

Haudenosaunee Confederacy

~THANKSGIVING ADDRESS~

From Robin Wall Kimmerer's- **Braiding Sweetgrass** Book.
"ALLEGIANCE TO GRATITUDE"

Today we are gathered and we look upon the faces around us we see, that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and All living things. So now let us bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as People. Now our minds are one.

We are thankful to our Mother the Earth, for she gives us everything we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk about upon her. It gives us joy that she still continues to care for us, just as she has from the beginning of time, To our Mother, we send thanksgiving, love, and respect. Now our minds are one.

We give thanks to all the waters of the world for quenching our thirst, for providing strength and nurturing life for all beings. We know its power in many forms-waterfalls and rain, mists and streams, rivers and oceans, snow and ice. We are grateful that the waters are still here and meeting their responsibility to the rest of Creation. Can we agree that water is important to our lives and bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks to the Water? Now our minds are one.

We turn our thoughts to all the fish life in the water. They were instructed to cleanse and purify the water. They also give themselves to us as food. We are grateful that they continue to do their duties and we send to the Fish our greetings and our thanks. Now our minds are one.

Now we turn to the vast fields of plant life. As far as the eye can see the Plants grow, working many wonders. They sustain many life forms. We our minds gathered together, we give thanks and look forward to seeing Plant life for many generations to come. Now our minds are one.

When we look about us, we see the berries are still here, providing us with delicious foods. The leader of the berries is the Strawberry, the first to ripen in the spring. Can we agree that the berries are with us in the world and send our thanksgiving, love and respect to the berries? Now our minds are one.

With one mind we thank and honor all the food plants we harvest in the garden, especially the Three Sisters who feed the people with such abundance. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans, and fruit have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength from them as well. We gather together in our minds all the plant foods and send them a greeting and thanks. Now our minds are one.

Now we turn to the Medicine Herbs of the world. From the beginning of time they were instructed to take away sickness. They are always waiting and ready to heal us. We are so happy that there are still among us those special few who remember how to use the plants for healing. With one mind, we send thanksgiving, love and respect to the Medicine and the keepers of the Medicines. Now our minds are one.

We gather our minds together to send our greetings and thanks to all the beautiful animal life of the world, who walk about with us. They have many things to teach the people. We are grateful that they continue to share their lives with us and hope that it will always be so. Let us put our minds together as one and send our thanks to the Animals. Now our minds are one.

We put our minds together as one to thanks all the birds who move and fly about over our heads. The Creator gave them a gift of beautiful songs. Each morning they greet the day and with their songs remind us to appreciate life. The Eagle was chosen to be their leader and to watch over the world. To all the Birds, from the smallest to the largest, we send our joyful greetings and thanks. Now our minds are one.

We are all thankful for the powers we know as the four winds. We hear their voices in the morning air as they refresh us and

purify the air we breathe. They help to bring change of seasons. From the four directions they come, bringing us messages and giving us strength. With one mind we send our greetings and thanks to the Four winds. Now our minds are one.

Now we turn to the West where our grandfathers the Thunder Beings live. With lightning and thundering voices they bring with them the water that renews life. We bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks to our Grandfathers, the Thunderers.

We now send greetings and thanks to our eldest brother the Sun. Each day without fail he travels the sky from east to west, bringing the light of a new day. He is the source of all the fires of life. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Brother the Sun. Now our minds are one.

We put our minds together and give thanks to our oldest Grandmother, the Moon, who lights the nighttime sky. She is the leader of women all over the world and she governs the movement of the ocean tides. By her changing face we measure time and it is the moon who watches over the arrival of children here on Earth. Let us gather our thanks for our Grandmother Moon together in a pile, layer upon layer of gratitude joyfully, and then joyfully fling that pile of thanks high into the night sky that she will know. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our grandmother, the Moon,

We give thanks to the Stars who are spread across the sky like jewelry. We see them at night , helping the moon to light the darkness and bringing dew to the gardens and growing things. When we travel at night they bring us home. With our minds gathered as one, we send our greetings and thanks to all the Stars. Now our minds are one.

We gather our minds to greet and thank the enlightened teachers who have come to help throughout the ages. When we forget how to live in harmony, they remind us of the way we were

instructed as people. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to these caring Teachers. Now our minds are one.

We now turn our thoughts to the Creator, or great Spirit, and send greetings and thanks for all the gifts of Creations. Everything we need to live a good life is here on Mother Earth. For all the love that is still around us, we gather our minds together as one and send our choicest words of greetings and thanks to the Creator. Now our minds are one.

May we recite this to our children every Thanksgiving bringing a new awareness to all life on this beautiful Earth. ~~ Blessings to all, Jocelyn Hoch