THE SCIENCE OF HUMILITY

Albert Marshall
Elder, Eskasoni First Nation
(Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife Commission)
Mi’kmaq Nation
(Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources)
Canada

Bringing Together Western and Aboriginal Science Knowledges

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The Medicine Wheel

Used to describe the nature of the Journey of Life

7 Sacred Gifts:

Love
Honesty
Humility
Respect
Truth
Patience
Wisdom
The Medicine Wheel

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7 Gifts:
- Love
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- Wisdom

Mi’kmaq Seven Sacred Gifts of Life

Teachings of Mi’kmaq Elder Murdena Marshall

Elders say that this is when your spiritual awareness is realized.

*The Gifts run in chronological order.
The Medicine Wheel teaches several lessons, indeed it contains an endless source of lessons.

Each lesson reinforces the 7 gifts and the need for balance in our lives.
Children and Elders share the colour white in the wheel, which also represents north.

This reminds us of clarity of spirit among Elders and children.

Mi’kmaq Seven Sacred Gifts of Life
Teachings of Mi’kmaq Elder Murdena Marshall
Honours Wisdom of Mother Earth: Cycles and Change
Mi’kmaq World View

Species possess rights

Humans possess responsibilities

Our culture is built on long term vision and our decisions were made with the next 7 generations in mind.

*image by: Rod Restoule from: Into the Daylight; C. Morrisseau, 1998*

Humans are not privileged, rather they are responsible.
Mother Earth provides for us, shelters us, nourishes us. We must look to her good examples for guidance.
Our seasons follow the cycles of Mother Earth, so that our children will always be reminded of the beauty of creation, and of our dependence on her.
Social Policies

• constructed around same concepts
• e.g. if a man committed violence against another man, killing him, he was responsible for that man’s family
• e.g. when two youths fell in love, the boy lived with the family of the girl, so they could observe his character, and see his ability to provide and care for their daughter
• families were supported to overcome problems; interconnectiveness was upheld
Celebrations

• based around Mother Earth’s provisions
• reinforcement of our beliefs
• songs, prayer, celebrations, feasts
• honour animals, encourage them to continue to provide
• honour ancestors, as they guide us to help us keep our beliefs and traditions alive
Language

- contains the wisdom and perspective of our ancestors
- how we express ourselves in language reminds us of our interrelatedness and interconnectiveness
- e.g. our word for the Bras d’Or Lakes does not mean “Arm of Gold” as it is usually interpreted into English, but “that to which all things flow” ... explains the relationship of the lake in creation, and relationship of the waters that surround her (i.e. not an exploitative value)
Example of Our World View
Residential Schools

Punished, abused, isolated

image from: Mi'kmaq Family and Children Services
Today

Our young people are poised on the edge of two worlds.

Some are parented by adults splintered by the residential schools who don’t know which way to turn.
As Elders in Our Time
We seek to be a conduit for wisdom of our ancestors. We seek to see with “two-eyes”...
... to take the accomplishments of Western Science further by blending it with the wisdom of our ancestors.
Only a change in consciousness will ensure long term survival of our planet. Only remembrance of the “science of humility” will ensure we do not destroy creation with our human ingenuity.
Only when we see with two eyes, will Western Science be something more than blind and Aboriginal thought something more than lost.
Wela’lioq
Thank You

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