HIGHLIGHTS:

- Elders discuss a variety of matters relating to Indian culture and traditions and what can be done to retain or regain these. Most topics are touched on only briefly.

SPEAKER ONE:

This question about money, what help can an elder get when making some kind of ceremony? In the old days, what I saw was that my father got help from the people when he put on a ceremony. The people brought food, and also helped him at give-aways. But I've never known him to be given money. It was entirely up to him to have what little money he could make. And now today, we see the government in Ottawa giving grants for certain things, such as sports, dances, and different things. I wonder if it's possible for us to use some of this money to help a person who is making a ceremony. They call this a grant. The women also get it for sewing. If we talk to the chiefs; they are our leaders, maybe they will say "Yes, we will give you a share of that grant to help you. We know that these dances are not playing or fooling around." This is also pretty near the same as the one we were discussing before. Maybe they would be willing to give some of this grant for this purpose. They could give some to these elders to use for making ceremonies, or for travelling, or for whatever little expense they may have. For instance, if an elder was to be invited somewhere to help in a ceremony, they would use this money. But,
they couldn't give them money to be on the road all the time, but enough to help out. This is what I would suggest. Try to get the money from the grants or a part of it to help an elder. Thank you.

SPEAKER TWO:

This is a very hard thing to figure out -- how we can help the elders, what you are discussing here today. I think the idea is very good. My cousin said they raised money on the reserve to help elders with their expenses. I think that if we could raise some money on the reserve, we could help the elders, whenever they are invited to help another elder in making a ceremony. I think it would be very nice to inform the people on our reserves about this right away as we are only trying to get it off the ground right now. Like what my brother-in-law said, I know that he never got very much help with food, and got some things for the give-aways. The rest, he did by himself, and he's made a few Sundances already. What we are discussing here today, I am for it too. That will be all for now.

SPEAKER THREE:

About what that man across the room was talking about, what our elders had to do when they were going to make a Sundance, I'll talk about that. It is true that long ago our parents did everything for us. They told us everything to try to make our lives better, and now we are here today. I've been paying close attention to these things, and I've recognized all of them and I've seen how things stand.

For instance, at my house, when my father died he left me a weasel skin. (This was a God-given thing to an Indian. He would dream of a certain animal that would help him all the days of his life. In this case, the animal was a weasel.) Every so often, my father used to put sweetgrass on his skin and put it behind his pillow. He did this before going to bed at various times, and also one year after my father died, my mother did this. I guess my mother has been to these workshops also. She's not my real mother. She gave me this weasel skin, saying that the kids were playing around with it too much. She said that I should keep it. So I told her that she didn't even want me to have my father's pipe to use. "You'll never make any use of it since you're a woman, and your younger brothers act like white men." She said. I asked her, "So who is going to use the pipe?" So she finally loaned it to me. I took the pipe and I used it. And the weasel skin, my father used to tell me, "If you really believe in your Indian way of life and in the ceremonies, you will have to keep these up. I'm leaving you. I will not be around for very long." Now I've put on "WE-JE-GO-CAN" dances four times. I was really sick one time. I was worried. I didn't know if I was going to live, when I think about it now. The doctor was giving me medicine, and I was in the hospital. I couldn't get better so I turned to this. I made a promise that if I became well and walking, I would make a
"WE-JE-GO-CAN" dance. After that, what was wrong or bothering me was gone, it left me. When I made this dance, this man here was my partner. He went hunting for me. This is what I want to tell you, that the Indian way of life brought me back my health. This I saw myself.

And now, about the medicine bundle (Kis-he-ta-kunis); sometimes, I keep it and sometimes, I don't. I was told, "If you ever have a hard time with your children, perhaps they are not well, you take this, and with sweetgrass smoke wave it back and forth four times over the smoke, and you say prayers to it. Put it behind the pillow of whoever is having trouble, your child, your wife, or yourself, before going to bed." We have done this a number of times already. My wife was having a very bad time, very painful bladder trouble. They were going to send her to the hospital. So I took this Kis-he-ta-kunis, and did what I was told, put it behind her pillow when she went to bed. She was in great pain when she went to bed. In the morning, she got up, she was all right. She said, "I guess I don't have to go to the hospital now." She told me that the Kis-he-ta-kunis has cured her, and that she believed in this Kis-he-ta-kunis.

Another time, my daughter came over to our place and told us her little daughter was crying. They figured they would have to take her to the hospital. "I can't make her quit crying," she said. So I told her to listen to what I had to say to her. Maybe she would be all right. She wanted to know what I meant. I told her about this Kis-he-ta-kunis. "This is what got your mother better when she had bladder trouble," I told her. I told her to take it home and told her what to do with it. I told her after she scented it with sweet grass, to put it behind her pillow when they went to bed, then maybe she wouldn't have to take her daughter to the hospital. She took it home. After two nights, they came to visit us. My wife asked how the baby was, and they said she was fine, and promised a spiritual cloth. "As my stepfather knows what to do anyway," she said, "I'm going to the store now, and I'll bring what I promised." From this, I see and believe that our Indian way of life is the truth. This is what you are asking about today at this meeting. I've seen this, and I've made Chicken dances also.

