

Community Help Needed

Help from the community is going to be essential for the success of the “Peacemaking Circle Sentencing” process. Elders, spiritual leaders, clergy, and responsible community members are invited to get involved. We can all help in the healing of the community.

Please Contact:

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Spirit Lake Tribal Court

Wodakota: Traditional Court

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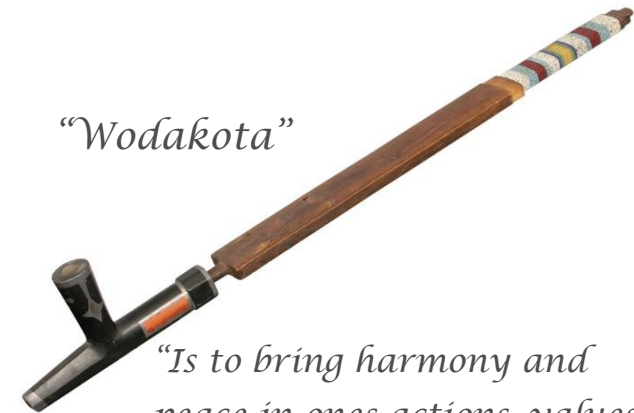
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Wodakota

Traditional Court



“Wodakota”

“Is to bring harmony and peace in ones actions, values and beliefs.”

Peacemaking Circle Sentencing

Conflict Resolution

Wodakota: Traditional Court

701.766.4244

Wodakota: Traditional Court

The **Wodakota: Traditional court** will use “Peacemaking Circle” techniques from our past to help the community and those affected by our current judicial system. By using a Circle approach we will respectfully engage in open communication among participants. A talking piece is passed clockwise to create open communication amongst the circle. A Peacemaker will lead the circle discussion allowing everyone to have an equal say. The Peacemaker will create a respectful space for everyone to be heard and help the “Peacemaking Circle” come to an agreement on the issue at hand.

This process will be used as an alternative to the current court procedures. We will use wisdom from our elders, spiritual leaders and community members in the “Peacemaking Circles” process to help resolve conflicts through mediation and serve as an alternative sentencing route for offenders.

Wodakota: for Youth

Will be a court diversionary program in order to provide intervention and prevention services to court involved youth & their families. It will collaborate with service providers, law enforcement, school districts and Spirit Lake Tribal Court in order to meet this goal.

Will approach Peacemaking through

- ◇ **“Peacemaking Circle Sentencing”** by Peacemakers through a creation of a “Peacemaking Compact”, that will allow for offenders to make things right through a variety of possible ways. Compact will include but not limited to community service, participation in faith based activities and/or cultural functions, cultural education, learning a cultural craft, restitution to victim, substance abuse evaluation and treatment, and traditional healing methods.
- ◇ **“Mentoring”** by Peacemakers to establish trust, leadership and guidance also may engage in activities that they agree upon.
- ◇ **“Mediation/Conflict Resolution”** where Peacemakers will serve as a conduit for communication between disputing parties. In an attempt to reach a consensus within the circle. Allowing the all parties to have an equal say and of equal importance. Peacemakers will find ways to help parties communicate with each other in a good way. In order to restore balance back to the community.

Wanting to Participate?

Applications and referrals to the Wodakota Traditional Court will be handled and determined on a case by case basis.

Spirit Lake Nation Members of the community wanting to participate will fill out an application, gather a support system to participate in the circle and attend a meeting prior to circle. Agreements and alternative sentencing will be made within the Peacemaking circle. Follow up will be required in most cases.

Youth Offenders 10-17 years of age wanting to participate in “Peacemaking Circle” prior to their court sentencing. Will fill out an application, gather a support system to participate in the circle and attend a pre-sentencing meeting to discuss case. If accepted Youth will agree to a Peacemaking Compact created by the Peacemaking Circle. Youth will attend follow-up meetings to give updates on progress in order to become accountable for their actions.

Questions? More information will be provided by Natasha Gourd, Traditional Court Coordinator, Location: Spirit Lake Tribal Court Offices Phone:701.766.4244 Email: ngourd@gondtc.com

IT IS THE GOAL OF THE **TRADITIONAL COURT** TO PROMOTE THE, “**WODAKOTA**” WAY IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE SPIRIT LAKE NATION. WE WILL USE THIS PHILOSOPHY IN ORDER PROMOTE HEALING AND WELLBEING AMONG OUR PEOPLE. IN OUR CIRCLES WE WILL TRY OUR BEST TO COMMUNICATE THIS FEELING AND KNOWING. WHEN PEOPLE ARE OUT OF BALANCE THEY ARE OPPOSITE OF THIS “**WODAKOTA**” WAY. AS DAKOTA PEOPLE, WE NEED TO STRIVE TO BECOME “**WODAKOTA**” IN OUR DEALINGS WITH OURSELVES, CREATOR, AND OUR RELATIVES. BY RECONNECTING THE CIRCLE IN A PEACEFUL WAY. IN THIS WAY WE WILL HELP EACH OTHER.