

BEGINNERS
BOOK 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank Heritage Canada for providing the funding to support this important Indigenous Language Initiative.

Special thanks also to:

Patricia Ningewance for allowing us to use her book *Gookomo's Language* as an amazing guide and reference to introduce our community members from Basic to more Advanced Ojibway levels. Patricia is an Ojibway person from Lac Seul First Nation in northwestern Ontario. She has travelled throughout Anishinaabe country, where Ojibway is spoken.

Bomgiizhik (Isaac Murdoch) for allowing us to use his book "The Trail of Nenaboozhoo" and its beautiful stories. Bomgiizhik is from the Serpent River First Nation in Anishinaabek Territory on the North Shore of Lake Huron.

Marleen Ironstand, for all her time and assistance with the translations, recordings, and editing of all the program materials. Marleen is an Elder from TTR who was instrumental in executing this program.

Lillian Lynxleg, for her support in the translation and recordings of the materials, as well as for helping us understand the importance of location and dialects of the Ojibway language. Lillian is an Elder and Ojibway Language teacher at TTR's Chief Clifford Lynxleg Anishinaabe School.

Madeleine Whitehawk, for assisting us with the recording and explaining the tutorials and recordings. Madeleine is an Elder and teacher from the Cote First Nation who has actively worked and advocated for language recovery and preservation for many years. Madeleine helped us bring the educational materials into the context of the local dialect of our area.

Chief Barry McKay and the TTR Council for their support.

Thank you all for your generosity and for furthering our language.

Disclaimer

Some of the educational materials in this language program have been edited, adapted, and modified from their original form to ensure compatibility with the local dialect.

Anishinaabemowin

(excerpt from Gookom's Language Book)

Anishinaabemowin, the Ojibwe language, belongs to the Algonquian language family, one of the largest in Mikinaakominising (Turtle Island) or North America. Today, the Anishinaabe language is spoken in western Quebec and eastern Ontario where it's called Algonquin. Their written language is influenced somewhat by their French neighbours. In Ontario, they know it as Ojibwe. It is called Chippewa in a small part of southern Ontario, northern parts of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and North Dakota. Further west in southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, it becomes known as *Saulteaux*. In Saskatchewan, the Anishinaabe people there call their language "nakawewin". They have developed their own way of spelling their language. There are even some Ojibwe or *Saulteaux* communities in British Columbia.

Although Anishinaabemowin does change slightly as you go from one region to another, it is the same language. People from different areas are very accommodating when minor dialect differences appear while talking. These variations should not present barriers in communication. Do not feel self-conscious in these situations. Be proud of the dialect that you're learning. Each dialect exist because of its unique social history. Real people spoke the language that you're in the process of learning. Those are real people that got up early each morning while it was still dark, people who had to feed their children and elders, people who feared strange sounds in the night because it might be enemies sneaking up on them, or cannibal spirits coming at them. Our language exists today because our ancestors survived great hardships. The dialect we learn is the remainder of that time. Let's honour the ancestors by learning the language they left behind for us to speak.

ANISHINAABE HISTORY

Because concepts in the Ojibwe language can't always be translated into English, learning Ojibwe is critical to passing on our history and traditions from one generation to another. Values live on through the language and benefit everyone.

There are many stories that explain the origin of the Anishinaabe people, let's read the following story and learn important words...

The Creation Story – Turtle Island

Long ago, after the Great Mystery, or Kitchi-Manitou, first peopled the earth, the Anishinabe, or Original People, strayed from their harmonious ways and began to argue and fight with one another. Brother turned against brother and soon the Anishinabe were killing one another over hunting grounds and others disagreements.

Seeing that harmony, brotherhood, sisterhood, and respect for all living things no longer prevailed on Earth (**Aki**), Kitchi-Manitou decided to purify the Earth (**Aki**). He did this with water (**Nibi**). The water (**Nibi**) came in the form of a great flood (**Mookskoobewun**), upon the Earth (**Aki**) destroying the Anishinabe people and most of the animals as well.

Only Nanaboozhoo, the central figure in many of the Anishinabe oral traditions, was able to survive the flood (**mooshka'an**), along with a few animals and birds who managed to swim and fly. Nanaboozhoo floated on a huge log (**gizhibaayaakowebishkigan**) searching for land, but none was to be found as the Earth (**Aki**) was now covered by the great flood (**Mookskoobewun**). Nanaboozhoo allowed the remaining animals and birds to take turns resting on the log (**gizhibaayaakowebishkigan**) as well.

