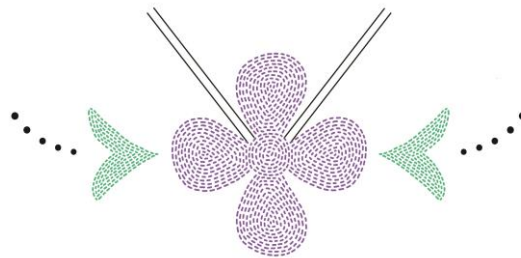


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale  
sur les femmes et les filles  
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls  
Truth-Gathering Process  
Part 1 Statement Gathering  
Prince George Conference & Civic Centre  
Prince George, British Columbia**



**PUBLIC**

**Thursday February 5, 2018**

**Statement - Volume 223**

**Sharon Lynn Patterson**

**Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay**

**Coast Reporting Services Inc.**

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1 [FEBRUARY 5, 2018, 11:20 A.M.]

2 KERRIE REAY: Sharon, if you are ready?

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I am.

4 KERRIE REAY: So, um, for the record, this is Kerrie Reay.

5 I'm a statement taker with the National Inquiry Into  
6 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It  
7 is February the 5th of 2018 and we are at  
8 Prince George, B.C. and the time is 11:20 a.m. With  
9 me is Sharon Patterson. You are Metis?

10 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

11 KERRIE REAY: And you reside here in Prince George. And  
12 you are here to talk about your survivorship, but you  
13 also like to see yourself as a warrior as well. So in  
14 the room we also have Gertrude Pierre and that's  
15 P-i-e-r-r-e. And, Gertrude, you are here as health  
16 support for Sharon. And I should make reference that  
17 Patterson is P-a-t-t-e-r-s-o-n. Also I just need you  
18 to confirm that you are here voluntarily, that you are  
19 agreeing to be video and audio taped, --

20 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

21 KERRIE REAY: -- and that your statement will be public?

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

23 KERRIE REAY: Okay. Okay, Sharon, this is your space, this  
24 is your time, and I invite you to share your truth  
25 with the National Inquiry.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Thank you. I just want to  
2 introduce myself. I am Sharon Patterson. I am 57  
3 years old. I'm a grandma, a mother of four, and a  
4 photographer. Um, I think I will start my story back  
5 to the first time I remember witnessing or feeling  
6 abuse. Um, I grew up in a family with eight kids,  
7 five brothers and three sisters. I'm the second  
8 youngest. I was the middle child. I was kind of  
9 always just there, the middle child. I wasn't the  
10 baby that got the attention. I wasn't the older  
11 sister. I was just the middle kid. I was the  
12 scapegoat too that got blamed for everything.

13 But my earliest recollection -- recollection is,  
14 um, I was three years old, and I know I was three  
15 years old because I looked to the right and I seen my  
16 sister in a crib, which means she was a baby. So if  
17 I'm three years she's a baby. I'm three years old and  
18 I was in my mom's bed and my mom was washing the  
19 floor. And I can remember having to -- having to go  
20 to the bathroom and I can remember being scared to ask  
21 to go the bathroom. Mom didn't like anybody walking  
22 on the floors after they were washed. And it was  
23 either take the risk and ask or pee the bed and then  
24 pay for it, right? My mom's bed. And so I said to  
25 Mom: Mom, I have -- I have to go pee. And the next

1 thing I remember -- we also had long hair and it was  
2 always in a pony tail or whatever or a braid. The  
3 next thing I remember, she came over and grabbed me by  
4 the hair and I remember landing outside the bedroom  
5 door; just because I asked to go to the bathroom.

6 And then I believe from that moment on probably  
7 until I was like 12 years old when I was as big as my  
8 mom and she couldn't beat on me anymore, I was beaten  
9 as a child from the age of three, that I remember,  
10 until 12 for all kinds of stuff. I was kept home at  
11 the age of eight. My mom and dad drank a lot. And I  
12 was kept home when my mom was hung over. I was made  
13 to stay home and do the cleaning and do the cooking  
14 and run errands. And we lived right across from the  
15 school. And I can remember being a child thinking,  
16 I'm going to get in trouble if the principal sees me;  
17 I'm supposed to be at school.

18 Um, my mom and dad fought. They drank a lot.  
19 They fought a lot. There was a lot of abuse. I can  
20 remember hiding in closets and hearing the fighting.  
21 I can remember, um, another time. I think I was  
22 closer to five, lived in the same house. And this  
23 wasn't the first time this happened either, but I  
24 remember this one really distinctly. It was Easter  
25 weekend and a big -- they were drinking. A big -- we

1           were all in bed sleeping, us kids, waiting for the  
2           Easter bunny to come. And I remember all this noise  
3           and crashing and I remember my dad hit my -- my mom  
4           and then my brother hit my dad, and then next thing I  
5           know -- um, we always wore those long flannelette  
6           nighties. And the next thing I remember is my hand up  
7           like this holding a big person's hand, bare feet, in  
8           my nightie, running to the neighbour's house for  
9           safety. And we hadn't -- this wasn't the first time  
10          we ran there. We ran there many times. Um, and then  
11          my dad went to jail. And I don't remember -- that's  
12          what I remember from that, that part.

13                 And I mentioned this to my sister a few years ago  
14          and she says, there's no way you could remember that.  
15          I said, I just told you exactly what I remembered.  
16          She goes: That was my hand you were holding. I had  
17          [Sister 2], the baby, you know, two-year-old or whatever,  
18          and I was holding your hand and we were running to the  
19          Briton's house for safety. Ah, and then Dad went to  
20          jail and I don't remember much of that after that,  
21          right?

22                 But it was like a regular occurrence in our  
23          family and I thought it was normal. I thought  
24          everybody lived like that. I didn't like it. I knew  
25          it felt wrong. But I also thought everybody else

1 lived the same way as we did until I started spending  
2 nights at other people's houses and it's like what?  
3 What's with these guys? They hug each other. They  
4 tell each other they love. There's no fighting or  
5 yelling and... So at an early age I knew it was wrong  
6 but I could never seem to escape it. Um, I'm sorry.

7 KERRIE REAY: No worries and no rush.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And one of those times when I was  
9 kept home from school to clean and cook, and it was  
10 old-school back in the day. My mom used to hard wax  
11 the floors and then polish them and then buff them.  
12 And my sister and I were doing dishes and we started a  
13 fight. And Mom was at the end of her rope for  
14 whatever reason. She always seemed to be at the end  
15 of her rope. And, um, I think she smacked my sister  
16 and sent her to her room and, of course, I said, why  
17 do I always get in trouble for everything she does?  
18 My sister. Because I was always told I was older and  
19 and I should know better.

20 And because I said that to my mom, my mom used to  
21 do this: She would grab me by the arm right here by  
22 the wrist, and whatever she could grab she would just  
23 start whaling on you. And what do you do? You run.  
24 So I ended up running around in a circle while being  
25 beaten, and beaten until she was -- expelled all the

1 energy she needed to get out. And at that particular  
2 time, I still have a scar today from it, she had  
3 this -- wait, my mom had a Chihuahua and it had a  
4 purple dog leash; you know, one of those metal clip  
5 things. And that's what my mom was beating me with  
6 that day.

7 And on the inside of my leg here I have got  
8 this -- you know the loop, metal loop? I have that  
9 scar because when she hit me it went into my leg and  
10 peeled back a big chunk in that -- that shape. And  
11 while my leg was bleeding and blood was running down  
12 my leg my mom made me get down to finish waxing and  
13 polishing the floors on my hands and knees while the  
14 blood was running down. I didn't even get to go to  
15 the bathroom and clean myself up.

16 I actually thought my mom hated me most of my  
17 younger years. I never could seem to ever do anything  
18 right. I seemed to be the scapegoat for everything.  
19 And I am just trying to go in order of some of the  
20 more traumatic things that I experienced.

21 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm. Um-hmm.

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Um, so I really believe from the  
23 age of three until 12 that I was unnecessarily abused  
24 for all kinds of things that I didn't do. And then  
25 when I was 15 I got kicked out of home. I was still a



1 kid in high school. I didn't get to finish high  
2 school. I got kicked to the curb, nowhere to go.

3 I ended up getting a job, getting an apartment,  
4 and then I couldn't afford the apartment because back  
5 then I was making \$3 an hour at MacDonald's. It's not  
6 enough for a person to survive. And so I had been  
7 dating this older guy. I was 15 and he was 21. And  
8 since I moved in with him another cycle of abuse  
9 started. And when I asked for help I was told I made  
10 my bed, you lie in it.

11 And I really feel back in the day when I was  
12 young and going through my abuse, um, there wasn't a  
13 lot of help. There wasn't all the stuff there is even  
14 today. I didn't know I was Metis back then, whether  
15 that would have been worse for me, you know, the way  
16 the stigma is with women today. Um, I just don't  
17 [unintelligible].

18 I don't think I got a lot of help when I did  
19 report. I didn't always report because after  
20 reporting a couple of times I didn't get any help, and  
21 I was made to feel like, oh, go see your doctor, take  
22 some pills and you will be better in the morning,  
23 right? Um, so there wasn't a lot of support there.  
24 There wasn't a lot of support groups. There wasn't a  
25 lot of family even for me to reach out to, and when I

1 did that's what I was told: You made your bed, you  
2 lie in it. What do you do?

