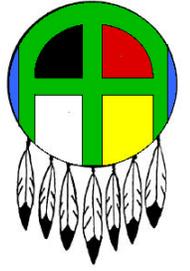


Four Directions



Native American Indian General Service Office

Summer 2006

Pg.1

"We know that in all creation only the human family has strayed
from the Sacred Way."

Ojibwa Prayer

"South"

South usually represents youth, growth, strength and victory. The theme of this issue is "Victory."

The Native American Indian General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous was created as the result of a vision received by a Paiute Indian, Earl L. NAIGSO functions to provide recovery, unity and service to Native Americans, as well as all people in Alcoholics Anonymous. Its hope is to add growth and strength to the native peoples in recovery.

In an effort to aid the growth, strength and victory of Native Americans to overcome the disease of alcoholism the Southeastern Native American AA Council was formed this past spring and held its first gathering in Cherokee, NC. The second gathering of the Southeast Native American AA Council will be held in Cartersville, GA. at the Redtop Mountain state park. The Gathering is scheduled for August 26th. (See flyer in ["Calendar of Indian AA Events!"](#)) "Victory" lives in the hearts of many sober native peoples today and each of them helps to carry the message of recovery somewhere on Turtle Island. We hope to see as many as possible bring their strength to the Southeastern Native American AA Council.

"All My Relations"

**Gary C.
Editor**



The Circle of Peace

Reprinted with permission- AA Grapevine



For the past year and a half, my spouse and I have been chairing AA meetings at one of the correctional facilities in our city. Recently the inmates have begun taking a more active part in their meetings, such as sharing, reading the Big Book, and so forth. We have typed "How It Works" from chapter five of the Big Book and after the Serenity Prayer and the Preamble the inmates read this aloud.

Last week, at our regular Wednesday meeting, the inmate chairperson declared the meeting an open discussion meeting and said there would be no set topic. Each person would speak out on what was in his heart and then that person would tag someone else. If the person tagged did not care to share that would be okay but he must tag another person.

The chairperson spoke first and his topic was gratitude. He tagged another inmate and for the next half hour several inmates shared. No one changed the topic, so it stayed a gratitude meeting. There were a number of Native Americans attending the meeting, and finally one inmate tagged an elderly Native American. At first the old man sat silent, then he looked up, waved his hand, and said, "I speak no English."

Almost everyone laughed except one young Native American. He got up from his chair, walked over to the old man, and spoke for a moment in another tongue. He turned to the rest of us and said, "The old man will speak and I will interpret his words." The old man began speaking, and the younger man would stop him every few moments and relay the words to us. "I have been here a long time and all because I committed a terrible crime against a brother of mine," the old man said. "I was drunk at the time, but that is not an excuse for what I did because I was drunk a great deal of the time. After I came here (to prison) I started to search for something to relieve the pain I felt for what I had done.

"First I tried various religions offered here. Then I tried solitary meditations. At no time could I find peace. One evening I heard one of my brethren speak of a meeting that was starting on Wednesday nights. It was a meeting about drinking problems. I came to this meeting. I have been coming back each Wednesday for over a year. You may ask why I would attend a meeting when I could not understand the words that were spoken. I will tell you."

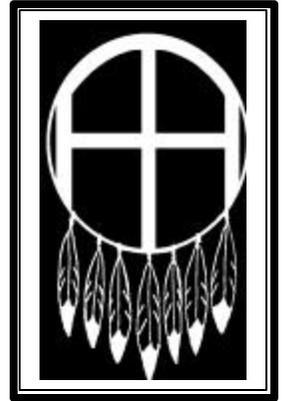
"From the very first time I stepped into this room and joined this circle of chairs, I felt a powerful spirit. Each time I return here I feel this spirit and the beginning of a wonderful feeling of peace. I need not know the words, although some of them are becoming known to me. All I need to know is that for the hour that I spend with you people, I am at peace with myself. I feel close to the Great Spirit of my fathers. Words are not necessary. The Great Spirit speaks in all languages. That is all I have to say."

We closed the meeting shortly afterward with the Lord's Prayer and all of us felt a special nearness to our own Higher Power and a true feeling of what spiritually is all about.