Finally, Nanaboozhoo spoke. "I am going to do something," he said. "I am going to swim to the bottom of this water (**Nibi**) and grab a handful of earth. With this small bit of earth, I believe we can create a new land for us to live on with the help of the Four Winds and Kitchi-Manitou." So Nanaboozhoo dived into the water (**Nibi**) and was gone for a long time.

A long time. Finally he surfaced, and short of breath told the animals that the water is too deep for him to swim to the bottom. All were silent.

Finally, the Loon (**Mahng**) spoke up. "I can dive under the water (**Nibi**) for a long way, that is how I catch my food. I will try to make it to the bottom and return with some Earth in my beak." The Loon (**Mahng**) disappeared and was gone for a very long time. Surely, thought the others, the Loon (**Mahng**) must have drowned. Then they saw him float to the surface, weak and nearly unconscious. "I couldn't make it, there must be no bottom to this water (**Nibi**)," he gasped.

Then the helldiver (**Zhing-gi-biss**), came forward and said "I will try next, everyone knows I can dive great distances." So the helldiver (**Zhing-gi-biss**) went under. Again, a very long time passed and the others thought he was surely drowned. At last he too floated to the surface. He was unconscious, and not till he came to could he relate to the others that he too was unable to fetch the earth from the bottom.

Many more animals tried but failed, including the mink (**Zhaangeshi**), and even the turtle (**Makinaak**). All failed and it seemed as though there was no way to get the much needed earth from the bottom.

Then a soft muffled voice was heard. "I can do it," it spoke softly. At first no one could see who it was that spoke up. Then, the little muskrat (**Wazhashk**) stepped forward. "I'll try," he repeated. Some of the other, bigger, more powerful animals laughed at muskrat (**Wazhashk**).

Nanaboozhoo spoke up. "Only Kitchi-Manitou can place judgment on others. If muskrat wants to try, he should be allowed to." So, muskrat (**Wasask**) dove into the water (**Nibi**). He was gone much longer than any of the others who tried to reach the bottom. After a while Nanaboozhoo and the other animals were certain that muskrat (**Wasask**) had given his life trying to reach the bottom.

Far below the water's surface, muskrat (**Wasask**), had in fact reached the bottom. Very weak from lack of air, he grabbed some earth in his paw and with all the energy he could muster began to swim for the surface. One of the animals spotted muskrat (**Wasask**) as he floated to the surface.

Nanaboozhoo pulled him up onto the log. "Brothers and sisters," Nanaboozhoo said, "muskrat (**Wasask**) went too long without air, he is dead." A song of mourning and praise was heard across the water (**Nibi**) as muskrat's spirit passed on to the spirit world. Suddenly Nanaboozhoo exclaimed, "Look, there is something in his paw!" Nanaboozhoo carefully opened the tiny paw. All the animals gathered close to see what was held so tightly there. Muskrat's paw opened and revealed a small ball of Earth. The animals all shouted with joy.

Muskrat (**Wasask**) sacrificed his life so that life on Earth could begin anew. Nanaboozhoo took the piece of Earth from Muskrat's paw. Just then, the turtle swam forward and said, "Use my back to bear the weight of this piece of Earth. With the help of Kitchi-Manitou, we can make a new Earth." Nanaboozhoo put the piece of Earth on the turtle's back.

Suddenly, the wind blew from each of the Four Directions,
The tiny piece of Earth on the turtle's back began to grow. It

grew and grew and grew until it formed an island (**minisi**) in the water (**Nibi**). The island (**minisi**) grew larger and larger, but still the turtle (**Mikinaak**) bore the weight of the Earth on his back. Nanaboozhoo and the animals all sang and danced in a widening circle on the growing island.

After a while, the Four Winds ceased to blow and the waters became still. A huge island (**minisi**) sat in the middle of the water (**Nibi**), and today that island (**minisi**) is known as North America.

Traditional Ojibway people hold special reverence for the turtle (**Mikinaak**) who sacrificed his life and made life possible for the Earth's second people. To this day, the muskrat (**Wasask**) has been given a good life. No matter that marshes have been drained and their homes destroyed in the name of progress, the muskrat (**Wasask**) continues to survive and multiply. The muskrats (**Wasask**) do their part today in remembering the great flood; they build their homes in the shape of the little ball of Earth and the island (**minisi**) that was formed from it.



