized set of generalized moral principles produced by the Government of Nunavut which exist *outside of their personal experiences*. This is not to say that the youth have been raised without traditional values, or have no Inuit identity: however, for the majority of youth, what they have been taught, how they have been taught, and who has done the teaching has produced in them a different worldview than exists among the Elders and the adults. As a result, their understanding of resiliency is very different from the one articulated by the Elders, though equally rooted in their lived experience which for many has included experiences of personal trauma, addictions, and poverty. Indeed, the discussions with youth illustrate the core notion of resiliency as an adaptation or response to hardship that is prevalent in much of the published literature discussed in Section 4 (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b; Luthar, 2006; Luthar et al., 2000).
- In between the Elders and the youth, adults (non-Elders) who participated in the discussion groups could be described as having a 'modernized' Inuit worldview. Although many participants lament the loss of certain aspects of their language, cultural skills and knowledge, most live the core traditional values and beliefs articulated within the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit framework, and many have had the good fortune to have had a strong Elder in their lives at some point who shared their knowledge and skills. The extent to which the adults who

participated in the discussions were raised in the traditional manner – that is, as the target of a holistic child rearing and socialization program, delivered by a tightly-knit web of kinship relations, with the aim of preparing them for life – varied person to person. Many of the adult participants are themselves children of residential school survivors, and have experienced a range of personal and family challenges resulting from the break in kinship and community relations, authority and leadership structures. Nevertheless, these adults relate to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit as a way of being in the world which is very similar to the Elders, while at the same time having internalized some Qallunaat ways of thinking and being as a result of being educated in Qallunaat-designed schools. Not surprisingly then, their approach to the topic of resiliency is similar to the Elders', though only a few adults could articulate the process of *inunnguiniq* as completely or as holistically as the Elders. At the same time, the adult discussion of resiliency incorporates many of the same elements found in the youth conversation, namely personal stories of coping and perseverance with significant personal trauma and hardship.

By **community**, we can make the following observations:

- Compared to participants in Igloolik, participants in Arviat took longer to come to agreement regarding the kinds of words to describe the concept of resiliency, as well as to describe the sub-concepts under the main idea of 'becoming a complete Inuk'. This is likely due to the different histories of the two communities: Arviat is an amalgamation of four different 'camps' or groups who were brought together in Arviat, each of which has its own particular histories and stories. By contrast, Igloolik is a more homogenous community, made up of different camps that had a history of interacting at various points in the hunting and trading season, and were as a result more culturally and linguistically similar (Qikiqtani Truth Commission, 2009).
- While Elders in both communities understood resiliency to mean the development of a complete Inuk – *inunnguiniq* – Igloolik participants focused on systems that support resiliency at the individual and community levels more in-depth than was possible in Arviat. For example, the conversations in Igloolik explored the importance of structures of leadership and authority, both pre- and post-colonization, and identified key elements of the current situation that undermine both individual and community level resiliency. This in-depth focus on structures is again likely related to the different histories of the two communities, with Igloolik participants having a greater shared history than participants in Arviat.

Based on the community discussions, it is difficult to identify **gender differences** in participants' understanding of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit beyond those that related to age. Similarly, while female and male participants share a common understanding of the concept of resiliency by age group, they identify **different challenges** to their personal and community resiliency, and propose **different solutions** to growing resilience. While all Inuit are impacted by the fall-out of colonization, men have experienced a greater rupture due to the loss of their traditional activities, including hunting, while women have been able to maintain their traditional domestic and childrearing activities – albeit in a different context (Morgan, 2008; Williamson et al., 2004). There is therefore a need to engage men, women and youth in different kinds of activities to support the development of their resilience.

5.4 Growing Resiliency from an Inuit Perspective

Overall, the community conversations about building resiliency resonate with the 11 individual and community resiliency constructs identified by Hegney et al. (2008, pp. 91-92), with different demographic groups emphasizing slightly different elements. For example, in developing resilience, Elders emphasized early experience and learning (that is, through the Inuit community-based childrearing and socialization program), beliefs, leadership, having a positive outlook, kinship relations and support, and having a sense of purpose.

It is important to note that learning as discussed by Elders, and some adults, is not the same kind of learning identified by youth. Youth identify formal learning opportunities – high school, post-secondary, trades training, and so on – while Elders and adults value community-based learning in the traditional Inuit way more highly. As people who experienced residential schools, and the forced break from traditional Inuit learning to Qallunaat learning, Elders and adults generally do not have good memories of formal education. As documented elsewhere, it is not unusual for Aboriginal people of these generations to have either very negative, or at best highly ambiguous, attitudes and feelings about formal education – attitudes and feelings which get transmitted to their children and grandchildren (Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Pauktuutit Inuit Women’s Association, 2006). In developing opportunities for learning and training then, approaches which incorporate both Inuit and Qallunaat ways of learning, teaching and knowing need to be brought to bear together within an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit framework if they are to be meaningful and effective.

In addition to these elements identified by Elders, adults also pointed to the importance of economic opportunities, services, infrastructure and support. For their part, youth placed a high priority on a diverse and innovative economy, services, infrastructure and support, learning – all done in a way which respects the Inuit relationship to the environment. However, they also pointed to the need to reconnect with Inuit beliefs; to develop a sense of purpose as Inuit; to reclaim Inuit leadership and authority; embrace cultural differences between Inuit and Qallunaat; and develop healthy interpersonal and community relations.

Underpinning the discussions with all groups was the expressed need for opportunities to heal from personal traumas associated with addictions, violence, sexual abuse, neglect and abandonment – in essence, as a necessary condition if individual or community resiliency is to be achievable. This is explored in the following section.

5.4.1 Understanding complex historical trauma and challenges to Inuit resiliency

According to Haskell & Randall, historic trauma is "a collective complex trauma inflicted on a group of people who share specific group identity or affiliation – ethnicity, nationality and religious affiliation. It is the legacy of numerous traumatic events a community experiences over generations and encompasses the psychological and social responses to such events" (Evans-Campbell, 2008, p. 320, quoted in Haskell & Randall, 2009, p. 67). Brave Heart (1999) has coined the term ‘historical trauma response’ to describe the negative social outcomes of addictions and interpersonal violence resulting from traumatic experiences, which have been well-summarized by Haskell & Randall (2009, p. 69):

Losses to the community have resulted from generations of traumatic events that have caused the breakdown of family kinship networks and social structures... at the familial level, effects of historical trauma can include reduced familial communication and stress

around parenting. These effects have also been associated in the literature with increased familial violence and sexual abuse.... Community responses to historical trauma have also been identified as including the breakdown of traditional culture and values, alcoholism, high rates of suicide, disease and homicide, poverty, internalized racism, and a range of mental health problems (Evans-Campbell, 2008; Palacios & Portillo, 2009).

A social context historic trauma framework is a way of understanding some of the key determinants of health which challenge Inuit resiliency at the individual and community levels, in particular the mechanisms at work in creating and perpetuating the cycle of trauma and its repercussions over time. It is also useful in understanding the impact of living in traumatized communities which are experiencing ongoing complex trauma responses, ongoing colonization, as well as historical trauma (Haskell & Randall, 2009; National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2007; Richmond & Ross, 2009). As noted by Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski (2004, p. 76), "traumatic memories are passed to next generations through different channels, including biological (in hereditary predispositions to PTSD), cultural (through story-telling, culturally sanctioned behaviours), social (through inadequate parenting, lateral violence, acting out of abuse), and psychological (through memory processes) channels".

In the Inuit context, the grief and trauma experienced by the Elders and now adults who experienced and experience colonization is transmitted from one generation to the next in a number of ways. In part, this trauma gets passed on as a result of the break in traditional child-rearing practices: children who were traumatized or not parented grow up to become parents who themselves do not know how to parent effectively. Because we are talking about the breaking of a complex system, once the *inunnguiniq* program has been disrupted, it sets up a negative cycle that is then perpetuated, and within which individuals experience additional personal trauma. This in turn prevents them from forming healthy attachments, which leads them to turn to other coping mechanisms such as drugs and alcohol, gambling and so on – behaviours which exacerbate poor parenting, or which result in 'absentee parenting'. Even if parents are not abusive *per se*, they may be traumatizing their children through neglect – not because they don't love their children or wish to cause them harm, but because they are *biologically* and *socially* unable to form a healthy attachment with them (Haskell & Randall, 2009).

This kind of historical trauma affects Inuit communities at every level – individual, family, community – and especially in small communities dominated by tightly-knit kinship structures, the trauma that is experienced infiltrates all of the social relationships (Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). In essence, the complex web of inter- and intra-family connections that would have served to protect, shelter, and ensure the survival of the camp are also severed through the acts of colonization, and once broken, the fragmentation continues (Abadian, 2006). With Aboriginal communities, the historical trauma is both complex and ongoing: colonization is happening right now through Qallunaat-run schools, government departments, and other correctional, health and social service systems – so that people face daily reminders of what they have lost (Haskell & Randall, 2009; Seale, Shellenberger, & Spence, 2006; Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004).

The social structural approach to understanding trauma and healing among Inuit takes as its core premise that "traumatic impacts are rooted not only in the specific experiences of any individual's unique life story and experiences, but also that traumatic impacts are structured by the historical legacy and contemporary realities of social inequalities" (Haskell & Randall, 2009, p. 49).

6 Summary and Conclusions: Suggested Areas of Focus in Supporting Inuit Resiliency

Taking a social structural historical trauma approach, the focus of efforts to grow resilience must begin with supporting the formation of healthy primary relationships: it is in these primary attachments that children learn how to form and maintain healthy emotional relationships with the people around them, and even with themselves. "It is essential to understand that the primary purpose of attachment is 'the provision of emotional security and protection against stress'.... *disrupted attachment is a core feature of complex trauma responses.*" (Haskell & Randall, 2009, pp. 62-63).

Other studies have also pointed to the need to focus on rebuilding an individual's sense of self within the context of their traditional kinship structure (Tagalik & Joyce, 2005; Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004). Similar to issues raised in the Arviat and Igloodik focus groups, healing efforts within First Nations communities have focused on restoring individual and interpersonal balance through exercise and emotional expression, reinvigorating traditional kinship practices to emphasize interconnectedness, and invoking spiritual practices which reconnect the living with a greater creative power. All of these approaches focused on supporting the formation of identity within the context of the community, and incorporated a holistic concept of well-being that included the emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 9).

Supporting the development of Inuit identity among individuals must include the delivery and transmission of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit – ideally through kinship relations, but in the absence of strong family leaders and Elders, through formal mechanisms which have in a sense taken on the task of child socialization such as day cares and schools (Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, 2010). But, according to Berger, there must be thoughtful and careful consideration, guided by Inuit, of the way in which the existing Qallunaat-based formal school system can be modified – without significant changes to that system, it will continue to exert a colonizing force, regardless of whether Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit is incorporated into the core curriculum (P. Berger, 2007, 2009; P. Berger & Epp, 2005).

Several initiatives which can be said to be 'growing resilience' in Inuit communities are currently underway. These are discussed in turn below.

6.1 Opportunities for Healing

The need for forgiveness and healing was discussed at length in Igloodik, as illustrated by this exchange between the lead facilitator and an Igloodik Elder:

Facilitator: *When I look at our life as Inuit this way, I think we have to find a way to forgive white people, but I don't understand this well enough to know how to process forgiveness. I have a lot of anger built up and that is something that affects me continuously and I am not the only one, there are many Inuit with the same issue that I expressed. What's happened is past, we have been through it all and continue to go through it, so we have to start finding ways for our own sake, a way to learn how to deal with our situation.*

Participant: *I also think those whose children were taken away to residential school, also have to find a way also to recover or find a way to forgiving white people ... When you hear mothers say they did not bring up their children properly, they feel guilty, but their children were taken away, so how could they bring them up properly?*

There is an understanding among the younger generation that the trauma experienced by their grandparents and parents has been transmitted to them, but as in the words of one youth in Igloolik, there is also some ambivalence about how to handle this intergenerational trauma. On the one hand, this participant describes the youth as being 'overlooked' by the government apology; on the other hand there is the suggestion that if the adults and Elders could just 'get over it', maybe the trauma and its effects would go away:

All the Inuit people have not been included in the residential school apology, the children whose parents went to residential school are impacted, all the parents whose children were taken away were impacted, and they are not included in the apology, because money is being used to compensate for the damage done to Inuit society. But the damage is not only affecting the residential school people. They know more about culture than us, we are after that time, and we can only imagine what our culture is, we can't apply it, use it the way culture needs to be in us. I think we are being overlooked, we are also being impacted, by our parents having to go to residential school, but they seem to want special attention or get an apology for the treatment they received during their school days. But why can't they just get over it, I mean if they could just forgive those who did this, the problem would be over already, I think... (Igloolik Youth Focus Group Participant)

The need for healing has been well articulated by many (Brave Heart, 1999; Castellano, 2006; Chandler & Lalonde, 1998; Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Korhonen, 2006; Kral, 2003; Kral & Idlout, 2008; New Economy Development Group, 2006; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2004; Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004; Yellow Horse & Brave Heart, 2005). Abadian (2006) talks about the need to create post-traumatic narratives as part of cultural renewal that help to integrate the past and enable people to process their grief and trauma, but which do not entrench the negative in toxic ways. She says

As we revive our collective mechanisms for healing — our various rituals, ceremonies, dances, and songs — we have to be deeply aware of the stories they tell so that we don't perpetuate a post-traumatic culture into future generations.... In their place, we must revive those narratives and practices that help us release our pain and give us perspective; that instil hope, optimism, and a sense that life can be good and abundant; that embrace the notions that people can be tested, then trusted, and that we are whole, regardless of life's trials. (Abadian, 2006, p. 26)

What's underway:

Community meetings. Opportunities for community members to come together, share and learn from one another are important elements of an individual and community healing strategy. Through the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) and organizations like the Ilisaqsvik Society in Clyde River, there are several initiatives that are underway to address the issue of the need for individual and community healing. As one example, Joe and Rhoda Karetak facilitated a community meeting in Arviat to discuss the roots of the health and social issues facing the community, including forced relocation and residential school abuse, in April 2009. A similar meeting was held in Coral Harbour, also in 2009. Both of these community meetings were initiated as part of a larger Nunavut Community Wellness Planning (NCWP) pilot project in each community.

According to numerous participants, the opportunity to reflect on individual, cultural and community

strengths in this study's discussion groups had a healing effect: none of the participants had ever been given the opportunity to reflect on the idea of individual and community resiliency, the effects of colonization, and the impact of Inuit history on modern Inuit society. Following the initial discussion groups in Arviat, the Elders' group there initiated an additional series of Elders' meetings in response to interest generated as part of this research.

The Historical Trauma & Unresolved Grief Intervention (HTUG) is an example of a culturally-specific intervention designed for Lakota, and which is being adapted for use with other First Nations (Yellow Horse & Brave Heart, 2005). It is an evidence-based "psycho-educational group intervention" which targets parents, with the goal of reducing mental health risk factors for adults, and increasing protective factors for children. It has several components, including education about the Lakota traumatic history, reconnecting with Lakota cultural values, and opportunities for community connection and connecting. There may be some value in examining the HTUG for applicability to the Inuit context.

Storytelling. A special project initiated out of the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre is working with local Inuit parents to develop and design culturally relevant books for their children. In the sense described by Abadian (2006), this initiative is empowering Inuit to tell their own stories in their own words, focusing on strengths rather than deficits.

6.2 Focus on Repairing Primary Delivery Mechanisms Implicated in Inunnguiniq, and Reintegrating these with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

As noted elsewhere in the paper, many are calling for the integration of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into all Inuit systems (Kawagley, 1999). The primary mechanisms involved in delivering the parenting program in modern Inuit society indicate the need for a 'made in Nunavut' parenting program; school curriculum materials; and even an Inuit-based system of learning that incorporates the Inuit way of knowing, teaching and learning into its design.

