

Sacred Code of Ethics

In addition to the sacred teachings concerning the nature of things, and of the gifts of the four directions, the teachings of *THE SACRED TREE* include a code of ethics to which all should conform their lives if they wish to find happiness and well-being. This code describes what wisdom means in the relationship between individuals, in family life, and in the life of the clan. These are the sparkling gems of experience practiced by Native peoples everywhere. They represent the path of safety leading around the medicine wheel, and up the great mountain to the sacred lake. What follows are twelve of the most important teaching that are universal to all tribes.

1. Each morning upon rising, and each evening before sleeping, give thanks for the life within you and for all life, for the good things the Creator has given you and others and for the opportunity to grow a little more each day. Consider your thoughts and actions of the past day and seek for the courage and strength to be a better person. Seek for the things that will benefit everyone.
2. Respect means “to feel or show honor or esteem for someone or something; to consider the well-being of, or to treat someone or something with deference or courtesy.” Showing Respect is a basic law of life.
 - ◆ Treat every person, from the tiniest child to the oldest elder with respect at all times.
 - ◆ Special respect should be given to elders, parents, teachers, and council leaders.
 - ◆ No person should be made to feel “put down” by you; avoid hurting others’ hearts as you would a deadly poison.
 - ◆ Touch nothing that belongs to someone else (especially sacred objects) without permission.
 - ◆ Respect the privacy of every person. Never intrude on a person’s quiet moments or personal space.
 - ◆ Never interrupt people who are conversing.
 - ◆ Speak in a soft voice, especially when you are in the presence of elders, strangers, or others to whom special respect is due.

- ◆ Do not speak unless invited to do so at gatherings where elders are present, except to ask what is expected of you, should you be in doubt.
 - ◆ Never speak about others in a negative way, whether they are present or not.
 - ◆ Treat the earth and all her aspects as your mother. Show deep respect for the mineral world, the plant world, and the animal world.
 - ◆ Do nothing to pollute the air or the soil. If others would destroy our mother, rise up with wisdom to defend her.
 - ◆ Show deep respect for the beliefs of others.
 - ◆ Listen with courtesy to what others say, even if you feel that what they are saying is worthless. Listen with your heart.
3. Respect the wisdom of the people in council. Once you give an idea to the council or meeting it no longer belongs to you. It belongs to the people. Respect demands that you listen intently to the ideas of others in council and that you do not insist that your idea prevail. Indeed you should fully support the ideas of others if they are true and good, even if those ideas are quite different from the ones you contributed. Once the council has decided something in unity, respect demands that no one speak secretly against what has been decided. If the council has made an error, that error will become apparent to everyone in its own time.
 4. Be truthful in all things, and under all conditions.
 5. Always treat your guests with honor and consideration. Give your best food, your best blankets, the best part of your house, and your best service to your guests.
 6. The hurt of one is the hurt of all; the honor of one is the honor of all.
 7. Receive strangers and outsiders with a loving heart and as members of our family.
 8. All the races and tribes in the world are like the different colored flowers of the meadow. All are beautiful. As children of our Creator they must be respected.
 9. To serve others, to be of some use to family, clan, nation or the world is one of the main purposes for which we have been created. Do not

fill yourself with your own affairs and forget your most important task. True happiness comes only to those who dedicate their lives to the service of others.

10. Observe moderation and BALANCE in all things.
11. Know those things that lead to your well-being and those things that lead to your destruction.
12. Listen to and follow the guidance given to your heart. Expect guidance to come in many forms; in prayer, in dreams, in times of quiet solitude and in the words and deeds of wise elders and friends.

Gaining an understanding of the Sacred Tree is an eternal journey. As in all journeys, there must be time for activity as well as rest.

It is our prayer that the Great Spirit will bless and guide your every step on this journey into an ever-greater vision of beauty, truth, love, wisdom and balance.

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