

Inuit & First Nations Guiding Principles and Concepts

Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit [IQ] [Inuit traditional knowledge]

A person with the power to make decisions must exercise that power to serve the people to whom he or she is responsible;

The obligation of guardianship or stewardship that a person may owe in relation to something that does not belong to the person;

People who wish to resolve important matters or any differences of interest must treat each other with respect and discuss them in a meaningful way, keeping in mind that just because a person is silent does not necessarily mean he or she agrees;

Skills must be improved and maintained through experience and practice;

People must work together in harmony to achieve a common purpose;

People are stewards of the environment and must treat all of nature holistically and with respect, because humans, wildlife and habitat are inter-connected and each person's actions and intentions

towards everything else have consequences, for good or ill;

The ability to be creative and flexible and to improvise with whatever is at hand to achieve a purpose or solve a problem;

A person who is recognized by the community as having in-depth knowledge of a subject;

Hunters should hunt only what is necessary for their needs and not waste the wildlife they hunt;

Even though wild animals are harvested for food and other purposes, malice towards them is prohibited;

Hunters should avoid causing wild animals unnecessary suffering when harvesting them;

Wildlife and habitat are not possessions and so hunters should avoid disputes over the wildlife they harvest or the areas in which they harvest them; and

All wildlife should be treated respectfully.

Source: Nunavut Wildlife Act 2003, Section 8

<https://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2003-c-26/latest/part-1/snu-2003-c-26-part-1.pdf>

Amerindian Guiding Principles and Concepts

“I’ve been considering the phrase ‘all my relations’ for some time now. It’s hugely important. It’s our saving grace in the end. It points to the truth that we are related, we are all connected, we all belong to each other. The most important word is all. Not just those who look like me, sing like me, dance like me, speak like me, pray like me or behave like me. ALL my relations. It means every person just as it means every blade of grass, rock, mineral and creature. We live because everything else does. If we were to collectively choose to live that teaching the energy of that change of consciousness would heal all of us — and heal the planet. We do it one person, one heart at a time... we are connected, we are the answer.” Richard Wagamese, 2015.

First Nations [Lakota]

“I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and round about beneath me was the whole hoop of the world.

And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being.

And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the centre grew one mighty flowering tree to shelter all children of one mother and one father”.

Nicholas Black Elk, First Nation, Lakota; vision quest as a youth

