

# This month's čičye circle teaching



“Incorporating spiritual talking circles and brushings into our family units would be very beneficial, especially with September coming and our very young children going to school.

September can be very triggering for parents with intergenerational trauma, or grandparents who are residential school survivors. Check in with your family, and ask them: how are you feeling? A lot of times our children push things down, as parents and grandparents do. Stuffing feelings can happen in a variety of different ways, for example: with food, alcohol, drugs, or another addiction of some sort.

Introduce the spiritual talking circle by letting all know this is a check in with how we are doing. There may be discomforting feelings and that's OK. Feelings are normal. The more we have the talking circle the more comfortable we will be sharing as a family. If there are tears, there is a teaching: washing your face and saying a prayer as you do this helps you get back to the present moment.

A lot of the teachings I received are from Elders from when I worked at the treatment center in Nanaimo. The teachings are similar to ours here, but there are differences too. I was gifted an eagle fan which is a very powerful tool for spiritual brushing. It is similar to the cedar branch which is another spiritual tool. I use both.

My husband and I just did a brushing with my grandsons a couple of weeks ago. As parents and čičye we can do that. It helps our grandsons to continue doing well in their lives ...

Another ta?ow (Tla'amin teaching) is the water, spiritual bathing. In our teachings you go to the water and brush yourself with cedar branches early in the morning - whether it be the beach or the lake or the river. Brush yourself off and then you let the cedar branch go, so whatever you are letting or wanting to let go, the cedar branch and water take care of it for you.

A lot of parents and grandparents think they can't do their own cedar brushing. You can. You can brush your own child, your own grandchild. You can ask your daughter or son or grandchildren to join you in the living room on a Sunday. My late Elder friend used to do that with our grandson. She gave and left him a lot of teachings.”



Gladys Osawamick, čičye circle member