Anishinaabe and Family

Anishinaabe families include a wide circle of relatives who are linked together in mutual dependence. Family members share resources and responsibilities. The Dakota use the phrase *mita-kuyapi-owasin* which means all my relatives. All my relatives includes not only the Dakota, but all human life, plant life, animal life and all things on this Earth. The Ojibwe used the term *indinawe maaganag* with can also be translated all my relatives.

The circle of relatives who live together or in close proximity are linked in mutual dependence.

Grandparents and other community elders have always played a major role in rearing and educating the young. This type of shared responsibility for parenting is a family and community strength. The grandchild is an extension of the grandmother and grandfather.

Whom/who are your *Kitinaweemaa kanak*

Miinan
Blueberries

Nibaabaa
My father

Gimishoomis
Grandfather

paapaasee
Woodpecker(s)

Nimaamaa
My mother

Gookom
Grandmother

Awesiinh
Wild animal

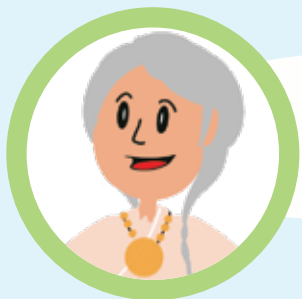
awakaan
Domestic animal

mitigokaa
Many trees

manidoons
Insects

Mooz(oog)
Moose(s)

Ogaa(wag)
Walleye



Aandi kaa-onciit Pat?
Where was Pat from?

Wikwedong gii-oncii
She was from Thunder Bay

Gi-baabaa dash wiin?
What about your father?

Gichi-mookomaanakiing wiin
gii-oncii.
He was from the States

Ooh?
Oh?

Gii-bwaaniwi
He was a Dakotah

Geyaabi na ayaawag gi-mishoomis gemaa gigookom?
Are your grandparents still around?

Etako ni-mishoomis geyaabi bimaadizi
Only my grandfather is still living

Aaniin endaso-bibooned?
How old is he?

Gegaa ngodwaak daso-biboone
He's almost a hundred

Iyohoo!
Holy moly!



The Seven Original Clans

1 & 2- Mooskohooz miinawa Maang

The crane and loon clans are the leaders and the chiefs. They both work together for the good of all the people in the nation.

3 -Giigonh

The fish clan settles arguments between the crane and loon clans. They are the wise people. They solve the problems within the nation. The turtle is the leader of the fish clan. In this clan we have different types of fish such as migrating, territorial, bottom feeders, top eaters, late spanners, early spanners.

4- Makwa

The bear clans are the ones who patrol the woods around the community to watch for danger. They also know how to use the plants for medicine.

5- Makaseewaanos

The deer clan is the gentle people in the nation. They are the poets and the peace makers. Everything they do is kind and gentle.

6- Waabizhishi

The martin clans are the warriors who fight to protect the nation. They are respected for their bravery and skills.

7- Binenhshiinh

The bird clans are the spiritual people. They are known to predict the future. There are different types of birds in this clan such as waterfowl, land fowl, treedwellers, insect eaters and seed eaters.

Awenen giin gi-doodem?
Who's your clan animal?



Makwa ndoodem. Giin dash?
Mine is the bear. And you?

Mooz niin
Mine is the moose.

Ni-maamaa gewiin ini odoodeman
That's my mother's clan too.

Ndinawemaa iinzan gi-maamaa.
I guess I'm related to your mom.



The Seven Teachings

Nbwaakaawin / Wisdom

To live in WISDOM is knowing the gifts the Great Spirit gave to everyone.

To use these gifts to build a family and community filled with caring, sharing, kindness, respect, and love for one another.

When we know and use our gifts we become an instrument of the Great Spirit, helping to bring peace to the world.

Debwewin / Truth

Always to seek the TRUTH.

The truth lies in spirit. Prayer was to be done every day at sunrise to give thanksgiving to the Great Spirit for the gift of life.

All gifts & each ceremony were given by the Great Spirit to the Anishinaabeg to help them find truth, the true meaning of their life, & existence. Living truth is living the seven great laws.

Ddaadendizwin / Humility

Always to act in HUMILITY. One was to always think about their family, their fellow man, and their community before they thought of themselves.

