



Tiokasin Ghosthorse: Indigenous Languages: A Perception from Earth



Tiokasin Ghosthorse is a member of the Cheyenne River Lakota Nation of South Dakota and has a long history with Indigenous activism and advocacy. He is the Founder, Host, and Executive Producer of “First Voices Radio” (formerly “First Voices Indigenous Radio”) for the last 28 years in New York City and Seattle/Olympia, Washington. In 2016, he received a Nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize from the International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy. Open yourself to indigenous ways of being and to how language shapes our experience.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Live your life as if your body was in the soul.

English Tends To Divide Things Up For Us, And It’s Very Hard To Divide In The Lakota Vernacular

- **As Lakota, we speak of the stars and we speak of energy first and then we describe it later as motion.** Elemental consciousness is alive within us. *“We are earth distancing ourselves, even today, with our words.”*

Lakota Language Does Not Have Words For Many Western Concepts Including Domination

- Lakota language begins in a relationship without domination, and it is in that relationship that our language is formed. **All aspects of identity are described within relationships with others and the earth.** Intimacy, generativity, even industry, are described in how we live with the land and surrounding environment. This is where we consider our integrity. We do not change the earth to suit our needs, as Lakota it is we are always adapting to the earth as we listen to the earth. *“Many elders did not want to speak English because it turned, it cut themselves, it restricted themselves from engaging with the rest of the world, not just humans.”*

Lakota Language Uses Verbs And Sounds To Describe Experience, Rather Than The Letters And Nouns Of English

- In English “I” is a noun, and **in Lakota, “I” is a verb, and in a sense, we were verbing everything.** All things are sentient, we understand life as essential consciousness - the rock, the fire, the water. For example, when at Standing Rock the call went out for with Water is Life - in Lakota, there is no noun for water, so Mini Wiconi translates “Mmmm” of Mini to mean “all of this”, and which is related to you and I and all things, “Ni” means living and the “ee-” sound of Ni means voicing. So “Mini” translated is the voicing and living of all our relations.
- *“When I think why we did not have an alphabet, it is because when the elders spoke, they were speaking in that of quantum physics.”*

Resources

- ❖ **Website:** <http://firstvoicesindigenoustradio.org>
- ❖ **Social:** [#tiokasinghosthorse](https://twitter.com/tiokasinghosthorse)



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