

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: SAMUEL BUFFALO 3
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: BOX 984
PRINCE ALBERT, SASK.
INTERVIEW LOCATION: WAHPATON RESERVE 94A
PRINCE ALBERT, SASK.
TRIBE/NATION: DAKOTA
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: SEPTEMBER 14, 1977
INTERVIEWER: SAMUEL BUFFALO
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD
SOURCE: SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES BOARD
TAPE NUMBER: IH-117
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC 12
PAGES: 11
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Description of the raising and education of children.
 - Tells a story of a spirit helping two children.
 - Tells a story used in the teaching of children.
- (Side A)

I will introduce myself to you. My name is Samuel Buffalo and I have a Dakota name Mniyo. I am a member of the Wahpaton Dakota Reserve 94A located ten miles northwest of Prince Albert. My birthdate is October 29, 1929. I have lived most of my 47 years of life at the Wahpaton.

Since last June, I have wanted to record several topics of Dakota history for Robert Goodvoice, a councillor at Wahpaton Band now doing research work for the Saskatchewan Archives. This tape is made on September 14, Wednesday, 1977. The time is 9:30 a.m. I have been compiling materials for text books and Dakota language courses because there is a prospect that Dakota language courses will be held on every Dakota reserve. I am very interested to do this type of work; besides I am a physically handicapped person and I have the time to study and train in the field I have mentioned. So writing Dakota stories is my choice for convenient time structuring. Now, I want to discuss one of my outlined manuscripts, the Dakota Child Discipline.

An old man named Ite Wapikida was my sponsor who taught me about the Dakota development in the old traditional Tioti Owihduhe meaning home-within-home, life-within-life system. The Dakota child discipline commenced when a child reached the age of two years old. The parents will select an elderly man and invite him to their home. After serving him food, gift, and a filled pipe to smoke, the mother of the child will ask him to Waiyedkiya, meaning sponsor her child. The sponsorship will continue until one party dies. They will associate together as often as possible and the boy must visit his sponsor even just to have a conversation. Whenever they are well acquainted, then the teaching starts. In my case, on top of it all, Ite Wapikida sat with legs crossed. He was a slim, tall old man. His hair was pure white, thin short braids hung down on each side of his head. In each hand, he held several objects I cannot identify. In front of his folded knees he placed a hoop with markings on it. He told me the hoop was the symbol of the mystery voice that promised our ancestors a new generation in the land where the sun descends. This hoop was the Tioti Owihduhe. That our grandfathers lived by its principles and rules. This hoop was the Dakota life span that provided them with good health, good home and hunting and pleasure. This hoop was the sacred hoop that developed the Dakota belief, identity, skills, and appreciation.

It began in far eastern lands. From there our ancestors came in search for the new generation. The journey road

extended to many, many Dakota generations. The purpose of the journey had trained Dakota people to share knowledge and support one another. The promise of a new generation had trained the Dakota people to centralize their confidence and hope to one sacred circle. The sacred circle was in harmony with the nature's circle powers. Our Dakota elders interpret their history as "We are the survivors of the Tioti Owihduhe. We are the descendants of the eastern generation. We will be the ancestors of the new generation. We will find mutual relationship and kinship in Dakota history. When we look around, we will find friendship. When we look ahead, we will find sponsorship of Dakota elders to Dakota children." This was the way to the Red Road leading to the promised new generation.

On this hoop there are fourteen markings called Niobe meaning phases. Each Niobe consists of seven Caoehde meaning steps or translated as seven years. The thirteenth and fourteenth Niobes are called Sagye Oehde meaning cave markings. Every Dakota child from birth to seven years old, will learn about belief. Age seven to fourteen will learn about identity. Then fourteen to twenty-one years old will learn about skills. And twenty-one to twenty-eight years old will learn about attitudes. The learning process concluded at the end of the seventh Niobe, or forty-nine years old. The eighth Niobe was for analysing and organizing all the things being learned. One began with the ninth Niobe, or age sixty-three, teaching his selected subject relating to Dakota people development. The

teaching process concludes at the end of the fourteenth Niobe or ninety-eight years old. Thereafter the time is for preparing and meditating on the Red Road to a new generation.

