

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: CREE ELDERS WORKSHOP 10
PIUS DUSTYHORN, CHARLEY BUFFALO
CALF, JONAS LARIVIERE, MRS.
WASKEWITCH, MRS. ALEC CHILD,
JIM KANIPITETEW, ELI BEAR,
ALEX STICK, GEORGEMORNING STAR,
ALEX BONAISE, JIM HOOSTIE, JOHN
ROCKTHUNDER, EVA PASKIMIN

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Elders express regrets at loss of traditional customs and values. Want return to schools on reserves.
- Need to preserve Indian ceremonies and Indian medicines.
- Concerns about problems with alcohol recur throughout.

CREE ELDERS WORKSHOP 6

PIUS DUSTYHORN:

I will try and tell what one old man told me long ago. I guess long, long ago our elders were given something by their Manitou to be able to survive. They were shown by Manitou, all these medicines and ceremonies which are now dying out. All these were given to him before the white man invaded our country. When the white man came in all this started to change till today, now we don't know anything. The medicines which were given to us, we don't even know where they are.

And I always wonder what this old man used to say about the future, which is now, and he was right. It's too bad that the white man went back on his word to the Indian people on what they promised when they took over the country. They promised the Indian education on how the white man survived, himself. He was supposed to show him this. Why I say this, these young

people now that are going to school in cities, there are the people we think are the ones leaving their Indian culture. They leave their reserves and the Indian way of life. And we don't show them enough of our Indian way of life before they leave us to go to the city. Even in Regina where I live, I have a job in a school there, I work two hours a day. The principal told me why I'm working there. He said, "There are a lot of these kids being brought to this school, and they don't know about their Indian culture." He said, "These children are orphans, and this is the reason we have this project for the native children here in the city. If they see their Indian culture, right there in school they may be able to get something out of there, these orphans here," he said. Why do we this, is that the children miss too school. Even though we try to teach them right," he said. "Maybe they miss their Indian culture, maybe that's why they are not very interested. It's not only the Indian child that this way," he said, "the white children are this way too. They are searching for something, it seems like. They rather go into the streets and get into trouble sometimes. They miss too much school. And this I would like very much, sometime in the future, a person who is educated to come and talk to the students here at my school," he said. For instance, I went to school in Fort Qu'Appelle last winter to learn Indian handicraft. And this is where I got a job after I finished my course. And so I teach these students, bead work and all kinds of Indian culture. This is our life, and I try to bring this to my pupils. The principal is very happy with this; he sees that the students are interested.

He is very sorry too, for these orphans. He, himself, thinks that an Indian child raised in a white home is no good. But he knows that our biggest problem is alcohol. These children are

being left all over and these are the people that pick them up and try to raise them and give them an education. He says, "These people have pity on these children, that's why they bring them here," he said. It's too bad that some of these children can never find out where they come from. Their mothers threw them away for the bottle. We see these children there, come in and try to learn about Indian culture; they know that they are Indian. They do all they can to help each other once they catch on, of what is supposed to be done. Especially if these children were on the reserve, and then they would be very happy. It's too bad but I guess this is the way it happens. I guess sometimes, something gets in our brain and we do these things. And I guess most of us have been told about these things in the past by our elders. Just like myself, of what I've heard you people say. I have children of my own and I'm always very sorry that I wasn't able to live with my children when they were growing up. But my wife left me when they were small and lived in another place. I feel this very much at times. But I'm very thankful they, my children, are all grown up today. It's too bad, that I was never able to tell them what I heard from my elders. It gives me a lot to think about at times.

And there's a jail mentioned. I know how a person feels when he's locked up. I have had my children there, but in Regina, I went to the jail when I was invited. I listened to the Indian inmates. I guess they have lots of time to think when they are locked up. And they have their own Pow-wows going on in there now. I guess it finally hit them that they are Indians and where they came from. They see it now. They used alcohol too much and forgot about their Indian culture. Now today they are beginning to try and get some of it back. And they are asking for people to go and talk to them. And this is what we are trying to do here, they said. This is what I heard there. So I believe that our people are definitely interested, if they can stay away from the bottle. They are asking for someone who is interested in Indian dancing to go and show them. These people, they didn't listen to anything when they were using alcohol. Today they kind of woke up; now they want someone to teach them their Indian way. This will be all. Thank you.

CHARLEY BUFFALO CALF, MAPLE CREEK:

