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The following is the established format for referencing this article:

Lertzman, D. A. 2002. Rediscovering rites of passage: education, transformation, and the transition to sustainability. *Conservation Ecology* 5(2): 30. [online] URL: <http://www.consecol.org/vol5/iss2/art30/>

Insight, part of Special Feature on [Interactive Science Education](#)

Rediscovering Rites of Passage: Education, Transformation, and the Transition to Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on rites of passage as a model for wilderness programs. It draws on my experience in the field, particularly with Native youth in a community-based program called "Rediscovery." The Rediscovery program is discussed, along with concepts of traditional indigenous knowledge and education. Foundational concepts of rites of passage are described in terms of their relevance to youth, outdoor education, and the Rediscovery program in particular. Using Rediscovery as a model, rites of passage are put forward as an educational process for youth from various cultural backgrounds. In this context, the purpose of education is to cultivate self-knowledge and to foster core personal development: the making of whole human beings. The paper closes with a reflection on my work with traditional indigenous people and the significance of rites of passage for education, cultural transformation, and the transition to ecological sustainability.

KEY WORDS: Canada, First Nations, Rediscovery, indigenous peoples, outdoor education, rites of passage, sustainability, traditional knowledge, youth.

Published: January 15, 2002

REDISCOVERING RITES OF PASSAGE

In this paper, I share from my experience of working with young people in wilderness settings. Much of this has been gained with a program called "Rediscovery," which is run from a number of Native communities, mostly in Canada. I will outline the approach used in Rediscovery and show how it provides a current model for "rites of passage." This holistic approach to outdoor, experiential education provides a learning environment that supports people's development as whole individuals: mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Finally, I will reflect on these experiences in terms of their relevance to education and sustainability.

Since time immemorial, rites of passage have played a fundamental role in human development. Rites of passage are especially important for adolescents making the transition from childhood to adulthood (Mahdi et al. 1996, Groff 1996). We are now painfully aware of what happens in the absence of rites of passage. For example, youth suicide, which up until the 1950s was a fairly uncommon occurrence, has more than tripled (Reeves and Tugend 1987). We have also seen a dramatic rise in substance abuse, teen violence, and gang activity. All these warning bells of youth in crisis are drastically more prevalent in aboriginal communities; a Native child or youth in Canada is at least five to six times more likely to die from suicide than a non-Native adolescent. Native boys are four to five times more likely to commit suicide than the national average, while Native girls are eight times more vulnerable (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1995). Statistics for individual communities can be even more alarming: last year, on a reserve in northeastern Manitoba, the suicide rate was 36 times the national average, making it one of the highest in the world (MacGregor 2001).

With Native youth as the most rapidly growing sector of Canada's population (well over half the aboriginal population in Canada is under 25 years of age (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1995)), there is an obvious need for culturally relevant educational and youth programs. This is underscored by the experience of the residential school system, which was enacted through a formal marriage of church and state, expressing the government policies of assimilation and termination (Barman et al. 1986, Titley 1986, Assembly of First Nations 1994, Lertzman 1996). The residential school system, which operated into the 1970s, left a legacy of violence, sexual abuse, alcoholism, suicide, family disintegration, community disruption, intergenerational dislocation, loss of language, and erosion of culture. One outcome of this colonial history is the breakdown of traditional child rearing and educational practices. Another is the general anomie (social instability) found on many Native reserves that leads to high rates of suicide (Brant 1993). Many First Nations academics (Battiste 1998, Hookimaw-Witt 1998, Longboat 1987) argue that current educational practices are the pedagogical progeny of this history, founded upon Euro-Canadian ideas of colonization and processes of assimilation. Native control of education is an obvious and vital antidote, which has also raised its own set of challenges (Battiste and Barman 1995, Battiste 1998).

Writing on the subject of suicide for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' National Round Table on Aboriginal Health and Social Issues, Brant (1993) recognized that "old methods of coping, the old philosophies and religions, which taught resilience, survival and a sense of being at one with nature, have been denigrated and destroyed by the dominant culture and discarded by many..." Yet, he also sees "a wellspring of hope coming from the re-establishment of Aboriginal traditions...and the establishment of departments of Aboriginal studies at various universities where young people can rediscover the old ways" (Brant 1993). Native people are finding creative and powerful means for enlivening traditional life-ways, one of which is through rites of passage, particularly in youth programs. A number of these programs take place in wilderness or outdoor settings. Some are cultural youth programs; others are correctional camps for young offenders (Searles 1998). Common elements of such programs include cultural foundations and spiritual teachings, elders, community-based initiatives, and the direct experience of natural ecosystems or Mother Earth. It is not surprising that non-Native people are attracted to these experiences, which can also benefit their youth. One such culturally based, outdoor education program that includes non-Natives is called Rediscovery.

THE REDISCOVERY PROGRAM

A mystical light glows in the faces around the council fire. Even the trees seem to be leaning over to hear the soft words of the elder's story. The elder's voice is deep, with a low, soothing rhythm. Young people sit listening, entranced in wide-eyed wonder, arms wrapped around each other. Just past the edges of the firelight, two men investigate a noise in the woods; an older woman comforts a startled child while another youth makes scary faces. The teaching is done; after a long drink of silence, a drum begins, followed by a single, powerful voice joined by others. As singing voices echo through the woods and drums throb into the night, the trees are at ease and the flames dance joyfully.

This scene could be from a long time ago, yet it might also have taken place at any number of Rediscovery camps over the past summer. A culturally based outdoor education program run in the traditional territories of various First Nations, Rediscovery started in 1978 in Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, Canada), homeland of the Haida people. It arose from a need at the community level to provide meaningful summertime activities for local youth. Thom Henley (1996), one of the founders, writes that it was the Haida people, especially the elders, who made Rediscovery what it is today by sharing a love of songs, legends, dances, and cultural traditions with their youth, and with non-Native children as if they were their own. A place for science was reflected in the many environmental education games and ecological teachings in camp. The goals of Rediscovery were as simple and encompassing as they are today, "to discover the wonders of the natural world around us, the cultural worlds between people, and the worlds within oneself" (Henley 1996). It quickly became evident that something unique had been created. As the program in Haida Gwaii grew, people began to hear about and replicate its success in other communities and even in other countries. The next Rediscovery program began in Four Corners, Arizona, and then in the Stein Valley of British Columbia.