To know humility is to know that there is a Great Spirit and he is the creator of all life, and therefore he directs all life.

Zaagidwin / Love

The Anishinaabeg were to always act in LOVE.

To love the Great Spirit the same way he loved his people, because it was the love of the Great Spirit that gave life.

Children are to be loved, for children are a gift from the Great Spirit.

Maanaacitiwin/ Respect

To RESPECT all life in Mother Earth.

To show real respect was to give of themselves for all the benefit of all life.

To respect the Elders and the Leaders who upheld the sacred laws of the Great Spirit.

Soogiziwin / Courage

To RESPECT all life in Mother Earth.

To show real respect was to give of themselves for all the benefit of all life.

To respect the Elders and the Leaders who upheld the sacred laws of the Great Spirit.

Teepweewin/ Honesty

To be HONEST to themselves.

To live in the spirit of how they were created. Never to lie or gossip about one another.



Medicine Wheel

The Medicine Wheel is an interconnected system of teachings relating to the seasons, directions, elements, colors and the cycle of life. It speaks of the need for balance, harmony and respect as bringers of happiness. It is an ancient system of traditional indigenous knowledge that many tribal peoples share under many different names.

Experience continues to be a fundamental principle of the Anishinabe learning processes.



The Dream Catcher

An Ojibwe Legend

A spider was quietly spinning his web in his own space. It was beside the sleeping space of Nokomis, the grandmother. Each day, Nokomis watched the spider at work, quietly spinning away. One day as she was watching him, her grandson came in. "Nokomis-ya!" he shouted, glancing at the spider. He stomped over to the spider, picked up a shoe and went to hit it.

"No-keegwa," the old lady whispered, "don't hurt him."

"Nokomis, why do you protect the spider?" asked the little boy.

The old lady smiled, but did not answer. When the boy left, the spider went to the old woman and thanked her for saving his life. He said to her, "For many days you have watched me spin and weave my web. You have admired my work. In return for saving my life, I will give you a gift."

He smiled his special spider smile and moved away, spinning as he went.

Soon the moon glistened on a magical silvery web moving gently in the window. "See how I spin?" he said. "See and learn, for each web will snare bad dreams. Only good dreams will go through the small hole. This is my gift to you. Use it so that only good dreams will be remembered. The bad dreams will become hopelessly entangled in the web."

**Sleep well sweet child
Don't worry your head
Your Dream Catcher is humming
Above your bed**

**Listen so softly
I know you can hear
The tone of beyond
Close to your ear**

**Love is alive
And living in you
Beyond all your troubles
Where good dreams are true**

**Dream Catchers
An ancient Chippewa tradition
The dream net has been made
For many generations
Where spirit dreams have played.**

**Hung above the cradle board,
Or in the lodge up high,
The dream net catches bad dreams,
While good dreams slip on by.**

**Bad dreams become entangled
Among the sinew thread.
Good dreams slip through the center hole,
While you dream upon your bed.**

**This is an ancient legend,
Since dreams will never cease,
Hang this dream net above your bed,
Dream on, and be at peace.**



The Sacred Plants

The four sacred plants are gift of the Four Manido (Spirits of the Four Directions). To those who live in the traditional way, there are four plants which are especially revered and used in daily living. The creator taught us to use the natural herbs of sage, sweetgrass, tobacco, and cedar smoke as a physical reminder to them of this omnipotent presence. It is the sacred way.

Asémaa

Asémaa, or tobacco, is one of the four sacred plants. It represents the Eastern Direction and the mind. The Anishinaabe use a form of tobacco known as kinikinik, or a red willow mix. Because it opens the door to the creator, When tobacco is used to make smoke, it is one of the most sacred of plants for Native people. Some elders say that tobacco is used to connect the worlds since the plant's roots go deep into the earth, and its smoke rises high into the sky. This plant is highly respected and highly honoured. Giving tobacco is a beautiful way of our people. Ceremonies using tobacco invoke a relationship with the energies of the universe, and ultimately the Creator, and the bond made between earthly and spiritual realms is not to be broken. There are four traditional Tobacco uses. None of them will harm you.

