

Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak

Episode 18: February 16, 2023

Erik Redix (ER): Boozhoo Anishinaabedoog. Miskwaa Anang indizhinikaaz. Migizi indoodem. Odaawaa zaaga'iganing indonjibaa. Gichi-Onigamiing indaa. Ingikino'amaage Ojibwemowin Gichi-Onigamiing.

Boozhoo! My name is Erik Martin Redix. My Ojibwe name is Miskwaa Anang. I'm a member of the Eagle clan from Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe Reservation in Wisconsin. I currently live on the Grand Portage Reservation and work as the Ojibwe Language Coordinator for the Grand Portage Band. Welcome to *Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak*, a program featuring Ojibwe first speakers telling stories in English and Ojibwemowin, the Ojibwe language.

For episode 18, I am pleased to welcome Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation Elder Nancy Jones. Nancy is known throughout Ojibwe Country for her tireless advocacy for the Ojibwe language and generosity and patience teaching younger generations. She contributed to multiple episodes on my prior radio program *Ojibwe Stories: Gaganoonididaa*. *Niminwendam aapiji ganoonag miinawaa*. I am thrilled to sit down with her again as she shares some traditional teachings about netting fish and handling nets, preserving food for the winter and talking about why winter nights are an important time for learning about the night sky as well as how to predict the weather based on winter sounds and other animal signs.

Nancy Jones (NJ): Boozhoo niin Ogimaagwanebiik Bebaamaashiyaan indigoo Nigigoonsiminikaaning omaa nindoonjii. Wazhashk nindoodem. Miigwech awe asemaa.

ER (1:44): The first question I had is what was your experience with what's your experience with whitefish netting in the fall?

NJ: Mewinzha gii-abinoojiinwiyaan ogii-ombigi'aan apane ingii-inanjigemin iwe apane ningii-amwaanaanig igiwe ayaa'aag adikimeg.

Jason Jones (JJ): So when I was a child when I was being raised when we needed food we would go netting.

NJ: So my mom and dad they taught me....whoops wrong language....

JJ: Go ahead do it.

NJ: Do it?

JJ: Yeah English.

NJ: Okay. It sounds better in Ojibwe though. So when we lived right by a lake where there were a bunch of whitefish and we make a living out off of that fishing in the summer, there were people who would trade for food or other things, or money sometimes. So my mum and dad taught me how to clean the fish and when to clean the fish and what to do after the fish is clean and how long you should keep the fish which isn't very long like it's in September, October or so. We only take what we need we find out this person wants two

whitefish the other one wants four whitefish and so on and on. And then that's what we that's what we get when you go netting. The net was a very respectable net. A lady or even a guy don't step over the net whenever, wherever it's at because I think my mom said that if you step over it that you...curse? You may not get anymore fish if we step over it cause of the power of the woman. And the man is told the same thing, don't step over the net. And we fish we set a net in the morning overnight, get it out the next day. And hang it up during the day, let it dry. You never leave the net hanging at night. They all they said that your soul your spirit might get caught in the net and your mind won't be right hahaha. That's the way they put it, it sounds better when you say it in Ojibwe.

Gijichaag imaa dabida'am maagizhaa giga-ni-giibaadiz hahaha it's a word. So we did that and the nets were made out of *asibikeyaab*, I don't know what you call that. They use to give it out at the treaty time a bundle and that's what we used to make...

JJ: Fishing line, twine?

