

REDISCOVERING NATIVE RITUALS: "COMING HOME' TO MY SELF"

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Rituals are an enactment of a culture's mythology which is the basis of its whole existence (Malinowski, 1984; Eliade, 1958). Apart from teaching the novice about membership, social roles, and social rules, rituals acknowledge the relationship of the culture with the cosmos by imitating the biological and physical order of the universe (d'Aquili & Laughlin, 1979; Moore & Myerhoff, 1977). The way that the society is structured and maintained is based on that relationship whose nature is dictated by its myths (d'Aquili & Laughlin, 1979; Eliade, 1958). Through the rituals, these myths, which permeate all levels of society, are lived (d'Aquili & Laughlin, 1979; Eliade, 1963), and it is this living of myths that gives people's lives significance, meaning, and value (May, 1991; Eliade, 1963). Thus, it makes sense that without those rituals which encourage harmony within a society, its members are not able to meaningfully deal with stressful transitions or "life crises" as they pass from one stage of life to another because those very rituals are what help them through difficult times (van Gennep, 1960). Rituals serve as a buffer, protecting them from experiencing a disintegration of reality as they know and understand it (McManus, 1979).

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In the case of various North American Native peoples, the practice of many of their cultural rituals historically has been discouraged and/or prohibited. As a result, some of these indigenous societies' sense of reality begins to disintegrate, leading to confusion, fear, and loss of morale and confidence in traditional means of coping (Laughlin & d'Aquili, 1979). In these situations many Native

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peoples were prohibited from renewing their relationship with the cosmos and each other through their rituals (and the intended meaning of the symbols embedded within the rituals are being lost because the people are prohibited from speaking their language) (Laughlin & d'Aquili, 1979). They are no longer within the safety of the context of the rituals in which connectedness with the community is facilitated (Imber-Black, 1986). This marks the beginning of a breakdown of an ideology that had sustained them (Laughlin & d'Aquili, 1979). With no one there to ensure their safety and success in going through the ritual, to celebrate with them once they succeed in making the transition, or to support and comfort them when they do not, a loss of traditional social identity is more likely, and assimilation then becomes possible (Laughlin & d'Aquili, 1979). Hence, it makes sense that to reverse this process, a return to rituals and their underlying myths could encourage and facilitate a reconnection of indigenous peoples, their culture, and the universe (Epes Brown, 1989). The purpose of this research is to examine the role of rituals in the lives of one Native woman and five native men from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The research question being asked is, "What is the experience of Native Indians who have made a decision to learn about their Native rituals?"

APPROACH TO THE INQUIRY

Procedure

The Native style of communication is to tell stories; to present the data in any other way would be an injustice. In each case, stories told may be described as self stories in which the storytellers talk about critical life experiences (Denzin, 1989). The methodological framework of this study was an adaptation of procedures associated with grounded theory (Glaser, 1978, 1992). Emphasis throughout the study was on "emergence" versus "forcing" of theory (Glaser, 1992), and we chose to not only identify a core process in the interviews, but also to retain the integrity of the individual stories.

Participants

The interviewees gave me permission to give them a pseudonym when quoting their personal stories. These names are Robear (a Huron Indian from Quebec who also has French and Irish blood), Andrew (Dene Indian from the Northwest Territories), Tuuk (an Ojibway Indian from Ontario), Dancing Cloud (a mixed-blooded Indian who calls himself a "Walker among the three worlds": the Native, the Non-Native, and the Mixed blood), Ted (a mixed-blooded Cree Indian), and Rose (a Cree Indian). All were contacted

with the help of friends and were chosen on the basis of their past participation in Native rituals and ceremonies. Issues of informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the right of the individual to withdraw from the research at any point without prejudice were dealt with.

Nature of the Interview

The interview was conducted so that the Native way of communicating would be respected. Specifically, I began the interview by establishing a context that would encourage this individual to reflect on Native rituals. Since my interest in particular was on the process experienced by the individual in rediscovering his/her Native rituals, I used the metaphor of the "journey" to encourage him/her to focus on that process. Realizing that the Native style of communication tended to be non-confrontational and indirect, and that silence was also important, I used the narrative form of interviewing in which I asked them to tell me their story, using the following as a guide: 1) What are the circumstances that encouraged you to learn more about your Native rituals?; 2) What are the circumstances that encouraged you to participate in Native rituals?; 3) Tell me about the impact that this re-discovery has made in your life. How has it affected your life?; 4) Tell me about the experiences you have had (both positive and negative); 5) Would you encourage other Native people to rediscover their rituals?

