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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Continuation of story (from IH-OM.13/2) about prophecies concerning the Indian people and the recovery of traditional values and ways.
- Role of elders as teachers and advisers.
- Practice of traditional medicine and the philosophy behind it.

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** Speakers on this tape

Jim Dumont: ...the same people but they would be like a new people, a new generation, new seeds that were planted on this earth. And when they, as they grew, they would find that as they were walking down this road that they were put on this other road, all of a sudden they would stop and they would look around and as far as they could see in front of them there was nothing that they wanted, nothing that had any meaning to them. And when they looked back behind them where they had come from, since the day they were born, they couldn't see anything that had any meaning for them in their lives. And then they would begin to ask, "Why am I on this road? Why am I walking this way?" It would be then that they would begin to retrace their steps to look for a road that they heard about that old people talked about. They would go looking for that. And in retracing their steps, they would go looking for some of these people that we see here today, some of these old ones who still held on to these ways, whose parents or grandparents refused to send them to school; kept them at home and taught them their traditions and their ways. And there would be some, maybe, who weren't so old, but they were also held back so that these ways wouldn't be forgotten.

And that, those strings of lives they talk about - that was never to be broken. That became so thin, so thin at one point that there was only a handful of people who were still holding on to our ways. And it would be these people that these young people who had lost almost everything, who had nothing, that's who they would go looking for. And it's said that they would travel all over this island. They would go without sleep looking for these things, looking for these ways, looking for those people who could give them those ways. They are the

people of the seventh fire. And it's through these young ones, these young people who had nothing, that there would be a return to the traditional ways again. It would depend on these pitiful people who knew nothing of what life really was, on these pitiful people, that this new time of the seven fires would begin. And it's felt now that we are living in that time. That not too long ago, that time began. And that the young people that you see - even though I am starting to get grey hair on my head, I'm still in that class of young people - who have come through that period of growing up without receiving anything of what belonged to me, and belonged to these ways.

We are the ones who have been looking for the last seven years, the last ten years. We are the ones that travelled all over looking for someone. We even went into, amongst other nations of people because we thought that it wasn't right here, around us. We didn't know that there were people like Sam here, that were living right here in this area, that could tell us about these things. So we travelled all over, out west of here and south of here looking for those things that we felt would give

us life. And that's the way it has been for me for the last ten years. That's where I went, way out west amongst the Cree people looking for those things. And what those Cree people told me, told us who went out there, "Go back home to your own people." Not that they didn't want us out there. They said, "We have given you as much as we can, we've given you a start. Now go home, because it's right there," they said. "It's right there amongst your own people and that's where you belong, that's where you should find it, amongst your own people. And if you sincerely look for those ways, those people will begin to come out." You see, it's almost like they've been hiding all that time. But it's not them who were hiding, it's only us who didn't believe in them and didn't believe that there was anything left anymore. And once you believe in that and begin to look for those things, you will begin to see those people begin to come out and talk about the things that they know. And that's what happened after we came back home.

Since that time we've become involved in the, I guess, in the fulfilling of the prophecies that were spoken of. We have ended up on this road that we were looking for. We are now following that way, we are living that way. As pitiful as we are, we are kind of like those people, the way that they were. That's the way that we are today. We walked around; we walk around out there; we walk right through medicines; we step right over top of it and still we're walking around with sores on our hands; we're walking around with illness inside our bodies and we don't even know that the medicine is right there. That's the way that we are. We go to a Dominion store, A&P, Loblaws, your favorite store, and we buy food, food that will make us sick, food that won't give us the nourishment that we need, food that's full of all kinds of chemicals, because that's the only way we know how to live, and yet we walk, we walk right over top of food here and we don't even know that it's food. We're like those people that, those second people

that were talked about. That's how much we have lost. That's how pitiful we are. And today, today it's kind of like that. The grandfathers are looking down toward us and they see us the way that we are. And they are sending help to us.