3 So I ended up staying there for three years in  
4 that relationship and being abused; with a scar on the  
5 back of my left arm. Um, we were at this party. I  
6 think I was 17 at that time. This same relationship.  
7 And, um, he told me to come outside and I went  
8 outside. And he was jealous of something and he took  
9 me and he slammed me up against this old garage. And  
10 there was a nail about this long sticking out, an old  
11 rusty nail with a head about -- I don't know, about  
12 that big on it. And it went into my arm, about this  
13 far into my arm. I have a covered over hole now. But  
14 it didn't wreck anything or damage anything, thank  
15 you. But I couldn't get out of that relationship  
16 either. I had to end up moving from Prince George  
17 away to Chilliwack to get away from him.

18 Um, and then at -- I want to say I was 18. I,  
19 ah, met this guy. This big guy. A lot of people were  
20 scared of him. And the stupid part of me thought he  
21 was going to protect me. He didn't protect me. He  
22 beat me. He was the worst out of anybody that's ever  
23 abused me or hurt me.

24 He's no longer with us, and I feel kind of guilty  
25 for talking about him, but this is what I had to live.

1 I have forgiven him and moved on -- all of them. I  
2 have forgiven them and moved on, even my mom. I still  
3 love my mom. But it's still wrong. It's so wrong and  
4 it needs to be changed -- mother or not.

5 So I met the father, the father of my oldest  
6 child. My oldest child is going to be 38 in August.  
7 And, like I said, I thought he was going to be there  
8 to protect me and it was quite the opposite. I got  
9 like smacked, backhanded. He used to -- when we got a  
10 place he would get away out of town, and then he would  
11 take the money and he would take the car keys and the  
12 car, and then I would just be abandoned there on my  
13 own, no phone, nowhere to go. Nobody knew, right?  
14 Because how could I let anybody know? Um, and then we  
15 moved into this trailer park at Cultus Lake,  
16 Chilliwack. And it was called Sleepy Hollow and it  
17 was down -- you had to drive down in to get to it.  
18 That's why it was called Sleepy Hollow. So you went  
19 down this big hill and then the trailer park was down  
20 in there.

21 And, ah, I got woken up one morning. I used to  
22 sleep in like a muscle shirt, you know, a wife beater  
23 shirt -- a good name for it -- a muscle shirt and a  
24 pair of panties. And I got ripped out of bed by my  
25 hair, thrown down the hallway, and then he says -- I

1 heard from behind me: You better run, bitch.

2 Sorry. Sorry.

3 KERRIE REAY: That's fine.

4 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: You better run because I'm going to  
5 kill ya. And he had had his dad's double-barreled  
6 sawed off shotgun -- army, from the army base. And so  
7 he chased me out of the trailer, up that hill, and  
8 about two miles down the road. I was trying to get to  
9 my brother's house. And I was in bare feet, a pair of  
10 panties, and the muscle shirt, and I'm running. And  
11 I'm running alongside of the ditch and he's in the car  
12 behind me and he's got the shotgun out the window. He  
13 said, I'm going to kill you now.

14 And I just -- my life flashed before my eyes, a  
15 whole bunch of things; I seen me and my sister in the  
16 sandbox when we were kids. And then he would just do  
17 it while I was running. And then I got as far as the  
18 mall and he got me, and he got me back in the car.  
19 And I am like, oh, my god, I am so dead. And I was  
20 kicking and screaming and everything and I couldn't  
21 get out.

22 He took me back to the trailer, threw me in the  
23 trailer, and then where do you go in a trailer? The  
24 only place I could go in the trailer was to the very  
25 far end of it, which was our bedroom. And I'm -- my

1 feet were bleeding from cutting from running and  
2 stuff. And I can remember being against the wall with  
3 my eyes closed just waiting for it. And he says, I'm  
4 going to kill you now. And he shot it. And I was  
5 terrified to open my eyes because I thought I was  
6 going to be dead, looking down at me dead like looking  
7 at my body. There was blanks in the shotgun. I  
8 didn't know that.

9 And then the police were called that time. They  
10 came. There should be a report somewhere. Um, they  
11 came and then all he did was get in trouble and not  
12 allowed to have firearms for five years. And then I'm  
13 like, oh, my god, what about in five years when he's  
14 allowed to have a gun again and he comes hunting me  
15 down? Because he said he always would. I could not  
16 get away from that man.

17 And then I ended up pregnant to him with my  
18 oldest son. And I always wanted a baby; I just wanted  
19 someone to love just me for me and who I was and I  
20 could love that person back and not get beat or hurt  
21 or threatened or anything. And while I was eight  
22 months pregnant when I was living out of town,  
23 isolated, so there was physical, mental, emotional,  
24 monetary abuse going on. And I still -- I'm still  
25 young. I'm not even 19 years old yet, right? I'm

1 still -- I'm 18 at this point and I'm pregnant. I'm  
2 eight months pregnant and I am cowering underneath the  
3 kitchen table because he's trying to beat me up, and  
4 he's going to try and kick the baby out of me, and he  
5 did kick me in the stomach.

6 And then I did something I never thought I would  
7 do and I have never done it again and I've felt guilty  
8 ever since. He had this machete on the counter. So  
9 it was an old farmhouse and I am under the table, and  
10 if you went right there there's the door, steps going  
11 down, and then outside. And after he beat me and  
12 kicked me in the stomach -- and I didn't know if I was  
13 going to lose my baby or not. And how was I going to  
14 get help? There's no phone. Um, he went out that  
15 door.

16 And something in me just -- I don't even know if  
17 it was me or not. I grabbed the machete and at that  
18 time I wanted to kill him. I wanted to kill him so  
19 bad. I threw the machete at him as he was going down  
20 the stair. If he had not of stepped down that  
21 stairs... And before I threw the machete and had it I  
22 had a visual of his head pinned to the wall with the  
23 machete. And when I threw it he stepped down and it  
24 missed him and he just kept going. And he didn't come  
25 back for about two weeks after that. And then I was

1           terrified. I had nowhere to go. I had to stay there.  
2           I had no nobody to turn to.

3                     But at that time I wanted to kill him. I can't  
4           believe I'm admitting that. But I did. I wanted to  
5           kill him for all the damage he done to me. Plus he  
6           was violent to his own mom and his own sisters. He  
7           used to take their car. He used to just go in there  
8           and take money and...

9                     Another time -- so I couldn't get away from this  
10          guy no matter what I done. Wherever I went he hunted  
11          me down. He stalked me. He threatened people that I  
12          knew. He beat up a friend of mine with a baseball  
13          bat. They gave me a restraining order a couple of  
14          times, and you know what he did? Rip.

15                    And then he -- he'd phone my mom and he'd say to  
16          my mom, do you know where Sharon is? And whether my  
17          mom knew or not she would just say, no, why? See what  
18          I was up to, right? He goes, because I just killed  
19          her, slit her throat and she's in the ditch dying as  
20          we speak. He -- he tormented my poor mom and my  
21          family for years.

22                    In -- in -- at that time in that one-year span I  
23          think I moved seven times and every time he found out  
24          where I was. It was like he had people watching me.  
25          He always knew. And he phoned: Oh, I seen you at the

1 grocery store, or I heard you were at Value Village or  
2 whatever. I'm like, how does he know where I am? I  
3 couldn't get away from him. So we ended up moving  
4 into -- um, it's on (indiscernible) Street, those  
5 apartments. I forget what they are called.

6 KERRIE REAY: Here in Prince George?

7 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah. We lived in a basement  
8 suite. And I had just come back to Prince George. I  
9 have a lot of family and friends here, right? So a  
10 friend of mine came over for coffee this one day and  
11 my so-called man at the time had gone out. And when  
12 he came back my friend was there and we were having  
13 coffee, and right now he thought we were having an  
14 affair or something. And he grabbed my friend and  
15 threw him out, and I tried to get out and he grabbed  
16 me by the throat. And my friend knew enough about my  
17 life and my situation with this guy. So he left there  
18 and went over to the Spruceland shopping mall and  
19 phoned the police and said, you had better get over  
20 there, he's going to kill her.

21 And when the police came pounding on the door I  
22 was in the bedroom being held down by my throat and he  
23 was trying to rape me with my two-year-old son in the  
24 bedroom. And you know what? That was more horrible.  
25 The most important thing was that I wanted my son out



1 of there. I didn't -- I wasn't so worried about what  
2 was happening to me. I didn't want my son to see it.  
3 And then he came over to his dad and started pounding  
4 on his dad: Don't you hurt my mommy.

5 And then when the police did come he told me, you  
6 stay in here, you and [Son] stay in here. And I  
7 thought, no, this is my only way I can get out, I need  
8 to get out. So I went running to the door. And then  
9 he put his arm -- puts his arm around me like that and  
10 when I went to talk he squeezed it; you know, a  
11 warning don't you say anything. And then I just went  
12 like this to the policeman, look what he just did to  
13 me, he was trying to rape me, get me out of there.

14 And that's how I got out of there.

15 KERRIE REAY: Sorry. Sorry. No, sorry, you are good.

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: So that's how I got out of there.

17 KERRIE REAY: Can I just ask for clarification? When you  
18 are talking about this, um, fellow that was holding  
19 you by the neck, is this the same fellow that is the  
20 father of your son from Chilliwack? Did he follow you  
21 to Prince George?

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I left Chilliwack to get away from  
23 him.

24 KERRIE REAY: Do you remember what year that was?

25 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Probably '81, '82ish. Because I'm

1 just thinking [Son] was two. So....