Just a few words, I'm here myself to try and help in my small way to bring back our Indian culture to our younger people. I was sent here by the people from my reserve. I'm not a good speaker but I understand what we are up against. This is happening all over the province, these people (young) leaving their Indian way and they can't seem to fit in anywhere. They don't want the Indian way because it was long ago, they say,

and they won't be able to go in the white society, so they are lost. The parent is right when he cries for his children to try and follow the Indian way. We have to always think of our Manitou. He's the one that shows us our way of thinking, and he will take pity on us, so our people will listen to us. Because this is what they are forgetting. I hope what we want will happen, to get our young back with us, and follow our old way of teaching because we see already that they are lost, have no respect for anything. These people are following the white man too much. I don't think our children should talk back to us, try and defend the white man. I don't think this will happen. I was thinking this as I was listening to you talking. Because our Young Indian is being looked after by Manitou when he is among white man, trying to learn his books. It is true that it's very nice to see a well-educated Indian but he shouldn't throw away his Indian identity, because he's well educated. He should look to where his parents are. He should think of these people, every morning and every night. These are the people that raised him. He should never forget the way they live because you have only one father and mother and these people should be respected and loved. And it is true, my relatives, you are right when you have this great concern to your young people. And we say this with all our heart, that we are worried whenever our young one goes out the door, and this is very true because I think the very same way. We never know when we are going to hear that our young one is in trouble or killed. This kind of thinking is in every parent. For myself, my children are in different places. And I always pray to our Manitou to look after them, wherever they are. I guess all of us were given to

love our children and this is why we have this great concern for them but they seem to think nothing of it. When we try to tell them something, they figure we are giving them hell; and this is the way they leave home. This is a white man teaching. Most of their children are bullheaded; they won't listen to what they tell them, because they figure they know more than their parents. I hope and pray to our Manitou that what we are trying to do here succeeds and pray the Maker turns our young people's thinking, so they will wake up and come back with us. And I pray also to be given the true words that I can relate to my child without giving him hurt feelings. And I'm also very happy to hear you people. I have enjoyed listening to you very much. I'm very glad also, that I was able to bring one of my sons along with me to this meeting. I want you people to talk to this young man. When we are on the road going home I will talk about this to him. Did you listen to the elders talking? Do you believe them? This I will ask my son. As these are the people that are making us cry. And it's the white man who's to blame because he's so many that he just about covers every inch of our country. And this is what has been on my mind, on my reserve. We are not many on that reserve but nearly all of my

relations are lost. We try to tell them something but we can't get close to them. We try to get them to be more careful and be a person that we can depend on but no. Instead he tells us we don't know what we are talking about and leaves us to go and buy a bottle of cheap wine. And when he's half shot he usually shows up asking what was that you were talking about? And when this stuff is in him, he will say anything, do anything. And this will be all for now. But I only hope that you leaders here can make a go of this. But I think we will succeed if we all work at it because we should never let our Indian identity go, no matter what happens. This has been my way of thinking but I hope we succeed in bringing our young back to us. So I pray that the Maker will listen to us and have mercy on us. Hope you leaders succeed. This will be all. I greet you all, my relatives.

JONAS LARIVIERE, CANOE LAKE:

I'm not going to say much, only that I sure go for that idea of having our schools right on our reserves again. At home the people are all kicking about this. They want their children to be around the reserve. And this is one thing they really want out there. It is not very good the way it is now as the children are transported for quite a ways. From Canoe Lake to Beauval, it's a distance of thirty miles, and sometimes they have trouble on the road. And when it snows heavy, the bus can't get through. Sometimes even the bus goes haywire, then the children miss a lot of school. And this is what I thought I would bring out when I had a chance. I would be very happy if we could get some help in this regard. This is what the people want on my reserve. I've heard of many of them say that they would want the school on our reserve again. Even a school that will take students up to grades eight or nine and then they will be more mature to start up taking higher grades in the white world. And this way I think they wouldn't just throw away

their reserves and their Indian identity. They would want to come back to their reserves whenever they have a dance. If a little child goes away from this reserve, then he doesn't remember enough about it and doesn't know even when he's told that he's from the reserve. But if they grow up there then they will always come back. There were a lot of thirteen, fourteen and fifteen year olds that tried to leave their reserves but these people didn't make it; they came back to the reserve. They know where to go to when they get good and broke, or they can't get along any place else. And this is why I say that if a student was to finish his grade nine on the reserve, he would still remember his Indian ways even if he starts to go to high school. This is the way we would like to have it at my reserve. I'm speaking for the people when I say this. I hope we can have

these leaders here talk for us on this. We really need this. Some them should come up to our reserve to sit with us at a meeting and then they would get an idea of what we want. And this is what I wanted to say. I just wanted to bring out what the people think about at home. Thank you.

MRS. WASKEWITCH, SASKATOON:

I will just talk about how I was brought up. I won't say very much. I was brought up the old-fashioned way. And I had lectures from my parents ever since I can remember. My father was very kind. He tried his best to bring us up right, and he also lectured us the way the young people were lectured in those days. I still remember all my parents used to say to me. I was brought up be an Indian all the way. But I was going to mention the young people, the way they are lost today. For instance, we were always travelling by team and wagon, and when the Indian wanted to sell cattle he drove them to the buyer. Now today they load them up in trucks and take them to the stockyards. Everything today is mechanized on the reserves, even now. Now all you have to do is read signs on the road for the cars to follow. And this is where the young people get their way of thinking. Every young man wants a car now because he sees another young man driving one. And this is where they get themselves into trouble with the law; they even get killed some of them. This is where we, parents, have to worry every time our young people go out. We never know when they will be getting back. They get involved with liquor no matter if they are underage or not. And this always hurts us parents. We try our best to tell our children but what can we do, when they won't listen to us. I can't say very much as I have never been to a meeting. This is only my second time that I have come to listen to these elders at these workshops. I never go to band meetings and stuff like that as I'm not a very good speaker. This will be all. I try my best to raise my family the way I was brought up. I have nine children, five girls and four boys. I never used to be rough on my children but I tried my best to tell them quietly of what I was going to tell them. I try to tell to stay away from alcohol and all that's bad. This is the way I was told and I try to get my children to understand this. I tell my daughters to leave the mini-skirts alone. This is going a little too far. I don't like them. This was never done

