



QUILLS

Queen's University Indigenous
Land-Based Learning STEM

Two-Eyed Seeing Through the Wampum

Two-Eyed Seeing

By definition, the Two-Eyed Seeing Approach is an Indigenous Inquiry that requires Western methodology and Indigenous knowledge, "To see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing, and to see from the other eye with the strengths of Western ways of knowing, and to use both of these eyes together for the benefit of all" ("Two-Eyed Seeing", n.d.).

Etuaptmunk, which is the Mi'kmaki translation of Two-Eyed Seeing, is a gift that is shared by many Indigenous peoples. However, the principle of Two-Eyed Seeing is not designed to navigate through academic practices and disciplines; rather it is a practice that is intertwined with the philosophy of Netukulimk, which acknowledges that humans "are interdependent and interconnective with the natural world" ("Two-Eyed Seeing", n.d.).

Actively practicing the Two-Eyed Seeing principle requires respect and understanding that demonstrates that the outcome of our agreements do not compromise the next generation. In addition, we need to keep in mind that the Two-Eyed Seeing principle coincides with the Seventh Generation principle, which is the philosophy that states that our decisions today should result in a sustainable future for the next seven generations.

The Story of the Two Row Wampum

In 1613, when the Dutch began to settle on the land of the Haudenosaunee, a meeting was called between the Mohawk and Onondaga nations.

The two nations decided that representatives of the Haudenosaunee would meet with the Europeans to discuss the settlement intentions.

Over a period of communication the Haudenosaunee and Dutch decided that they needed a greeting to recognize each other. The Dutch thought that they should be referred to as 'Father' and the Haudenosaunee as 'Son'. Recognizing the inequality of the relationship, the Haudenosaunee suggested 'Brother'.

An agreement, a special wampum, was made to signify the promise of how they will treat and live together. The wampum was made of white and purple beads running in patterned rows. "In one row is a ship with our White Brothers' ways; in the other a canoe with our ways. Each will travel down the river of life side by side. Neither will attempt to steer the other's vessel" ("Two Row Wampum – Gä•sweñta", n.d.).

Along with the peaceful living negotiations, the Haudenosaunee created the wampum with the principles focusing on maintaining friendship, peace, and an agreement that will last forever.

Coming Together

Moving forward in regard towards Reconciliation, we need to educate our current and future generations in the principles of Two-Eyed Seeing and the Story of the Two Row Wampum. These principles both emphasize the importance of proactive listening, in which we have a responsibility to listen and respond based on our best interests that will benefit the next seven generations. These principles cannot be separated from our everyday life practices, but, rather, should be a subconscious, holistic reaction that we accommodate to our life.

What is the Seventh Generation Principle?. (2020). [Blog]. Retrieved from <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/seventh-generation-principle>

Two-Eyed Seeing. Retrieved 20 March 2022, from <http://www.integrativescience.ca/Principles/TwoEyedSeeing/>

Two Row Wampum – Gä•sweñta. Retrieved 20 March 2022, from <https://www.onondaganation.org/culture/wampum/two-row-wampum-belt-guswentala/>