2 KERRIE REAY: And then you came to Prince George?

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And I -- yeah, but then, um, I  
4 wasn't -- when that almost rape thing happened, that  
5 was probably '81, '82. Because [Son] was almost two  
6 years old, I think, at the time.

7 KERRIE REAY: And you came to Prince George and he somehow  
8 found out you were back here?

9 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, he stalked me. And when I  
10 came to Prince George he was -- everywhere where I  
11 went and moved he found me. And he would come and  
12 kick my door in and beat me, and then I would get a  
13 restraining order. And it's -- you know, I tried to  
14 explain this doesn't -- you need to put him in jail,  
15 this isn't working.

16 And then, um, while he had a -- that restraining  
17 order he beat one of my friends with a baseball bat,  
18 and I seen the baseball bat and there was scalp and  
19 hair and blood on the baseball bat, and he still got a  
20 slap on the wrist. He -- I don't know how he managed  
21 to get away with everything he did. Everybody was  
22 scared of him. Everybody was scared of this guy. So  
23 stupid me for thinking, oh, he's going to be my  
24 protector and, in turn, he became the worst abuser I  
25 ever had. Okay. So after....

1 KERRIE REAY: So did the police -- the police took him away  
2 then?

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: They did. They took him and talked  
4 to him and stuff. I never charged him for anything  
5 because of not getting help from the police all those  
6 times. I didn't want to go into court and be told  
7 that I was a whore and I deserved it or stigma; back  
8 in the day if you were raped you asked for it. That's  
9 what I was told: I must have done something to make  
10 him rape me, and who rapes their own partner?

11 So I got out of there. I got out of that place,  
12 and I got a place in an apartment called Spanish  
13 Villa. It's here in Prince George as well. I think I  
14 was on the first floor. And he was doing everything  
15 he could to find -- to find me, and he did find me.  
16 He always found me. And I'd have this -- this one --  
17 well, this incident happened. I happened to go  
18 upstairs. I didn't have a phone. My sister and her  
19 girlfriend were there and [Son] was still like two --  
20 right? -- one-and-a-half, two. He's still little.

21 And, um, I had to go upstairs to use my friend's  
22 phone, and while I was upstairs he came to my place.  
23 He kicked in the door. He chased my sister around  
24 with a butcher knife. My -- you know, I'm 19, 20.  
25 See, I'm 20, 21. My sister is only 17, 18 years old.

1 He chased her around with a butcher knife demanding  
2 where I was. And he said, it's a good thing she ain't  
3 here because she'd be dead right now. And then he  
4 stole my son. He took my son away to Chilliwack.

5 And I got no help from anybody because there was  
6 no custody. He was our kid, right? And I hadn't had  
7 time to get in to court after -- and I was pretty  
8 messed up. I hadn't had time to get in to court to  
9 get custody of my kid yet, right? My son. And so I  
10 called the lawyer after [Son] was stolen and was told,  
11 you don't have custody, he don't have custody, there's  
12 nothing we can do. I said, well, how am I going to  
13 get him back? I had to go back. I had to go to  
14 Chilliwack and steal my son back.

15 I went to Chilliwack. I'm not proud of this,  
16 what I did, either. Because I -- even I -- it's what  
17 I had to do. I don't think it's right and I don't  
18 think it's right for kids to have to go through it.  
19 But I went to Chilliwack. I stalked out the place  
20 where they had him, his mother's house. I knew his  
21 mom went to work at a certain time. She worked on the  
22 army base where that gun came from. And his sister,  
23 one of the sisters, would have to stay home with him  
24 because they were in school. Someone had to watch  
25 him, right? And I knew she wouldn't let me in. So I

1           knocked on the door, and when she opened the door she  
2           went to close it. And you know on the bottom of  
3           screen doors there's that silver metal?

4   KERRIE REAY:   Um-hmm.

5   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  I kicked that off and I scooted  
6           through there. And I told her, you get my kid's -- my  
7           son's stuff together because he's coming home where he  
8           belongs. And she says, you are a psycho. I said, no,  
9           your brother shouldn't have broke in and threatened my  
10          sister with a knife and stole our child to begin with,  
11          right? So then I got [Son] and his stuff and we came  
12          back to Prince George, and then I went to court and  
13          got custody of him.

14                 But that wasn't the end of that story either. He  
15                 still -- I could not get rid of that man. And he  
16                 always told me: If I can't have you nobody is going  
17                 to have you, and I'm going to take you out. Maybe  
18                 today, maybe tomorrow, maybe five years from now, I'm  
19                 going to come back and get you. So I've lived in fear  
20                 most of my life, I guess. Um....

21   KERRIE REAY:  Did you say he's passed away?

22   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  Yes.

23   KERRIE REAY:  When did he pass away?

24   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  Oh, goodness, it has got to be  
25          about nine, ten years now.

1 KERRIE REAY: So you have had that fear almost your whole  
2 adult life then?

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I don't have it now that he's gone.

4 KERRIE REAY: No.

5 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: When I -- when I heard he passed  
6 away I was relieved. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But I  
7 was relieved. He's my son's dad. But I knew he could  
8 no longer hurt me or anybody else again.

9 And then he used to get visitation with our son,  
10 and he would come back all messed up. He's still kind  
11 of messed up today and he's violent because of what he  
12 witnessed. And, you know, part of me thinks it's my  
13 fault because I didn't get out soon enough and I kept  
14 my kids with me and they witnessed and heard and seen  
15 some of that stuff. Had I been stronger and was able  
16 to get out or had someone to turn to to help me get  
17 out, my kids wouldn't have had to go through that  
18 stuff.

19 KERRIE REAY: And, you know, that -- that is part of what  
20 the inquiry is really looking at is how it -- you  
21 know, it stays generation to generation.

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Intergenerational --

23 KERRIE REAY: Yes.

24 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: -- abuse. And, you know, my  
25 grandma, I don't know anybody above my granny. And my

1 granny was born in 1898 and died in 1989, and I don't  
2 know any of my relatives of my mom's above that. But  
3 it -- all the abuse started way up there and has come  
4 down. My mom was kicked out and had to -- my mom was  
5 kicked out at 12 and had to raise her six-year-old  
6 sister, and it just cycled down through the  
7 generation. So my mom -- there was my granny, my mom,  
8 me, my daughter, my granddaughter. Now my mom is  
9 gone. So now we're down to four generations. But it  
10 still has filtered down through the families.

11 My daughter ended up in a very violent  
12 relationship that she couldn't get away from, and  
13 everybody tried to help her. And I understood because  
14 I've been there.

15 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: But she got out. She's out. She's  
17 out. I raised -- while she went through that he  
18 abused her and he abused my eight-year-old  
19 granddaughter. So [Daughter], my daughter  
20 [Daughter], she lost her daughter over a lot of that  
21 stuff. But me and [Partner] took her. We raised her for  
22 almost four years and we got her counselling. She's a  
23 great kid. And my daughter's got her daughter back.  
24 She went back home to Tumbler Ridge last July and they  
25 are doing awesome. I'm so proud and so happy of them.

1           And I talked to her about what I was going to do  
2           and she's proud of me. I want it to stop. I told her  
3           that it's up to me and her now to stop this chain.  
4           Because we don't -- I have lived it. She's lived it.  
5           And we don't want [Granddaughter] to live that or anybody else.  
6           I have a niece in McBride who is getting bullied at  
7           school, and that's so wrong too. It's time to stand  
8           up and say no, no more.

9           KERRIE REAY: When you spoke of your mom, um, being, um,  
10           kicked out of the house at 12 and your background is  
11           Metis, was your mom First Nations?

12           SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No, my dad.

13           KERRIE REAY: Your dad. Okay.

14           SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

15           KERRIE REAY: And was your mom --

16           SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

17           KERRIE REAY: -- and her mom from this area, from  
18           Prince George area?

19           SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No, um, my mom was, ah -- my mom is  
20           from, um, Ontario. They were in Ontario and then  
21           they -- I think my mom and dad got married in Kemple  
22           [phonetic] Saskatchewan.

23           KERRIE REAY: Okay.

24           SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: A big family too. Not enough of  
25           anything all the time and five boys getting into



1 trouble and then -- and then, um, there's something  
2 else I want to mention. When I was also growing up  
3 aunties, uncles, grandmas, grandpas, babysitters were  
4 allowed to beat on us and discipline us or do whatever  
5 and get away with it.

6 I can remember being terrified at the age  
7 probably about seven or eight of being locked in a  
8 closet under the stairs. I'm terrified of spiders. I  
9 don't like spiders. I have gotten better with spiders  
10 because I garden. But I know there are spiders in the  
11 underneath the stairs closet. And she locked me in  
12 there without a light. And I remember when I came out  
13 of there -- trying to beat, dig, and get out. And I  
14 told my mom and nothing was -- she was allowed to  
15 babysit us again.

16 And I wanted to retaliate when I got older. I  
17 thought, I'm going to pay her back. But what goes  
18 around comes around. It's not for me to decide. I  
19 need to look after me first before I can get to  
20 anybody else. And that is kind of what I'm trying to  
21 do. Be a good person and, um, move through life. And  
22 I was a survivor, but I'm a warrior now. I did --  
23 surviving is where I needed to be at that point in my  
24 life at the time. But I'm living my life now.

25 My life has been very good for the last 15 or so

1 years. I was looking at this and, ah, out of my 57  
2 years of my life 38 of it has been abuse. So for the  
3 last 19 years I've been abuse free. And for the last  
4 15 years of that life it has been great with my  
5 partner, [Partner]. He's awesome. He's helped in my  
6 healing.

