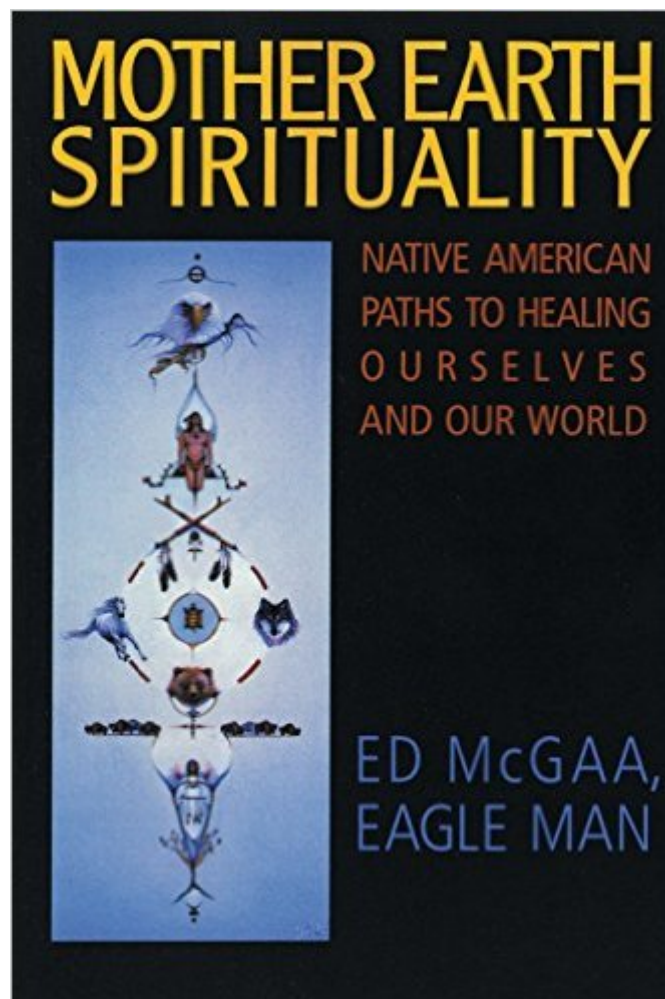


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Mother Earth Spirituality: Native American Paths To Healing Ourselves And Our World (Religion And Spirituality)



Synopsis

"A rich panorama of our native heritage which allows the seeker access to the heart of the Path of Beauty. Ed McGaa has walked this path so that all people may live in harmony."Samie Sams, Hancoka Olowanpi, author of *Midnight Song: Quest for the Vanished Ones*"Ed McGaa is one of the first persons who can write about Oglala religion in the first person because he has lived it. For years anthropologists have hoped a Native American would portray that society from the inside out. Ed McGaa has. It's about time."William K. Powers, author of *Oglala Religion*"Fascinating as well as inspiring reading. Ed McGaa makes an excellent spiritual guide and intellectual teacher . . . The information stimulates the mind, the drawings delight the eye, and the ideas soothe the spirit."Jack Weatherford, author of *Indian Givers*"Profound and insightful . . . Mother Earth Spirituality will be of great importance to those of us, both 'rainbow' and non-Indian people, who walk over land in search of a deeper spiritual life . . . For us, this book is an invaluable guide showing us how to do it."Fred Alm Wolf, Ph.D., author of *Taking the Quantum Leap*

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Customer Reviews

After reading "Black Elk Speaks" I picked up this book because I believe that Native American ways of living have much to offer us. We neglect their wisdom at our peril. It is a great privilege that we have access to their knowledge on how we can live in harmony with Mother Earth. The author starts with the question why he should teach non-Indians about Native American spirituality and answers