A long time ago, when I was a young man, I came to Thunderchild to get a horse. This was when my stepfather was still alive. His name was Okanee. This I will tell you: As I was going home my horse played out. The horse was a stud and was run down (thin). So, I let my horse rest and eat, then I took my blanket and went over the fence as the white men were already here when this happened. I camped on a little hill where there was no snow. This was the warmest place I could find. This was before I had a woman. When I was sleeping, I heard a song; I never heard this song before, but right away, I could sing it. I could hear. I was dreaming of a Chicken dance. They sang three songs, and I could sing them all. Then I woke up. I opened my eyes and there was a prairie chicken up in a small
tree that I was sleeping under. The rest of the prairie chickens were going through their dance all over the hill. When I lifted my head, they stopped dancing. When I got up, they all flew off. This is when I was given the tent. I was told by the elders, "If you really believe these things and do them, you will know and understand them." This is what I've done, so when I got back, I told my father about what I dreamt and saw.

Finally, I got married too. My first marriage, I lost four kids in a row. This is when I met a man who came walking from the southerly direction. He came and stood beside me and said, "I guess you still remember that tent you were given to make dances. You should have done this long ago, but you didn't do them. If you do this, then your daughter will live. This was my only child, the oldest. If you do this, she will live to see old age; but if you still won't do it, you will have nothing left." This is what I heard him say. So I did these dances. Today, my daughter is alive, and she's getting pretty old now. This is another thing that I believe is true, because this happened to me. I have done this dance four times at my age.

I always keep this in mind and try to help my younger brother. I say prayers for him. He gives me the pipe whenever he's going to make a Sundance. Because we see this is helping us, and we believe in it with all our hearts, it has helped us and our children. Long ago, you used to see the elders cry when they invited people to come to their ceremonies. This is our Indian way of life. These elders used to feel what they asked our Maker for. They didn't ask for themselves alone. They asked and said prayers for all people. That's why they got what they asked for. This is what I think. A lot of times, I've backed away from my relatives my age. Many times, I've shed tears when people come to depend on me to pray for them. They bring me spiritual cloths. These times I sure wish I could help these people, but I don't know nothing. I've never made a Sundance. The only one I know and do are the Chicken dance and WE-CHE-CO-CAN dance. Those are the only two I know. Many times, I have cried. I have pity on my relatives. I don't know how to help them because I don't know anything myself. It's my strong words and strong mind that keep me talking about our Indian way of life. This was given to us Indians, we have to pursue it at all times. This is our religion. Our Maker made us see that this is our way of life. He gave this to us. He showed our elders how to keep us alive. The elders saw this gift which was given to them and they were proud of it.

SPEAKER FOUR:

What I'm going to use now is the truth. This is what we were told by our elders who brought us up -- to use the truth at all times, and this is what I have been following as long as I've lived as a human being. I have a lot of children, a lot of them have grown up already. I also have many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and this is what I have been thinking
about all along, like what was given to our elders. It is the absolute truth that they were listened to and that their prayers were answered. This is nothing to fool around with. This was a gift given to them by their Maker. Of how to speak for the people, pray for the people, ask for good things for their people, just like what this man said -- that's the truth he's using. This is what I'm proud of myself. And this is true, because I make Chicken dances myself. I have one to do when I get back home. "This was also left to me, this ceremony." This is what our father used to tell us. "All right now, when I am finished working at what I am doing, it will be all up to you now. You are to have this, what I am doing." And when our father died, my older brother took over, and he's doing the ceremonies, now. He did one last summer; that is the Sundance. And when my older brother decides to quit, I don't know which of us will be doing it, as there are three of us brothers. Our sisters have all died, so there are only three of us left. We think a lot of each other. We live apart, but whenever we see each other, we are very proud. Our children know this too. My brothers' children think of me as their father, and my children do the same to my brother. This is what our children think about too. They get reminded by their parents. One of my sons is in Prince Albert. His name is Johnny Bear. He's in Grade 12 now, and is also working. He has been there ten years now. I sent this son of mine to school when he was young, but I also kept reminding him about our Indian way of life, and this he doesn't forget. He didn't forget what I have told him. When I make a Sundance, he is right there helping me all he can. Even if he is going to school, he doesn't forget what I've told him. I have already had three Sundances, and I have one more to make. As a person I was given four Sundances to do, and no more. If a person does more, then he will have to do four more, eight altogether. This is what I know myself. Although my son goes to school and has white man education, we always told him about our Indian way of life. I was thinking of him, and I show him my love for him. Now, as a young man, he helps us when we make our Sundance. He buys stuff for us to give at give-aways, things he bring into the Sundance tent. This is the way the Indian way of life looks. What I am talking about is the truth; always use the truth. We were told "Think, think about our Maker. If you are using the truth he'll know what you are thinking about." This is what we were told by our father. And this, my friends, was what I wanted to tell you about our Indian way of life.

