



# FOUR DIRECTIONS



Native American Indian General Service Office

Fall 2007



## WEST



**Brothers and Sisters,**

Well here it is time for the fall edition. It seems like I just finished the summer edition. Fall is a good time of the year; the weather cools down and trees start changing into beautiful bright colors and also Thanksgiving is just around the corner then Christmas and then another year is before us.

Fall reminds me of gratitude and November is gratitude month, so that is what I dedicate this newsletter to is gratitude for all the blessings we receive each and everyday. And today thanks to this program I can see all the blessings that have been given to me. Also, on November 11, 2007, I will have 15 years and what a miracle. Before I got sober I never felt any kind of gratitude but today I have learned to accept the fact that the results of any and all my plans are always in the hands of the Creator and I can relax and leave the outcome to Him. The faith that the Creator will carry out his design for me, even when I do not understand it, relieves me of much anxiety and frustration. Also by leaving everything up to the Creator leaves me each day with gratitude and serenity. So today I will stay in the present and enjoy each and every blessing the Creator has given me!

Again I want to remind you that if any of you have an article or whatever you would like in the Newsletter I would certainly be happy to put it in. And once again thank you for letting me be of service.

Pilamaya,  
Sioux D.



## **LEGEND OF THE CHEROKEE INDIAN YOUTH RITE**

Do you know the legend of the Cherokee Indian youth's rite of passage?

His father takes him into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the rays of the morning sun shine through it. He cannot cry out for help to anyone. Once he survives the night, he is a MAN. He cannot tell the other boys of this experience, because each lad must come into manhood on his own.

The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human might do him harm. The wind blew the grass and earth, and shook his stump, but he sat stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could become a man!

Finally, after a horrific night the sun appeared and he removed his blindfold. It was then that he discovered his father sitting on the stump next to him. He had been at watch the entire night, protecting his son from harm.

We, too, are never alone. Even when we don't know it, our CREATOR is watching over us, sitting on the stump beside us.

When trouble comes, all we have to do is reach out to Him.

Hard things are put in our way, not to stop us, but to call out our courage and strength.

## THE 12 STEPS IN PLAIN ENGLISH

- 1) **Alcohol will kill me.**
- 2) **There's a power that wants me to live.**
- 3) **Do I want to live or die? (If you want to die, stop here.)**
- 4) **Write about how I got where I am.**
- 5) **Tell another person all about me (let God listen).**
- 6) **Want to change.**
- 7) **Ask a power greater than me to help me change.**
- 8) **Write down who I hurt.**
- 9) **Fix what I can without hurting anyone else.**
- 10) **Accept that I'm human and will screw up. Fix it immediately.**
- 11) **Ask a power greater than me to show me how to live.**
- 12) **Keep doing 1 through 11 and pass it on.**



**MINUTES OF THE NAIGSO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
30, 2007 (#70) AT MANY NATIONS IN RECOVERY, 3928 ILLINOIS  
CHET HUNT ROOM,  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92104.**

ATTENDANCE:

Board members present: Sylvia W., Gary C. (via phone),  
Dennis C., Robert V. (via phone), and Don W.

Board members absent: Judy V. and Marla M.

Visiting Participants: Kenny B., Don W. Jr., Raylene H., Chuck  
R., and Josie R.,

OPENING: Prayer and Potluck @12:15 pm

Sobriety Birth Days:

Don W. Jr. presented Kenny B. with a token for 11 years  
Cake was served.

CALLED TO ORDER: @1:00 pm

ROLL CALL: Quorum is present to conduct business

MINUTES: Meeting minutes #68 (3-25-07) and meeting minutes  
#69 (6-24-07) approved.

