



# Wellbriety!

*The Wellbriety Movement's Online Magazine*

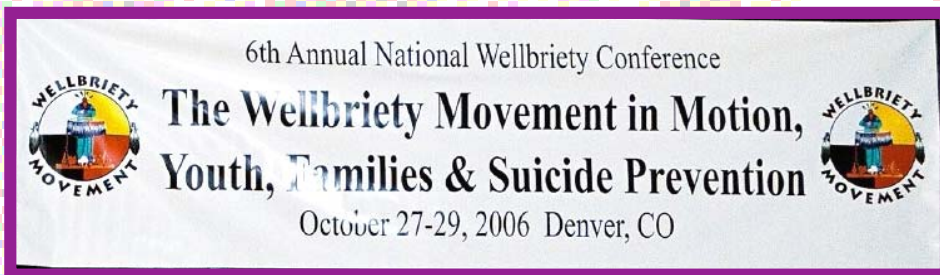
Volume 7, Number 12

November 20, 2006

## *The World of the Fifth Hoop*

Don Coyhis and Ilarion (Larry)

Mercurieff speak about the role of Alaska in this time of healing



Published by White Bison, Inc.  
Colorado Springs, CO





**T**he Fifth Journey of the Sacred Hoop came to completion on Thursday evening, October 26, 2006 when Laura and Phil Hom returned the Hoop to the Double Tree hotel in Denver just in time for the start of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual White Bison National Wellbriety Movement conference. The Hoop had traveled over 3000 miles to Sitka, Alaska and back for the raising of the Totem Pole in Sitka. (See Wellbriety!, V7, #11). Prophecy had been fulfilled, almost without our knowing it.

During his opening address on the status of the Wellbriety Movement, White Bison founder and president, Don Coyhis, connected events going back to 1994, a journey to South America by two Wellbriety Movement supporters, and the meeting of the Totem Pole and the Hoop, with a remarkable talk given by Aleut Alaskan Leader Larry Merculieff, which he learned about when he reached Sitka for the Totem Pole ceremony.

In this issue of Wellbriety! Magazine we are honored to present some of Don's remarks, as well as the talk given by Larry Merculieff.



## The World of the Fifth Hoop

Comments from the opening keynote address given by Don Coyhis  
at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual White Bison Conference  
Denver Colorado, October 27-29, 2006

**B**efore the coming of the 100 Eagle Feather Hoop, before the Wellbriety Movement, I was in Alaska at Copper River (1994) and I probably received one of the greatest gifts I've ever received, from an Alaskan woman Elder. I have received many good things but this is one that touched my heart. I completed a training up there, and at the end of the training two Elders came up and said good things about the time we spent there with them. The woman Elder asked me to sit down. She had two round fans with fur on the outside. She said, a long time ago when our men would come in from fishing we would take these fans and each one of us had a song for our man to sing. We all sang that song really loud and the water would calm down and they could then come into the shore. She said, 40 years ago my husband passed on to that other world so I

haven't sung that song. But I want to sing that song for you.

She started to sing that song and first it sounded like an old woman was singing. But it wasn't very long until her voice changed and she was like a twenty-year old singing that song. When she was done she said, I want you to take these fans to the east. She said that in the east a wind will start to gather and it will blow. She said that wind will blow south, then it will blow west, and then it will come up here (to Alaska)—it will blow north. When she told me that story it didn't make a lot of sense but something about it I remembered.

By then, (in 1994) we had started our very first community development work in the



Passamaquoddy Nation up in northeastern Maine. Without even being told this story, that group named themselves **The Healing Wind**. One day a big wind came to their camp (at Sipayik, in Maine) and stayed all morning blowing around the community. So it was just like the Alaskan Elder said in 1994, the wind would begin in the east, it would start to blow south, then west, and then it would go to the north like she said.

Five years later we were ready to begin the Journeys of the Sacred Hoop. In 1999 our Journey started at the Great Onondaga Nation. Then in the year 2000 we walked across the United States from Los Angeles to Washington, DC. We walked and we ran 4294 miles in 109 days. There were two more cross-country Hoop Journeys that took place: one in 2002 and the fourth one in 2003.

