

Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak

Episode 6: December 16, 2021

Erik Redix (ER): Boozhoo Anishinaabedoog. Gibizindaan *Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak*. Miskwaa Anang indizhinikaaz. Migizi indoodem. Odaawaa zaaga'iganing indonjibaa. Gichi Onigamiing indaa. Ingikinoo'amaage Ojibwemowin Oshki Ogimaag Gikinoo'amaadiwigamigong.

Welcome to *Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak*, a program featuring Ojibwe first speakers telling stories in English and Ojibwemowin, the Ojibwe language. I'm your host, Erik Redix, and I am the Anishinaabe language Director at Oshki Ogimaag Community School on the Grand Portage Reservation. In episode six, Maajiigwaneyaash, Dr. Gordon Jourdain, Ojibwe Language Specialist for the Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwe, talks about the importance of raptors to Ojibwe people and what he calls the dichotomy of thought. So our students here in Grand Portage recently had a program from the University of Minnesota Raptor Center, and I wondered if you could share any stories about the importance of raptors for Ojibwe people.

Gordon Jourdain (GJ): I always sat with my grandmother no matter where we went, from the time I was a little kid until, well, she left this earth. I always sat with her during ceremonies and or outside of ceremonies, no matter where we were, I was always with her. And then I was always curious, you know, at the ceremonies of *niimi'iding*, those powwows, those contemporary powwows, that they have these days. *Niibiwaa gegoo biinzikamagad*. A lot of different Anishinaabeg. Long time ago, my grandmother would say you would be able to tell what type of Anishinaabe was there by the colors that they wore. It's not decorating, but how they how they kind of like wore, the things that told their story of who they are in their life, or even their family. Commitment to *bimaadiziwin* and the communities that they came from, you always knew where they were from by those things. *Dibishkoo i'i gikiwe'on*, how a flag resembles who we are as Anishinaabe people, the people were seemingly just like flags of their of themselves and their nations and the communities that they came from. So you always knew who they were. And they always had *migizi*, and they always kept it in higher regard. And there's teachings in the lodges why that is so. But a lot of those people would wear eagle feathers or *giniw* feathers, and they would, depending on if they took life or almost lost their lives, they would wear their feathers differently, so you could tell how the story of their warfare through how they decorated their feathers and how they also decorated their faces. So the feather was held in high regard, of course, because *migizi* and the *giniw* were the ones that that were able to sound their voice so that we would be saved from being removed from our mother, the Earth.

But I asked her, and I was always curious, because the way the contemporary pow wows are done was kind of like strange and foreign to me. I didn't see them doing it that way where I grew up. Because where I grew up they were more like really, really extreme ceremonial dances, *niimi'idiwag*, different dances, like, *gichipizowag*, *waaboozoniimi*. So, you know, I wasn't even all those kinds of things that the people in the community where I grew up did. As we came out and as I started to grow up and traveling with my grandmother, I noticed that they would do these ceremonies when they dropped feathers at the powers that they had. So I watched them for a while. Then finally, I just asked my

grandmother. I tried to figure things out. I was always curious, trying to figure things out on my own. So I finally asked her, “*Aaniin ezhichigewaad Nokomis?*”, and then she wouldn't tell me right away. She didn't want to burden herself with explaining something to me while in the midst of enjoying her powwow (laughter). So she would tell me those things later on when we got home she said, “*Gichi-apiitendaagozi migizi*,” the migizi is held in high regard. *Gii-ikido*, “*Miisa o’o bi-naazhakii*,” it comes from the sky to the earth to help those ones that wear them, and the creator does work for them and heals them through those feathers that Anishinaabe wear *gikiwe’on*, on the flag to resemble who they are in their story, through to the things that they had when they were dancing, and she said, and then when they are finished healing that person, they just let go, and they fall just like the eagle feather dropped.