by an Indian woman long ago. Same with the young man, they used to dress up nice. They didn't have their hair flying all over. They had braids. And we never had anything to drink, even when we had a chance. Now today nearly every girl drinks now. I have even seen a twelve-year-old girl drinking. I would talk a long time if I was to try and explain on how badly we are lost today. I would be sitting here a long time, if I was going to

talk about all these things. So this will be all for sure now. I greet you all. Thank you.

MRS. ALEC CHILD:

I only wish to say that I thank you all very much. All what you have said is true and I can't add very much more. All I can say is that this alcohol has my children going haywire. We can't seem to quit using this stuff. It would have been nice if they were to listen to the elders. And I can't say very much now. Only I would like to thank you again. It's been nice coming to your meeting. This is the first time I've been to a meeting. I hope that you have good luck in what you are trying to do. I thank you again. That's all.

JIM KANIPITETEW, ONION LAKE:

I won't say very much as we would like to hear you people. This is why we go around all over to try and get you elders here, to tell us what would be best to do. I don't want to hold up the meeting too long. But I've heard many good points that you elders bring out and for this I want to thank you. You have talked about all kinds of these things. I just want to bring out what I was told and what I've seen. This uncle of mine that told me a lot of things, he was a chief for a long time at Little Island Lake. And as my parents told me to have respect for an elder, by being kind to him, help him, and so I used to listen to this man. And when I could start doing things for myself and making my own living I did this. One time one old man made a Sundance on our reserve and this is where I saw my uncle and his clothes were kind of torn and patched up and right away I thought of what my father and mother told me, to respect, to be kind, and to help one another. So I went up to my uncle and I told him, "Come on, let's go and have some tea," so he came home with me. I gave something to eat, gave him tobacco, and I got my clothes and told him, "You put these on, my uncle." He was very glad. And this is what my uncle told me. "I will tell you what I know about these certain ceremonies which was left to me; this I will leave with you of what I know. In the future people will come to depend on you." And he also gave me a song that was to be sung at these ceremonies. "You will be doing lots of this in the future because we are getting lost and there won't be very many of you hanging on to this." And the song he left with me I still remember it. I used it at these ceremonies. There are not many people this way now. Because in the old days a person didn't just go and ask an elder if he can show him what he knew. A person had to give a spiritual cloth and have a pipe ceremony with the elder before he can do anything. All this was handed down from father to

son from away back. So are these lectures they used to use. They also were handed down for their children so they would be like them. And these are the things I do and I follow what my elders told me because I know I'm an Indian and I will never be anything else. I try my best to speak to my children and grandchildren about this. This was told to me by my elders. I don't make anything up myself. I cover a lot of territory now as I'm called by elders from different reserves to go and help them when they have a ceremony. But this is what I depend on, what was given to me and what I've been told. This is what I depend on and that's why I'm doing this. And my uncle also gave me another song. He sang a song to sing when a person is looking for the main pole in the Sundance tent. It's called Okemow-atik (kingpole) and this was also a song for this. I guess they sang this while cutting the tree down. This is another that my uncle left with me.

And my uncle, he knew when he was going to go, he told me, "I won't be with you very long." And I wondered how he knew because at that time he was well. And so that year we came to Sweet Grass to a Sundance. As we were watching the Sundance he again mentioned what he told me. He said, "It's true that I won't be around with you people very long." And I still didn't believe him. And my uncle told me again if he could talk to my son so that he would leave something for him also. So I took him to my home and so he gave my son his job of being a server. He told my son all about the Sundance and what was supposed to be done there. I was very grateful to my uncle. And so I say again that this people are right when they say these things are handed down. But in order for an elder to tell you what he knew, you have to give him a spiritual cloth and pipe ceremony and then he will tell you of what he knows. Now I will say I don't know anything but I just want to say that when this started up eight years ago I was here helping these people. Whenever I'm called I come no matter if I got some work at home. Because I see that we are gaining a little. We are waking our children and our grandchildren up. And also some of our relatives. I'm talking about my own reserve, no place else. There are some elders that won't come and help us from my reserve, and these are the people that are bading their children to be lost. And I'm very sorry for these people, but if even they won't come to help us, I say prayers for them just the same. But I'm very sorry to see where they are leading their children, and grandchildren and relatives - all their loved ones. It's pitiful to see these people, but if the parents won't listen how are we going to make the children listen to us. And now I'm very thankful of one of my grandchildren. This one here that brought her daughter here. One time I was very thankful I was going to make a ceremony and she gave me berries to use. I thought to myself this one knows the Indian way of life. And there should be more young people this way. Because these are the people that are making us cry