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FINDINGS

The following stories) are about the human struggle to become whole with the help of culture and tradition-to "come home." Although Rose is the only female in the sample, her story was not substantially different from the others.

The Core Category: "<Coming Home' to my Self"

The process involved in rediscovering one's Native rituals is conceptualized as "'coming home' to my self," a phrase used by several interviewees to describe their personal journeys. The components of "'coming home' to my self' are 1) exposure to Native ways of knowing and healing; 2) dealing with the fear with the unknown; 3) healing through the rituals; and 4) evaluating changes within oneself.

*The principal author, Sandra Diaz, conducted the interviews. Both authors performed the analysis.

1) Exposure to Native Ways of Knowing and Healing

Learning about Native ways of knowing and healing was not a conscious decision for all the interviewees. Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, and Rose did not consciously plan to be at events that had to do with Native traditions. More often than not, their attendance at these events was serendipitous. Movement towards Native cultural ways started with their exposure to the Native world in some form without any real commitment to identifying with it. Tuuk talked about going to college and being exposed to people involved in their Native culture, after being away from it since leaving the reserve to go to high school. He said, "I was just around people that were involved in their culture. I really didn't pay too much attention." Dancing Cloud talked about connecting with his Native roots when he took courses in Native American studies. He remembered watching a video on Hollywood's image of the Indians and recalled, "In that course as well as in the literature course, I remember feeling a lot of anger over how Natives were portrayed, and still really it wasn't how I was being portrayed because I still didn't see myself as part of that." Rose talked about how she ended up training in a Native drug and alcohol treatment center through a friend who worked there. Although she was exposed to the Native traditions and Native people, she, too, did not see herself as part of it in the beginning. She recalled, "... I'd seen all these Indians and here I am Indian myself, and I walked in there and I thought, 'Oh, my God! Look at 'em.... I wouldn't be caught dead with none of these.' And I had a real struggle with that."

*searching
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Robear, Andrew, and Ted, on the other hand, consciously planned to be exposed to Native traditional ways of knowing and healing. Robear recalled searching for an Elder to help him reconnect with his roots and said, "My first experience was with a Cree person. He was an Elder, and I went up to him and talked to him and told him about my situation, about wanting to find my roots again and saying, well, I'm Huron." Andrew recalled searching for Elders who could help him understand his pain and said, "... the loss of family and relationship in a family, that created a lot of those anxieties and stuff. So then after that I realized there's more to it to look into it, and so that just led on to get more into trying to find Elders and people that understood those things." Ted talked about going to his first healing circle to reconnect with his roots despite feeling afraid. He said, "I had an opportunity to spend a weekend workshop. Big snow storm, so I said, 'No, forget it' ... and I was like, 'I don't wanna do this.' But I guess to a degree there was an underlying thought, 'What's gonna happen there? I don't know if I wanna go there at all.?' Unlike Robear and Andrew, Ted did not strongly identify with being Native. Although he had expressed wanting to learn more about his roots to get a better sense of who he was, and had even journeyed out to attend a workshop that would

bring him closer to his roots, he talked about resisting becoming emotional during his experience in the healing circle. He recalled, "... listening to their stories, it's like 'Wow,' so it really got to me here (points to his heart) ... [the facilitators] were trying to ... encourage it but in a gentle manner.... I just sort of resisted and shut down... ."

Meeting Key People

Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose did not go deeper into the Native world all alone. They met key people who helped them become more involved with the Native cultural ceremonies and rituals. How they met key people varied: at workshops, at ceremonies, at learning institutions, at work, through friends or professors, or through a combination of the above. Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, and Dancing Cloud connected with these key people in a special way, leading to the feeling of an emotional connection to Native cultural ways. This emotional connection became an important turning point, resulting in a deeper involvement in Native traditions. Rose's turning point came during participation in the ceremonies. Ted talked about the experience of participating in the ceremony as being "powerful" but not reaching a turning point that resulted in a deeper involvement in Native traditions.