What's underway:

Curriculum development to support "made in Nunavut" parenting program model: The Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, directed by Gwen Healey, recently completed a literature review of parenting support programs in Nunavut (Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, 2010). The review examined the origins of existing Nunavut parenting programs, examined practices in other Northern jurisdictions, and evaluated the use of the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)* and *Nobody's Perfect* parenting program in the Nunavut context. In the absence of a Nunavut-based model, the review finds that the adapted *ASQ* and *Nobody's Perfect* are currently the best evidence-based alternatives. At the same time, the review identifies a number of gaps in existing programs, and identifies the following key components for the development of a Nunavut-based model (Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, 2010, p. 28):

- Be informed by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and teachings from Elders;
- Target whole families (and explicitly reach out to fathers);
- Use a strengths-based, holistic health model;
- Provide a range of activities, including land based sessions;
- Focus on experiential learning using role plays and providing practice time;
- Be supported by space in each community allocated for families; and
- Include components for:
 - personal growth and healing that address the impacts of colonization and other

- trauma/challenges faced during life;
- positive discipline; and
- communication skills.

As a follow-up to the review, the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre recently received funding to pursue the report's recommendations, and is now working with experts in Arviat to develop this Nunavut-based curriculum, building on materials developed as part of their "Inunnguiniq: Advice from Inuit Elders" series.

Curriculum development, Day Care, Head Start and Kindergarten for Inuit children in Ontario: The Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre has been in operation since 2005, delivering a range of programs including Aboriginal Head Start, Language, Family Literacy, Child Care, and Youth programming (among others). In January 2011, the Centre opened the first Inuit Junior/Senior kindergarten in Ontario. Delivered in partnership with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, one of the Centre's main goals is to give Inuit living in Ottawa the opportunity to know their culture and have pride in who they are. Cultural programming is developed and delivered by an Inuit educator, in cooperation with the classroom head teacher. Materials, learning and teaching methods, and the classroom space are all being developed within the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit framework. Key informants at the Centre report that many Inuit families struggle when they first come to Ottawa – with homesickness, addictions, interpersonal and domestic problems – and so the Centre functions as an extended family system: "***We know [that a healthy support network is] what makes the difference to help people have success and be well***". The Centre is staffed by Inuit from all over Inuit Nunangat (Inuit regions). On the one hand this diversity has the potential to enhance the cultural programming offered through the Centre; on the other, it creates challenges when it comes to teaching the language due to the many different dialects represented among staff. One of the most pressing needs identified by key informants was for Inuit-based materials and resources that could complement those developed in-house.

6.3 Community Leadership, Ownership and Control

Research has also shown that decisions-making authority, leadership and autonomy are also important in building not only individual, but also community resiliency (Kral, 2003; Kral & Idlout, 2008).

What's underway:

There are several high level initiatives underway in Nunavut to address the effects of the last 60 years of colonization, including a Suicide Prevention Strategy and a Mental Health and Addictions Strategy (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), 2010). However there is a dearth of systematized efforts at a community level to address the issues. In that regard, the Nunavut Community Wellness Planning Project (NCWP) 2009-2011 stands out. NCWP is a partnership between NTI, the Government of Nunavut's Department of Health and Social Services (GN), and Health Canada's Northern Region (HC). The NCWP is funded by HC and administered by NTI. The six communities selected for the project were Clyde River, Igloolik, Kugaaruk, Kugluktuk, Arviat and Coral Harbour.

As a pilot project, the NCWP was meant to test various methods and approaches to addressing individual and community health status based on the assumption that the status quo for Nunavummiut is no longer adequate or acceptable. The project tested the premise that getting community people involved in an Inuit/community-directed project, coupled with a deliberative process, could result in community ownership and control of its wellness needs and priorities – with the long term goal of

improved health status.

Over the course of two years, with support from an outside consulting team and under the direction of a Steering Committee comprised of the partners, the communities undertook several activities. The activities were guided by a Community Working Group comprised of community leaders, and included developing a vision for the community, mapping assets and extensive consultations with regard to health and social issues and priorities for action. Each of the communities developed a Community Wellness Plan that was presented to the Steering Committee in October 2010. Since then, with support from the GN, the communities have received initial funding to address their various priority issues. The NCWP final evaluation concluded that “overall there is agreement that the project has been a successful pilot from which much has been learned. The NCWP has been embraced by those communities who had the opportunity to participate and the learning can and has been of value to many of the stakeholders within and external to the participating communities” (Aarluk Consulting, 2011, p. ii). In addition, the tools and approaches are being seen as useful to the rollout of the Nunavut Public Health Strategy.

6.4 Policy and Program Implications

There are several policy and program implications at territorial and federal government levels that emerge from the findings on resiliency found in this paper. As described earlier, for Aboriginal communities, historical trauma is both complex and ongoing: colonization continues to happen through the imposition of worldviews that are southern in orientation in the running of schools, government departments, and other correctional, health and social service systems.

6.4.1 Federal Government

At the federal level, it is only in the last 10 years that government departments have begun to develop a particular focus on Aboriginal **and** Inuit programming, as opposed to the all encompassing “Aboriginal” Programs (Bonesteel, 2006). Nunavut is a territory that is still reliant largely on federal funding support. As such, the major departments that fund health and social services programming are the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) at Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Justice Canada. These departments fund programs such as Aboriginal Head Start, the Canadian Action Program for Children (CAPC), the Canadian Prenatal and Nutrition Program (CPNP), the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS), as well as Public Legal and Education Programs and Justice Committees. For the most part, although they can be adapted to fit local circumstances, these programs have been developed and designed for First Nations communities. As a result, these programs are not used to their fullest extent in Nunavut, given they were not designed in ways that fit with the Inuit worldview (New Economy Development Group, 2006).

The findings on resiliency make it clear that the holistic worldview, coupled with a deliberative program of child rearing, were what enabled the Inuit to live and thrive in a harsh environment. The Inuit way of being is unique in Canada and as such needs policies and programs that respond to their worldview in order for them to come to terms with the past, adapt to the present and adapt to what the future brings.

Government departments could consider the following when designing or renewing new policies and programs for Inuit communities:

- Inuit “lens”, developed within an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit framework¹⁸: This lens would require all federal government departments to consider the impact upon the well-being, aspirations and capacities of Inuit when designing or renewing programs and services; and would ensure that the concerns of Inuit are accounted for in all government decision-making processes.
- Grief and loss issues: Development of understanding of impacts of colonization, to be applied to all existing programs of funding support in order to identify the aspects of colonization that prevent full uptake and use of the program, and develop Inuit-appropriate alternatives.
- Inuit Curriculum: Funding support for the development of Inuit specific curriculum in all programs that contain a training aspect.
- Training Support: Funding for existing/redesigned programs would include monies for training in cultural competency based on a Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit-based curriculum.
- Youth Programming: Funding support to address the intergenerational disconnects.
- Mothers and Children Programming: Funding support to address issues based on community priorities, including the use of a method to assess and ensure that communities’ needs have been canvassed in keeping with Inuit values and principles.

6.4.2 Government of Nunavut

As outlined in the previous section, there are some promising new approaches emerging in Nunavut in several areas including community health planning, curriculum development for early childhood education, and youth programming. The Government of Nunavut could take advantage of opportunities to build upon these best practices in the design and delivery of health, employment, education, justice and social service programming. In so doing Nunavut could develop a truly “Made in Nunavut” approach to the delivery of programs and services for the well-being of the people in the Territory.

6.5 Outstanding Questions and Suggestions for Further Research

This research has focused on defining the concept of resiliency within an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit framework, using an approach which has tried to decolonize the research process. As so often happens in such projects, the project has raised many additional questions.

- 1) Given that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is inherently an adaptive process, how far can it be shifted before it is not longer Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit?
- 2) What are the ‘essential skills’ that someone would need to be taught by their Elders and parents, in order to become a complete Inuk in today’s society?
 - a. Can we make a comparison between survival skills in the traditional sense, and those in the modern sense? Is there any comparison that makes sense between the traditional and the modern?
 - b. Are there things that Inuit need to know now that are completely new relative to what they would have been taught traditionally?
- 3) Can we articulate a community level concept of resiliency which parallels the individual concept of ‘becoming a human being’, or is that already understood within the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit framework/Inuit worldview?
- 4) How can a research program be developed with Inuit communities in a way that fosters their own understandings and capacity to define their own problems, and seek their own solutions?

¹⁸ A similar lens has been put into place, with much success, by Status of Women Canada with respect to gender issues.

- 5) Is it possible to develop culturally appropriate curriculum materials and supports that are rooted in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and that also support Inuit to develop the skills, abilities and knowledge needed to live and work in modern Inuit society? What process should be followed? Who should be involved?
- 6) How can Qallunaat systems be shifted/adapted/removed in order to allow Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to flourish in Inuit contexts?
- 7) What role can Qallunaat play in supporting Inuit resilience?

6.6 Final Comment

Using participatory methods aimed at ‘decolonizing the research process’, this project identified and interpreted Inuit concepts of resiliency in relation to the broader resiliency literature. Within the Inuit worldview, resiliency is the process of transmitting Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit through *inunnguiniq* (creating whole human beings). While ‘resilience’ as the notion of ‘adaptation in the face of hardship’ is encapsulated within the Inuit idea of resiliency, it is but one element among many others which come together to form the concept of *inunnguiniq*. Further, while the Inuit worldview contrasts significantly from the Qallunaat paradigm, there are clear resonances with First Nations’ descriptions of the process of nurturing, protecting and guiding children.

To understand current health and well-being outcomes in Nunavut, the study pointed to determinants of health concepts and historical trauma theory, and argued for the requirement to take a social structural approach to understand the causes of the break in the childrearing program, and to identify appropriate solutions. Study participants focused on the effects of colonization, in particular the introduction of the non-Inuit school system, in breaking the traditional mechanism of *inunnguiniq* that was delivered through the highly sophisticated Inuit childrearing program. Despite sharing difficult personal stories of trauma and hardship, participants were very focused on the future, and identified key areas of focus to help grow individual and community level resilience, including providing opportunities for individual and community level healing; developing parenting supports and educational resources grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit; and supporting efforts to reclaim Inuit leadership, authority and control over community and territorial systems.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the findings from this study demonstrated the importance of embedding the research process in the cultural framework of the population of focus. This focus was echoed by key informants, who advocated working from an Inuit perspective – including the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles and values – and for Inuit to be creators of Inuit knowledge, not simply the ‘subjects’ of government and other studies. At the same time, key informants also saw the need to create new Inuit ways of being, doing and knowing as a result of greater cultural and economic integration between Nunavut and the South – including incorporating Qallunaat ways where they make sense. Furthermore, the spirit of hopefulness and anticipation of the future expressed by discussion group participants and key informants alike was in itself a positive indicator of resiliency as perseverance – a perseverance which persists despite the many challenges that Inuit continue to face.

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Appendix 1: Detailed Findings from Community Conversations

This section presents detailed information collected as part of the community-based research, including key informant interviews where they apply. Findings are presented against the following key research questions:

1. What are the Inuktitut words that are used when referring to resiliency?
2. What are the main concepts and sub-concepts within Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit related to resiliency?
3. What mechanisms were used in Inuit society **traditionally** to transmit these ideas of resiliency?
4. What is different for Inuit now, compared to traditional times, in terms of building resiliency?
5. What challenges do Inuit identify – things that are difficult for them personally, or for their communities? How are people and communities responding to these challenges? That is, how are they adapting? Do men and women see the challenges, and the necessary adaptations, differently?
6. What are communities doing, or what should they be doing – programs, services, activities – to promote or grow resilience at the individual or community level in modern times? Are these activities focusing on particular factors over others? Are these initiatives gender-specific? Should they be?

1. What Are the Main Concepts and Sub-Concepts Within Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Related to Resiliency?

The concept of resiliency as it is understood and used by Inuit contains elements that refer both to a process, as well as to a state of being. In its most inclusive definition, resiliency is “the making of a complete human being” or of a “complete Inuk”. The Inuktitut word for this process is *inunnguiniq*, a process that in the South we might refer to as child-rearing and socialization, which begins before the child is born, and continues throughout the person’s life. This section presents the key terms and concepts that emerged from the focus groups.

Words and metaphors used to talk about resiliency translated from Inuktitut

In keeping with the complexity of the Inuit worldview, there are many sub-ideas contained within the overarching concept of *inunnguiniq*. As a holistic concept, the Inuktitut term encompasses the entire process of a lifetime, as well as particular sub-skills or outcomes that are acquired along the way. Some of the Inuktitut terms used in the discussions are listed below.¹⁹

Aaquiqtuqsariniq is preparing children and youth with proverbs and instructions to follow under certain situations, but mostly to ensure they will always continue to keep their relationships intact, because no matter what you disagree with, you must ensure you don’t break up your relationships or family ties.

¹⁹ All of the words ending in ‘niq’ imply a process – so all of the IQ principles, and many of the words related to resiliency, are inherently process-based.

Saliariyaq is a term that means to realign when someone needs to be straightened out, which may be due to misunderstanding or lack of awareness. This is an important part of becoming a human being – of *inunnguiniq*.

Naglinirq means having a belief, a will and compassion – again a key element of *inunnguiniq*.

Piniratuniq is another term to describe a person who is resilient or who perseveres, but can also be used to express a person who has good self-esteem.

Qulalijuinniq refers to one who does not lose hope, never gives up.

Qinuittok is also a word used to describe someone who does not give up easily.

In the process of translating the Inuktitut conversations into English, some 19 words were used to express various elements of either the *process* of becoming a human being, or the specific *skills* that were developed through the process. It is important to remember that for Inuit, a human being would develop all of these skills, and would work to keep these in balance throughout their lifetime. The process of developing skills and working to achieve balance is seen as a dynamic process, not a static one: every person could go through periods during which they may be out of balance, but this did not necessarily mean they were no longer a human being. It was the role of the community, and in particular Elders and other adults, to act as a buffer against personal challenges and assist in regaining balance when it was lost (such as in Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b). Some of these words were used to describe the process of developing skills, and in other cases to refer to the skill or characteristic itself. These are presented in order of frequency of mention.²⁰

Table 5: Words used to describe ‘resiliency’, translated from Inuktitut

Words connected to process	Words connected to specific skills or characteristics
Struggle for survival To enable Investment A gift	Preparation Conditioning Perseverance Self esteem, confidence Reaction to hardship Coping Pressure Planning Patience Learning Problem solving False resiliency Emotional management Endurance

²⁰ The majority of the conceptual discussion around resiliency and its component parts took place during the Elders’ discussion group, which is why the majority of the quotations around concepts and terminology come from that group. This is because Elders have the greatest knowledge and understanding of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit.

Words connected to process	Words connected to specific skills or characteristics
	Will Prevention

Focus group participants clearly saw the connection between the various aspects of resiliency – in particular between preparation for life, and being able to deal effectively with whatever comes along (cope). The following two quotes are examples of the way in which Inuit are prepared from childhood to be able to succeed in their lives.

Life repeats itself over and over - the same things will happen. With that you can prepare a person to be conditioned. By hearing stories about situations others have gone through, you can recall that story to help you as you are now the one that has to go through similar situations. I personally would have to say that it is all the teachings from my parents, family members and other people who have helped me get prepared through conditioning and coaching me with life matters. I am still here; if I did not have all that support, I am pretty sure I would have given up already. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

So we can see some people have encountered most difficult situations and were able to persevere, because they were properly prepared in life matters and found ways to survive. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

These quotes also have resonance with the description of resilience under the *challenge* model described above: as a program of childrearing and socialization, the process of *inunnguiniq* would expose children to situations in which they would adapt and learn, and as a result be better prepared for situations that may arise in their lifetime (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b).

Another theme that emerges from these two quotations is the importance of the individual’s social network – of their family and others – in preparing them for life. The notion of preparation as a gift from others – of knowledge, of experience – is one that permeated the discussions in one form or another. It is also exemplified in the following quotation.

I am freely given a lot of advice and I accept this as gifts of great value. I do feel that my grandfather left me something that enables me to survive and all the support I receive from all my siblings and relatives and friends all help me cope with life's ups and downs. Life is not always easy to understand and you need something to help continue, while understanding is not there. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The importance of conditioning as a way of preparing an Inuk to be able to deal with the severe weather conditions as separate from, and preceding, the developing of other skills and knowledge, was also conveyed through the discussion of the Elders in particular. For example,

One of the hardest things to overcome was the cold. As a small child, you start going with your father and in winter, you are going to get cold, but you just learn to put up with it as a child. When you get stronger and older, your body will be able to deal with cold conditions, but that is one thing you need to be able to put up with, is the cold

conditions up here.