This Dakota life span was designed like a hoop. The right side was for learning, on the left side for teaching. A Dakota child who followed up the life's process being described will go with full of exciting adventures throughout his life. A child must learn to listen with an open mind. A child must learn to observe everything. A child must learn to respect the elders and his sponsor. A child must understand the power of sacred objects, places, and names. The sponsorship was the basic training for Kici, companionship. It was an important practice in Tioti Owihduhe. Learning to be a good companion will have many friends. Later a man will be a member of an organization so the understanding of companionship and friendship will teach a man about membership. The discipline commenced soon after birth; the child will have parental training. This early training was to prepare the child for his sponsor. The sponsor will teach generally about the Tioti

system but his main concern will be the Dakota belief. By the end of seven years old, the child will acquire a fair knowledge of the spiritual aspect of Dakota development.

In the case of an old lady sponsoring Kas Akuwin, a seven year old girl named Kas Akuwin. She and her parents left Long Plain, Manitoba. Several other families joined them to journey to Wazi Paha, now known as Cypress Hills, Saskatchewan. When they reached Maka Owicu, now known as Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, they visited some of their relatives who lived there. This was early in the spring to do Mastingpazi and trapping fur-bearing animals at Wazi Paha. So one early morning they left Maka Owicu for their destination. When they arrived at their selected place, the following morning three cousins of Kas Akuwin -- the men were in their twenties -- suggest to go Mastingpazi. Kas Akuwin saw one of her cousins walking out of their tent with her father's double barreled gun. The three men went a short ways from the lodges and loaded their guns. Then they sang Wakte meaning victory song. After that, one spoke loudly, addressing her father, "You are one of the few who started a fight at Minnesota called Woseja. Your foolishness scattered Dakota people in strange regions. You made many of us orphans and many families broken never to be together again. But today, you and your family will pay for it." They came forward towards the lodge and started shooting. Kas Akuwin held onto her baby brother. Her parents and brothers were shot. The three men quickly disappeared soon after the murdering action. Meanwhile, the old man called Kas Akuwin to bring her brother. When she knelt down with her brother seated on her knees, they were close by their father and suddenly he drew his knife but she pulled away quickly. With her brother, she managed to dodge the swinging knife.

Kas Akuwin took a small pail, a bundle of pemmican, her mother's sewing bag, a hatchet and a knife. She put her brother in a blanket and pulled him over her back carrying the

other bundle. Both were crying as they left the scene. She followed back along the country that she barely remembered. The first nightfall, she selected a clump of bush. She prepared her bedding with old stumps. She stamped on them until the stumps were in small pieces and spread them out. There she placed herself on it very carefully with her baby brother, covering with one blanket but her feet were wet and cold. She started to cry as the memories of the fatal incident were coming back to her. But again she started praying and directing her mind to the spiritual aspect of life. Kas Akuwin laying there with little warmth. Then she heard a man walking

up to them. His clothing was decorated with small jingle bells. He stopped a short ways from the children and said, "Your grandfather heard you and knows what happened to you. He appointed me to guide you children back to your people so fear me not. I am here to keep you children warm and throughout the day, follow my footsteps for strength and speed. Tomorrow, a little ways from here, a fat duck will be given to you. You cook the duck so both of you may avoid hunger." The stranger came and lay down at the children's feet. Soon afterward, the warmth reached the children and they slept very heavy.

Kas Akuwin woke up by the sound of movements near by. She quickly changed her brother's diapers, once again placed him in a blanket and on her back. She pulled the blanket ends tightly around her and tied them together. Then the other bundles and a pail she carried in each hand. When she came out of the bush, she saw a coyote trotting away, so she followed the coyote half running. After travelling far from where she started out, they came up to a pond. She found a large fat mallard tangled in the tall dry grasses along the pond. She killed it and prepared it and cooked the duck. She fed her brother and drank the broth. From there Kas Akuwin felt strong and eager to get back to the camp at Maka Owicu. The following day, she did -- went back late in the evening. The strange experience in reply to her prayer, it strengthened her Dakota belief.