7 Okay. Um, at another point in -- while I was  
8 still with the father of my oldest child, um, his mom  
9 was babysitting our son and, ah, he was going to stay  
10 overnight. So we were going home, and he borrowed his  
11 moms' car, a little old station wagon of some kind.  
12 That was back in 1980 or something. And, ah, he  
13 started driving and then he started getting mad and  
14 I'm like, oh, no. And her door handle to get out was  
15 broken off on the passenger side. And I'm already  
16 starting to think, how am I going to get out of here?

17 And then it start just started escalating. He  
18 hauled off and backhanded me and my nose is bleeding,  
19 and then he says, okay, I have had enough, I am going  
20 to end this for both of us right now. And I am like,  
21 what you talking about? He gunned it and started  
22 driving right towards a tree. He was going to kill us  
23 both. And I don't know what I -- how I did it. I  
24 grabbed the stick shift and I just pulled it all the  
25 way back, which should have just shut the car down.

1 It did something to it and he started fiddling. And I  
2 was already rolling down the window, and I was out of  
3 the window and I ran.

4 And I ran and I ran for blocks, running through  
5 people's yards trying to -- this was probably at about  
6 1 o'clock in the morning. Most people were sleeping.  
7 I was running for my life. I ran out of my shoes and  
8 I never did find them. And I ran to one house and  
9 knocked, nobody answered. And then I ran and I ran  
10 again. And I seen a house with lights on and I ran.  
11 I'm like: You guys have to help me. He's going to  
12 kill me. He just tried to run our car into a tree.  
13 And so they brought me in, gave me a glass of water,  
14 and they phoned the police and a report was made.

15 I was taken to the hospital because that time he  
16 had, um, punched me so many times. There's a police  
17 report in Chilliwack on this one. There was pictures.  
18 Um, my -- my eyebrow touched my cheekbone. It was  
19 just like this big horrible goose egg on my eye. And  
20 they took pictures and they took a report and I got a  
21 restraining order, and he still came after me. Could  
22 not get away from that guy.

23 KERRIE REAY: Would it be okay to ask at this point,  
24 because one of the themes that I'm hearing with this  
25 man is that you -- you got the restraining orders but

1           there was no enforcement. So were you able to report  
2           the violations that he was still --

3   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

4   KERRIE REAY: -- stalking you?

5   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

6   KERRIE REAY: And what -- let's take the Chilliwack. What  
7           was the policing, um, response in Chilliwack?

8   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Um, the restraining orders is what  
9           they -- all they said that they could do to help me.  
10          Um, I can't -- it's really jumbled up. But I can  
11          remember at one point where I was beat up and I said  
12          I -- because that time -- that was that time. I can't  
13          even remember what I was wearing. Um, I said I  
14          don't -- I'm not charging. I don't want to charge  
15          him. And they said, why not? I said, because he's  
16          going to kill me or he's going to kill one of my --  
17          he's going to hurt my family. That's what he always  
18          told me: He's going to hurt my family or he is going  
19          to take me out. Um, but then I think there was -- I  
20          think there was a law passed where if you weren't  
21          going to charge them the police could charge them  
22          anyway. They took the onus off of you. It came  
23          later.

24   KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

25   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

1 KERRIE REAY: One of the things that the inquiry, um, is  
2 looking at is those patterns of violence and such,  
3 severe violence and the lack of protection that comes  
4 when there seems to be this ongoing, um, reporting.  
5 And so I know you made a comment that you didn't want  
6 his name used because this is public. But I would  
7 like to, when we are finished the recording for the  
8 inquiry, get that information. Because I would like  
9 to know if you would like the inquiry to look back at  
10 those police reports on him to see what kind of  
11 pattern existed, given that you lived, ah, for maybe  
12 15, 20 years in fear of your life never knowing when  
13 he was going to show up. Are you okay with that?

14 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

15 KERRIE REAY: Okay. Because it is certainly something that  
16 the inquiry is, um -- is -- and is part of the terms  
17 of reference for the, um, response. At that time, um,  
18 one of the other things that the inquiry is interested  
19 in is racism and discrimination. And you referenced  
20 yourself as, um, that you were -- that you weren't  
21 aware when you were younger that you were Metis. So  
22 when you were older did that ever -- were you ever  
23 questioned about that? I'm just trying to see in  
24 terms of the reaction of policing to your particular  
25 situation.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No, I didn't find out until I was  
2 like -- after I was 40 that I was Metis.

3 KERRIE REAY: Okay. Okay.

4 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I feel ripped off that all my life  
5 I -- I feel cheated, right?

6 KERRIE REAY: And your father had --

7 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, dad.

8 KERRIE REAY: So was your -- your father had a First Nation  
9 parent or both parents were First Nation? Your  
10 grandparents?

11 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: My grandparents.

12 KERRIE REAY: Both were First Nation and, by the sounds of  
13 it, from Ontario.

14 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: French. Yeah.

15 KERRIE REAY: Okay. Okay. Ontario or Quebec?

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I think we lived in Ontario.

17 KERRIE REAY: Okay. But, I gather, you --

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Ancestors back -- when we did our  
19 ancestry going back all those years --

20 KERRIE REAY: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

21 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: -- came from France.

22 KERRIE REAY: Okay. But married into a First Nations  
23 community?

24 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I don't know the -- I really don't  
25 know the whole story.

1 KERRIE REAY: Okay.

2 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And now Dad is gone and Mom is  
3 gone. And before Mom left I went through pictures and  
4 wrote on the back of them.

5 KERRIE REAY: Uh-huh.

6 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And I have got a history of our  
7 family traced back, but I still don't know a lot of  
8 it.

9 KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

10 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: My brother [Brother 1] who -- he passed  
11 away last January. Um, he's the one who did all the  
12 researching and his wife in Kamloops.

13 KERRIE REAY: Okay. And your partner in Chilliwack, was he  
14 Caucasian or First Nation?

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: The father of?

16 KERRIE REAY: Of [Son].

17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No, he Caucasian. He's a big  
18 Caucasian.

19 KERRIE REAY: Okay.

20 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Okay. That's that. I'm 20. Now  
21 I'm -- now I'm away from -- finally got away from that  
22 guy and I'm in Prince George still. And I met another  
23 one. This one is the father of my three youngest  
24 kids. We were together for nine years. Um, so from  
25 22 to 31 this is kind of the life.

1           He was a controller. Controlled everything. Um,  
2           he once -- after I left him he used to come to my work  
3           and sit in my workplace and kind of stalk me, and then  
4           he'd follow me home. He wouldn't do anything but he  
5           would follow me home. And many mornings I would wake  
6           up and he'd be sitting outside of my apartment door  
7           passed out sleeping or whatever, or he'd come to my  
8           door at night and cry I love you and all this stuff.  
9           I couldn't get rid of him. And the police never  
10          really did anything there either. This was in Tumbler  
11          Ridge, a new town.

12          Um, one time he almost broke my arm. When I was  
13          walking home he grabbed me and he had it, twisted it.  
14          And I remember my hand touching the back of my head.  
15          I can't do that anymore. And he was, ah -- so he  
16          physically hurt me maybe once or twice, but -- but,  
17          you know, for the nine years I was with him it was  
18          mental, emotional, um, monetary.

19          He withheld money. He wouldn't even let -- if  
20          the Family Allowance was coming in he would take the  
21          keys so I couldn't go get the kids' cheque and go get  
22          them what they needed. He had to decide. He  
23          controlled everything, the bank account, everything.  
24          Um, he was a cheater. Stupid me. I didn't think he  
25          would. Oh, no, he would never do that to me.



1           Um, and that man is still kind of somewhat in and  
2 out of my life because that's where my granddaughter  
3 and my daughter live right now. Um, he used to do  
4 this too when we were mad -- when he was mad at me for  
5 whatever. He came home one night and -- like he used  
6 to work four nights and then four days and four off.  
7 And he came home one night unexpected because we  
8 thought he was gone to work, right? And so when he  
9 went to work lots of times the kids and I would just  
10 have pancakes and bacon and eggs for dinner. And he  
11 came home and I made him a plate and he threw it and  
12 smashed it into the wall in front of the kids; like  
13 why would you make me a dinner like this? Or he used  
14 to come in and he'd go, oh, didn't clean today. And  
15 that's all it would take.

16           Um, and when we were fighting, you know, you'd  
17 try to get away. You are up against the wall and he'd  
18 go like this, bam, punch a hole in the wall, next time  
19 it will be your face. So I lived in fear quite a bit  
20 while I was with him too and couldn't get away from  
21 him either.

22           Ah, um, but within that relationship I started my  
23 healing. I, ah, met this wonderful man, who is no  
24 longer with us, [Counsellor]. He was the  
25 counsellor in Tumbler Ridge. And he told me that I

1 was a good person and that I had a lot to give and a  
2 lot to live for and that everything wasn't my fault  
3 and I didn't deserve what I was getting. So I  
4 counselled with him for a couple years and then I made  
5 the break.

6 Like we had a daughter. My youngest is my  
7 daughter. And when she was a year old I just couldn't  
8 take it anymore. I tried. I tried. I tried. And so  
9 finally I just told him, I'm leaving, I'm taking the  
10 kids and I'm leaving. And he laughed at me. He  
11 didn't think I would, but I did. I took the kids and  
12 moved to Lethbridge.