Finally, it started to make sense to me. I felt that I had begun to know what that Alaskan woman meant. A few weeks ago, in October, 2006, we were reminded of her story that the wind would start in the east, then it would blow south, and it would blow west, and then it would go north. And for us, this was about the Totem Pole. The Totem Pole was put up on October 14, 2006 in Sitka, Alaska. (See, *Wellbriety Totem Pole Raised in Sitka, Alaska*, Wellbriety! Online Magazine, Volume 7, #11 for complete details).

We didn't know more about Alaska's role until after we were up there for the raising of the Totem Pole. They handed us a printed article. It said that when the Hoop had 57 feathers gathered on it

(during the gathering of the feathers in 1994-1995) I was in Alaska. I was having dinner with a man named Larry Mercurieff. When we were there, a woman from Alaska came to our table and said, I really feel I am supposed to give you this feather. The story I am telling you is the short version. (Larry Mercurieff's story follows these comments by Don Coyhis).

I felt really moved to take that feather and make it the center feather of the Hoop. So we kept that feather for the center feather when it was constructed later in 1995.



Don Coyhis

After the Hoop was assembled in 1995, we took the Hoop to the White Buffalo calf that had recently been born in Janesville Wisconsin. At that time we received a message from Peru. The Elders had come down from the mountains in their homeland the same weekend that we were doing the Hoop ceremony with the White Buffalo calf. They came down from the mountains for the first time in 500 years to talk to the younger brother (the white man). In their prophecies it said, When the eagle and the condor meet, then they are in this time of healing too.

In 2002 Snookins Honena and Laverne Beech went down to Peru and they brought back a condor feather. They gave us the condor feather and it was placed in the center of the Hoop: *when the eagle and the condor meet...!* The condor feather traveled at the center of the Hoop on all those Hoop journeys after that because they were now together. (See *Joining North and South in Resistance and Healing*



by Laverne Beech, Wellbriety! Online Magazine, V4, #21).

The article that we were given when we arrived in Sitka, from a talk by Larry Mercurieff, this message that we got, was from Alaska. We had not known this. He said that the Dalai Lama came to Alaska and said the energy center had moved from Tibet into Alaska. The Dalai Lama said it has to be in Alaska because conditions are right in Alaska.

Larry also received a message from the Hopi people of Arizona and the Maori people of New Zealand that he was asked to deliver to the Elders. (His talk follows these comments). He said the Hopis say we are entering another world, a fifth world. They said what will start in Alaska they called the **World of the Fifth Hoop**. So when we heard that, we had just made our fifth Hoop Journey to Alaska. (The Hoop Journey that brought the Hoop to Sitka for the Totem Pole raising). After the Totem Pole was raised—and we really prayed a lot about it—we presented the condor feather to the Alaska people. We felt that the center feather was theirs and the Journeys had finished.

So we believe very strongly that the alignment we have been waiting for is coming from Alaska. This all just happened in October, 2006. We call that alignment the **World of the Fifth Hoop**.

If we take a look at our groups and what has just happened we see that some of our groups are very, very strong. But some are going west, some north, some east. They are all trying to figure out what's happening. They told us that what we are going to start to see is alignment. In this alignment you'll start to see that our tribes will start to come together. Our organizations will start coming together. We cannot do it without one another. No one can do it alone. Mental health departments can't do it alone. Alcohol programs can't do it alone. The tribal

councils can't do it alone. We have to work together. And they said, we will start to see an alignment of the four colors: the red, the yellow, the black and the white. We would start to come together because of that Totem Pole. It's a beacon, like the north pole—south pole. It has a kind of magnetic field. You will start to see that that pole will cause us to start to align and to really be helpful to one another. The resistance we sometimes encounter is going to go away.

These are the things we are talking about now. If I had my way, this would be the last White Bison solo conference. We have got to start doing conferences like this together.

When I came back from Alaska I prayed because I was getting confused. I saw what went on up there, I saw what the people said about the World of the Fifth Hoop, I felt an incredible existence up there. So I came back and prayed. At three o'clock in the morning, I had this vision. The difference between a vision and a dream is that if you have a dream you are always in that dream somewhere. If you have a vision, then you are not in it, you just feel it. I'm going to explain what this vision was as best I can.