This is the first time for me at these workshops. I wouldn't be here, but they came to get me, and I'm thankful to be sitting with you here today. This is what I'm always thinking about, our Indian way of life. Where I come from the young people are very good in that way. They really want to help us whenever we make any kind of ceremony. They really enjoy themselves helping us. This is what I'm very happy about, as a person doesn't see very much of this on other reserves. Our young people believe our Indian way of life yet. They hold
what their grandfathers told them. And also hearing you people talking about what you are trying to do about our Indian culture, let us never let it go, because if we let our Indian culture go, what then? We can never be white men. This way of life was given us by our Maker; he gave us dark skin. Not like a white man; he has white skin. Whenever we try to act like white men, we can't, because everytime we look at each other, right away we recognize each other as being Indians. This is the way the Indian looks like. We were given a different way for ourselves by our Maker, and the white man also has a different way, but the white man is superior in his doings, which we see today.

This is what I'm thinking about, like my grandfather. He was blind. I remember when I was seven years old, he used to call me when he wanted to go out. "Come, my grandson, take me out." And I used to be right there to help him, and do what he wanted. This was a long time ago. He used to ask me to take him to a little hill where the ground was clean. He would ask me to lead him there, and this is where he gave me these lectures about the future, what the whiteman was going to do with our country. That in the future there would be railroads, towns, airplanes, and all sorts of things which were very hard to believe at that time. He told me there would be a great change. He told me these things I see now today. My grandfather was blind--how did he know these things? So this is why I say, that we are different. An Indian was given power to use right, to be good and truthful.

I remember clearly when the white man did come to our territory. I was already a young man then. In fact, I was married and had kids. The people were all cutting brush. I was also given a job cutting brush for the railroad to come in. This was at a place now known as Spiritwood. It was very long after we finished cutting that the railroad came in and I saw my first train. We were really awed by the size of the train, even the sounds it made. We sat very still because we were kind of scared. We were very surprised when the train came puffing in, and were afraid of it. It sure looked big. We were astonished by the strength it had as it was pulling a long line of cars. We were very surprised, as we had never seen anything like this before in our lives. Even the noises it made surprised us, when it blow its whistle or when they let the steam out. I kept thinking - how did my grandfather, who was blind, know of this? But this was exactly what he told me would happen. A while after, I saw my first airplane. This also gave us a scare. This is also what my grandfather told me about, and I often wonder where they got the wisdom to see these things coming.

Now, my relatives, this was what I was going to tell you, I am very glad to be here with you, and to hear you talk. When I get home, I will tell my people and all the young people about what you people are trying to do. I'm always working at this being an Indian. I never forget what my grandfather told me about, and I often wonder where they got the wisdom to see
these things coming. Now, my relatives, this was what I was
going to tell you, I am very glad to be here with you, and to
hear you talk. When I get home, I will tell my people and all
the young people about what you people are trying to do. I'm
always working at this being an Indian. I never forget what my
grandfather told me, about railroads, airplanes, and towns, and
our land would be like a checkerboard. So, my friends, I am
very glad to be here and to listen to you. Whenever there is
something going on at my reserve, the people always come to get
me because I am the only old man there, so I am busy most of
the time. When my cousin comes in with me I am always very
happy. We have known each other for a long time. We do the
pipe ceremony together a lot, for many of these young people.
I am always thankful for his willing ways. So, my friends, I
will say thanks to you again.

ELI BEAR:

This is what we have been talking about today. These workers
like Jim, here, Smith and Andrew Paddy. We have all been doing
a lot of work trying to show that what we are doing is helping
the people. I'm not doing this just to be proud of myself and
I'm not going to do something mysterious. I am only trying to
do what I've been told by an elder. What he tells me to do,
about my job. I said today that I didn't know how to approach
an elder. I know about making scent with sweetgrass and the
pipe ceremony, but this is what I mean, just what am I supposed
to do, as our pipe ceremonies are varied--they're different
from tribe to tribe, and they're known in different ways.
There are different ways of pointing the pipe. A man is given
different ways to be handed down to another generation. I
couldn't begin to do everything just perfect. I told you this
when we started these meetings. I worked at this when I was a
very young man. I used to work with a man whose name is Simon
King. This man was head server at our reserve. At that time,
there were all kinds of ceremonies. My uncle here knows this.
We had a lot of people at that time to make these ceremonies.
But where I started to lose this slowly, I used to wake up
sometime saying prayers while drunk. But, I didn't play with
Indian religion, or fool around with it. I always respected
our Indian way of life. Then I sobered up, to try and work at
this "being Indian" again. I've seen this and I've dreamt
about it. I have told this to a lot of elders, so from there I
say I have been very careful on how I approach an elder. How am
I supposed to do this? I've often wondered. He is different.
This is what I think. But I usually talk to them and give them
tobacco. So as far as my co-workers are concerned, they are
supposed to know. I know my uncle here knows, as he has been
around for a long time. We should light a pipe for him
every time we come to depend on him. I'm a server myself, but I
thought to myself that they are working here too, and that's
why I don't light the pipe for him. As we depend on this man
for a lot of things; he gives us his ideas and what we should
do. It's the same with Andrew Paddy. We have worked hard
together, and we have talked at great lengths about our Indian
culture. And now about lecturing our children, how can we
lecture our children? How can we come together to try to get our children to listen? Some, and now I mean these elders, some don't like the idea of coming to a white man place for a meeting, and some say its too far. They get tired. Jim Ryder and Joe told us this. Some of these old men want to come - that is the Saulteaux from North of Regina - but they say it's too far, that they get tired; and this is true. This is what we talked about, Smith, Jim, Andrew, and myself. We asked how can we do this to make it better for everyone? But we just can't go and say we will do this. It's up to the elders to tell us what they want and how we can make it better for them. We just get prepared. We get ready for the coming summer, see what we can do, and see how we can work things out. We have started now, and every time these elders speak, we are that much farther ahead. Whenever we get together and ask for something we step a little farther, but if we don't pull together, that will be it. We will be nothing; we will be going downhill.

