

TALKING STICK

THE VOICE OF METTANOKIT

Spring/Summer 2006



The Talking Stick Speaks: (through Manitonquat)

You are oppressed people. Every one of you. Most of the people of the world languish in poverty feeling helpless. You are not? Even the few wealthy and powerful also feel oppressed, in other ways. Oppressed by the clock, schedules, responsibilities, stress, attacks, betrayals, inadequacies. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.

Human beings, the systems you have inherited, built by your forebears, have put you at odds with one another in a struggle for survival. They have

brought you conflict, enmity, anger, anxiety, loneliness, and a lifetime sentence of muted dread.

Your systems of law and enforcement, of economies based on the greed of desperate egos, of education of mind, emotions, and spirit motivated by unadorned selfishness, all these systems are failing you. And the more they fail, the more you curse and attempt to tinker and prop them up. You are only feeding the conditions that are creating all your problems.

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Freedom, you cry. But freedom is not to be found. Not in the systems that perpetuate your oppression. But somewhere in the dim recollections of past struggles you may be connected to the old dream of equality. Freedom and equality, they cried, and brotherhood. Familyhood. The family of humankind. Human closeness.

'Man is born free but is everywhere in chains,' J-J Rousseau said it, and it's just as true today, after all those revolutions. Only the chains may in some places be different. But the cry that rose from the heart then, 'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité,' still resonates. Because you know they go together - you cannot have one without the



others. You need equality, for without it you will not have true closeness and love, and without them you will never be free.

Start with equality then. Can't you see how your systems promote inequality? How they create wealth and power and keep them securely in the hands of a tiny few while subjecting more and more to greater and greater poverty? Did you know that the total resources owned by less than 300 people on earth equal the total resources owned by three billion people? Did you get that? Think of it: less than 300 people own more than half the other people sharing this planet. Where, in that world, will you be able to find justice and peace? To say nothing of joy and love.

So, for you to be free, you must live by a system in which all are truly equal. That means everyone must have an equal say in the system. That equality must not only be a word, window-dressing, propaganda, spin. It must be practical and functioning.

When you come together to decide and to act you are, of course, not equal in many ways. Some of you are louder, angrier, some excel at logic, persuasion, some are shy, unsure, some think fast, others need more time. Some of you have been so hurt in the system that you retreat from conflict and ill will, while others, maddened by past injustice, attack relentlessly and pay no heed to anyone else.

To be rid of the inequality of the



law, which is devised by, for, and of the wealthy and powerful, you might turn to pursue anarchy - no law, no governance. But that only produces another inequality - rule by the aggressive, loud, and violent over the timid, quiet, and conflict-phobic. Before there was law, however, before your conquerors imposed their wills and codified them in statutes enforced by their mercenaries, by threat of slavery, confinement, or death, your ancestors managed good and harmonious societies for millions of years.

The system they devised for that is the one we call the circle. All the systems you live under today are pyramids. The power comes from the top down, from the very few over the many below. In the past the rulers claimed their authority from higher up - from a god or gods. Today they also claim authority from the bottom, that they represent 'the will of the people'. The truth is their authority comes only

from fear - the fear of sheer physical force and violence.

The people in a circle are equal to one another in power and authority. There is no top or bottom. They represent themselves and need no representative to speak for them. This means that a circle cannot be too large for all to be heard in the amount of time needed for it. When a circle becomes too large for the time allotted, it must break into smaller circles so that each may be heard equally. When these circles make decision they may be heard in larger circles, but any decisions made there must be brought back to the small circles for approval.

This takes more time than governance by executive fiat or by representation. But it assures equality and avoids the threat of domination. Every voice has the opportunity for an equal impact and authority. But each must be heard without interruption

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under an equal time limitation. To have a true circle of equals there must be a prior agreement that each shall have equal respect and attention.

To assure this your ancestors created me - the Talking Stick. I could also be a talking feather, wampum belt, shell, feather, bowl, herb, stone, relic, or what-have-you. But something in the hand reminds the listeners that attention must be paid and respect given. And something in the hand gives the speaker opportunity to consider, to collect thoughts and draw on inspiration. With me in your hand you can take your time. You can find your center and speak your heart. You do not need to rush to speak, no one will interrupt you. The time is yours.



You have the full attention and respect of the circle people. You are their equal. Respect does not require they agree with you, only that they listen and consider.

When you hold me in your hands, when you share me among you and listen to each other carefully, you will see a change in your deliberations. You will not be in competition with each other, trying to better or best each other. You will pay attention to what you have in common, to what makes you one body, one mind, one heart, a family, a community.

