



Special Issue Foreword

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In a world that where our news cycles seem dominated by negativity, division and conflict, we can sometimes be distracted from the things that more truly celebrate and accurately reflect our humanity. “Love” is one of those true positives across all cultures that contributes to making life joyful and fulfilling. It is for this reason that the Journal of Indigenous Social Development chose “love” as its special issue topic.

Universally, the concept of “love”, with its depth and complexity is thought of and expressed with endless creativity. Many cultures have several linguistic expressions, some have no equivalent word, or only one “love” as in English, applied in multiple contexts. The spirit of love is respectful, unifying and perpetuated in all life.

For Indigenous communities across the globe, love is conceptualized, enacted, and practiced in countless ways – and extends beyond western notions of love to include limitless practices stemming from the many understandings of creation and our origin stories. Love is offered in ways that grow identity and spirit, heal ancestral trauma, bring existential meaning, and inspire efforts in reconciliation. Love is essential to every program and policy created to address ongoing racial strife and division, the welfare and care of children and elders, the health of our earth and in resolving the deepening crises we face.

Without a love that fuels and sustains connection and passion for change, noble efforts are bound to end in futility. Love is a boundless essence that must be intrinsically and mindfully rooted in our work, in our use of resources, and in how we honor and strengthen relationships.

The JISD Editorial Board identified “love” as a Special Issue topic to understand its divergences and how Indigenous love can be grown and intentionally applied to improve the human, non-human, and environmental conditions. The authors in this issue share how love guides their practice and person, and urge us to consider that love is contained within the land, ourselves and each other.