today, because we hear every day of young people getting into trouble or getting killed using drugs and all kinds of things. We don't want our young children this way. And this is why we

have you elders here to see if we could come up with something that will make our children listen to us. And on this job here we are always worried if we will be doing the right thing, and will this be what the people want? What will the people at the next house be like? Maybe we will welcome with open arms and maybe will be kicked out. So we usually talk about this when we are travelling. But I think the right way to do, is to go and give the elder a spiritual cloth, and this way he would talk to us. But we try to say what little we know to people, as this is a very hard job out in the field. And one never knows what kind of people we meet. But we pray and hope for the best, and this is our work. We don't know anything. We are not educated, but we are trying to tell about our Indian Culture, because we see that we are getting lost. I would take all day in speaking about different things but I don't want to take any more time as we are depending on you people to tell us something, that's why we bring you here. And this will be all for now and I greet you all. Thank you.

ELI BEAR:

These things I mentioned, like these Indian medicines and the pipe ceremony, we have elders working on these things. For instance, in Alberta there are people there trying their best to do these things, but there are people that us who are working out in the field. Some people say that we are trying to sell our Indian culture but you all know that this is not true. We are trying to bring back our Indian culture. We are saying let's bring the elders to these workshops and let them know what we are trying to do. We are trying to tell people of what was given to us as an Indian nation. We are trying to wake people up, to have respect for our ceremonies and all the Indian ways of life. Because nowadays we seem to hear the elders from a distance; it is as if they are fading away. These elders knew about these medicines and they die without leaving us the way to make these, or where to get them. All these things we don't know about now. But the elders they tried to tell us about these but we didn't listen very hard to them. So now we see ourselves we haven't got anything some of us, because we followed the white man too much, also the almighty bottle. Also our ceremonies and traditions these are all disappearing. So I'm very happy to say that this is coming back a little as I counted 10 Sundances will be performed this coming summer, around the North Battleford area. And this is what I was going to discuss with the bosses here at the college. It is true that I have a lot of pressure put on me when I'm travelling this way.

And this is why I brought this up to the bosses here to buy some spiritual cloth, or give us money to buy this stuff. And so I was told to put it on my expense and now this spiritual cloth as you call it if you buy it you put it on your expense; now this has to be done. Because it's going to be for everybody not only you, and make sure when you buy this cloth to put it on your expense. And if there's a funeral, if you have to buy flowers put it in your expense, that's still cultural. You know this is what I'm urging you people to do. I know this is a big thing, even though as the elders said, that

we think only of people after they are dead, and when they are alive we don't respect them and love them. But I think this makes the person who's lost a loved one, his mind is a little at ease, when he sees this being done for him. And this is what I brought up to these elders and leaders also. We have to do this is as this is Indian culture we are doing.

And about these ceremonies for instance the Sundance, I was told long ago that this was the most sacred the Indian religions and we were supposed to have all the respect for it. Sometime we have some young ladies or young woman that don't pay any attention. Some of these young women are not told about respecting this Sundance tent, or any other Indian ceremony. Whenever the pipe ceremony is performed, I think the mothers of these young women should keep telling their daughters about these things. To have respect for the ceremonies. Not to go near these ceremonies when they are having their monthly sickness. And this is what we don't have, people to tell our young about these things. And another thing is the alcohol. We have now in Saskatchewan a police force, the Midwest Patrol and these people go around to these ceremonies and they are hired by Indian people, so no one can say that they are scared of liquor.

I've approached so many young and older people alike, why they haven't any ceremonies going on in their reserves, and they always say that they have no elders to show them. I even know one old man that said to me he didn't want to make a Sundance even when he made a promise that he was going to put on a Sundance, the reason being that the people on his reserve didn't want to help him, and didn't want to have anything to do with it. So he said this is how pitiful he was. I said I'm all alone so I told him not to quit and I also told him that this is our religion and you should never give it up. "You are not praying to the people you are praying to our Manitou," I told him. "You use sweetgrass and pipe ceremony and you stay in your Sundance tent, we pray to our Manitou and these people will be there with you. If you are short of elders to help you tell us for there are quite a few of us that are fieldworkers for our Indian culture, and we will bring you some elders to help you. We can't just look at you and have no help."

And this is what I told them. Same with our fieldworkers when they are given some tobacco and told where to take it they do just that and tell these elders what's expected of them. Same with the C.D. workers, we have Community Development workers, and these people will do the same thing, but the only thing that these elders said was not to give the tobacco away just not to anyone, because this is respected also, especially this Sundance tobacco. And so we are hoping this way we can understand about our Indian ceremonies more. There are a lot of people with cars along with the workers that will help. And this way we will be doing what's been done in the past. No matter how far a person has to go and light a pipe for an elder. This is what's wanted and all these workers here are ready to do this, because this is our life and this was the way it was given to us. And this is the only way that we will get

to know each other, and then from there we can tell what relation we are to each other. Maybe from there we can find one old man from far away to come and listen, because it's true us Indians we are all related.