I have seen this with all your ancestors before you were subjected to the laws of the conquerors. I see it today whenever I am brought to circles in prison and other oppressive systems. They used me in the ancient Nordic Thing, and they use me still in the gatherings of the Rainbow People, people of many nations and races and ages and backgrounds who have no law but come together and create peaceful communities every summer in many places around the world.

With respect and attention there begins to be understanding, and with understanding there begins true human closeness. With equality and closeness comes freedom. The will of the people is your will.

When you find your own human community - body, mind, heart and spirit, you will be free together. And together there is nothing you cannot do.



Old Age in Indian Country

Old age in Indian America is very different than in the rest of the country. We Native Americans really love our old people. As some other folks may love their grandparents, American Indians have the greatest affection for all elders. Even though they may not be blood related, or even in the same tribe, they call each old person grandfather or grandmother. I am in the last half of my eighth decade of life on this earth. When I travel in cities and towns throughout North America and Europe, I am not much noticed. I carry my own luggage, stand in lines for service, rent cars and rooms, and generally am ignored as most strangers are unless they ask for something. In America old people go to retirement communities where they don't even allow young people to live.

They rarely see their families, and

when they require assistance and attention they go to nursing homes.

Old people are only noticed as a problem.

It is so different everywhere I travel in Indian country, to native communities and reservations. Even where no one knows me, people come right up and offer me a chair. "Would you like some coffee, grandfather?" they ask. "How about something to eat?" "It's chilly, get grandfather a blanket."

The little children sit by me and ask what stories can I tell them. The older young people come to ask where I'm from, what my people do, what is the history of my tribe. Older people trade jokes and stories with me, and many from all ages may bring me gifts, some little things they

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OLD AGE cont. from page 5

have made themselves that become treasures in my home. I feel welcome and cherished in native communities.

That is why our people look forward to growing old. They don't use cosmetics and dress to pretend they are young. I take care of my body, eat good food, stay away from chemicals, do physical work; I take care of my mind, stay curious and interested, read and discuss with others; nurture the love of my wife and my sons, play with children, take time to relish beauty; and I join with my tribe in the spiritual ceremonies we all love. It is an honor to grow old with our people, and our elders are not only honored, but cherished. For one thing, elders are a link with the past. They tell us how it was when they were young, and what their elders told of when they were young. They tell us stories from their long lives and what they have learned from them. And they tell us the wisdom that has been handed down generation-to-generation of our people's experience from ancient days.



We elders in turn love all the people, especially the children, so full of play and laughter and curiosity. It would be terrible to us if all the generations only kept to themselves. We are all family, and each generation loves and respects the others. How lonely and sad we would be without out energetic young people to love us, and how bare and barren would be the lives of our young people without their many grandfathers and grandmothers who encourage and love and are delighted by them.

I remember fondly my own beloved elders, all gone now, who gave me so much that helped my life. Now it is my turn to pass on their wisdom and what my own life has taught me.



SCHEDULE 2006 MANITONQUAT & ELLIKA

Date	Place	Contact
MAY		
12	We return to Copenhagen	(45) 32 571 471
18	Talk and book signing, Milano, Italy	
26-28	Heckenbeck Workshop, Germany	(49) 5563 6170
JUNE		
9-11	Workshop, Celleno, Italy	
22-25	Workshop & storytelling, Mölln Germany	
28-July 2	Finland – Circle Way Ecovillage camp	
JULY		
6	Peace & Love Conference, Borlänge, Sweden	
7-13	Circle Way Mundekulla Camp, Sweden	(46) 471 50450
14-21	Öland, Sweden	
23-Aug. 5	Circle Way International Camp, Germany www.international-camp.de	(49) 0234 958 6098
AUGUST		
6-10	ZEGG Camp & Tamera Summer University	
20-27	Circle Way Austrian Camp	(43) 699 1788877
SEPTEMBER		
8-10	Extertal Workshop, Germany	(49) 5262 992133
15-17	Bayreuth Workshop, Germany	(49) 921 150 1143
30-Oct. 1	Program in Sjælland, Denmark	
OCTOBER		
2	Return to USA	

(Still to be scheduled: Kiel & Wietzow, Germany, perhaps also Copenhagen)



Books and Links

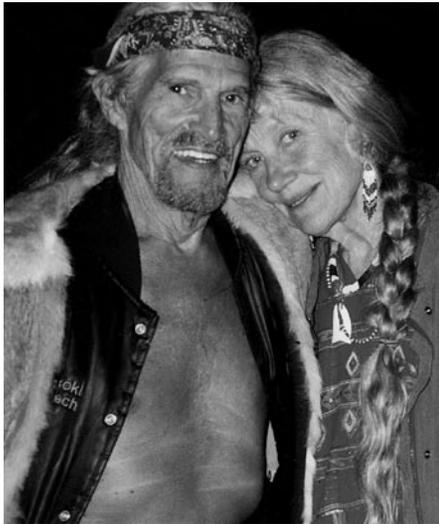
TWO ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR OUR WORK:

Last Child In the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder
by Richard Louv

Every parent and every teacher should read this book, which presents the case for the importance and urgency of our work here at the Nature School bringing children of the industrialized world back to our roots in Mother Earth.

