

ROLE MODEL BIO: Neegann Aaswakashin is Saulteaux of the Anishinaabe Nation, a member of Fishing Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan, and Bear Clan. Her name O’Niigaannii Aaswaakshin means "leader to lean on" in Anishinaabemowin, and as such Neegann is a passionate and dedicated advocate for Indigenous peoples. Neegann’s undergraduate studies were in Arts and Sciences, and she holds a Juris Doctor (JD) law degree from the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law. Neegann is currently the Vice-President of Indigenous consulting firm First Peoples Group, and proprietor of the company’s new western Canada sister company, Indigenous Peoples Group. Neegann previous worked for the Assembly of First Nations, Native Women’s Association of Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General in areas such as policy, civil litigation, negotiation, and legal issues concerning the intersect between Indigenous peoples’ legal rights and interests and the Crown rights, duties and obligations. Neegann currently lives in Squamish, British Columbia with her baby daughter and husband.

LEARNING GOALS:

- I will make connections between a role model’s life experiences and my own

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

- I can Identify 3 specific actions that helped Neegann achieve their goals
- I can connect examples of these themes to my actions in my own life

IDENTIFY *Some of the themes below are discussed in the Fireside Chat with Neegann Aaswakashin*

Indigenous female leadership healing fallibility
mental health and wellness

How have these themes have been present in Neegann’s life?

- Listen to the interview
- Record notes of relevant themes and examples

CONNECT *Reflect on your own journey. Where do these themes appear in your own life?*

Discuss with a friend of family member. Record your connections in writing, drawing or with music.

“People don’t realize that failures, for me, are what I’ve learned most from. And being able to persevere and allow yourself to fail and not to give up on yourself, and just pick yourself up, dust yourself off and keep going. Just need to have your eye on the prize, and anybody has that capability”

-Neegann Aaswakashin

EXTEND *Neegann is open about seeking counselling to restore balance and to heal.*

Are you aware of the resources available to you in your community if you need someone to talk to? Conduct research at your local youth or friendship centre and/or access your personal networks to compile a list of professional support services. Keep this list accessible for times of need for you or others.