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Turning Point: Feeling an Emotional Connection with the Native Cultural Ways Through Exposure to Key People. Tuuk talked about how he ended up in a workshop on Native traditions given by a friend of his from the same reserve. He recalled watching his friend talk about Native values, beliefs, rituals, and ceremonies, and drawing circles on the flip chart. He remembered how much more comfortable he was with what was being taught as opposed to what he was taught about Roman Catholic values and beliefs and telling himself, "I've finally 'Come Home'," He recalled it being an emotional experience as he said, "I remember shedding tears. All this time I've been around, I was never really awake. I didn't feel comfortable." He remembered the feeling of belonging as he said, "... I think that *this is where I belong. I feel much more grounded here* than I ever was at the Roman Catholic Church or at any of the other institutions." Unlike Tuuk, Andrew searched for people who knew about Native cultural ways to help him with his feelings of "confusion" and "uneasiness" which he believed had to do with his experience of going to boarding school. Listening to an Elder speak for the first time was an emotional experience for him:

... I can remember the first time that in my 30s when I heard an Elder really speak... up until that time, I had never expressed my emotions,

and something in the Elder, the way the Elder had transferred information, just, it made me feel something, a very powerful feeling. . . . I was feeling very emotional, and normally, I would have found a way to hold back and not express that feeling, but I knew in my mind that wasn't something that I should be ashamed of or be afraid of, . . . I did speak to him without holding back how I felt. *I cried for the fact that it took me thirty years to find that.*

"I
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Robear also made a deliberate attempt to search for someone to help him. He searched for someone who could teach him about being Native. He talked about having to travel West to search for his Native roots because his own people have become so assimilated that their connection with their traditions are relatively nonexistent. He talked about meeting a Cree Elder and said, "After my encounter with that Elder, we sat and we spoke for a long time. *I was so happy. Ah, Home* ". then he introduced me to the sweatlodge",

Becoming Involved in the Ceremonies and Rituals

Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose began to be more involved with the ceremonies and rituals which became a powerful force in bringing them deeper into the Native world. It was here that they had to deal with their fear of the unknown. It was also here that much of the healing occurred. By learning about the traditions through their participation in ceremonies and rituals, they came face to face with themselves. While Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, and Dancing Cloud felt a strong emotional connection with Native cultural ways when they were exposed to key people, it was in the involvement in ceremonies and rituals that Rose made an emotional connection.

Feeling an Emotional Connection with the Native Cultural Ways Through Involvement in Native Ceremonies and Rituals

Dancing Cloud talked about going to his Native advisor in a time of crisis. It was then that she taught him about a ceremony called "smudging." He recalled, ". . . And there's no words that I can use to explain, but *when I did that ceremony, there was some kind of change. I don't know how or why. But I felt some kind of connect- edness with something . . .*" Rose talked about her involvement in the sweatlodge while she was training at a Native drug and alcohol treatment center. She recalled, "... we went out for a sweat there, and it was this woman's lodge, and *I knew somehow that that was the piece that was missing . . . And I knew I belonged there* and I continued going and today I still go." Robear remembered the feeling of awe in his first sweat as he recalled, "... they say you

always remember the first time in anything. Simple. . . . Yet ... when it's so simple, how does awe come into the picture, you know, versus the big cathedral and stuff like that."

Ted's experience was different. He talked about his first experience in being part of a healing circle in the first night of a weekend workshop he attended but never returning for the rest of it. He recalled, "So I guess for me because it was new, it was really scary, because it was just my first time ... meeting all these different people, all strangers. It was so powerful. You could feel everything in the room."

2) Dealing with the Fear of the Unknown

Needless to say, becoming a part of the Native world involved feelings of fear because the Native world was an unknown. Going to a ceremony for the first time was not an easy experience for Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose. Being novices, the ceremonies were ultimately a mystery to them. They did not know what was going to happen or what it was about. Dancing Cloud, Tuuk, and Andrew talked about going through periods of self-doubt. Robear, Rose, and Ted talked about their fear of not being accepted by the other Native people.

Experiencing Self-doubt

Dancing Cloud recalled his first sweat lodge experience. He did not know anything about it and called himself a naive urban Indian." When he went to the reserve where it was being held, he did not know anyone. He said, "I felt scared as hell. Hell, they're Indians.... And my friend wasn't there ... about five or ten minutes before we were supposed to go into the sweat, he pulls in... ." He recalled his friend saying to him before he went into the sweat lodge that he was no different from the other Indians. His friend said to him, "When you go in there, just experience it for what it is. Don't question it." He recalled, "So ever, ever getting deeper without ever having any kind of plan but I remember that *I felt like I belonged*. I wasn't judged. It's like at that time nobody says, 'You don't belong here. You're white... .' Nobody said anything." Dancing Cloud also talked about his experience of self-doubt when he participated in the Sun Dance. He recalled, "I remember standing there with my pipe towards the end of the row ... figuring, 'What the hell am I doing here?' And the message came extremely quickly, 'You belong here. You always were meant to be here. You're home again.'" Tuuk talked about his experience of self-doubt when he went to his first fast and sweatlodge in the Kootenay Plains:

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They were all saying, "Well, there's fasting. Do you want to come?" "Fasting? What do you do?" "Just come," he says, "You'll discover it when you get there." So I jumped in my car ... and we drove into the sunset. ... So, I was, "O'k., here we go," and I haven't the faintest idea why I'm doing this. All I know is that everybody else is doing it. So I'll ... hell, I might as well get right into it, too.... I remember ... people praying and I was praying. I don't know why I was there. I was praying and I didn't know what I was praying for.... Anyway, we were in the fast four days, and I thought, "This is ridiculous. What am I doing? Why do you want to do this?"