7<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION: \$27.00 collected bringing the balance of the 7<sup>th</sup>  
tradition fund to \$154.04

TREASURERS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF 1-1-07 to 9-30-07

Inflow: \$1,192.96

Outflow: \$179.46

Balance: \$5,182.55

Check register correlates with bank statement

REGISTRAR REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF 1-1-07 to 9-30-07

From Noelle D. via Gary C.: 14 new individual contacts, 6 new  
groups, and 1 change of address.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Regarding the 2008 NAIGSO-AA Conference to be held in Bismarck, North Dakota: Gary, GM, NAIGSO-AA, the advisory council, and the AA folks in Bismarck have finalized plans for the event. Details and flyers will be posted on website and copies made for distribution. Action complete.
- Regarding the printing/publishing of a hard copy of the Daily Meditations: Gary, GM, has been denied permission by AAWS to use their copyrighted material. We are still waiting on a final decision from the AA Grapevine on this matter. It has been suggested by one of the Advisory Council members that we simply produce our own material since this has been an ongoing situation with New York AA GSO. Gary and the advisory council will continue working towards a consensus on this issue. Action remains open.

- A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved for Don W. Sr. to rotate into the position of board treasurer. Judy V., past board treasurer, has transferred treasury records and information to Don W. Sr. The Board expresses their appreciation for the fine job Judy V. did as NAIGSO-AA treasurer. Action complete.
- Don W. Sr. has coordinated with NAIGSO-AA newsletter editor to include a report of group/individual contributions and plus itemized expenses to the membership in the quarterly newsletter. Action complete.
- Gary, GM, indicates that in response to his inquiry regarding what meeting formats are in use by NAIGSO-AA registered groups. All meetings responding use the NAIGSO's typical format versus the Judeo-Christian format of AA normally used through out U.S. and Canada. Action complete.
- Gary, GM, reports that a desire to host our 2009 conference was expressed by a member of the Cherokee NC Native American AA convention committee. Gary will follow up on this, possibly next month. Gary plans to attend at least one of their committee planning meetings. Status: The committee planning meeting did not materialize but Gary will continue to follow up on this item. Action remains open.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The Board unanimously concurs with the advisory council's recommendation that NAIGSO should send Native American Peoples and Associates who are in prison copies of the NAIGSO-AA Newsletter at no cost. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved for to approve funding for this task. Don W. Sr. will take the lead and administer this task. Action complete.
- A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved for NAIGSO-AA to allocate funds to pay for the travel/lodging expenses of NAIGSO-AA General Manager and those individuals NAIGSO-AA has asked to speak at the 2008 NAIGSO-AA Conference, Bismarck, North Dakota. Action complete.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Many Nations in Recovery, Chet Hunt Rm. @12:00 noon, December 30, 2007.

ADJOURN: @ 2:30 pm

**NAIGSO-AA FINANCIAL REPORT 7-10-07 THRU 9-30-07**  
**NAIGSO-AA Balance Brought Forward**

\$4,721.33

**Contributions:**

**Groups and Conventions:**

Serenity Circle Fellowship, Coarsegold, CA	9/23/2007	\$57.00
Barona 4-Directions, Barona Res., CA	9/30/1967	\$67.00
Native Amer. AA Conv., Cherokee, NC	9/24/2007	\$400.00

**Individuals:**

Timothy S., Odessa, FL	9/23/2007	\$ 19.00
Chuck R., Alpine, CA	9/30/2007	\$ 40.00

**Total Contributions**

\$ 583.00

**Expenditures:**

Stamps/copies	8/4/2007	\$ 14.78
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**Total**

\$ 14.78

**NAIGSO-AA Closing Balance**

\$5,289.55

**Bank Balance as of 8/08/07**

\$4,706.55

**SUMMER BIRTHDAYS, 2007 REPORT**

Timothy S. Odessa, FL

1989 19 yrs

*Note: Send a dollar to the NAIGSO-AA for each year of sobriety.*

*Newsletter will print the Birthday Donors.*

*Please consider adding this statement to your meeting format.*

*"The NAIGSO "Can" monies go directly to the NAIGSO. They are not divided according to the suggested PIE Chart. This additional contribution is needed until such time we have more groups contributing e.g. GSO NY has thousands of groups registered where NAIGSO is approaching 100. When the can is full please send the money to NAIGSO-AA, PO Box 1253, Lakeside, CA 92040."*