And these medicines, I guess all of us here now today do not use Indian medicine anymore. We all use pills and we get them from a doctor. This is another thing we've thrown away, our Indian medicines. All our elders are dying off and the medicines they knew, they get buried with them. One old man from the north told me, "I will tell you, my grandchild, long ago there was a plant with a big flower and a big root. Today the same plant is small and it's you people that don't recognize when you see them. It is us that don't see these, because we follow the white man too much. If we had thought about these things and listened to our elders, then we would not be crying today." And this is what the elders today tell us. And some of these elders still have Indian medicines that are good. These younger people don't believe in them, so they just die with them. And this we should try and bring back too, these Indian medicines, I mean. One old woman told me, when I was talking to her she said that there are not very many women around today that haven't got a few scars on their bellies, because of having operations. And long ago the Indians had medicines for these and the women never had any scars on their bodies. Long ago we used what was given an Indian. We didn't go to the hospital to get cut up. Today the young generation don't believe in Indian medicine anymore. I make medicine for my grandchild in a cup for him to drink, and he asks me, "What's this crap?" And these medicines were good but a person had to believe in them. They will be no good if a person didn't believe.

And about this pipe ceremony. I mentioned this yesterday; I'm not going to steal the way you do this. I left this behind me. I was shown this when I was young, but when I took alcohol I left this behind me. And now today I'm afraid to do this. The only thing I can allow myself to do is light the pipe for an

elder, and this was shown to me too, and I have a great respect for it. Whenever I see an elder saying prayers I always help him in my mind. I have to help him, hoping that all he's asking for will come to pass. And this is what I have been told and have seen. And whenever I go and see these elders having a pipe ceremonies, they never say to me in their prayers they pray for the whole world. They don't ask Manitou to give just only them a good day, a good life, but they ask Manitou for all of these things for the people in the world. They pray for every one of us. And I also heard a lot about these people that are in jails. And these people the elders want to go straight when they come home. These are some of the things and the ways they use the pipe ceremony to pray for people no matter where they are.

And I also told these women that work at the native handicraft in North Battleford. They were making baskets out of sweetgrass and they were going to sell them. And I told them,

"No way. I don't want you to do this." This sweetgrass was given to us to use for a different purpose and we don't want you to start selling them. So I told them to do it elsewhere, but we will not do it here. This is Saskatchewan and we are trying to get our Indian Culture back and we don't want you people to start selling it. There's everything in the Indian way, even one feather. We have to know what's behind anything that we make. "Because if you do this," I told the whiteman who's in charge, "maybe you start making medicine bundles to sell. You will be making anything and selling these." I said, "We will have to put a stop to it." And an old woman spoke up and said that it was true. She said she knew that they were not doing right, but they do it anyway because they are getting paid a little money for them. "I'm getting paid and if I start to say anything, I will lose my job and I won't make any money." And this is what the old woman told me. She knew all the time that it wasn't right. I told her she knew but wouldn't say anything. "This is what's the trouble with us now," I said, "we don't say anything." So this they did anyway. Right today that white man in there doesn't talk to me much, because whenever I see someone not on the right track I have to come out and tell him. But I never lecture anyone. I tell them if they want to know something to go to an elder. He knows more about it than I know, but what I heard is what I'm trying to tell you. You want to know about it to go to the old man, and this is what I wanted to bring up.

I'm thankful that Battleford area will be having 11 Sundances. We will be collecting the names of the people who will be making these Sundances. And I hope to see you all there to come and help us. So hope each and every one of us will try and tell our children about these Sundances, how to respect them. We even see cars racing around the Sundance tent. There's no one singing around any more. And there's no barker, the man

who calls to the elders to come and have a pipe ceremony. The people, they make fun of these people now. And there's people there taking pictures; these go to white places. It shouldn't be allowed no matter what Indian it is. They shouldn't be allowed to take pictures. We see lots of Indians taking pictures, but we think it's an Indian, so we leave it go. But these pictures land up in white man's places, and if we don't look out, if we don't watch, there will be white man will come to us for us to make some ceremony so we can make money on the side. And this we have to watch; there's lots of things like this we should watch out for. And we have to tell our children. Maybe our own children will come and tell us that this white man wants to do this also. And if they get this way then we will go broke for sure. And this is all I wanted to bring up, this is what I learned and this is what I see, and not say anymore, just what I see. This is what I try to tell you people, what I've learned. And this will be all for me. Thank you all for listening.