As a child, you are conditioned more than being taught lessons, because if you are not conditioned first to deal with the physical demand, all the teaching will be useless. So the knowledge part comes later, once you are at certain level of conditioning. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

And again, this quote also talks about being conditioned before being instructed in other skills, calling to mind the *challenge* model described above (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008b).

[Those who] grew up traditionally, would have been well conditioned and taught life skills to continue their learning, be productive, be stable, be a human-being, because they wanted to make sure all people growing up were able to cope with life matters. So this was more important and it came first, and knowledge and skills came second. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The concept of resiliency as a community investment, and the subsequent pressure that individuals felt having received that investment, was identified by men during the Male Focus Group. Men talked about feeling pressure when they were younger because adults and Elders were harder on them than their siblings, only later realizing once they were adults why this additional attention had been paid to them. The following is the translation of the conversation as recorded through the facilitator.

Facilitator: *One of the things is that not every family member is taught the same way. They tend to select someone in the family to teach. [The participant's] grandmother selected him to have resiliency and to be instructed more so than any of his brothers. So many of these same teachings were really imprinted on him. Since not everybody gets selected in the same way there is a big investment made in these certain people. This means they have a role in "carrying" the rest of the family. Although you get prepared you are also sent out to "experience" and to learn by trial and error. So there is also the expectation that you will learn by doing and experiencing as well as by being instructed.*

Participant: *Yes. Those who were instructed will have the best ability.*

Facilitator: *And those who invest also gauge your attitude. You have to show yourself to be a learning person and someone who will obey what is being said. When they see that in you, the Elders are eager to invest their skills and knowledge in you.*

There is a lot of pressure on these people but you have been prepared to handle that pressure. You are already well into the program before you even are aware of it.

Participant: *When we are named we have to carry the responsibilities of the name we carry so that has a lot to do with the selection.*

The process of investing in the person was echoed in the Women's Focus Group:

As soon as a child is born you start teaching him/her the way of life. Through observation and through being knitted very closely all members of the extended family would take on roles in training the child. (Arviat Women's Focus Group Participant)

It is through the process of investing in the person throughout their life that Inuit ensured that their members would have the self-confidence to be able to persevere in the face of hardship, adapt and solve problems as these arose. The notion of preparing the individual to manage life in all of its myriad complexities is always balanced by the role of the extended family and community in supporting and enabling that person's success, all in the interest of the survival of the group as a whole. There must be a balance between the independence of the individual and the needs of the group, with the implicit understanding that without this balance, neither can be successful.

The themes of coping, managing hardship, and persevering were dominant throughout all of the focus groups. The Elders spoke more about being conditioned to manage hardship such as starvation or severe weather, while in the other focus groups participants talked about coping with the effects of personal trauma and addictions. For example,

At times when we were going through hardship, we would be told, it will pass, even if we as children thought it would never end. Being taught to have patience helps us cope and keep a level head, while we were experiencing the hardship. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

By contrast, a participant in the women's focus group talked about healing from the trauma of her child's suicide, discovering that her child had been sexually victimized, and the importance of looking for support to begin the healing process. She notes that today people are afraid to ask for help, when in the past the Elders and other community leaders would have intervened and not allowed them to suffer alone.

I have gone through a real hardship and I have lost a child. If we had not gone through a healing process my husband and I would not have been able to cope. Our children do not depend on social assistance. We expect them all to become self-reliant. As parents we have to be strong about some things... First we started self-healing amongst ourselves. We had to talk it out and with time we understood the consequences of child molestation had really been hard on our child and we were able to share with Elders and then finally I was able to receive some personal counselling. It has helped me to understand much more clearly and I can share this with my husband. Often men are the last to seek help because they see this as a weakness, but, in the past, they would have been counselled in the normal course of activities by Elders and other men in the camp. They would not have been left to struggle. (Arviat Women Focus Group Participant)

Her story conveys again the importance of the community in ensuring that individuals are able to cope with personal hardship. When Inuit were living in camps, if one community member became depressed or unable to fulfill their duties, the whole camp became vulnerable. Elders would also intervene to ensure harmonious relations in the community, including between spouses:

If you needed counselling in the past, there were Elders whose skill set was to counsel and help people deal with their pain. [An Elder] once told me that at Duke of York Bay there was a couple that were not getting along so the Elders had to step in and talk to both of them. They found out that the truth was not being told. She was asked questions with a council of Elders sitting around. She was talked to until she came out with the truth. If the person did not want to change and lead a better life, the person would be removed from the group. In this case, she went back to her family and the

man was able to remarry. (Arviat Women Focus Group Participant)

Indeed, the role of social support in *buffering* the effects of hardship as central to the maintenance of personal – and community – balance is well-documented, particularly among Aboriginal communities where relationships form the basis for personal and community resilience (Anderson & Ledogar, 2008; Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Pearlman, 1989).

Among youth, the concept of resilience focused on coping and perseverance, particularly in the face of hardship. Many youth described situations in their communities where children are given a lot of freedom from an early age. The kind of ‘excessive freedom’ they refer to is different from individual autonomy that is highly valued within the Inuit worldview – an autonomy which is actively cultivated and which is not the result of absentee parenting (Briggs, 2000; Brody, 2001). Youth participants identified many different reasons for current ‘freedom’: poor adult-child attachment; poor parenting skills; loss of confidence among adults to parent or be in charge; absentee parenting resulting from addictions or other abusive situations; and so on. In Igloolik, youth discussed at length how children grow up too early, and are given too much independence now relative to how Inuit would have been raised traditionally. One youth in Igloolik stated that “***resiliency means to keep persevering even when you have nothing or ways to solve the problem, just keep going no matter what***”. Another Igloolik youth participant noted that ways of coping are changing: instead of getting help from other people, youth tend to use media – such as music, the internet, gaming and so on – to cope:

The way resiliency is generated has been really changed. For example, people are listening to music to help cope with life, using different ways to have resiliency. So that is changing resiliency, which in turn is changing everything. (Igloolik Youth Focus Group Participant)

Similarly, youth in Arviat also talked about resilience as a form of persevering despite hardships, and despite a lack of adult leadership in their lives. Many youth turn to alcohol and drugs as a way of coping, and realize too late that they are no longer in control of the substances they are using. This was also confirmed in a key informant interview with the Youth Worker, who summed up the situation for youth in the following way:

There is also the situation that these kids feel nobody cares. Nobody cares what they do or about them as individuals. Kids often turn to drugs in the first place because of this neglect. When you think about the symptoms of why kids are using alcohol, drugs and becoming addicted, once they are addicted they say they can't see any way to help them stop. Perhaps a land treatment program is what is needed to break this cycle with youth. A lot of these youth do not have a means to go out and never experience getting out of town. There needs to be something that can be available to encourage people to get help. The community voted to have a dry town, but instead they are just going onto the land to drink to avoid getting the fines. So prohibition without a plan to address treatment and provide positive rather than negative deterrents is what needs to be available. Also these youth need to be able to connect with Elders who have genuine concern for them as individuals. (Arviat Key Informant Interview)

Another Arviat youth remarked on the different ways that people deal with hardship. Some give up, some figure out a solution, and others get someone to fix their problem for them (which could itself also be seen as a solution, she pointed out). In reflecting upon her own behaviour, one participant couldn't

describe why she persevered, just that she did:

One of the things is that it is just internal to some people. I always had the desire to strive to do things. If I am unable to do something then I will get help, but there is something within me that makes me want to try. (Arviat Youth Focus Group Participant)

The observation that increasingly children are using the third problem-solving style, and as a result are becoming less independent, was made in several focus groups, and was of significant concern to adults and Elders in particular. This dependency creation is encapsulated in the comments of a youth in Arviat:

Often kids are expected to learn to do things themselves or if they want something, they have to find ways to get it themselves. When you assist a child too much in everything they want, it makes them unable. They will always be looking for someone else to resolve the problem. Their form of solution is to get someone to do it for them – learned helplessness. This is the same kind of reaction that the Elders say results from the welfare system. (Arviat Youth Focus Group Participant)

Metaphors

A number of metaphors were used to express the concepts being discussed. In Arviat, three metaphors were used repeatedly.

Avoid Staring at the Moon: There is an Inuit saying that you shouldn't stare at the moon, which is a warning not to dwell on the negative because it can affect your outlook. Inuit were taught from a very early age to be extremely mentally tough and to manage their emotional state very closely, because of the very negative impact that negative thinking could have on the whole community. The following quotation reveals the importance of this saying expressed by many participants:

As I was saying before about having to stay up late out in the land, once I got back home, I kept wondering why is there an Inuit saying "don't stare at the moon or it will take his bow and arrow and hit you in the eye". I started thinking about it and realized that it is a metaphor. The moon has two sides to it, at all times. Nothing is just one sided, there is always the other side of things, and sometimes you cannot see the other side, just like you cannot see the other side of the moon. So someone understood that and wisely created a saying, you must not stare at the negative side of things, because it will affect your state of mind. Looking at things during the night, we can't see very well, but you look at the area in day time, you will certainly see a lot more. I think this can be hard for us to do, but we must try to look at the positive and not only at the negative. (Arviat Elder Focus Group)

A poem that was included in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (2010, p. 74) also illustrates this belief:

"I will walk with leg muscles which are strong as the sinews of the shins of the little caribou calf.
I will walk with leg muscles
which are strong as the sinews of the shins of the little hare.
I will take care not to go towards the dark.
I will go towards the day."

Dog and Wolf: The Elders spoke at length about their experiences raising their dogs, and several compared the behaviour of their dogs to the behaviour of wolves, as a metaphor for what has happened to Inuit as a result of colonization. Wolves were described to be driven mainly by instinct, whereas the dogs were described as requiring a lot of socialization – in particular a lot of teaching in order to make them good sled dogs. One talked about training the family dog:

I just recalled how I used to often have many puppies. One time I owned a wolf puppy. We had a wood stove made out of a barrel, cut in half; this was in our tent. The baby wolf, even when it was very, small would not walk around the wood stove. When it came upon the stove, it would start trying to find a way to climb up on top. When it finally would get on top, it would often fall in the cut hole on top of the stove; when it got out again, it would fall off the other side. None of the dog puppies did this. Maybe the wolves are made to be like that, but it did seem to be very persistent, makes me think of its perseverance...

As hunters, we Inuit may have a certain way of being; we do think instinctively in ways other people who do not need to hunt to exist [might not]. When life really changed dramatically [due to colonization], I think that is why we have gotten confused, and don't know what really happened. So much like the wolf who starts to act like the dog puppies – this is not surprising to us. Even though there are many people who have a lot of resiliency, I think they are fewer than people of our past. That is how I think: the situation has reversed. Before, there were a lot more people who would be resilient, now there are less people who are resilient, compared to our past. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

And again, this exchange between the facilitator and a participant (Elder) also illustrates the comparison between how Inuit were raised traditionally, and the current situation.

Participant: *It is said that our words are alive and that they will impact the person's life. As one example, people would also wish skills upon their puppies, hoping they will be fast runners and not tire easily. We did certain things, like taking both puppy's front legs with one hand and both hind legs with your other hand, and moving them as if they were running. Or, in the case of making a lead dog, we would throw them up the side of the tent, so they rowed down and did this a couple of times. This was so they would not get confused so easily. I saw a person doing this when I was a child, and remember thinking how I felt sorry for the puppy.*

Facilitator: *You see dog owners taking their puppies and talking to them, saying how they wish them to become fast, and acting out as if they were running and in my way of thinking. I think it makes all the difference, wishing someone or something well; it makes things better, because you are wishing for good things. I wonder how you understand things to be?*

Participant: *What do you mean?*

Facilitator: *Well, if you wanted someone or something to be able? What would you say to that?*

Participant: *Well, we must possess perseverance, we must have determination. When a white man*

adopted a wolf puppy, the wolf never learned how to be a hunter. This is just like our children, who no longer know how to be an Inuk: they are just like the wolf that could not know how to be a proper wolf anymore. We must teach our children about the way we are, as Inuit, before they start leaving us to go to school. That is all I have to say. Children must be given knowledge that comes from their parents before they are separated, otherwise our children will end up like the wolf that could not hunt for itself and does not know its own identity.

Cup as metaphor for childrearing and socialization: One of the most powerful images used to describe the process of *inunnguiniq* was conveyed using the metaphor of filling an empty cup. Even as the child is born, its family and community members make offerings of wishes, blessings to fill the child's cup. Traditional early childrearing and ongoing socialization practices are all designed to fill the child's cup with essential information that they may in turn transform into knowledge as they mature. As articulated below, the real challenge is that cups are no longer being filled with things that can sustain the person through their life.

The real depth of culture is just being glossed over and the importance of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is not being addressed in the schools, so although the students are asking for the information, it is not being provided for them. The teachers often just want to limit Inuit education to things like building sleds and cooking. It would be like giving a child an empty cup. The purpose of the cup is not being used until the cup is filled with something that can be used to sustain you or quench your thirst. It is also like giving a name to a child without telling about the qualities of the person carried by the name and the expectations for the development of the child based on the person s/he is being named for. It becomes an empty cup. This is why our children do not know who they are and what purpose they have in life. (Arviat Female Focus Group Participant)

This same participant reflected upon how she has been able to heal from her traumatic experiences at the tuberculosis sanatorium, again drawing on the cup metaphor:

I was able to move on in my life only because my parents and extended family had prepared me with core beliefs and values that I could draw on to heal myself and to find a way of moving forward. My cup was never empty. The reason that [we] work so hard at collecting this information from the Elders is so that our young people do not have to try to live with empty cups anymore. If I left [respected Elder] somewhere out on the land, I know he would survive. If I took my son and left him, I do not think he would be able to survive on his own. This ability to survive is something that we need to strive for and be proud to have. We should not be settling for less than what we have been and should be as Inuit. (Arviat Female Focus Group Participant)

The cup must be filled with sustaining substances that help an individual to become a whole Inuk. In the absence of such sustenance, children, youth and adults look to other ways of coping – including alcohol and drugs, gambling, violence, and other negative behaviours.

Another focus group participant picked up on the cup metaphor, and during closing comments, thanked the Elders for their comments and stories:

Thank you for inviting me. I have heard really inspiring stories and have also heard a lot

***of things from the youth. My cup is not full but there are many more things in it now.
(Arviat Youth Participant, Final Focus Group)***

Summary

Thus, while the notion of adaptation in the face of hardship is encapsulated within the Inuit idea of resiliency, it is but one element among many others that come together to form the concept of *inunnguiniq*. The next section describes the primary mechanism through which resiliency has been transmitted in Inuit society.

2. What Mechanisms Were Used in Traditional Inuit Society to Transmit These Ideas of Resiliency?

Within the Inuit worldview, all things exist in an interconnected web that must be kept in balance. To become a fully formed person and have a good life, Inuit must follow the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the four *maligait*, the principles and laws governing Inuit relationships with one another, the land, and all beings, across time and space. In fact relationality is a core Inuit cultural construct and is grounded in the respect for all living things and living in harmony with the environment. Human relationships mirror the relationships that are established with the natural world and the spiritual world (Tagalik & Joyce, 2005).

Inuit society is structured entirely around *inunnguiniq* – the growth, development, support and maintenance of social relationships throughout an individual’s life; relationships which Tagalik and Joyce (2005) refer to as ‘essential’. Thus, while this process is both life-long and embedded within all aspects of Inuit society, the primary mechanism by which Inuit have traditionally built resiliency in their children is through what focus group members referred to as “the childrearing program”.²¹

Traditional Inuit society, and social interactions, were structured through complex kinship terminology. The web of social relationships within an Inuit family, camp or community were seen as a series of interconnected dyads. Each relationship dyad had its own set of expectations and obligations which were tied less to the individuals involved, and more to their position in relation to other social relations (Briggs, 2000; Douglas, 2009; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). Traditionally, the use of this kinship terminology defined the interactions, obligations, and expectations that each relationship carried. The words that people used to speak to one another served as a daily reminder of their identity as an individual, and within the family and larger structure, both in the present and in the past. This complex web surrounded each individual, shaping identity, sense of self, and sense of purpose (Bonny, 2008, p. 119; Briggs, 2000; Douglas, 2009; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). The centrality of these kinship relations is clearly articulated by several focus group participants, for whom their primary social relationships are a source of support that when brought to bear collectively, can overcome all challenges.