The eagle drops a feather from the sky and it comes down to the ground because that feather has done its work with that particular eagle and as a worker, as an *oshkaabewis* for the Creator, we are all *oshkaabewis* to the Creator, *oshkaabewis* are the ones that work for the lodge and do all these things and get everything ready, we pick up these feathers and pass them on to somebody else, so that essentially that that feather just drops from the sky, and then somebody comes and picks it up and goes and helps those ones now. So that the feather just keeps traveling back from person to person to person to person, always, always moving on when it's work is done with that one individual person. That's how she explained the picking up of the feather at the dance. And I look at it as in a positive way, my grandmother's mode of teaching was through love, it wasn't through fear tactics, like it's a bad omen to drop a feather or it's a bad omen to see something that the Creator fully lovingly placed on this Earth to come and heal us with. There's nothing bad about anything that the Creator placed on this Earth. That's the way that she looked at this Earth, and that's the way that I try to look at this earth, too. But it's a struggle sometimes (laughter) to look through the lens of love and try to live that way on a daily basis. But that is how she was informed by her grandfather, and that's the lens that she used to kind of like show me through life example, what those kinds of things meant to us and what it meant to her, and what how I should be placing meaning in those things in my life too.

ER (07:58): I wondered if, for our language learners, if you could, myself included, if you could tell that story, then in Ojibwe?

GJ: Oh, of course, yeah.

Mii sa aa’aa nookomis Bepakwewidamook gii-izhinikaazo, Waawiye-aanakodook, Gwayakwaanimadook gaye, moonzoon ogii-odoodeminan. Apane dash igo ingii-pabaa wiijiwaa, ingii-ombigi’ig a’awe aa’aa mindimoowenh ingii-kanawenimaa dash gii-ani kichi’ayaa’aawi-, gii-ani-, gii-ani-kichi-ayaa’aawid, awashime gii-ani-kichi-ayaa’aawid. Gii-

ani-mamaanjigotood gegoo ji-izhichiged ingii-, ingii-wiidookawaa, Mii go apane gii-pabaa wiijiwag.

Mii go ge iwidi he’iing a ishkoniiganensing gagii-tazhi-obigiyaan gii-a, ayaawid goda gii

pabaa-wiijiiwag, nimaamaa sa go gaye ingii-pabaa-wiijiiwaa, gii-ojitdaakwewe nima-, gaagii-ogiiyaan. Gakina gegoo gii-izhichige awe aa'aa mindoowenh.

Mii dash imaa, nawaj igo gii-ani-, gi-ani-zaziikiziyaan mii apii gii-pabaamiwizhid nookomisiban. Ingoji ingii-pabaa-ezhiwinig bepakaan he'iin ishkoniiganan. Pakaan dash igo ingii-pabaa-inaapishin, pakaan igo gegoo izhitoowag ingi anishinaabeg eyaawaad. Pakaan, pakaan a izhitoowag onzaam, onzaam mii ezhichigewaad ge wiinawaa iwidi eyaawaad.

Mii dash ingiwe gaa-ikidod ko nookomisiban mewinzha gaa-izhi-kikenimaawaagwen ezhi bepakaanizinid anishinaabe' mii iwe ezhi'onid ingoji waabamaawaad. Mii go ge he'ii goda e-, enikawaawaad i'iw omiigoniwaa', mii imaa wenji-kikenimindwaa aaniindi gaa izhiwebiziwaad wendo-baniziwaad ingiw anishinaabeg. Bebaa-, bebaa-ando-baniziwaad imaa babaa-ganawendamowaad i'uwe odanishinaabe-akiimiwaa.

Miinawaa iniwen nakake obwaazhii'oniwaan aaniin enaandenig mii go ezhi-kikenimadwaa wegonen dinawa anishinaabeyiwiwaad. Nashke ge mii gaa-ikidod nookomisiban gii miskokonayewag iinzan ingi aa'aa Ojibwe-anishinaabeg, gii-ozaawikonayewag dash ingi aa'aa Bwaanag miinawaa go bepakaan igo gii-izhi'owag ongowe bepakaan anishinaabeg. Mii go gaa-izhi-kikenimadwaa aaniin gaa-izhichigewaad. Aaniin gaa-izhi-, gaa-izhi-, ezhi badakibine'owaad mii imaa nakake ge-izhi-biisikawaawaad i'i ogimiigoniwaa' nakake.

Miinawaa enizhigaazonid iniw omiigoniwaan mii ge imaa nakake wenji-kikinimaawaad. Waaj igo ge-iniwen ezhi-, ezhi-, ezhi-aabajitoowaad i'iw onaman imaa nakake odengweniwaang, ezhi-bii'an, ezhi-bii'igaadenig ini odengwaaniwaan. Maage imaa ongoji owiiyawawaang gagi-kamowaad ini he'iin bepakaan enaandegin iniw onaman.