Later, some families escorted Kas Akuwin and her baby brother back to Long Plain, Manitoba. They lived in that region with their uncle. She became a reliable helper to many families. Her brother grew up to be a fine, intelligent boy but he was always in search for his family's murderers. One day, he found two men sleeping in the hills. He snuck up to them and took a double barreled gun. He examined the gun and found the markings on it. He knew it was his father's gun so he shot one in his sleep and shot the other one while running down the hill. Soon after that incident, he found the third person. He walked up to him and gunned him down. Thereafter, Kas Akuwin, her brother and the whole family of her uncle moved away to another band. Then her brother joined another band and she never saw him again. Kas Akuwin married Ozepshunkov and moved to Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. She lived to a very old age at Wahpaton Reserve. While visiting her son Alex Swifthog at Pelican Lake, Saskatchewan, she took ill and died at Pelican Lake Reserve. Most of her teaching to children was based on

Dakota belief. She lived a healthy and a long life. And this is the end of the story of Kas Akuwin.

The next aspect of Dakota life was identity. A person doing a deed for a Dakota band was highly valued in them days. The people of that band were praised for it. Even if one person made a new discovery that the Dakota people will benefit from it, the Dakota band will be credited instead of the individual. The eastern Dakota or Santee had learned to make baskets out of young willows and birch bark. The plains Dakota had horses before the eastern or the northern Dakota people. But through the annual Oyate Okiju meaning people gatherings, this is the place where they share knowledge and help one another.

Now, the Dakota skills were developed for the boys commencing at the age of fourteen. The boy would leave his home for good for long periods of times. He associated with other boys of his age. He continued to visit his sponsor for advice. Soon, he will join with other bands and travel with them. He knows that the seven years of skill searching and practising adventures must be done. He was learning to survive in every circumstance of Tioti system. If he failed to do this, then people will identify him as one of the poor. They were known as Wizi, meaning round-tipi dweller, or Tiokiti, meaning living-within-his-own tipi dweller. This was considered an embarrassing way to live. But some Dakota people had no choice but to live as Tiokiti.

Now this is a story of a fourteen-year-old boy named Tiode. His sponsor visited him often and encouraged him much with many exciting stories. But he knew his age matured by adventures away from home or his encampment. The other boys of his age do not associate with him because he was blind and a Tiokiti. But an idea came to him that prompted him to action. When his sponsor came and he told him about his secret ideas, his sponsor was very glad and helped Tiode to make a plan. The following day, the sponsor led Tiode to the hills. Later in the day, he will bring Tiode back home. This continued throughout the whole summer. Whenever the encampment moved to a new area, they will quickly find a suitable place for skill development. During the winter months, Tiode stayed indoors and practised his skill secretly. He was very eager for the spring season. Tiode and his sponsor made more plans for the following summer months. As soon as the spring season arrived, he commenced his skill training. His practices were long and nearly every day. The sponsor wanted two full summers of training before introducing Tiode to the people.

On the third summer, his practice extended only to the Oyate Okiju. At that time, the Dakota were engaged in three new activities. The peace-making missions, trading adventures, and territorial fights. So, at the Oyate Okiju, the sponsor introduced Tiode as a singer and song-maker for the Dakota Ohitikapi, meaning Dakota heroes. Our Ohitika will approach Tiode, telling him about his daring action. Tiode will concise

the story to twelve to sixteen words including the Ohitika's name. This new style of promoting the men created by Tiode was well accepted. His skill was introduced at the proper time. He made his name Tiode well-known in a short period. He received many gifts and payments for it, that satisfied him. The next following years were prosperous of having his own large tipi and married to a kind and a helpful girl. His singing and his song-making skill led him to another skill. Tiode was paid for a song with a young colt. It later became a fast running stallion named Pikana. Pikana won many races at...