If the family can stay together no matter what the issue, and is able to overcome all obstacles, there will always be a chance they can get through hard times. The quality childrearing program that promoted this is very precious and we would like to see it not get lost. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

²¹ Although the focus of the discussion groups was the transmission of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in children, the Inuit socialization process is lifelong, extending right through to the time when someone becomes an Elder.

I tell my children they must be there for one another and to maintain strong connections with their siblings – that the solutions to problems can be found in the family with sharing of problems and coming up with solutions together. (Arviat Key Informant Interview)

I lived in a community before houses were built (before community infrastructure). Our people would come in for resupply. They always pitched tents in the same spot all close together, but in the wintering villages they were together with extended families. When houses were built there was no consideration that families stay close together. This has created a barrier to traditional support systems. It has contributed to some of our social challenges because it is the relatives who were confronting improper behaviours such as child neglect or spousal relationship problems. (Arviat Women Focus Group Participant)

These relationships are highly structured in order to ensure the survival of the group in the face of an unforgiving, harsh environment. Strict enforcement of social mores and values was a matter of life or death. The Inuit worldview – including taboos regulating behaviour, the rules about respecting Elders, the earth, animals, oneself – shaped a sophisticated social structure that dictated not only individual behaviour, but also interpersonal and inter-group behaviour. People were socialized to take the advice of their Elders very seriously, because the implications of making a bad choice based only on one's personal experience could be fatal (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; d'Anglure, 2001; Douglas, 2009; Laugrand & Oosten, 2009a, 2009b; Oosten, Laugrand, & Rasing, 1999; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005).

Traditional Inuit society and Gender

Gender roles were also central to the structure of traditional Inuit social relationships, roles which have been described as flexible, situational or contextual as opposed to 'binary', in some instances distinct from the person's sex (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Briggs, 2000; Morgan, 2008; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005; Trott, 2006; Williamson et al., 2004). This fluidity manifests itself in a variety of ways, from the meaning of 'man' and 'woman' in Inuktitut which translate to "the one more manlike" and "the one more woman-like" respectively (Bilson & Mancini, 2007); to traditional Inuit naming traditions described above which imparts upon a child the skills and abilities, and some of the spiritual essence, of the namesake regardless of the sex of the ancestor, or of the newborn child (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Briggs, 2000; Morgan, 2008; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005; Trott, 2006; Williamson et al., 2004).²²

At the same time, authors agree that in general, men and women occupied very different roles and fulfilled different tasks within the context of their semi-nomadic lifestyle (Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2007). Women were traditionally responsible for childrearing and early socialization; food preparation and conservation; and with the preparation of skins and other animal products to be converted into clothing or other domestic implements. For their part, men were in charge of hunting, construction and maintaining hunting equipment, and hauling heavy loads (Bilson & Mancini, 2007; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2006). While some have characterized Inuit traditional society as patriarchal (Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2007), most describe the relationship between the male and female spheres as interdependent, within which each was powerful (Bennett & Rowley, 2004;

²² In fact children can be raised in ways which emphasize the parts of themselves which are of the 'opposite sex', typically until puberty, at which point a conversion ritual takes place and they subsequently take on the gender role that mirrors their sex. See Trott (2006), Bilson and Mancini (2007) and Williamson et al. (2004) for examples.

Briggs, 2000; Morgan, 2008; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005; Trott, 2006; Williamson et al., 2004). In essence, the survival of the group was entirely dependent on the fitness of each individual, and on the ability of each to fulfill their ascribed tasks to the best of their ability. In this way, everyone in the camp was a specialist, and those with the necessary skills or abilities would be asked to apply those for the benefit of the group, regardless of their sex.

Even in terms of decision-making and leadership, there are many accounts which describe the Inuit way as 'consensual' as opposed to 'hierarchical': all adults would be consulted, and those with particular expertise or knowledge may have greater influence over others in the making of the decision, but only insofar as they could demonstrate the validity and applicability of their knowledge (Bilson & Mancini, 2007). Leadership, in so far as decision-making was concerned, resided in whomever demonstrated the necessary skills to ensure the survival and well-being of the group: in some cases, these leaders were women, in others, men – but always within the context of consensus (Bilson & Mancini, 2007).

The Inuit childrearing program

At its core, the Inuit childrearing program incorporates all aspects of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, and it was the responsibility of adult women to deliver the program, which was overseen by female Elders. In both its delivery and content, the childrearing program reinforced these central principles that shape an Inuk's existence, as an individual; as a family member; as a community member; and as a creature of the cosmos.

In order to convey the complexity of the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, and of the Inuit *maligait*, the childrearing program was designed to contain the following characteristics:

- A conditioning sequence, where the readiness of the individual to take on the next phase or aspect of conditioning dictated the pace of learning. In this way, the Inuit way of learning is fundamentally individually-centred and paced according to their level of maturation, as opposed to being dictated by an individual's chronological age. Once a child had demonstrated that they had mastered a skill, their instruction progressed to the next level. For example, one Arviat Elder recalled that her job was to fetch water. ***"I remember I used to have to serve my grandmother, I used to sleep beside an adult to keep me warm. In the summer, I would have to fetch water, and even though I kept falling down I was sent back until I succeeded. Today we are not so stern with how we train our children and we do not set high expectations for our children and grandchildren."***
- Applied, overseen and monitored by Elders, in particular grandmothers and other female community members when the children were small, before the physical program came into play. Once the physical program came into play – activities related to hunting, shelter-building, tool-making, and other aspects of existence related to 'technology' – men played an increasingly important role. Elders supervised parents and demonstrated how to properly raise a child. Mothers and other female family members took the lead from infancy, until the child was ready for the physical program. This was expressed by a participant in the Arviat Focus group: ***"Women establish the foundation of the family and to life so it is important to have this understanding so that relationships are respected."***
- Activity based. This means that children (and later youth, and then adults) learn first by observing, and then by doing. Observation and listening skills are highly valued characteristics. Children were given specific tasks, initially simple in nature that once mastered, would be increased in complexity.

- Holistic content which helped the individual develop their identity in relation to their family, their camp, their community, their ancestors, the physical and natural world around themselves, and across time and space. Included character, ethical and moral, development, as well as the development of the Inuit belief system; this was followed by the attitude program, and the physical program. The attitude program was designed to reflect the person's character – people were taught the strengths and weaknesses of their character type, so that they understood under what conditions they had an advantage, and what conditions their character type put them at a disadvantage. The physical program included games and activities which were designed to develop specific skills/strengths, to provide mental challenges to enhance thinking processes—towards deeper thinking, and to reinforce proper attitudes, such as persevering, etc.
- Development of character elements exemplified within the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: accountability, reliability, responsibility, reciprocity, wisdom, compassion and love are continually transmitted throughout the entire process.

The process of building resiliency among the youngest members of Inuit society begins even before a child is born: naming rituals and traditions ensure that the skills and qualities of dead ancestors, as well as living relatives, are passed along to new family members, and in this way are never lost to the community. The *Atiq*, or namesake, is said to become imbued with their relative's soul, and so possesses their qualities and skills, and even their memories (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). Certain members of the community were also said to be able to fill the new child with skills and abilities, including the midwife (Oosten & Laugrand, 1999). Children also had songs sung about them called *Aqausiit* which also were to give them certain abilities (Oosten & Laugrand, 1999).

In the words of one Arviat Elder:

Inuit, when they wanted someone to be able, they would start preparing them, long before they knew to understand anything. I could wish upon a child, even if I was not a shaman. I could for instance wish my child be a fast runner or be good at something, or may he or she live long. It is said that our words are alive and that they will impact the person's life. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

There are three different outcomes that may result from the *inunnguiniq* process, depending on the successful application of the childrearing program. A key component in the socialization process is the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principle of *Pilimmaqsarniq*, which means to become able and self-reliant. As with all Inuit principles, there must be balance applied to the concept of *Pilimmaqsarniq*; if it is taken too far, or not far enough, then the individual will be out of balance, and have difficulty surviving (Briggs, 2000; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). According to Rhoda Karetak, an Elder in Arviat who has spoken across Nunavut and Canada on this topic, the types of individuals who emerge from the process can be characterized as 'hard rocks', 'fragile eggs', or 'human beings' – an able person (R. Karetak, n.d.). The following is excerpted from Karetak's (n.d.) typology (please see Figure 2 below):

The hardened person results when an individual is exposed to extreme discipline and pressure, more than the rest of their siblings, by being told to do more chores, or all the chores. The child will not happy about this situation, constantly being ordered around by all those around them, and you can see this happens to some individuals in all our societies.

When the parent or guardian starts to scold them, all the others around start joining in:

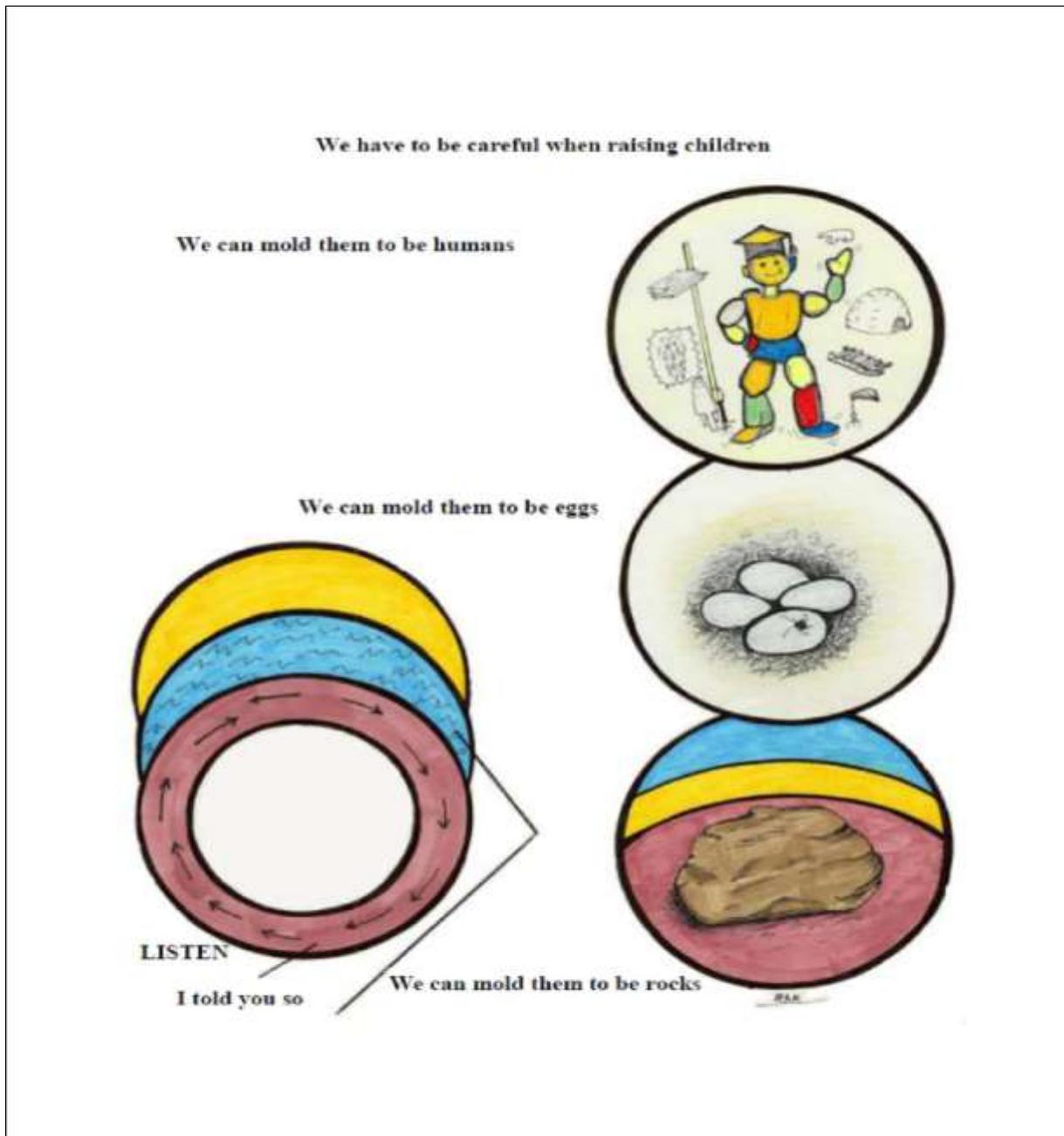
that is too much, it is not fair. Then the scolding starts to get bigger, and instead of just scolding, it escalates to being yelled at and maybe even being hit. If a child gets yelled at or extremely scolded suddenly while they are too young to understand, they get shocked and stunned by this, and Inuit have a term for this situation called “Quqqik”, meaning the child is traumatized. At first they are stunned by this, but when they are exposed this kind of treatment over and over, they will start to become a hardened person and will no longer seem to be affected by the yelling. Symptoms will start to show such as when someone is yelling at them, they no longer have any fear, and when someone tries to speak to them, they may pretend not hear the person speaking. No longer having any fear, this person will become harder and potentially very uncooperative, like a rock. When Inuit people recognize these symptoms, that person would be known as someone who has been hardened and may become a very dangerous person when they grow up.

By contrast, being over-protective of a child can have the opposite effect:

Fragile egg person becomes like this when the guardian or parents are over-protective and keep going to the defence of the child, asking him or her questions like, “who mistreated you, were you hurt by anyone, has someone been mean to you?” In the old traditional way, this behaviour towards our children and asking questions of this nature is absolutely forbidden. As a mother, because I love my children a lot, it is extremely difficult not to want and defend them. But we must refrain from doing so, because the old people always say you cannot be there forever, and be with them wherever they go, so it is not wise to make them think that you are going to take care of them all the time, or be there all the time. ... When a fragile person experiences hardship for the first time, it may be too much for them, and they may not be able to recover from this situation. The damage done within this person will be because of you, you who have tried to defend your son or child whenever you think anybody has wronged them. If you are father or a mother who has created a fragile person, you will have to worry about them all the time, for the rest of your life and their life.

Traditional Inuit communities were an organic whole that functioned and survived only to the extent to which all of its members executed their specific tasks to their highest ability. The aim of the Inuit childrearing program has always been to therefore develop “human beings”, people who are capable: who have mastered their designated skill set and so can be independent, but independent only insofar as they can then contribute to the survival of the group (Briggs, 2000).

Figure 3: Possible outcomes of Inuit childrearing program (R. Karetak, n.d.)



Knowledge transmission

Children were tied to their relations not only through their names, but also through the daily process of socialization – of learning (Briggs, 2000). The process of transmitting knowledge in traditional Inuit society has several unique elements compared to Qallunaat socialization and education which are linked to the Inuit world view. These include an emphasis on:

- observation
- listening
- imitation
- role play, imaginary play, story telling

As in other social interactions, Inuit traditional society prescribed the type of interactions between teacher – often an Elder, or another adult – and student. For example, asking questions of Elders was frowned upon (Bonny, 2008; Briggs, 2000). Children were expected to observe and learn all they could before they attempted a task: understanding the whole, and the sequence of events required to accomplish the whole task, was an important part of the learning process. Sometimes, children would be taught specific tasks through ‘reverse-chaining’: learning and mastering the final step, and proceeding backwards through an entire process, until they had mastered the whole (P. Berger, 2007).

