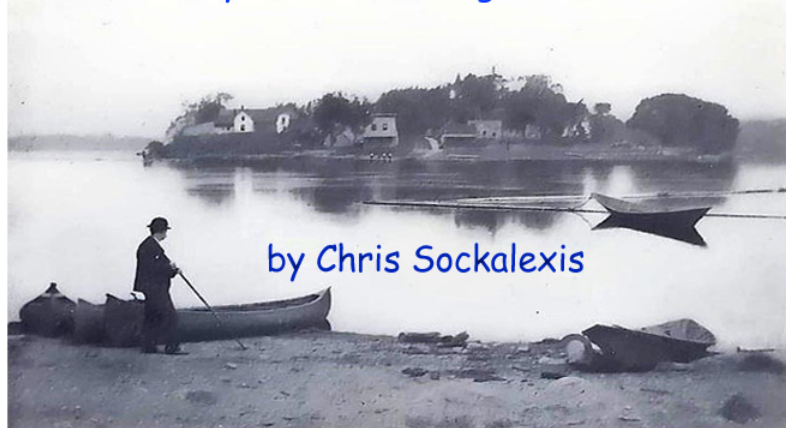


## Why We Drum, Sing and Dance



If you listen to the wind you can hear the old ones sing. That is what an elder said to a young man a long time ago. Months later the young man began hearing songs everytime the wind blew and he began to learn those songs. With in no time the young man was singing all those songs he learned from the wind. The others in the village laughed and thought the young man was crazy.

The young man moved to the outskirts of the village and sat in his lodge with his new found talent. All throughout the summer into the beginning of winter he listened and learned numerous songs that the wind kept singing. By winter the young man was singing all the songs that the wind had taught him.

Winter finally arrived in full force and the village was quiet and boring. There came a sound from the lodge off in the back corner. It was a dull sound of banging and a voice that was singing a melody. Some of the young children were the first to arrive and what they found was the young man hitting two sticks together and singing. The songs had a warm, happy feel about them and the children began to dance out in the snow as the young man was singing by his fire.

Some of the others, mostly adults, showed up and thought the young man had gone totally insane and was scaring the children because they were moving about and making a lot of noise. The adults started to grab the children to take them home but the children did not want to go with the others. They were having a good time with the singing man. They liked his songs and the way he sang them. The adults just scoffed at the singer and walked away with their children leaving the young man to sing alone once again. The young man started another song as the crowd left and the snow fell.

In the dead of winter a sickness ran throughout the village. Several elders and children were dying and there seemed no possible way to overcome the sickness. The young man went into the village to visit his sick uncle and grandfather. At his uncle's house he thought of an old song that the wind had taught him over the summer. The young man sat down next to his grandfather and uncle, burned some sweetgrass and began to sing.

It was an old song. One that his grandfather had not heard in many years. They listened to the song and prayed for the sickness to go away. Many rounds of the song went by and when the young man was done singing he opened his eyes and saw that his grandfather was crying. The young man thought that his uncle had died but when he looked down his uncle was crying too but had a smile on his face. The young man's uncle sat up and gave him a bundle of medicines.

All three men sensed that the young man's uncle was cured. It was the song along with the medicines that cured the young man's uncle. Those songs that were once forgotten for a long time were now renewed and the young man grew up to become one of the healers in the village.

It took a while for the others, who scorned the young singer, to realize that the young man had a special gift. Once the young singer was finally accepted he was asked to come to each lodge to sing his songs and bring his medicines to help the others who were sick. The village had realized the power in those songs and thanked the young man for curing all the sick families.

Spring time came and the village was alive with the new season. The singer and the children surprised the village by hosting a celebration. Everyone came with food and their families. After the feast everyone danced in the beauty of the day and throughout the night by the fire. It was a joyous celebration that has not happened in years.

That summer the young man was asked to sing everywhere for any event that happened in the village. The young children wanted to learn the songs that they had heard throughout the winter. This made the elders and the ancestors very happy. The old songs were alive again. The young man sang whenever someone wanted to learn the songs. Those old songs were passed on to the younger generation and they will pass them on to the next seven generations to follow.

