

The Métis in the 21st Century Conference

June 18-20, 2003

Saskatoon

Day 1 – Tape 4

Start Clip: 01:54:52:06

Rose Richardson: As a Métis, my lifestyle has been influenced by my environment. Being Métis meant knowing how to survive in nature. Being Métis meant having respect for my environment. Being Métis meant being in tune with nature, and also being in tune with my own spirituality and the spirituality of my environment. Our culture, our lifestyle, our spirituality was, and still is, influenced by our environment. Although my mother and grandparents had little or no formal education, we still had many teachings. Picking plants for food and medicine was and still is part of our lifestyle. We have, we have studied plants and their medicinal uses for generations. We have, we have preserved the knowledge of traditional plants as an intellectual right given to us by our ancestors. As technology advances, and industry moves further north, we are beginning to lose control of the very land on which our medicines grow. And in many cases the information taken from our people has become patented or copyrighted without giving recognition to our people and to our ancestors.

It is true that many cultures share the same knowledge and uses of, for plants. For example, chaga. Chaga is used in Russia and East China, and by Native people as a medicine to prevent and help heal cancer. We have been picking this type of medicine, which is a birch fungus, and sharing it with people affected by cancer for the last few years. After having one lung removed ... (Can this be taken off? I need something to hold onto. Like, everybody else is nervous and so am I. Will I break it if I take it off?)

Paul Chartrand: I don't know a thing about it, but I'll help you break it.

Rose Richardson: Okay. Okay, I'll go back to chaga. Chaga is used in Russia and East China, and by Native people as a medicine to prevent and help heal cancer. We have been picking this type of birch fungus and sharing it with people affected by cancer for the last few years. After having one lung removed, a seventy-one year old man in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario was diagnosed in November of 2001 with another tumour on his remaining lung. His doctor told him that there was nothing they could do and that he should get his personal affairs in order because he only had three months to live. They, we gave him some chaga and he began using it in December of '01. When he was still alive in March of '02, his doctors performed various tests, which showed no evidence of the tumour. Knowing that cancer does not disappear, that it may go into remission, but it does not disappear, they did more tests. And they told him, after more tests, they found out in May of '02 that he didn't have cancer. They told him by some form of miracle his cancer had gone. He has since gone on to enjoy life, and he contacts us regularly. We hear similar stories from people we have shared this medicine with and continue to give heartfelt thanks to our creator, creator, for having given us this gift.

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