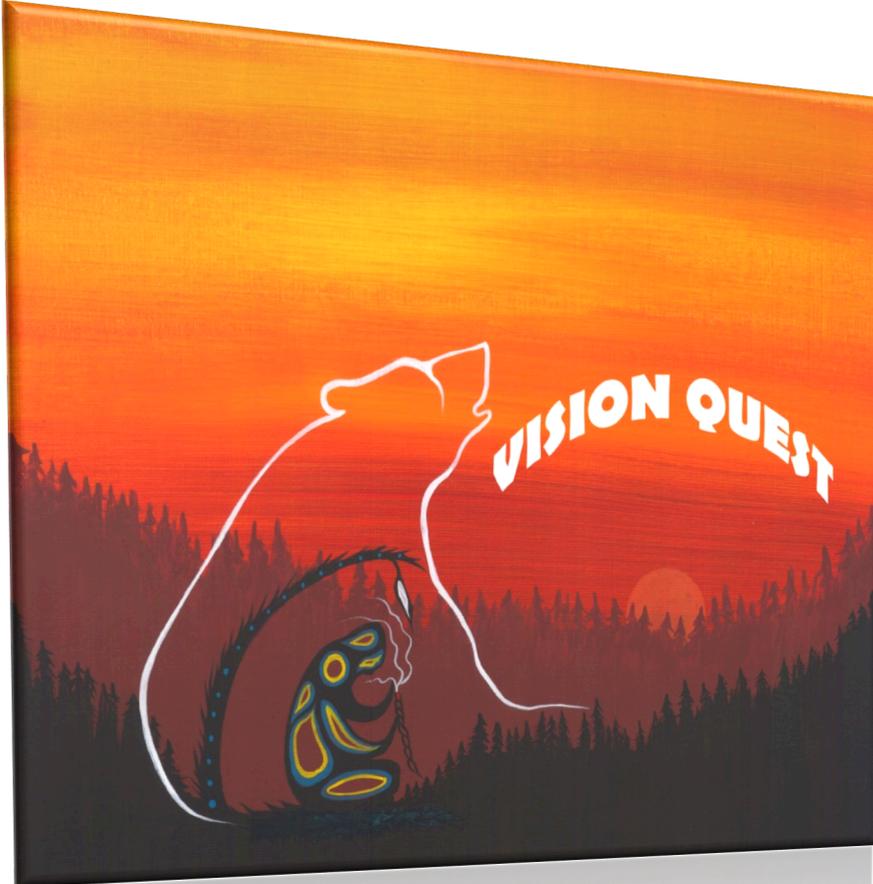


VISION QUEST – A NEW BEGINNING

FOR A NEW GENERATION OF MEN

A Call to be Initiated: Boys aged 12 and Up
TURTLE LODGE, MAY 10 TO 14, 2017
Manitou Api, in the Center of Turtle Island



The Turtle Lodge is making a call to all men who yearn for direction and connection to Spirit – who want to find a vision that will define the meaning and purpose of their life.

For 5 days in May 2017, men will gather to fast and pray in the heart of Turtle Island in Manitoba. Our first priority is to provide this experience to young boys (12 years old and up) so that they may be properly initiated into manhood.

Everywhere we see evidence of men who were never initiated into manhood, men who never had the opportunity to discover their own vision and nurture their individual gifts, or learn how they might serve the Creator and their fellow beings on planet Earth. In order to facilitate this transformation, boys must spend time alone on the land,

seeking a vision and creating an alliance with all of the natural world. They must be initiated by Mother Earth. In doing so, boys have a path to manhood that is based on respect for women and all life on Earth.

This will be facilitated by being on the land under the direction of Anishinabe elder, Dave Courchene and other mentors. Following ancient protocols that have worked for our people for thousands of years, we will support the emergence of strong men who will be set on a path of learning, love, humility and relationship to Spirit. There will be a few days of preparation with elder teachings, sunrise ceremonies, the sweat lodge, the sacred fire, and pilgrimage to the sacred petroforms, followed by 4 days out on the land alone with no food and no water, to seek a vision. Once they have completed the Vision Quest there will be a feast celebration. Each man will be responsible for his travel and sleeping bag and will make an offering to this event to support the work of this year and following years.

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VISION QUEST–May 10-14, 2017

No matter what how disconnected that we are, what challenges we face in life, and whether we are sick or feeling lost, the Elders always say in their great wisdom, "Go back to the beginning." They will ask, "What is your vision?"

They tell us we need to have a vision that defines our purpose and meaning in life.

If we hope to survive as strong families then we must create environments where the rites of passage are brought back and taught again. The young boys when they come of age must be taken to the land to seek a vision that comes from Spirit and to be initiated by Mother Earth. **Something is going to happen to the boys when they are out there. They will need to overcome their fears to find themselves – as they dream or have a vision of their purpose in life.**

To the Elders, going back to the beginning is to return to the ceremonies of our people. The sweat lodge is a lodge of cleansing and purification that represents the womb of our mothers. Once you enter you begin to regain the memory of being attached to your mother in her womb. You remember she is the one who created you as a human being. The memory of being attached to our mothers reminds us of her sacredness. All men must be initiated by woman to become real men. It was the grandmothers of our nations that initiated men in the past. They selected the leaders. Being the life givers they were honoured, respected and protected by the men. The more we find ourselves in the

sacred ceremonies of our people the more we understand the sacredness of the woman, and the sacredness of all life.

There are four elements that constitute our nature as human beings: our spirit, emotions, body and mind. The foundation of all life is the Spirit. The essence of all our lives is Spirit. The elders remind us we must turn to Spirit to understand our existence, our purpose. Our spirituality as a people defines who we are, and what our responsibilities are in this world. Our spirituality is connected to the Earth, Mother Earth as we call her.

As a young boy seeks his vision on a Vision Quest he is initiated by Mother Earth. We are making a call for young boys and men to participate in a Vision Quest to be initiated by the Earth this coming spring. They will be guided into one of our most sacred sites known as *Manitou Api* in the center of the continent. They will be encouraged and watched over daily by the Elders.

There was a Law that we were recently reminded of that came through ceremony. That Law, spoken in our language as Anishnabe people, was called *Abinoojii Ka kii kwe win*. The closest translation would be: *Teachings that are given to a child that last forever that can only be given by woman.*

If we truly understand that law, we will see and extend that sacred connection to our mothers, our grandmothers, our ancestors, and right to the beginning, to Mother Earth. We are all children of the Earth. All life has been born from the Earth. All teachings that are sacred have come from Mother Earth.

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