(End of Side A)

(Side B)

...supported by his sponsor, freed himself from Tiokiti to a respectable man of success. He died of old age. He sponsored many young boys into their manhood with good reputations. His teaching was about skill development. Tiode defined skill as presenting a new arrangement of old Dakota ideas.

Opiiciyapi, meaning attitude, was the last of the seven-year training phases. It ended at the age of twenty-eight years old. Dakota Opiiciyapi was the combination of skills to be practised throughout one's life. In the case of the blind man, Tiode, his attitude extended into horsetrading, peace-making missions and giving fine race horses as gifts, fast running horses used in territorial defenses and successful Wanasa, meaning the buffalo hunts. In the case of Kas Akuwin, her attitude extended to the art of meditation and Hanbde, meaning four-day fasting. She gave many advices in these areas. Kas Akuwin developed a special touch in caring for sick children. Both had attitudes directing to the art of appreciation in life. And in Dakota you call that (speaks Dakota).

The next story was a common children's story about friendship. It was a slim-bodied little animal with a large flat tail named Sinkpe, meaning muskrat. He was preparing to leave his river home to a lake. Just then, a strange animal

swimming down the river, was approaching Sinkpe. He stopped close to Sinkpe and said, "I am Capa," meaning beaver. "Why do you look so sad?" Capa asked. "My name is Sinkpe. I am sad because I am forced to leave my river home. The river is drying up and turning my feeding places without green grass." Capa stretched his large muscular body and swung his long narrow tail a few times and said, "Sinkpe, do not worry or move away to the lake. I will dam the river to deepen the river." Capa assured, "You will have many feeding places with new growth of green grass." Sinkpe was glad and he stayed at his favorite river home. He was amazed at the hard work of Capa. The dam was finished and water was slowly rising. Capa suggested, "I will build my home close to yours. We will visit one another and we will live as good friends." So they did for a long time after that.

But the third party arrived and made his home near to them. He introduced himself as Ptan meaning otter. He roamed around and enjoyed sliding into the river. He was a fisherman. He laughed a lot and visited Sinkpe and Capa too often. He visited Capa, the beaver, and said, "You are strong and hard worker. Your body pulls you as a proud Capa but your long and narrow tail degrades you. If only Sinkpe would lend you his big flat tail, you would do more work and faster too. You will be able to dam the biggest and the strongest river in this land with a flat tail." Capa thought for a moment and refused. So the otter left and visited Sinkpe. The otter suggested, "You should lend your tail to Capa. He will improve this place for you to enjoy. That big tail spoils your appearance. But you will look better with a long, narrow tail." But Sinkpe got angry and said, "Go home, Otter, and visit me no more. You are trying to break my friendship with Capa." So Otter left quickly from Sinkpe's home. But Otter continued his steady visit to Capa. He kept repeating his suggestion with the same words. At last Capa had a strong desire to trade tails with Sinkpe. So one evening Capa interrupts Sinkpe and said, "I want to extend our friendship as long as I can. I will make a better place for you to enjoy." He paused and continued, "I want to dam the biggest and the strongest river in this land with your flat tail. When I complete the dam, I will return to give your tail back to you." Sinkpe remained silent with his head down. But Capa continued to beg with the same words. At last Sinkpe gave in and traded tails with Capa. Sinkpe said to Capa, "We visited each other, we talked freely to one another, we journeyed together. These are the reasons why I value our friendship so much and that is why I don't want to lend my tail to you." Capa said, "I felt the same way as you do but you

will be proud of your new home." At dawn, Capa left for his new assignment. Sinkpe noticed the otter deserted his home too. Sinkpe waited and waited for Capa to return home. The dam got so old and broken down, drifting with the river. At last the river went dry again and then Sinkpe, the muskrat, left to search for Capa. He journeyed down the river singing these words, "Capa, give back my tail. I will give back yours." To this day, Sinkpe waits on the dam for Capa. They still live near to each other but without friendship. The otter goes on living his own unfriendly life.

