

Hello,

My name is Michelle Lewis, I am an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

Thank you for hearing our stories and giving us space to heal.

My Dad, Jack L. Avery attended Chillocco Indian School in Oklahoma. He drove me there, we stood and looked at it, I began to ask questions and he had one tear, gave me the hand signal to not talk. Finally he said, "I think it was good for me." through tears. Since then we have learned the truths of what happened in Indian Boarding Schools. I am the baby of the family, but my Brother and Sister were raised by him. He tortured them to learn their address the same way the Indian School taught him. TORTURED. As we read more elders stories of Indian Schools, we began to realize this is what tortured our Father his entire life. We began to heal and understand him. It is so important that the truth come out. There must be truth or there is no healing.

Thank you for listening. Thank you for voting to give us room to heal.

Sincerely,

Michelle Lewis

Cherokee Nation

Living in New Mexico with fire

Thank you, Deb