

Thoughts From The Desk Of Derek Lowry

Dear Editor,
Just when you thought it was safe to sit down and read the Carolina Indian Voice, I'm back again. You might want to fix yourself a cup of coffee and take your shoes off, no this is not going to be a long one. I just like for people to feel comfortable when I talk to them and during this season everyone is in a hurry to get somewhere for what reason is only clear to them. Have you noticed that when days get shorter people do too, no this is not a short people attack, I'm talking about attitudes and tempers. You would think this being the season of "Joy and Good Cheer" people could show a little bit of it, but then again that may be asking too much of people. But as always, I say all this to get my point of writing. I don't get to read the Carolina Indian Voice often, but when I do it's disheartening when it's negative. This person is writing to blame that person, or that person doesn't agree with this person and I know I'm talking about myself. As I like to say "Sometimes the best sermons we preach, are the ones we need to listen to ourselves."

As some of you know my favorite hobby is people watching, especially when they think no one is watching them. I was visiting a school one day and one student pushed, his classmates, which the Teacher witnessed. She call the student forward and asked him to apologize, which he said he would not and that she couldn't make him. I was surprised at what I heard next. "Well young man you just earn some time out". I wanted to scream "NO<NO<NO<" he just won a free ticket to Attitude Change USA, you remember, or some of us do. The belt, the switch, the hickory stick, the shaving strap, the board of education, now you what I'm talking about, that's what this young man needed. I know there're some of you who are saying

"You should never beat a child" Guess what you are right, if you can talk to that child and show them the error of their ways, then show them the short cut to the wood shed. Here is another thing I want to bring up for us to think about what happen to respect. I'll share with you what I think, have you noticed kids calling adults by their first name, no sir or miss, and why is this, is it because we adults don't want to be sired because it makes us feel old. Guess why that is it's because we are allowing a foreign culture into ours, to the Native people age is thought of more highly than youth. In other words wisdom and experience is highly valued over youthful looks, which often lacks either wisdom or experience. You only need to cut on a TV to see kids selling us soft drinks, cars and everything else. If we adults earn all the money, why would we need some kid telling us what to buy? It's just not in a child's nature to show respect unless they have been taught to do so. Now this may sound like a small sound like small stuff, but it takes small stones to make bricks and it takes alot of bricks to make a house. And a house without respect will not stand, this is why that young man felt he could tell his teacher what he was and was not going to do.

After I had told a couple of Legends I noticed the child in time out, he still had that look on his face that he was right and the world was wrong. In my next legend I told the children how at one time all the animals could communicate, until one day a fight started that caused the Creator to end communication among the animals. I asked the class how would they like it if the Teacher told them to never speak to each other for the rest of the year. I told the class if they wanted others to speak kindly to them, maybe they needed to speak kindly to others first. Well the student who had been

given time out dropped his head and went over and whispered something to the Teacher, as I was leaving. Now I would like to think that child apologized but I am not sure he did, besides that is not what important it's the moral of the story. Time out is only good when we are given something to think about while we are having time out. I even learned something that day, it is hard and it takes a lot of time to teach respect, but we better get started because we don't have much time left.

So to all of you who have been kicking and point at other people, maybe you need some time out to think, why am I doing this. Can't I sit down and reason with these people if not is there someone who can, or does both sides of the issue just need time out. Here's a little something for those who have been kicking someone who is already down, stop. True it is easier to kick someone who is down than to help them up and I know it's the hardest thing to do, but think where would we be if Jesus had taken the easy way out.

Anyway before you become short or say something that you may never be able to take back think. Just send yourself to time out and think before you react and remember the old saying "You get more fleest with honey that the other stuff". If you can't say anything nice do like me, walk away before you have to say something ugly. This is the season of joy and good cheer, share a little with someone, just a kind word goes a long way, who knows it might find it's way back to you. May the Creator's blessings continue to find their way to our doorstep and bring you joy for the day to come. I'll leave you with the hope that I've gave you something to think about, and you can put your shoes back on. In The True Way,
Derek Lowry

Along the Robeson Trail

by Dr. Stanley Knick
Director, UNCP Native American Resource Center

In the last few weeks we have been trying to understand the village life of the Lumbee ancestors in Woodland times. The reader has been asked to imagine living in a village, living the life of *pimadaziwin*.