If we can get together on our reserves to talk to our young people. This is what I said to lots of people, to talk to young people. But I was the only one that did it differently. I don't think of myself as educated or anything like that. I didn't want to say to these people, "You do this," but I think it would be very nice. The parents should try to know about Indian culture, so they can show his children the same. There are a lot of us who are middle-aged and we don't know anything about our Indian culture. We haven't had very much to do with the elders. We never lit a pipe for an elder, so we cannot go to them for something. So, we have nothing to pass on to our children. There should be people talking to these middle-aged parents to kind of go easy on the alcohol. This is what they are showing their children. It would be better if they tried showing them about our Indian culture. When the women leaders came to get me to speak, this is what I mentioned. This was told to me. This wasn't mine.

I've told about my grandfather, as you all knew him anyway. He was from here. He gave me sweetgrass, and he told me everything and this, what he said, is what I see now. I try my best to do what he told me. He even told me that he wouldn't be here long, he was dying. When he gave me the sweetgrass, he said, "Here my grandson, keep this with you in your truck at all times. This will speak for you. This will help you. These, my grandson, these, never give up what you are trying to do." And just lately when I got to Big River, I wasn't feeling very good. This is where my grandfather was from. I felt a great heaviness when I got there. I felt pain when I saw the exact spot where my grandfather sat when he was talking to me for the last time. I really felt let down and lost when I got there. I pitied myself and nearly had a heart attack from thinking about this man. I had to be taken to the hospital. I had pity for myself when I looked at where my grandfather talked to me, where he sat to lecture me and told me everything. I will really say, where this man turned me from a drunk to what I am
today. This was where this old man told me about nature and what we Indians were given by our Maker. I was thinking about all of this when I got the attack. I went into the hospital. I couldn't even speak right, as I was hurt by what this old man told me that last time. But today now, I am glad and I try to do my job. I feel fine now, and I always try to follow what my grandfather told me. I try to depend on these elders the right way. I thought I would have four from my reserve to come to this meeting, two my age. They also have big families, and their parents were with these ceremonies. These are the people I thought would come to our workshop, come and see what we do and try to understand about our Indian culture. From there, to pass this on to their future generation. I thought that they would try and tell their children what their parents and grandparents taught them. Because our elders are dying off; they never get a chance to teach their children what they know and it's forgotten when they die.

This way, we suffer, as we don't know nothing. This is why I say sometime, we are the ones to blame. We brought this on ourselves. Our elders tried their best to tell us what was right, but we didn't listen. Many times, I have said that the liquor shouldn't have been allowed to us, even though I loved it myself once. Maybe today, our children wouldn't be what they are now. They are causing us much grief now. If we pull together, to wherever we want to go, we are going to get there. The elders say that one person can't do anything single-handed. Nobody will listen to what they say. So, if we can get together, then this would be much easier. This is why we depend on the elders. We rely heavily on our elders hoping that they will be able to talk and wake our children up. We have to tell our children about Indian culture. This is where we want an elder to show us the way to go about this. There was one old man who told me, "Take a look behind, way back, to the old man who brought you up. You see how he did things in our Indian way, and what he said. How many times did you see him take up sweetgrass and the pipe." This is true, when I look back, or think back, my grandfather did put on a Sundance. He told me, "From there, you can look back and see how many of your relatives have done these other ceremonies. From the way you see these, you should be able to see and understand about our culture." It's true this is what my old Uncle William Sapp told me.