13 I was going to college in Tumbler Ridge and I won  
14 myself a \$250 scholarship for English. And within  
15 winning that, it's like somebody sent me a lifeline.  
16 Within winning that scholarship I was able to pack up  
17 my kids, move to Lethbridge, go to college there and  
18 start a new life. So that's what I did. And that was  
19 probably in 1992.

20 So I'm 32 now. Right into another abusive  
21 relationship. I used to wonder what the fuck is --  
22 whoops. What is wrong with me? Why? Is it the way I  
23 look? Is it the way I talk? Is it the things I do?  
24 Like I couldn't understand why every -- so every --  
25 these are all my main relationships, and every

1 relationship I got into I was in for a number of  
2 years. I didn't just have one and go on. Um, every  
3 one I was in I ended up getting abused in one way or  
4 another. And I just thought -- finally just thought  
5 it was me. It has to be me and something that I'm  
6 doing or not doing.

7 But within the counselling I learned a lot of  
8 stuff. The counsellor made this, um, drawing and  
9 everybody has their own space and you are supposed to  
10 have like a two- or three-foot radius. That's your  
11 space and people, you know, should be respectful of  
12 that. Well, he made a picture of [R.] and he made a  
13 picture of me and then our four kids. And then he  
14 goes, see how you guys all got a circle around you?  
15 You guys all have your own and, you know -- and then  
16 he made [R.]'s and it encompassed all of us, which  
17 meant we didn't have our own.

18 And then he cheated. He cheated I don't know how  
19 many different times on me. And given where I was and  
20 what I had come from, I didn't know what real love  
21 was. And I think all my life I was looking for love  
22 in the wrong places. I just wanted someone to love me  
23 and ended up with all these abusive people.

24 So in Lethbridge I'm with this guy. I'm ten  
25 years older than him. And he gets jealous and starts

1           beating on me. And one time he beat me so bad I got  
2           vertigo. I had vertigo for almost a week. I couldn't  
3           even -- like to get up to stand up to go to the  
4           bathroom -- have you ever had vertigo?

5           KERRIE REAY: Uh-uh.

6           SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: It's like everything is just going  
7           around like this, right? I didn't report it or --  
8           because I was embarrassed. A lot of times I didn't  
9           tell anybody anything because I was so embarrassed.  
10          Embarrassed that I let it happen to me and embarrassed  
11          that I couldn't get away from the situation. And then  
12          I got one last one. So after I got away from this  
13          guy -- um, I spent three years in that relationship.

14                 So now it's like 1995. I'm -- from 35 to 37. I  
15          met this Russian guy, and he taught me how to read  
16          cards and fortunes. And then he started hitting me  
17          and I didn't even know why sometimes. He locked me in  
18          a bedroom one time. I was in the bedroom and he  
19          barred the door so I could not get out. I was locked  
20          in that bedroom for two frigging days, nowhere to go  
21          to the bathroom, nothing to eat or drink.

22                 And I -- when I did get out of there I ended  
23          up having -- I had carpal tunnel. I had surgeries on  
24          both of my wrists. Um, and after I had the surgery  
25          and I came home to that guy at my home -- this was

1           supposed to be my home. I don't even know what  
2           happened for this situation. I was in bed sleeping  
3           and the next thing I know -- same, same undershirt and  
4           a pair of panties. And the next thing I know I'm  
5           being grabbed by my hair, ripped out of the bed, like  
6           grabbed from the bed onto the floor, dragged through  
7           the house by my hair to the back door and then thrown  
8           outside onto the deck, and my hands are still in  
9           bandaids and stuff -- I just had surgery -- and out  
10          onto the deck for all the neighbours and everybody to  
11          see in my panties and T-shirt because I was useless  
12          now because, you know, I couldn't use my hands.

13                 And then finally there was a whole bunch of  
14          different beatings and abuse and stuff with that guy  
15          too. But you know what? When I look back, I stayed  
16          with him the least amount of time. Because I think,  
17          by looking at my story, it went from wow to wow to wow  
18          to wow to wow. So some seeds that were planted were  
19          starting to work. Like I need to get the hell out of  
20          here.

21                 This is -- and at that time I had a place that I  
22          could go to when I did get out. I had a place to put  
23          my stuff in storage and then I got an -- I got my  
24          apartment. He didn't come around and stalk me and  
25          stuff like all the other guys, though. And so it was

1 -- he did a few drive-bys and stuff, but I didn't get  
2 the extent that I did from the other guys.

3           Want to hear something really weird? He's on my  
4 Facebook friends. So this is the guy that I was 10  
5 years older. And I -- I put a little thing out there  
6 that I'm going to tell my story, and one guy liked it.  
7 Like liked it like good that I'm going to do it. I  
8 hope he has some time to think about what he did and,  
9 hopefully, he made some changes in his life. This was  
10 in Lethbridge too, the Russian guy.

11           And in -- in between these I've been in and out  
12 of counselling a number of times. I've been to  
13 groups. Um, I've been to a few women's groups. I  
14 have hosted -- I've been -- um, you know what, I  
15 think, was one of my saviours throughout my life is my  
16 volunteering. I have volunteered since I was like 11  
17 or 12 years old. I was in Girl Guides. I go  
18 volunteer because I'm giving from my heart and I -- it  
19 just makes me feel so good. I still do it today.

20           Um, I planted some seeds in my granddaughter too.  
21 She's -- it's hard now that she's moved away because  
22 she was my Relay For Life partner, my Terry Fox. She  
23 was the one I did all my fundraising stuff with,  
24 right? But now she can do it with her mom.

25           I don't know if I left anything out. That was

1 most of the stuff that I had, um, wrote down to tell  
2 you. Um, and now today I'm no longer a survivor. I'm  
3 a warrior. I'm a volunteer. I'm a grandmother. I'm  
4 a photographer. Um, I have stuff to give now. Before  
5 I had to take from everybody else because mine -- mine  
6 was empty. And somebody would hug me and I would just  
7 try and steal all their good energy. And now I have  
8 energy to give back because I'm full.

9 And I found another outlet just yesterday. I  
10 went down to the Omineca Arts Centre and I was taking  
11 some of my red dress decals that I created to drop  
12 off, and I got asked to come into the circle of  
13 drummers. And I got a drum handed to me and I spent  
14 the next two hours drumming. It was so amazing. And  
15 I think that's -- I -- like I know I have shed some  
16 tears, but it's part of that chapter I'm telling and  
17 then that book is going to go closed.

18 But I think it helped me, the drumming, and I'm  
19 going back Sunday. When I was down in the room  
20 downstairs with the really tall lady, [L.], um, she  
21 comes over. She goes, do you need a drum? I'm like,  
22 I'm not drumming. She goes, you drummed yesterday.  
23 Are you going to come and drum with us? I'm like, no,  
24 I don't know any of the songs, I think. She goes, you  
25 don't need to know the songs. You just get up there

1 and drum, girl. That's the heartbeat.

2 So I'm going back Sunday. I'm going to stay  
3 going back and I'm going to make a drum and,  
4 hopefully, become part of it. So then somebody else  
5 will have to take the pictures. Because I'm always  
6 the one there taking all the pictures, right?

7 KERRIE REAY: Right. Right.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: But, yeah, life is good now. Um,  
9 I'm pretty well -- well-known in the community for my  
10 photography and do a lot of donating of my photography  
11 to raise money for different things. Um, I created  
12 the decals. Um, I'm going to make a calendar for me.

13 KERRIE REAY: Would you like to just hold these decals up  
14 for the video just so that we can see?

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: So last April, um, I spent 22 days  
16 in my mom's hospital room while she was passing away,  
17 me and my three sisters. And my -- the middle -- the  
18 youngest sister, she lives in Calgary and she has this  
19 beautiful machine called the Cricut. Cricut. Not  
20 like the chirping guy. So Cricut. And she can cut  
21 out anything. And so we were laying there. She's  
22 telling me that she's getting this machine and I'm  
23 thinking, so when you get this machine you need to  
24 make me some kind of a red dress sticker or something  
25 so I can raise awareness and raise money with it,



1 right?

2 And so -- and so, um, in October this came to  
3 fruitation [sic]. And first I got just the Prince  
4 George red dress one because this is where it all  
5 started for me. And then I had, um, a gentleman from  
6 Ontario ask if I had any that just said red dress, and  
7 I sent him 10 to Ontario to get it out there. And  
8 through these will come awareness and will raise  
9 monies to host our stand-ins, buy a banner, you know,  
10 gift our speakers and performers.

11 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

12 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And it's my voice for this campaign  
13 and it's helping me heal.

14 KERRIE REAY: And would you like those to go in with your,  
15 um -- with your statement as part of the legacy for  
16 the National Inquiry?

17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I would love that. Thank you.

18 KERRIE REAY: Okay. Thank you. So I have a -- I have a  
19 few questions, if you wouldn't mind, and it's to go  
20 back to the beginning of your story and you talked  
21 about your family.

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

23 KERRIE REAY: Because as we were talking we talked about  
24 that systemic violence --

25 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

1 KERRIE REAY: -- going from generation to generation. And,  
2 um, your -- you feel that it's -- your mother was left  
3 at 12 and left to be out -- like kicked out from the  
4 home raising -- raising her sister.

5 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

6 KERRIE REAY: Right? And, um, so you spoke a bit about  
7 your mom's side of the family because you understood  
8 that. But do you know much about your dad's side of  
9 the family? And I guess why I am asking is, being  
10 Metis, I'm just wondering if any of your family were  
11 part of the residential school experience?

12 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Not -- not that I know of.

13 KERRIE REAY: Or the Sixties scoop?

14 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Not that I know of. I don't think  
15 so, no.