The life of *pimadaziwin* is a life of balance and harmony and beauty not only among the human beings of your village, but also between the human beings and the environment in which you live. Every part of the environment is important. Every part has a spirit which distinguishes it from other parts.

The spirit of otter is different from the spirit of bullfrog, though both live in the stream near the village. The spirit of winter wind is different from the spirit of summer wind, though both bend the branches of the trees. The spirit of sun is different from the spirit of moon, though both are high and far away. The spirit of stone arrowhead is different from the spirit of grinding stone, though both produce food for the people. The spirit of sassafras is different from the spirit of willow, though both make a healing tea. The spirit of hummingbird is different from the

spirit of redtail hawk, though both have a lesson to teach.

And every spirit is respected, given honor for doing its part in Creation. And somehow combined — somewhere beyond and yet within everything in the universe — there is the one spirit of all things, the Great Spirit. And the people of the different villages call that Spirit by different names, each in their own language. But everyone knows that there is only one, and everyone connects to that Great Spirit in a good way.

For many generations, probably more than a hundred, this Woodland way of life has worked. The environment has given everything that has been needed — crops and other foods; materials for housing, clothing and tools; medicines; stories. And although the Woodland population naturally has grown, it has never done so out of proportion to what the environment could sustain.

It has not been necessary to change the course of rivers. It has not been necessary to eliminate whole forests. It has not been necessary to generate more energy than the people could wisely use. The ancestors learned

how to live in a balance with Mother Earth, and taught their children to do the same — to carry on the tradition of thanksgiving and respect for every natural spirit, to continue the ceremonial ways which preserve the spiritual balance.

In our reconstruction of the past, *pimadaziwin* may look to us here in the late twentieth century like a noun. But in the real time of living, it was also a verb. It was something you did, something you believed, something you maintained. Was it a life without sorrow or pain, without disappointment or frustration, without war? Certainly not. But it was a life of balance. There was danger in the forest, but at least there was understanding. There was suffering, but there was also faith.

In the next segment, we will begin to look at what happened in the villages along the Lumbee when *pimadaziwin* met its greatest challenge — the time when the world changed. For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Cookie's Corner
Vinita Maynor Clark

"Loving at a Distance"

It is Christmas Day 1997 but I know that there are alot of you out there just like me. Because there are alot of my relatives that "I have to love them at distance." In their life they really "don't want you around". They live in their "own little world" Wearing a set of "rose colored glasses". They don't want anything to do with you unless it is to their advantage or they receive some kind of satisfaction. They have their nose stuck up so high that it can "get sunburned easily". I once had a cousin who wanted me to sell him my house and go in debt for 30 years on a mobile home. He said that he would give me some antique furniture wherever I live. I decided not to sell the house and I have yet to see the furniture. He'll go and see my other cousins but to him "I do not exist" because it is not to his advantage.

But, you know what? God's got places for people like that! Just because they are "turkeys" and you are an "Eagle" that soars on the wings of God no matter what the situation. They try to "bend and break you" but what

doesn't break you... only makes you stronger. And when they can't get to you, because God protects you from ignorant people, you are suppose to love people in spite of their ignorance...not because of their ignorance

These are the kind of people that never come around you, never try to help you, but you still love them and you do it at a distance. God know that you love this person and that is really what counts. Pa always said "As long as you know the truth and God knows the truth, don't worry about what man thinks, because they have their own problems. God bless them if they come and God bless them if they don't come." That's what Pa always said!

Today is Christmas, why not give them a call? If they hang up on you, You can say "at least Lord I tried". Go

and knock on their door. If they are there and you know that they are there and they know that you know and they still do not open the door and greet you with the love of Christ. You can say "Lord, I tried". When there are people like this in the world, and you try, God knows about it. After all he knows every hair that is on your head. The moment you were born and the moment that you are going to leave this world. Trying is what makes the difference. Because, if you do not try then you will never know, and sometimes people can change.

Look for changes this holiday season. Because our God is a great God. He made the blind man see and the cripple man walk. He can change hard hearts of a man or woman.

Has anyone told you that they love you this Christmas Day? I know that God loves you and I do too!

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