Knowledge was seen as a gift that the Elder could confer, but could not be requested. To receive the gift, an individual needed to demonstrate that they were worthy (Briggs, 2000). This was done by being attentive, learning by observation, completing one’s tasks independently and well. The notion of knowledge as a gift in the form of unsolicited tips and advice, and the importance of listening to that advice in order to have a good life, is clearly expressed by many focus group participants. For example:

And those who invest also gauge your attitude. You have to show yourself to be a learning person and someone who will obey what is being said. When they see that in you, the Elders are eager to invest their skills and knowledge in you. (Arviat Men Focus Group Participant)

I am freely given a lot of advice and I accept this as gifts of great value. I do feel that my grandfather left me something that enables me to survive and all the support I receive from all my siblings and relatives and friends all help me cope with life's ups and downs. Life is not always easy to understand and you need something to help continue, while understanding is not there. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

One Arviat Elder recalled an incident in his community:

I recall another situation where a person was given advice, not by his grandfather and father, but by his uncle, about what to do if he ever fell into the water and cannot get himself out. This was a gift of knowledge from his uncle, and he had to use it one day, a long time later when he fell in the ocean with his wife. They had been struggling to get out for quite a while. He finally remembered what his uncle told him, which was that if he ever falls through the ice, try to imitate the polar bears - use their technique. So once he tried this, he got himself and his wife out of the bad ice, and they survived this accident when they couldn't get out of the water. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The importance of listening to the Elders is clearly articulated by another focus group participant:

Listening properly you will be told very valuable knowledge which will certainly help you to go through life's obstacles. Even when your own thoughts and feelings are wrong, if you can follow the instructions your father and mother gave you, and go against your own confusion, this will help you get over those hard times. True words never go wrong: real life matters are timeless and timeless advice stays right, no matter whose life you are talking about. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Focus group participants talked about the bond of trust that develops between child and Elder, and which carries forward as the child grows into an adult, so that even when they are being corrected or disciplined, the child understands the purpose underneath the correction – which is to ensure that the child is well-prepared for life, or becomes *inunnguiniq*.

So I learn to trust my grandparents, because they talked to me in a way that made it easy for me to trust them. The things that I was asked to do were not easy things to do, so I had to take things they said seriously and I was afraid to disappoint. And you don't know that you are getting more skilled and knowledgeable; they tell you when the time is right to instruct you, they know when it is right to tell something about life matters, and so you don't that you are getting wiser, because you are not monitoring yourself. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

At the same time as individuals were expected to take advice from their Elders, they were also encouraged to learn by doing. Because in so many situations making the wrong decision could lead to death or another serious outcome, the key was to find a balance. When the outcome was not what was intended, the important thing was to learn from the experience. In the worlds of one focus group participant, ***“Do not waste hardship, learn something of it, it is not all bad, there are important lessons you learn from going through hardship”***.

Accepting criticism, or correction, was a central part of the learning process: if an Elder took the time to correct someone's work, be it sewing or tool making, it implied a certain level of praise. Correction or discipline was done in a very direct, often harsh way: this conveyed the seriousness of the matter, and ensured that the lesson would be recalled. Typically, individuals were not singled out directly for performing their tasks well, because this could disturb the balance in social relationships that had to be carefully managed in order to maintain order and harmony within the community. One performed one's tasks for the betterment and survival of the whole, not for personal gain or attention.

Correction, social order and balance

If the purpose of *inunnguiniq* is to prepare Inuit to have a good life, the only way they can have a good life is if they follow the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the four *maligait*. The Elders and camp leaders played a central role in maintaining order and discipline among camp members, and enforcing the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and adherence to the four *maligait*. They were revered for having survived and acquired knowledge and wisdom: respecting Elders was an integral part of individual well-being, as indicated by an Elder from Igloodik:

When people are older than you, you are supposed to respect them; you try to abide by what they say. Inuit really frowned upon you if you were to disrespect a person older than yourself, because they believe that if you disrespect an Elder, your life will run into

something bad sooner or later. So people would be afraid for you if you disrespected an Elder because you foolishly were too proud and thought you could disrespect someone older than you. So it turns out, there is some truth to that: if you do right by Elders, they are very thankful, but if you were to disrespect or bad mouth an Elder, of course they will not appreciate that. So when someone respects and treats their Elders properly, it is attached to their wellbeing in life. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

For this reason, Elders were involved in guiding and correcting the behaviour of young people, just as they were involved in correcting the behaviour of adults. For example,

When we were young girls our mothers really kept an eye on us, never letting out of their sight. Our fathers would also let us know which rules we needed to follow and in this system, it was hard to want to just simply disobey. The Elders also would determine how things got handled. The Elders are supposed to be listened to, and involved in life's directions. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

And another Elder spoke of disciplining her own children:

I always explain to my children and my grandchildren that I may speak strongly/firmly, but this does not mean that I am angry, but I am adamant that they would listen and understand. For that reason Inuit spoke forcefully, not out of anger, but out of urgency. (Arviat Final Focus Group, Elder Participant)

The perspective of the younger person learning is illustrated by an Elder from Igloodik:

When we were young people, when we were being talked to, we would be afraid and try not to talk back: eventually the scolding would pass. We didn't try to rebel or leave to avoid being talked to, because we were raised to respect and not just get upset when someone is talking to us, because they are correcting our behaviour for our own good. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

Another Igloodik participant talked about understanding the purpose of the discipline, which was “not to punish them, but to ensure harmony”, while another shared the memory of the discipline, and the importance of the lesson conveyed by the Elders whose words seem “heavy and strong”:

We were told if we did something wrong or were doing something wrong: we would be asked to adjust. As children we make mistakes or do things we are not suppose to do, but that is just way life goes, as life is that way too. So life is this way, and when someone instructs you about something you shouldn't be doing, other than your own family member, their words seem very heavy and very strong. You don't forget those words, where a person tells you that you know better than that, so don't you do that again. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

We don't always know what we did was not right, so you do start to realize and remember what you should do and what you shouldn't do. As a girl, my grandmother would scold me at times, but the intent of the scolding was to learn to tolerate being disciplined, to adjust my attitude. It was important to the adults that we, as children could take some discipline without shattering. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

The requirement to maintain balanced interpersonal relationships was necessary to individual and group survival: understanding this was a core component of becoming a stable Inuk, and building resiliency.

Factors affecting personal resiliency

Factors which are seen to impact an individual's ability to learn include their personal attitude and level of readiness for learning, as illustrated by a comment from an Igloodik Elder: "***Determination and attitude, and respect being one the main driving force imprinted from within.***" Indeed, the importance of personal attitude and choice is clearly stated in the following excerpt from the Arviat Elder Focus Group during which the facilitator summarized some of the conversation around what it means to be resilient, and develop resiliency, for Inuit:

Our Elders and parents attempt to grow resiliency in us, but the choice is up to us to accept the teaching of being resilient: it is up to the individual, is up to all of us. When a person is brought up to be a human being there are many applications involved and there are certain things that need to be in place, that need to be applied at certain times. To be made into a human being, you must accept that this program is applied to you for it to work. If I choose to give up, it is my doing, because even though someone or people did all that they could to raise me to be resilient, they cannot stop me from giving up: only I can stop me from giving up. (Facilitator's summary, Arviat Elder Focus Group)

Thus, even as Inuit traditional society was guided by a strict social and moral code, in which relations and behaviour were highly structured and the fulfillment of personal desires and goals came second to fulfilling the needs of the community, personal agency and choice was seen as an important balance to the prescriptive social context.

Other factors affecting an individual's resiliency identified by focus group participants and key informants include diet; having a sense of humour; a belief in God; and music. One participant noted,

I see how important the diet is when it comes to raising children and because that was part of the conditioning because diet affects us all. If we don't eat properly, that is going to affect how you feel and how you feel will affect how you think and how you think will affect your attitude. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Perhaps most importantly, focus group members emphasized the importance of unconditional love found within the external circle of support surrounding the individual – the essential relations described above (Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). This point was articulated by a discussion group member:

His family and colleagues always supported him and he knew in his heart that he was loved and supported. This is very important when one is struggling to know that others have not given up on you. Knowing that you are loved, through both words and actions, enables you to carry on. This is the external support that we talked about on the first day. These important people in our lives keep holding us up and pulling us towards a good way of life. (Arviat Final Focus Group Participant)

Finally, the issue of balance – within the person, between the person and their extended family and friends, and between the person and all three spheres of life – was identified as a factor affecting a person's resiliency by all consulted. In the final Arviat focus group, participants fell into a discussion

about the issue of balance during which a number of examples of Inuit beliefs around balance were expressed:

- Inuit have a very strong belief in the three-ness of life in terms of providing both balance and holism. It is said that even though Inuit walk on two legs, they are supported by the third spiritual leg. It is up to each Inuk to understand this and be able to learn to rely on this leg.
- There is also the story of 3 wishes and the importance of becoming wise in selecting what to wish for and understanding the nature of the things that underscore a wish.
- There is the belief in three key areas of life—inuusirq, sila and pirkutiit—also as areas which need to be kept in balance and respected for the way they are both interdependent and no area must overshadow the others.
- One participant shared her understanding of “wanting” as being a state that creates incapacity and prevents one from ever achieving happiness. She shared this as an example of how reliance on one area or an imbalance in life creates a negative response in the person that leads to incapacity.
- This theme was especially strong in the Igloodik Elder focus group. As one Elder expressed, ***“In our traditional way of living, life was structured, it was sound, there was a balance.”*** The Igloodik Elders spoke at length about the importance of sound leadership in maintaining balance and harmony within the community.

But back then, there was always someone who would be there to help make sure we were all trying to do the right things, made sure we all abided by our traditional laws and represented justice and understanding, because one person can throw the balance off, if it continued and so I think at times, that is what's affecting us today. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

Implied in this quote is that today, this balance has been lost. In fact, much of the conversation around balance highlighted the impact of a *lack* of balance in many individuals’ lives, as well as in Inuit communities. As such it will be discussed below in the section on challenges.

Community level resiliency

Focus group participants articulated their understanding of resiliency as an individual-level process – *inunnguiniq*, or the making of a human-being. Elders and women in particular focused on the childrearing program, and its importance in Inuit socialization, and in preparing people to have a good life. As a specific topic, the *concept* of community resiliency was not discussed directly. Instead, factors affecting community level resiliency were expressed primarily in the negative form – that is, in terms of the challenges that communities are facing, and the reasons for those.

As the expression of the Inuit way of being at its macro level, Inuit community resiliency has many of the same determinants as does individual resiliency, and there is no question that individual and community resiliency are intimately related for Inuit. Indeed, the purpose of the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit principles, and the four Inuit *maligait*, are all designed to promote, nurture and support the development of stable, capable individuals within the structure of the larger kinship structure. The topic of community level resiliency specifically will be revisited in Section 6, Discussion.

3. What has Changed and Why? What is Different for Inuit Now, Compared to Traditional Times, in Terms of Building Resiliency?

For Elders, who have experienced change on a scale that took hundreds of years in the Southern portion of North America compressed into some forty to sixty years, it is not an understatement to say that everything has changed: Inuit do not live, hunt, eat, learn, govern, build, travel, celebrate or interact as they did some 40 to 50 years ago. The pace of change imposed on Inuit has been so rapid that communities impacted by colonization and other ongoing traumas have had no opportunity to take stock, to reflect, to adjust and make a forward-looking plan: they have had time only to react, and to survive. As articulated in Wesley-Esquimax & Smolewski (2004, p. 74), "Aboriginal people were exposed to unrelenting waves of trauma (colonialism, settlement, displacement, starvation, fur trade, economic disorganization, religious persecution and, eventually, residential schools) and they had no time to stop and deal with what was happening to them." A similar sentiment was expressed in the Arviat Elder Focus Group:

And in a way it is frustrating to see all the issues that we all face comes from the way Inuit ways were discouraged and Inuit Elders were disempowered and no one has had a chance to reflect and analyze anything, because we are so busy just trying to keep up. And before we even finish learning, here comes the next stage of change. I am thinking now we have to be the ones who make our own solutions, and we will get that by continuing to have discussions and meet often if we must, to mend our hurts and wounds which have been inflicted upon us, and then we will start being able to find our balance in life. We all want it back. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

It is not possible to include all of the various ways that study participants expressed the changes to Inuit life in this current paper. Instead, a few examples that recurred across the focus groups form the focus for this section. These centre on changes in people's behaviour, which very often contravenes Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit principles and breaks taboos that have been in place for generations. Indeed, several participants described the changes they observed using words such as 'upside down', 'backwards', 'inside out', or 'flipped'.

For example, in many families the naming tradition has ceased. In others, the tradition has become inverted so that people wish upon the child not the skills they wish them to have, but a lack of weakness. This is well-illustrated in the Arviat discussion group:

When we are named we have to carry the responsibilities of the name we carry, so that has a lot to do with the selection. This practice is still in place, but may be taken less strictly and is more ceremonial. Today it is being used more as a wishing for a lack of specific weaknesses, rather than for the strengths the person is known for. (Arviat Male Focus Group Participant)

Other researchers have also documented the impact of the loss of the naming ritual in the eyes of the Elders, who "complain that today, children are being given the names of soap opera stars and the significance of the naming practice has been lost. With that loss is implied the loss of the wisdom and skills of those souls who contributed to the survival of Inuit societies over thousands of years" (Tagalik & Joyce, 2005, p. 5).

Elders identified other aspects of the Inuit social order that are upside down, for example:

- the principle of reciprocity has been damaged, as illustrated by the high rates of vandalism and theft;
- the principle of respect and care for the land, animals and the environment is being ignored, with many participants noting that hunters are not disposing of animal remains properly.

In the words of one Arviat Elder,

We have always had Inuit laws Inuit for hunting, and it may be the men who need to pay attention the most because it is about hunting, but we can't even enforce these laws anymore. We are not supposed to live as if it does not matter, yet no one can be stopped anymore, and have no sense of obligation to follow traditional laws which protected both the people and the animals. An Inuit principle is being broken that used to ensure when followed properly, there would be plenty of animals because we only get what we need, and apply proper harvesting methods, timing and proper hunting skills and attitudes. If we keep breaking this principle, we are all going to pay, and we are threatening our own well-being acting and behaving the way we are doing things now. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Others have noted that rules guiding behaviour between males and females are being ignored, and this is responsible for the high rates of teen pregnancy. Historically, when a girl was not yet promised, no one would think of having sexual relations with her without parental consent. Disobeying could result in family feuds and major confrontations, all of which could destabilize relationships which were central to individual and group survival. The following comments from the Arviat Elder focus group hint at the implications of breaking these rules:

Well, I just say it: the modern way of dancing, finding reasons to stay out late at night, are all causing negative impacts to our young people. Some Inuit groups have always discouraged people from having intercourse outside, so now young people are doing this, which was considered to be a taboo. So this causes heavy loads on our society when taboos get broken, so I think we have to create new methods in promoting the right ways to being, even if it comes from other people other than our own relatives. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

I believe it is very bad to do things out in the dark that you should not be doing. I know this is really bad to break long traditional taboos, such as messing around outside in the dark, and another taboo I mentioned was not to leave animal parts just out exposed in the open. That is considered to be a very serious taboo and it would be advisable to all not to break this rule. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

In listening to the Elders from Arviat and Igloodik, these changes are the result of profound alterations to the nature of the kinship structure, and to the obligations and responsibilities that have historically been attached to each and every relationship, caused by the break in traditional childrearing and socialization practices (Bonny, 2008; Douglas, 2009; Tagalik & Joyce, 2005). Just as documented in the community focus groups and key informant interviews, the breaking of the childrearing program had a similarly destructive effect among First Nations:

With the break-up of the extended family, many indigenous women found they had no

role models to teach them parenting skills. As many Native people were raised in boarding schools, the traditional roles and ways of parenting by both Native men and women were lost. The attitudes and norms, which then sprang up in parenting styles, such as harsh physical punishment, emotional abandonment, lack of parental involvement, and insensitivity to children's needs added to imbalance in the family. As generations continued with these ways of parenting, the trauma was passed down until many believe it has become a cycle of despair and desperation (1999:70). (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 65)

Unbalanced childrearing methods and *inunnguiniq*

Focus group participants pointed to 'inversions' in basic parenting styles, in particular around the use of structure and discipline, to explain changes in Inuit society. Whereas in the past discipline was used to correct and instruct out of love, Elders and adults noted that parents now use very little structure or discipline:

There is a switch in how people are being taught right from wrong etc. There is a kipuk [something broken] in the system where you were once disciplined because they love you and now you are not disciplined because they say they love you. It is reflective of how the whole society has been turned on its head as a result of colonization. (Arviat Men Focus Group Participant)

In their discussions of the process of *inunnguiniq*, many Elders made reference to the negative outcomes that can occur if children are not brought up to have balance. Several made reference to the creation of 'hard rocks' or 'fragile people', in keeping with Karetak's typology, that can result when parenting methods are not balanced.