There was a light that came down from the sky. It came down and it touched the earth. Out of that spot of light, smoke started to rise up very slowly. And then it encountered a hoop (not the 100 Eagle Feather Hoop). That smoke said to the hoop, it said, "Who are you?" The hoop said, "I'll tell you who I am. I am the center of the universe. I am your boss. I am your guide. I will order you." What its name came out to be is what we sometimes refer to as colonization. There was a force that we, as Indian people, encountered. When the smoke encountered it, it said to that hoop, "There is another way. It's the Native way." When the hoop heard that, it shook. It started to not be strong. It's like it knew it

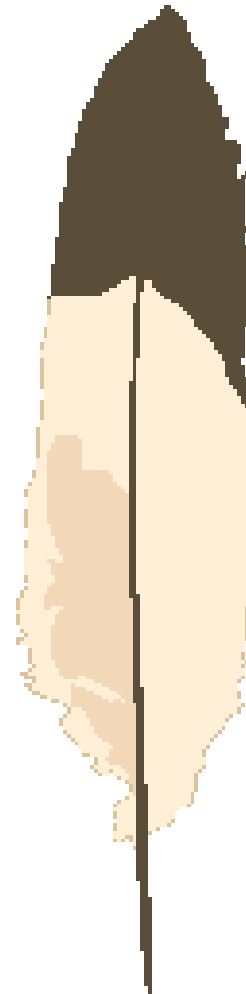




got caught. The Medicine, the Movement, and our songs were re-established and that hoop (colonization, oppression) knew it was in trouble. We made it wobble.

As the smoke continued to rise, near the top, on the outside, it started to spread out. It continued to rise. When it got to the right place, a new hoop came down, the new way that we are to live—*The World of the Fifth Hoop*. When it showed up, that other one (colonization, oppression) collapsed. It went away. It no longer has power for us. We don't need that hoop (colonization, oppression) telling us what's evidence based, what are promising practices—we know what's strong, we know what's right. Our teachings are right. Those songs are right. Because something is tested somewhere else, and it works for them, that doesn't mean it works for us. Each one of us in our communities—*that's what right for us*.

I have always honored how strong the Onondaga have stayed in their culture. They didn't give into that hoop (colonization, oppression). It really struck a lot of our communities. I think in this new way we are realizing we don't stand a chance unless we come back to our culture—the spiritual way, whatever that way is for each of us in our own traditions. That's the World of the Fifth Hoop.





Larion (Larry) Merculieff (Aleut) was born and raised on the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea. He is currently the Alaska Native Science Commission's Deputy Director. In this role, he has used his exceptional public education, negotiating and leadership skills to work effectively with a wide variety of interests including scientists, journalists, Alaska's Native tribal officials, the environmental community, federal and state government officials, young people, and the general public.

Larry has made many presentations on the Bering Sea ecosystem, traditional Elder wisdom, and global climate change, including at the 1998 White House Conference on Oceans with Vice President Al Gore in Monterey, California. He has also played a key role in advancing these issues through local, national and international radio shows, TV documentaries, magazines and newspapers. In 2004, he received the Alaska Native Writers on the Environment Award.

Larry Merculieff has been successful in his environmental work in bridging the traditional knowledge obtained from indigenous Elders with the Western approach to ecosystem research and management. He has also spent time exchanging cultural wisdom with the Mapuche Elders in Patagonia, Alaska Native Elders, the Stoney Elders in Alberta, the Cree, Sioux, Mayans, Kechua in the Andes, among many others. He currently resides in Anchorage, Alaska.

We are more than honored to present a transcript of this talk connecting and aligning many different areas.



## "Let Goodness Take Its Place"

by Larry Merculieff

*Larry gave this speech to a meeting of Aleut Elders who had assembled to hear his important message. Larry began his speech in the Aleut language with the saying, "The afternoon tastes good." He continued...*

**Y**ou are the second group of people that has invited me to talk on something that is very special. I have been asked to give you some messages from the spiritual leaders of the Hopi and [also the] Maori people from New Zealand. When I went up to Canada one-and-a half years ago, I went there to be with the Stony Elders. They invited me to go there. While I was there, they said the Hopi

and Maori sent the messenger to meet me. I do not know why me, but they gave me some messages to bring back here to Alaska. They must have known things that I do not know or cannot see yet. And this is one of the things that I think they knew: that I was going to be invited to speak in places like this.



