

Native American tribes are very diverse. Cultural teachings, philosophies, and social dynamics differ greatly from one tribe to another. Even within one tribe, stories and teachings may vary from region to region.

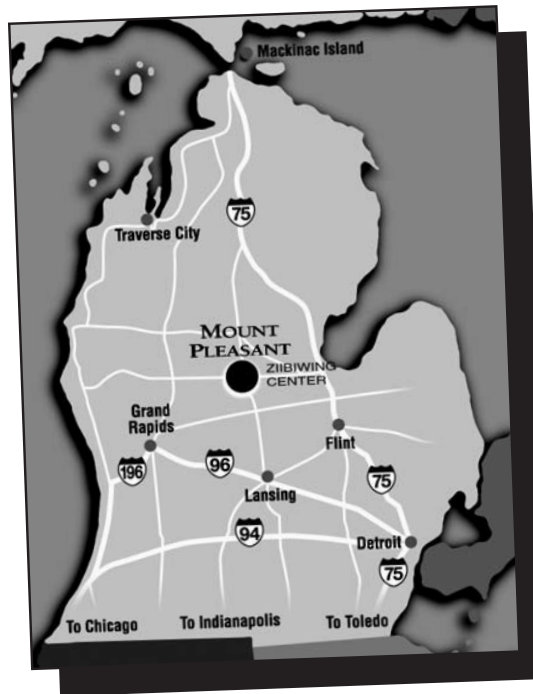
The teachings shared in our *Kinoomaagewin Mzinigas* (Little Teaching Books) may be presented differently in other areas.



ZIIBIWING CENTER
of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways

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**Niizhwaaswi
Mishomis
Kinoomaagewinawaan**

(Seven Grandfather Teachings)



Part 1 of a series of
Kinoomaagewin Mzinigas
(Little Teaching Books)

Seven Grandfather Teachings

We have to take care of *Aki* (Mother Earth) or we will not have a home. We must all share in this responsibility. We need to make sure that Mother Earth and everything the Creator gave her will always be here for future generations. Each morning let us remember to greet our Grandmothers and Grandfathers whose spirits are in the many glories that surround us. They taught us, as they had been taught by their elders, how to take care of Mother Earth and each other.

We are straying away from the Teachings given to us. Our young people do not pray and give thanksgiving. We need to know the Teachings of our Grandmothers and Grandfathers to give us direction and balance. Especially our leaders who are young; they need to listen and learn. We need their participation.

To take care of Mother Earth and the community of life, we need to remember the Teachings of the First Elder. The First Elder gave us the gifts of knowledge that he received from the Seven Grandfathers

when he was a little boy.

Each Grandfather gave him a great gift. One gave him the gift of **NIBWAAKAAWIN (Wisdom)**, and he learned to use that wisdom for his people.



Another gave the gift of **ZAAGIDWIN (Love)**, so that he would love his brother and sister and share with them.



The third Grandfather offered the gift of **MANAADJITOWAAWIN (Respect)**, so that he would give respect to everyone, all human beings and all things created.

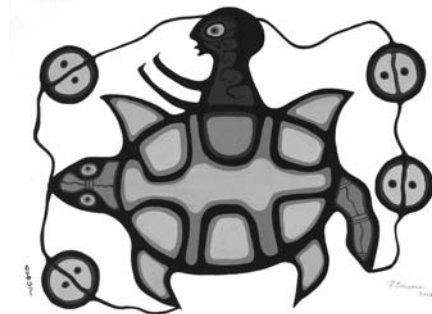


AAKODEWIN (Bravery) was the next gift, the courage to do things even in the most difficult of times.

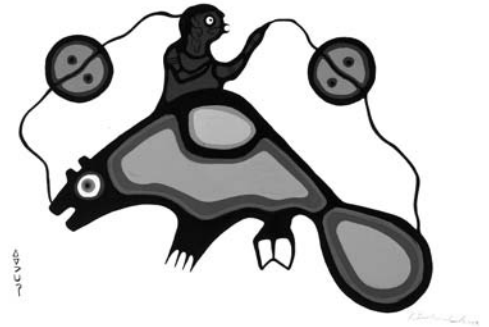
A fifth Grandfather gave the boy **GWEKOWAADIZIWIN (Honesty)**, so that he would be honest in every action and provide good feelings in his heart.



Another Grandfather offered **DIBAADENDIZOWIN (Humility)**, to teach the boy to know that he was equal to everyone else, no better or no less.



The last gift that was given to the boy was **DEBWEWIN (Truth)**. The Grandfather said, "Be true in everything that you do. Be true to yourself and true to your people. Always speak the truth."



The Grandfathers told him, "Each of these Teachings must be used with the rest. You can not have **WISDOM** without **LOVE**, **RESPECT**, **BRAVERY**, **HONESTY**, **HUMILITY**, and **TRUTH**. You can not be honest if you use only one or two of the Teachings, and to leave out one is to embrace the opposite of what the Teaching is."

We should all try to live by the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Sometimes it may be hard to apply all of them daily, but we must try. If we don't practice honesty, we cheat. If we don't practice truth, we will lie. We must go back to the knowledge that the Seven Grandfathers taught the First Elder, who then passed the Teachings on to the next generation, and so on.

The Seven Grandfather Teachings will remind us how to treat one another and our children. Each of us is responsible for taking care of the children and of Mother Earth. The children are the ones who must care for Mother Earth tomorrow, and for the generations to come.

- Author Unknown