And in our traditions, what we have followed for the last eight years now, that it said a little boy would be born amongst you, a little boy would appear one day at the eastern doorway. And that little boy - about him they said, "Get your children together, get your people together, and teach them so that they will know. So that when that little boy comes, when he talks to them, they will know how to talk to him, because he will be talking the language of the earth and of the plant life, and of the birds and of the animals. That's the language he will be speaking. And if you don't know that language and if your children don't know, then they won't even recognize him, they

won't be able to follow him. It's through that little boy," they said, "when he appears at the eastern doorway, he would begin to go and gather all those things that were scattered along the trail," the trail that we have taken over the last few generations. Little by little, we dropped our language over here. And as we walked along, we threw a little bit more of our culture down. We left it behind and said it wasn't important anymore. We left some of our songs, some of our ceremonies. So, if we could look back we would see scattered all along the trail of the past generation, we would see those things just scattered along there. Then we would understand where we are, the people of my generation. If you understand why we are so pitiful, why we have so little, is because it's been left back there. This little boy, it said he would go gathering those things again and he would be filling this bundle, just like that bundle that that little boy originally brought to the people, the sacred ways, our life. He would gather those things together again and begin to fill that bag, fill that bundle, and we even, who recognized him, that's the way we would be.

We're just like that little boy, us. We're going back like that; we're retracing our steps trying to find the language over there, trying to put together a few more pieces of the culture, trying to gather together a little bit more knowledge of the pipe and of the drum, the song, the ceremonies, trying to put them together again - the knowledge of medicine and the healing - and looking for those people that still remember. That way, we fill that bundle full again. That's the time that we're in now. And it's said that, that little boy, he's already been born. He's already among us. And if we know that, if we have experienced that, that's why we were doing that. That's why we're trying to put those things together. That's what we're doing; we're following that little boy. And it's through that little boy that these ways would come back to us again. In the last seven, eight years that's what we have been doing. And we have witnessed that little boy appearing at the eastern doorway. And we have recognized him when he came. And what was said about him in the prophecies, that's what's happening with us now. There are many who haven't even heard

of this road, who haven't even come to believe that it's important to gather these things together again.

But there are a few here and there, like ourselves, like the young people who are here today, that wherever they are on this island here, that's what they're doing. They are trying to piece these things back together again. And it seems that it's the old ones, the old ones can still remember. And it's said about those old ones that it's not all of them who still know. Just because they are old doesn't mean that they have the knowledge because some of those old ones have fallen asleep. But there are those, I guess, that are called elders and you will find them and it's those old ones, those teachers and

those young ones who are looking for those ways, they'll come together this time. This is the way that we are here. It's as though this is what they were talking about. So for me, for me to be here is - just to be in the same room I guess, where these old people are talking here - for me that's what they talked about hundreds and hundreds of years ago when those prophecies were given. That's happening right now. And I feel like I am a part of that. And I feel like these people who are gathered here, that you're the ones who they talked about way back there. They knew this was going to happen one day but it seems to depend on us, this generation, what we're living right now. Because this seventh fire they talk about; they said there is an eighth fire somewhere out there ahead of us. It seems like it's way over there, and it depends on two things today. If we can retrace our steps and find the road that we were originally given to follow by the Creator, and if the people who came to this island, the light-skinned people, if they can find the face of brotherhood, that's the way they should have come. If they can find the face of brotherhood and learn how to live properly in North America here, on this island - if they can do that, that means they have to learn to live with our mother, the earth. And if we can retrace our steps and find our original ways, then it's possible for that eighth fire to be lit which is talked about as the time of peace and brotherhood and of understanding.

But if that doesn't happen, then the time of destruction that we see all around us to the earth, to the land, to the people, that will only continue until man destroys everything. And we, the original people of this island, we are so caught up in it now that we will be destroyed with it. So it depends on those things. So for me to be here, we've taken one more step towards that, towards the lighting of that eighth fire. So I wanted just to say that much because what I am here for is to listen to these old people, these teachers and those who have knowledge of medicine, to listen to them talk, to listen to what they have to share with us, and other than what I have just said, I don't think I have that much more to say or that it's up to us to be talking at this time. It's up to us to be able to listen to what these people have to say here.

