

## WHAT IS IT?

The **National Indian Education Association** partnered with **KAIROS Canada** to become certified facilitators of the Kairos Blanket Healing Exercise (KBE). NIEA participated in the Facilitator Training so that we would be able to provide and implement the blanket healing exercise in our own local communities, both Native and non-Native.

The **KAIROS Blanket Exercise** program is a unique, participatory history lesson — developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and educators — that fosters truth, understanding, respect and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



*“There was tremendous value to doing this training with NIEA, the other participants at the training added a lot of perspective and richness to the discussion.”*



### National Indian Education Association

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## NIEA Indigenous Empowerment and Resilience Training

*Developed in  
partnership with  
KAIROS Canada*

*“This exercise showed me other ways to share the truth and how to express ourselves with emphasis on cultural relativity.”*

## THE EXPERIENCE

During this exercise, participants stand and walk on blankets representing the land and into the role of Native peoples experienced during pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance.

Participants are guided through the exercise by trained facilitators who read the script and assume the roles of European explorers and Indigenous knowledge keepers. The exercise concludes with a debriefing, conducted as a 'talking circle,' during which participants discuss the learning experience, process their feelings, ask questions, share insights, deepen their understanding, and create actionable next steps for their work.

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## HISTORY

Created in 1997, the KAIROS Blanket Exercise explores the major themes and findings of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). A precursor to KAIROS, the Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC) brought to the table Elders, participatory, popular education experts and members of the Assembly of First Nations Education Department. The concern was that RCAP would be shelved and forgotten. From this group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the Blanket Exercise was created. ARC and then KAIROS have guided its ongoing development for two decades. Versions for different regions of Canada now exist as well as adaptations for Australia, Guatemala and the United States.

## Components

- Prayer
- Cleansing
- Land Acknowledgment
- Role introduction, including Elder or traditional knowledge keeper (if applicable)
- Blanket Healing Exercise
- Talking Circle
- Physical and emotional healing
- Supports (provided by the host organization/community)
- Optional: Federal Indian Policy and Culture Based Education (CBE) training

## What NIEA needs from you:

- Advance notice to book travel and accommodations. (NIEA is following all COVID CDC guidelines as it relates to gathering in large groups).
- Specific dates and times
- At least 4 hours to conduct the full exercise. (Optional training components will require a full day to complete the exercise).
- Accurate counts of all attendees
- Host organization will provide food, water, and Kleenex
- Participation in a post-exercise survey/evaluation

*"I felt re-energized and inspired by the resilience of our people. This experience made me remember why I teach where I do."*