Andrew recalled his fear of going to his first fast:

So that (the fast) was my first really, beside the sweat, the first ceremony I participated where I became more involved.... I didn't really understand it but it ... I felt better. I felt good that I made that connection, so I made a commitment next year to want to fast one thing led to another and I realized it's something I had to do when I'm afraid of something, my tendency is to attack it, to get into it, and I know I was afraid to go to the fast but ... at the same time it was something that I wanted to experience.

Fear of Not Being Accepted

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Robear, Rose, and Ted talked about their fear of not being accepted by other Native people. Robear talked about his fear of not being accepted because he was "white-skinned." He talked about how the rituals helped him deal with that:

From my experience, the journey has been, I'd call it an arduous journey. Things don't come easy, especially when you're white-skinned. To find one's roots, it was scary too. Scary in a sense, am I gonna be accepted? And it's still part of that process, still of being accepted, you know. It never really ends' cuz you'll always have I think ethnocentricity within any group.... I expect to go on a Vision Seek this summer and then later to a Sun Dance. I'm apprehensive and yet I'm excited. Apprehensive because again we're back to two worlds. Down in Quebec everyone is light-skinned, so there isn't a problem, but when you get up here, that becomes a problem. I always have to deal with that in my mind whether I'm accepted or not. Once I get into a sweatlodge or smoke the pipe, then I know that I am part of it. That fear goes away.

Rose recalled her fears of not being accepted at the sweat lodge as she said, "... A lot of times I'd go there and I'd feel like the women didn't want me there, that they knew what I did in the past ... and they weren't gonna love me and they weren't gonna accept me." All except Ted continued to participate in the ceremonies despite the fear and doubt. Ted has just begun his journey. Unlike the others who have the support of other Native people, Ted does not

have much contact with Native people. The person who is his support system is his therapist who is a non-Native person. He said, "I don't really have a lot of contact with other Natives. In more ways than one, I actually try to stay away from other Native people. That's just my own little inner personal problem that I have with that." He talked about wanting to know who he is as a Native person but at the same time feeling afraid of not being accepted by other Native people given that he was raised in "white suburbia." He said, "It's like being Native but not Native, trying to understand what Native is with groups of other Natives. How are they going to look at me? I'll still be that different person. I wanna try to fit in here.... "

3) Healing through the Rituals

As they learned more about what it meant to be Native through ceremonies and rituals, Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, and Rose were able to begin the process of healing the emotional pain brought about by being separated from the Native world. A natural part of learning *about* Nativeness involved making comparisons between Native and non-Native cultural ways. Another part of healing through ceremonies and rituals was facing one's imperfections.

*making
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Learning About the Meaning of Nativeness

Learning about what Nativeness meant through the ceremonies and rituals was an important part of the healing process because it gave their lives meaning. Much of the healing occurred with the help of the ceremonies and rituals because the connections with Native traditions and Native people were strengthened. Andrew talked about learning through fasting to appreciate life and to become more responsible. For him, this was what Nativeness meant:

You really begin to realize the value of where your life's coming from, and I think that tradition had helped me understand more about life ... and *the fast made me appreciate what life has given to me. . . .* It's a different sense of you and the world, I think. And I think that's what fasting helped me is to realize that, I guess, in a Native sense that's the sacredness of life, that these things are giving you life. I guess that this is why they can say the Earth is your Mother. It is feeding you. It is giving you that life and it is that appreciation that does . . . it does impact. ... You see so much and you understand so much. It makes you more responsible.... I guess it's what these rituals like fasting and Sun Dance does in some ways. Every culture experiences that at some point in time. They have some kind of ceremony to get you past from being a child into being responsible in the world.

Robear talked about his sense of Nativeness as "having a rapport with Creator, Mother Earth, and everything that grows upon it." For him, "Our rituals keep us connected to Mother Earth." Rose talked about learning that the Earth is alive:

And it was my culture and my identity, where I come from that was missing. And learning all about ... I always wanted to know why the Earth was the way it was and why there were trees and why there were the animals and the rocks even, and since I've found my culture ... like it was never ... my culture was never lost. It was me and since I've found it, I'm getting all these answers ... even why the little bugs and just everything is here ... and the power that the Earth has, like everything's alive! Everything is alive ... like She's living.