Mii dash ingi aabiding ingii-waabamaag, apane go ingii-waabamaag gii-, he'ii goda badakibine'owaad ingiw anishinaabeg memindage ogichi-zaagi'aawaan ini, ogichi apiitenimaawaan ge ini giniwi-miigonan maagizhaa ge ini migiziwi-miigonan. Gaan shnaa gigii-piibaagindamaagonaan a'aw manidoo, indizhi-, indizhi-bizindawaag ongiw enwaachigewaad imaa gaagiigidowaad iniw he'iin waaginogaanan maage iniw he'iin midewigaanan.

Mii imaa eyaagin iniw niibiwa kikendaasowinan. Mii gaanash giinawind iwe he'ii gigikino'amaagewininaan. Kino'amaagewigamig iwe nakake midewigaan miinawaa onowen gegoo gaa-ezhichiged anishinaabe. Mii imaa eyaagin iniw, giinawind ezhaaying ji kiken-, ji-kikendaasoying giinawind.

Mii dash imaa, waa-, babinzidawagwaa ingi aabiding mewinzha gii-piibaagindamawinang awe awesiinh, binesi, ji-bimaaji'inang a'a manidoo, aanawigo ji-manaaji'inang a manidoo geyaabi ginwenzh ji-ani-, ji-ani-bimoseying imaa nakake akiikaang.

Mii dash iwe nakake gii-niimi'iding noongom nooma-, noongom owe nakake indizhi-waab-, ingii-izhi-waabandaan gii-izhishimo'idiwaad awiya.

Kina gegoo gii-izhichigewag idi Kijiwanong gagii-tazhig-nitaawigiyaan. Mii dash i'iw wenji kikemdamowaad aaniin enakamigak imaa agwajjing ezhi-kiken-, ezhi-kik-, ezhi

kino'amaaged a'a gimaa-, gookomisinaan, nibaa-giizis ezhinikaazod. Ingoding ge waaboozo niimi'idiwag, ingoding ge kichipinidiwag, ingoding ge bimaazhagameshimo'idiwag, ingoding ge biiwidekewag. Noojigo gii-izichigewag ingi anishinaabeg bepakaan ge ako.

Mii dash igo gii-pabaa-wiijiiwag apane nookomis ingii-pabaa-, ingii-pabaa-waawiindamaag sa go babaa-enaapishinaan aaniin wenji-izhichigewaad gegoo. Wiikaa go ingii-wiindamaag gaawiin owii-ayaasii niwii-tazhi-, wii-tazhi-ombiigizisii imaa biinje'ii endanakamigak wii waawiindamawid aaniish ezhichigewaad. Mii go baamaa idi gii-ani-giiweyaang mii iwe weweni gii-waawiindamawid. Ginwenzh igo gii-namadabi aaniin ezhichigewaad.

Mii dash o'o gaa-inaapishinaan owe nakake, niimi'idiwaad ingi anishinaabeg, ezhi baninaawaad iniw miigonan ingoding. Ingoding aa ingoding go gaawiin weweni da-, minjimapizosiidog awe nakake miigon imaa nakake ezhi-obwaanzhii'od awe anishinaabe.

Mii dash ko gaa-ikidod awe nookomis, apane go gaa-nagamowaad miinawaa gaagiigido aw akiwenzii miinawaa niimiwag ingiw azhimaaga-, gaagii-azhimaaganishiiwiwaad mii ingi wedaapinaawaad iniw miigonan. Mii dash i'i gaa-kagwejimag aaniish i'iw wenji izhichighewaad? Mii dash gaa-ikidod o'o: "Migizi megwaa go babaamised maagizhaa giniw megwaa go babaamised idi oshpiming," apiitekamig idi bebaa-, bebaamaashigwen awe dinow aweshiinh, "Mii go idi ingoding wenji-binigoned.

Mii dash i'iw ani-gagiiizhiikaminid iniw omiigonaan minik gaagii-izhi-minigoowizid gewiin, manidoon gaagii-izhi-miinigod ge-izhi-kikendaasod awe migizi maage ge awe giniw wenji bangishimaad iniw omiigonan. Mii miinawaa imaa oshki-ayaa'aan gaa-onji-maajiginid. Ezhi-bangishing owidi ominaan iniw anishinaaben. Omiinaan sa go ini gimaamaanaan akiin, -akiian, akiinan ji-ayaanid goda gewiin ge-onji-mino'yaanig i'iw obimaadiziwin awiya.

