

The Power of Stories: How Lifelong Learning Changes Lives

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Eden Jaycock
Kelly Loffler
Tim Brigham



Royal Roads
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Hay'sxw'qa si'em nakwilia

[Hy-sh-kwa sea-em na-kwil-ia]

Thank you my honourable people

We acknowledge the campus is located on the traditional Lands of the Lekwungen speaking Peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.

With gratitude, we live, work and learn here where the past, present and future of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty and staff come together.



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Agenda

- **Royal Roads University: Who Are We?**
- **Our Reason: Lifelong Learners**
- **Meet Tania**
- **Meet Remy**
- **Meet Kelly**
- **Reflections**
- **The Rub: Processes vs. People**
- **Review/Conclusion**
- **Q&A**





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Institutional Profile

- Founded as a public university in 1995, Royal Roads University offers applied and professional programs at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels.
- Programs are primarily offered in a cohort model as a blended format, combining periodic on-campus residencies with face-to-face intensive sessions with online courses.
- This format is designed to favour working professionals, who may complete the programs at a distance while maintaining their careers.



About RRU

- Life-changing transformation
- Flexible admissions
- Build towards a degree
- Learning that fits
- Diversity by design





Structure of WDLL



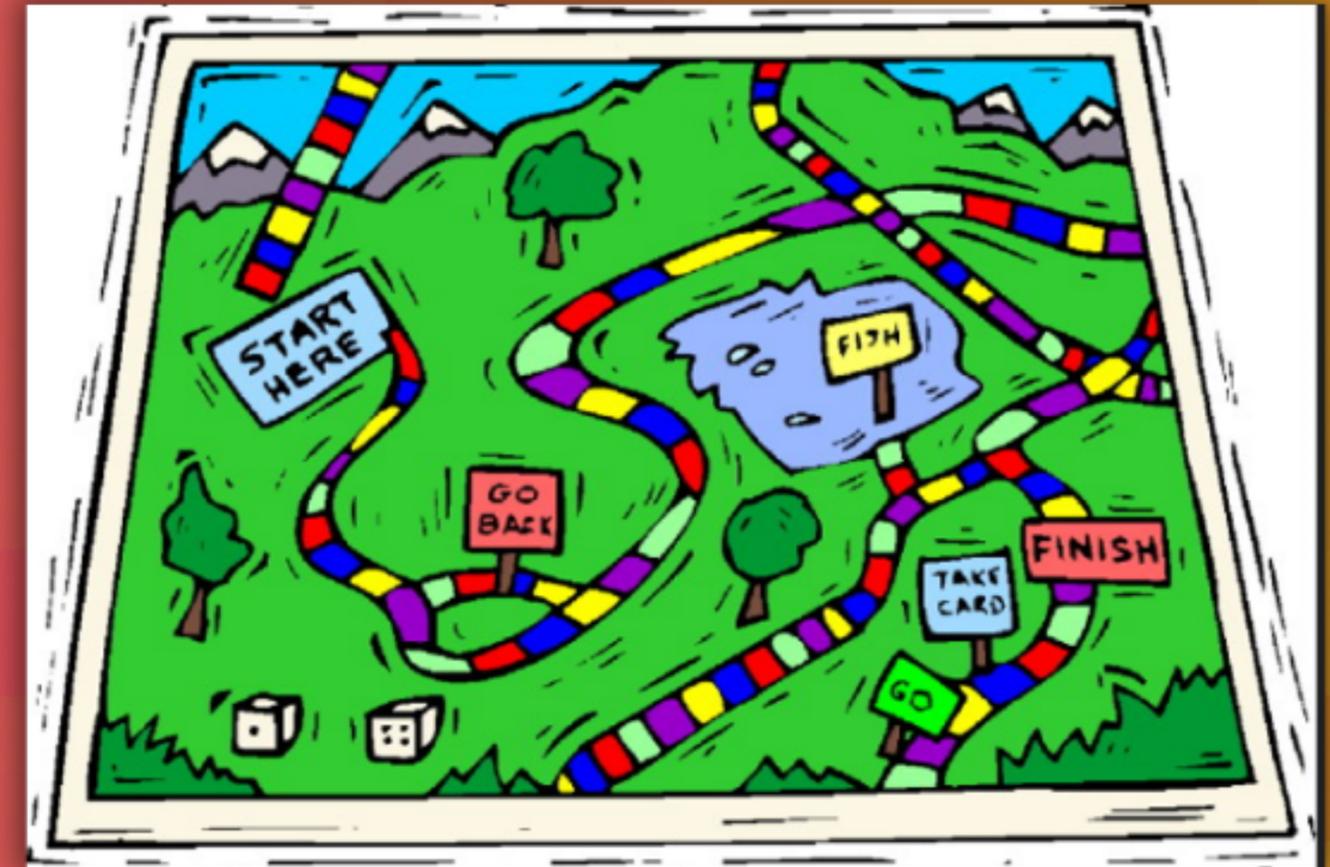
Overview of PCS Learners

- Serving a diverse audience:
 - Working professionals wanting to upskill/reskill
 - “Upgrading” for credit programs
 - Employment-focused, in-community
 - Organization professional development
- Variety of ages, stages, needs



Setting the Stage

- Focused specifically on employment programs
- Three learners from three different programs
- Focused on 4 areas:
 - Previous education/professional experience
 - Details of the program
 - Barriers/challenges during the program
 - Ways the program impacted their lives (work and personal)
- Using stories to make connection



Meet Tania