Dancing Cloud talked about the important place that the circle has in the meaning of Nativeness as he said, "Like our life is a circle, a Medicine Wheel. There's four parts to it. There's the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. We also travel in a circle in life." He talked about Nativeness in terms of Native values such as "honesty, kindness, caring, sharing, strength, respect" which comprise "all the stuff that Native people have always lived by."

Comparing the Native and Dominant Cultures

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the
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As Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, and Rose began to accept their Nativeness, they also began to separate themselves from the dominant culture. Comparing the Native and the dominant cultures was a natural part of that process where they began to distinguish what was Native and what was not, what they were and what they were not. Their identity as Native people became strengthened. They looked at different aspects of Nativeness—differences in communication styles, religious beliefs, attitude towards learning, and world view between the Native and the dominant cultures.

Communication Styles. Robear, Dancing Cloud, and Andrew looked at how Native people communicate. Robear talked about the importance of storytelling in Native communication:

When one asks a question, I've noticed that we (aboriginal people) never seem to give a direct answer. The answer to the question is there, but it's circular, not linear.... I was at a conference not too long ago and an Elder was speaking. He talked and just talked, and he had so much to say in just that talking. Questions were asked and he kept talking ... giving an answer to those questions. Now most of the people there had never associated with a Native storyteller or knew anything really about the culture except through books. ... And they were shaking their heads. They didn't know what he's talking about ... they should just listen to the story and let the story permeate, go into their minds slowly, and the truth will come out of that story. Not look for

specific points because you're not gonna get a specific answer. That is not our way.

Dancing Cloud talked about the importance of Listening in Native communication and why it is that people who want information from Native people often do not get it:

It's like they come in with a preconceived set of ideas. A paradigm that's totally at odds with Native beliefs and Native ideas. And it's like they wonder why nobody ever talks to them. Well, in order to talk, you have to listen. And I've come to realize that listening is an art that's not very well understood, and the essence of Native culture and tradition has always been oral. So there have been people who have been picked from childhood to be the storytellers.

Andrew talked about the importance of approaching Native people in the proper manner when asking them to share their knowledge with you:

... They're willing to share their knowledge if you approach them properly, and there is a proper way to approach them in terms of giving them tobacco, bringing food, and stuff like that 'cuz they have suffered for their knowledge. And I think that if you don't sacrifice something of yourself when you ask for something, you lose appreciation, and you lose a lot when you don't appreciate what it is that you are given.

Robear talked about learning about silence:

You notice there's long pauses? In the technological world today, that's (technology) the governing force really, we don't have time to think. And when we do think, we're looked upon as being slow, you know, like what's wrong with that person? ... In a European education system, we were taught to be so questioning, and I had that questioning and I was always wondering why the Elder would look at me, but he understood the impatience on my part. . . wanting to know.

*learning
about
silence*

Religious Beliefs. Tuuk compared Native religious beliefs and Roman Catholic beliefs:

Roman Catholic values and beliefs were really imposed on us as Native people. It just didn't sit well with us. I guess their values and beliefs seemed to me ... I guess we were in trouble... We were in trouble. There's all kinds of commandments that you weren't supposed to break. What I discovered over the years was that the Roman Catholic Church was a shame-based religion. And so when I look back at the Native people, that's what they are. When I look at them, they're so full of shame and guilt and everything else ... where I used to come from, when I look at what the Roman Catholic Church was doing with their laying a heavy number on guilt and shame to the people-do this or you're going to hell. All *those* things we used to hear. The whole idea about religion was sin. When we talk about human beings in the Native culture, we came in here pure as children of the Creator. I have not

heard any Elder in town or in the country say that when we came into the world, we were tainted. So that's the difference in the two pictures. We came into the world untainted and the way that we believe it is we are untainted, whereas the Roman Catholic Church tells us that as soon as you were born, you were doomed. Sony, but you're going to hell unless you learn your catechism and first communion and confirmation and all those things and then you might get to heaven. There's a lot of fear around. I think that's what we grew up with—the reality of the Roman Catholic Church.

Attitude towards Learning. Robear compared the difference between the two cultures' attitude towards learning. In his mind, novices in the dominant world are not given much of an opportunity to make mistakes:

When I first smoked the pipe, I wanted to do it right and you say, "Oh, how do you do it right?" And yet you're nervous and you want to show that you know and yet you don't want to. It's sort of like ... again we're back to the European mindset where you're not allowed to go into something being innocent. You have to sort of think, "I know. I know." You go, "I could take care of it. No problem." And all that. So I had to shake that off. That was ingrained in me through the system.