16 KERRIE REAY: No. Because, of course, the Sixties scoop  
17 would have been you, right?

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, because I was born in 1960.

19 KERRIE REAY: Right. Right. Okay.

20 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No, I don't think anything like  
21 that happened to our family. Um, my dad didn't see  
22 his mom and dad for a long time. I don't know what  
23 was going on there. I met my grandmother once. My  
24 grandfather was already passed away. I never got to  
25 meet him. Um....

1 KERRIE REAY: Sort of I guess what I'm asking is that the  
2 violence started before your generation?

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Oh, yeah.

4 KERRIE REAY: Two generations before? I'm trying  
5 understand where that violence came from.

6 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: My grandma kicked my mom out at 12  
7 with a six-year-old to... Like....

8 KERRIE REAY: So it was almost a repeat --

9 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: What she did to me.

10 KERRIE REAY: -- what she did to you?

11 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

12 KERRIE REAY: And at 15 you talked about there was -- um,  
13 so at 15 we're talking mid '70s?

14 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, '75.

15 KERRIE REAY: So, I mean, at that time you said there was  
16 no help. And so I'm wondering where did you look for  
17 it? Was there like -- was there social services?

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: There was little help. There was  
19 help but not like it is today.

20 KERRIE REAY: You mentioned that, yeah.

21 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Um....

22 KERRIE REAY: It just felt that, from your truth, that, um,  
23 in the time you were growing up there was no support,  
24 no place to turn. You had no family to turn to, no  
25 services to turn to.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I did go to -- this is later in  
2 life like with the husband and my three kids. I did  
3 end up taking, um, my -- my -- I hadn't had my  
4 daughter yet. I ended up taking my three boys and  
5 stayed in a safe house. I stayed in a safe house once  
6 this stuff was going on --

7 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: -- with the guy in Lethbridge too.  
9 There was help out there but it was far and few  
10 between.

11 KERRIE REAY: And what about Chilliwack? Because that  
12 really seemed to be that, ah, you know, the  
13 restraining orders weren't working. There wasn't  
14 enforcement from the police, from what you are saying.  
15 You know, the death threats. The actual -- um, you  
16 said, you know, driving a vehicle that was a -- that  
17 could have claimed your life. And was there no  
18 resources at that time in Chilliwack? Because you  
19 were saying that was probably like '79, '80, '81?

20 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, there was some  
21 like the police. Um, I don't know if there was victim  
22 services back then or not. There was later in life.  
23 I accessed that later in my life. Um....

24 KERRIE REAY: But not at that time?

25 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No. I was -- I was just, um,

1           terrified to tell anybody or to report stuff because  
2           he said he was going to kill me. He would kill me or  
3           he would kill -- I was more afraid he was going to  
4           hurt my family than me.

5   KERRIE REAY: Right. Right.

6   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I had been there so many times  
7           already.

8   KERRIE REAY: You mentioned that your father, um, went to  
9           jail. Ah, when he went to jail did you see him  
10          afterwards? Like was he in jail a long time or a  
11          short time?

12   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I don't think he was in jail for a  
13          long time, and that was for assaulting my mother, and  
14          then my brother punched my dad -- my dad. And it's  
15          like, okay, I hate you, Dad, for hitting my mom and  
16          now I hate my brother for hitting my dad. What --  
17          there was my brother in the closet, and hiding in the  
18          laundry basket, and that was the night we ran in the  
19          rain.

20   KERRIE REAY: Was that the only time that you were aware of  
21          that your dad went to jail?

22   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No. I think my dad had been in  
23          jail a number of times.

24   KERRIE REAY: Okay.

25   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And for abuse. And it always

1           happened when they had been drinking.

2       KERRIE REAY:   Okay.  And you said there was lots of --

3       SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  Yes.

4       KERRIE REAY:   -- consumption of alcohol?

5       SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  And lots of times they'd go out to  
6           the bar.  And, you know, we're kids in bed.  We are  
7           going to school the next day.  And they'd bring people  
8           home to party, --

9       KERRIE REAY:   Um-hmm.

10      SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  -- you know, and then a big fight  
11           breaks out or....

12      KERRIE REAY:   And when -- and when those -- when those  
13           parties occurred, um, were the children safe from the  
14           people who were coming to the parties?

15      SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  I think so because we weren't  
16           supposed to be out of our bedrooms.

17      KERRIE REAY:   Okay.

18      SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  I walked on a lot of egg shells all  
19           my life.  I'm tired of walking on egg shells.

20      KERRIE REAY:   Well, you are a warrior now.  It sounds to me  
21           like you are not doing too much of that.  Your son  
22           [Son], you got quite upset there at one point when you  
23           were talking about the violence that -- that he  
24           endured and you also referenced very briefly, um, that  
25           he has a tendency towards violence.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, and he's -- he's always,  
2 um -- I think he just got off of probation. I know  
3 prohibition was going through my mind. Probation. He  
4 just got off of probation. He's been in a number  
5 of -- he's been in and out of jail too mostly in the  
6 [City] area.

7 KERRIE REAY: Okay.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And we've tried. He just came here  
9 and, um, lived here for almost two years and  
10 everything was going good [redacted - private information] and  
11 then things just started going sideways, and it came  
12 to the point where I told him: You have to go. You  
13 can't come back here. You can't come back here and  
14 say those things to me in my house.

15 KERRIE REAY: Okay. So were you starting to see --

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: [R.2].

17 KERRIE REAY: -- the abuse was now coming from your son?

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I started to see his dad, yes. And  
19 some of the things he said to me, it's like he has  
20 scared me more than once in my life.

21 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I think a lot of the family is kind  
23 of scared of him.

24 KERRIE REAY: Okay.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: When he's good he's good, but  
2 there's that flip side, right?

3 KERRIE Reay: And that -- and you said he's [*one line redacted - private*  
4 *information*]?

5 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, [*one line redacted - private information*].  
6 Yes. But he don't think there is.

7 KERRIE REAY: No. Okay.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And there's nothing you can do at  
9 that point.

10 KERRIE REAY: No.

11 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: But, for me, being the mom, I kind  
12 of feel like I'm in the rock and the hard place where  
13 he's my son and I love him, but I -- I can't let him  
14 abuse me or talk to me like that or anybody in my  
15 house. So he's gone back to [City]. I haven't heard  
16 from him since he left in October or November.

17 KERRIE REAY: Okay. And your health is important.

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

19 KERRIE REAY: Right? You are a warrior now and that is --  
20 you have got control of your life. And, um -- and to  
21 do that sometimes it comes with some hard decisions.  
22 And they are okay. Those are okay decisions.

23 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah. I'm doing pretty good  
24 health-wise. I was telling Gertrude that four years  
25 ago I got diagnosed. [*Two lines redacted - personal health*



1 *information*]. And they have monitored  
2 it for the last -- so it has been four years since  
3 they have been monitoring it. And, um, it hasn't  
4 changed. [*Two lines redacted - personal health information*].  
5 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.  
6 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Everybody that I know of that's  
7 died from [*five lines redacted - personal health information*].  
8 KERRIE REAY: Okay.  
9 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And then the doctor says, you know  
10 it can't go from that area into there, right? So I  
11 was checked. The last time I was checked they said  
12 they were just going to leave it now and that if  
13 something starts happening then I go back. I had  
14 quite a few MRIs, and I was pretty scared for those  
15 three or four years, though.  
16 KERRIE REAY: Oh, I bet. I bet.  
17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: But people say, how do you get  
18 through that? I said, I got a life to live. I've got a  
19 granddaughter to grow up with. And I don't even try  
20 thinking about it because I really believe what you  
21 put out there comes back to you. Whether it's bad or  
22 good it's going to come back.  
23 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm. Right.  
24 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: So I just -- I said, I got a life  
25 to live. I'm just getting on with my life. I don't

1 even think about them most of the time.

2 KERRIE REAY: And in doing that you referenced a fellow by  
3 the name of [Counsellor]?

4 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: [Counsellor].

5 KERRIE REAY: And was that a turning point for you where  
6 you were actually were able to access some services  
7 that were starting to show up in communities and --

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: That was in Tumbler Ridge and he  
9 was the counsellor in town.

10 KERRIE REAY: And what -- what triggered? Can I ask, what  
11 connected you to him? How did that happen? Because  
12 it sounds like it was a big turning point for you.

13 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I met him through a friend, I  
14 believe, and then I needed help.

15 KERRIE REAY: And --

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And Tumbler Ridge is a small  
17 community, right? Still a small community. So I  
18 ended up going to counselling with him once a week. And  
19 then, um, we tried counselling, me and the hubby,  
20 together, and then he just would sit there and lie the  
21 whole time. I -- and then one day I got mad and I got  
22 up and I said, okay, I am not doing this anymore. I  
23 said, excuse me, [Counsellor], I'm going home. And then, you  
24 know, the partner gets all mad. And I am like, I am  
25 not going to sit here and spill my guts and be as

1 honest as I can so I can try and heal and heal our  
2 family and our children, and, you know, so forth and  
3 so on, and you are going to sit there and lie and deny  
4 everything. So I said, I think it's better if I just  
5 do my own counselling and you do our your own  
6 counselling, and that's how we did it.

7 KERRIE REAY: And I guess because one of the things the  
8 inquiry is looking at in terms of recommendations in  
9 terms of supporting people, women and girls, that are  
10 coming out of those violent relationships, and you  
11 have described a lot of violence, and a lot of courage  
12 here by you today. Huge courage --

13 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: It's time.