JONAS LARIVIERE:

All what Eli said is true about these Indian medicines. It is

true all these different kind of medicines are not all good. So we say that for a young person not to take any kind of medicine, for some are not good. My father lived to be 100 years old, and this old man he used to heal people sometimes. And he told us there were medicines for all kinds of sicknesses. But one medicine that he was dead against was the bad medicines. He used to tell us that this medicine was no good for us. If a person used this, it will be good for a while but in the end it will either come back on the person using it, or maybe one of his children will suffer for it. Or someone he loves. And he also said that a person who uses this will have good luck for a while, but in the long run it's no good for him. It will hurt him some way. If you are thinking about using medicine, use the right kind of medicine, and use the right kind that will heal people. And this is true what the elders said long ago, that it is no good to use all kinds of medicines. It is true that the Indian medicines were good, because this is what kept our forefathers going long ago. They were chosen where to get these medicines. But there are a lot of people now who don't believe in them. Sometimes some person will go and get an elder to come and give medicine to someone sick. So he goes and shows him what to do. And in a few days time he goes to see how the patient's coming along. And when he gets there he finds his medicine still there and the patient has gone to a hospital instead. And this is a letdown for the elder; he figures that no one believes in his medicines anymore. And when another person comes to depend on him he won't do it because he doesn't want a person to make fun of his

medicine, because this elder want people to believe in his medicine and appreciate it. He doesn't want anyone making fun out of it because a lot of these medicines are very good. And we should never make fun of anything that was given to us. Manitou gave these to our forefathers so they would know what to do when we get sick. He didn't intend for us to make fun of them. Our Manitou gave us roots from these different trees to use as medicines and this is what our forefathers did. We should be glad when we see something growing because maybe this is one of the medicines that was given to our forefathers, but we don't recognize it because we are lost. And this is what I wanted to tell you.

And about the various ceremonies, my elders did them all too but I didn't have too much to learn on these. But what I see my fellow Indian do here, I'm very thankful. I don't see this being done very often, this pipe ceremony and prayers before we start our meeting; I think this is very good. And I only want to say to the leaders and workers here, that I hope you never weaken in what you are trying to do. You are trying to do something that is very hard, and in my own small way I will try and help all I can. Always remember to be humble in everything you do. Never think that you are better than someone else; this will get you far. Always remember the words you use to people. There are people all over that will make fun of you and what you are doing, but you have to listen to these people. Because you see people, sometimes they get mad easy. They want to fight right away as soon as they think someone said

something wrong to them and these kind of people never get anywhere. We don't think very much of people that are this way, but much rather listen to a person explain something and try to speak the truth without shouting in order to make his points clear. We have to speak quietly to people and they will understand. I have met lots of people in my time. I was a policeman at my reserve for 10 years. And this is what I found out when talking to people that we had to talk slow and try to make them understand. And if they were not from my reserve I would tell them that I would tell them once, not to cause any trouble while they were on my reserve. Because I wouldn't tell them again, I would have to use force in order for them to behave. And I think this is the only way to talk to these people, quietly and gently. They will understand and this is the way we should all be, to try and be good people, to try and set an example for our children, and to keep reminding them these things. Because it is so very hard when we hear about young people getting killed every day. We feel this even when these are not our children. Thank you for letting me talk.

ALEX STICK, LITTLE ISLAND LAKE:

I will just say a few words on what Eli brought up there. I talked about this yesterday, about Indian religion. This doesn't come from me but what I was told and what I have seen and learned. As I said, I was 39 years old when my father died and before that he was to tell me and show me what he knew, what he was handed down to him by his father. And I stayed with my father and he told me on his last breath about what he has been telling me all along. He said, "Never make fun of an old woman or an old man. Always have respect. No matter what they look like, or how poor they may be, ask them something. These people are wise and they have lived a hard life. Give them help, give them tobacco and they will be thankful." And this is what I have followed. And also my old uncle used to tell me many things also. He knew that he wouldn't be around with us too long and he used to come and visit me nearly every day to talk to me and teach me his songs. And this old man used to say that we are losing our Indian life. He used to tell me, "You try to keep these things that I'm telling you and to keep them going, for this is our life and this was given to us." He used to say that some of these people don't seem to give a damn about anything anymore. "But you," he said, "try and live by these for they will get you a long ways. For these things they will give you life." And this is what the elders said when they gave their songs to someone. This person used to tell me that he wouldn't be around with us very long and I didn't believe him because he looked healthy. But these are the things that he left for me to tell my children as soon as they are able to understand, and to teach my children to have respect for the pipe ceremony and also to tell their daughters to respect these ceremonies because these are sacred to the Indian. This is our given religion; we should be of great respect for these things. For instance, this Sundance, this is the most sacred of our Indian religion and this is supposed to be kept as clean as

possible and this is why they say that women are not to go near there when they have their sickness.

These were given to us Indians, these Sundance and the pipe, and this was our religion to talk to Manitou this way. And this is why the elders always told us to have respect. They also said to ask an elder what these are all about, they will tell you. And from there you will find out how to have respect for them. And this had been my life and I try my best to talk to my children about it, but it's very hard. They have followed the white man ways to being happy and this had caused them to forget. And this is why I wanted to have some of these leaders over to my reserve to talk to people; maybe they would wake them up. They don't seem to understand me. There are not very

many of us left on our reserve that are hanging on to our Indian way of life. There are two things that are getting the people from my reserve, the one is alcohol and this is what's causing the trouble in every reserve. Even the older people are drinking on my reserve and they do all kinds of things. They get into trouble with the law, and they forget their Indian way of life and they are too busy with alcohol and they forget everything else including their children (some of them). And the second thing is these other religions. I mean these people go around to different reserves and tell these people this is the way and some people follow these, so at my reserve there are very few of us left that are real Indian.