- Formal Education: BSc with a major in Psychology
- Worked in the Finance industry - Brokerage House
- Left workforce for 12 years to focus on family
- Barrier: technology had advanced during the time away
- Needed a change



“Learning happens everywhere.”



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Learning Opportunity

- 12-week employment program with a focus on administrative skills
- Included career coaching and logistical support
- Motivation: Wanted to try something new (needed a change)
- Goal: Bring skill level up to work readiness at RRU
- Barrier: Self-Imposter Syndrome



Impact

- Professionally: secured employment where she wanted to be
- Personally: growth, self-worth, defining future on own terms



Career Learning & Development Coordinator
Student Services



Meet Remy

- Formal Education: 2-year BCIT Computer Systems Technology Program, Specializing in Decision Management Systems
- Eclectic career ranging from Software Quality Assurance to Office Administrative Assistant
- Journey was shaped by market ups and downs, periods of unemployment, retraining, and readjusting work expectations



“Being adaptable and resilient and focusing on work has made me who I am today.”

Learning Opportunity

- Supervisory Skills Micro-credential (Spring 2021)
- 10 wks
- Online learning with peer cohort
- Motivation: furthering and bettering skills while between jobs
- Goal: be more attractive as an employee with more leadership skills going forward (middle/upper management)
- Thrived in the online community



Impact

Professionally: Increased viability as an administrative professional - parlayed into a successful position Fall, 2023

Personally: Better sense of self, improved self-confidence, ability to self-actualize

“Lifelong learning means being ready to accept when life changes the status quo and you can adapt, change in new ways.”



Administrative Assistant III
Metro Vancouver Regional District

Meet Kelly

- Successful business owner and beauty professional for 20+ years
- COVID-19 halted the personal service industry, providing a catalyst for change
- Educational opportunity - intimidating yet transformative
- Renewed goals and motivation
- Inspired to support others taking similar life-changing steps

