

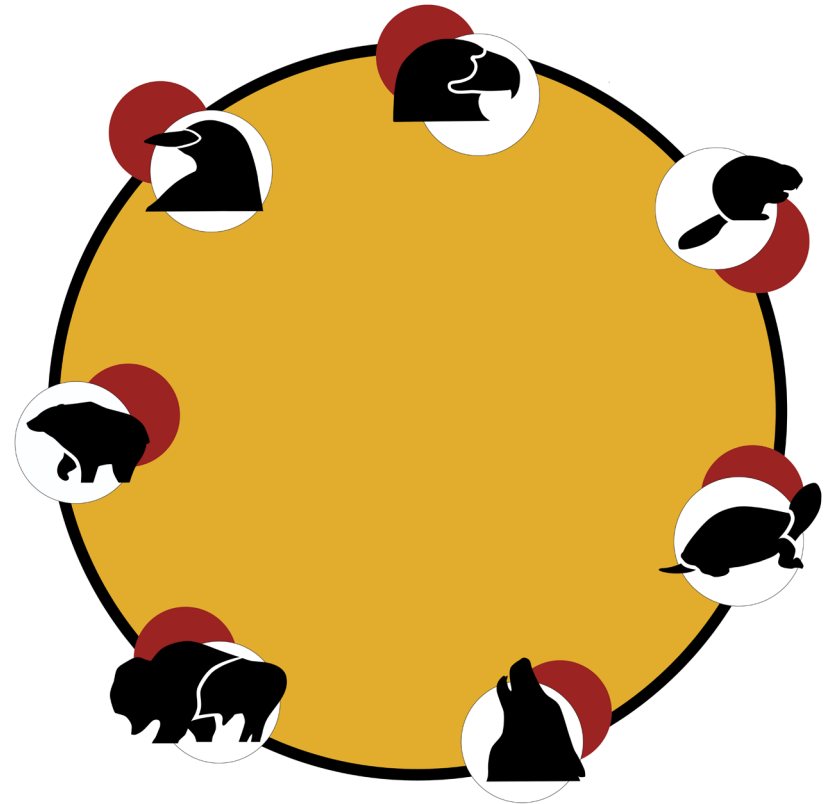
THE SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS



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The Legislative Assembly of Ontario is situated on the traditional land of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Huron-Wendat, the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee peoples. Today, Ontario is home to many Indigenous people and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and live on this land.

For millennia, Indigenous communities have shared their cultures and beliefs through storytelling. The Legislative Assembly is honoured to have a carving of the Seven Grandfather Teachings within the Legislative Chamber, and to share the story of these Anishinaabe guiding principles with all Ontarians. We recognize and respect what has been lost and strive to build bridges of understanding through education and discourse between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities.



Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
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CARVINGS IN THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER

For almost 130 years, Ontario's Legislative Chamber has brought many people with different opinions together to seek consensus. The Chamber has a rich heritage and contains a number of intricate wood carvings. Inspired by medieval architecture, renderings of gargoyles and mythical creatures are intended to scare away evil spirits, while Latin mottoes inscribed on pillars promote good governance. These pieces are beautiful and historically significant, but they lack representation from the Indigenous people in Ontario. A call for submissions for a new wood carving was circulated to incorporate an Indigenous voice into the Chamber. Garrett Nahdee was the successful artist, and his carving of the Seven Grandfather Teachings will serve as a permanent reminder of the history of Indigenous people in Ontario and symbolize new connections, relationships, and opportunities being fostered today.



ARTIST

GARRETT NAHDEE

Garrett Nahdee is a self-taught artist from Walpole Island First Nation. He served as an active-duty United States Marine for four years, participating in humanitarian missions. After his honourable discharge from the Marines, he spent five years as a truck driver, travelling all across Canada and the United States. It was in his truck that he first started drawing. Realizing he had a passion for art, he soon started painting and carving. He began getting requests to create custom pieces, and is now a full-time professional artist.

About the Seven Grandfather Teachings, Garrett says they are "great leadership traits, and when they are practiced in everyday life, you will see changes in your life. Burdens will be lifted, and bitterness will deplete. Uplifting your spirit to soar to another level of progress. I truly believe in the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and teach them when I can."

He explains "Let's begin with eagle, the spirit of Love. Through one's journey living through Love, one will gain Respect, and with love will respect others. So with Love and Respect, we abide in the Truth. Being true to oneself will bring Humility. Humility is a reflection of Wisdom. Wisdom is knowledge, which guides you to be humble. In the end, it takes Courage to be Honest, Courage to defend the Truth, Courage to always Respect and Love all of Mother Earth's gifts."



THE SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS

The Seven Grandfather Teachings are set of Anishinaabe guiding principles that give people the tools for how to live a good life. They have been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years through stories and ceremonies.

There were Seven Grandfathers who were given the responsibility by the Creator to watch over the Earth's people. They saw that life was not good, so they sent a helper, the Oshkabaywis, to walk among the people and bring them someone who could be taught how to live in harmony with Creation. It took seven tries but eventually the Oshkabaywis brought them a baby and they were happy. They instructed the Oshkabaywis to take the baby to every corner of the earth to see all of Creation. This took seven years and when they returned, each of the Grandfathers gave the child a gift – a teaching – to share with all the Earth's people.



LOVE

Love is unconditional and must be given freely. When we give Love freely, it comes back to us – in this way it is mutual and reciprocal. Love is between all of Creation, humans and non-humans. Love is represented by the eagle, who can travel over great distances and carry it and all of the teachings to the four directions of the Earth.