# 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

## ***I am a Secret Child***

I picked at the coals in the woodstove. The bright embers danced happily in the darkness. Time to reflect. I sat back down to recount the days' activities. A warmth came over me as I remembered how the Chief's son had gently hugged me that morning. I had told my secret finally...how my adopted family had abandoned me. Now, this distant relative had allowed me into his space without expectations. It was good to feel somebody cared about me. That adopted family had long stopped caring about me in 1976. I got sober October 24, 1980. Since then, I've done a lot of inventories. A few of them have been about me bein' an adopted native.

I was took from my mother's home after she started drinkin'. I tried to take care of my lil' brothers and sisters the best I could. But somebody turned us in...heard it was neglect. I got around to forgivin' my mom and had a great relationship with her before she died in '91.

I had my first child in '76. My adopted mother and father stopped by to visit us. The baby was fine; but we were plastered and higher than a kite. They stuck around quite a while; I wanted them to leave. I remember being pretty embarrassed even though I was really messed up.

After sobering up in '80, I dedicated my life to helping other natives get sober. I started to learn my native ways when the church thing didn't work for me. It seemed like my ancestors left a good path to follow. I've been walkin' the Red Road since 1983.

Bein' on the Red Road has been a joy for me. I've watched people learn their native ways and become spiritual leaders in their communities. I've seen kids join the program and continue to stay active into their adult years. The best part is praying. There's so many different ways of prayin'. I like them all; especially the ones about when we ask Creator "to forgive us for the things we've done wrong for we're merely human beings." I used to want forgiveness from my adopted parents; they're white.

You see, I got caught messed up after my first baby was born. My husband and I were livin' in a run down trailer on the poor side of town. We had just finished off some booze and chased it with a bunch of speed. Suddenly, there was a knock at the door. We tried to collect ourselves, but we were smashed. In walked my adopted parents. I can pretty much say that they were horrified. They were fundamentalist Christian; Southern Baptists. They stayed for awhile, then left. I don't remember havin' a clear conversation with 'em that day.

Twenty-six years have passed since I got sober. Twenty-nine years since I got caught by my adopted parents. My husband has long since divorced me. My three children have grown up and had little ones of their own. We all get along; pretty good, in spite of, this adoption thing.

I wish I could be dissolved of this adoption with these white folks. That getting' caught didn't help matters much. Then I went ahead and started learnin' the Old Ways of my people. They called it "Boogidee! Boogidee!" There's not much I can do to change how they feel. They believe that I practice evil ways; the same ways my mother practiced before they had saved me from what they called "that drunken native woman!"

They thought I was pretty much a "poor, homeless native child...destined to be at their table so that I could see the light and be saved by Jesus!" So I became dedicated to my success in the community. I graduated from high school with honors. I wanted was to be loved. I learned about unconditional love from their church; the kind that you give away for free; the same kind that Jesus gave to Mary Magdelene. Now I'm not a Christian; but I do respect the

principle of forgiveness. So how come my adopted parents cannot forgive me? How come they can't understand that the Red Road has the same principle of forgiveness as their religion?

The Indian Religion is an important part of my life. It means I use a set of guidelines that my ancestors have laid down that have worked for thousands of years. It includes traditions like ceremony, prayer and respect. Permission is a fundamental activity in my community. We act as one people.

So why am I tethered to these white people? How come Creator has seen fit not to provide a "Dissolution of Adoption" in my state of Alaska? Some of my Elders have smiled and said, "Why not? Are you so special as to have a simple way out? Are you not grateful for what you do have; a place in our community? Did you not dedicate your life to the People? Isn't that enough?"