Sacred Pleasure: Sex, Myth, and the Politics of the Body – New Paths to Power and Love
by Riane Eisler
(author of *The Chalice and the Blade*)

This book should make a revolution in our social thinking of and change fundamental directions in society for the future of humankind.



OTHER RECOMMENDED READING:

Nature's Way
by our good friend Ed McGaa
(author of *Mother Earth Spirituality*
and *Native Wisdom*)

Intelligence In Nature
by another good friend, Jeremy Narby
(author of *The Cosmic Serpent*)

Peace Is the Way
by Deepak Chopra

Nothing should be more important to us than peace – this book should be read by everyone who can read, and conveyed to the others.

*Kindness In A Cruel World:
The Evolution of Altruism*
by Noel Barber

For those like myself interested in science and evolution and how we got how we are.

LINKS:

www.circleway.org
our website. Info about us. See especially “Changing the World”

ishmael.com/welcome.cfm
connect with Daniel Quinn’s network and New Tribalism

partnershipway.org
join Riane Eisler’s essential work to transform human society



Home Saved

The home of Manitonquat, Ellika, and Raven, the sacred birch grove, the Nature School, the Mettanokit lodge, and the Woodlands Village have all been saved through the efforts of Donna Werner (AKA Wonder Woman) which allowed Manitonquat to buy the land. All is well. The only downside being that now he is heavily in debt and relying on donations to the Nature School Foundation to buy the land back from him eventually.

Meanwhile the Nature School will be able to resume its mission of saving children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, getting them beyond the computer and TV screens, out of the malls and shops, away from the cell phones and iPods, and into the reality of our woods and meadows, our ponds and rivers, our mountains and seashore. To find the animals in their own world, not in zoos or on “Wild Kingdom”

Also, with the help of former prisoners and supporters, Manitonquat has begun to build a traditional woodlands Indian village that children can visit and learn how the first nations people of the northeast lived here before the Puritan Invasion.

Tax-deductible donations to the Nature School Foundation may be sent here to 173 Merriam Hill Road, Greenville, NH 03048.

Changing the World

Manitonquat’s new book, *Changing the World* is available now by mail at a pre-publication price of \$10, plus \$2 shipping. The book contains Manitonquat’s vision of a Circle Way Village of the future, which he considers our best hope for getting the world out of the economic and political traps that keep us locked in to violence, greed, oppression, inequality, injustice, and ecological disaster.

Manitonquat’s own work to change the world he calls a three-legged stool – the first leg being the Prison Outreach, the second the Nature School, and the third the teaching of the Circle Way through his writings, lectures, workshops and international camps. Each leg is vital: the prison circles not only demonstrate the healing power of the circle but also send released prisoners back into society as healers and teachers of the circle; the Nature School, bringing children back to their roots in the earth and connected to our plant and animal relatives creates allies for nature in the coming generations and an understanding of the circle way of our ancestors; the third leg is most active today in the camps, but the next step, as indicated in the new book, is to begin work on a village, a settlement that can live now the life we all are seeking.



Starting a Movement

Manitonquat asks: Are you satisfied with how the governments and industries of the world are running things? Do you want to take back the control of your life and your world?

Are you ready now to change the world? If not, read the book *Changing the World* and think about it. If you are, read the book and connect with us.

We want to start a movement. A global organization dedicated to constructing a truly human society. The words “start” and “movement” might be qualified by saying we have started already and we move with all we do, but the key concept now is “global organization”. Our camps and workshops are well organized locally, and now it is time to think bigger, to connect and think and act globally.

Movements must have funding. We can expand the number and promotion of products we sell – books, recordings, arts and crafts, etc. as well as outreach for donations. At this time all the income from Manitonquat’s work goes into supporting the prison programs and the Nature School. Both of these should be able to attract a lot of donations with expanded publicity and promotion. And with more organization Manitonquat is willing to do more lectures, workshops and camps to fund a global organization.