And about the medicine, this is true and our forefathers were given this in dreams on how to make medicine, so they would make each other well when they were sick. Each spring we see these come up and bloom. This was our medicine, but very few of us now know what it is for. Even though they were given to us to use by our Manitou We don't know what these are for anymore. Each time someone gets ill right away we take them to the hospital to get needles or to be cut open. This was not meant for us Indians; we were given our own medicines with which to heal. And this is how our forefathers lived; they used to cure each other. If one elder didn't have to right kind of medicine they would go to another one till they found the right one. And this happened. That's why our forefathers had long life; their medicine was good. Today we can't find too many people that do this.

We use Indian medicine yet at home. Whenever our grandchildren feel ill, my wife fixes some medicine and gives it to them. And this happens. That's why our forefathers had long life; their medicine was good. And this is what I always try to say, whenever you want to ask an elder something give him a spiritual cloth, don't ask him by mouth alone. If you give him a spiritual cloth, you will make it much easier on him to talk to you and for you. If you want to ask him about medicine ask an elder, because this medicine is always growing and you will never run out of it. And this will be all for now, my relatives. I hope that our prayers be answered in all what we ask for. And I hope you see all your families safety, when you get home, because we will be bringing them something they can listen to. And I hope we meet

again some day. I greet you all once again. Thank you.

GEORGE MORNINGSTAR, COCHIN:

This is true that we were told all this about respect and this has been my life, since I was young. I have been very careful with the older people, because this is what we were told, to have respect for elders. I have always had a great respect for

the pipe ceremony. I have always been happy to help whenever I was depended upon to talk for someone. And same way at a Sundance I've always tried to help the elders there, and I sing along with the elders and I try to follow what they do. But I see some people they go ahead of the elders. And I think they should wait till an elder tells them to start. I have always been very careful of this pipe ceremony, as I'm sitting here I'm the same. I have lots of respect and I have been very happy to have taken part in your workshop. I will try and speak to people about this at my reserve. And this will be all I will say. Thank you.

ALEX BONAISE, LITTLE PINE & ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, ALBERTA:

I am very glad of what I've heard and what my brother-in-law Eli Bear from Little Pine wanted. I'm from the same reserve myself, and this is what he asked us to discuss, Indian culture. Well we all know that we are trying our best to tell our people about this, also about respecting our Indian ceremonies, the Sundance, the pipe and all the various different ceremonies we have in our Indian way of life. A young person was told all this when he was growing up - to have respect, love and all that the Indian was proud of. Also a young woman was told by her mother to have respect for the ceremonies. She was told by her mother not to go near these ceremonies if she was sick, because this was a very big religion. There is very little of this with us today as the young people don't listen to their parents any more. This was why it was good long ago, this pipe ceremony and all the other ceremonies too. A young person listened when he was told something; this is why we had respect. And this is when we got our Indian culture come in, but we don't have our young people with us, and this is what every one of us want that are working at this Indian culture. We all know it is a big job, but there are a lot of people pulling for us. We should help these people all we can and especially these leaders that try their best to have this thing going. The leader is the one that is got a hard job. I feel this myself in my travels. But I try and say that this is the way my leader wants me to do. And this is what our children will see in the future. If we keep going we will succeed, but we will have to work together. And for this I thank you and I'm very happy to know that there are some of us still fighting here to keep our Indian culture. So hope we will meet again some day. And about our leaders, our chiefs and councillors, these people were selected because they are kind and respected by the people, this is why they were selected. This will be all for now. Thank you.

JIM HOOSTIE, WHITE BEAR RESERVE:

I will say a few words again, to try and patch up what I said before. I am very thankful for what these people are trying to do for the Indian people. It is true that we are losing our Indian ways. And I'm very happy to have taken part in your workshop, and I also enjoyed the pipe ceremony and the prayers you say every morning, before we start the meeting. This always gives me a big lift to hear prayers being said for all the people. I was the same way myself when I was young. I had my grandparents talking to me along with my parents, but I was young and I think and take too much of what was said. I remember about the medicine they had; they had great respect for the Indian medicines. I remember when even a woman before she comes in to visit she stayed outside till she was told that all the medicine were outside, and then said would come in. They had great respect for their medicine and this I remember very well. This is one thing, respect. I was very young at that time. I had a girl friend so I met my girl friend this time and we went together. Finally she told me that she was sick and nothing can happen. "Maybe next time," she said. You see this young woman didn't want to dirty me as she knew there were medicine at my home; she knew this. I know now that was respect because I even told her that I would wash myself, but she didn't think it was right. So I'm thankful for that, I'm not making this up this really happened to me. And this was the way that they respected their medicines. We were very careful not to make fun of our elders of this we were told, I respected the older people man or woman, this was told to us nearly every day when my parents were alive. And this is what I followed I have never laughed at or made fun of an elder person. The reason I'm saying this is some of our young people they make fun of older people or mimic them when they are saying something, and this is what we should try and stop, this is no way to treat an elder. This will be all I will say. I only wish to thank these people for letting me say a few words. It has been very good listening to you people. I hope and pray to our Manitou that he will help these people that are working so hard, to try and get our Indian Culture back again. May they succeed in what they are doing, and I thank you all again, may we see each other again sometime. Thank you and I greet you all my relatives.