My mother used her medicine and helped bring 39 people in the world. She used to be called upon to deliver babies. They didn't have to go to the hospital. Today some of them are as old as Norman Frank (around 55-60 years old). These people never had to go to the hospital. My mother and my grandmother did this. And my uncle Robert Bear told me once, "My nephew, stop your drinking." I was quite a 'boozer.' "You know," he said to me, "I was counting how many people your mother helped to bring into this world, and I counted 39," he said. Today, some of these people are quite old. I go to this old man all the time, whenever I have some kind of problem or maybe just a visit. He usually tells me what to do, and he sets me
straight. It's true that his word is very sharp, but I listen to him. He tells me the straight facts, no beating around the bush. I am very thankful for all he has said and done for me and my people. This old man has been in the hospital three times. I have managed to visit him in the hospital each time. I'd sit with him and try to cheer him up, tell him not to weaken, have a strong mind, keep going, as he is our elder from our reserve. Today now, I see how I helped him. He's home again and he walks and seems to enjoy himself. He was very discouraged and very worried when he was bedridden, but he managed to get well enough to walk again. I used to tell him, "You are the only man that will have to try and stand up for us. If you go, we won't have anyone to stand up for us and do the things you do." I am very happy today now that he is well and once more back at our reserve. He was here at the University Hospital. He had a heart operation, and now will have to wear a battery for life. Now he's well and walking, and I always think myself fortunate to have this old man to talk to. The things he has told me about and the way I used to talk to him too when he was in the hospital. I had a visit with him three times. They were okay; on my fourth visit he said to me "Nephew, will you go and ask the doctor if I can go home?" It was hard. I walked away from there, and didn't visit anymore. I thought if I keep coming back, he would say more and more to me till finally I would have to take him home; so I didn't visit again. I was scared to visit him, as I think I would have taken him home before he was discharged from the hospital.

This is all I have to tell you. It's about this that I would like you people to think about and see what you can come up with, about how things in general can be better on our reserves. You have just about finished with everything else. It is the counselling of our children on the reserve now that we are after. How can we get together on this? What can we do? How can we do it? I will say this just once more, that long ago the elders used to make a feast and invite everyone to come. So everyone used to listen to these elders say prayers and have lectures and a meeting. I've seen this happen myself when I was young. The chief at that time was James Blackman. He used to do this. He used to invite everyone, and the elders used to discuss things about the future. I've seen this happen, not only once but a number of times. The chief would put on a feast and the elders would talk for him. At home, there are two elders who still remember what our old chief used to do. So this will be all. Try and come up with some ideas on how we can start this thing.

JIM KANIPITETEW:

I will tell you about my job and what these people would like me to do. My cousin Smith and the chief here, approached me and wanted me to try and help them out. Eli knows about it, also Alex Bonaíse and Mr. Fox. At that time, I promised them that I would do all I could to help them for as long as I could. After I finished talking, these other people also gave their
promise that they also would go to any length to help. They said, "Wherever you send us, we will make an attempt to be there, and help all we can. It doesn't matter about the distance, we will go to offer our prayers." And this is what I told them myself. The first time we were told to go across the Rockies to say our prayers and help out, I was the only one that showed up. The other workers backed out right away. Today, we don't see these people here. They are elsewhere, and on our reserve when I go around visiting, I can't get anyone. They say that I'm just a nuisance and don't know what kind of work I am trying to do. They say I'm only doing this for the money. They wonder what I'm doing anyway. I've heard this being said about me many times. When I hear people talking about me this way, I say prayers for them, as I know they add a little something good to help me in my work. I always think of my Maker, so I don't answer back to these people.

This is why I say we have to work together, get along with each other, love each other, and this way, we will have our work, working the way we want it. We have progressed quite a bit already in a short while. I believe in what we are doing with all my heart. I believe it right through. Especially now when I see my nephew working here with us. How can I back out? I can't back out because I know we are doing something good that will help us all and our future generations. We see our work is doing some good. We have come a long way already, and it's very good. My nephew was right about the spiritual cloth and the pipe. These things are going to be given to us. These are the things we have to rely on, depend on. This is what I think myself. This is what I wanted to tell you to think about. When they selected me here to say prayers for these workshops, I did that. I wasn't afraid to do it. I told the people there that I put the pipe down. I didn't hear nothing wrong. I didn't know if I said anything wrong either. When I ask for something I firmly believe that I'm right. So we will have a wide open road and have daylight wherever we are going, where we came from, also our children, our grandchildren. May we have all that is good from the earth, good child raising, this is what I always ask for whenever I say prayers for my people. Thank you.

FELIX SUGAR:

You see how old I am, my relatives. I have worked at our Indian culture for a long time. I have worked at the various ceremonies since I was young. I started as soon as I had a mature mind and have been trying to help people ever since. Why did it happen, and how did it happen? My parents were both Saulteaux. Both of them tried very hard to tell me about how to run my life. Long ago, an elder or parent really tried hard to tell his children about life, our Indian life. A child was taught how to be straight and have respect. The way my parents taught me, how I would have to run things for myself in the future. My father used to say as I was growing up, "You will have a woman one of these days, God willing. When you are blessed with a child, then you will have to use your kindness and love, and your mind will have to be very good." And this, my elders were very strong on, and this is what they left with
me, and these are the things I worry a lot about.

And now, I will discuss our Indian religion, and also all the other different religions we have today. The reason why I want to talk about religion is that the young people today are being led astray by the white man. You young people today are lost. You have followed the white man into a blind alley. You have followed him since you were born. Now you are like something that's planted. This is what he has done to you, you children. From the day you are born, he teaches you his way. He gives you his religion. He tells you anything and everything. He teaches you good things that you should follow, but we don't do that. I know this because I'm old and I've seen this happen. I don't do these.

