ᒥᔪ ᐃᐧᒉᐦᑐᐃᐣ
miyo-wîcihtowin

"Miyo-wîcihtowin - to get along together (and) having a good relationship with each other. Communication is very important."

Elder Russell Wanyandie, April 25, 2018 [1]

The principle of ᒥᔪ ᐃᐧᒉᐦᑐᐃᐣ *miyo-wîcihtowin* guides Cree people in creating positive or good relations in all relationships. It is viewed as strengthening unity while reaffirming the importance of good communication, kindness, respect which may be necessary elements of nation-building. It includes those laws encompassing the bonds of human relationships in the ways in which they are created and reaffirmed as a means of strengthening unity (Cardinal, 2000).[2] One Elder of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation describes ᒥᔪ ᐃᐧᒉᐦᑐᐃᐣ *miyo-wîcihtowin* as everyone acting as one unified family: talking to each other, loving each other and working with each other.[3] Living according to the principle is also described in connection to the good relationship that Cree people are expected to have with the land. This relationship may be reaffirmed with the protocol offering of tobacco in ceremony (Makokis, 2009).[4]

ᒥᔪ ᐃᐧᒉᐦᑐᐃᐣ *miyo-wîcihtowin* may be fully understood when it is seen as a principle and related laws with distinct responsibilities and obligations. All interviewees deem that upholding the principle and related laws of ᒥᔪ ᐃᐧᒉᐦᑐᐃᐣ *miyo-wîcihtowin* is essential to living a harmonious and fruitful life within their family and with the Nation as a whole. Getting along well as reflected by this principle is demonstrated, according to one Elder, through sharing and good will which, in turn, require engagement from the mind and from the heart.[5] Other Elders describe how family members are expected to show kindness, respect and generosity toward each other, even in time of conflict. [6] Many interviewees stress the importance of practicing ᒥᔪ ᐃᐧᒉᐦᑐᐃᐣ *miyo-wîcihtowin* by engaging in active communication with other people, including external relations,

reaffirming mutual respect and reciprocity.[7]

Some Elders emphasize that the long-term success of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation's nation-building project is dependent on the members' fulfillment of the related obligations of communicating and working well together as per the principle of ᒥᔪ ᐑᒋᐦᑐᐏᐣ *miyo-wîcihtowin*.[8] In support of this collective project, the historical practice of "visiting", where protocols are practiced by host families, serve to recognize and reaffirm relationships as well as encourage acts of reciprocity.[9]

Endnotes

1 From interview with Elder Russell Wanyandie, April 25, 2018.

2 Cardinal, H. (2000), *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan: Our Dream Is That Our Peoples Will One Day Be Clearly Recognized as Nations.* University of Calgary Press.

3 From interview with Elder Philomene Moberly, April 26, 2018

4 Makokis, L. (2009). *Leadership teachings from Cree Elders: A grounded theory study.* Lambert Academic.

5 From interview with Elder Mabel Wanyandie, April 24, 2018.

6 From interview with Elder Mary Delorme, August 24, 2018 and Elder Mabel Wanyandie, April 24, 2018.

7 From interviews with Elder Adelaide McDonald, April 24, 2018; Tom McDonald, July 23, 2018; Elder Mabel Wanyandie, April 24, 2018 and Elder Russell Wanyandie, April 25, 2018.

8 From interviews with Elder Jane McDonald, July 11, 2018 and Elder Philomene Moberly, April 26, 2018.

9 From interviews with Elder Mary Delorme, August 24, 2018; Elder Jane McDonald, July 11, 2018; Elder Philomene Moberly, April 26, 2018 and Elder Mabel Wanyandie, April 24,2018.

THIS GUIDE WAS PREPARED BY JOHANNE JOHNSON, Wahkohtowin Lodge Researcher, AS PART OF HER Master of Arts in Native Studies.

WAHKOHTOWIN

LAW & GOVERNANCE LODGE

ASENIWUCHE WINEWAK NATION