

December 7, 2009
Remember Who You Are

A note to Clarice Brownshield. You were voted in by good and decent people. You were attacked by the corrupt and false petition was brought against you. Remember that it was by the efforts of good and decent people who showed up to support you against that false petition, that made the corrupt back down.

You cannot ignore these good and decent people. You cannot become like those who have gone before, and think it is all about you. It is not. It is about your community, your tribe, working against incredible odds and opposition, to heal itself.

Take the time to thank the Good People for both their vote and for their support. Take the time to stop and talk to them. Remind them that you are a good and decent woman, Tribal Councilor, and that you have not forgotten how you got here, and whose support has allowed you to stay in a position to where you can do the most good for your people, your tribe and your community.

A note to Darwin Brown, Justin Yankton, Jason Thompson: See note to Clarice Brownshield.

It is most important that, as Tribal Councilors in a wounded community, you must stay in touch with the people you represent. That means you are available to them when they come to your office, or you can make a reasonable date appointment and spend time with them, to hear them out, (some might have really good ideas), and let them know THEY are the most important aspect of your job. Because they are.

And, it is up to you, to make it a point to drop in on your constituents, bring tobacco, and ask them their opinion on things planned for the tribe or needed in their lives.

At first, they might say nothing, or not much. They won't trust that you actually are the change they voted for. But continue to do it. Continue to be there, go there. Continue to be responsive, and continue to listen to them, collectively and as individuals.

And, you will see, in your community, voices rise to guide you, support you and help you to do what you need to do. You will see your people, in your districts, gain confidence in you, trust your judgment more, and think better of themselves and their community.

Take the time to listen. Take the time to explain. And then watch what comes of that!

Value Life

Lucas Littleghost, for some reason, so I am told, jumped into the river last week (November 24th) and floated away from those who loved and cared about him.

The Obit says he died in the hospital, with his loving family around him. I don't know if he ever regained consciousness or not. People tried to save him. He was 24.

I don't know the circumstances. I have a suspicious mind, I always wonder, since they don't investigate the deaths of Indians, they don't do autopsies on Indians, they don't really even make the news when they are murdered or die under unknown circumstances, anyway, I suspect it could be more.

And, I am not alone. More than one writer has suspected that there is a serial killer murdering young Native Males and dumping their bodies in the river. But, since it is only Indians, I guess it's not worth looking into, eh? Yeah, I am sure there is something waaay more important out there.

Suicide or not, this has to stop.

Violence is Failure

Yes, it can be suicide. Raised in an environment of futility, hopelessness, low self-esteem, suicide is very likely. But so is murder. Violence is used as the solution to just about anything in Indian Country. Jealousy, anger, easily escalates to violence. Violence is so common, that it escalates into ultimate violence so swiftly, a petty feud can end up as a murder.

Violence at the common levels experienced in Indian Country creates more violence. Worse, it becomes the only and the ultimate 'coping skill'. Drugs, alcohol, make it worse, and more frequent.

Remember: Eddie was murdered. His murder was planned and executed, over a driving citation.

Violence against another is a clear indication that you have already lost. You can see no further than your own fists. You lose. Even if you win the fight, if you throw the first blow, you lose. You are wrong and you know it. You failed.

Violence against yourself, whether you cut yourself, or try to off yourself, is just as wrong.

Violation of Trust--Nowhere To Go

The second suicide last week was Chris Feather. He was 22. Apparently, he killed himself over a woman. Tiffany. I hear she is an RN, and is 37 years old, a relative of Piggy Cavanaugh. She either worked or had access to the mental health clinic on the rez.

Here's the big problem with that: Piggy is not qualified to run that Clinic. She should be removed, immediately. She has run off all the good, qualified, educated, degreed and certified health workers. She has opened up confidential

files, violated privacy, breached confidentiality, and used information against those who have come for help.

Ethical people have had to leave because they could not, in good conscience, allow clients to come in and reveal themselves, knowing that Piggy would find a way to breach confidential files and they could not protect anyone from her, her family, or her friends.

People on the rez have nowhere to go to heal. The one place where people are the most vulnerable, and need the most protection, is where they are the most in danger.

Doesn't matter if they are seeking counseling for alcohol, drugs, rape, or if they are contemplating suicide, they have nowhere to go for help. Piggy has abused her position, threatened and harassed good people, and essentially, made the clinic a place where people who are the most vulnerable, and their lowest point in life, run the greatest risk of being exposed and exploited for personal and political gain.