There was a time long ago when I tried for the priesthood. This was the time I knew I was lost. When I told my father this, he told me that this was not for us. This was not given to us Indians. I couldn't bring up my children. I had a wife and we lost six of our children when they were small. I have only one living today, a woman. She is 43 years old now. And why was this? My father used to tell me that I was lost trying to follow the white man, and I was being punished by losing all my children when they were born. So I asked my father what I could do. He said to me, "Try and give an elder a smoke; give an elder that you know a spiritual cloth. He will give your child a name. This is where your child will get up from, and this where he will be healed from." I did what he told me. I took my daughter to an elder and this old man gave my daughter a name. (This old man's name was KO-TA-PAY-PA-HAT. Pulling Him Fast.) This man was the son of my grandfather, Piapot. This was the old man I went to for help. So he named my daughter "Sweetgrass Woman," and I still use that name today whenever I see my daughter. Today she is getting pretty old herself. From that I believe in our Indian way of life. This was what my father told me to do in his lectures.

You often hear an elder talking about the Telling Spirit, and he talks about different spirits. This is for us Indians. When a white man talks about these he calls them angels. Well, these are the same as the Indian spirits. These are all children of Manitou. These are the workers the world over. Whether an Indian sees it in a vision or in any other form, it is still the same. These are the spirits we cry to. Manitou sent these angels here to Indians to tell them something. This is why I want to discuss this with you today. We were given these. They are no different to what the white man prays to. We were given these. They are not different. Manitou gave these to us, his children, so they can sit with us. This is why you see an old man today always talking about these spirits, whenever there is some kind of ceremony. At this ceremony, the elder who is making the Sundance asks Manitou for all good things for all of Manitou's children. He prays for all the world. There is only one Manitou, and he gave his children some of his goodness to do his work. Same as when we say a person has power to do this or that, we call this man
"AMANITOUIT." He can do something which we can't do ourselves. We Indian people call our Maker "KISA-MANITOU." The white man calls him "God." We native people were given a different way of worship than the white man. That is why we worship the earth and all that is in it. The white man destroys all that we love. He gave us a different way of knowing him and a different way of praying to him. So you young people think about this. If you don't, you will be lost. We natives can never become white man. We'll never change our skin. We might forget the language, but our skin will never change. And another thing I know that my grandfather Piapot used to say to me is about our reserves. He used to say that these reserves were allotted to us to keep for ourselves and to try and raise our families there. To try to make a living on these reserves. You are not to use these reserves in any different manner. You are to try and farm or to raise livestock for yourselves on the reserve.

It came at a good time too, when you are discussing reserves, to tell you about what happened to the reserve we were supposed to have had. It was not my grandfather Piapot. It was another grandfather before him that was given the reserve. I didn't see this or hear him in person, but it is on paper, in black and white. My grandfather was given a reserve, but no one seems to know where it is. This was supposed to have been our reserve. We were supposed to have been members of this reserve, but this is lost for now, as we have never been able to have enough money to hire someone to look for it. We are only now just starting to look for it. One of our sons is working on it, and already has a long list of names, but these things take a long time to happen, as these leaders we have now seem to hang back when something like this turns up. They are not too fussy about talking to people in the government about things like this. I hope, not for myself alone, but for my children, grandchildren, and my relations, that these people find our reserve for us, so the people that were to belong there could move in and have a fresh start. This is not for me, but my relations. These are the people that would make use of this reserve in the future. This is what I'm thinking about. I'm not thinking about my generation, but of the future generation, because the reserves we are at now are overcrowded. There are a lot of dissensions among the people because no one can do very much for himself as there is no room. The people are mad at each other most of the time. Not very many can make a living on a reserve like that. I think this is why we are losing our relations too. This relationship, this is one thing we've lost already. This is true; when I see a young person, I can't recognize him. This is on my reserve. I have to ask who he is, and it often turns out that he is my grandchild. We've lost this. Nowadays, we just wave at each other, as we don't recognize each other. This is not our Indian way. This is the white man's way. What I do when I don't know another Indian is go and shake hands with him and ask him where he comes from. From there, we usually ask one another our parents' names and in this way, we find out what relations we are to each other. But today, our young people are not that way at all. They just
wave to each other, if they wave at all. Some don't, as they seem to have a chip on their shoulder all the time. This is not the way it should be. We have lost our kinship or relationship. When we find out we are related to a person, we have great respect for this person. Our mind is relieved when we have set such a person straight. Today, what I'm after, my relation, this is where my mind is. One of my cousins is in the hospital, very sick, and my mind today is there with this relation of mine. This is where relationship comes in. We are all supposed to love and respect people. Not to start bragging about them only after their faces are covered up, after they are dead. My father used to tell me, "Don't give up, my son, love your mother and all your relations." My mother is still living today. She is 107 years old. She is the oldest woman in Piapot reserve. What my father taught me, I still follow. I love my mother. This is why I say love each other as we love our mother. We look after her. I come to see her every day, even though I live quite a ways from her. I don't miss a day when I'm home that I don't go to see my mother. This has been my mother's lifetime work, to help people be good. She has loved people all her life and has respected people all her life. As soon as there was some kind of ceremony, she would be there helping. This is what we call love or respect, thinking of Manitou, depending on Manitou every day. To have a nice awakening and to have a good day, every day. This is what the elders say is love and respect. We have respect for each other, all of us native people. We are all related. We are all from the same place as our forefathers of long ago. They were all related and this is where it comes from. Manitou made us. There is only one Kisa-Manitou, and he is our father. This is why we are all related. So when we meet each other, we should shake hands and be happy. We won't know at first what relations we are, but we will find out eventually. Manitou knows what relations we are because he made us. He knows and this is how he made us too. As there is only one life and this is the way he made us. And this is how it is. Thank you.