Speaker: Thank you very much, Jim Dumont. And for such nice words and the wisdom you've shared with us. We greatly

appreciate it and we hope to continue a lot of dialogue amongst yourselves in the spare moments. There has been a slight change of schedule again. The UCCM chief, United Chiefs of Councils of Manitoulin are meeting today in West Bay. They wished to meet you and say hello to you after the meeting, 3:30 today. Which is shortly, you know, within the next three quarters of an hour. Now, we hope that they will come and join

us at gate 7 into the Bell Rocks area at that time. So, since there is that slight change, I'd like to change, because we are (laughter). We're making this change again because Art Delgogo has to leave but most of you do know Art. Art is from the Birch Island Reserve and is one of our elders. He works very closely with our cultural centre and he is here this afternoon because he wanted to come over to the Bell Rocks with us but he has to leave at three. So we've asked him maybe to just say a few words to you before that.

Art: Sorry ladies and gentlemen. I would have very much liked to stay longer but I had committed myself outside, I want to take a class. And I was asked if I'd tell you a little bit about what little bit I know or what I've heard. I don't mean that I know but just what I've heard about this Bell Rock. (Ojibway) They used it as a (inaudible). (Ojibway) Thank you.

Speaker: (Inaudible) and he said tell them a couple of words. Well, first of all I want to thank all of you for being here today, all of us. To get to know each other, understand each other and love each other. So we should have this more often you know. Like Joe here, I never seen it until oh, quite a while ago. And like Arthur, I'm here too, I never seen it. So if we have a meeting like this you know, more often it is very good to know each other. To know what we are doing and also all the medicines, you know. I don't know much. I know a little bit. (Inaudible) pipe ceremonies (Ojibway). I'm glad he's coming back. (Ojibway) (Inaudible) well, it was a very important place one time....

(break in tape)

Sam: ...what we are and what we're doing, what we're trying to (inaudible).

Speaker: Thank you, Sam. Sam was from the Wikwemikong Reserve. He shares a lot of his knowledge in medicines with us. And we have another gentleman who shares and we're very grateful to have him who tells us what and how, what not to do when it comes to these herbs that grow all around us. And this gentleman is Joe Yellowhead from the Rama Reserve and as Jim mentioned earlier, we have all these people near us and around us and when we started to seek them out west, that was necessary. But now we have to seek them out here, in our own neighbourhoods sort of. So we have Joe from Rama Reserve. A few words?

Joe: A few words, it's going to be very few words.

Speaker: Don't be like Sam.

(laughter)

Joe: I got so many things to say but I don't think we've got the time right now. I don't want to hold up anybody. I want to go see those rocks, and I want to find out what makes them ring. And when we do come back, I guess I could say a few more words. But now I sit.

Speaker: Okay Joe.

(break in tape)

Speaker: ...and for the last couple of days so if you could pursue your own individual visits with them, alright. We're having a special guest speaker right after supper and that will be Noel Knockwood from New Brunswick. He is a Micmac from the east and he belongs to the Algonkian nation of which we are a part of that nation. And we'll be pleased to hear from him after supper and then we will have more sessions of your own. Okay? Quarter after is when we plan to get our cars organized to go through to Bell Rocks area. So we still have a few minutes. Ron, why don't you say a few words.

Ron Wakegijig: Well, while we're waiting for Annie to come and we're supposed to go towards the Bell Rocks, I won't take too much of your time. You've already heard some of these more experienced people speak to you about everything in general, especially the medicine. There is two things that make up medicine in my estimation, by analyzing what was told to me by the elders. First of all, you have to believe in creation, you have to believe in the Creator who put all these things here first, to use. I suppose it can be called spiritualism. If you don't have that in the medicine part, the natural medicine part, it's not going to work. Elders have told us that time and time again. Some of us are expecting instant miracles. Instant miracles are few and far between. There again, that depends on the Creator himself. I've been told that the Creator placed or gave us a mind, gave us natural abilities to use for our own well-being, above all, to respect all of creation. That's why all these medicine plants are put at our disposal. We have to make some effort. If you want to cure some, or heal our bodies, we have to put in some effort to do that. Too many times we depend entirely on the Creator. We say a prayer and then we expect help to come from the heavens like a lightning bolt. Well, things don't happen that way,

unfortunately. I wish they did. It would make my job and the job of these elders a lot easier. Then we wouldn't have to go travelling miles and miles to get medicine plants, plants that don't grow around here. But anything that's good is hard to come by. The bad things are easy; they can do by not even trying. To seek those things that are good, you have to search.