JOHN ROCKTHUNDER, PIAPOT RESERVE:

I won't say very much I guess this meeting is nearly over. And I'm thankful to have been here and hearing all the good things that were brought out, it reminded me a lot of what I have missed. People around my age we were forgetting our elders'

words, but now again they are back as if they were talking to me. I only hope that the young people will understand this in the future. We don't know nothing about a lot of these ceremonies from where I come from. Many of the younger people even lose their native language altogether. And what I like about you people the most is the way you use your native language yet. This is very nice to hear, and to know that you people still keep this up. We went to the wrestling match last

night and when we were standing there, a couple of you people passed by, and I thought they were whitemen, but they stood nearby and started to talk Cree, and the man I was with was surprised too. I told him we never hear this from our young people, and this is a fact our young people down there all speak the whiteman's language, when they speak to each other, and this is what I like very much that you people from out west still have your native language. This is very good. I only hope that you people make a success of what you are doing, this will be all I will say and I thank you all, my relatives.

CHARLEY BUFFALO CALF, MAPLE CREEK:

What I have heard at this workshop sure keeps me a lot to think about. It is sure that we are lost today. But what you people here are trying is very good. I have been brought up the same way as you people, my parents were strict with me and always told me about respect to elders and the ceremonies. I had lots of people to counsel me as I seen my grandparents both on my father's side and my mother's side. And all these people talked to me all the time, when I was young. These parents of mine were pretty sharp when they talked to me, they wanted me to understand. Whenever there was a ceremony of some kind they always told me to play somewhere else, and not to run around close where the ceremony was taking place, especially if it was a Sundance finally when I was growing, my father had a talk with me and wanted me to take this, he told me to help this elder that was making the Sundance, and this I did what my father told me. I got some spiritual cloth for the elder and I didn't eat or drink anything for two days. And this is what I believe because this was given to us Indians. We believe in this and it will help us raise our children the right way. And again later on I made a promise to Manitou that I would do it for four days, and this what I did, but I was very weak on the last day when the Sundance was finally over. And the elder that made the Sundance was very glad that I was able to help him. And this is my way of showing that I believe in Indian religion, because this was given to us. And we should never let it go same as our language. I'm not trying to lecture anyone here, I'm telling you what happened to me, and this is true of what I believe. I have enjoyed listening to you people, and I know

now that there is a place where a person can find this kind of talk, because on our reserve you can't find it, most of the people have left it. But it's very nice to hear people talking about Indian religion.

I only wish you all the luck in what you are trying to do. I pray for you to succeed. We will try and work with you people as much as we can. And I like to mention here about medicines I have seen quite a bit of this where I was still a young boy. I have seen elders who were good medicine men, and I have seen my parents when they went and bought some medicine from another man. One man was very ill and so they went and got this elder to come and see what he can do, but there were things you had to do before you got the elder to come. A person didn't just

walk up and say, "I want you to come and see what you can do with this man for he's sick," this elder was given something and these people that are depending on him believed in him and his medicine. And this man that was sick was walking around within two days. So it is the truth I used when I say they had good medicine. And this is what I believed also. I have seen a lot of this with my own eyes. And some of what I have seen is hard to believe, but as for myself I believe in this Indian religion and the Indian medicines also.

And now I want to thank the leaders here again, for making my stay here very good. And also you elders that are from different parts of Saskatchewan, I also thank you for the wonderful things you reminded me and all of us here. I thank you again. This will be all and I hope there will be able to get together again and have another dicussion. It was nice being here. Thank you all, and I greet you with all my heart.

EVA PASKIMIN, SASKATOON:

I'm very happy to be here and to hear the elders talking about Indian Culture and the past. Your words have been very good, and I have watched people from all walks of life that I will be mentioning. And I've also watched what they do. I have been in the city for 14 years now. Maybe if I speak English I will come out better with what I'm going to say. I have been in A.A. now for quite a while and I used to drink quite heavy, but I could see that alcohol was getting me nowhere. So I decided to get into A.A. And went to school but I fell out of the wagon and was back on the same road again. Finally picked myself up again, my husband and I we parted and I brought my children up myself. I'm now teaching dressmaking at the Friendship Centre here is Saskatoon. I would just like to say here that the Indians don't have to be shy to walk down the street. And when I work we make these dresses that are up-to-date, and Indian

girl wearing these kind of clothes don't have to be shy or ashamed. And also I would like to help people when they have an alcoholic problem, all my family has this problem my mother and father and brothers also. I'm having quite a time with my children who are growing up now.

But I sure like being here and I asked Alex here yesterday, what you people do here and he told me he couldn't explain it in detail, so he told me to come and listen and see for myself. I'm glad now that I came.

So this will be all I have enjoyed listening to you. I wish you all the best of luck. Thank you.

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