JIM KANIPITETEW:

My friends and relatives, as you see me here today, I would appreciate very much if you would help me all you can. I am in a very tough position, trying to run these workshops. Let us use our kindness and not criticize each other. What else can we do? We are trying to do our best when you people see us here. Even this way people talk about me. At my reserve anyway, people say, "What is this guy doing going to Saskatoon every so often? He doesn't know anything." When I hear people talk like this, I say a prayer for them. I pray for the one that is talking about me. When they talk about me this way, they are helping me. We are trying to work at something we think is very good for us and for our children, grandchildren, and the future generations if we can succeed now. When people come here to the workshops, we try to tell them to tell us what they know, and we just listen; we try not to tell them very much. We are more for listening as we would like to have their ideas, and that is why I say to you here today to try and give
us all the help you can. Don't go home and say that the people running this are no good. Tell us where we are wrong, and we will try to rectify the mistake. In case we don't do just exactly what you want us to do, then tell us. We don't know all that you would like us to do, so we would appreciate it if you would help us in this way. But our main concern is we depend or rely on the elder, and not only the elder. We also depend on the man that has a large family. He already has the brains to give his children the lectures we hear from the elders. This we would like you to think about, as we go our different directions to go to our reserves. Let's all try and make the work we are doing strong and successful. This is for our children and grandchildren, so they will have a good future, hopefully. So now, this is what we do every time we lay the pipe down. I'm usually given a spiritual cloth to take home with me. Also the one that lays the pipe down is given a spiritual cloth to take to his reserve and offer prayers when he gets there. I will do likewise when I go home. This we do when we are ready to quit. I would like to ask you again if there is anything that you would want changed about your stay here or about the meeting itself. If there is, tell us. It won't hurt us if you tell us what we are doing wrong. We will try our best to correct our mistakes. This is all for now and I wish everyone a good trip home. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

About these dances we have now. As you all know, they are going strong now. These dances were sacred long ago, as was nearly everything that the Indian did. I was told by an old Sioux Indian that before any dance was to begin, they always had a pipe ceremony first. Like what I've seen done here at the start of the meeting. I've seen this being done in most places I've visited, and I have been to a number of places. The pipe ceremony is always first before they start anything else. This tradition was given to us to give us life, to live by it. I have seen at one time, in Piapot reserve, where an old woman was carried in while the dance was going on. They made the old woman comfortable by placing pillows on her back so she could sit up while watching. Later on, I saw this old woman get up on her feet, and still later, I saw this old woman get up and dance. The Round dance was still with us then. She danced the Round dance. This old woman was my grandmother, her name was MA-HE-GUN-IKAMIK. And there I saw and heard my grandmother when she sang along with the singers. My grandmother was also a good singer. I know that this is where we get life from because I saw it there. Here was my grandmother sick and she got well. After she married Piapot, my grandfather.

Now, I will tell you just one story and people say that I'm lying when I tell this story. But this happened to me, and it's true. I have lots of stories of long ago, but I want to tell you one which I did myself. This is true. One time we were out of food on the Piapot reserve. We had nothing to eat. There were three tents. One tent belonged to NA-PEN-NEN; he
later went to Little Pine Reserve. One tent was my uncle's and the other was ours. My father at the time was gone to town for some supplies. The times were hard long ago, no assistance of any kind. But I used to see these prairie chickens close by where we lived, and they were plentiful. I saw where they gathered every morning. By the way, there are hardly any prairie chickens today. Anyway, I went to NA-PEN-NEN's tent and asked him if he had any shells. So he told me that he would look in his medicine bag and see if he had any. He found four shells which he gave to me. So I got up real early in the morning to go and shoot these prairie chickens. I got to their gathering place ahead of them, so I waited. Soon one came and landed in a tree not far away. It began making all kinds of noises. It was very loud, sometimes it was like it was whistling. It did this for a while, finally it flew down and landed on the ground. There, it make sounds like he was beating a drum. It kept turning and beating its wings and also his tail. He kept beating or hitting the ground with his tail. I was watching real close to all his actions. Finally, the prairie chickens started to come. They came by twos or threes till finally there was a lot of them. I still kept watching them, as I was really impressed with what was going on. All of a sudden, they all took off, like something scared them. As soon as they were in the air, I let go of one shot. I knocked down nine of them with one shot, and gathering them up, I thought to myself, these wouldn't be enough for three tents of people for one day. So, I thought I would wait again and shoot some more at the next gathering. I got my gun ready in front of me where I was lying, to be ready for action. As I was lying there waiting, I must have dropped off to sleep as I got up real early that morning. Anyway, I was sleeping there, and I dreamed about this dance, the one we do today. What I dreamt about that morning often makes me wonder when I see these dancers with all their feathers on their back, as I saw in my dream. I wonder if any of these people were ever given these feathers, or dream of feathers being given to them, because long ago, it was a deed being done by a certain man and he would be given a feather to decorate his costume or dancing outfit with. A person is given something great when he is given a feather to decorate with. But I guess these dreams all vary. A person dreams of being given different things such as various ceremonies. These are usually in a dream or in a vision. Long ago, all of these were very sacred to an Indian, as these were given to them in a dream. Maybe today, the dancers just take them to decorate their dancing outfits. This is what I see today. As I saw these prairie chickens dancing in my dream, I had a vision that they were humans dancing. I must have been sleeping for quite a while, and I must have had my mouth open while sleeping. I could feel something rubbing my mouth. I opened my eyes and here was the prairie chicken that was making all the noise rubbing against me. So I grabbed him and killed him. With all the commotion I made I scared the other ones away. I killed this one without using a gun, so that made ten chickens I killed. And that is my story. I'm telling the truth when I tell this. I told this at a ceremony where a stone was reddened. And at this ceremony, a man will
tell nothing but the truth. (This was a custom long ago. When some men had stories that were hard to believe, they would paint a stone red. There they would tell their stories. Some stories were very hard to believe, and this way they were believed when they told them at this ceremony.) I told my story there when they reddened the stone. At these ceremonies there are no lies to be used, all truth, and again I say that this is what happened to me. This will be all for now.

