

Community of Friends (Thiyóšpaye):

The term Lakota roughly translates to "an alliance of people." Family and the thiyóšpaye throughout most of Lakota history, family and community were the foundations of life.

Family did not just end at one's immediate relatives (i.e., siblings, parents, and children). Instead, different families that were bound by blood or marriage ties united together to form a social unit called a thiyóšpaye, which translates to "member of extended family."

Each person's acts were often measured in terms of the impact on the entire thiyóšpaye. People within the thiyóšpaye aligned and cooperated together for the good of all of its members. And even though several leaders headed each thiyóšpaye, there was still a sense of equality among all people.

From the Book: Speaking Of Indians by: Ella Cara Deloria, (A MUST READ!)

"Let me try to explain the kinship system of the Dakotas as simply as I can ... you have, of course, your natural father and mother and siblings; that is, all their other children, your brothers and sisters. But now, in addition, there are any number of men and women whom you also call father and mother, your secondary or auxiliary parents ...

Now you can see where you get so many other brothers or sisters besides your own, and where you get so many cousins. These extended siblings and these cousins constitute your generations; you belong together."

Ella Cara Deloria, Speaking of Indians (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, [1944] 1984).

"Everyone who was born a Dakota belonged in it; nobody need be left outside ... I can safely say that the ultimate aim of Dakota life, stripped of accessories, was quite simple: One must obey kinship rules; one must be a good relative. No Dakota who has participated in that life will dispute that ... Without that aim and the constant struggle to attain it, the people would no longer be Dakotas in truth. They would no longer even be human. To be a good Dakota, then, was to be humanized, civilized."

Ella Cara Deloria, Speaking of Indians (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, [1944] 1984)

"So I try to encourage young people to think about their identity in a much bigger way—as part of the Seven Fire Places [Oceti Sakowin], or as in individual identity, what language they speak or even their Tiospaye, their extended family. Now back in the day our Tiospayes were the most important part of our identity ... We asked, "Who are your relatives?" The old ones today ... they'll tell you who their relatives are and indeed we are all related, we belong to one another."

Jace DeCory, Instructor at Black Hills State University, Spearfish, South Dakota (from wolakotaproject.org)

https://www.biography.com/video/sitting-bull-the-lakota-family-2080096211?fbclid=IwAR0g6vfWitaiv8n0xhO-pnznhUm8iNgQ_MJ_V4EVfro8yBEyMU656AYNc8E

The Spirit of the Horse (Šuŋkawakǵáŋ):

The horse, spiritual or mythical figure, according to the Native Americans, were first saw around the 1700's. Horses appeared frequently in winter counts of the southern bands of Lakotas. The Native Americans were enchanted by them. Around 1750, the Lakota used the horses regularly for hunting and transportation. Horses were important to the Native Americans because it allowed them to travel vast distances in shorter periods of time. Thus, allowing them to strike enemies and prey at a quicker pace.

A family might own several horses, but a bison hunting horse was a special animal that wasn't used for other purposes, except perhaps war. When looking for a hunting or war horse, they selected a fast young one. They would train it for speed and to approach a moving herd of animals. The hide of a buffalo (tǵathǵanka) would be rubbed on the horse so that it would learn to know and not fear the smell.

Embracing the bond of one's horse, it may be painted with symbols that were important for special occasions like war or religious ceremonies. Some decorated their horse's bridles, saddles, and saddle bags with beads or quillwork. Masks of animal hide decorated with feathers were made for the horses face.

To the Native American community, horses would represent wealth. Both men and women could own horses. Men may acquire a horse through trade or a raid, but a women may receive it as a payment for her beadwork. But, in the Lakota tradition, wealth was to be given away to honor someone else who had done something great or to honor the dead. Horses often changed hands in giveaway ceremonies.

Horse by the Smithsonian NMAI

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC98mlqOY5HGNI5wrWS52F9A>

Lakota Horse Symbols

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43rv95H5Yul>

The Eagle Feather (wanǂlí wíyaka):

The Eagle... Master of the Sky and it's feathers hold a special significance to most Native American Indian people. The eagle is of the strongest and bravest of all birds. Of all the birds, the eagle flies higher and sees better than any other bird. They are highly revered and considered sacred with in Native American tradition, culture and religion.

The Bald and Golden Eagles (and their feathers) represent honesty, truth, majesty, strength, courage, wisdom, power and freedom. To be given an Eagle feather is the highest honor that can be awarded within the Native American culture. Every feather touched is honored with great care and shown the utmost respect.

Indian Braves, warriors and Chieftains were awarded the Eagle feather for extreme acts of valor and bravery. Each feather was earned one at a time and were difficult to come by.

It is said that a warrior would rather part with his horse or tepee, than to lose his Eagle feathers. Many of the old Chiefs had earned enough honors to wear a double-trailed bonnet that went to the ground.

Native Eagle Feather Teachings by Adrian LaChance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIDnZmWyTaE>

Lakota Origin Story by Elder Duane Hollow Horn Bear

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHbXk63wMTI>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VXbt_A6zgw&list=RD3VXbt_A6zgw&start_radio=1

Anpétu wašté, Good Day,

The Native American Education Committee and Timber Lake School is honored to provide a cultural enrichment experience for you during this time of flex-learning outside of our school building. We have collaborated with Colorful Creations in Aberdeen to provide a painting opportunity for our family, **thiyóšpaye**, at Timber Lake School. This is not required and will not be graded.

Although this project is for FUN and not a classroom requirement; this project is available for EVERY student at Timber Lake School. We hope that you will join in and “make” the most of what we have been experiencing. The grab-n-go kit will have an 8x10 canvas, 5 paint colors, 2 brushes, color chart, and either step-by-step directions or one that is already traced for you.

We feel like this will be a fun way to enrich each other with traditions of the Native American beliefs and teachings. The goal of this project is for you to own it, yet be connected to family, **thiyóšpaye**, school, and community. Together, we can share a piece of all of us. We urge you seek others in your family for their input and wisdom. Maybe a favorite color, a word or a symbol that represents a significant meaning can be added. Take the time to ask. Take the time to listen.

To order your grab-n-go kit, you will need to email amy.sandquist@k12.sd.us and tell me the design, how many, and step-by-step or already done. The designs are: Community of Friends/ **thiyóšpaye**; Spirit of the Horse (**šunƙawakǰán**); or The Eagle Feather (**waŋblí wíyaka**)/Panther Way. Orders need to be in by Friday, April 24th. They will be sent out with lunches on April 29th.

Please, share your finished work on social media. Did you know we have a FB page: Native American Education Committee? This will help us collect your master pieces! If you'd like, you can also email pictures to me and I can share them.

We encourage you to read the information sheets that accompany each design chosen for additional teachings. Ultimately, we hope this creative time allows you to connect to the very values that are core to the Native American culture and the Panther Way!

Tókša akhé (until we meet again),

Amy Sandquist

Native American Coordinator