We are not suppose to come to our children's or grandchildren's defence if they are not badly hurt or not bleeding. But this rule or way to be is not enforceable anymore, when a lot of us have been guilty of going to extreme actions to come to their defence. Already even as a small child they expect to be backed up if any one upsets them or does not agree with them. This was a big no-no; anyone who was going to defend their child like that would have been told how it is going to negatively impact their child and really put them in an unhealthy state of mind where it can become a danger to them. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Defending one's children – in essence, over-protecting them – was very taboo in traditional Inuit society (Briggs, 2000; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999). In the words of one youth participant, "***When you assist a child too much in everything they want, it makes them unable. They will always be looking for someone else to resolve the problem***". In Arviat, several focus group participants and key informants made reference to the belief that if you overprotect your children, they will be attacked by wild animals. Several participants shared stories that they felt illustrated this belief to be true. In Igloodik, one key informant related the belief that raising boys and girls is different. She noted that she was always told that it is not possible to spoil a girl, but if you spoil a boy he will grow up to become your abuser. Several respondents pointed to incidents of Elder abuse as illustrations of this belief's validity.

Similar remarks from another participant clearly connect the current situation – unbalanced childrearing that has resulted in adults and youth who are not stable – to unresolved grief and trauma experienced

by the previous generation.

I have been working with Elders for a while now, and the meetings and research we do have to do with life matters. If we have unresolved issues that we never addressed properly, and we have not gone through healing, we will want to defend our children, because we are protecting our pain and acting it out by overly protecting our children. We are creating a fragile egg person, spoiling them to make ourselves feel better. When the hurt was done to us, at an earlier point in our lives, we think that it is in the past, so it can't have anything to do with anything now. But we are wrong to think it does not impact our day to day life. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Young people seem to abandon themselves. You have to try and talk with them very carefully, and it is better to talk with them by themselves, carefully so as not to upset them, because they can't handle stress or pressure nowadays. I have been thinking about this for a long time, so I had to get it out. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Now Inuit are spoiling their children to the point of where they are committing suicide, and this is not just is a couple of communities, but happening in all the communities. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

I think sometimes we love our own children so much, it can affect us in a way it is somewhat harmful, because we want them to have everything, just exist, be happy all the time, when they start to get older, especially all my grandchildren, become somewhat very hard to please and dysfunctional. We handicap them, we let the world know how we totally love them so much, that we are not going to let any bad thing ever happen to them, so we spoil them and make them fragile and very demanding. For that, we are guilty. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Several remarked that they, or other Elders or adults that they knew, had become afraid of their children – something that would have been unheard-of when Inuit lived the traditional camp lifestyle because of the strict enforcement of rules and laws by the leaders within the community.

I see parents who are afraid of their older children, they need to set limits and not give their children everything they want. If they do give them everything, the children grow up thinking they can get whatever they want and some threaten their parents. (Arviat Key Informant Interview)

Within the community structure that used to exist, when a family member was not cooperating, the family had someone they could go to, someone who was a community leader. Someone mentioned earlier they need something in place in the community that helps the parents with situations when they are not able to get the needed results within their family in order to maintain harmony in the family. This makes me think that we don't have [the traditional structure anymore, the community leader], which is why things have gone so bad and with no solutions in view. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Similarly, another participant shared her thoughts about the impact of unresolved issues on the next

generation:

We hear some people say “When I was young, I was always working so hard, too hard, so my child will not have to do anything and not be told to do things, like I had to do”. This is wrong, that because we are mad at the fact we had to work hard, we act out our frustrations through our children. This can be very devastating to our children. We are wrecking their potential to be happy, because we have unresolved anger within us. (Arviat Elders Focus Group Participant)

The following quotation summarizes well how focus group participants understand the current challenges they are facing in their communities: they clearly point to the role of the colonization process in breaking the transmission of the traditional childrearing program, and what this break has meant for the development of ‘human beings’, or *inunnguiniq*.

This whole thing is difficult, because just by listening to you all speaking today, it is easy to see how and why things have suddenly become so difficult. Parents used to spend their time enabling their children, and grandparents made sure their grandchildren were being brought up properly and helped govern their communities, and all that got left behind, setting us up to fail. Without this program that helped Inuit live in balance, it means that life will now be unbalanced, because there is not anything in place for Inuit to stay balanced. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Qallunaat school system and *inunnguiniq*

To explain why so many elements of their society had become ‘upside down’, focus group participants pointed to the Qallunaat school system. Participants talked about the effect that the school system – residential or non-residential – had on breaking the child’s primary relationships: between parent and child, Elder and child, siblings, and so on. For those who went to residential school, they would leave their families for months on end, returning for two months in the summertime. In school, children were introduced to a new language, new religion, new food, new interaction styles, and new teaching methods. In the process, many were sexually, physically and emotionally victimized by those running the schools – the details of which have been well-documented elsewhere (Castellano, 2006; Dion Stout & Kipling, 2003; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996a).

Even those who attended a community-based school, who were not victimized at school, or who had fond memories of their school experience spoke of the split their attendance created between themselves and their primary caregivers. Berger (2007, 2009) has analyzed the differences between the Inuit and Qallunaat methods of teaching and learning, and argues that the way that the school system is organized, regardless of how well-meaning individual teachers may be, limits true expression of Inuit culture. Similarly, others have also documented the various ways in which the Qallunaat educational system undermines the transmission of the Inuit worldview from one generation to the next (Douglas, 2009; Laugrand & Oosten, 2009b). It is not just the content of what is taught that creates a chasm; it is the very way of being within the Qallunaat institution that also undermines and breaks apart the Inuit social structure. Once the school system was introduced, children

- were no longer living a nomadic lifestyle, and so became out of touch with the way of life;
- stopped referring to parents and other family members by their kinship terms, which also changed the nature of those relationships;
- lost their understanding of the seasonal cycle: they were not learning hunting practices, caching,

- or executing all of other practices required for survival on the land;
- were taught to learn Qallunaat-style, where teachers download compartmentalized chunks of information: there is often no sense of the whole and how it fits, and the information is disconnected. This contrast to Inuit learning, where children are accustomed to thinking long and hard about one topic from beginning to end; as a result, many Inuit struggle with the pace of learning and 'fall behind' in class;
- were taught to ask questions as part of this Qallunaat style of learning, whereas among Inuit, people are supposed to learn by observation: they are specifically taught not to ask questions "out of reverence for Elders". The introduction of questioning has combined with a loss of understanding of the kinship structure and obligation into a loss of respect for authority.

In essence, the introduction of the Qallunaat-style school system not only disrupted the development and maintenance of the Inuit kinship system, and thereby the transmission of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit and the Inuit worldview: due to its structure, content and approach, the formal school system was also inadequate as a substitute mechanism by which to transmit this fundamental cultural information. As a mechanism to develop stable, whole Inuit human beings – to carry on with the process of *inunnguiniq*, or building resiliency as Inuit understand it – the formal educational system as it is currently structured is inadequate.

Even today, Elders see that the Qallunaat school system is not preparing children for life – is not developing their resiliency – as was done through traditional childrearing practices.

We were told to give up our children to the school so that they would have a better life, but when a child gets into trouble in school, then suddenly the parents are responsible. Even though they are our children, they suddenly behave in ways that we have not taught them and do not expect them to behave. Even when they complete their schooling I believe they know less than me in the area of how to live life successfully. Although we have little formal education, we are capable, but our children lack capacity to live life well. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Another Elder's comments similarly show the difference between the Inuit childrearing program, and the depth and complexity of information and knowledge that was transmitted throughout this program, relative to the skills taught within the Qallunaat school system:

But now our children are only learning how to be white people and now I think about this and know we should have kept trying to teach them about our ways. Even when they graduate from High School, they still have to go out for more education. Inuit do not have a point where you will achieve a satisfactory level, you never stop learning and as a parent, I did not try to teach them our ways. Now when I try, it is too difficult for them and the way we were taught is too harsh for them to take. So life is changing so drastically; we are in a difficult situation. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The Elders did not always see the role of the school system in the same way in Arviat. Some noted that even though children go to school most of the time, their parents and other family members can influence them up until they are school-age, and can also continue to influence and teach them outside of school hours.

We must teach our children about the way we are, as Inuit, before they start leaving us

to go to school. That is all I have to say. Children must be given knowledge that comes from their parents before they are separated, otherwise our children will end up like the wolf that could not hunt for itself and does not know its own identity. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Well what I wanted to say was, both the school and parents are involved with life matters; not just the school has an impact in children's lives. When children are little, they see only us and get our perspectives of life matters, they believe us very much. When they go out to go to school, we tell them to make sure they listen to the teachers, and do not stab other children with your pencil. If you tell your children things before they go out, they will remember what you said and not forget it. The instructions to not bother other children or tease other children comes from the parents, and they will not forget that. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

By contrast, others found that when children were home from school, they were too tired to do more learning, and just wanted to relax and socialize with their friends. This situation is compounded by teen pregnancies, with children raising children. The following Arviat Elder comments illustrate the difficulty in ensuring the effective transmission of the necessary skills for life in these circumstances.

Our children go home tired from their day attending school and do not want to take on more learning when they go home, so they just want to relax or play games or want to be entertained, so we don't want to put any more pressure than they are already feeling. They go out early next morning and do it all over again, so where is our time? The children have no time to really learn important things from their parents and all these things are all impacting us all now, no one is immune to this situation anymore. Even our grandchildren, we are content to see if they are not hungry, just trying to make sure they are well rested, that all we seem to be able to do, we are not teaching them important things about life anymore, no time. We can only just love them, we don't or can't raise them the way we must or want to anymore. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The children, even when school is out, they rather spend their time away from home, with their friends, so there is almost can be no time left for parent participation to teach their children ... [this is] compounded by teen pregnancies, having babies with absolutely no idea how to raise a child and continuing to have more babies. When a child is born into this world, without very much instructions and time spent to help know things they need to know, they are just growing older, without any directions or the knowledge they need to function well in life matters. They end upcoming to adult age without the necessary skills and knowledge they should possess at their age. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Well, Inuit ways of life matters was not a part of the education system, it is not included in the school system at all, as I see it. The education system seemed only interested in teaching skills only, nothing to do with the more important part of life. Life matters did not exist in the new system. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The Elders' reflections point out the difference between information and knowledge, and growing older

versus growing wiser. In their minds, children and youth are not being properly prepared in life, and are growing older, but not wiser. For them, this is at the heart of many of the difficulties that many Inuit communities are now facing, and is challenging their resiliency.

Recent attempts to reinvigorate the school curriculum with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit have been largely unsuccessful in the eyes of many Inuit. Students are taken out on the land and shown how to build igloos, hunt, cook, build sleds, and other activities. These activities are however seen as being highly contrived: these field trips often take place when the weather is good, and are of such short duration that the students' skills are not seriously tested (see also P. Berger, 2009). In the words of one focus group participant,

The real depth of culture is just being glossed over and the importance of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is not being addressed in the schools, so although the students are asking for the information, it is not being provided for them. The teachers often just want to limit Inuit education to things like building sleds and cooking. It would be like giving a child an empty cup. The purpose of the cup is not being used until the cup is filled with something that can be used to sustain you or quench your thirst. (Arviat Female Focus Group Participant)

And yet, there is no unanimity regarding the role of the Qallunaat-based school system. Some Inuit see the need for their youth and children to attend the formal school system in order to be able to get jobs and fit into the new 'reality'.

Life is always changing. I was a hunter for a long time and then was employed at the mines and then was able to return to hunting when we were turned out by the mine. Youth need both schooling and the ability to live as a real Inuk. (Arviat Final Focus Group Participant)

Young people who have pursued higher education or any people who have a high level of education must not be told negative comments against their education, because they can still learn to do both, unlike us. We can understand how equipment works, such as the Hondas we use a lot for transportation, but if any modern equipment breaks down, we are immediately unable to deal with them. So I don't think you need to compromise either way: new education is necessary, and you don't need to compromise Inuit ways of being to do well in English education. With proper support, it can all work out. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

It is good to have Western education if they can complete it; it is not good when they only get half way. When you see someone finishes school and lands a full time job, that is good, but not finishing and just being stuck the rest of their life, is not good. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

By contrast, others see the two systems of knowledge as competing, rather than complementary:

When we were touring communities to show the all the old artefacts in existing museums, a person from the audience spoke out and said that if Inuit ways are going to be taught in our schools, they won't be able to know how to operate heavy equipment or know how to do anything to be able to make a living. He was an Inuk person who

was against his own culture and language, so to hear that coming from an Inuk was so discouraging, it hurt. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

As a result of these competing cultures, many Inuit have become lost, suspended between both, as in the following quote:

When I was in my late teens, as an 17 or 18 years old, I remember thinking how little I knew about Inuit ways of being and knew that I didn't know all there is to know about the white man's way. I felt as if I was inadequate in both cultures, I was unhappy that I was made to feel as if I had to choose a way to be, which was heavily pressured to be like a white person. I felt that I had to choose and wondered why should I have to choose? (Arviat Men Focus Group Participant)

A similar sense of confusion in an Alaskan Inuit context is documented by Seale, Shellenberger and Spence (2006, p. 12): "A young female participant noted: In the villages, I think it is more intense, too, with a loss of direction...They have the elders and the people...banging it into their heads..., 'Live the old way, live the old way,' whereas they are going to school...they don't know which way to go: to go to their old traditional ways, or to go to college...They get lost right in between."

What are the impacts of these changes? What challenges do Inuit identify to their personal, or community, resiliency?

In their reflections upon how life is different now, compared to forty or fifty years ago, focus group participants were quick to point to the numerous community challenges that have resulted from the break in transmission of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit to a generation of adults and to youth. Underpinning the specific challenges that Elders and adults list is the sense that in particular, the younger generation has lost its bearings, and is no longer embedded within the Inuit worldview of the four *maligait* and the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit principles.

There has always been laws and proverbs that show us what is good to follow, to guide us in life matters which are letting us know what we should avoid to do, what we should try to do, how we should deal with situations that are hard to deal with. Today you wonder if they are just not listening or not been told what laws and proverbs we all need to live by, because they don't seem to have a sense of any laws now, no consideration or concern laws are being broken. There is also no sense of knowing which laws are greater laws and what are guiding laws. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

While concern over the future of Inuit youth was a priority for all participants, the problem of cultural breakdown is common to all generations. Just as there are Inuit of all generations who have developed into 'human beings' – who have developed resiliency in the Inuit sense of the word – the majority face significant challenges to resiliency, and the list raised by focus group participants and key informants is daunting. Participants identified the following issues that they are grappling with, many at both personal and community levels:

- loss of respect for Elders
- loss of leadership
- loss of authority
- suicide
- unemployment

- social assistance and dependency
- addictions
- poor economy
- lack support services
- loss working together for common good - reciprocity
- lack of housing
- lack of facilities and activities
- poverty
- absentee parents - no parenting
- theft, vandalism
- teen pregnancy
- human resource challenges (lack of locally skilled and trained people)
- domestic abuse
- unhealthy relationships
- high rates of incarceration
- hopelessness
- Qallunaat blocking jobs
- lack of food security
- cycle of trauma
- money management
- healing

Elders tended to identify challenges from a holistic perspective, and in relation to what their lives were prior to contact with Qallunaat. They articulated a great sense of grief and loss at the fading of their traditional way of life. To be sure, Elders lamented the loss of cultural practices and skills through which they have expressed the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit – although many of these practices are being revived through the formal education system, through ‘on the land’ programs and so forth. However, as many Elders noted in the focus groups, these revitalized traditions are being taught to youth and adults in isolation from the values, morals, and Inuit laws which have always been woven through all aspects of their lives.

What is often missing from the cultural teachings is transmission of the holistic world view: the understanding that is imparted to Inuit from birth through the *inunnguiniq* of the interconnectedness of all aspects of life, across space and time, including an understanding of each person’s role in that interconnected web. In this way, Elders have experienced a profound rupture with their very way of being in the world, and mourn the loss of the Inuit way of being as it was expressed through their tightly-knit extended kinship structure, in their social organization and governance structure, in the application of the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles and the four Inuit *maligait* through the *inunnguiniq*.