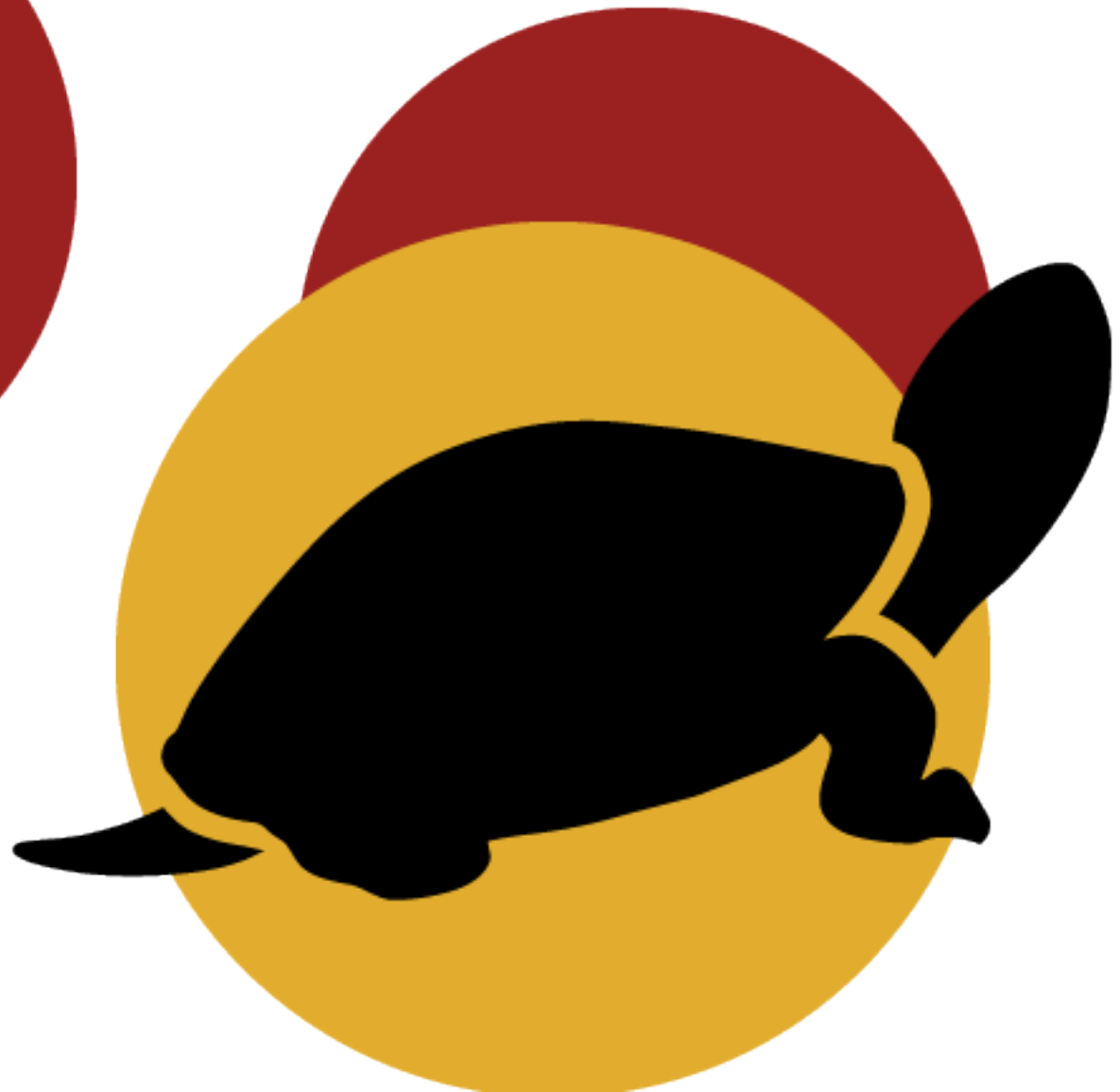


WISDOM

Wisdom is to be used for the good of all people - to cherish knowledge is to know Wisdom. Wisdom is represented by the beaver, who uses its natural gifts of sharp teeth wisely to cut logs and branches to build dams.

TRUTH

Truth is speaking only about what you have lived or experienced, do not deceive yourself or others. Truth is represented by the turtle, who was here during the creation of Earth and carries all of life's teachings on his back. By living in a slow and conscientious manner, the turtle knows the value of both the journey and the destination.





HUMILITY

Humility is to know yourself as a sacred part of Creation. You are equal to others, but you are not better. Humility is represented by the wolf, who are social animals that live in packs. They work in cooperation with each other and for the greater good of the pack.

RESPECT

Respect is mutual and reciprocal – in order to receive Respect you must give Respect. All of Creation should be treated with Respect. Respect is represented by the bison. The bison was at one time a significant resource for Anishinaabe people, giving every part of itself to sustain human life for food, clothing and shelter.





COURAGE

Courage is to face your foes with integrity, and do what is right even when the consequences are unpleasant. Courage is represented by the bear. The mother bear has the Courage and strength to face her fears and challenges while protecting her young.

HONESTY

Be Honest in your words and actions. Be Honest first with yourself, and you will more easily be able to be Honest with others. Honesty is represented by the raven. The raven accepts himself for who he is and does not look to try to be like others.





ANNO DOMINI
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1874
FALLENBACH



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