

# On Making *The Meaning of Life*: An Interview with Hugh Brody

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## **Abstract:**

An interview with Hugh Brody—an anthropologist who has worked for over thirty years with Indigenous peoples in Canada and abroad—on the making of *The Meaning of Life*. His documentary examines Kwá-kwèxwelhp Prison in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia. Operated in collaboration with the neighbouring Chehalis First Nation, Kwá-kwèxwelhp (Kwi) is a minimum-security prison that offers programs to Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners based on Indigenous spiritual and cultural philosophies. A key figure in the men's lives is Grandma Rita Leon, an elder-mentor whose approach is to separate the crime from the man. By the film's end, some of the men have been successfully discharged from the prison; some have not. *The Meaning of Life* explores the challenging issues accompanying the journey to recovery while also reflecting on the meaning of a life lived in prison.

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