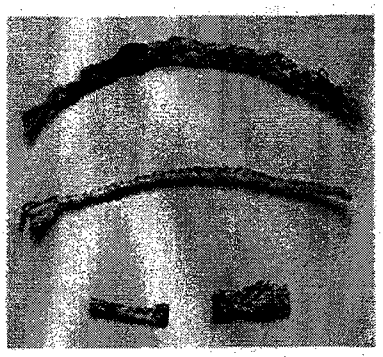
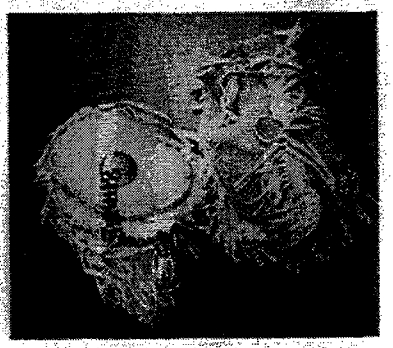
The Wearing of One's Personal Regalia

Tribal people understand the silence, we have been taught to listen intently to it. In this space of Self we put on our bells, our moccasins, our elaborate bead work, our feathers. Here in this space of Self we gather our Eagle-wing fans, prepare our staff, or Medicine Wheel, and attach our Medicine Bags to our wrists. Men may put on their bustles or roaches, their chokers, bells, or breast plates, their arm bands, or grass dance regalia, their animal skins, or head dresses. Women may put on their jingle dresses, or traditional shawls, their leggings, their beaded hair pieces or ribbons. We all put on our sacred regalia as a ritual of Sacred preparation.

Tribal people present themselves in their dance regalia to express their deepest Self. It is time to find, validate, and celebrate your true essence, your truest Self.





Watch the Birds. Are the sparrows merely the colours of their feathers? Are they the songs they sing? Or are they the movement of their wings? The Experience of their flight? Are sparrows the hunger and fulfilment they feel inside? Or the winds they ride? Are they what we see and experience them to Be, or what they see and experience? Are sparrows all of this? None of this? More than this? Only a sparrow knows what is to Be a sparrow.

Our personal regalia expresses our outward feathers, yet is rich Beyond the Bright colours and elaBorate designs. Our Beautiful regalia is our celeBration of Self, manifested for others to see. It is our internal design and colours, our internal patterns. Our outward regalia symBolizes our internal Self.

Come to know your uniqueness.

Come to declare your uniqueness.

Come and dance with your Self.

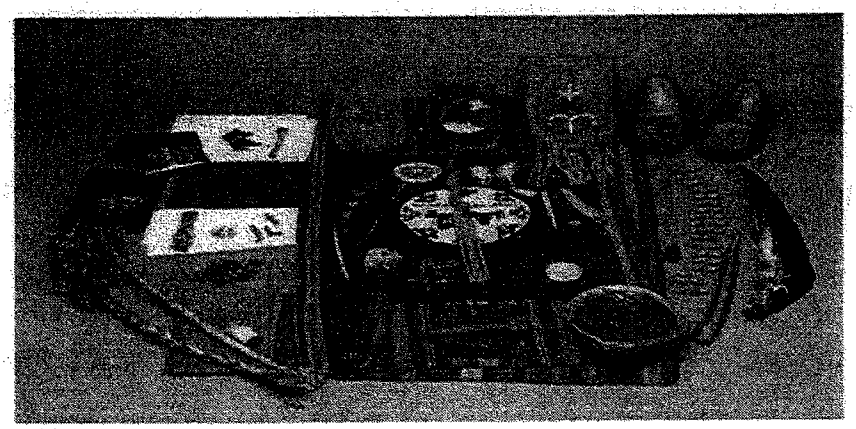
Our regalia manifests four aspects of our Self: physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual. You can wear the most beautiful clothing ever made, yet it only becomes meaningful when you imprint it with your own uniqueness, preen your emotional feathers, smooth out you're your values and link your spirit to the Great Spirit. Your regalia is coming home to Self. It is physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual preparation for the Dance of Life. It is a deliberate act of balance. I invite you know to prepare and then wear your own personal regalia with your heart.