J. F.M. Tucson, AZ



“Strength”



O Great Spirit Master of Destiny Maker of all exalted Dance
I dance today in your shadow -Shaking now my turtle rattle
Looking upon your faceless sky in wonder How fearless you have made my body
All pulsing with magnificent life-How kind and loving have you formed my lips
That I may praise your every shape and contour -In your mighty Ruach in your lowly dew drop
As you rise upon the east as Sun-As you fall upon the west in flames
You have endowed my eyes with sight- And blessed my sight with clarity
Given me purpose soul seva- Sending out in your wind and storms-A thunder of proclamation and joy
Every spirit hears you-Every being basks in abundance-For you have delivered unto me and mine
Sevenfold the blessings of a thousand generations-For yours is an everlasting favor
True until time is no more-And galaxies themselves grind to dust
How fortunate I am to find myself showered-In your radiance and your blessings
And for how long have I sought you-To find you here-In the always ever simple stillness
That is the beginning and end alpha and omega-Of all and every and each-So your teachers teach
And finally thus I hear-That beat - tum tum - of the sacred drum
Calling me to your presence-And cleansing me of suffering and shame
That in service glorious I may rise again-To embrace the Dance that once I spurned
To teach the Dance I barely learned-To flow in Dance my soul returned
Thus I thank you-Whose name weighs upon every tongue.

As a sweet word spoken we explain in our way and to the best of our ability what it was like what happened and what it is like - how we each met a personal creator who transformed our lives and gave to us a strength which sustained us daily so that we might not drink.



Eye of the Hurricane

Reprinted with Permission- AA Grapevine



My mother spoke spirituality. Her tribe did not believe that we owned anything; if she liked something she would give it away, as she would say that it was trying to “own her.” She encouraged me to watch and learn from the animals to see how they used different skills to solve problems and to study the ways of the universe and of the Great Spirit who would teach me if I would listen. I was never accepted by the other children of the tribe as I was not full-blood. I listened to the Germans, who worked in the oil fields with my father, when they came to sing the good German songs, drink the beer, and really have a good time. That was “my people.” I did not want anything to do with the tribe. I refused to play cowboys and Indians if I had to be the Indian. Shame came early in to my life. World war II broke out and it was no longer popular to speak in German. The music was gone from my life and now I had more shame for my heritage. With the shortage of gas, food, and legal booze, things got worse. The violence that came when my father’s friends got together to drink became more unpredictable and more unpleasant. Fear became a companion to the shame. I still react to a slammed car door that was a sign for us children to scatter to the winds; my Dad had got hold of some of that “fighting whiskey.” My mother’s spiritual nature must have kept her isolated from the growing violence, the ugly incidents, the verbal and physical abuse. She always seemed to live in the eye of the hurricane, untouched by the madness around the house. I found in my own drinking a release from the shame and the fear. Booze was my solution, not my problem! Being activated for the Korean War did not make me an alcoholic but it sure did allow me to hone my skills of drinking and surviving. It also allowed me to run away completely from the identification as an Indian and to escape from the harshness of my father. After coming home from the war, I made many attempts to stop drinking which were never successful for long. The fears and shame demanded to be drowned in the next bottle, or the next. Images of childhood trauma came up—as I became worse than my father. But the fear in the eyes of those who loved me (and later left to escape a crazy man) became too much to drown in booze. I have lost much to booze—too distanced from the Indian heritage or from the German to speak either language or be a part of either culture. But I gained a spiritual life from AA. I am now an apple Indian, white on the outside but red on the inside. AA is spiritual, is the eye of the hurricane, is my refuse and my comfort. Today I can visit my mother who talks to me in her native tongue and I do not understand, but she understands! I hear the voice of the Spirit in the winds, in the animals, and in AA meetings. Today at an AA meeting I can be myself; I work on ways to touch those parts of me that were lost or thrown away. I can pray and meditate and hear the Great Father’s moccasins as he walks through the halls of AA meeting places. Thanks to AA for making a place for broken hearths and wounded souls.

Anonymous
Oklahoma City, Okla.

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Alcoholics Anonymous pg. 59
Reprinted with Permission A.A.W.S.

A Cherokee Pipe Prayer

The narrow buckskin-beaded laces were wrapped tightly around the end of his long gray braids. As the old man rose and feebly made his way to the center of the circle. Smoke curled gently from the intricately carved bowl of the ancient ceremonial pipe that he held reverently in his aged and wrinkled hands. As he raised the pipe to the East, he repeated the prayer that had been spoken by his grandfather's grandfathers for more years than time could remember. He spoke clear and distinct but with reverence that would touch the soul. His words were, *"Oh Great One, allow this prayer to ascend up to thy presence as the smoke from this pipe finds its way to heaven. Thank thee for the east which color is red, which is the color of success, happiness and victory. This is the color of my youth. I thank thee for those great ones that you sent to direct my steps, my Grandfathers, my Father, and my Uncle who taught me the Path of Life. For my strength and success as a young man and for protecting me in war, for my success in hunting, for the lovely lady you gave me to adorn my wigwam and brighten my life. The sons that she gave us whose hearts were free and brave. Our daughters she gave us through who she shall always live, because they wear her smile and express her love through all they do and carry her loving skills on to their daughters. So I thank thee for the color red."*