Mii dash owe nakake gakina, giinawind omaa gagii-ozhi'inangid manidoo, kina gegoo gaagii-ozhitood, kina go gidooshkaabewizimin mii go ge ingiw awesiinyah mii go ini he'iin goda kitigaanan. Kakina gidanokiitawaanan a'aw manidoo wii-kaanizkamang owe nakake owe nakake bimaad-, obimaadiziwin iwe gaagii-miininangid omaa. Odoozhichigan sa go, gaagii-izhichiged awe manidoo.

Mii dash owe nakake miinawaa gii-kiizhiikaad owe miinawaa bekaanizid awiya ezhi odaapinaad ini miigonan. Mii miinawaa imaa nakake ani-naandawi'iwed awe aa'aa miigon, pakaaniziwan miinawaa ini bebaa'ayaawaad, bebaa-wiijiiwaad, bebaa'ayaanid imaa nakake akiikaang. Babaa-naandawi'aad ini nakake gekishkawaad onowen aa migizi-miigonan maagizhaa ge onowen giniwimiigonan.

Ezhi-omigooniwaad sa ongo binisiwag kina, mii iwe ezhi'owaad ongo bepakaan anishinaabeg. Baanimaa miinawaa gii-kiizhiikang owe, gii-inendang awe manidoo, mii sa iw gii-kiizhiikang, gii-kiizhiikang awe miigon odinanokiwin. Gaan shnaa gewiin oshkaabewizi awe miigon odanokiitawaan gewiin ini manidoon. Gaawiin eta go kina ingi anishinaabeg ezhi-naagoziying oshkaabewizisiwag.

Mii iw miinawaa ezhi-bangishing awe, ezhi-bagijwebinixed imaa shkaa-, ezhi-zagaakwiipan iniw, babaa-minjiminaad iniw anishinaaben, ezhi-bagidaakwiid. Ezhi-maa-, ezhi-bangishing awe miigon.

Mii dash miinaawa enokiitawaad awiya oshkaabewiz maage awe akiwenzii maagizhaa ge mindimoowenh gaagiigidod imaa nakake. Ezhi-gaganoonaad iniw manidoon miinawaa pakaan awiye e-wi-izhi-naadamawaad awe miigon. Mii go apane bebaa-izhi-babaa'ayaad miigon. Babaa-wiidoookawaad bepakaan anishinaabe, ezhi-andawenimind igo ingoji ge-izhi wiidookaazod, mii iwidi nakake ezhaad awe miigon.

Aapiji awiya niibiwa anishinaabeg onandawenimaawaan, onandawendaanaawaa noojimo bimaadiziwin. Mii dash bebaa-izhichiged awe migiziwimiigon maagizhaa ge aa giniwimiigon maagizhaa ge bepakaan igo miigonag onowe, gaanash naa o wiidoookawaawaan gewiinawaa manidoon, anokiitawaawaad ji-nooji'awaad, ji nijimo'aawaad iniw anishinaaben.

Mii sa iwe minik ge-ikidoyaan.

ER (17:12): I wondered if you had some thoughts about this whole idea of being afraid of things, and the way that some people in some communities there seems to be, like, fear about stuff, “oh, we did this wrong,” or fear about I guess, the example I'm thinking of, and it relates to this question I asked you about raptors, is, “oh, I saw an owl. I'm afraid.”

GJ: The Creator blessed us with, blessed us or cursed us with, with thought. And the teacher behind the imbalance of thought and even life was our, our great uncle, *Wenaboozhoo*, when you listen or teach or render the stories, I don't necessarily call them stories, but the teachings of *Wenaboozhoo* there's always a dichotomous relationship and things, and that's true with ceremony as well. And I started off by saying the blessing or the curse of thought, because we have a choice on how, through which lens we are going to conduct our place and our journey on Earth with and I've always used my grandmother and I know and I've lived through her idea of how life should be like for her. Her choice was to do it through love. That was her conscious choice. Because she was given the blessing and the curse of thought. She chose love to conduct her way on how to do things and as an individual life form in the creation of all things, we are given that choice as well. And our teacher, *Wenaboozhoo*, was at both extremes, sometimes he'd have a lot of things, and sometimes he'd never have anything. Sometimes he'd be happy and sometimes he'd be sad. Sometimes he'd have, he'd be friends with, with other things, sometimes he'd try to trick them into giving him things. So there's a lot of teachings about, about balance.