NJ: It's not fishing line it's cotton. And we used to make a net, my grandma way back showed me how to make a net, it's hard to make a big long net. Takes a long, long time but it's a homemade net it never, it's cotton so never let it sit wet, we hang it up right away. In the winter time we do the same thing when we go fishing, we used to go fishing in the winter time too. So the net is very, very important it's sort of that's how we get our food we get all kinds of different kinds of fish. And it's only certain time of the year the spawning is done, we know when the spawning is done that's when get the loosen ones. Well during the summer we know where we can get them before the spawning. The lake we were, we knew the lake very well so we know where to get the kind of fish we wanted. And my mother or my grandmother used to do a lot of smoked fish and we could keep that for a long time. She made a basket over the summer, a birch bark basket or we make them, and she put a bunch of grass or something in the basket and that's where we keep the fish underneath, she would dig the ground. And we could get that in the mid winter if we want some fish. That that kept for a long time it doesn't get spoiled when it's when it's dry, when it's smoked. It's pure smoked we don't add nothing to it we don't add no salt to it and think that's why it keeps it keeps longer. And the fish is anywhere you wanna eat it, we canned some fish. Same thing we don't add salt to it we just add salt after we make soup or something out of it. And we use the eggs when we mix it sometime in our bannock. I think my favourite was with my grandma was blueberries and fish eggs, and bannock flour, that's really good. I still remember the taste of that hahaha.

So we clean the fish, we eat the guts, some of the part of the guts and they looks it looks like a pipe and that's what I liked, I liked to eat the inside of the fish. When we eat the fish say it's boiled fish, fried fish whatever there's bones there and everything goes back in the water. And my grandmother, my mother said that another fish is gonna swim away from there if you take care of the take care of the bones and you don't give them to the dogs. If we going to feed our dogs well feed the fish only not the bones. Just like all the other things like the deer, moose and everything goes back to where it lives. And that's the respect of, you'll get more if you do these the right, if you do the right things, if you show the respect

what you have what you have what Creator had given you for the meal. Even when you clean the fish the scales they go back in the water. Anything that we don't want...we don't

eat goes back in the water. Do you have any questions so far?

ER (8:47): Ah no did you want to maybe go back and give us an Ojibwe kind of version?

NJ: I'm my own translator? Haha I forgot what I said now.

Mewinza gii-ayaa'aang gii-abinoojiinwiyaang mii go gaa-apii inanjigeyaang ogowe aya'aag giigoonyag adikimegwag namegosag gaye mii dash awe nimaamaayiban gewiin aa nookomisiban apane ingii-waawiindamaa gegoo. Gegoo wiikaa baazhidawaaken aa asab gidikwew gegoo baazhidawaaken asab. Mii go ge ogowe ininiwag gewiinawaa gii-inaawag gegoo baazhidawaaken asab. Gaawiin geyaabi giga-bida'inaasii giigoonyag giishpin baazhidawad asab. Gii-ani-dibikak gii-ani-onaagoshig giga-bagida'waa, waabang miinawaa, mii apii ji-naadasabiiyan. Akawe dash giga-gikendaan aaniin minik ge-odaapinadwaa igi giigoonyag aya'ii tagiin gaye jibwaa-bakobii'od aa asab akawe asemaa gibagidinaa nibiikaang giiindaakoojige imaa nibiikaang. Jibwaa-bagida'waayan akawe giga-gikendaan aaniin minik awiya waa-ayaawaad giigoonya' maagizhaa... George George Spencer want niswi niiwin Mary ningodwaaswi (aaahhh) minik igo mii dash igiwe ge-dazhiikawadwaa giga-bagojiinaag giga-biini'aag gakina onagizh giga-bakobii'aan nibiikaang. Minik eta go (waa-ayaa) geyaabaj'adwaa giigoonyag mii minik ge-onaapinadwaa. Waabang miinawaa (giga-giga-)giga-agwaabiiginaa aa asab giishpin debisiyan minik waa-migiweyan giigooyag gegiin minik waa-amwadwaa mii minik ge-ayaawad ge-izhi-agoonaa giizhigak gaawiin gii dibikak ji-agoojing aa asab. ningii-onji'igoo nimaamaa nookomis gijichaag imaa dabida'am. Giishpin niibaa-agoojing aa asab mii iwe gaa-izhid maagizhaa ingoding giga- (ayaa) gaawiin giga-gwayakwaadizisii ingii-ig. (ingoji ingoji imaa) Ingoji imaa da-izhaa gijichaag (mii) mii gaa-ikidod nimaamaayiban. Minik gegoo gaa-ishkonigaadeg okanan onagazhiin gii-miijimin ge onagizhiin aya'iin imaa biinjiya'ii gaa-ayaagin onagizh aapiji minopogwadoon. Minik idash gegoo gaa-aya'aag ashkosegin maagizhaa okanan. Mii dezho bakobii'aman nibiikaang nibakobii'aanan. Mii miinawaa bezhig imaa dani-ondaadige gii ikido nimaamaaminaan nookomis giishpin weweni izhitooyan gegoo (gaa-) gaa miinigoowiziyan. Gaawiin wiikaa giga-jaagisesiin gegoo.