One thing to know before I start. The people who are here today are here for a reason. It is no accident that you are going to be here to hear this message, and it is up to you whether or not you want to use this message of wisdom that has been given by the Hopi and Maori. If you do not use it, I would ask you pass it along to others.

I used to write my speeches, you know, when I left the University. They train you to write everything down. As Commissioner, you have to write everything down for the public record. I stopped doing that when an old man, Howard Luke, and I were exchanging tape recordings with each other. He sent me this tape and said, "Anybody who gets up in front of a crowd of people and has to read from a piece of paper has no business being up there!"

So for the first time in my 43 years, today, I say, "OK, the papers are going to be put away." I will speak from the heart. There is a great deal of wisdom in speaking from the heart instead from a paper. It was a re-learning for me. I learned it very well, I think. When I have to speak before a group, I never know what I am going to say. The only thing I can do is clear my mind, clear my body, and pray for the messages given from the people that I have been sent here to give the messages for. And I pray to the Creator to help. When I came here, I also prayed for the help of the Spirit of the land; The Spirits of your ancestors; The Spirit of the river; The Spirit of the animals; The Spirit of the trees; and The Spirit of the wind, because each area of the world

has its own guardian. Even this group now has its own guardians. They are here now and they are sitting with us—and so, I ask for their help when I talk.

The Hopi and Maori sent a messenger, her name was Beverly, to meet me when I was up in Canada. The messages come from the Hopi, Maori and the Stony Elders, who are part of the great Sioux Nation in Alberta—and also from the White Bison Society. I will explain what this is.

What the Hopi [and the] Maori wanted us to know here in Alaska and in all the villages, is that we are moving into the what they call the **World of the 5th Hoop**. The Navajo called it moving into the 5th World. Maybe amongst some of the Elders of the

Athabascan people there are similar things that are being said about this time. It is a message of hope. They know of the sicknesses that made them suffer. They know of the fights that have been going on between the organization and the villages. They know of the struggle between villages and within regions and between regions. They know about the alcohol abuse and accidental deaths due to alcohol, the suicides, the high blood pressure, failing health, heart problems, all these things that our people in Alaska have been facing. In my years working for my people, I have traveled all over the State. And it is pretty much the same everywhere...the kind of problems we are experiencing.

That is not what this message is about. They know about our business in the villages. This



Larry Merculieff



message is a message of hope. They say that moving into this time—of the World of the 5th Hoop—is a time when all the four sacred powers are going to be reconnected. They are the red-white-black-yellow. They wanted me to know that, among the Hopi, they are the keepers of the sacred stone tablets for the sacred red power—that includes all of us. They wanted me to know that they have the sacred stone tablets in Tibet, in the mountains, kept by the Tibetan Monks, in the same way that the Tibetans have their sacred stone tablet with the Hopi.

There are four sacred stone tablets that were given. The sacred black color has theirs in a small village in Africa. They cannot exchange it with the sacred white color because they lost theirs. But the Hopi wisdom keepers say that they are soon to find this stone—very soon in this time. If you look at the maps where the people of Hopi live, and Tibetans live, [it] is exactly on opposite parts of the world of the Mother Earth. The Hopi word for love is the Tibetan word for hate. And the Tibetan word for love is the Hopi word for hate. The same word, but exactly opposite meanings. They say that this is necessary to help keep the balance of Mother Earth—and that there are keepers of this balance that are around the world like us.

In moving into this time of the World of the 5th Hoop, it is going to be a time of great healing. There is going to be great healing that is going to start, and the Hopi say that it is going to start in the North. I have learned just recently that it is going to start in Alaska.

The Hopi told me that this time of great healing is going to be shown by several signs. One is when a **Hoop of a Hundred Eagle Feathers** is completed. And I have met the person from the White Bison Society in Colorado, who are the keepers of this hoop. I met the person while I was in Anchorage.

While we were having dinner, a lady came in from Kodiak and she had an eagle feather in her hand. She said, "I know this had to go to some special place, and I guess it is you." And [she] gave it to this guy who was sitting there. His mouth dropped open. He could hardly speak. He said that this was the eagle feather that was to be the axle—the center point in this Hoop of 100 Eagles that was described to him exactly by the wisdom keepers. The eagle feathers numbered 57 at that time.