I have to admit there seems to be selfishness on each of our parts. I want the adoption to be dissolved; so do they. The final disgust of their lives seems to be me; I am their secret child. They adopted me believing that I would forsake my heritage. When I returned to the ways of my people, they abandoned me. I know that the alcoholism and drug addiction contributed. However, they have forgiven my ex-husband even though he continued to drink and use. I can only see one difference: our heritage.

I am a Proud Alaska Native...born of strong Inuit and Athabascan spirit. My Grandfather, the Chief, left a legacy of leadership and healing. By following the traditions of my heritage; I've learned to forgive. More so, I began to accept being "a secret child." The same "secret child" that many of you are. We have chosen to walk this journey together. I want to let you know that what I have experienced is what some of you have experienced already. I am grateful there is a Native American Alcoholics Anonymous. I can talk about these things knowing I will not offend anyone with my story: I am a secret child adopted by white folks. More importantly, I am sober in spite of my story because a good friend told me about Native American AA. Thank you, L.S. for sharin' your story. Now I can share mine.

## **Kay P. Alaska Native Inuit and Athabascan**





## **PLAINS-STYLE PEMMICAN**

Makes about 12 Patties

4 oz crisp, dry buffalo, venison or beef jerky  
1 cup pitted, dried chokecherries; pitted, dried, tart red cherries; or dried cranberries  
8 Tablespoons melted suet (fat) or butter  
1 to 2 Tablespoons brown sugar (optional)

Tear jerky into pieces and place in a food processor with steel knife blade. Pulse on and off until jerky is shredded almost to a powder. Add the cherries, suet and sugar and pulse on and off until mixture forms a coarse paste. Scoop out heaping tablespoons of the pemmican and form it into small patties. Wrap the patties individually in plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator until patties are firm. Sore in refrigerator, or freeze until ready to serve.

## **AA Acronyms:**

### **HOPE**

Hang – On – Peace – Exists

### **ASAP**

Always – Say – A – Prayer



## **PUMPKIN WISDOM:**

**Being a good person is like being a pumpkin. The CREATOR lifts you up, takes you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. He opens you up, touches you deep inside and scoops out all the yucky stuff – including the seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc. Then He carves you a bright new smiling face and puts His light inside you to shine for all the world to see.**

**THINGS TO REMEMBER:  
Life is short! Break the rules!  
Forgive quickly! Kiss slowly! Love truly! Laugh uncontrollably!  
And never regret anything that made you smile!**

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](mailto: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.***

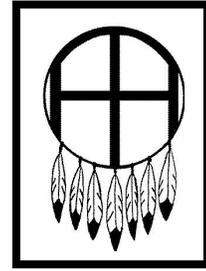
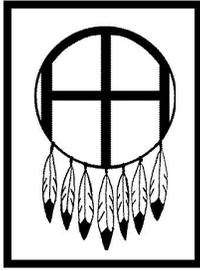
How to contact the Native American Indian General Service Office (NAIGSO):  
NAIGSO  
P. O. Box 1253, Lakeside, CA 92040  
<http://www.naigso-aa.org/>  
(256) 247-5887  
[generalmanager@naigso-aa.org](mailto:generalmanager@naigso-aa.org)  
[newsletter@naigso-aa.org](mailto:newsletter@naigso-aa.org)  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/naigsoaafamilycircles/>

### **Four Directions Newsletter Subscriptions**

If you would like to have “Four Directions” delivered to your home each quarter,  
you can receive a postage- paid copy for \$2.00 a year.  
You can even have one sent to a friend as gift!!

NAME-----  
ADDRESS-----  
PHONE-----

Make check payable to: “Naigso-AA”      Mail to: Native American Indian General Service Office  
PO Box 1253



## 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 (256) 247-5887 E-mail: [generalmanager@naigso-aa.org](mailto: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: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return the completed form to:

**NAIGSO**, P.O. Box 1253, Lakeside, CA 92040  
Telephone (256) 247-5887 E-mail: [generalmanager@naigso-aa.org](mailto:generalmanager@naigso-aa.org)