SPEAKER:

I will tell a story myself. I don't know if it's true or not. You can judge for yourselves. A long time ago, I guess some of these Indians really had supernatural powers. Especially these old Indians I am going to talk about. I heard this from some people up north. These two old men used to make all kinds of ceremonies all the time. Finally, they started losing people. They were not attending their ceremonies. To make things worse, a Catholic priest showed up and built a church and took all the people away from these two medicine men. So the old Indians couldn't get very many to come to their ceremonies anymore. Their ceremonies were getting farther and farther apart. Finally one old Indian invited the other old Indian over so they could talk this over. So the other one came over, and he lit a pipe for him to smoke and ask him what he thought of the Catholic priest that was taking all the people away from them. One of them wondered, maybe the priest had more power than they did. So they thought they should try the priest out. So they had some young men to start a big bonfire, as this one Indian could walk through fire without getting burned. So they all got ready for they thought they would invite the priest the following day. Everything was all set. So the next morning, one of the young men went and told the priest that these two medicine men wanted to see him to ask him something.

So the priest agreed and went over to where he was invited. When he got there, they called him Father, as that is what everyone calls the priests, "Father," they said, "we want to try you out. What powers you have, you have taken our people away from us. When we make our ceremonies nobody shows up. They all go to you and your religion. They seem to want your religion more than ours. So therefore, we'd like to try you and see what powers you have. First, I will show you what I can do." The young men had a big fire going by this time. The old Indian took off his clothes and started walking through the fire and came out the other side. He asked the priest, "Can you do that?" "No", said the priest. And they made another fire for the old Indian in another place. So he takes a big piece of red hot charcoal and put it in his mouth, and everytime he blew, fire would come out of his mouth. He also asked the priest if he could do that, the priest again said no. So the medicine men asked him to do something to show what kind of power he had. The priest stood there wondering what he would do. Finally, he thought about his false teeth. So he took out the top plate first. Then he took out the lower plate. By this time, the medicine men wondered what kind of
man he was to be able to take out his teeth. So they got beat.

NORMAN FRANK:

I would also like to tell a story as told to me by my old uncle. I used to look after him in his old age. One time, he told me about Manitou Lake. It's out our way towards North Battleford, and south. Anyway, the Saulteaux people used to have a reserve there long ago. Every once in a while they would see a horse go in the water and disappear. Anyway, I guess my uncle was looking after the horses one time, and when he rounded them up, one horse was dead. He was quite sure that the horse was dead, as the coyotes already had eaten a little bit on the dead horse thigh. But when he came the next morning, the horse was alive, risen from the dead. And the old Indians said that it was the mysterious water horse that brought this dead horse back to life again. There are a lot of stories that came out of this place; maybe that's why it's called Manitou Lake. Thank you.

(End of Interviews)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX TERM</th>
<th>IH NUMBER</th>
<th>DOC NAME</th>
<th>DISC #</th>
<th>PAGE #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POWER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-amulets, charms&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-management of&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGION &amp; SPIRITUALITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-Christian religions (vs.)&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>13,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGION &amp; SPIRITUALITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-vows&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESERVES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-loss of&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14,15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIRITS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-spirit helpers&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORIES AND STORYTELLING (GENERAL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-animal&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORIES AND STORYTELLING (GENERAL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-dreams and visions&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORIES AND STORYTELLING (GENERAL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-hunting&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17,18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORIES AND STORYTELLING (GENERAL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;-unexplained phenomena&quot;</td>
<td>IH-432</td>
<td>CREE WKSHOP3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>