Some people spend a lifetime looking for the things, or one particular thing, that's good for them. There is many paths that lead to a certain world that was placed before us to try and reach. Each one of us has an individual mission in our own small way, and we have to put all these things together to give some sort of importance to the job at hand. See, one of the prayers that are said in pipe ceremonies or medicine ceremonies when you ask the Creator's assistance, you pray to the spirits that guard the west, you ask that the ability be given to you so when the time comes to answer to the Creator what you did while you were passing through this existence, that any account that you have to make for yourself will be good. That's very hard to do. I suppose a person could take anything that's good and make an evil thing out of it. It's being done every day and it will continue to be done until the end of time. That's where these lessons from the elders have to be used.

You have to differentiate. We have to be able to tell what is good and what is bad. These two paths run side by side; if you step off the good path then you fall right on to the bad. You got to always constantly rely on the Divine Power, that you have the ability, that you have the necessary mental strength to follow the good road. Some of us fall by the wayside. Maybe we don't realize it sometimes. That's why we have these elders to remind us. They are milestones or the guiding signs to help us get to where we want to be. I have yet to see these elders tell me personally, "You got to do this." They don't do that. They give you a lesson and they give you an example of what they went through and what they heard from their elders in the years gone by. Now, each one of us having a free will, that's where that advice comes in. We have to be able to use it to our best advantage, to be able to follow that good road. When people ask me for advice I never tell them, "You got to do it this way," or "You got to do this." Maybe sometimes I'll say, "You should try to do this." If I gave a person the wrong advice and they got themselves into one heck of a mess, I'd blame myself for the rest of my life for that, for that person. Nothing wrong should happen. I only pray that I have the wisdom that my words will help that person along. Any knowledge I have about medicines, I never say, "This is going to cure you." See, the cure is in the believing. If you honestly believe that the Creator is going to help you through these natural medicines, then that's the way it's going to be.

Even that has to be worked at; we call that faith. You got to constantly work towards that.

Sometimes we get people - I'm not deliberately trying to call down any religion because that's not my place - but I've seen some of the tactics that people use to entice other people to follow up their doctrines. They promise you this and promise you that. They even go so far as to promise you personal riches. "You come to my church, you'll always have money." That's what they do. I have heard, myself. I'm not going by somebody else's words. That's not the right way of preaching about things. You need money, you have the ability to work for

it. You don't ask the Creator for a hundred dollars tomorrow - "Please give me a hundred dollars right now" - you dig in your pocket and you grab a hold of a hundred dollars. Things don't happen that way. You got to go out and work for that. So it's the same with good mental and physical health, you got to work at it. If we drink two bottles of whiskey every day of our lives, I guarantee it's going to be a very short life. You'll be killing that body that's not yours. I said that yesterday. Even medicine - you go to the drug store - there is hundreds and hundreds of different kinds of medicine that are chemicals that are made by scientists in some lab. Some of those things have the ability to alter our minds, our process of thinking. No medicine should work that way. If it does work that way, then it's not a medicine, it's a bad thing.

There is natural medicine that will maybe take a little bit longer than some of those drugs you find in the hospital but the end result is more permanent, and you won't be an addict or an abuser of drugs. That's why this natural medicine our ancestors knew, that's why it interests me personally. Sometimes I find it necessary to see a white doctor. A lot of times that's the only way to get what I suspect verified. He tells me and he prescribes some sort of a drug. I've got a whole bunch of prescription slips at my place right now that have never been used; maybe five or six prescriptions that have been administered to me over the past ten years, five years. I've yet to use one of them. If I get sick, I seek out one of these medicine people. Or I try to use what little bit of knowledge I have. But there again, there is a separate philosophy that goes along with that.

Two more days, and Ernestine suggested that if there is questions that any of you people want to ask these elders while they're here, feel welcome to do it. That's what this gathering is all about. We want to interest more and more people to follow the old way because it's the better way. Twenty years ago I heard our parents, Jim Dumont was mentioning today, the primary purpose of parents was to see that his kid got a good white man's education and be able to cope in this day and age. I don't blame my parents for that. It just so happened that was the philosophy, it was a prophecy that had to be fulfilled. Our people knew about these things. They meant

well by sending us to white man's schools. This particular job I have, if I didn't know anything about my own culture, then I'd have no business being here. I'm fortunate. I'm able to converse with my elders. The young people - a lot of young people don't speak Indian any more but I'm fortunate I can work with both groups.