Prayer

When we put sacred tobacco into our Sacred Pipes, we are also using that tobacco as a communicator to the sky world where all of our ancestors have gone on before us. We do not inhale the sacred smoke that comes from the pipe. When the smoke rises, it is taking our prayers with it up to the Creator and all of our relatives who have gone on before us. Our elders show us that when we finish with prayers, we sprinkle a small amount of tobacco on the drum.

This is a way of giving back to and thanking the Creator for all he has given to us. Tobacco can be used on a daily basis as each new day is greeted with prayers of thankfulness. Many elders say to hold it in your prayers of thankfulness. They also add that you are to hold it in your left hand as this is the hand closer to your heart.

Offerings Traditionals burn tobacco before storms. It is used to pray that powerful storms won't hurt our families. To pray with tobacco in your Native language is very powerful. It can make a difference in the physical world.

Purification

Tobacco is used in the offering of prayer to the Creator, acting as a medium for communication. It is either offered to the fire, so the smoke can lift the prayers to the Creator, or it is set on the ground in a nice, clean place. It means we come humbly to our creator. We proclaim our innocence. When you want to speak to the creator, we are told to make an offering of the tobacco plant. An Elder will take tobacco ties and offer them to the fire or offer it back to Mother Earth on behalf of the Sacred Circle. Anishinaabe people live life in a very sacred manner. When taking something from the Earth, they always explain to the spirit of the plant why it is being done and offer some tobacco in return for the generosity and help of the plant which shared itself so freely.

Purification and working with a clear mind and heart are essential in asking the land to provide for people. This is keeping with the Native belief that if you do things in a good way, good things will follow. If careful attention is not established, the result will not be as good. Sometimes elders place tobacco on the water. This shows our thanks to the Creator, for the lifeblood of our Mother the earth that is provided to us. At this time we also acknowledge the moon who in her 28-day cycle cleanses the water by filtering it through the sands.

Respect

Respecting our tobacco should be taken seriously. Sacred tobacco is used for prayers of gratitude to thank the Creator of Mother Earth for our many blessings, such as good health, great fishing, and good crops. When any plant is picked or any animal is taken, Tobacco and Prayer must be given to show respect. By honouring all our relations we demonstrate that we have not forgotten our place within the web of life. To offer someone tobacco is to ask that you and the person receiving the tobacco be of one heart, one mind and one spirit. Tobacco is offered when you ask someone to do a ceremony for you, such as a name-giving, drumming or singing for someone, to do a smudging ceremony, a sweat lodge or sacred pipe ceremony; any ceremony. This signifies that you and the one doing the ceremony are of one heart, one mind and one spirit, that you have the same purpose.

Another way that is used to bring people together in unity is that it is used to heal rifts between people. If you have a disagreement that causes ill feelings or someone has treated you badly, or if you have treated someone badly, you can bring tobacco and ask to speak to the person. Then of course, you would do your best to heal the rift, not to make things worse, so tobacco assists us in making amends, getting over resentments, healing emotional wounds and in forgiving people. Even a little tobacco can be given if you do not have money for a pouch. It is the sacredness that counts, not the amount. The person can decide to accept your tobacco or reject.

Some of our Elders still offer tobacco to everyone who visits them. Tobacco is given to elders when one is seeking advice. It is always good to offer tobacco when seeking knowledge or advice from an Elder or when a Pipe is present.

It shows gratitude and respect for the elder whose advice you are seeking. Tobacco is given when you appreciate a teaching from an elder or even a younger person if you value what that person has told you. It is a way of showing respect and gratitude.



KEEZHIK

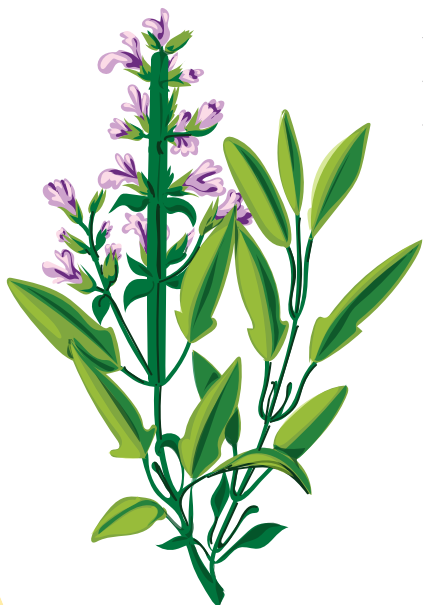
Keezhik (Cedar) represents the Southern direction and the soul. The leaves are cleaned from the stems and separated into small pieces, which are used in many ways. When burned, Keezhik acts as a purifier, cleansing the area in which it is burned and emitting a pleasant scent. True cedar is burnt while praying to the Great Mystery in meditation, and also to bless a house before moving in. Cedar was offered to the fire to smudge the lodge and people. It is also used to waft the smoke to ward away sickness. In traditional medicine, a compound decoction of twigs was made into an herbal steam for rheumatism. It works both as a purifier and as a way to attract GOOD energy in your direction. Elders say put some in your shoes and only goodness will come your way. Many traditional women keep some cedar in their left pocket. When you breathe in the smell of cedar you decide that you're going to have courage and stamina and that you're going to survive. You think of what the herb means, why it was given to us ... It's not magic.