There are now some 40 programs in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere. Rediscovery has become an international movement: a broad network of loosely affiliated community-based programs funded and administered independently, each uniquely adapted to its own bioregion and the culture of local indigenous people. There is a charitable society called the Rediscovery International Foundation (RIF) with various community representatives on its Council of Directors. RIF sponsors training, networking, and community exchange for the various programs through conferences, community development sessions, and an annual Rediscovery guide's training at Lester Pearson International College near Victoria, British Columbia. There is an annual Rediscovery International conference hosted by a different community each year. Some of these have taken place in Haida Gwaii, Port Hardy, Kispiox, Bella Bella, Vancouver, and Victoria, British Columbia; Ft. Chipeweyen, Northwest Territories; White Earth, Minnesota; and Ghost River, Alberta. Some individual programs also provide training; for example, Ghost River Rediscovery offers "Wilderness Skills" on the east slopes of the Canadian Rockies.

Bringing Native and non-Native youth together with elders in wilderness settings, Rediscovery uses an experiential, hands-on approach to learning based upon traditional cultural teachings. With elders, adults, and youth forming their staff teams, Rediscovery camps re-create the experience of an extended family in the bush, similar to traditional summertime activities of gathering, hunting, and fishing. Participants learn bush-craft and wilderness skills, play games, have physical challenges, receive teachings and personal support, and get to experience a sense of community and connection to the earth that can empower them for years to come. Rediscovery is rooted in the land, based on the culture, and guided by the elders; it is a magical, fun, and healing experience.

Community is the heart of Rediscovery. A healthy community fosters a sense of belonging and connectedness that is essential for the development and healing of individuals. In Rediscovery, a fundamental feature of healthy community is cultural authenticity; this is integral to the Rediscovery experience. Cultural knowledge and traditional teachings are shared by those empowered to do so. This gives value and meaning to such teachings. It brings authenticity to the sharing of traditional knowledge and wisdom, and genuineness to the exchange between cultures. Guided by the teachings of the people of the land, and the land itself, individuals come to realize that their own culture, whatever their background, can be a doorway to the communion of people from different cultures.

Communing with non-human Nature is when some of the most profound experiences happen. Rediscovery takes place in the ultimate, most ancient classroom: Mother Earth. There are many teachers and lessons in this "more than human world" (Abram 1997). Communing with animals, mountains, waters, and trees puts people in touch with their essential selves, that part of oneself that is part of everything. Hearing the voice of Nature helps us to hear our "inner voice." This is the foundation of the Rediscovery philosophy. Our heart and the heart of the Earth are one, we are all part of the Circle: people, rocks, plants, creatures, and the cycles of life that connect them.

MAKING HUMAN BEINGS: LEARNING FROM TRADITIONAL EDUCATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Educators have sought to develop and publish models based on traditional indigenous approaches to education (Bopp et al. 1985, Cajete 1994, Brendtro et al. 1998). As I have been taught, traditional indigenous education is about fostering the development of the whole person, mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. This is summed up in Akan (1997). She paraphrases her 82-year-old Saulteaux elder, Alfred Manitopeyes, who said that traditional education is about "the making of human beings." The primary purpose of education is in generating "spiritual wealth and well-being." Education in this context, therefore, is about cultivating self-knowledge. It is about a way of life.

Indigenous educators have stressed the fact that First Nations developed their own forms of education long before Europeans came to North America (Cajete 1994, 2000, Hampton 1995, 1998, Buffalohead 1976). These traditional forms of education are often characterized in oral histories, teaching stories, ceremonies, apprenticeships, learning games, mentoring, and formal and informal instruction. "The teachings of the elders are different than in schools today. With the elders, it's hands on: you touch, you smell, you taste, and breathe it in" (Wata Twance, traditional Kwagwiltz elder and cultural educator, *personal communication* 10/27/01). Cajete (1994, 2000) has described in detail the philosophical foundations of this experiential approach to learning as fundamentally ecological in nature. Cosmology, the "lived story of place, kinship, and environmental knowledge," forms the foundation for the expression in communities of what he calls "Native science." Cajete describes Native science as a "people's ecology," explaining that indigenous peoples traditionally lived a "communal environmental ethics" that stemmed from the broadest sense of kinship with all life.

Beginning with the most basic skills, children learned to live respectfully in their environment, in ways that would guarantee its sustainability. By first watching and then doing, Native children learned the nature of the sources of their food, community, and life's relationship. They learned that everything in life was a matter of kinship with all of Nature (Cajete 2000, p. 101).

Although Native science comprises considerable empirical knowledge, understanding the empirical relationships of nature is not enough. The key, according to Cajete (2000), is in living and nurturing these relationships. One can see, therefore, how empirical understandings of nature are perceived within an ethical framework based on a spiritual ecology.

Armstrong (1987) stressed that traditional indigenous education is a natural process integrated into daily life within the social unit. She emphasized the role of traditional education in cultural survival, suggesting that loss of indigenous cultures could be hazardous for humanity as a whole. Survival is a key factor in the traditional learning process of indigenous peoples. The chief social mechanism is the family, organized into cooperative family or clan units. This creates a powerful, cohesive force. Armstrong has suggested that, through an examination of education in traditional indigenous cultures, Native people may identify changes that can promote their own survival, and even that of the rest of humanity (Armstrong 1987).

Considerable knowledge and skill are required to live the traditional lifestyles of indigenous peoples. This goes well beyond technical skills of wilderness survival, food gathering, and food preparation, which are substantial in their own right. Other areas might include oral history and oratory, traditional ecological knowledge and astronomy, religion and ceremony, medicine, statecraft, and the arts. Mastering any of these takes years of ongoing mentoring, training, discipline, and intensive practice. Rites of passage have thus played a crucial role in helping

ensure the survival of individuals and their community as a whole. Within a community, extended family supplies the social context, along with teachers and individual specialists for these important tasks. Mother Earth provides everything else: classroom, science lab, playground, athletics facility, church, grocery, hardware store, and drug store. Transmitted intergenerationally, these cultural teachings of Mother Earth give people what they need to address the physical, social, and spiritual necessities of life.