Elders have seen their way of life transformed in a very short amount of time, and many shared feelings of sadness, guilt and shame, and ultimately great responsibility for what has become of their communities. One female Elder expressed the following:

I don't feel that I fully understand Inuit ways of being either and I do support us in getting a better handle [on our situation]. I can see now at my time in life, all the errors of my ways [and] what I did not provide. I feel very responsible for the outcome of my

children and family members – our people – so it is for this reason that I am in great support of what we have been discussing. I don't have very many opportunities to discuss things like this, with other Elders anymore, and I do miss talking with Elders about things, because I grew living with my grandmother and I feel very much lighter having being here, participating in life matters. (Arviat Final Focus Group, Elder Participant)

Indeed, the theme of loss of authority, leadership, and respect for Elders' position in the community was strongly articulated within the Elders, Women and Men focus groups. The Elders make a clear connection between colonization and the loss of their community leadership and authority role, in particular the introduction of residential school, and then Qallunaat-style community-based schooling. Once the connection between children, adults and Elders was interrupted, the rest of the *inunnguiniq* was also negatively impacted.

We as older parents can be blamed for not saying it sooner, or loudly, but we have had no room to say what we have always needed to say; we were just somewhat set aside. Now that we are in bad shape as a society, it is clear that we were not heard, in part because our children have always been somewhere else. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Similarly, another Elder noted that ***"We should have been teaching our children and our society things that are necessary, but we were set aside and had no support or time to be involved with the way our communities were governed"***. The loss of this role has had profound implications for all Inuit, who have had no opportunity to take stock of the situation due to the rapidity of the changes being imposed. The loss of Elders' role and authority was echoed as well by other focus groups:

Elders today wonder what is wrong with grandchildren today because they do not understand how the view is so broken and broken up by schools, TV, media, peers—families all mixed up. There has also been a loss of the parental role, responsibility and respect. (Arviat Women Focus Group Participant)

Elders, women and men in Igloolik expressed the same loss of authority in their communities and within their families. This loss of authority has implications for keeping order in the family, and in the community. Whereas in the past, the Elders would have been responsible for correcting any imbalance – within individuals, or within social relations – and meted out justice if necessary, they have been replaced by the Qallunaat justice system. Participants in the Igloolik Elder focus group noted that ***"This means our authority figure is not our Elders, our leaders, but the judicial system of white people."*** An Elder expressed the situation in the following way:

If one of our children were to do something wrong, never do the authorities come to me first to say that one of my own has done something wrong. They just get incarcerated, and I find out way later something has happened. I think it would work better if as their parents could be properly involved in dealing with our own, getting into trouble with the new laws. If one of the ones in our own house is accused, they just walk right in, right past us to take them away and when this happens, it really hurts us deep inside. We lived here first before anyone else, but we are treated so rudely and as if we are just people to push around by those who are not even from out here. We just gave in so easily, and for that reason, we have lost our footing, and are just drifting along with all

that is going on around us. All parents just all agreed altogether to let the white people do whatever they told us to do, because everyone was so afraid of the white people. We are just still following whatever they tell us to do. It should be, I am older, this is my responsibility to right the wrong my child did, let me fix this situation. I've come to this sudden realization how this is really messed up now. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

This description of the lack of fit between Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Qallunaat systems in addressing interpersonal problems was also echoed in the Igloodik men's focus group. One participant points to the how the Qallunaat social services and criminal justice systems treat the individual as opposed to the family unit; and use an approach that does not foster reconciliation or reparation between the parties that are in conflict. The damage that this approach does to children, many of whom are taken into care as a result, could be avoided if these systems were designed from an Inuit collectivist perspective:

Today our individualities are damaged, and the most damaging to our community families are Social Services. Today they deal with common-law partner issues by separating them – a mother with her children are sent out from the community and not helped or supported with their issues, while the male partner is taken by the R.C.M.P., ordered to be in court, and just left to wait for his court date without any support for their partnership issues. As a result, the young family breaks down. If assisted in the Inuit traditional ways, both would be dealing with their own issues together, and our children's futures would improve. Social Services and the R.C.M.P are not assisting in the betterment of our children's future, because they are not trained to be social counsellors. (Igloodik Men Focus Group Participant)

While there were themes in common, challenges at the personal level were more often expressed by participants in the Women, Men and Youth focus groups. Men and youth placed the greatest emphasis on key challenges to their resiliency: finding employment, housing, managing their finances, and developing healthy relationships and managing their emotions. Men in particular talked about the lack of strategic community business planning, comparing themselves to other communities in Nunavut which are seen to be better-prepared and better-organized. One Arviat male noted that ***“From a political perspective, our community is very behind other communities this size. There is very little support for business so our economy is weak”***. Another agreed, pointing to the need for some overarching leadership that would have the community working together in a concerted manner – a direct reference to the loss of the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principle of *piliriqatigiiniq*, or working together for the common good.

The community as a whole needs to adapt to the current situation before it can respond effectively. There is no effective network system within our community so everyone is left to struggle on their own rather than being able to plan strategically. (Arviat Men Focus Group Participant)

The challenges to personal resiliency identified by male participants reflect the understanding that relative to Inuit women, Inuit men have experienced the greater erosion to their traditional male activities over the last 50-60 years (Morgan, 2008; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2007). For those men who are employed, they work in Qallunaat-type '9-5' jobs, and are now forced to ***“guess the timing of the caribou run and 'book time off' in advance”***. Even among those men who are not

employed full-time, while modern technology has created opportunities around hunting that did not exist previously, it has also increased the cost of pursuing these activities, in some cases well beyond their resources.

The introduction of the wage economy was identified as the reason behind many community challenges, including the lack of community volunteerism. Whereas in the past, the needs of the community and the group always took precedence over the needs of the individual, this spirit has been disrupted and distorted by the introduction of Qallunaat ways, to the extent that few people volunteer for any activities in the community any more. In the words of one Arviat Elder,

Money has everything to do with things now, which we did not even know existed. We hear people say now that I will not help or discuss unless I get paid; [some others] think they don't have enough knowledge or feel that they are not knowledgeable enough to participate in meetings. But you must try to get involved, whoever you are, so things will become less dangerous. It is hard to define: I am not the boss, we are not the boss of anything; even so, if we all try together to deal with things, that is all we have as an option to address our state of being. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

While these themes were also expressed by the women, their discussions focused on the behavioural challenges they observe among children and youth that have resulted from the break in traditional child-rearing practices, as well as anger management issues that they observe among the men.

A female Elder in Igloolik talked about the changes that she has seen in the behaviour of men since Inuit stopped living on the land in camps, and lowered their level of daily physical activity. For her, there is a clear connection between the changes to their way of being – living in permanent settlements, shopping at the Northern for their food, lacking consistent activity in the form of employment and so on – and the negative and destructive behaviours that now permeate Inuit communities.

I think men do not go out hunting enough now, they are staying constantly at home, when before they were always out and hardly home because they were out hunting. This causes men to get upset too easily now, because Inuit noticed when men cannot or are not able to go out hunting, they start to think too much and start to get agitated and irritable. When they go out hunting, they burn a lot of energy, so when my husband got a job, his behaviour changed, he started getting upset a lot more and that started to bother me. I wish at times he would leave for a while, he is always around me, too close, he wouldn't leave me to be on my own, and I had no more me space. I think the way of being, where we lived traditionally, helped us stay balanced. This way suited our bodies to operate a certain way, though it has a bad side also. (Igloolik Elder Focus Group Participant)

Similarly, one male participant shared this reflection on the purpose of anger and its utility when Inuit were living a more traditional camp lifestyle, and the need to manage this emotion now that they were living a different way.

Anger is such a powerful emotion that it can actually be helpful when you are in a difficult situation because it brings the greatest adrenaline charge. It helps you to get a lot stronger very quickly, but we have to learn to understand how to generate that adrenaline without the anger. Anger's purpose is to help you cope, but it is not

supposed to be used when it deters relationships or makes us abusive to others who are not deserving of that response. (Arviat Men Focus Group)

Although not stated directly, focus group participants alluded to this connection between imbalance in their way of being and a whole host of negative behaviours, including interpersonal violence, vandalism, and various addictions. Some of the most destructive expressions of the imbalance that Inuit are experiencing are suicide and addictions, which were discussed more frequently by adult and youth focus group participants than by the Elders. Stories of suicide and addiction all pointed to the inability of people to cope with their current reality: they had not become ‘fully formed human beings’, they had not developed the skills through their child-rearing and adult socialization to persevere in the face of adversity. As articulated by Rhoda Karetak (n.d.), so many of the generation of adults and youth have been raised to be ‘fragile eggs’, and they are breaking under the strain of trying to find their place.

I did not learn too much about life, other than about hunting. But [relative] would say things every now and then and I would recall things he mentioned, long after he had passed away. He would say, make sure a man does not decide to give up on life, because of a female. I recall remembering that saying because of issues I had with a woman. But now you see today, that there are males who are not able to withstand the situations they may have with females. A lot of them are giving up, the male person gets someone pregnant, even have a baby, and when things go bad, commit suicide, leaving the child they made. We should have been teaching our children and our society things that are necessary, but we were set aside and had no support or time to be involved with the way our communities were governed. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Another shared the story of another young man who tried to commit suicide because his brother was using the ATV (Honda):

I was told this story by a young man: he decided to go do laundry at his sister's house, a two story house, and while doing laundry he was upstairs and started hearing all kinds of noise coming from downstairs, so he went down to see what it was. It was his younger brother who was trying to commit suicide and he stopped him and asked why he was trying to commit suicide and his answer was, the Honda is being used for too long and that he really wanted to drive around now he was really upset to the point that he was trying to end his life. The parents had taken the Honda out hunting and he was tired of waiting for it. I mean, if things like this are causing people to want to commit suicide, this is insane, that is not even a serious enough reason to be so depressed, so I do think what we are talking about now, is very important to discuss and take very seriously. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Youth pointed to a number of determinants of health which place young people at risk for suicide and addictions, including unemployment, lack of housing, absentee parents, and generalized hopelessness. For example, one youth participant noted that ***“Kids graduate from school, but that doesn't get you a job”***, while a female focus group participant stated that the ***“key issue is a stable economy ... young people are becoming dependent on welfare”***. The situation for youth in Arviat is exacerbated by the large population bulge of which they are a part: at 65-70 births per year, among a population of about 2,860, Arviat has the highest birth rate in Canada (White, 2010).

[It is very hard] when you are in a situation when you are in need for food, in need for fuel and yet you know even though you struggle to meet the needs it is all going to be the same again next month. My other siblings all have young families and so a lot of the burden falls on the younger teens. (Arviat Youth Focus Group Participant)

As with male focus group participants, lack of financial planning skills was also identified by youth. Youth in particular talked about the difficulty of making their social assistance cheques last until the end of the month. As a result, they end up either borrowing and needing to return with interest, or else they are building up debt and then limiting their network of support because they are not able to reciprocate anymore. Two participants were clearly being asked to manage significant loads, including caring for family Elders, adults, and siblings. Another participant noted that if a person has a disability, it is even more challenging to meet their needs. The discussion groups revealed the extent to which a small number of individuals who are coping well (relatively speaking) are shouldering significant personal and community responsibilities. These individuals acknowledged their own 'good fortune' and a desire to give back to their communities; and yet, the obligations imposed on the few who were 'doing well' were so extensive, it is easy to see how even those who have managed to develop resiliency – to become human beings – can burn out in the face of so much community need. The potentially negative personal consequences of working for the benefit of the community is illustrated by the story of one participant: already weighed down by significant immediate family responsibilities, she talked about feeling responsible for other adults and Elders who were asking for assistance over the radio because their own families were not helping them:

It is hard to hear an Elder ask for help and not be responding. The responsibilities for helping others are not being spread out evenly because some people are avoiding their responsibilities. (Arviat Youth Focus Group Participant, as relayed by the interpreter)

Concern about the lack of economic planning for the community, region, and territory was a dominant theme among Igloolik youth, and echoed by Arviat men. The government's role in creating dependency through social assistance and over-regulation and control was identified as large barriers to the development of a stable Inuit economy. One participant expressed frustration with the lack of assistance for those wishing to become independent business owners, a frustration which was echoed by others.

As a territory, we are not really very connected to the rest of the world. Individually it is getting difficult to know who to go to, what to do with life. When you are in need of help or direction it is hard to know who to go to. I took a hair dressing course before and tried to start a hair dressing business. Starting a business, any business is immediately difficult, because almost all the people do not know what it takes, or anything about running a business. We get rejected because there is no support for the small business interested person, only big business gets supported. (Igloolik Youth Discussion Group Participant)

The combination of lack of opportunities, poverty, hunger, homelessness and 'couch surfing', combined with a lack of parental supervision, has led to a number of break-ins and instances of vandalism in Arviat. According to youth participants and the youth outreach worker, these are largely related to drug addiction – predominantly marijuana and alcohol. For focus group participants, lack of parenting is at the heart of the problem for many of the youth engaging in these behaviours: ***"These kids feel nobody cares. Nobody cares what they do or about them as individuals. Kids often turn to drugs in the first***

place because of this neglect.” One participant shared the following story:

Kids were breaking into the youth centre, which was so devastating that this was being done to them when they had worked so hard to get this place specifically for these young people who were breaking in. Most kids are stealing because they want food or they want hash. In court those are the two main reasons why this is happening. Occasionally some kids will say they did this because they were bored. Often these kids are locked out of houses or parents are absent and they are unsupervised. (Arviat Youth Focus Group Participant)

A key informant working in the social services sector was equally concerned about the impact of the burgeoning population on the school, health and social services systems, as well as the longer term employment opportunities for Arviat youth.

I am very worried about the big bulge of the population that is coming through in 10 years. There will be a need for 200 jobs: we have no paved runway so the jets cannot get in here, we are missing many public services and are stretched to the limit – What are they going to do about the schools they will need? (Arviat Key Informant)

4. Community Suggestions to Grow Resilience

Participants had many ideas as to how to grow resilience in individuals and at the community level. According to the Elders, correcting the situation in their communities is a matter of returning to the guiding principles that have traditionally shaped Inuit society. This involves applying Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit principles to the new way of living; it also requires individual and community-wide opportunities to express the grief and loss that is driving so many challenges Inuit currently face so that people can begin to move forward. The following suggestions were captured in the focus groups:

- youth as priority – including land-based opportunities
- need to create and support Inuit-based mechanisms
- Inuit control over systems (social; economic; education; governance)
- community-wide healing
- personal healing
- need to blend traditional Inuit and modern
- opportunities to share, find and give support (meetings)
- relational approach
- need to update IQ transmission to modern reality
- need local training opportunities
- need activities
- support kinship system
- use education system as vehicle
- restore balance
- going on the land
- school activities
- value school

At the heart of the proposed solutions is a return of Inuit leadership and authority over key societal

structures, including governance and education. Currently, despite having negotiated a vast territory, a public, Inuit-majority government and self-determination under the 1993 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, Inuit are still not masters of their domain: Nunavut is filled with Qallunaat who occupy most government positions, as well as the majority of educational, correctional, health and social service positions (Laugrand & Oosten, 2009a; Tester & Irniq, 2008). While this is changing, as increasing numbers of Inuit obtain the higher education, skills and training required by these positions, the goal of staffing at least 85% of all positions with Inuit will take many decades to achieve (T. Berger, 2006; Fraser, 2010). Moreover, many have noted that the systems that have been put in place in Nunavut are not Inuit-based, and as such these systems will continue the colonization process regardless of whether they are staffed by Inuit or Qallunaat (P. Berger, 2007, 2009; P. Berger & Epp, 2005; Tester & Irniq, 2008). Indeed, in his 2006 report, T. Berger argued for the need for schooling to become bilingual and bicultural for it to serve the needs of Nunavut students, and called on the Government of Canada to take responsibility for this change; the Government of Canada was quick to respond that it would not lead this process (T. Berger, 2006). Seen in this light, the suggestion to infuse all systems with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit oversimplifies the situation – like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole.

To some extent, the types of solutions identified by participants reflected gender-specific concerns: among men, the need for financial planning and management, healing, personal counselling, and help with anger management and addictions were highly prevalent, and there was talk following the research discussion groups of forming an ongoing men's support group. For their part, solutions to building resiliency identified by female participants focused on developing healthy kinship relations, the need for personal and community healing, and for Inuit-based parenting and educational activities.