I wonder. If there were a safe place, run by qualified people, ethical people instead of Piggy and her clan, I wonder if there would be a chance that people who are having serious issues would be able to heal. I know that it is absolutely critical that people who are having acute or traumatic issues in their lives, have a place to go where they are able to get help and guidance and healing.

Suicides are no surprise. People have nowhere to go. Piggy gets a paycheck and your children are dying because she is where she should not be. Think about that.

I know that because of that, Chris Feather had no place to go. No one has. The suicides on the rez can go directly to the feet of Piggy Cavanaugh and the damage she has done.

People have to die like that so that the unqualified can hold a position they abuse? Is it really worth it?

Talk To Each Other

Your new Tribal Council needs to address the issues of so many unqualified people being in key positions, doing the most harm. You have Poopsie using the Casino as his personal Piggy Bank, whore stable, drug den. Your community goes hungry and cold while he pockets the wealth for himself, and the casino is known as the worst in the country.

That corrupt, stinking, foul casino is the only thing some people know about Spirit Lake Nation. You can do better.

His family, especially the Turdlings, have ruined everything they have touched.

So why does a convicted rapist, Q-Ball, hold down a high paying job in water and sewer? Why is his son allowed to do drugs and get paid an administrative wage. And where is QBall's office, anyway? Oh yeah, he killed his brother Scott so he could steal his house from him, and not pay any rent. (No investigation, no autopsy, no problem). WHY is he allowed to do this? Because he is a big bully? Is that all it takes?

Make It Work Right

Key to improving things is requiring degrees for positions that are Administrative. Enough of your children have overcome the challenges, beaten the odds, gotten the best educations and come home to help their people--only to be run off, not allowed to function and having to watch as 'friends' of the powerful take positions and ruin the community for lack of knowledge and skills. Worst of all, their lack of ethics and integrity.

Call your warriors home now. You need them. You need their skills. You need their integrity. You need their love of community and desire to really help and to heal. Start calling your warriors home. Or continue to watch your future float down the river, or swing from the rafters.

Call your warriors home. Learn new coping skills. Learn to value life again. Learn to live again.

Go talk to your Tribal Council Members. Tell them what is on your mind.

Those of you who have Walking Ego and Naked Lawn Ornament, look around. Find a better choice. You can do it.

You've already begun.

People are telling me that they see a difference in the People of Spirit Lake, these days.

People used to tell me that Spirit Lake People were like Zombies. Head down, dark, suspicious, and there was like a dark blanket over the place.

Now, people are telling me that they can see the people are more awake, standing up, defying the corruption, losing their fear of the bullies.

People are starting to look good out there. People are starting to look alive in Spirit Lake Nation.

If others can see it, so can you. The bullies fear you. Don't stop standing up. Ever.

Don't stop believing there is a reason to live and a purpose to your life.

Value YOUR Life

And no one, absolutely no one is worth killing yourself over.

Everyone has been dumped, lost a love, or been betrayed. Everyone. And we have all gone on to have even more love in our lives. Survive more betrayals. And life is so worth living.

Just seeing and hearing that the Good People of Spirit Lake Nation are doing what so many thought was impossible, is exhilarating.

Imagine how, when you are older, and whatever heartbreak, disappointment or betrayal is behind you, you can then reach out to someone going through the same thing, and pull them forward, into a better future--imagine how good that will feel.

Give yourself an idea of how good it will feel: Go do something for someone. Help them shovel their walk, carry their groceries, split their wood... something. Anything. Do it.

You will feel a high that is beyond any drug. I promise you. And it will last you much longer. You will connect with something much greater and stronger in yourself by doing something, anything, to help another person. You don't even have to know them to feel good, at a cellular level, in your whole being. It will change the vibration of your existence.

Imagine, having gone through what you have, and survived it, how much you can help someone going through this same ordeal—and make it an easier bridge to cross. You will have reached further into the future than ever you could imagine. That is why we go through crap. So we can help others get through it, and move on to a better life.

Plan to survive anything that comes at you. Plan to survive because you know something way better, more important, more vital is coming. You just need to be here to meet it.

Know that someone, up there, in the future, is counting on you to be there to help them when they need you the most. And someone further up, is waiting for them, at a critical time. It all comes back to you, being there, when the time comes—to meet it.

You know where to find me.

~Cat