

Nature's Dreaming by Kaylynn Sullivan TwoTrees

Bees being . . .
Land and life dreaming
Ancestors singing
Whole remembering

Regeneration comes from dreams, where the energy from a sense of possibility is stronger than the fear of the unknown. So even today, as the bees are struggling for survival and hives are collapsing, a taste of honey or the hum of bees in my garden re-enlivens my belief that the sound of nature's dreaming is the hum of bees and the audible activity of the hive.

The honeybee is a link to the land and the cycle of growing food. The bees bring nature's dreaming to the senses and to my table and keep the remembering strong, vibrant, and sweet. My part is to remember—in the sound, in the taste, in the garden, and in the grocery store—that I am nature and part of the dreaming.

I reclaim my *indigenous mind* to move beyond current notions of sustainability and step into the dreaming of a future of dynamic regeneration. Indigenous mind is the power of reenergizing our world with all of the hundreds of senses that open our awareness to the web of relationships that are the Earth. The power of this consciousness to renew, adapt, and regenerate in new forms is without question more powerful than our single species. Accessing this consciousness means a slowing down, remembering, and reconceiving on a smaller scale to reclaim intimacy with nature and its layers of species as an aspect of our own essential nature. In this way we remain aware of being indigenous to this planet through space, time, and mind.

The simplicity and complexity of the bees remind us that nature is our true nature and that each of us as humans are indigenous to this planet. When we dream in our physical world, rapid eye movement (REM) shows that we are in the dream state. A similar acronym, REMS, gives us keys to reclaiming indigenous mind and an awareness of entering nature's dreaming: Remember-Embody-Model-Share.

Remember

Paw Paw found bees and wild honey through some secret power that he called hive medicine. He said the hive sang to him when the Earth was dreaming. The fact that he brought home honey and sometimes a few stings from following the sound of nature during its dreaming made his gift all the more mysterious and magical. It made me listen to the bees, birds, wind, and grasses more carefully to hear the subtleties.

Each time I heard the bees I listened more carefully to see if I could hear or sense the hive medicine. I don't have Paw Paw's ability to listen for subtleties, but the bees still bring me messages from the land.

Embody

In summer I was walking along the edge of the creek out of the haze of midday heat. My thoughts were dancing among the trees and the shafts of sunlight as I dipped my feet in the water. A loud buzzing came from farther up in the meadow. I looked just in time to see a swarm of bees coming toward me. They hovered around my head before I could think to move.

The caress of the hum and the sound of Paw Paw's voice talking about the Earth's dreaming slowed me down to Earth time. I slowed down to breathe in the story those bees were telling and the deep scent of flowers and honey and sunshine. I slowed down so that my heartbeat and the hum were tuned to the rhythm of that creek. I'm not sure how long I stood there before the swarm moved on. It is a touchstone to the place in me that connects to the bees and the dreaming of the Earth.

I am reminded that the honeybee, in the recurring patterns of its world, from the unique patterns of its body to the patterns of the hive, embodies nature's deep dreaming. My own patterns and systems, from the automatic function of breathing to the tides of the water that make up most of my body, also link me to the Earth of which I am a part.

Model

Bees were always around us at home. Even when we moved into town, we planted for the bees so that they could forage. The garden provided food for the bees and us. Rabbits and raccoons were uninvited guests, discouraged but not excluded. There were smells and activities for every season that reminded us that we were part of the Earth's turning and gave some of our busier neighbors a chance to reconnect.

The Earth guided and people followed. As children we came along for the stories, songs, and chores that made us feel grown up and part of the gathering of people tracking the changes in the land and listening for the messages in those changes. There were the old stories of big changes on the Earth, and there were new stories of changes in the patterns of crops and harvest, of birds and animals. There always seemed to be a message for everyone.

Share

Both sides of my family used honey like gold. They bartered with it to get more food on the table or to multiply good deeds. When new honey was brought home, we rejoiced and called the neighbors over for dessert. Grandmother Mabel soaked stale cornbread with goat milk and drizzled it with honey while we watched the sunset and shared our gratitude with the neighbors, the ground, the ants, and the day that was ending.

As children we gathered like ants around drips of honey to hear the stories of how Paw Paw listened for the signs of dreaming, how he followed the sounds of the birds and wind that led to the hive, how he was stung as he gathered the honey by the bees protecting their hive and

queen, and how he thanked all the plants on the way home for the nectar that was gathered by the bees. For days afterward we scoured the woods trying to be quiet enough to hear the dreaming and find the hive.

As the generations reach into the future with the birth of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, I hold on to the stories that connect us to our nature. My nature binds me to the Earth as tightly as the bees are linked to the hive, for physical survival and for the awareness of the Earth and her changes—not as cause or solution, but as an intimate and dynamic detail of her process.

I follow the bees toward the heart of nature's dreaming. Each breath links me to the rights and responsibilities we are given as children of the Earth:

to remember the Earth's dreaming
to listen to the bees
to breathe with the trees
to use both Earth time and clock time to measure our days
to live as a human, indigenous to this planet
to treat others as relatives, not just kindred spirits but strangers and acquaintances
to see all beings as unique ingredients for the well-being of the planet
to share hope through our nature in each encounter
From the past, in the present and for the future.