

# CULTURAL AWARENESS

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# Cultural Awareness Purpose

Broad look at some of the cultural values and behaviors that may be seen when working with Native American fire crews.



# Native Fire Use



- Use of fire in traditional practices
- Many Tribes and Tribal families have a history and tradition of wildland firefighting

# Cultural Awareness

- ∞ Remember as a IARR you represent the crews and the Government equally
- ∞ To learn about the Tribal Culture you need to talk with the right people
  - Elder Group
  - Culture Committee
  - Tribal Council
  - Medicine Man
  - Interpreter
  - Hiring authorities
  - Current AD Pay Plan

# Individual Respect

- » As a courtesy, many remain neutral in others affairs
- » Those who practice this courtesy expect it to be returned
- » Hesitant to voice thoughts and opinions, sometimes even when asked



# Quietness

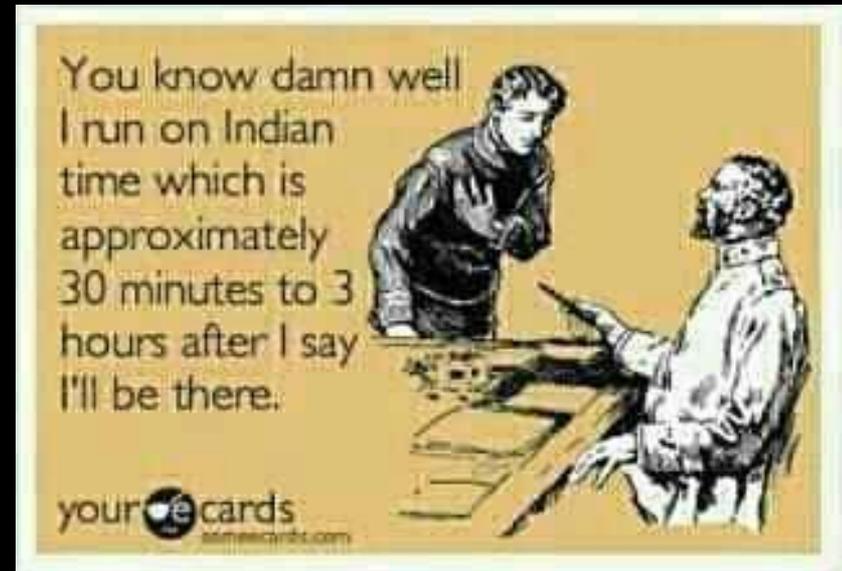
- Quietness or silence is a value
- Talking is done with purpose and is taken carefully with deliberation
- This trait may also be displayed when one is upset or uncomfortable
- Unfamiliar encounters and situations are approached with caution
- It can be difficult to discern the reason for an individual's silence, when in doubt remember to not make assumptions



# Traditional Sweatlodge

## TIME ORIENTATION

- Time is generally flexible and not structured in precise units. “Things happen when they are ready to happen.”
- Strong orientation to the present, current task or immediate need
- Patience demonstrates respect for the individual



# Work Ethic

- Work is directed at a purpose and is done when it needs to be done
- Busy work, or work without defined purpose moves against the grain of traditional values

# Practicality

- Native Americans tend to be practical minded
- Experiential and observational learning are highly developed in traditional cultures

# Holistic and Spiritual Orientation

- A long standing and integrated orientation to the whole
- Found in every aspect of Native American life
- General discussions are not unusual, but the inherent privacy of the Tribe and individual must be respected



# Examples of Holistic and Spiritual Orientation

- Reverence or fear of certain animal and plant species
- Leaving of offerings
- Prayer
- Ceremonies
- Interpretation of random events as signs or omens, either good or bad



# Questions?



To view the “Return to Tradition” or Traditional Uses of Fire”  
videos go to the BLM Youtube website or search  
<https://youtu.be/mUkkKEWFtrY>