Another analogy that I'll use to sort of like give an expression of my thoughts and my feelings about that is, again, we were at a powwow my grandmother and I, and that's the first time I saw somebody dancing, Ojibway is always dancing in a clockwise, well, Ojibwe, Anishinaabe, that I'm familiar with, always dancing a clockwise rotation. But then there was this man that, and the only one that danced there, what danced in the opposite direction and didn't dance among the people, because he had to dance on the outside of the circle,

everybody else was going the other way. And that was kind of like really strange to me, because that's the first time I seen anybody do that. Of course, I asked her there again. She didn't explain that, but she said, she said later, maybe about four days later, she would say, "*Omaa bi-namadabin noozis*," And she would always say, "come and sit by me, my grandson." And then I knew that is when she was going to be teaching me things. She said, "remember that person that was dancing that you asked me about, was dancing the other way," she said. "*Gigikenimaa na minjimenimaa a'aw Anishinaabeg babaamishimod iwedi?*" And she said "it wouldn't be good for us to all go in the same direction." There has to be an opposite and equal balance to the direction that we go, the opposite rotation for there to be balance and things. So we need both of those things to have balance. Also to decide whether, whether anywhere from this spectrum to this one, and anything in between, is not the right way to do something, particularly if you're understanding of there has to be those two different dichotomous relationships and everything in between to create that balance. It's very futile to suggest that one of those elements within that spectrum in between is either right or wrong. It's like a pendulum, our life is like a pendulum. There will never be anybody that walks on the straight and narrow. If there is there, they're not really telling you the honest truth (laughter).

So it's a personal choice informed by a lot of different people. We still have to be respectful and listen to a lot of different things. We have to formulate those what is right for us and what we think exudes who we are supposed to be, based on our *Anishinaabewizowin*, and try to create a kind of sort of a haphazard balance in our journey in life, I guess. I use my grandmother as a person that was, you know, totally informed through love and kind of just tended to have her pendulum in that part of that dichotomous relationship between love and not loving. When you when you consider the teachings behind how the Creator made everything it was through love, and those are contained within our teachings in the Mide Lodge, was informed by love and nothing else. So the Creator made everything that's on this Earth because the Creator loved life so much and wanted everything on the Earth to be in a balance and to be in a healing and loving and sustainable relationship.

But the Creator also gave human beings the thought and choice on how we should conduct ourselves with those things that were placed here for us to heal with. Should we take them for 100% for the healing properties of them, or shall we use them to manipulate their effect on humans? So there's a control factor, and to help in controlling those different life forms, you introduce the thought of fear. There is not fear in any of the concept of the creation of

everything. Fear was never, ever a consideration of that. But it is because we have a functioning brain, and seemingly an intelligent one, or at least our ego will inform us that it is, we have the functional ability to manipulate things, to our service. We all have that choice and ability to do that. One of the things that, there were many phenomenal things that my grandmother talked about it, and she told me this when I was much younger in my teens, and she was talking about medicine and how that after introducing the idea of having the choice of whether to use it for love or for not love, you can get it and obtain it really, really fast by using it to hurt others. And by medicine, I don't just mean the plants and herbs, but how you exude yourself through your voice, how you how you treat others, and

everything else that has to do with the human characteristic. We tend to want to have power right away, so we take shortcuts to get there. And she said, the most powerful medicine that you will ever have, and if you choose to will be love. If you choose love, you will walk a long life. But if you take the shortcut, your life will be short too. And as just an example, the community where my grandmother grew up, or my mother, my mother was from northern Minnesota, the fifth degree Mide holder of knowledge is the owl, and it's regarded very highly, not as as a person that that that will hurt somebody. Of course, it may have the capacity to do that, because, after all, it's a life, it's a biological life form too. But they, they hold the knowledge of the fifth degree teachings of the community where my mother grew up at. So I choose to believe that there are not bad omens, because the Creator placed those things on this Earth for healing and love, love and compassion.

ER: Miigwech for tuning into Anishinaabe Bizindamoo-makak. Support for this program comes from the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe and the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Our producer is Staci Drouillard. The theme song is by the Stonebridge Singers. Until next time, this is Erik Redix. Giga-waabamin!

Ojibwe Transcription by Gordon Jourdain