Indeed, traditional knowledge and wisdom have had to address all the main areas engaged by western education: natural sciences, social studies, religion and philosophy, history, physical education, the arts, personal planning, and life-skills. (See Colorado 1988, Corsiglia and Snively 1995, Cajete 1994, 2000, Freeman 1995, Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound 1995, Duerden and Kuhn 1998, Lertzman 1999, Turner et al. 2000.) Woven throughout are common threads of cultural identity. This experience of community and connectedness to the land cultivates a vital sense of place in the universe and individual purpose. Having a sense of place in the world, and a community in which to experience it, is an important foundation of any well-adjusted person's life. This is especially important for young people in transition from childhood to adulthood, a transition that has been ritualized the world over. For example, the onset of a young woman's first menses has been marked with rites of passage throughout the ages. In many traditional First Nations cultures, a young woman would be separated, secluded, attended upon, supported, instructed, and trained. Wata Twance, a traditional Kwagwiltz elder and cultural educator, told me that, at this time, "your great-grandmothers and aunts, your mothers and sisters come in and tell you what the path of life is all about, as you get changed to be given the power to bear children" (*personal communication* 10/27/01). Such processes could last for years (Boas 1966). If she were shown to have certain gifts, for example with herbs or in healing, training in those areas would be intensified. Young men also have their rites of passage, often involving years of arduous training, testing, and instruction.

One well-known rite of passage is the vision quest. In the Stein Valley of British Columbia, Canada, among the 'Nlaka'pamux (interior Salish), there are stories of young people going on vision quests to make '*tchua* '*tchut*' (training) for months, even years, at a time. Once a vision is achieved, it could sustain a person through a lifetime. Both girls and boys were put out for periods of isolation as part of their coming of age and traditional training. (Louis Phillips, 'Nlaka'pamux elder, *personal communication* in Lertzman 1999; Terry Aleck, 'Nlaka'pamux cultural educator, *personal communication* 9/4/00; Doreen McIntyre, 'Nlaka'pamux elder, *personal communication* 9/4/00.) At this time, spiritual gifts could be received and developed, perhaps even a guardian spirit would be obtained. Doreen McIntyre, traditional 'Nlaka'pamux elder and cultural educator, says that, in the process of being alone with the Earth, with your ancestors and non-human relatives, "the spirits open the door" for you to enter fully into their life and the life of the community (*personal communication* 9/4/00). This rite of passage and the time of change it empowers set the stage for the rest of your life.

Traditional training provided, in a sense, the ultimate in holistic education. Young people were challenged and supported to learn with the whole of their being: mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. In the process of acquiring a wealth of practical skills and knowledge through the training, mentoring, and oral instruction, something even more important transpired: they learned how to be human beings. This kind of learning is greatly needed for the youth of today, for Native children and young people from all cultural backgrounds. Rites of passage are as important today as they have ever been.

rites of passage

Rites of passage are an important part of human development. They mark key times of transition in an individual's life: birth, naming, adulthood, marriage, creating life, becoming an elder, the passing of the body, and being re-born. When these times of transition are marked, ritualized, witnessed, and supported, it creates a kind of experiential map of self-development. Without proper rites of passage, people can become disoriented and lose their way in life's journey. It is as if their life map is incomplete. I have already referred to the necessary social context required for rites of passage, including key individuals such as mentors, trainers, role models, elders and other wisdom-holders, and extended family and peers. I would like to look more closely at the process and components of rites of passage and how these are used in Rediscovery.

Although the focus of this paper is primarily on adolescence, rites of passage are relevant to all stages of life and

their transitions. The more momentous ones relate to birth, death, and creation. Entering and leaving this world, and opening doorways within. There are other rites of passage, for example, those associated with career development, stages of spiritual growth, civic responsibility, and other ways for gaining status in a community. There is an obvious cultural diversity in the patterns of initiation, ceremony, ritual, and celebration that attend rites of passage, yet the key elements seem transcultural.

Groff (1996) asserted that rites of passage are a necessary step toward wholeness. A death and re-birth is often experienced when undergoing a rite of passage. One "dies" to a certain phase of life, along with the roles and persona associated with it, while entering a new stage with a new identity. "Within the these rituals, individuals are given the opportunity to face their emotional limitations and to move beyond them" (Groff 1996). He cited anthropologist Mircea Eliade's *Encyclopedia of Religion* for a working definition:

Rites of passage are a category of rituals that mark the passage of a person through the life cycle, from one stage to another over time, from one role or social position to another, integrating the human and cultural experiences with biological destiny, birth, reproduction, and death. These ceremonies make the basic distinctions, observed in all groups, between young and old, male and female, living and dead. (in Groff 1996).

Groff (1996) states that initiates in rites of passage have the opportunity to experience the source of their inner strength and spiritual power through the "evocative techniques within the ritualistic event." These may include practices such as isolation, fasting, drumming and dancing, ritual breathing techniques, use of plant medicines, confronting fears (even death), and other consciousness-altering techniques. All of these can elicit non-ordinary states of consciousness that serve to push initiates past their limits, often bringing them to a sense of the mystical and an expanded sense of self. Whether experienced as Mother Nature, the Creator, ancestors, or some other divine being, this spiritual experience helps initiates access that which provides guidance and inspiration in their lives.

In Victor Turner's now classic article (reprinted in Mahdi et al. 1987), he referred to rites of passage as being fundamentally characterized by a "liminal state." Liminal means transitional: that which is "betwixt and between." Turner built on the work of anthropologist Van Gennep, who, in the early 1900s, identified a common structure underlying rites of passage. These transitional rites seem constituted by three main phases: separation, margin ("limen"), and aggregation. Though all are important, Turner focused on the intermediate phase as most consequential. In a condition of being neither here nor there, the liminal state is where core experiences of transition take place; the individual is, in a sense, unformed, or being reformed. Transformation is the quintessence of liminality; it is the whole aim of rites of passage. Therefore, I call these three phases *separation, transformation, and integration*. In separation, an individual is removed, at times dramatically, from daily life. During and prior to this phase, training and preparation take place. Transformation refers to the core experiences of rites of passage. Integration is where the whole experience is put together, on an individual level and within the community, which is where Turner saw that rites of passage are consummated.

Groff (1996) has cited others, such as Joseph Campbell and Margaret Mead, to assert that the loss of rites of passage in mainstream, western society has contributed to various social pathologies. Malidoma Somé (1996), a Dagara medicine person and academic from West Africa, has made the point that ritual is "the soil" upon which a community's future grows. "When ritual is absent, the young ones are restless or violent, there are no real elders, and the grown-ups are bewildered." This does not mean that rites of passage are completely absent from the cultural mainstream. For example, graduating from high school, getting a driver's license, your first sexual experience, voting for the first time, or even getting drunk are all seen to be rites of passage. Yet, do such experiences really meet the transformational needs of society's members? This question is especially relevant when considering the developmental needs of young people.