Ecovillage

The Nature School has building sites available for sale just down the road in Mason, NH, and wants to encourage and assist a small ecovillage to grow there as a model for our goal of a Circle Way Village (see the new book *Changing The World*). This project is called the Walker Brook Eco Village, and its mission is to promote self sustainable community living, community gardening and the Nature School’s earth teachings. It encompasses 38 acres of woodlands, wetlands, fields, herbal, fruit and vegetable gardens, and a pond with Walker Brook bordering the entire property. For more information contact Cynthia or Donna at naturesch@aol.com or (603) 878-1173

Volunteers Wanted

Changing the world is a self-help operation. We need to attract a few people in each country who are willing to donate some of their own time and energy to organizing the movement locally – putting together circles, talks, workshops, camps, getting donations in order to advertise further. We need to expand our Internet outreach. Soon we must be able to pay wages to some people so they can work on our projects full time. If we make enough to hire professional fundraisers and publicity professionals, more staff can be hired. We should support our people to do event organizing, development and sale of products, directing village projects – acquiring land, building, providing basic village needs.

Our people here in New Hampshire at the Nature School and its Mettanokit Outreach consists entirely of Cynthia, Donna, Manitonquat, Ellika, and Jim (Raven), who are donating their time and energy without pay. We have a few volunteers helping part time with the school and the prison projects, but we are all over-extended and need help. The greatest help would be in the areas of publicity and fund-raising, which require professional expertise, but we need teachers, builders, and unskilled folks too.

We want a coordinated center like this in every country where we now function – Denmark, Sweden, Finland,

Germany, Austria, and Italy, and to expand to other countries soon and to connect these centers through an international office.

We should be able to organize spiritual gatherings on the scale that other movements do – Christian, Buddhist, Sufi, Yoga – only we have no single tradition we draw on, no dogma, no scripture, no hierarchy, only the circle – us, all equals – and our humanity, our love and compassion and closeness. If you have experienced our circles, whether in prisons or schools or workshops or camps, then you know what we mean.

So. Who is ready? What can you contribute? What are you thinking? Let us know. And let’s get to work (play). www.circleway.org; medicinestory@yahoo.com



April In Our Woods

We are walking out together this morning,
 My beloved, twenty years my bride, and I.
 She goes to the woods to begin her every day,
 Sometimes, as now, prevails on me to come too.
 Glad am I she never gives up on me, always
 Hopeful, and the gift she is to my heart and mind
 Forces me sometimes out of myself, to follow her
 To the woods, the breathing soul of dreaming earth.
 Nights are cold, smoke from the sugar hose tells
 Maple sap is plentiful this year, and the chill of morn
 Remains in our eyes to clear and waken them.
 Outside our door the blue and white crocuses wait
 The gentle prod of sun to open again
 Rhododendron puts tentative buds to the air.
 It will warm soon. The sky is clarion blue.
 Green laurel everywhere encourages the spring.
 The woods here are varied: slender ash, tall
 Silvery beech, much hemlock, some pine,
 Old oak. Maple are more by houses and roads,
 And hickory are all down the east side of the hill.
 Birch are rare and sickly, more sensitive
 To the sour rain from the industries to the west,
 Their rotting trunks litter the forest floor.
 We find a dark freshet warbling deep below
 And follow it up again to our neighbor's pond.
 Twenty-five years ago he bought the land,
 Thirty acres, from our community to ease our debt.
 He tore down the houses, built himself a new one,
 His own road, and dug his pond below the house.
 He is a doctor in the big city and is rarely here,
 Only a few weekends a year. We know him little,
 Our exchanges all about our spilling over his borders.
 Not a country person, at least not a community man,
 Not a neighbor as neighbors are reckoned here.
 New Hampshire folks are private and possessive too,
 So maybe it's the Indian in me wondering about him,
 Seems like he knows how to work the culture well,
 Property, money, America's model of success.



