

Ed-Digenous Traditions

North American Indigenous Talking Stick

History:

The talking stick has many names and many usages that came from Indigenous people, Māori North American Indigenous people, aborigines, and some tribal groups of Africa. They were and are still used all over the world by different tribal groups. The talking sticks would be used by the Indigenous people in meetings, the individual holding the stick would be the only person in the group that could talk. Once they had finished speaking, they would then pass the stick on to the next person who would then go onto speak while others listened and so forth. It was felt that this method gave an equal participation of talking and thus preventing anyone from overpowering their influences when others were talking.



The talking stick has been used in traditional story telling by elders and promotes listening and patience in the children receiving the story and or lesson. The talking sticks are symbolic to their use with their distinct colours of spiritual representation, feathers, animal hide, the symbolic meaning of the wood used, sometimes carvings are present on the stick and are all symbolic to the talking stick's purpose. The symbolic components represent the spiritual belief that the stick would present in the meetings and provides strength, courage, and hope with a feeling of importance while using it.

Materials:

- 1 Natural stick
- String
- 3 Leather laces
- 1 leather piece for handle
- 20 Beads, 1 Shell, and Feathers

Optional Materials:

- Scissors
- Hot glue gun
- Paints

Instructions:

Attach and assemble all materials in participant's style.

- Use the largest piece of leather for the handle, wrapping it around one end of the stick, this will be your handle.
- Secure the handle in place with one of the leather strings, tie off where you choose and use the remaining string for decorating.
- Feathers will fit inside the beads once the beads are strung through with the leather laces.
- The shell is precut with a hole for the leather lace to fit through.