14 KERRIE REAY: -- to share your truth.

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Happy birthday, Mom.

16 KERRIE REAY: But, um, part of it is moving, going forward.

17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

18 KERRIE REAY: Right?

19 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: You have got to go

20 (indiscernible)--

21 KERRIE REAY: And what -- what happened for you as a  
22 survivor and now a warrior that allowed you? What was  
23 there that sort of not triggered but helped you take  
24 that step towards healing and your journey towards  
25 better health for yourself and for your family?

1           Something happened in Tumbler Ridge is where I'm  
2           going.

3   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  Yeah.  Yeah.

4   KERRIE REAY:  Because for all those years --

5   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  I always volunteered.

6   KERRIE REAY:  Um-hmm.

7   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  And, you know, if your front yard  
8           is good your whole household is good.  Not true.  So  
9           that's -- I grew up with that thinking from my  
10          parents, right?

11   KERRIE REAY:  Um-hmm.

12   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  And, um, I don't know what it was.

13          I don't know what made me go to [Counsellor].  But it was  
14          ever since I started seeing [Counsellor] it -- just little  
15          seeds were getting planted.

16   KERRIE REAY:  Right.

17   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  And then I stepped out of my  
18          comfort zone --

19   KERRIE REAY:  Okay.

20   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  -- and I said, I want to go back to  
21          school.  That's a big risk.  I got kicked out when I  
22          was 15.  I want my education.  I'm the only one in my  
23          family that graduated.  I did it years later but I  
24          graduated.

25   KERRIE REAY:  Congratulations.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And, um -- and then it was like  
2 rocking the boat. I'm going to rock the boat. I'm  
3 not going to tip it over but I'm rocking it. I'm  
4 going back to school. So I went and registered.  
5 Because my counsellor says, you have every right to go  
6 back to school if you want to, right? And through  
7 that going back to school and my volunteering in the  
8 community. Um, and I got a job at the Royal Bank  
9 cleaning the Royal Bank. You have to be bonded. So I  
10 was bondable. And then, um, I won the scholarship.  
11 And then I thought, okay, I can't go any further here.  
12 I need to get out of here. And then it all just....

13 KERRIE REAY: So what I'm hearing is that the counselling  
14 provided a -- some strength, a bit of a safety net as  
15 well --

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

17 KERRIE REAY: -- as you made some decisions and, it sounds  
18 like, taking control --

19 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

20 KERRIE REAY: -- back?

21 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

22 KERRIE REAY: Some things fell into place for you as well  
23 like getting the scholarship and it just allowed you  
24 because of that -- not because but that support --

25 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

1 KERRIE REAY: -- with the counsellor helped move you  
2 forward?

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah, big time. And then, you  
4 know, growing up thinking -- I was told I was stupid  
5 and I was never going to amount to anything. And  
6 then, you know, you get with these guys and they tell  
7 you you are fat and you are useless and you are  
8 stupid. You know, after so many years of that you  
9 start believing them. And I remember finding myself  
10 in a closet one time with the doors closed bawling my  
11 eyes out thinking, I hate my life, it sucks, there's  
12 nothing I can do to change it and it's always going to  
13 be like this.

14 KERRIE REAY: And you proved yourself wrong.

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I did. I did. And then when I  
16 left Tumbler Ridge to move to Lethbridge to go to  
17 school I just became active and involved and had my  
18 kids. I was always that outgoing, um, volunteering person,  
19 but I was always -- guys always just -- and  
20 then, you know, the Russian guy in Lethbridge there,  
21 he beat me up one time because of what I was wearing  
22 or he seen a guy look me and he beat me up, you know.  
23 It's like...

24 But if I wouldn't have gone through all that  
25 stuff I wouldn't be the person I am today, I think. I

1 don't think people have to go through all that stuff  
2 to become the person they want to be, but my life was  
3 a different story.

4 KERRIE REAY: So thoughts about, um, for the recommendation  
5 piece of the inquiry and the violence that sort of  
6 permeated from the time you were a child until about  
7 15 years ago, what recommendations for women that are  
8 experiencing that? What sort of things do you think  
9 could help them move forward or to escape? Because  
10 you -- you made that comment a number of times. And I  
11 am mindful that you were talking about a time in the  
12 '70s and the '80s --

13 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

14 KERRIE REAY: -- and you said that they were different.

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

16 KERRIE REAY: What would you think is changed for women  
17 today?

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: It's always been escape. All the  
19 relationships I was in was escape. And then the  
20 father of my three kids, he kicked me out and then  
21 when I was packed and ready to go he wouldn't let me  
22 out of the house.

23 KERRIE REAY: But you said you felt like you couldn't  
24 leave. So --

25 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

1 KERRIE REAY: -- my questioning, to myself, is in terms of  
2 the recommendations --

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I didn't think --

4 KERRIE REAY: -- as a survivor and a warrior.

5 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I didn't think there was enough  
6 help for me. I didn't think there was -- I didn't  
7 have any safety nets. Like, I mean, if your family is  
8 not going to help you who is going to help you, right?  
9 I didn't -- I was young and didn't know. Um, safety  
10 nets are huge. Having somebody that you can call and  
11 talk to any time. I did that too with number of  
12 women. I'm here 24/7. Any time you need a ride, you  
13 need to get out call me. Um, and I still see it going  
14 on in relationships today and even in some family  
15 members. And it's hard to stay out. It's hard.

16 KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: You can let them know that you are  
18 there for them, but you can't go in and change things.  
19 You can't make them change. You can't make someone  
20 escape or whatever until they are ready.

21 KERRIE REAY: Right.

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And I -- I don't know if this is  
23 still the stats, but back in my day it took a woman  
24 sometimes going -- leaving 10 times coming and going  
25 before she actually left. And I look at all my



1 relationships and I didn't just leave the first time  
2 and stay away. I couldn't. I didn't think I was  
3 capable --

4 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

5 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: -- of raising kids on my own. I  
6 didn't know if I could get a job to raise kids. I  
7 didn't have my education. I didn't have my high  
8 school yet. And back then to pack groceries you  
9 needed grade 12. I couldn't even pack groceries. And  
10 then I felt stupid.

11 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm. So what I'm hearing is that safety  
12 net and the services for women need to be in place --

13 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

14 KERRIE REAY: -- for them to actually escape the violence?

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes. Regardless of your culture.

16 That shouldn't have anything to do with it. We are  
17 all human beings.

18 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

19 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: We all deserve not to be abused.

20 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm. Now, one of the things that you had  
21 mentioned earlier was your photography and how that's  
22 been part of your healing journey and something that  
23 you were considering about helping to support the  
24 legacy further outside of your truth in terms of the  
25 National Inquiry?

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes. Yes. I attend as many of the  
2 events in town. Um, I'm a photographer for a lot of  
3 the events in town, and then I take the pictures and I  
4 post them on social media and then just tell people to  
5 share, and they go all over the place. I have friends  
6 around the world, right?

7 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And that's the best platform. One  
9 of the best platforms. My photography keeps me sane.  
10 I was -- I was telling Gertrude that I go to water.  
11 I'm a fire sign.

12 KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

13 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Someone asked me why water. I  
14 said, because I think it grounds me, right?

15 KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And today, because everything is  
17 frozen, I go to the shower or I go have a bath. And  
18 then when I first decided I was going to do this and I  
19 went into the shower and all the memories were coming  
20 back, I just stood there and let the water wash them  
21 away.

22 But photography is -- I don't know. Ah, it's my  
23 passion. It's what I do. And, um, I am, this year,  
24 looking into making a calendar from my red dress  
25 events, our red dress events, and some of my own -- I

1           have 46 of my own red dresses that I have collected,  
2           and I take them out and set them out and do different  
3           pictures with them. So I'm going to make a calendar  
4           and I want to donate at least part of the money to The  
5           Red Dress Society to help with events, um, speakers.

6   KERRIE REAY: And you mentioned that, perhaps, if there's a  
7           calendar you'd like to donate that to the National  
8           Inquiry, a calendar?

9   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I would donate it. You betcha. I  
10          would love to do that.

11   KERRIE REAY: I just want to take a look at my notes, um,  
12          just to make sure that -- and that we will -- after  
13          we're off the record, um, you will give me the  
14          information so that we can look at --

15   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

16   KERRIE REAY: -- the possibility of taking a look at that  
17          time when you were in Chilliwack, particularly, and  
18          Prince George in the early '80s --

19   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

20   KERRIE REAY: -- and the lack of policing support in the --  
21          enforcing those restraining orders.

22   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Um, after the thing that happened  
23          here in Prince George, I had a constable named  
24          [Police officer]? I think it was [Police officer]. And we  
25          had this connection, and it just seemed whenever I -- I had

1 his -- he gave me his card and I could call him if I  
2 ever needed to. And then like he was around for about  
3 six months and then he just -- he disappeared. I  
4 didn't understand where he went. And I was told that  
5 they removed him off my case because he was getting  
6 too close. It was... Right?

7 KERRIE REAY: Hmm.

8 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And like he's a police officer.  
9 Isn't that what he is supposed to do?

10 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

11 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: But, yeah, um....

12 KERRIE REAY: So I do -- I -- there's another question, and  
13 it probably seems a little out of context, um, because  
14 I'm asking it towards the end, and that was, you know  
15 when you were describing the violence in the family  
16 home, was there any of the children who were removed  
17 from the home by any social services or foster care?