Since that time, two more [feathers] have come from Alaska, one from an all-white eagle. This white eagle had called to this man. (This is true, as I was a witness.) He was a white man. He calls me up and he says, "I do not know why I am calling, but this morning I looked up in my yard and there were 13 ravens in a circle. And in the middle of the circle was an eagle." He said he knew that was pretty weird. He had never seen anything like it. The people in the village had never seen anything like this. This was just about a month-and-a-half ago. He said that he had heard the story of the Hoop of the 100 Eagle Feathers. He said, "That night the tribal chief delivered to me the dead eagle." That morning he saw the eagle alive, surrounded by 13 ravens, [but] that evening, it was delivered to the camp. He did not know why. And so he heard of the story and knew that, if he asked permission properly, one of these eagle feathers was to be delivered to this Hoop. And so it was. A person who was on his way down to Colorado delivered the white eagle feather or the feather from a white eagle. So now there were two feathers delivered.

In this time of healing, in the time of the message of hope from the Hopi [and] Maori and the Stony Elders, I was invited to Sacred Ceremony by the Stony Elders. The youngest was 77 and the oldest was 106. No one spoke any English during the whole time I was in the Sacred Ceremony, which lasted 3 hours. They spoke English, one in the





middle, and the person who spoke said, "I am speaking English for the benefit of our friends from Alaska. We know that your people in Alaska, in many villages, believe that they have lost their culture, the cultural wisdom and their ways. We are praying to the Creator. We want you to know of the message that has been given to us so that you would take it back to Alaska."

The message that they received for us is that our cultures are not dead. All the wisdom that has been collected in our cultures, since time immemorial, is being kept for us, waiting for us, to awaken in our spirits. We will awaken our spirits again. When that happens things will be revealed of the old wisdoms. Things that have been forgotten for a long time are going to be brought back—Art, Music, Song, Dance, Storytelling, Spiritual-Wisdom, Knowledge, and the wisdom of how to work with Mother Earth, will all be restored.

They also want us to know that among the Hopi and Maori there are people who do nothing but pray 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, every year of their lives. That is all they do. In rotation, they pray around the clock for other people. In this prayer is where they have seen some of these things that are about to happen. The healing that is going to take place, the advice that has been given to us, is, "Seek not to fight evil—do not fight it—let goodness take its place." So when we see bad things happen and when we fight those bad things, what we do hurts everybody. Fighting evil has spiritual energies that go to the ends of universe, affecting everybody in the community.

When I come into community, I can feel the energies that are created. We are all affected by it. You know, sometimes you watch little kids when a stranger walks into the room [and], all of a sudden, the child just cries. Sometimes this happens, or, they love the stranger. What they are doing is taking

their God-given, Creator-given, way of talents, skills, gifts, to feel the spirit of the other person because everybody gives out these energies. So we have to, they say, be very careful. This is part of the wisdom amongst the great Athabascan People and most indigenous people throughout the world. We must take care of how we think—how we feel.

The signs of this time of healing that is to start are:


When the children bring back the spirit to the village; when the young start speaking with the wisdom of the Elders; when the leadership energies start shifting to the feminine side; when this Hoop of the 100 Eagles Feathers gets completed, and when the White Bison shows up. These are all the signs of the movement from the 4th to the 5th Hoop.

Now, I know that some of this is in language that you may have not heard in your lifetime. But I know inside that you will recognize these words to be true. Your intuition is going to tell you what I am saying is true. The world for the last 4,000 or so years has been stuck in the male energy side. The male energy is thinking from the brain. It is a management from the top down. It is more aggressive. It does not use intuition or feelings from the heart. It is a different kind of energy. It is not a bad energy. It is just different than the female energy. Female energy is healing, nurturing, loving, caring, touching and sharing. The world's spiritual leaders know now that these energies have been male and now have shifted to the female side.

The center of the top of the energy entrance to the Earth Mother is here through Alaska. The spiritual leaders say that a host, hosts of angels, are coming through Alaska and spreading out throughout the world for this healing to take place.

I see what is happening to our young people. I spent most of my life thinking I was a leader, for 25





years working for my people. I realized, when I finally woke up, I was not a leader because I was stuck in the same place with the same kind of sickness they had.