Then the old man turns to the North and raises his pipe northward and says, *"Oh Great One, I thank thee for the north whose color is blue which is the color of captivity, defeat, and sorrow. As the cold winds of winter comes from the north, even at this time I stand trembling in the wintertime of my life. I thank thee for the great things I have learned in the wintertime of my life. I thank thee for the patience I have learned through trials. Thank thee for compassion I have learned through pain, and gratitude I have learned through the service of others."*

As the old man feebly raised his pipe to the west, with deep feeling he pleaded, *"Oh Great One, please hear my prayer and take my hand as I soon walk into the west whose color is black which stands for death. Take my hand and steady my heart with courage and faith. Stay those two dogs that guard the log that I must walk over and hold my hand and don't allow the dogs to turn the log causing me to fall into the depths of darkness where the wicked are captured, but hold my hands and allow my feet to walk across this great abyss into the land of the south."*

When the old man turns to the South his face takes on a glow as he pleads, *"Oh Great One, help me to have walked the "Old Beloved Path" and lived the "Old Beloved Speech" so I will be able to walk through the land of the south whose color is white, which stands for peace and purity where I can be with my faithful loved ones who have "Walked the Path" before me."*

The old man completes his circle by turning back to the East. While raising the pipe in both hands above his head, he looks upward and says, *"Oh Great One, after this journey is over, help me to enter the land above, whose color is yellow which is the color of glory and dwell in your presence forever. As he lowers the pipe, he bows his head and reverently whispers Aho!*



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Please join the circle and send us news of what is happening in your area. Share your experience, strength and hope with the NAIGSO-AA family.

Four Directions is the voice of the people.

Share your experience and your wisdom with the Circle. Please submit articles of interest to Native Americans in recovery from alcoholism by emailing them to: newsletter@naigso-aa.org

Your original artwork is also needed. Any graphics with a Native American or recovery theme can be submitted.

Please do not submit any copyrighted materials.

How to contact the Native American Indian General Service Office (NAIGSO):

NAIGSO

P. O. Box 1253, Lakeside, CA 92040

<http://www.naigso-aa.org/>

951-927-2626

generalmanager@naigso-aa.org

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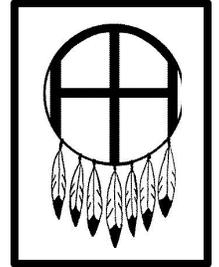
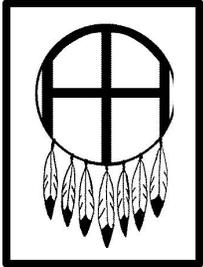
PHONE-----

Make check payable to: "Naigso-AA"

Mail to: Native American Indian General Service Office

PO Box 1253

Lakeside, CA 92040



**Native American Indian Alcoholics Anonymous
Registration Form for Individuals**

I am an individual who is willing to be a point of contact to carry the message of AA to the alcoholic who still suffers. I authorize my name and information as I have recorded it on this form to be included in the Native American Indian Alcoholics Anonymous Directory. In order to be included in the directory NAIGSO must receive your original signed copy of this form.

To help us be self-supporting it is suggested that each member on his or her sobriety birthday contribute one dollar per recovery year to NAIGSO.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP Code: _____

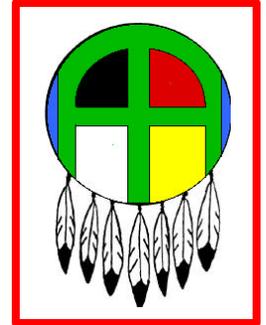
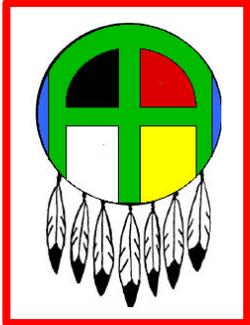
Telephone Number: _____ E-mail address: _____

Tribal Affiliation: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return the completed form to:

NAIGSO, P.O. Box 1253, Lakeside, CA 92040
Telephone (951) 927-2626 E-mail: generalmanager@naigso-aa.org



**Native American Indian Alcoholics Anonymous
Group Registration Form**

Group name: _____ Date group was started: _____

Meeting location: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP Code: _____

Reservation: _____ Nation: _____

Meeting day:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Meeting time:							

Contact for the group

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ E-mail address: _____

Tribal Affiliation: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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