that it is time to share that spirituality because it does not belong to the Indians alone but to others with the right attitude; we all live in one world. If kept within the Indian community their old wisdom will not be allowed to work its environmental medicine on the world where it is desperately needed. A spiritual fire that promotes a communal commitment to a worldwide environmental undertaking is needed. Native or primal ways will fuel that fire and give it great power. Mother Earth can be revered, respected and protected. He then quotes the letter from Chief Seathl (Seattle) to the President of the United States of America in 1854 - one of the most unusual and eloquent letters that a President can have received. "How can we buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?" The truth is that we could really stop here, go into a quiet room and reflect on those three sentences and we will surely discover the root cause of many of our ills. We put a price on everything the Indians think has no value and we place no value on everything the Indians think is valuable. Sparkling water in a stream flowing through a wood has no value to us but it is the essence of life to the Indian. Having polluted our rivers and killed the fish we are at long last starting to ask ourselves those very questions that Chief Seattle asked of the President 150 years ago. Another point made by Chief Seattle haunts me. "...to harm the earth is to heap contempt on the Creator. The Whites too shall pass; perhaps sooner than all other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste." How many of us today are saying somewhat similar things to our deaf leaders? But the heart and soul of the Indian way of life lies at the end of Seattle's letter, "So, if we sell our land, love it as we've loved it. Care for it as we've cared for it. Hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you take it. And with all your strength, with all your mind, with all your heart, preserve it for your children, and love it ... as God loves us all. One thing we know. Our God is the same God. This earth is precious to Him. Even the white man cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We shall see....." How many of us would claim that we have loved the land as the Indians loved the land, or cared for the land as the Indians cared for the land? If we answer 'no', then surely that means that we have something to learn from the Native Indians. I am sure that if Chief Seattle were here today he would cry to see what we have done to those lands the Indians held sacred. He would cry for the pain inflicted on the earth. He would cry for us who in our greed and selfishness have wrought such damage on ourselves and our children. I agree with and applaud Ed McGaa. A spiritual fire that promotes a communal commitment to a worldwide environmental undertaking is needed. Native or primal ways will fuel that fire and give it great power. We should all learn something from this book. But not just read and think and speak. But act. This book is nothing if we do not act on it. This is

what Stephen Covey was telling us in "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change" that first we have to change ourselves, and only then we can change others and the world. Einstein told us that we need a higher level of thinking to get ourselves out of the mess than the thinking that got us into the mess. Stephen Covey tells us that in such situations as we are in today we need a quantum change that can only be brought about by a completely new paradigm. Our current way of living is the paradigm that got us into the mess. The Indian approach is probably the paradigm that will get us out of the mess. If we read this book with an open mind and without prejudice, I believe that the Native American paradigm should be at the top of the shortlist of new paradigms from which we should make our selection for building the world we want for our children.

Ed McGaa has written one of the clearest explanations of Native American spirituality to date. This book speaks in simple terms and translates ancient customs into modern language for the average reader delving into a new cultural approach to spirit and mother earth religion and philosophy. If you are exploring Lakota religion for the first time, this is one of the best introductory books available.

In Mother Earth Spirituality, Ed McGaa (Eagle Man) writes: "For Indians, four-legged and winged ones, stones, and trees are regarded as holy, in that they harmoniously live upon this earth, following exactly the plan of the Great Spirit." Reading this book was itself a spiritual experience, a revelation of the Great Spirit. I was informed, inspired, moved, and also brought to grief over what had been missing from my own life: the closeness to Mother Earth that the author so clearly and powerfully feels. By describing Oglala Sioux spirituality and philosophy from the inside, Ed McGaa has given us a great and generous gift. I owe him a debt of gratitude for reminding me of what I must recover. If humanity is to have a future, it will have to learn the lessons and absorb the wisdom of this important book.

After reading "Native Wisdom" by the same author I had to read this earlier work. This book includes several ceremonies. Peace Pipe Ceremony The Sweat Lodge Vision Quest (Crying for a vision) Sun Dance Yuwipi and more. Includes the legend of Buffalo Calf Woman and bringing the pipe to the Sioux. Includes the vision of Nick Black Elk (a Sioux holyman). Includes a Sioux-English dictionary (It can be difficult to find what you are looking for). Includes a glossary of natural names. Mr. McGaa describes the pipe as a portable altar. This is absolutely correct. The pipe bowl represents the feminine aspects of creation, and the stem represents the masculine forces of creation, and the smoke is offered to the seven sacred directions; N, E, S, W, Above, Below and Center. Mr. McGaa

also calls the Wotai (personal stone) as a portable altar. I disagree with this. It's true that you can present the personal stone to the directions. In my opinion; the personal stone doesn't come close to representing the level of sacredness as the pipe. Questions or comments? E-Mail Me. Two Bears Wah doh Ogedoda

I commend Eagle Man for this sensitive and indepth commentary on Native American spirituality and our responsibility to Mother Earth. In this hustle, bustle world today, we too often lose sight of the environment that we were given. At one point, it was clean and pure and bountiful. Now, we have polluted our water, desecrated our land, and exterminated animal species. Not much of a commentary on how we take responsibility for and care of these gifts we have evolved into taking for granted. Eagle Man opens our eyes to the simple facts that his forefathers knew and that we have allowed to fall by the wayside. It is works like this that should be required reading in our schools. It is a wake up call that unless we do something to change our world, we may not leave much for our descendents. I highly recommend this book not only for its enviromental impact but also to provide knowledge of the spirituality and philosophy of the Native American people.

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