Harold Napoleon, who wrote the book, *The Way of the Human Being*, talks about the Great Death. Why, people ask, are we suffering like this today? Why are our kids this way? Why are we having this alcohol problem? It is easy to understand when you get back in touch with your heart. Harold Napoleon talks about the time of the Great Death. My people faced it. Eighty percent of our people were wiped out in 50 years. We still have stories of those times. How many men can a musket ball kill? The Russians were betting about the Aleuts, so they lined them up back to back, shot point blank, and the answer is nine. There is one community where the Russians went to take all the women and girls for their sex slaves. The women and girls said, "No, this will be a violation of our spirit!" And they all got on top of a cliff and jumped, in mass, and died. There is a story in a village in Akutan, where it used to take a year to build meat boats from hide. It was one of the most sophisticated kayaks in the world. It took a year to build because it had to be dependable. They had to go out on the high seas for weeks on end. They knew this, and the Russians knew this. The fur traders, who were greedy, went into the village at night and destroyed all the boats. The village starved to death. There was one old woman who survived out of 300 people.

So we have these stories. The first people who were killed among my people were the Shaman and their apprentices. Because of their religion, or way of life of spirituality, the Russians did not understand so they destroyed it. They thought it was a threat. Can you imagine our people who are survivors—we are survivors here today, having gone through that time—experiencing for 50 years, eight out of ten people dying in a horrible way? Your

loved ones? Your grandchildren? Your children? Your mother? Your wives? Your husbands? [All] dying by horrible ways for 50 years? Year after year, seeing horrible death? And being subjected to all this? The American doctors have a name for this now, they call it Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

The Vietnam Vets have also experienced this syndrome. The veterans, when they came back from Vietnam, were depressed. They took drugs. They took alcohol. They withdrew from their relationships. They could not be close to people because it hurt too much. They did anything to escape their feeling and what they were thinking. When they did that, they separated from their spiritual side. When this happened, the depression started. So they experienced this in Vietnam after two or three years. Sometimes people had four trips over there. Our people experienced it for generations. Not only did we not have the support that the Vietnam Vets had, [but] they still had their culture intact when they came back.

Our cultures were eliminated, or attempted to be destroyed. Those who had survived, were without hope. Having gone through such misery and pain, the only thing they could do to defend themselves, the only way they knew how to defend themselves, was not to feel.

I know and I understand it. Harold Napoleon understood it. Many of you understand it, because as a child, like many of our people, [I] grew up in a family that abused alcohol. And the first thing that I did as a child to defend myself was to shut off my feelings. They were shut off for over 20 years. And when that happened, it is a state of constant depression and addiction. Addictions can be cigarettes, alcohol, TV and noise. Big loud music, and even thoughts could be an addiction. Anything to take us away from feeling right now the way we feel. We try to run away from it. That is what



happening when you see a kid walk down the street with big earphones blasting and they are not hearing anything else because they do not want to be here. No.

The wisdom keepers say that the only place to find the power of the Creator is to be present in this moment. If we have fears, we are projecting them into the future. Into a future time that does not even exist. If we have guilt, we are living in the past, for the past things we did. We are not living now. All the spiritual keepers, of all groups in the world, be they Buddhists, be they Islamic, be it part Red Pack, be it medicine pack—you name it—say [that] the only way to find the power that has been given to us from the Creator is to be here, now. Not to escape.

So you see, because of this addiction that has happened from the Great Death, the survivors are separated from their feelings. Can you imagine the kind of children they raised? It was hard for them to love and be close to another because they were afraid. If I became too close and loved somebody, they would be destroyed, and I would suffer the pain all over again. So they stayed away from that feeling. Those kids grew up and had their own kids, and from generations to generation to generation, until today, we have the legacy the inheritance of this spiritual sickness that was given to us a long time ago. And so the answers from the wisdom keepers is to work at being present and that will first revive the key.


The spiritual keepers also say that the first step towards healing yourself, before you can heal others or help heal others, is to love that which we may hate or who may hate me. We may hate ourselves. We may hate an organization. We may hate the people from outside who have interfered. We may hate somebody. The first step towards this healing is to stop the hate and turn it into love. And it will

transform everything. This spiritual sickness that we have is going to move now. It is going to change.