I don't think I said that in English it's um...if you show the respect you get from the creator, you will never run out of food. Show the respect and the food will show you the respect, give you back the respect or food. *Mii ganabaj ekwaabiigak.*

ER (12:23): Whitefish runs in the fall, that shallow right, the shallows?

NJ: Yup, well it's a shallow lake. But usually we know exactly how long, how long they're gonna be running then we go towards the end. Towards the end of the season for them, but we catch them to in the mid summer anywhere.

Ningii-gikendaamin iwe zaaga'igan omaa gaa-gii-ayaa'aang maanaminii zaaga'igan izhinikaade. Ingikendaamin aandi ge-ondinangidwaa giigoonyag amanj igo apii gii niibing. Ogaawag gaye ginoozheg awegwen igo. Mii dash aah nimaamaa, nookomis ogii-

baaswaa igi giigoonyag omaa. Nametego(wag) ogii-ozhi'aawaa'. Owe dash gii-niibing ingii ozhitoomin aya'iin wiigwaasimakakoonsan. Wiigwaasi gichi-michaawan igo mii dash imaa izhi-biinawaad a'aa giigoonya' (gaa-baat...) baate giigoonh. Akawe omaa gegoo ogii

piina'aan maagizhaa mashkosiwan. Mii imaa gaa-izhi-biina'ang mii dash gaa-izhi gibaaboweng naamakamig idash iwidi gii-zhi-ganawenjigaadewan. Amanj igo apii gii biboong (mii) mii idi andone'amaang

They used to smoke the uh...grandma and mother we smoked lots of fish during the summer time, any kind of fish. The lake that we were living, we knew the lake exactly where to get the fish anytime and whenever the time of the summer. So we made these baskets and we buried them in the ground and the fish they last(ed) quite awhile. In the winter time you can go dig out whenever you want fresh fish in...smoked fish in the winter time.

Tobacco I think is very important for everything we do, tobacco leads, leads the things that you do. That's your gift to the creator. The creator will give you if you give enough tobacco I guess haha.

ER (14:32): You touched a little bit on this real briefly but what was the role of moose? When you were living long ago, how'd you store it? And any parts of the animal that are important for... that have power, medicinal power and other kinds of power?

NJ: Mewinzha gii-bi-ombigi'aan noopiming idi ingii-ayaamin wanii'ige akiing ingii-ayaamin miinawaa ge-ani-gichi-ayaa'aawiyaan mii adinowa gaa-wiidigemag (wa) wanii'igewinini. Mii dash igo geniin imaa gaa-onji-ombi'agwaa niijaanisag ogowe moozoog awegwen igo wazhashkwag aah amikwag, waawaashkeshiwag, binewag, waaboozoog mii imaa mii iye gaa-izhi-ombigi'aawasowaad.

I grew up on the trapline with my mom and dad and then I grow up and end up marrying a trapper and we were raised on traditional food from the bush. And we were taught about respecting what you do when you get a moose. The one I really remember is my husband and we started the camp, the trapping camp about about October and about the end of October, he'd get a moose. And we prepare alot of different ways, first of all we have a ceremony for giving thanks for the food that we have. And that would last us maybe till January or so and then again maybe about March, he'd get another moose. So we had two moose in the winter time and that was that was our main course meal during the winter time. We'd stay there from October to maybe April sometimes. And we were nine hours away from the store. If we're gonna go to the store, we walk for nine hours or you paddle a whole day if you're going to paddle.