Adolescence is itself a kind of liminal state, a time of immense physical and emotional transition. Adolescents are often told, "don't act like a child," yet at the same time they are not treated as adults. Contradictions seem "hard-wired" into the very nature of adolescence. For example, young people need a solid family or social unit from which they can break away. They need to break away and assert their independence, so that they can return and reintegrate. Young people need guidance and reassurance, yet they also need to try things on their own and make mistakes without too much direction. They must develop a sense of individuality and self-esteem while trying to fit in. And, of course, one of the greatest sources of confusion and wonder at this stage is sexuality. These physical changes, understandably, are often given considerable attention, but what of the psychological and spiritual

changes that young people undergo?

According to Groff (1996), a deep spiritual longing in young people underlies the various aspects of adolescence and adds power to them. Spiritual transformation seems to be the crux of rites of passage, especially in traditional tribal societies. The liminal state, which is a doorway for such transformation, is also a dangerous or risky time. Bill White, a traditionally trained Coast Salish (Nanaimo-Cowichan) educator, explains:

The old people perceive the state of limbo to be the most vulnerable for young people...Sacred rules, sacred rights, words of advice, which in effect too are sacred, are applied through childhood in order to prepare young people for states of transformation. (Personal communication 10/29/01).

Thus, healthy rites of passage are especially important for young people. However, most of what young people experience as rites of passage today are incomplete; many are unhealthy, even dangerous. These surrogate or "pseudo rites of passage" are usually superficial, not particularly transformative, and often destructive. Yet, they may contain many elements of authentic rites of passage (Groff 1996).

Indeed, many of the dangerous or unhealthy behaviors in which young people engage can be seen as misdirected manifestations of a natural or even healing impulse. Much of the gang activity that has become so prevalent in North American youth culture can be seen to have powerful elements of rites of passage. This includes separation from family, initiations and ritualistic activities, special hairdos, clothing, piercing, tattoos and other accoutrements, consciousness-altering drugs, confrontation of fears, danger, and death, and testing of personal limits. Other popular, less dramatic, activities, such as raves and rock concerts, can be seen in a similar vein (Oh 2000). Although pseudo rites can be destructive and unhealthy, youth may engage in them in an attempt to fill in the missing pieces of their "education for being human." Although it is easy to fault adults for the lack of meaningful guidance and initiatory opportunities in the lives of young people, it is also hard to blame people who may never themselves have had such opportunities in their youth.

REDISCOVERY AND RITES OF PASSAGE: A MODEL FOR OUTDOOR INITIATORY EDUCATION

Rediscovery offers a classic rites of passage model. Programs in Rediscovery camps typically pass through the main phases of rites of passage, including separation, transformation, and integration. This kind of learning process can be aptly described as "initiator education" (Julian Norris, *personal communication* 04/01/00).

Rediscovery camps start with separation. When participants leave their families for camp, they are usually out of contact for 1 to 2 weeks. Thus, young people are removed from their day-to-day social unit, grouped with their peers, and placed into a completely different natural and social environment. This environment becomes the basis for a new family, some of whom are human, and others, inhabiting the local terrain, who are not. At this point, considerable training usually takes place. From the beginning, participants are instructed in proper "bush" behavior and cultural etiquette. Rediscovery camp involves following significant protocol, which varies geographically, based on the local First Nations. Even how to wake up, bathe in the river, eat, and go to sleep requires proper instruction. Much of the training takes place in experiential workshops, games, and activities designed to help young people become more self-reliant. These include: basic survival (shelter, water, fire, food) and search and rescue concepts, local ecosystems and cultural teachings, wildlife (especially bear) protocol, and ethnobotany. Participants will have to use these skills in camp and on their wilderness out-trip, which may take the form of a backpack trek, a waterway journey, or both.

Other activities prepare participants for their inner journey. For example, each person spends a period of time each day in his or her "spirit spot." The rules are simple: you are alone, silent, and stationary within audible but not visible distance of camp; the rest is up to the participant. The main thing is to be alone with yourself, silently, in the natural setting. Choosing your spirit spot is an activity in itself. Cultural activities such as the sweat-lodge ceremony, the sacred pipe ceremony, smudging (burning of special herbs), songs and dances give a cultural and spiritual grounding while the guidance and input of elders support such experiences. Although these cultural activities and ceremonies vary from nation to nation, elders always provide cultural continuity, connection to the

land, and personal support that has a tremendous impact. Young people need to be guided and elders guide to be needed. Thus, programs of this nature contribute to the lives of elders and the community as a whole. Hearing the stories of elders enlivens the presence of the past and helps orient young people, as well as the staff who work with them. It is also important for youth to be heard. Every night, a council fire is held where an eagle feather is passed and participants are given an opportunity to express whatever is on their minds and in their hearts. This may include a review of the day, a poem, story, or song, or silence, which is an honored response. In the talking circle, people often share deep feelings, at times even painful or troubling experiences from their day-to-day life. Legends and traditional stories are told around the council fire, yet the most popular part is almost always the drumming and singing. Along with spirit spot, the land, and people, drumming and singing are among the most consistently memorable aspects of a Rediscovery program (Lertzman, *unpublished manuscripts*).

A typical day in Rediscovery is filled from beginning to end. After people are woken, the camp gathers and forms a circle to greet the four directions, each other, and the new day. Following this, the whole camp goes to the water (river, lake or ocean). In many places, it is an ancient traditional practice, especially for training young people, to immerse yourself daily in cold water. After warming up by the fire, breakfast is served, followed by chores, then the main part of the daily program begins. If there is a full-day activity (e.g., a hike) a lunch is packed; if not, there will usually be two workshops or activities separated by a lunch. Workshops and activities might involve making a fire, building a shelter, human-bear protocol, water-crossings and safety, ecological and experiential education activities, traditional games and crafts, ethnobotany, or spiritual and cultural teachings with an elder or cultural teacher. Later, in the afternoon, is the time to go to your spirit spot, then dinner and chores. There are usually games after dinner and perhaps some free time. The day ends with the council fire. Programs typically last 1 to 2 weeks, starting with orientation, followed by training in wilderness skills and other foundations, leading up to an out-trip (2-5 days), then solos, culminating with ceremony night. Certain programs take place entirely out of camp, such as an expedition hike or canoe journey. Some programs have themes. For example, one program in Alberta called Ghost River Rediscovery has a 10-day hike devoted to the grizzly bear called "In the Path of the Great Bear." Here participants literally walk in the footsteps of the "Great One" while receiving both traditional and scientific teachings. Another theme they offer is a females-only rite of passage camp for young women called "New Moon." They also have a "Warrior Spirit" camp for young men. Some programs include workshops that split young men and women for an afternoon so that elders and others can deliver gender-based traditional teachings that support the developmental needs of adolescent males and females. Special programs have also been developed for adults and young adults together, people with special needs, and those with mental health concerns. There are extended wilderness solos, drug and alcohol counseling, and staff training sessions.