The Dakota elders remind the children about the message of the story. Just as you are -- only chance to have true friendship. Never allow the third person to interfere with your friends because the third one is always tempted to break up friendship. Or avoid to be the third person to other friendship. Do not lend anything away to your friend because you may find yourself waiting and you will lose important time. Perhaps lose friendship too. The friendship plays a large role in developing the art of appreciation and life. The Dakota people taught their children the important parts of people development. This is the end of the story about trading and losing a good friendship.

The Dakota child discipline had been discussed concisely. But the basic information about child training in the Tioti system are mentioned. We should reveal some main points before concluding this recording. It was, the circle that had been used throughout the Dakota history ceased in the reserve area. Not completely. In the first place, the circle was used as a symbol of the mystery voice that promised the Dakota people new generation in some unknown western land. Are the Dakota people reached that land now? According to Ite Wapikida's teaching, a woman moaned and prayed to the most holy circle, "Have mercy on my grandchildren. Protect them well. I arrange myself in a new position. Our grandmother the earth will move any time now." Another, arranging ideas presented in a new way was the Tioti Owihduhe. It was an illustration of principles and rules working together. These were applied in a mutual relationship between the encircled homes and Tioti. The elders rearranged these ideas showing a clear way as a life span. The fourteen markings on the circle were the rules. Any Dakota respecting these rules will reveal itself in good health, home, hunting, and pleasure. The word hunting can be changed to job or

occupation or career in our time. The life span of ninety-eight years had three major changes -- learning, refreshing period and teaching. This way, the whole lifetime of a Dakota will practise the art of appreciation in life. Another arrangement was the sacred circle interpreted as holy dance, Okodakiciye, meaning society. This Okodakiciye provided four principles -- belief, identity, skills and attitude. A person must be older than twenty-one years old to join the society. Then he becomes a Candojuha Yuha, meaning principal member, or a Akicita, meaning guardian member. Kici literally means with other, but refers to companion. The word Kiciwa was understood as co-worker. Man and wife addressed one another with the word Kiciwa. So, it interpreted the marriage as man and woman working together to keep their home existent.

The Dakota progress was measured by these numbers: 2, 4, 8, 12, 16, 24, 40, and 48. Only a Dakota life span was measured by number 7. Dakota language is one of the few native languages that has the word Woyawa Tanka, meaning million. It will be interesting to know what was it in Dakota history that extended their counting into millions. Canyon was the method of counting generations of Dakota. But Dakota elders quit the Canyon early in the reserve era.

One other subject that should be included in this discussion is students' dropout. In grades three and five show the first sign of dropout. A chart may indicate the highest rate will be at grades eight and nine. There are many suggestions of solving the problem. These are good and helped many students. According to Ite Wapikida, he spoke about young Dakota training process. The training period was divided in four equal parts. It can be measured by day, moon, season, or year. In our modern time, we can include hour and week. If we consider school is training a student measured by year, the training will be complete at the end of the sixteenth year. A two-year-old child possesses a mind of desire to explore. This

was the proper time to have a sponsor or instructor other than parents. Exploring a subject, let's say carving. As the first part of training was the four meetings. What I mean exploring is the first part. The second part is to recognize carvings in four meetings. This is done by identifying carving pieces and knowing his own carving ability. The third part is application. A child must apply carvings in everyday life such as repairing his toys or decorating his room or making bird houses, etc. The fourth part is observing the mind about carvings. This will be done by discussing, review, practices, and teaching. A child must know carving is the purpose for convenient time structuring in life.

I was two years old when Ite Wapikida taught me in the following procedure. Subject, circle, two meetings, eight sessions and sixteen hours. Bear in mind an old Dakota saying, numbers three, five and nine will not do any good for you. Now I will repeat my summary in the Dakota language.

(Speaks Dakota)

(End of Side B)

(End of Tape)

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