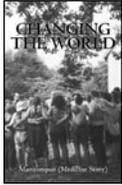
I'm guessing he toils at undoing the damages of stress
 In the city, needs to remove sometimes to the slow,
 The quiet, the order and wonder of our woods, dig
 His hands in the soil of gardens and watch the ducks.
 Well and good. I'm only bothered that during more
 Than three hundred days of every year the boys
 Of town warned not to skate or swim the empty pond.
 We lie in sun and watch the ducks – a pair of them
 (At least they have not been barred) gliding
 Sedately and bobbing for their submerged buffet.
 While I plan all I must do today the languid ducks
 Just cruise the moment, letting northlands wait:
 When the time comes they will be on their way.
 Meanwhile mice and squirrels and chipmunks rustle
 The dry leaves. In the larger pond below the hill
 Mother beaver stirs her mate, "It's half-past
 April, time to get busy, the house is a wreck,
 The children are famished, the dam leaks,
 The otters already out and scouring the pond."
 Now the drone of a single plane slices the sky
 Like a buzz-saw, reminding both of us
 Of the human world beyond that feeds and grows
 On its own toxicity, the hunger of its maw
 Seeking to swallow every forest, all
 Our ash and oak and hemlock, every maple,
 Hickory, birch and beech, pine and cedar,
 The mice, chipmunks, squirrels, rabbits, deer,
 Wildcat, wolf, coyote, moose, raccoon,
 Skunk and porcupine, beaver, badger, possum,
 Scurrying quail, grouse, turkey and pheasant,
 Hawks, eagles, falcons, buzzards keeping watch.
 Where will we all go? How should there be life
 When April returns but the forest is no more?
 I want to tell that pilot up there, all the people
 Raging the roads of sky and land, come back,
 You won't find it anywhere that you are going:
 Not peace, nor love, nor freedom, nor joy, nor life —
 Nothing your soul requires is there to be found,
 Only more search and stress and never April.
 Come instead to the woods and follow your love.



Native American Teachings and Stories for Healing Ourselves and Our World



Books



Changing the World

Medicine Story
Story Stone Publishing, Paperback (140 pgs) (adult)
Healing ourselves, our families, our communities, our earth. A vision for achieving freedom, peace, happiness and love, and a truly human society.

The Granddaughter of the Moon

Medicine Story, Story Stone Publishing
Paperback (32 pgs) (all ages)
An illustrated story based on a remnant of an old legend.



The Circle Way

Medicine Story, Story Stone Publishing
Paperback (90 pgs) (adult)
A manual of how to start and enhance circles of any kind.

Return to Creation

Medicine Story, Bear Tribe Publishers
Paperback (175 pgs.) (gr. 7 - adult) [ISBN 943404-20-7]
Using the history, traditions and prophecies of his Wampanoag ancestors and other native peoples. Medicine Story illustrates common human values and offers solutions to the problems confronting people today of all ages and cultures.



Ending Violent Crime

Medicine Story, Story Stone Publishing
Paperback (71 pgs.) (adult)
A concise report on working prison program circles which focus on a violence-free society.

Children of the Morning Light

Medicine Story, Simon & Shuster
Hardcover (71 pgs.) (all ages) [ISBN 0-02-00505-4]
Illustrated collection of Native American tales and legends of the Wampanoag Native of southeastern Massachusetts.

TEMPORARILY OUT OF STOCK



Other Publications



Talking Stick

Newsletter of Mettanokit Outreach. Yearly, with articles and schedules of Mettanokit and Medicine Story's writings, workshops and other events.

Heritage

Medicine Story Editor, Rational Island Publishers
A Re-Evaluation Counseling Journal for Native Liberation.



Order Form

Books

- _____ Changing the World (\$11)
- _____ The Granddaughter of the Moon (\$15)
- _____ The Circle Way (\$8)
- _____ Return to Creation (\$10)
- _____ Ending Violent Crime (\$6)

Other Publications

- _____ Talking Stick (\$2)
- _____ Heritage Journal (\$3)
- Storytelling Cassettes available (\$10) (call or email for details)

Shipping and Handling: add \$2.50 for 1st item and \$1 for each additional item. Prices for products are listed above.

Make checks out to: Mettanokit.

Mail order form to: 167 Merriam Hill Road, Greenville, NH 03048

Enclosed is a check in the amount of: _____
(this amount includes shipping and handling costs for each item requested)

Please send my order to:

Name: _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mettanokit is a non-profit learning center which is dedicated to healing ourselves and our world. Programs and services respectfully incorporate the ancestral wisdom of Native Americans and others who honor harmonious living with Mother Earth and spiritual connections with Creation.





Prison News

We are trying to work out the details of making sweat lodge purification ceremonies in the New Hampshire prisons. If we can't come to an agreement with the prisons and the Department of Corrections it will have to be settled in court this summer.

Environment

There can no longer be any doubt about the global warming scientists have been warning us about for over 40 years. Although the US government has not admitted it and censors the statements their own scientists issue. The warm weather is clearly responsible, scientists agree, for El Niño, the tsunami of last year, and hurricane Katrina that devastated the Gulf Coast. Check out the film "An Inconvenient Truth".

CONTACT US:

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Phone: (603) 878-2310

Fax: (603) 878-3201

Mail: 167 Merriam Hill Road
Greenville, NH 03048

COPENHAGEN

Phone: (45) 32 571471

EMAIL

medicinstory@yahoo.com

or mettanokit@yahoo.com

WEB

www.circleway.org

Downloadable pdf versions of this and previous issues of the Talking Stick can be found at www.circleway.org