Wilderness ecosystems, which are the traditional territories of local First Nations, set the context for Rediscovery camps. Direct experience of the land can help you gain deep personal insight so, when participants hike several days into a mountain valley, they are going deeper within themselves. The land is a living symbol of the spiritual purity and tenacious life force that empowers the heart and spirit of young people. The magic of an ancient tree, the gentle wonder of a butterfly, and the awesome strength of the grizzly inspire young people to seek those qualities within themselves. Isolation in a wilderness setting also has a disarming effect that can make people emotionally vulnerable and open to life-changing experiences. Effective Rediscovery guides push participants in safe and healthy ways to support them to go beyond their limits. The land provides the perfect context for people to face their fears and limitations and to find new sources of strength and inspiration.

The most transformational event in Rediscovery is the solo. During this day or two alone in the wilderness, participants confront themselves and something powerful happens. Without the trappings of day-to-day life, away from the distractions, conveniences, and contrivances of the modern world, you are alone with yourself. It can be difficult to spend time alone with someone you don't know or like, especially if that person is yourself. Confronting yourself this way may not always be fun or easy, yet it will almost always be an empowering, even life-changing, experience. Facing our fears, we can learn to find strength in places of weakness, hope in despair, joy in grief, and peacefulness in rage. This builds the core of your being. Thus, the inward journey facilitates an outward movement, which can sustain you for years to come. For a young person on the verge of adulthood, the solo builds personal resources that are transferable to day-to-day life in any environment, urban or otherwise. As with our ancestors the world over, such rites of passage develop life skills that help to form or reform the foundation of your identity.

The Rediscovery solo is patterned after an ancient, traditional rite called the "vision quest." Vision quests are conducted by specially trained, culturally empowered individuals and usually take several days. Rediscovery solos are not called vision quests (these entail significantly more protocol), yet they incorporate elements of the vision quest, such as isolation and solitude, exposure to the elements, fasting (or very little food), and prayer. The elder

gives a blessing and may conduct a smudge ceremony, and a song is sung. In cultures where it is practiced, some camps will have a sweat-lodge ceremony. As with a vision quest, soloists go of their free volition; the choice must be their own. The staff that are running the solo are also in a prayerful state. The whole camp takes on a different air and is focused on little else while solos are taking place. Participants who choose not to go on the solo are not made to feel any less than those who do, yet they are expected to participate by helping in camp and taking their turn tending a vigil fire. They spend their time beautifying camp with wildflowers, boughs, and wreaths, making crafts for gifts, and helping prepare for the feast and ceremonies to follow.

Soloists must use all of their training from the previous days. Preparation starts when they arrive in camp and builds to the moment when they are taken in silence to the solo spot. They will have been given considerable guidance, along with optional rain gear, sleeping bag, water bottle, two matches, and a raw potato; some camps are more stringent than others. What the participants do on their solo is between them, the land, and the Creator. They gain strength in the prayers offered for them and from the songs they have learned, knowing that an all-night vigil is being held at the council fire. Sometime in the night, perhaps at sunset or sunrise, alone with their non-human relatives, a transformation occurs. Amidst all their excitement, fear, and dreams, the soloist realizes "I can do this!" Many soloists have described how they realized their place in nature and connection with the Creator. When the soloists return, a change has taken place. It may be dramatic, it may be subtle, but you can see it in their faces and on the faces of those welcoming them back.

Rediscovery programs include important protocol and procedure for the return of soloists, which is the beginning of the integration phase. When soloists return, they are directed immediately to the council fire, which may be outside or within some manner of traditional dwelling structure (e.g., teepee or longhouse). This is a critical moment. The soloists return in silence and are given ample time to gather themselves. They are still "between the worlds" and must not have contact with others until the solo has been formally completed (e.g., with smudge, prayers, song, and elder's blessing). Soloists are given the opportunity, if they wish, to share their experience in the privacy of a circle with other soloists. Special prayers will be given for each soloist and they will stay in the shelter of that space to integrate for some time before the whole camp is brought back together. If a soloist should return early, the individual is not made to feel bad; he or she will be given some form of counseling and helped to integrate. (Soloists return early because they were hungry, scared, lonely, or just not ready.) When the individual responsible for the solo feels that all are ready, a circle is held with everyone in camp and the solo is formally brought to a close. All is well. Hugs and congratulations are given. However, the soloist will be processing his or her experience for months, even years, to come.

The next phase of integration is ceremony night, which is the climax of the program. After a feast (often with traditional foods), the festivities begin. Although ceremony night may vary from program to program, there are common elements. It always involves copious singing, drumming, and dancing. There is considerable speech making, gift giving, and recognition of participants and staff. There may be special activities, such as a torchlight procession, bone-games, or a fire ceremony. A food offering may be made to give thanks. Each participant is recognized and praised in one way or another. Stories are told. Soloists are given special recognition and held up to the community in camp. Soloists often give gifts to the guides and others who may have helped them on their solo, and they receive gifts as well. The public recognition and witnessing helps anchor the experience and reinforce a new status for participants in the eyes of their community. The celebration with feasting, singing, drumming, and dancing is also a way to help draw the whole camp experience to a close and begin preparing participants for their return to the "outside world." The next day, after all is packed and ready to go, there is a special closing activity followed by a prayer, song, and hugging circle.

Integration continues in many Rediscovery programs through follow-up activities. Some communities host a homecoming for participants on their return from camp. This is a good opportunity for staff to meet families and tell stories of how their children distinguished themselves on the solo and in other ways. Parents are often surprised, even taken aback, by the bold and touching tales others have to share about their children. Some programs have other kinds of follow-up activities, for example, a midwinter celebration such as a pow wow, or a large feast and gift giving to appreciate volunteers, funders, and community supporters. Some hold fundraising events. Some programs have created links between Rediscovery and band-run schools. In Calgary, Alberta, the Ghost River Rediscovery Program runs winter programs and has initiated an urban school project to create further integration with camp and build continuity in participants' lives. Their youth leadership program has brought together First Nations youth leaders from several provinces, some of whom travel to South America to participate in a community development project. Other programs have also integrated youth from around the world. Rediscovery has facilitated connections with young people from Thailand, Russia, Nepal, Germany, Japan, Britain, Ecuador, Chile, South Africa, New Zealand, and other countries. A new program called Guiding Spirit offers post-

secondary training in outdoor initiatory education based on the Rediscovery approach.

