



# Up Ghost River: A Chief's Journey Through the Turbulent Waters of Native History

*Edmund Metatawabin, Alexandra Shimo*

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**Up Ghost River: A Chief's Journey Through the Turbulent Waters of Native History** Edmund Metatawabin, Alexandra Shimo

**A powerful, raw and eloquent memoir about the abuse former First Nations chief Edmund Metatawabin endured in residential school in the 1960s, the resulting trauma, and the spirit he rediscovered within himself and his community through traditional spirituality and knowledge. Foreword by Joseph Boyden.**

After being separated from his family at age 7, Metatawabin was assigned a number and stripped of his Native identity. At his residential school--one of the worst in Canada--he was physically and emotionally abused, and was sexually abused by one of the staff. Leaving high school, he turned to alcohol to forget the trauma. He later left behind his wife and family, and fled to Edmonton, where he joined a Native support group that helped him come to terms with his addiction and face his PTSD. By listening to elders' wisdom, he learned how to live an authentic Native life within a modern context, thereby restoring what had been taken from him years earlier. Metatawabin has worked tirelessly to bring traditional knowledge to the next generation of Native youth and leaders, as a counsellor at the University of Alberta, Chief in his Fort Albany community, and today as a youth worker, Native spiritual leader and activist. His work championing indigenous knowledge, sovereignty and rights spans several decades and has won him awards and national recognition. His story gives a personal face to the problems that beset Native communities and fresh solutions, and untangles the complex dynamics that sparked the Idle No More movement. Haunting and brave, *Up Ghost River* is a necessary step toward our collective healing.

- JOSEPH BOYDEN is a friend, fully supports Metatawabin and the book, and wrote the foreword.

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