Miracles

Introduction:

It is with great pleasure that I am able to share my thoughts from a Native American perspective on Miracles. An Elder once told me, Native Americans believe that miracles are a way of life. The Values of various Tribes have allowed miracles to happen. The single most important value our elders teach is Spirituality and Prayer; all the other values extend from that. Recently some of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux elders prayed for a miracle for our people. Because of this great things have happened. First comes prayer, then faith, believing the prayer is heard, then waiting for it to happen, which instills hope when it does. Many times when things look bleak and the only thing you have is prayer, you do it. That is what happened over ten years ago. It wasn’t a coincidence that we met Dr. Kevin. I can say he is like a brother, someone who will put his heart into what you may ask of him. He and many others with him are an answered prayer.

Instilling tribal values is imperative for the survival of our people. Due to the lack of values being taught, our quality of life has been severely diminished. Too many of our children aren’t graduating high school and are being incarcerated at an astounding rate. Our gang problem is taking its toll in our communities as our youth see violence and property destruction as a means of entertainment. We are hoping to bring back our tribal values, as taught by tribal elders; to bring the youth and elders together to learn and relearn the importance of individual roles in building healthy communities. A group of our elders developed a list of ten tribal values and ways to teach youth in an effective manner. We want to bring back traditional values through storytelling, traditional games, traditional dancing and arts and crafts taught by elders in and outside of schools. The ten tribal values we will focus on are: respect, responsibility, discipline, compassion, honesty, love, trust, sharing, spirituality and prayer and the concept of everybody raises a child. If we get back these tribal values, we can and will eliminate seventy-five percent of the health disparities that plague our reservation. We will watch proudly as our children start to come home from colleges as professionals. By setting a standard of living through values we can address diabetes, obesity, lack of education, heart and lung disease, gang violence and destruction, drug and alcohol abuse as well as learn effective ways of overcoming the difficulties of life. We have presented these ideas to the schools, the juvenile detention center and the elders. All have expressed an excitement to get started. We will build healthy communities on the Ft. Peck Indian Reservation. This is considered a miracle considering all the above.

Miracles come from the number one Value as defined by the Elders: Spirituality and Prayer. You have to ask Jesus, Creator, God, Great Spirit to help with impossible tasks, and believe that it can happen. I have seen this many times with prayer that comes from the heart.

In my early years my father had requested prayer from elders; I remember the ceremony being very precise, from the offering and preparing of the food and who was to be the invited guests. The time came for the elders to pray, as they sat in their wheel chairs they sat for a long time with their eyes closed mediating on the prayer that was about to be said. It was thoughtful wisdom and humbleness in speaking to the Creator.

I often say the Love Has No Color is an answered prayer, bringing hope to our children and communities. This commitment by my friends is unparalleled by anything that I have ever been a part of. It goes to show what prayer can do even in the most windswept barren land (as described by a recent writer describing our community) with all the negative issues surrounding us. This Partnership with LHNC is a miracle in the fact that it brings life to me and others; while we still breathe we must be responsible to fight for others. We believe that everyone has something good to offer. The gift given by the Creator and that gift must come full circle. This means that we cannot be selfish with the gift, we need to share and teach it to others so others can benefit from it as well. That gift is carried on in life for others to enjoy. I see this with the LHNC group; there are many talents that are shared with our children that they may experience in their lives, bringing on hope, excitement and love. They not knowing, but our ten values are what LHNC live by. I’ve seen it. What a MIRACLE.