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Okay. So my oldest brother, he was  
19 in the navy already. And then my second oldest  
20 brother, he was married and out on his own. Um, but  
21 the six younger ones, or the four before me, like me  
22 and [Sister 2], so the two older ones were already out  
23 living their lives. And then there was, um, [Brother 1],  
24 [Sister]. My brother [Brother 2] went off and lived with a  
25 family on the Bonaparte reserve because he couldn't

1 stand our family anymore.

2 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

3 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And my mom and dad were good with  
4 that. So [Brother 1] and [Sister] and [Brother 3] were  
5 all put into foster homes.

6 KERRIE REAY: What about yourself?

7 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No, I never went in one, but I was  
8 threatened with it daily. If you don't behave, --

9 KERRIE REAY: So some of your --

10 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: -- if you don't do this....

11 KERRIE REAY: -- older siblings? So just --

12 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

13 KERRIE REAY: Just to get my mind, I have that there was  
14 five children in the family.

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: There's eight.

16 KERRIE REAY: There's eight children?

17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Five boys and three girls.

18 KERRIE REAY: Oh, there we go. There's the five, five boys?

19 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

20 KERRIE REAY. Okay. Okay.

21 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And then the two older boys were  
22 already off doing their own thing.

23 KERRIE REAY: Okay. Yeah.

24 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Um, so -- so my older sister and,  
25 ah, the brother above me and the brother above my

1           older sister, they were all... And stuff happened to  
2           them and they are -- that's their story, though.

3   KERRIE REAY: Right. Okay. No, but it's part of --

4   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: It is.

5   KERRIE REAY: -- understanding the system of systemic  
6           violence.

7   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And my sister still -- since my mom  
8           has passed away my sister is still having a really  
9           really hard time. Both of them. I kind of came  
10          through it gracefully.

11   KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

12   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And they are having a harder time.  
13          I mean, everybody grieves differently.

14   KERRIE REAY: Yes. So, um, we talked about counselling.  
15          And, as a survivor, you talked about your strength and  
16          your resilience started when you started with [Counsellor]  
17          but also that you found a lot of strength in giving back  
18          to the community --

19   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Um-hmm.

20   KERRIE REAY: -- through your volunteering. So I'm just --  
21          I'm just trying to make sure that some of the themes  
22          that the inquiry is looking for in their  
23          recommendations that I don't miss. Because you  
24          have -- you have taken such -- as I said earlier, such  
25          courage to share so much and so personal. I want to

1 make sure that I can capture some of those themes.

2 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Okay.

3 KERRIE REAY: So, um, we've talked about commemorating  
4 the -- you have got the dresses that you have given,  
5 the sticker dresses. The calendar will come. And,  
6 ah, we've talked about making things better. You have  
7 highlighted the need for services, the need for safety  
8 nets for women --

9 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

10 KERRIE REAY: -- and girls. Is there anything else in  
11 terms of what you think the inquiry needs to  
12 understand from -- from your truth or that you would  
13 like to offer in terms of anything else that would  
14 support some recommendations?

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I think quite a few of the times in  
16 the different situations that I wasn't believed, that  
17 they believed the abuser.

18 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

19 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Which made me think, why do I --  
20 why should I even say anything then?

21 KERRIE REAY: And that's policing? Okay.

22 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah. Um, I think one of my --  
23 another of my -- just in the last like three years,  
24 one of my breaking points to put myself out there more  
25 was, um, I seen an ad on the TV that Prince George was

1 going to host the Canada Winter Games in 2015. And I  
2 said to my hubby, I said, I don't know what I'm doing  
3 but I'm going to be part of that. And so when they  
4 put out the applications, like I had just a basic  
5 little camera but I took some pretty amazing pictures  
6 with that little camera, right? And I put myself out  
7 there. I am going to go. I want to be a photographer  
8 for the Canada Winter Games.

9 KERRIE REAY: Okay.

10 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And some people scoffed because my  
11 camera was, you know....

12 KERRIE REAY: You can do some pretty good [unintelligible  
13 overtalk].

14 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I said it's -- I said it's not just  
15 the camera. It's the eye.

16 KERRIE REAY: Right.

17 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Right? And so I went for it. And when I went  
18 there there was all these -- there was 50  
19 of us. And there was all these other people with  
20 these lenses like this and they are looking at my  
21 camera, right? And I said to the -- Nikon came up.  
22 Nikon came from, I don't know, Ontario or whatever.

23 KERRIE REAY: Right.

24 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And they would clean people's  
25 cameras and stuff for them. And mine was a Canon. I



1           said, yeah, I know you, can't touch mine because it's  
2           a Canon and it's little. And he goes -- and these  
3           guys are still scoffing away. And he goes, no,  
4           Sharon. He says, we can't touch yours, but we can  
5           loan you one. I'm like what? We can loan you a  
6           Nikon. I'm like what? And they loaned me an  
7           \$8,000 -- (indiscernible) an \$8,000 Nikon and I had  
8           it for 22 days in a row, and I went out there.

9                        So my job with the winter games, I did their job  
10           during the day and then at night the Lheidli Tenneh  
11           had their own pavilion with all these amazing  
12           performers and stuff and all the spirituality and  
13           drumming and bannock. So, um, me and my daughter, we  
14           did my work in the daytime, and so I got my daughter  
15           to become my assistant.

16   KERRIE REAY:   Okay.

17   SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:   And so I took her everywhere with  
18           me and we went to all the different sports and  
19           everything, and we spent every night over at that. I  
20           have some amazing pictures of the performances and  
21           that. And that -- like that camera has a lens like  
22           that on it. And then I came away from that and then I  
23           had to go back to my Canon. I'm sorry I abandoned  
24           you, my little camera, right?

25   KERRIE REAY:   Ah.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And then just started taking --  
2 just go out. Well, that's what I started with. I  
3 just started taking. And it allowed me to put myself  
4 out there.

5 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

6 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I am as good as some of these other  
7 people. I can take pictures like this. And then  
8 about a year-and-a-half ago I saved up money and I  
9 bought myself a \$2,000 Nikon. It's not 8,000, but  
10 it's \$2,000.

11 KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

12 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And I have taken some amazing  
13 pictures with it. And so that's --

14 KERRIE REAY: Okay.

15 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: -- my voice.

16 KERRIE REAY: Okay. And you also were speaking that you  
17 were finding your voice in drumming --

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

19 KERRIE REAY: -- as well? So you are starting to connect  
20 with your culture?

21 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

22 KERRIE REAY: Good.

23 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I went to take some decals to some  
24 ladies at the drum session yesterday and they invited  
25 me into the circle. And they gave -- Jen gave me a

1 drum and then I just -- because I have seen so many of  
2 their performances.

3 KERRIE REAY: Um-hmm.

4 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And the drum is the heartbeat,  
5 right? And I thought, wow, this is so good for me for  
6 what I am going to go do tomorrow. So I drummed for  
7 two hours. They said, you drummed for two hours?  
8 That's a lot for your first time. I am not even sore.  
9 I'm going back Sunday. And then eventually I'm going  
10 to -- they are going to have a drum workshop. I'm  
11 going to make a drum.

12 KERRIE REAY: Good.

13 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah. Yeah, it's very very very  
14 very, ah, spiritual and healing. And we had a  
15 gentleman come through here. His name was Caribou  
16 Legs. He ran from Ontario.

17 KERRIE REAY: Yes. Yes. Yes.

18 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: And he -- to cleanse the Highway of  
19 Tears. So me and my girlfriend went up, ah, to the  
20 bon voyage just before he started his running. We  
21 were part of the smudging ceremony. And I gifted him  
22 five of my decals and he gifted me this.

23 KERRIE REAY: And you have been here today holding that.

24 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes.

25 KERRIE REAY: Sharing it with your truth.

1 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yes. So, with that, I feel really  
2 good right now.

3 KERRIE REAY: Oh, good.

4 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: I feel like I want to cry because I  
5 feel so good. I feel really -- rushing around in my  
6 chest. I feel light. I feel like I just went poof to  
7 a hundred pounds.

8 KERRIE REAY: Good. Good.

9 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Thank you.

10 KERRIE REAY: Any last comments?

11 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: No. Thank you for having me here  
12 and allowing me to tell my story. And I hope that if  
13 my story can help one woman or girl....

14 KERRIE REAY: Yes. And it will be part of the legacy of  
15 the inquiry.

16 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Wow.

17 KERRIE REAY: It's a public -- um, it's a public session,  
18 although, we're private in here.

19 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Yeah.

20 KERRIE REAY: But it is public. So it will be that legacy.  
21 And I know I have said it before, but I think it needs  
22 to be said again, phenomenal courage to share --

23 SHARON LYNN PATTERSON: Thank you.

24 KERRIE REAY: -- what you shared today. And we -- it's  
25 your truth and we want to honour that. And so thank

1           you very much for being here and --

2       SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  It feels --

3       KERRIE REAY:  -- giving your time.

4       SHARON LYNN PATTERSON:  It feels good to tell the whole,  
5           whole thing.  I am sure there's pieces in there, other  
6           stuff that happened, but that was the gist of it and  
7           it feels good to share.

8       KERRIE REAY:  All right.  With that then, I'm going to turn  
9           off the recording.

10                               [PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED]

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

I, Janet Chorney, Official Reporter in the Province of British Columbia, Canada, do hereby certify:

That this is a true and accurate transcript of these proceedings recorded on sound-recording apparatus, transcribed to the best of my skill and ability in accordance with applicable standards.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 9th of March, 2018.

Official Reporter