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"Native
problem"*

World View. Dancing Cloud talked about the differences in the Native and European world views by telling me a story about what the Jesuit missionaries (Marquis, 1916) did to take care of the "Native problem":

And there was this Jesuit missionary named Paul Lejeune who wrote a four-point plan for pacifying or making Native people into no problem any more. And I remember reading those words and feeling absolutely chilled. First of all, it was you had to change the gender roles into man superior, woman inferior as the European model was, whereas with the Native American at the time, there was gender equality. It's like there was respect for each role. And that had to be changed. The next one, you had to change the societies into one central community, preferably near a white community so you could teach them. Third one, you had to introduce the concept of punishment as a teaching tool. In the old ways, you taught a child by modelling. They would watch you, and if you were making a basket, they'd watch you do it and then they'd try it. And even if the kid made a horrible mess of it, it's like, "Oh, that's very nice. Maybe if you tried something like this." And I firmly believe that there was no concept of physical punishment. There were things such as shunning. There were things such as if the child wasn't doing what he was supposed to at the dinner table, and he'd been shown a number of times, they would turn his food basket over, and then he'd have to figure out what he did wrong. . . . So it was important to use punishment as a teaching tool (in the four-point plan), and the fourth part of this was to teach the children separate from the community and the family. That way if you could separate them, you could teach them the values and also the child would go back and teach the others. So within a generation or two, of course, you'd have all these brown-skinned

people living white values. That's never worked. It never worked in 1634, and it's still not working today.

_____ One's Imperfections

Facing their imperfections through the process of participation in ceremonies and rituals was the most difficult part of rediscovering their Native roots. It was generally an unpleasant experience. One came face to face with one's imperfections. Andrew talked about suffering in the fast. Not only was it a difficult experience physically, it was also difficult emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually because he had to really face himself. It was through the suffering that he learned not to take his life for granted. He recalled, "... You struggle with your fears. You struggle with yourself and it made me think about different things that I would never have thought about before now that I look at it. ..." He talked about modern culture not teaching us to appreciate life. Through the fast, he recalled, "... I think you suffer ... I mean you've gotta face your imperfections I suppose ... out of that suffering, I know it enriched me more even though I'm afraid to learn more, to see more."

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Tuuk also learned much about himself physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually through his suffering in the fast. He realized that he had not been paying attention to these different aspects of himself and had taken his life for granted. He said, "... you find out things about yourself.... I think that's a teaching ... when you're into fasting and rituals like that, you take in more teachings, insights." He recalled one emotional experience during the fast when he realized that he was the one who left his culture and he had to take responsibility for it:

... I was praying to the Creator and I remember saying something to the effect that, "There were times when You seem so far away. Where are You going?" [was angry. I remember after going through my dialogue with God and such, I stayed quiet for a while. I was looking up at the sky, and I heard a voice and the voice said, "I have never left you. I have never left you. I would never leave you." I remember breaking down and crying because I realized that, yeah, I'm never alone. It's only me who goes away. All the times I left, so yeah. There's a lot of times I left. I didn't care.

Like Tuuk, Rose expressed the same sentiment when she said, "... my culture was never lost. It was me."

4) Evaluating Changes Within Oneself

Comparing what they were like before (past) and after (present) rediscovering their Native traditions and rituals and evaluating

those changes became an important part of the healing process, as it helped them take responsibility for making those changes and to feel pride in their accomplishment, reinforcing them to keep up the work. Interviewees talked about how rediscovering their roots through learning about traditions and rituals had brought their life meaning and a feeling of connection to the self, to others, and to spirituality. Very simply, the changes they experienced were about "Becoming whole." As Dancing Cloud succinctly stated, "... Our life is a circle, a Medicine Wheel. There's four parts to it. There's the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. We also travel in a circle."

Becoming Whole

Finding Meaning. Finding meaning was an important change for interviewees who became very deeply involved in ceremonies and rituals. The deeper the involvement, the more meaningful life became. As Tuuk recalled, "... the Indian way of belief and values seem to make my life much more stronger in terms of having *meaning* here for me, much more deeper than the way it used to be ... much more simple, much more fine." Andrew talked about no longer feeling that there was something missing in his life, when he found meaning and enrichment through the rituals and ceremonies. He recalled, "I begin to see more meaning to my life. That's what I was looking for that was missing it's enriched my life ... it has matured me in a lot of ways that the education system presently could not give me.... "

