



From an essay written in 2008 by Cecilia George about her half grand aunt, Dr. Mary Thomas:

Mary Thomas' leadership approach was transformational because she inspired many Indigenous people to want to learn about our culture and language for the good of our people...[and others].

Mary had a profound and extraordinary effect on both our people and non-Indigenous people.

What I find most inspiring about Mary Thomas is that, even though she had been treated very harshly by the priests and nuns, she found a way to love and be loved.

She is an inspiration to all women both Indigenous and non- Indigenous because she came from a place of poverty, bitterness, and she was widowed very young with [16] children, which she raised on her own.

Mary left the reserve and took any kind of job she could get to raise her family and she remained single until most of her children were grown.

... [T]he most inspiring thing about [Mary Thomas] is that around age 70 she began a new career and began teaching [our culture] to all the schools and then branched out to the Indigenous community.

[It] is my desire to work on getting my PhD this summer. I want a nom-de-plume such as Dr. Cecilia George and I want to go out and do workshops in the Indigenous community and assist in the healing of my people who have suffered the generational effects of residential abuse.

I learned from Dr. Mary Thomas that she didn't need a formal education to go out and do what she did. From my recollection she probably didn't even have a grade 8 education.

If my Aunt Mary could do it, I could do it.