The younger people now, they have their own separate society almost. The elders have been set to one side. To me, knowledge has different connotations and has different meanings. Sure, I may have gone to grade 13 and learned a few things, but if I ever went out to the bush with one of these elders, I'll guarantee he's going to come out before I do.

Somebody would have to be sent after me. These people would survive. That's a different kind of knowledge. It's the knowledge of survival. There are many things and many ways knowledge can be utilized. It shouldn't be at the expense of losing one's culture. You know, it's a long rocky road ahead of us to try and reinstall some of the beliefs that our people had, some of the values that they had, and their attitudes towards our fellow human beings. When I was a small child, it was unheard of to talk back to your grandparents or your parents. Nowadays, it's sickening what's going on. You can't tell the young people anything. They are ready to put the boots to you or take you out in the back alley if you try and correct them.

In my day there used to be a curfew bell at ten o'clock every night, summer and winter, it didn't matter. When that bell rang every child was expected to be inside their house and getting ready for bed. There used to be a man that patrolled the village. He wasn't a policeman; nobody appointed him for that job. He just considered it his responsibility to enforce this curfew on behalf of the parents. You don't expect all the parents to go around looking for their kids all at one time. It's impractical, but they had this one man. Twice I got caught by this man and I was on the receiving end of a red willow. My parents never went up there and chewed that guy out for doing what he did. It was accepted. In fact, they probably thanked that man for doing that. Nowadays, you try and discipline somebody's child and the next thing you know, there will be four or five cruisers in your front yard ready to take you to jail. That's not our fault; it's not the parent's fault; that's the fault of society itself. The law states that you can't lay a hand on that child. It's the law in a society that permits such goings on. In order to rectify that, everybody has got to, needs a little bit of shaking up, including all of us; including the white man. We have to go back to the old sets of values.

One aspect of those sets of values is called respect. Respect for, I hate to use that word 'authority' because nobody has really defined what authority is. People should respect their elders and their parents - especially young people. Elders

have to learn to respect each other. Parents have to respect each other. I'll always have a common goal that I mentioned before. There is different paths that lead to that common goal. Each one has been given a different set of, or different form of ability. Take, for instance, some people are very good at playing musical instruments. If we all had that ability then all of us would belong to some dance band or something. That's not the way things are. Only certain people that can do that; they are chosen for that. The same with the medicine, there is only certain people that are chosen for that. There is a danger. If this medicine is not taught properly then it gets used like everything else is being used.

In order to learn about medicine, you have to approach these people that know these things. You got to listen but you don't

go out and try and use these medicine plants because you heard somebody has used that. They are a real danger. The elders themselves will tell you, "Okay, you're on your own now. You can do this." To give you an example of that, there is one old man that taught me what they call obosechiuk which is a general remedy. The only thing I'm not permitted to do is to tell you exactly how that thing is made, this medicine. But after I learned how to make that, the old man said, "Until the day that I pass on, this medicine is still mine. And until that time happens, you're not allowed to pass it on to anybody else. You can write it down someplace and keep a permanent record of it. Someday you'll be able to find somebody that you can pass this on to."

He told me, "Sometimes a person will come to you, he'll hand you a twenty dollar bill instead of free; they want to give you that. Take it, give him the medicine. Maybe some other time there will be somebody coming around with ten dollars; that's all he's got; he wants to give it to you. Take it. And there will also be a time when somebody doesn't have anything to offer. You give him medicine, too. Because this knowledge that you're receiving now, I'm giving it to you for free." That's what he told me. "Don't ever put a price on that medicine. That people that want that medicine, they know their obligation. If a person wants to give you tobacco instead of money, who knows maybe that tobacco has more value than the money." That's the way the old man taught me and that's the way I try and conduct myself at all times. Sometimes I feel bad when I see somebody using what I feel is maybe too much. A lot of times I tell them, (Ojibway) he said. "No, that's how much I'm going to give you." That's the way medicine is supposed to be handled.