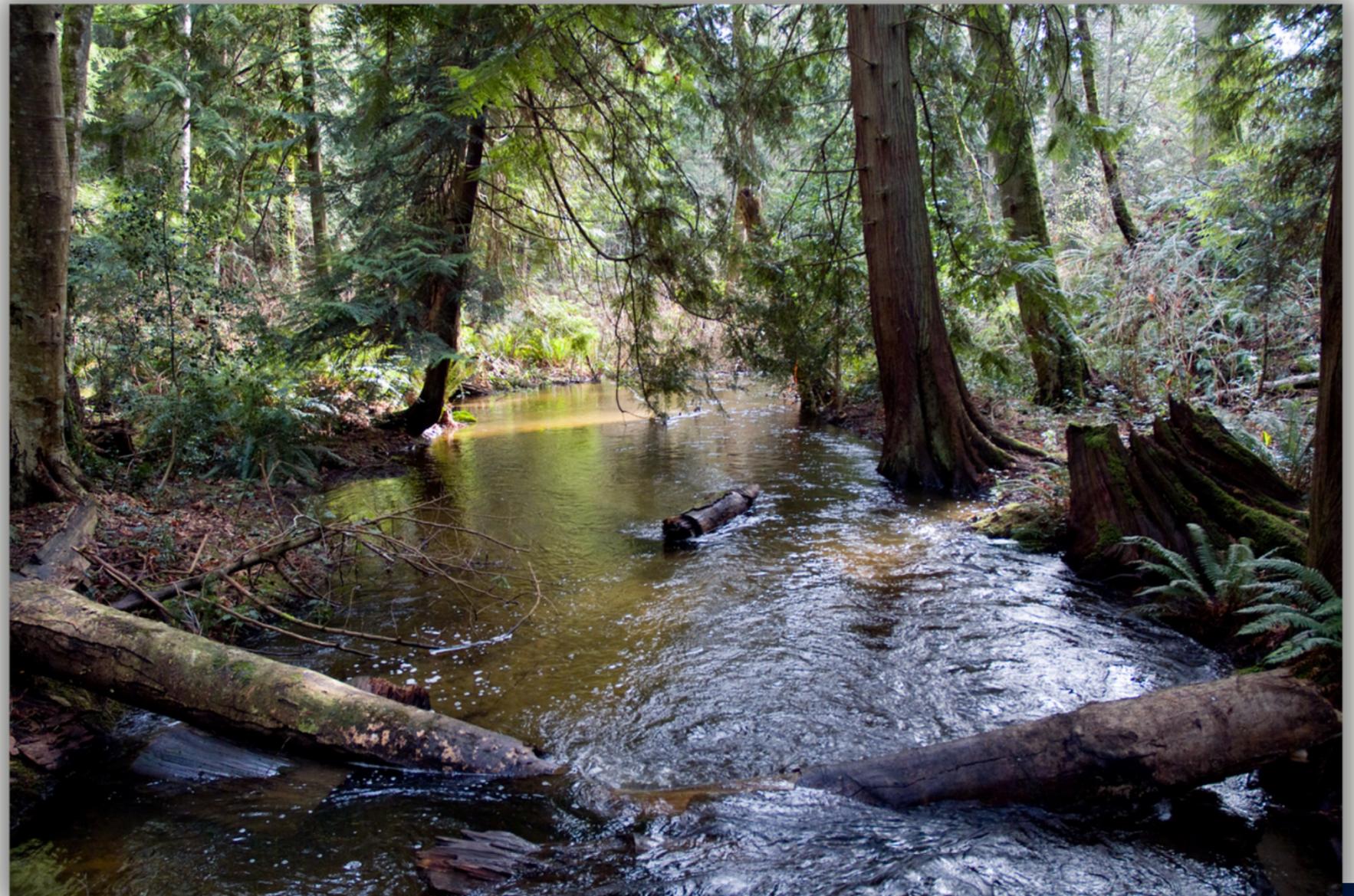


Learning Opportunity

- 1st cohort of the Professional Project Administrator (PPA) Program
- Employment-focused program for Indigenous learners
- 7 cohorts (over 100 learners) from 2020-2025
- Completion rate > 90% with learners reporting a broad range of personal & professional impacts
- Developed and piloted through Future Skills Centre (ESDC) funding



Reflections & Takeaways



The Rub

- We need to 'colour outside the lines'
- Our learners are not traditional
- Reporting out (KPIs) may not capture "success"
- Processes/policies vs. learners' needs
- The need to be flexible in an inflexible environment



Our Lifelong Learning

- Learning with and from our learners
- If you're not flexible/adaptable, it may not be the right area for you
- Our biggest successes have come from continually reminding ourselves who we are here to serve (Learners)
- Superpowers: Care, Connection, Creativity, and Curiosity



Why this matters



Questions?



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