INTEGRATING THE EXPERIENCE: AREAS OF CHALLENGE AND RESEARCH

Although considerable anecdotal information exists, very little formal research has been done on the Rediscovery program and its impacts. The testimony of different people, including staff, past participants, volunteers, and community members has credibility in communities that are still based, to a considerable degree, on oral cultures. As far as I am aware, the only formal research conducted with Rediscovery participants and staff, is that which I have carried out over a 2-year period for a program called Splats'in Rediscovery. Splats'in Rediscovery was run in the interior cedar-hemlock forest of southern British Columbia on the traditional territory of the Spallumcheen Indian Band, who are part of the Sewcepmec, interior Salish (Lertzman 1994, 1995; Lertzman, *unpublished manuscripts*). We wanted to get a sense of participants' feelings about the program, its impact, and what they enjoyed. We were particularly interested in any lasting impression Rediscovery had on participants' daily lives, and whether they had learned skills that would be helpful outside of the program. For 2 consecutive years, the research was done about 6 to 8 months after camp had finished. We reviewed questionnaires from about one-quarter of the participants and a similar number of parents. Although the sample size was small (21 respondents in total each year), it was quite uniform in response.

Participants certainly enjoyed camp and Rediscovery seems to have made a lasting impression. Every participant who filled out a questionnaire responded that they would like to come back again. The large majority responded that camp had brought them closer to nature and to First Nations' culture. Although it is hard to gauge the degree, an impact clearly was made. One participant wrote, "I've learned a lot and I do find myself teaching others, like friends, about nature." A number of participants responded that Rediscovery had helped them to "deal with my problems." Some even responded that Rediscovery had helped them to help "others with theirs." One participant stated, "I'm not going to be scared of animals because now I know what to do." Almost all mentioned that they were still doing Rediscovery activities on their own, like singing and going out to commune with Nature. One participant recounted a story about getting lost in a thunderstorm and using a popular Rediscovery song "to give me strength." Another answered that Rediscovery had helped them "sharing culture (and) teaching others about Mother Earth." The following are a few direct quotes from seven different participants:

I always knew that I had Native blood, but I didn't really know what it meant to be Native until I came to Rediscovery...I felt connected in that space, with Nature, with myself.

Before I came to camp I always wanted to learn about Native culture but didn't, and now I know how because of Rediscovery.

It showed there is always more that I can learn about my Ancestors. That was the longest I've ever been in Nature...the first couple of days I wanted to go and I almost cried when I had to leave.

I like Nature because of the animals (and) to learn about the past that the elders talk about.

What I miss most is the friends I made while I was at camp and my spirit spot.

Living in the wilderness made me feel closer to Mother Earth. I wish I could live the way my ancestors lived.

Responses from parents were just as telling, corroborating that Rediscovery seemed to have a lasting impact on their child. Of the two parents that didn't respond strongly in agreement that Rediscovery had a lasting impact, one did state that his/her child still mentioned Rediscovery (over half a year later) and that it had been "a good experience for him and me." All those who responded in the Parent-Guardian category felt that their children had benefited from attending Rediscovery. All parents who responded informed us that their children still mentioned Rediscovery, sang songs, or did other activities on their own. One parent recounted that, when the family was dealing with some issues, their child held a talking circle for the family to work things out. Below are quotes from

seven of the Parent-Guardian responses:

My child loved it and it affected him deeply.

I think what you did with my son was a real learning for him...he did enjoy himself and learned things that he never knew before and you did a good job with him and other kids that I know from around here.

I think the programs...are great for the children. This was her third and she talks highly of them.

He still talks about the camp. For our New Year's Eve review, he recounted his camp experience in more detail than ever before.

Rediscovery was a great program for our son, that's his space away from us...he has his time to get to know what he is as a person to himself.

Personally, I thank you very much for giving my child the opportunity to go to camp and providing some needed counseling which she would never have had otherwise.

An incredible experience for the child, effects have been very visible and lasting; a profound effect as a rite passage for my son.

It certainly seems that participants had a great time and families recognized this. More importantly, it seems as though some of the participants went through some core self-development and that, at least at the time of the study, they were still practicing some of the skills learned at camp. One mother spoke at length about the influence of Rediscovery on her son:

His sense of physical capability has grown, he's more secure in Nature and urban situations; he problem solves his physical and social environment more easily. He doesn't blame others as much, and has more compassion for individuals, more tolerance and respect for differences. He's still a loner but he's more comfortable and has a much better sense of self in a group. He takes more personal responsibility for himself, he's more of a young man; and in all of that...he's retained more of his child ... he has more reverence and pays homage to the Earth, the animals, they are in his prayers.

This same parent was contacted recently and asked if she still noticed any influence in her son's life, 7 years after attending his first Rediscovery camp. She felt much the same and offered the following: "Rediscovery certainly had an ongoing, lasting and positive effect on my son; I wish he would have attended more camps as these would have contributed further to his development as a man...Rediscovery is a wonderful bridge of western and indigenous cultures" (Rhea Peake, Rediscovery parent, *personal communication* 10/21/01). Encouraging as these responses are, they represent only 2 summers in one program. Research draws attention to the need for further inquiry. For example, a follow-up study of these participants would help give a sense of long-term impact. Another thing to consider is that Rediscovery has its share of challenges. These also indicate areas worthy of study.

One challenge for outdoor initiatory education such as this is that it requires a broader skill base in its paid staff, its volunteers, and its hired consultants than most outdoor education programs. Along with skills in outdoor recreation, experiential education, and wilderness therapy, it requires community development skills. Community-based programs must be built on a solid foundation of community involvement and ownership. All too often, programs rest on the efforts of one family or certain key individuals. Burnout is a common problem; one death in the community can devastate the life of a program. Many programs go through a season or even years of dormancy. Politics can affect program delivery or funding, and can even lead to program demise.

The great richness and diversity of First Nations' cultures and traditional territories is reflected in Rediscovery programs and their communities. Non-Natives working in this context must learn to be proficient in another set of skills, which I call cultural literacy (Lertzman 1996). Such cultural competency is learned through life experience in community, and the process can be enriching for non-Native and Native people alike. Speaking from personal

experience, I can say that this kind of learning is often challenging for the non-Native person; I've had to learn to think and communicate outside of my cultural box. This is a lesson you never stop learning. (See Davis-Case, *this issue*, for a different example.) You have to be intellectually and emotionally open to do this kind of work. This requires an ongoing process of critical self-reflection, which makes you vulnerable, so there are risks involved. The rewards, however, can be tremendously fulfilling.