I want to leave that one lesson to any young people that are aspiring or want to learn more about it. My personal advice to you is listen to the elders first. Don't try and do it on your own right away and practise these things. Even the sacred pipe was mentioned earlier on by one of our elders here, Sam. I've only handled a pipe for about, maybe two years now. My

teacher is right here today from Saskatchewan, the old man that taught me how to handle that pipe properly. I never touched that pipe until the day came when he told me. He says, "It's your turn. You're going to do this ceremony." And I sat there deciding. I was pretty nervous because this was a great - this is something that is way beyond my own imagination, beyond my own knowledge, even beyond my capacity to learn. I know the basics, it's something our people used to survive for thousands of years on this continent. It's probably one of the primary forms of respect you could show the Creator; to be able to handle that pipe and pass it on to whoever wants to join me and pray that they get some benefit out of it. That's what these things are for, to be shared. And shared properly. I'm fortunate that as I was growing up, I learned my own dialect, my own language. I'm very proud of that fact. Of all the things that I have right now, it's probably the thing that I'm proudest of. Some people are less fortunate. They didn't have

that same opportunity that I had. These people have a message as well and you should be able to open up your minds and listen to that message.

There are different kinds of good fortune that a person experiences in their lifetime. Some people are - I suppose it could be called good luck but, a lot of people, they go to a Bingo, they always come away with something - maybe a couple of dollars or ten dollars or whatever the prize is. I've never had that kind of experience. I'll probably be too old to enjoy money by the time I have that kind of good fortune. I'm not worried about it right now. I'll probably worry if and when it does happen. It may change my whole life; I don't know that. Right now I'm trying to make the best use of what I have. I have to work for the things that I have. Most of you people have to work for the things that you have. But I think you get a little more enjoyment out of it if you have to work for it. It seems ridiculous when I say that but that's the way it is. If somebody gives you everything free, all....

(End of Side A)

(Side B)

(Singing)

Speaker: I'm greatly honored by my brothers to sing a song for me today.

(Agreement in the audience)

And I'd like to give these feathers to the chief.

(Singing)

Dan Pine: I'd like to say a few words. Being in a traditional way of life, the way I was brought up by my people who were all traditional people; people who knew nothing of the white man's ways; only their ways, the Indian ways of life. So that's the way they brought me up and today that's the only thing that I have within myself. I want to stay an Indian. And I'm glad to tell anyone I am proud to be an Indian. These feathers that was given to me by my brother Ernest, in the past of our people, the Indian nation, the feather has been a symbol to the American Indian. It made everything towards honorship, towards the good things that you do for your fellow Indians. These are good words that you say to your fellow people and towards the respect of our traditional ceremonies, religious ceremonies, because in every one of our ceremonies, we see the feather, the eagle feathers. At this time, I'd like to take the honor of thanking our brother Ernest and his fine gifts that he has given and may the good Lord that we know is up there in the heavens, bless him here and take away what's making him hard to walk upon mother earth. I ask him to give him strength, give him strength on his legs and I ask him to take away whatever that is that came upon him. And ask him to heal him, to heal our brother so that some day we see him walking upon his mother

earth with his own feet. May he receive that strength and life. So that he may live on in the future and see the different seasons that are coming, what we call each year. And may the good Lord bless his family and his relatives. And may the good Lord feel sorry and give him his - grant him something which would be good within his heart towards the tragedy that we have heard that came upon his family. And may the good Lord look upon the one that we hear is in the hospital at this time. May the good Lord put his blessing upon him and heal him, give him strength and life so that we may see him in the future and bring him home some day, as Indian people. At this time then, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and also I thank you people who are here at this time. May the good Lord look upon all of us and give us what we want, what we like to have every day in our every day lives, give us life, give us strength, give us the good feelings within our hearts for one another and take us on to the time where we will pass away from this world. These are the things I'd like to say to you, my people. And also to Ernest, thank you.

(Thanks from audience)

Speaker: Thank you for listening to us.

(Singing)

(Inaudible conversation)

Dan Pine: (Ojibway) ...back again, what we were, where we were, our children, (Ojibway) what he has to live with, spiritual things. (Ojibway)

(break in tape)

Dan Pine: (Ojibway)

(End of Side B)

(End of Conference tape and 1981 conference tapes)

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