The continuing relevance of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

The focus group discussions and key informant interviews revealed ongoing reverence for Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and a great desire to see its use revitalized, among all age groups and genders. There was a sense that throughout Inuit society, people are struggling to make sense of their current reality, and place great hope in the ability of the traditional ways to light the way forward. Following are some examples of participants' statements demonstrating their sense of the ongoing relevance of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to today's Inuit.

Any young people who are not addicted or confused about who they are, are very interesting young people, just the same. They find great interest in our knowledge, as I have always been asked to speak or teach young adults, children in schools regarding traditional knowledge. Even though I don't think that I know much about life matters, people seem to choose me to be their Elder female in activities regarding our Inuit ways of being, such as this, I was chosen because someone needed an Elder female in this meeting, so here I am. (Arviat Final Focus Group, Elder Participant)

I appreciate hearing about experiences having children and grandchildren because it provides us all with a very specific purpose in life. I was never into politics, but now I am because I want my children to live in a good environment. It is really helpful to hear how we each understand these things and the importance of this perspective. (Arviat Final Focus Group, Male Participant)

I have learned from your stories and I understand and even visualize how it was in the past. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have heard from everyone. If we are going to

receive these kinds of instructions from our Elders, this will be very great. I have not heard anything from our Elders in the past. Though sometimes we do not listen I have heard many things today that well help me. (Arviat Final Focus Group, Youth Participant)

Similar comments were made in Igloodik. For example, one Elder shared an exchange that she had with a young person in her community: despite the many changes that have occurred, the “world is still the world” and Elders have much knowledge that still applies:

My children that I reared would say ... how they heard of a young person saying to his parents, when they tried to discipline him or instruct him ... things are no longer like they were before, those days are gone, so don't tell me. My own children did not talk back me, but one day, one did say to me, it is not like it was long ago. I answered back, yes, you are right about that, I know there is TV, radio, new dances, trying to drink alcohol, being intoxicated, sure that is what today is like now. Even though none of those existed before, the world has not changed, it is still the world... I still stand by that. (Igloodik Elder Focus Group Participant)

The comments of a youth in Igloodik also illustrated the desire to preserve Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and the Inuit way of seeing and being in the world, while also incorporating elements of the Qallunaat world:

We hear a lot about the Northwest passage now, and I have travelled around and find that most people do not think there is anybody even living in this part of the world, so we don't exist as a people, people actually think, no one lives up here. I think about how it will become exploited a lot, because they think no one lives up here. I think we are going to be noticed a bit more now, because there was someone last year that was studying us Inuit because it was Polar International Year. We will get notoriety and what I think we need to keep doing is continue to be human beings, and promote caring for people, be right, treat the environment properly and continue to promote that. (Igloodik Youth Focus Group Participant)

The focus group conversations conveyed a sense that there exists a window of opportunity during which Inuit can arrest the decline in the transmission of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and indeed have begun that process at both the local or family level, as well as at the community and territorial levels. This belief is echoed in the work of Tester and Irniq (2008), who agree that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit has the potential to show the way forward. The challenge is to ensure that the principles are not appropriated by the Qallunaat culture, and used as an ongoing colonizing force. In their words,

IQ, we suggest, is a place, a foundation—a kappiananngittuq ‘safe place’ made so by the historical struggle of elders. It is a place legitimized by ancient wisdom that defines all of us in ways that have profound implications for human survival in a world of dramatic and threatening environmental change. As Stevenson (2006) argues, IQ is about remembering, an ethical injunction that lies at the root of Inuit identity. It is also about acting from a particular intellectual and spiritual location. IQ, as resistance, is persistently present. It is, as Kulchyski (2006:263) argues, written everywhere: “the syllabic writing of Elders, the inscriptions on the landscape on the body, the material structure of communities incarnated in architectures and gestures...” IQ can be a

spiritual and intellectual home, a safe place from which elders and youth alike can practice resistance through stories, art, music, research, writings, and very many forms of practice. As kappainartuqanngittuq, 'a place about which there is no reason to be scared,' IQ can bring together generations of Inuit in a common challenge. That challenge is to hold in check relations that seriously threaten Inuit culture and, in so doing, put before us relationships between and among people, animals, and landscapes relevant to all of us that might otherwise be absorbed by a very different, totalizing logic. (Tester & Irniq, 2008, p. 59)

There is hope for the future

Key informants in both communities identified a long list of community assets and resources that form the basis for strong community, and several remarked that their communities showed signs of healing in recent years – such as holding community-wide clean-ups, falling suicide rates, and increased participation in community activities, to name a few. For many respondents, the need to participate in individual and community-wide healing activities is critical for the future well-being of Inuit.

In both Arviat and Igloolik, key informants noted the positive outcomes of the Nunavut Community Wellness Planning (NCWP) process, which despite its challenges, has resulted in the development of community-based wellness plans and increased cooperation among community organizations concerning wellness issues. According to key informant interviews, the community was invited to attend a community healing presentation and discussion as part of the NCWP project in Arviat. The response was so positive that this first presentation led to other small group discussions and regular support group meetings designed to help people integrate their past experiences so that they can move positively into the future. In both Igloolik and Arviat, key informants reported that the NCWP has promoted the feeling of community ownership and control – the ability to make things happen at the community level, however small – which has been identified as a key element in promoting community healing and resiliency (Saul & Bava, 2008; Walsh, 2007).

Despite this optimism, several participants shared a sense that they did not feel competent or qualified to come up with solutions to the current situation. As described above, Inuit knowledge has traditionally been passed down from person to person, generation to generation. Inuit were discouraged from making decisions based on their own experience alone. And yet, the situation confronting Inuit is unique in their history: there is no collected body of knowledge around managing the effects of colonization to draw upon, which is forcing Inuit to address these challenges using different methods and approaches. The need to use the 'trial and error method' is captured in the following comment by an Arviat Elder:

Things we were never exposed to are things we can't fully know about, but after trying them, or seeing what results they have after, can we make adjustments. We can't be expected to have known the right and wrong things of which we have no way of knowing. But experience is something we all can learn from, trial and error method. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

Another participant was hopeful that by working together they could make a positive difference.

Even if all agreed at this meeting, let's all just start promoting and living Inuit ways of being, it is very hard now. No matter how determined we are, it is now going to be very hard to revive Inuit traditional knowledge. I think if we could collaboratively work together, be organized, we may make some difference. There are some people who

never seem to say anything, but they may have good ideas and should be asked to speak, we should try to speak out, what we think are solutions to our society's well-being. As Elders, we must start speaking out, we have been quiet for too long. (Arviat Elder Focus Group Participant)

The following exchange between Elders from Igloolik exemplifies the precariousness of the situation from their perspective, and the challenge that they face as their community and family leaders pass on:

Participant1: *Now I think of things this way, there are no more older generation after us, we are it. To me I still think that I am not an Elder yet, but also know we are now at the outer side of the living. But we have to stop thinking that we are not the Elders yet, we need to start voicing our knowledge, we have to start being the Elders and accept that role. We are talking together about life in this setting and the subjects we are bringing up are starting to surface. If we say only what we think from our own perspective only, it is not going to be accurate, but if we relate back to what and how we were told by our Elders, pass that on, that information will be right. We have to get involved and do what it takes to help our community, we have to take care of its well-being, for the sake of younger people.*

Participant2: *Some people say, there will always be Elders, Elders are not disappearing, but the ones with knowledge of Inuit ways, because the Inuit culture and language is not written, it is our Elders' minds.*

Participant3: *But we fall so short of that knowledge.*

Participant 1: *Sure we fall short of that knowledge, but listen to us, we are relating back to what we were told and remember. I mention earlier about a family who recently lost their father, and what we were told before was, if you don't let the words of the person who died, die, things will be alright, you will continue. And when the family lost their father, it is very heavy, it is painful, hardship instantly is a reality. Someone spoke at the funeral and I was there. So I can clearly remember what was said and can agree with it, because I've also lost my father and know what this is about. When the person, who was your knowledge provider dies, remember what they said and try to follow the instructions they provided you, use the words and use them to not be like a helpless orphan. Now if you don't use the words of the one who provided you knowledge, and don't bother trying to follow them, you will experienced being a helpless orphan. When I heard someone speaking at the funeral, I could agree with that person, if we hold their words in our hearts, we use them to reach our adulthood and on.*

By contrast, youth are focused on the future, and many identified the need to adapt the Inuit way of being to the current realities in order to build a strong economy. The following comment from a youth participant from Igloolik illustrates the shifts that are taking place among the younger generation in terms of how they see the world, which in turn has implications for the problems they identify, and the solutions they form:

We are living an American lifestyle right now, we are never going to get the same respect as our Elders have in being Inuit. Even if we try to say we are Inuit, it is never coming back, we are never going to treat our children the same way they used to. We are Americans now, so we have to be more open minded with other cultures, so they

will want to live in this world. We are part of the rest of the world, but that is so far into the future. (Igloolik Youth Focus Group Participant)

This youth's statement acknowledges the connection of the North to the rest of the world, a connection which for now is largely media- and electronically-based, but which in his eyes may become even more intimate as climate change opens up access to their communities, and physically brings the world to their doorstep.

This 'focus on the future' was mirrored in the discussions that took place with Inuit key informants representing research or service delivery organizations outside of Arviat and Igloolik. The need to work from an Inuit perspective – including the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles and values – and to be creators of new Inuit knowledge, not simply the 'subjects' of government and other studies, was strongly articulated. At the same time, key informants also saw the need to create new Inuit ways of being, doing and knowing as a result of greater cultural and economic integration between Nunavut and the South – including incorporating Qallunaat ways where they make sense. Furthermore, the spirit of hopefulness and anticipation of the future expressed by discussion group participants and key informants alike is in itself a positive indicator of resiliency as perseverance – a perseverance which persists despite the many challenges that Inuit continue to face (Tousignant & Sioui, 2009).

Appendix 2: Research Methods Used to Explore Resilience in Aboriginal and Inuit Communities: A Literature Review

General approaches to methodology. Resilience has been defined in many ways, and different conceptualizations of resilience imply different research methodologies (Kirmayer et al., 2009). Inevitably those researching individual resilience will lean towards different methods compared to those who focus on community resilience. Specifically, those who focus on individual resilience may rely on standard surveys (Dahl-Petersen, Pedersen, & Bjerregaard, 2007) and key informant interviews to collect both individual perceptions and analysis of broader community interactions (Collings, 2001; Kirmayer et al., 2009; Kishigami, 2008; Korhonen, 2006; National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2008; Patrick & Tomiak, 2008; Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2004; Richmond & Ross, 2008; Richmond & Ross, 2009).

Kirmayer argue that community-level resilience concepts must be measured through community-level indicators ((Kirmayer et al., 2009). Community resilience can be measured by aggregating individual-level data (Tait, 2006) and/or by measuring indicators of community organizing and functioning, although using both allows for valuable triangulation (Kirmayer et al., 2009). Several authors, particularly those engaged in larger research processes with extended resources, support the use of multiple methods that allow for full triangulation of findings (Anderson, 2008a; Basford, Thorpe, & William, 2004; Colussi, 2000; International Resilience Project, n.d.). These researchers also argue that community based research must be combined with local capacity building in research methods and implementing research projects (Anderson, 2008a). Colussi's design for community economic development planning (Colussi, 2000) includes elements like an organizational inventory and public meetings. According to Colussi (2000), with the focus of the research on the group rather than the individual, there is little need for individual confidentiality and the research process probably should be as public as the outcome. Interestingly, Colussi's method promotes the collection of baseline data so that the community can accurately measure change over time, which is less common in other studies.

Others working on smaller projects with limited resources have used innovative qualitative methods like analyzing photography and written compositions elicited from youth (Rygaard, 2008), and films and lyrics produced by youth (Pedersen, 2008). Researchers with a more anthropological approach have extracted their evidence through workshop processes (Larsen, Pedersen, Berthelsen, & Chew, 2010; Oosten & Laugrand, 2002), comparing case studies (Gladue & Lund, 2008; Healey & Meadows, 2008; Tousignant & Sioui, 2009), cross-cultural analysis (Christie & Halpern, 1990), and anthropological studies (Blackman, 2008). Another strand of research explores the connection between ecological resilience or sustainability and community or cultural resilience (Kawagley, 1999; Richmond & Ross, 2009; Trosper, 2002; N. J. Turner & Clifton, 2009; N. J. Turner et al., 2003).

Some specific advice from the literature. This review has identified five key elements to consider when conducting research with Aboriginal populations. These are described below.

- **Community involvement.** It is important to consult formally with the community about the research, and incorporate opportunities for input into design and implementation (Anderson, 2008a; Healey & Meadows, 2008). However, there is always the risk that last minute community involvement can lead to changes to instruments or methods which reduce the value of the data (Anderson, 2008a). Community-based researchers who are nominated by their communities can add value, so long as they actually work in their

communities. Moving them to other communities leaves them out of the local community context like any other outside researcher (Anderson, 2008a, 2008b). Some studies like the CIET projects use ethical review panels made up of Aboriginal members (Anderson, 2008b). In the CIET projects, community involvement includes giving the community responsibility for feedback. Besides text based methods, video and community events were designed locally. Community participants took the ideas from the research and fed them back in a variety of ways, looking for the best approach for their community (Anderson, 2008b).

- **Language and culture.** The Stories of Resilience project integrates into its methods both direct and indirect ways of capturing and understanding the role of cultural difference. The project consciously built their methodology around a tradition of oral history, and oral culture. In the first instance, the project directly addresses language and vocabulary as a tool for exploring cultural difference by asking respondents about the words in their Aboriginal languages they use to talk about resilience. More indirectly, the project addresses different cultural interpretations of resilience by soliciting traditional stories which can provide cultural metaphors around resilience (Dow, 2008). In terms of written documentation, translation of key relevant documents into local language, with back translation is recommended (International Resilience Project, n.d.). This approach can have far-reaching far reaching effects. In one CIET study, researchers worked hard to translate sexual terms related to sexually transmitted diseases into an Aboriginal language, where they did not exist, or had negative connotations. The outcome of this element of the research methodology was the development of new content in that language for talking about HIV/AIDS (Anderson, 2008b). Finding a common language to express concepts during the research process is a critical step. For example, the CIET researchers found that a large number of their respondents did not understand what the researchers meant by ‘spiritual’, but they were slow to realize this was a finding in itself, which set back their research unnecessarily (Anderson, 2008b).
- **Selecting data collection methods.** Anderson points out that the more common methods of collecting anecdotal reports and case series are seen as less evidence-based compared to randomized control trials (RCTs) (Anderson, 2008a). However, he speculates that the difficulty in finding statistically significant associations between factors or variables in larger studies may be due to community-specific cultural contexts found in different communities (Anderson, 2008b). Anderson also cautions against opportunity-based sampling of individuals which introduces problems of external validity (Anderson, 2008a). This speaks to the need to remain cognizant of the context of all data collection, and to be wary of inappropriate extrapolations.
- **Designing research tools/instruments.** Anderson finds that the majority of existing tools and methods are designed to measure individual resilience, and are ineffective at measuring the collective dimensions of resilience that occur between people (Anderson, 2008a). The usefulness of self-administered questionnaires is limited by the level of literacy of the respondents, and it may be necessary for researchers to assist respondents with ‘self-administered’ tools to get meaningful results (Anderson, 2008b).
- **Implementation:** The International Resilience Project (IRP) suggests that is helpful to speak with youth and adults in separate focus groups (International Resilience Project, n.d.). Healey and Meadows argue that all the processes in the research method benefit from being iterative, including recruiting participants, data collection and analysis. Interviewers can increase the reach and depth of their work as their experience develops during the project (Healey & Meadows, 2008). The IRP also suggests that researchers may break

interviews into shorter sessions. This reduces fatigue, and allows both interviewer and participant to pause and think, and bring more reflection to second or third session (International Resilience Project, n.d.). The IRP methodology specifically recommends that researchers be prepared that some participants may find engaging in the research distressing. They suggest that researchers find a support person or organization in advance, to help respond to any adverse reactions (International Resilience Project, n.d.)