Mewinzha ingii-ombigi'aa wanii'igewakiing gii-tazhi-ombigi'igoon nimaamaa nindede. Mii go apane gaa-ishitigeyaang ingii-miijimin wiiyaas noopimiing gaa-onjiimagak. Mii awe gaa ikidod, gaa-ikidowaad mashkikiwan iw wiiyaas noopimiing gaa-onjiimagak awegwen igo waabooz, waawaashkeshi, amik, binewag. Mii imaa mii iye gaa-ondanjigeyaang ingii wiindamaagoomin dash aaniin aaniin weweni ge-izhi-angidwaa igiwe. Gaawiin ingoji wiikaa agwajiing noopimiing maagizhaa ziigwebiniganing ingii-pagajigaadesinoon okanan

noopimiing ge-azhegiwewichigaadewan, aandi go gaa-onjiid awe mooz. Giishpin amik (nibiikaang ate) nibiikaang izhi-bagidinigaatewan okanan. Giishpin weweni izhichigeyin gaawiin wiikaa giga-jaagisesiin wiisiniwin.

So my kids, I raised my kids that way too, the way I was raised. We teach them about respect. Where ever you get your food from, if you have a beaver, you ate the beaver, you don't feed that to the dogs. The bones from the food, the beaver, goes back in the water. Whatever the kind of the animal, the ducks, geese they all go back in the water, the bones all go back in the water. And we use feathers for warmth sometime we make a pillow or a hat from the feathers of the ducks and the rabbits skins we'd make rabbit blanket *waaboozoyekon*. And a lot of other ways I remember going walking across the lake, it's windy, it's cold. And my mother said put some rabbit fur in your ears and put it on your hat. Put it at the end of your mitts. And put it at the end of your shoe. You will never be you will never be cold she said and she was right. I still do that today whenever I go out. I caught a rabbit the other day, I was given a rabbit the other day, that was nice.

So there were a lot of use of what's in the bush, there's a lot of medicine. There's medicine in eating the animals, I think I talked about that earlier. It's a medicine food when you eat the deer, the moose, beaver, rabbit, partridges and all that, because of the way they their habitat is they're eating the branches or the leaves that we make food out of, I mean we make medicine out of. So it's a medicine food for me. I still live off the land. I have grandsons, great grandsons that are good hunters today, Jason is one of them. So, I'm ok, I don't hunt anymore but I always have always have meat, every winter. Some kid come and gave me a trout the other day, yesterday, and that was nice, he said he went ice fishing. We did ice fishing too, but ours was different, we used a night line. *Bagidaabaan* is what it's called. When I talk about it in some of my teaching, nobody seems to be aware of it, did you ever see it? It's night line set it's about this long. And uh there's a sturgeon hook at the end and the fish swallows the night line, it's at the bottom about four inches down the bottom. It's like a big uh what do you call those...little fish...*giigoonyensag*...minnow, it's like a big minnow and then there's a hook here and he swallows that the hook is this way, he swallows that and it gets stuck here. It's a sure catch sometimes you can get three fish in the day time, you go in the morning, at noon and evening. We put one out there that's enough. Sometime you get a big northern, the northers are good in the winter time especially up in the clean water lakes.

Gii-biboong giigoonyag ge gii-nooji'angidwaa gii-pagidaabiimin ingo-dibik, ingo-dibik gii ayaag gii-agwande bagidaabaan ganabaj igo (agi) ganabaj igo gii-akwaa bagidaabaan ganabaj igo inigokwaa'aa mii dash imaa wewebanaabaan imaa zaagaabikisin omaa gwesk. *This is the hook*, wewebanaabaan, mii dash ezhi-gondang aa giigoonh omaa izhi-gichi woseni. Mii dash imaa mii owe ingoding gichi- gichi-mindido giigoonh. Maagizhaa maagizhaa niswi gidaa-nisaag giigoonyag ingo-giizhik. Gigizheb, naawakweg, onaagoshig bezhig eta go ingii-aamin bagidaabaan mii eta go mii go onizhishing aapiji minopogozhi ginoozhe gii-biboong.