SUKODAWABUK

Sukodawabuk, also known as sage, is used in much the same ways as Keezhik (cedar). It is burned as a purifier, but when compared to the "piney" scent of cedar, sage has a spice air. Sukodawabuk represents the Western direction. Sage is used by the original peoples to make their prayers, to signal the creator of one's need for help. There are many varieties of Sage and all are effective in smudging. Smudging is a way of using the smoke from burning herbs to cleanse the body, an object, or a given area of negative influences. Many Native Americans used varieties of sage for medicinal purposes as well as religious ceremonies. The burning of Sage in smudging ceremonies is to drive out evil spirits, negative thoughts

and feelings, and to keep negative entities away. The root was used by the Ojibwa in three ways: as an anti-convulsive, on wounds to stop bleeding, and as a stimulant. The Potawatomi burned the plant to smudge and also used it as poultice on long-standing sores.



WEENGUSH

Weengush, or Sweet grass is used to cleanse the mind, body and spirit. It is considered sacred because it is symbolic of purification. It represents the Northern direction and the body. The elders tell us that scent of these natural herbs is pleasing to the creator and will incline him to hear the ceremony with favor. The smoke is considered distasteful to all evil beings and thwarts their powers. This plant plays an important part in ceremonies of spiritual significance. When Weengush is used in ceremony, each person is to fan the sweet grass smoke, first to their heart, second to their mind, third around their body and lastly, return the smoke to their heart. The prayer said during this process is: "Great Mystery, please cleanse me of my negativity and fill me with the positive energies of love, so that, as I am healed so may I work for the healing of our Earth Mother."



Because it signifies the hair of Nokimis Akiin (Our Grandmother the Earth) it is usually braided. Each of the three sections that go into the braid have a specific meaning, being mind, body and spirit. Because the Anishinaabe people live life in a very sacred manner, when taking something from the Earth, they always explain to the spirit of the plant why it is being done and offer some tobacco in return for the generosity and help of the plant which shared itself so freely.

Many sacred and cultural objects re made with Weengush. The Men's grass dance outfits are symbolic of the sacred plant. A braid of sweet grass was traditionally tied to the dancers' belts. The colorful yarn or fringe that sways from their regalia symbolizes sweet grass swaying in the wind. Weengush is also used to make coiled baskets, called unity baskets. These Unity baskets are not for sale. It is said that in the old days very small ones kept children's navel cords. Sweet grass is a very powerful herb.

Gratitude

Our sacred plants have a special role to play in our lives. We need to keep the idea of gratitude ever present in our mind. We cannot keep our NDN worldview alive without fully appreciating the concept of gratitude. Proper use of our sacred plants helps us to convey the meaning of gratitude. Whenever we take something, we must remember to give. We must be able to be grateful before receiving. To appreciate that life is a gift and that everything that comes with it – our successes and our defeats -- is truly a gift in itself. Tobacco is what is offered back to Nokimis Akiin - grandmother earth. When we find a feather or collect medicines, we take them with us as a gift from her. We offer tobacco.

When we hunt animals, we offer tobacco to the earth and to the chief spirit (Manitou) of the plant or animal we're asking to give of itself. We also offer tobacco when we cross a river, before thunderstorms when someone dies, when we see an eagle. This idea of gratitude is what binds us together as native people and keeps us strong. The four sacred herbs complete the cycle of life. Their smoke is used to cleanse the mind, spirit, body and soul. They can remove negative forces and refresh us.

To achieve honesty within yourself; to recognize who and what you are.

Do this and you can be honest with all others.



