

Teachings of Yoołgaii Asdzáán

Aside from having a responsibility and performing countless tasks and chores within and around a homestead; as women are identified with the teachings of Yoołgaii Asdzáán / Asdzáán Nádleehé in the early morning dawn when she was identified as “Yikááh Yizhchí / Born in the Morning Twilight Dawn”, and upon which she gave the right to women to possess spiritual power and goodness in “Yódí Yésdááhí / Nit’iz Yésdááhí and Tsodizin Yésdááhí” / “One Who Sits for Material / Mineral Goodness / One Who Sits for Prayer”. A possessive right encompassing spiritual connection, whom is a keeper of material / mineral goodness in the early morning dawn; a trait in which the bestowed is enabled to communicate and receive goodness and wishes upon her prayers of the Diyin Dine’é for her family and children. A trait that is still part of Diné Traditional Culture today, where a home is a woman’s kingdom and domain, a place that is specifically and sacredly oriented to and around the fireplace of a home. It is for this reason, why water and its use is always sacred in ceremonial rites, where certain rites bring in water in the early morning(s), preferably known as “Morning Water”. As it is told that such moments are serene and presentable to the Holy People; that a woman’s prayer is very sacred because it is immersed in/with Holy Water.

Responsibilities and chores that a Diné woman encounters and endures will last throughout her lifetime and will eventually be taught to her immediate family members, especially in young women. Males can also be taught responsibilities in / of households, because they will eventually come across various homemaking skills that will come in handy many times throughout their lives. They (males) cannot be dependent on their mothers and womenfolk in general, to perform chores that can be easily done by the male offspring(s). It is based on these traits that it is a must for women to continue to retain and maintain the customs and practices of ‘White Shell Woman’, a maternal model to all Diné as a holy deity. As it is also a known principle, in which she (White Shell Woman) was given the right to conceive, give birth, teach and raise her heroic twins in: Monster Slayer / Naayéé’ Neizghání and Born for the Water / Tó Bájishchíní.

As Diné people physically and mentally develop and mature through various stages of life, there is precedence, an expectation and anticipation that they will all have learned and become accustomed to the teachings of their parents. This is especially relevant to mothers’ teachings and how young people should be encouraged to take in as much in acquired skills and to perform them as responsible family members, and try to live the spirited path in harmony, as set forth by their forefathers.

All humans are born of a mother, a part of a natural order in ecological life's processes and its relevance to the natural evolution in the cycle of life. From the time of conception, and throughout the gestation period within a nine-month period of fetal growth and development, a mother serves as the life bearer and the caretaker throughout this stage. Within that time, a woman has to also maintain security within the spiritual-spatial boundaries, and to withdraw and limit herself from the many activities in the do's and don'ts that exist while carrying a human in her womb. That an expecting woman exposing herself to sightings of dead animals or the harming thereof can be physically, mentally and emotionally detrimental to her health and her unborn child. Furthermore, aside from having the awareness and all the physical work, women in mothers still have to maintain and carry on families with unlimited responsibilities. In contemporary times, teachings' of such nature are taken for granted and ignored by many, because it is thought of as primitive and flagrantly daunted with tainted taboos and superstition; one of the many aspects in Diné cultural awareness and teachings that many young people negate and deprive themselves of. Young mothers and teenage girls of today should be taught of the traditional and cultural ways in womanhood, as accorded to White Shell Woman / Yoolgaaí Asdzáá via Changing Woman / Asdzáá Nádleehé. If awareness is unattained, many forms of violations through ignorance and deprivation will cause many people to realize that cultural traits will have its effects, if is violated. Sometimes and often than not, effected people sought help when it was too late, because the unbalancing of natural order in spiritual laws can be unpredictable, condemning and sometimes devastating to human lives. This is why young people need to aware themselves of cultural teachings, traits and disciplines. More importantly in contemporary times, we often see young people, young men and women alike, disrespecting their parents and abusing their mothers by inflicting mental abuse and physical pain. You see and hear of young men cussing and swearing at their mothers and even physically attacking them, as though they are unimportant and never having an impact on their lives. A teaching that should be noted in which the saying goes, "Who are you to inflict mental and physical pain on your mother and, or your father, when you have nothing to stabilize yourself with / against; when you are still unstable, 'Like blowing in the wind' and when your mother is still feeding you and changing your diapers. That, until you have something to 'showfor', with a roof over your head and food on the table with your own hard work and earned money, can you say anything that is worth an argument, or a judgmental statement against your parents / guardians".