There are some predictions in the sacred stone tablets among the wisdom keepers about what is going to happen here in this World of the 5th Hoop. Not only are we going to have this healing, but the Earth Mother is going to shake in a way that it has never shaken before. It is going to move in a way it has never done before. There is going to be a lot of fear because of this, and the wisdom keepers want me to convey that, when this happens, we should not be afraid. Because, what is happening is that the Earth Mother is trying to help us remove the stuff that we have stuck in our bodies, inherited from the spiritual sickness of generations and generations out. And one of the ways that we do that is to scare the life out of us. This is why there is going to be time for healers.

Healers are being called from all over. Women are now taking their place as the original healers around the world and some of the strongest original healers are starting here in Alaska. Not only [will there be] the shift to the feminine side of leadership, but the women are going to start taking their place as healers. I think this is an exciting time. The Dalai Lama went down to Yakutan during the last change of the moon, with all the spiritual leaders, to pray for this time of the shift, this time of healing. And he has 'chosen'—and this is the words that they use, which are hard to understand—he has chosen to take the spiritual energies that they have been keeping in Tibet and move them from Tibet and bring them here to Alaska. Which they did a few weeks ago. The reason they did this is because the Chinese are wiping out the Tibetan Monks and destroying all the temples. So the Dalai Lama moved its spiritual energy here to Alaska, because this is the place where the healing is going to start. And this is the place where all the Angels are coming in by hosts. This is the place where the Hoop of a Hundred Eagle





Feathers will be finished. And, interestingly enough, some of the healing ways are being revived from all the cultures. People are being woken up.

How do we start this healing? When you are quiet within yourself and you sit next to the river—ask. Do not be afraid to ask. Ask the Creator. Ask whoever you feel is your higher power, "Please help me find the way because I do not know how to heal. Make me your history." And when you ask that, with humility in your heart, you will get it. You will find it. And it will be given to you. You will see this healing start to spread like wild fire. It is just exciting. Exciting to see. And the key to it is staying here, now.

Now, last thing I am going to say: I ran the village corporation in St. Paul [Alaska] for ten years. I was city manager for four years. We started from no economy out there. In 1983 the government pulled out. That was our only economy. They pulled out and we lost 80% of our jobs. That year we had 100 suicide attempts out of 600 people. We had four people who killed themselves. We had three who were murdered—things that had not happened in our village for 150 years! The last person ever murdered in our village was over 150 years ago. And it all happened in this one year. Big shaking up. And we thought, the leadership thought—including me—that, if we worked to bring the economy back so that everybody got a good paying job, our kids would return to our village. And that it would solve our problems. We had [a] growing alcohol problem. Sixty per-cent of our population [were] alcoholic and one-third of our kids have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. We had suicide attempts all the time. I have been to 44 funerals here in four years—44 funerals! Goodness sakes.

So what we learned from this and what I want to share with you is what happened when we got our economy [back]. We have the strongest rural

economy in the State of Alaska right now. Our per capita income is \$34,000.00—\$34,000.00 per person! That is what was accomplished in ten years. But did it solve our problems? No. The spiritual sickness is still going on. The money only feeds the addiction. We have a community that is already addicted in some way because of the spiritual sickness. We have inherited this sickness from the time of the Great Death.

Bringing money in, in large amounts, will fuel the addictions just like gasoline to fire. It will make it worse. Bigger. Because it is what we do with the money. Look at St. Paul. We are buying cars. Everybody has got a car now. We bought, maybe, 300 cars in the last 3 years. Everybody has one or two TV sets—big ones. Everybody has 4-wheelers. Everybody has got boats. Everybody has got nice clothes. Everybody has got nice houses. Things. Everybody has got things. But yet they are saying, "We are not happy. What is wrong?" What is wrong is [that] we were looking outside for feeding for a hunger inside—a hunger that we did not understand. And that hunger is the hunger of the spirit.

When we have addictions, it is a hunger to fill the spirit. It is like a big stomach inside you that wants to feed all of the time. And no matter how much we feed it with these addictions, [it] is never enough. And it just goes down and down and we get so depressed that we feel we cannot get out of it. At that point, you die either physically or you die spiritually. Hopefully, many people will not have to go through that.

So, that is the message that I have brought to you. This is a message of hope and a message of good wisdom. Remember, our cultures are not lost. The wisdom of it is already here with us. We just do not know it yet, because we are spiritually sleeping.

**Reprinted by permission of the author**