ER (22:40): So you mentioned a little bit about living out on the trap line, I was just wondering if you wanted to share anything about how that life was in the winter time when

our days are so short and our nights are so long in Northern Minnesota, Northwest Ontario and I think it's hard for some of us, you know, thinking about that living out there, lots of nights without TV or devices.

NJ: When you live the way you live you get used to it, there's always something to do. There's always something to do at night. My husband, he would I fix his snares and traps during the night time. We had werlow lamp, we didn't really have a bright light like today. And I had lots to do, I had blankets to take care of and I put the kids to bed then I washed the floor after all the kids went to bed. We were in the cabin, one, two room cabin. There's always something to do, there's storytelling at night. And then sometimes you go outside and then you talk about the stories of the stars. And the noise you hear at night, maybe an owl or wolves. There are different kinds of sounds that these animals make to let you know about the weather for the next few days. There are two different sounds of a wolf and two different sounds of an owl, telling about upcoming weather.

And then the stars up in the sky tells you what kind of winter its going to be this year, how they lay. I don't know what they call that, diamond dipper some people call it, and I call it *Aatawaa'amoog* (orion's belt). So my father used to show me that, look at it in the fall, you'll know what kind of a winter is coming. And then we would look at the beaver huts, beaver houses, muskrat houses, and how much feed they have and that's also telling us what's going to be this winter then in the summer time you run into a bee hive sometimes and you look at it, how high is it..especially the yellow jackets I think they call them. If it's way down low in the ground that that's tell you what the winter and if it's high and high off the ground it's telling you it's going to high snow winter time. There were alot of things to listen to and to look at when ...like you said what did you do at night. We talk about these things we teach our children about these things what to look for tomorrow out when you play. So there was never boring time, I did lots of sewing, sew by hand. Things to clean, wash clothes, didn't have a washer, didn't have water hahaha. But there there's always work, it was it was nice exercise, work day and night.

Gaawiin wiikaa gaa-niikaa gegoo ingii-waniikesiimin ge-izhichigeyaang owe gii-dibikak baatayiinaad aapiji izhichigewin. Nashke onowe aya'iin aadizookaanan gii-aadizookewag ogowe gii-dibikak. Miinawaa ingoding agwajiing awiya gii-izhaa ganawaabam ogowe anangoog aaniin enagoojinowaad mii dash imaa ge-onji-gikendaman. Aaniin waa apiitaagonagaag maagizhaa ge waa-apii ji-gisinaag. Miinawaa ginaanaagadawaabandaan gegoo gii-niibing maagizhaa ogowe aamoog. Giishpin dabasakamig ayaanig iwe owaasoniwaa giishpin ge ingoding ishpagoodeg mii iwe wii-ishpaagonigaa miinawaa ani biboong giizhaa niibiwa misan giga-ayaan. Miinawaa ogowe ayaa'aag awesiinyag ga noondaagoziwaad gegoo go dibaajimowag gii-noondaagoziwaad gookooko'oo niizhwewaan gegoo dibaajimo maagizhaa wii-kisinaa, wii-aabawaa miinawaa ma'iingan dibaajimo ooh (ingii-) ingii-nitaage ambe niiji-ma'iinganidok miinawaa gigizhiiwed gii woonood mii iwe wii-kichi-noodin. Giishpin weweni bizidawindwaa awesiinyag gaawiin memwech gegoo (giga) gidochigan ginandawendanziin.

If you pay attention to the animals you don't need no iPod or or radio or anything to you'll get your weather from from them, mii na iye? Well Jason says that's good enough hahahah.

ER: Miigwech for tuning into Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak. Support for the series 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 performed by the Stonebridge Singers. Until next time, this is Erik Redix. Giga-waabamin!

Transcription by Jason Jones