

The International Journal of Ecopsychology (IJE)

Volume 1
Number 1 *Narratives on Coronavirus: The
Overwhelming Power of the Infinitesimally
Small*

Article 9

10-15-2020

Native American Perspectives: From the Red Road in Recovery

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Recommended Citation

Pete, James (2020) "Native American Perspectives: From the Red Road in Recovery," *The International Journal of Ecopsychology (IJE)*: Vol. 1 : No. 1 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/ije/vol1/iss1/9>

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Native American Perspectives: From the Red Road in Recovery

Cover Page Footnote

(Cover photo, "Jim," courtesy of James Pete. Next-Figures: 1. Elaine's Moccasins; 2. Otter Turban; 3. Brandon's Moccasins; 4. Grandparents.)



*Barb Gordon
Photography*

Native American Perspectives:
From the Red Road in Recovery

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CULTURE AND TRADITIONS are a major part of my Red Road in Recovery. I've been involved in Native Art (used to call it Arts and Crafts) from the time I was 8 years old and going on 55 years! I am still learning, in many aspects. But, when I am creating Native Art....there is this place of peacefulness, serenity, a connection to the Higher Power (*Gichi Manidoo*), those who traveled to the Spirit World, and many others. This is from an *Anishinaabe* (Chippewa or Ojibwa) aspect.

I feel so honored, grateful, and humbled...and every day in my thoughts, prayers, blessings, and offering tobacco ask for the continued guidance, direction, and support.

IN OFFERING MY THOUGHTS, PRAYERS, BLESSINGS, AND TOBACCO THIS MORNING...I come to the appreciation that I am able to begin each day, like this, with the newness of hopes, having the courage, and strength to continue on with my Spirituality and Sobriety.

This morning there was such a serenity outside, so early in the morning as I seen Grandmother Moon shining brightly and hearing in the distance, the very distant howling of wolves or coyotes. Other times in this setting, also, hearing the sound of an owl.

Like so many others, complaining about the weather ... the winter ... the cold ... the snow, I also reflect on how our ancestors survived in these same settings, for centuries! One of our teachings relates to the war between the Winter Spirit and the Spring Winter fighting with each other, at this time. The Winter Spirit wants to hang on and the Spring Spirit doesn't give up.

Also, thinking of the newness that is there with the East representing a newness, new life, the baby stage of life.

As Spring emerges, one can see the many signs how it continues with the buds on the trees, the melting of the snow and ice ... cold nights and warm days, which leads up to the Sugar Bush time for collecting the sap from maple trees, for syrup, maple sugar, maple cakes....

This cycle that has been there, since the beginning of time.

IT ALL STARTS WITH ONE BEAD ... sometimes I have an idea, in my mind, of what I'd like to make. And as I begin, it needs to come from a place of balance, serenity, harmony ... because if it doesn't, things don't "turn" out or I have a lot of challenges, because of negativity or bad feelings.

I knew I wanted to make a medallion, and as I continued, it changed many times, but I knew that whatever it was going to be....it was meant to be.

While I have been creating Native Art (which we used to call it Arts and Crafts), some of it relates back to a lot of trial and errors, ripping it apart, throwing it away ... setting aside for a long time (even years). But it also comes from the teachings of a lot of people, who have had some type of influence (see figures 2-4).

In this day and age, there are so many modern day conveniences, like thread, beads, glue, leather, chamois....on and on, as compared to many years ago, whereby our Ancestors had to actually make the items they needed in their creations, or trade with others for the beads and cloth....so,

when I am making something, I try to think of the piece(s) lasting for 100+ years, like the work of our Ancestors!

I don't sell my work anymore, like I used to, but I continue to make things for a variety of reasons, and I just realized, a part of me continuing making things....is to pass on or share with others, so that our Traditions and Culture will continue on.

A (Partial) *DibaaJimowin* (Story) of

James E. Pete, DBA

My *Anishinaabe* (Indian) name is *Guyaushk* (Seagull). I am a member of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, from the Eagle Clan. I have two sons, eight grandchildren; with a great granddaughter born on March 29, 2018 and another great granddaughter born on November 4, 2018. On November 6, 2018, I celebrated 26 years of sobriety. I served on the Red Cliff Tribal Council, in 1982-1984, and from July 2010 to November 2011. In addition to serving as a Council member, I also served as the Vice-Chairperson and Tribal Treasurer.

I have a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, a Master's degree in Organizational Management, and a Doctorate in Business Administration. I serve(d) as an Adjunct Faculty member for Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, St. Cloud University, DQ-University, and with the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

My Doctoral Project, entitled "*Native American/Indian Tribal Organization and Leadership: Understanding the Past, Living in the Present, Designing the Future for Tribal Organizations and Leadership*," focuses on the encouragement of integration of traditional beliefs and philosophies into the Tribal Organization.

In October, 1995, I became owner of *Guyaushk* and Associates, which is a firm that concentrates on a variety of Tribal management issues, organizational assessments, training, and technical assistance services. I also offer services to organizations/individuals in the facilitation of creating a plan to address change, team building, personal healing, overall assessment, program development, and creating an atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration.

I believe in the encouragement at all levels to create an atmosphere of cooperation, collaboration, and once in a while..."***COLORING OUTSIDE THE LINES.***"

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