Native communities also take risks in opening themselves to non-Natives. What constitutes a significant investment of community time and resources in building relationships, can be merely a transitory, if interesting, diversion for a non-Native person. Traditionally trained Coast Salish (Nanaimo-Cowichan) cultural educator, Bill White, explains that one of the great challenges for Native people working across cultures is the apparent individualism and transience of western society, "... *when my time is finished, I'm out of here* vs. the songs and ritual which have a focus of continuity" (*personal communication*). His point is not judgmental; it simply recognizes that what is "normal" in one culture can be difficult in another. He explains the "difficulty with opening up" for traditional Native people:

...the very nature of walking on the land, of singing, of ceremony, is an act of transformation and, as we know, acts of transformation are long term; so when a non-Native person leaves, the old people wonder where you are. There is an ache in their heart, "where is that guy." They expect you to be there because that's their world. Once you commit to transformation, it's forever. This has been a fundamental challenge on our end (personal communication 11/01/01).

This is mainly, but not exclusively, an issue with non-Native staff. Native staff from other areas, or even a host community, can also be transient workers. Because funding is frequently an issue, staff retention is often a challenge. Every time a staff member moves on, new ones must be found, trained and hopefully retained. Rediscovery programs make significant investments of social and financial capital in individuals who often take their skills to better paying positions in other organizations.

An ongoing topic of concern in various communities is whether programs go far enough. Young people often have fulfilling and deep experiences in camp. Their rites of passage may even result in a transformation that leads to new self-perceptions. Returning home, however, they may find themselves in situations among family or peers that are not supportive of, or are even antagonistic to, their rites of passage. This sharp contrast can be a significant emotional and intellectual shock for the participant. Bill White emphasized the importance of "sustaining the transformation" (*personal communication 11/01/01*). To do this, participants must have an understanding of what they've gone through and an appreciation for each other's experience in relation to the program. They need to have an understanding of their own issues and, very importantly, a community structure that is able to support their transformation. In many cases, such structures do not exist, or are only partially in place. The issue boils down to family. Therefore, some programs have considered developing family camps. A number already run adult Rediscovery camps and training sessions. For example, Ghost River Rediscovery runs a camp with a multiple-day solo for adults. Sustaining the transformation requires support from the participant's reference group. This is why some programs hold homecomings or invite families out to camp for the ceremony night as way to support the integration of participant's experience in the community. Not only does this contribute to the transformation of young people, it can help to transform the community.

One source of controversy relates to the sharing of culture. This applies not just to cultural teachings shared with non-Natives, but also to the sharing between First Nations cultures. Some people have related that they would like more cultural and spiritual teachings shared in camps; others feel too much has already been shared. Another perspective is that the manner of sharing is the issue. Bill White put forward that:

... there are many challenges associated with enacting rights of passage, reconnecting with the old worlds, worlds of other cultures, worlds associated with one's own culture. Young people in states of flux, neither in their own culture nor in the Euro-Canadian, most often find themselves in limbo ... The act of bringing forward prayers, bringing forward songs, away from the community norms, away from the age old patterns of the ancestors...may create an artificial void and merely increase alienation of the young from their own communities (personal communication 11/29/01).

The point is well taken. Things need to be done properly. There needs to be cultural integrity and sound guidance from trained individuals when dealing with transformational practices. Such processes done incorrectly or without proper training can do more harm than good, and perhaps should not be done at all. The challenge here, of

course, is that holding back such transformational processes does not serve a purpose either. These are difficult questions for holders of traditional knowledge, rites of passage, and processes of transformation.

All the areas I have outlined above pose significant challenges for a program like Rediscovery. Neither have I discussed other areas, such as organizational development, funding, and fiscal sustainability, nor any number of intercultural issues and community development challenges. Each one of these could stand further inquiry. Research can help frame such challenges, aid in understanding their mechanisms, and reveal practical solutions or at least mitigating strategies. In the end, it is up to the communities themselves to determine the manner of research, the topic, and the objectives.

Doing research within a Rediscovery camp presents its own challenges. From the point of view of methodology, participatory observation can provide qualitative data and answer some interesting questions. Many researchers are familiar with the drawbacks posed by such techniques, where an investigator's role as a participant hinders his or her objectivity as an observer (Yin 1994). A far greater concern for practitioners like me is that my role as an observer might hamper authentic participation. Indeed, many people in Native communities are skeptical of researchers, as is illustrated in the following statement by 'Nlaka'pamux cultural educator, Terry Aleck:

We've had tons of professors and researchers come into our communities and divulge information and we don't see nothing from it ...A lot of the elders have voiced that they've really felt invaded upon; researcher after researcher has come into the community ...they research us to death, and then boom they're gone. You know, we don't hear nothing or see anything from all the work that these people do, all the studies that these people do on us. We've been assessed to death (personal communication in Lertzman 1999).

One approach to research that development practitioners find effective in community-based initiatives is Participatory Action Research (PAR) (McTaggart 1997, Ryan and Robinson 1996, Bopp 1994). In PAR, the community members themselves establish research objectives and are often trained to do research. Whatever the approach, performing effective research in Native communities requires a specialized set of cultural competencies, which I have referred to as cultural literacy. These experientially learned skills enable a person to communicate effectively between cultures. Relationship building, therefore, becomes a major element of research. In this and related fields, good research is based on good relations. Such relationships are, by their very nature, transformational. As we have learned, transformation is a long-term process.

DISCUSSION: EDUCATION, TRANSFORMATION, AND THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABILITY

As a non-Native person reflecting on the experiences with indigenous peoples that I have been privileged to have, I'm left with a profound question: how can I use this knowledge, understanding, and experience to contribute to my society? If I were to really take the lead from the elders and traditional people who have been friends and guides along the way, I would ask, how can I best use this to contribute to the healing of my nation? The most pressing issue facing my world is the unsustainable nature of modern industrial culture in ecological, socioeconomic, and existential terms. The issue at hand is the transition to sustainability in all these domains.