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Having Connections. Having connections with the self, with others, and with spirituality was ultimately what participation in ceremonies and rituals achieved. The more involved they became in ceremonies and rituals, the more connected they felt and the less alone they became. They no longer had to go through crises alone. Dancing Cloud talked about how important being connected to his roots, to people, and to himself were to him. He talks about having "a feeling of *belonging* to something, belonging to a culture that is older than the hills." He described his experience of connecting with his roots as returning to a place where he feels "a part of, rather than apart from, people," no longer "detached." He recalled, "... I'm a part of ... a nurturing way of living, .. a part of the human race.... I don't feel detached ... I belong somewhere.... I'm accepted for who I am.. , . I have some knowledge of who I am as a human being." Rose also talked about the impact that rediscovering her Native roots has had on her. She has learned to love herself, her culture, and creation. She said, "... I love who I am ... if I hadn't found my culture ... I think I still would be lost. . . . *It was my culture, my identity, where I come from that was missing* . . . like my culture was never lost. It was me.... "

Tuuk talked about connecting with the spiritual, emotional, psychological, and physical aspects of himself through his involvement with Native cultural ways. He talked about how the Native culture brought "awareness" into his life. He said, *"It's a spiritual experience. It's an emotional thing. It's a psychological thing. It's a physical thing. It's all these four embedded into one.* It's a real important aspect in my life when I get involved." Robear talked about becoming a stronger person who is connected to his roots and to his people. He expressed, "It's made me a much stronger person. . . . I look at myself in a different way . . . I'm not alone anymore *Now I'm a strong person with connections.* " Andrew talked about connecting with his Nativeness through the ceremonies. He said, "I always somehow wanted the Native name I never had. So that was, really besides the sweat, the first ceremony . . . and I didn't really understand it, but I felt better. I felt good that I made that connection "

DISCUSSION

Rituals have played an important part in the lives of the one Native woman and five Native men interviewed. The journeys of rediscovery of Native rituals undertaken by Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose were not easy. To walk on a path that was not previously known, or of which they knew very little, was challenging if not frightening. The stories that Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose offered reveal that their journeys of rediscovery took them on a path that would not only acquaint or reacquaint them with their Native roots, but with themselves.

*journeys
of
rediscovery*

Their journeys of rediscovery dealt with more than simply the question of "What is my heritage about?" Ultimately they had to deal with the question of "Who am I?" Taylor and Smith (1986) examined a similar journey. In their analysis of Ahsen's epic poem, "Manhunt in the Desert," they found that the journeyer, a desert wanderer, "guided by intuition, wilfully approaches the unknown" (p. 121). In a society that devalues the spiritual dimension, an individual's ego and soul are separated (Taylor & Smith, 1986). To heal that separation, like the six individuals interviewed, s/he walks on a *lonely* journey in which s/he encounters forces s/he is unaware of in everyday life, namely his/her fears (Taylor & Smith, 1986). In delving deep into his/her unconscious, the journeyer "relies upon imagination to reveal his[her] personal darkness. Image then . . . becomes the support and guide to connect to the lost soul" (p. 122).

Hence, like the journeyer, these individuals travelled into their personal darkness to face, explore, and accept the contradictions

within themselves (Loomis, 1960). Jung called this "the realization of the shadow," the shadow being the dark side of the ego-personality (von Franz, 1964). In realizing the shadow, the contents of the unconscious are brought forth into consciousness (Jung, 1971). Jung (1971) recognized that to attempt to experience this process of "realization of the shadow," which is ultimately a self-realization, was a difficult one because it meant having to come face to face with the unpleasant contents of the unconscious. However, this process was a necessary part of the journey if the journeyer was to become transformed. Like the journeyer in Ahsen's epic, these six individuals make their pilgrimage by way of rituals that attempt to "make the soul" or, simply put, to become aware of and in touch with the soul, bringing them closer to becoming whole (Taylor & Smith, 1986). Specifically, this "wholeness" involves a coming together of the masculine and feminine principles of the psyche as it progresses towards conscious integration (Cirlot, 1962). A bridge is, therefore, built between the journeyer's rational and spiritual selves, resulting in the journeyer's vision of a new world (Taylor & Smith, 1986). Having successfully dealt with the conscious integration of the contradictions within, the journeyer is transformed. Like a new child, the journeyer sees the world in a new way.

The journeys undertaken by Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose to rediscover their Native roots offered a way for them to achieve the sense of completeness and the sense of greater meaning they could not find in the Dominant world. Rediscovering their Native roots was a way for them to heal their "wounded personalities," the split between their conscious and unconscious selves.