An easy way to meet your individuality is to find some sand, dirt, or clay and make footprints. Many people are probably more familiar with the way expensive tennis shoes imprint the sand than their own foot. Go and imprint your foot. We have become so accustom to being distanced from Earth Mother

and ourselves, including our own bodies, that this may be a new experience for even a twenty or a sixty year old person. Observe the imprint, the way the granules lift and compress. Earth Mother acknowledges you in this unique way. She responds to you in a way unlike anyone else.

You are unique. When you become familiar with your own footprint you have taken the first step to celebrating your uniqueness. Massage your feet and honour them. They carry you from the doorway of birth to death's door. Take the time to relieve them of their burden. Decide what you can do to help your feet. Do for your feet what you would do for a friend. If you question the importance of such honour, ask someone who has lost their feet, due to disease, accident, or war, and the importance of such respect. The celebration of our true Self must begin with our physical self. To honour fully who we are, we must honour all of who we are.

Make your own moccasins and design them a pattern that will best represent you. Embellish them with beads, paint or bells. Express your true Self in what you wear.



Now consider whatever else covers your body, for either comfort or effect. First care for your body, then wear it for yourself. People who are truly free dress themselves not for what society might say is appropriate, but for what they feel is meaningful to them. I know of someone who wears wolf tee-shirts. Through this clothing, he is expressing his concern and respect for Brother Wolf. The Anishinaabe Way states whatever happens to the wolf, happens to people. I know that my celebration of my life, hinges on the celebration of others.

What is meaningful to you? What can you wear that will

express your deepest convictions, your deepest values, your deepest Self? Consider why spiritual people from across the globe wear specific attire. It is more than to simply state their identity. Like the regalia at Pow Wow, it is an expression of their deepest Self. It is an expression of their convictions. They become walking billboards announcing their spiritual awareness. You do not have to go Pow Wow, or become a priest or a rabbi, to have a cause and express that cause. You can wear something as small as a necklace or as large as a printed tee-shirt to make a difference with the people you encounter today.

Sadly, today's streets are filled with people including children wearing clothing that screams of hopelessness and escape. The slogans, though sarcastic humour, belittle living and the ability to make a difference. Yet, some people make a positive difference by wearing reminders of what life is truly about. Be deliberate in your choices. What you wear can affect others by either perpetuating the apathy for tomorrow's children or installing and reasserting hope in yourself.

Please sit close to your feelings, emotions and your passion, as you would to a fire. Hopefully you will hear the whispers of the Ancestors as we speak, this in the form of our traditional teachings. Words that mean more than just the words, the felling, the emotion, But mostly the passion. Please join this Hoop of Love, hear this prayer it honours you.

We have lost parts our teachings and parts of us that make us whole, we hear this in pieces we try to patch it together But this world tells us not to stop and listen, not to knit the parts together into a seamless Experience, or a peerless understanding. We are told today to read and re-act not respond But re-act, in this sense we allow things to happen to us rather than making things happen for us. Our teachings in the traditional way tell us to stop and to observe all things around you, we are encouraged to Become familiar with all things in nature and Creation. We are taught to participate in life, not to rush past it trying to make more of it, we are taught to Be, in the Being and the happiness of Being we are allowed to Become. If we spend all our time trying to Become

something bigger, stronger, better, or richer, we will never have time to enjoy being who and what we are, just the scramble to become something else, and never being anything. We are told in the traditional ways, on our way to life we are to attend to that life, should we while on our journeys happen upon a significant event or need of our attention we are taught to pause and attend to it, taking the time away from our journey which we can continue later when our presence and attention are no longer needed.

These are some of the lessons we have let slide away, we need to see all things around us, see what is truly important. Listen to the silence, hear the messages that the Creator has put there for us.

Every journey is begun with a single step, but the direction one takes is always influenced by the people, the things, and the situations that surround you. We as a group like to look at achievement as a singular event, a personal vindication, or a private milestone, a benchmark for all others and yourself to

be measured against. Just like the stone as it enters the placid water it does in effect cause the ripples to echo to the shorelines, without the water there is no effect, just as without the stone the effect is unnoticed. It is important at times to be the water but equally as important to be the stone, it is the harmony of this unique relationship that makes the connection spectacular.

WUT-TUN-NEE

(Tim Brown, Chair of the O.P.S.E.U. Aboriginal Circle)

O.P.S.E.U. Aboriginal Circle

Presented In Peace, To All Our Relations, Miguetch.

Convention 2002