I would like to reflect on how I have come to think about sustainability in this context. I have had to learn to think and act outside of my cultural box without leaving it behind. In this, I have learned to be critical of my culture, yet also to value and appreciate it much more. This has changed me, and changed the way I see the world; it continues to be a transformational journey. What have I learned from working with young people and Native elders in the bush? Time and again I have been shown the spiritual role that wilderness, the unfettered more-than-human world, can play in the lives of people. My work with rites of passage has highlighted the human need for transformation throughout life's stages, particularly for youth. My experience with traditional indigenous people has emphasized the importance of community, of a sense of place on the Earth, and the big picture of humanity's part in the cosmos: we are the descendants of our ancestors and the ancestors of our descendants. In this bigger picture, we are part of a living universe, where all of its components are infused with the life of the whole, and the

whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

What does any of this mean in terms of sustainability? For the concept to be viable, sustainability must address our material, as well as our non-material, needs; both are essential. Realizing this imperative has also compelled me to recognize that, as much as the world we live in is empirical, it is spiritual. Ecological sustainability is as much about our spiritual life as it is about our biophysical survival. To realize this we may need to include the rational empiricism, which is our culture's heritage, within a larger perspective. This would be inherently transformational. It would be, in a sense, a rite of passage for our culture.

Considering education in relation to sustainability, we can see how the transformational element emphasized in rites of passage calls our attention to a much-needed and missing aspect of the transition to ecological sustainability. We need only look to the cycles and processes of Nature to see forces of transformation at work: leaves fall and become nutrients for new leaves; a caterpillar "dies" and is reborn as a butterfly; a drop of water falls and becomes the sea. Ecological patterns of birth, death, and rebirth are cosmic patterns. They are also mythic patterns in many cultures. These same cosmic forces are patterned into the cycles of initiation that make up rites of passage. When we as individuals undergo such transformational processes, we emulate on a personal level those same cosmic forces and enter into an ancient pattern of resonance with our ancestors. The old ones mythologized a dark Goddess of death and rebirth; we formulated the second law of thermodynamics. Yet they both amount to much the same thing: organizing principles for understanding a way of life and humanity's place in the scheme of things. Rites of passage give us access on a personal level to these cosmic dramas, generating spiritual wealth in our lives. As the elder has said, this is the purpose of education: generating spiritual wealth and well-being in the making of human beings (Manitpeyes *in* Akan 1997). We will need such an education for our society to become ecologically and culturally sustainable.

I have thus learned that another doorway to transformation is to openly experience perceptions, values, and beliefs from outside my own cultural terms of reference. What better partners for such endeavors than First Nations? There, people still live who have grown up close to the Earth, in ways of life based on principles for harmonizing human patterns of behavior with Nature's cycles. With respectful, quality relationship building, each community holds opportunities for bridge building on the road to sustainability. An 'Nlaka'pamux colleague spoke about his role as a cultural bridge builder:

...I feel like I'm walking between two worlds, between tradition and technology, values and beliefs. We work within mainstream society and within our culture: coming from science and coming from spirit. We have that image on our rock paintings, of being able to walk in two worlds, we call them the Earthquake Twins. We take non-Native teachers out to track animals and gather medicines, 'tchua 'tchut (traditional training). They can talk about the science part and I can talk about the spirit of the plant; they can tell what makes the medicine work and so can I, just from different perspectives. So I say reach out to the First Nations, reach out to learn about the land and our territories; there is so much there, ask us and we'll gladly help, as long as you are respectful in the asking. It may not have a lot money wealth, but there's great spiritual power in the land. (Personal communication 2/10/01.)

The teaching of walking between the worlds is helpful for non-Native people on the path to sustainability. It sheds light on a way of framing the topic. Thinking about the transition to sustainability as a cultural transformation, we can see how much there is to gain by learning to walk between the worlds of different cultures. We can also see educators playing a role in this bridging process. This applies not only to intercultural bridge building with First Nations in North America, but with indigenous peoples throughout the world. In building such bridges, we may find that concepts of sustainability are not so new.

These intercultural lessons learned through work with indigenous peoples can also be applied to building bridges within our own culture. Ecologist-planner William Rees (1989) has pointed out that the successful implementation of sustainability requires "integrated policy, planning, and social learning processes; its political viability depends on the full support of the people it affects through their governments, their social institutions, and their private activities." If this is the case, the transition to sustainability will require bridges to be built and relationships to be maintained through a diversity of sectors within the cultural mainstream. This also applies to different areas of science (Benbasat and Gass *this issue*), as well as the social sciences.

The transition to ecological sustainability will be a rite of passage for modern industrial society. It harkens to the

political, economic, and philosophical transformation of our culture. This transitory state holds the possibility of danger, death, and most certainly rebirth. In it, we can rediscover the sources of our biological and spiritual life, opening the doorways for ecological and cultural sustainability, which for humans is essentially the same thing. As a non-Native person, one of the most valuable lessons I have learned from indigenous people is to appreciate the culture from which I come. In being privileged to hear teachings of their ancestors, I have begun to learn to listen to my own.

I will close with a prayer of transformation, kindly shared with me for the purposes of this paper by Bill White (Nanaimo-Cowichan):

THE WINDS BLOW, MAKE YOUR MINDS STRONG

A Coast Salish Prayer From Bill White

Creator, we thank you for this day
Ancestors we thank you for walking before us
Ancestors we thank you for walking behind us
Make your minds strong!
Behold it is a time of change!
Behold it is a time of transformation!

It is the old people who have saved the teachings from ages past
It is the old people who have saved the songs of our ancestors, of the Creator
It is the words of the Creator, of the ancestors brought forward
for a new time and a new place
With great humility we thank you for these gifts
Change for self, Change for the community
has been foretold and will like the wind be persistent.
Change and transformation is powerful and can be frightening
Make your Minds Strong!
The Creator has provided songs for such things
The Creator has provided dances for such things
The Creator has provided words for such things
The old people, the ancestors knew of the times of change
and the wind blows,
and the teachings and the songs flow
and the winds blow,
hear the wind, hear the songs
Behold it is a time of change!
Behold it is a time of transformation!

RESPONSES TO THIS ARTICLE

Responses to this article are invited. If accepted for publication, your response will be hyperlinked to the article. To submit a comment, follow [this link](#). To read comments already accepted, follow [this link](#).

Acknowledgments:

I would like to thank Terry Aleck and Doreen McIntyre of the 'Nlaka'pamux, Wata Twance of the Kwaguilth, and Bill White of the Coast Salish nations for sharing their knowledge, wisdom, and culture. I would also like to thank David Tremblay of the Sewcep'mec nation and Rhea Peake (Cherokee/Tuscarora) for their ongoing support and commitment, Julian Norris of Guiding Spirit for his leadership in the field, and the reviewers for their careful and inspired input. A special thanks goes to Lee Gass for his guidance, wisdom and support.

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