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opportunity
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By rediscovering their Native roots, they were given the opportunity to heal that split so that they could reconnect with those primordial images which were lost to them with the imposition of the dominant world. They were given the opportunity to learn about the myths and the sacred beginnings of the Native peoples and to deal with their fear of the unknown within the safe context of other Native people who would support and guide them. Through the rituals and the ceremonies, they were given the opportunity to witness the enactment of the myths and experience the awesomeness of the mysterious Universe. Their identities as Native Indians also became strengthened as they symbolically died and were reborn as members of the Native cultures. As Robins (1973) succinctly states, "Rites of passage ... concern identity formation or change" (p. 1208) by "inculcating in its members knowledge of behaviors and symbols appropriate to given identities" (p. 1308). Through the rituals and ceremonies, they were given the opportunity to come face to face with the contents of their unconscious and with the opposing forces within themselves and to learn to achieve a balance between them. As they recognized their shadows, they

were also given the opportunity to learn that they were imperfect and that it was all right. They were given the opportunity to become whole as they learned to reconnect with the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of themselves. By facing the darkness and journeying towards their inner center with the help of their cultures, they found that the Universe was powerful, that their lives had meaning, and that they were no longer alone. Robear, Andrew, Tuuk, Dancing Cloud, Ted, and Rose continue to connect with the authentic paths that have led them "home." What propelled them was the feeling that there was something missing in their lives. As Ted succinctly states:

I'm wanting to learn more about what my Native heritage is all about so I can get a more complete picture of who I am. I guess that's the whole thing right now 'cuz I sort of know who I am, but] don't know who I am ... so I can have a deeper understanding of the whole picture.... I guess the impact is that it has me curious. It has me curious, wanting this, really wanting this. It's gone beyond need.

What kept them on their authentic paths to home was feeling a strong emotional connection to the Native cultural ways and finding a Native support network to guide them as they made the journey home. For them, "home" meant having a life that had meaning and a place to belong. For them, "home" meant knowing the answer to the question, "Who am I?" and being proud of it.

*authentic
paths
to
home*

NOTES

"The interviews were audiotaped, then transcribed to begin data analysis. The steps outlined in the grounded theory approach were closely followed with the six individuals so that it went from paraphrasing to open coding to axial coding to selective coding to grounded theory. Analysis was done paragraph by paragraph. Any biases, judgments, values, and preconceptions were documented with the help of memos, diagrams and a research journal, and "bracketed" throughout the research process (Quartaro, 1986). I divided the interview into meaning units which were paraphrased. The codes were chosen for each unit. In choosing a code, I stayed as close to the data as possible. The codes were transferred to 3x5 index cards and were sorted into what I thought were appropriate clusters. The codes that did not seem to belong anywhere were examined again together with the corresponding meaning units and original transcript. Where necessary, either new codes were selected to better capture the meanings or if they were deemed similar enough to existing codes, they were absorbed under those codes. This process was repeated until all codes fell into particular clusters and no stragglers were left. The clusters were then examined and themes identified. The final step involved the assignment of a "name" to the overall process. After the completion of transcription and analysis of the interviews, interviewees were contacted to show them what I had done so far and to get feedback. No further analysis was performed when the analyses shown to the individuals were approved.

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The process involved in rediscovering one's Native rituals is conceptualized as "'coming home' to my self," a phrase used by several interviewees to describe their personal journeys. The components of "'coming home' to my self" are 1) exposure to Native ways of knowing and healing; 2) dealing with the fear with the unknown; 3) healing through the rituals; and 4) evaluating changes within oneself. *The principal author, Sandra Diaz, conducted the interviews. Both authors performed the analysis. Rediscovering Native Rituals 71. searching for an. Hey all you cool cats and kittens, I'd like to give a shoutout to the current USA president for taking the time to write out "Chinese Virus," because the shock of it allowed me to connect with a part of myself that I'd never been able to. #covfefe It was a major trigger, and I needed time to process. I went on airplane mode for a couple weekends, and reflected about all of the racism Asians have been experiencing. For some context, I was adopted from Korea when I was six months old. My family is white, and I grew up in a small white town in Minnesota. While my "job" and interests have The second printing of Coming Home to Myself revives a popular and noteworthy book that does indeed bring women home to a more intimate connection with their feminine selves. Not quite poetry and not quite prose, this collection of quotes offers a series of bite-size excerpts from the writings of Jungian therapist Marion Woodman (Leaving My Father's House, Dancing in the Flames). As Woodman calls it, this is a "surprise child" that was born from the creative mind of artist and psychotherapist Jill Mellick (The Natural Artistry of Dreams), who initially imagined excerpting Woodma