



Legend of Willow

Kāyas, long ago, Kisemanito, our Creator, had first brought the Nēhiyawak, people, onto this land and he was trying to figure out the best way to take care of kahkiyaw ayisiyinowak, all the people.

At that time he would assign the plants and animals that were here before us jobs. So with an animal like Mahihkan, wolf, his job was to help the people learn how to hunt and gather. The plants had different jobs. Trees such as the poplar tree made sure people talked right and didn't say bad words.

So, at this time, Kisemanito asked, "I need one of you plants to come forward and agree that you'll look after kahkiyaw Nēhiyawak, all the Cree people, and to make sure they all behave right and to take away any bad behavior or bad energy that they might have with them."

Even before he quit asking this, nīpisīy, the willow, stepped forward and spoke up, "I'll take this job. It sounds like an honourable job so I'll take this job to take away all the bad thoughts, bad energy, and bad behavior from kahkiyaw ayisiyinowak." So, the job was given to nīpisīy.

When this was told to Nēhiyawak, it was told that any time we had bad feelings or bad energy, we're taught to take nīpisīy and to tap ourselves or rub the nīpisīy on our body and our mind just to take away all that bad energy. And this teaching was passed down from generation to generation of the story of nīpisīy agreeing to take this job.

So this is the story of nīpisīy.

Ekosi Maka