

To the Young People of Warm Springs

As two adults who have walked the confusing paths of youth, we care about those who come after us. We offer our thoughts to those young people who stumble now and then, who need a direction, who quietly call for help.

We do not speak to one youth or one family. It is to all who share in the future of the Warm Springs community that we speak.

Willow Woman and
Vision Dreamer

Crying, Lying Through Tears

A lifeless young body lies still on the road
another tragedy begins to unfold
Yet we never listen or do as we're told
and we cry

A lifeless young body of seventeen
hardly ever known where its been
Never more to be heard or seen
so we heartbreakingly cry

A lifeless young body with nothing more to fear
is lowered in the ground as we shed our vain tears
One who just plainly drank too much beer
makes us sadly cry

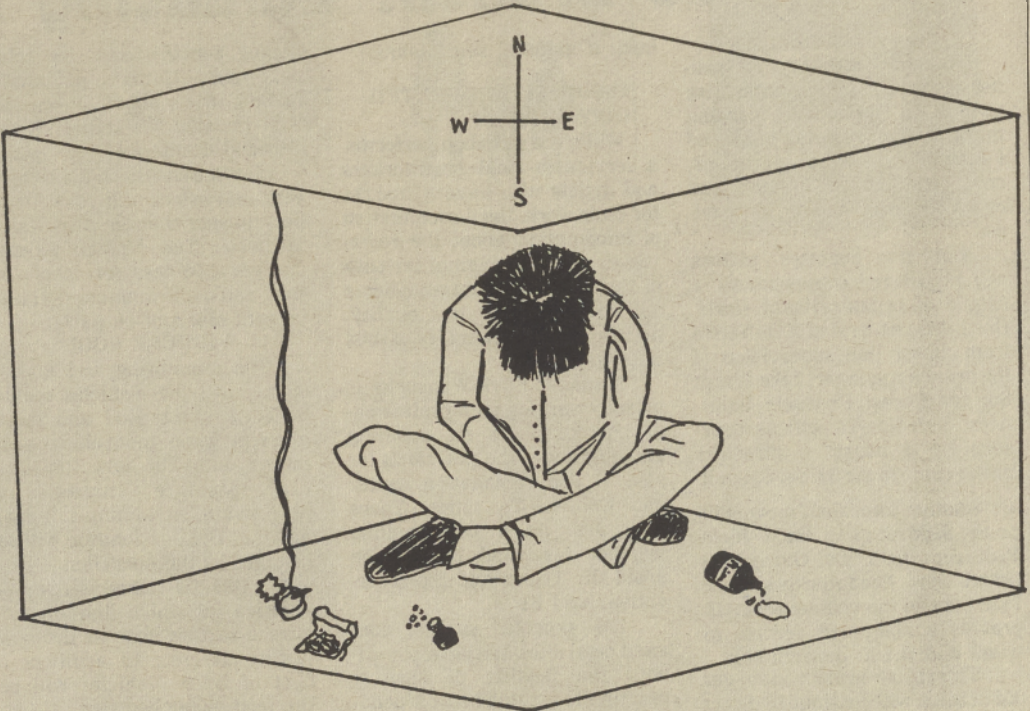
A lifeless young body will soon be covered from sight
a precious life gone without much of a fight
Too young to know what was good and right
still we cry

And though the bottle of booze we young people buy
take our friends, take away their lives
Are our tears for them only a lie?
For within a little while, we no longer remember or cry

We rush to the store the night of a home game
drink two cases or more without any shame
Fight our friends, call each other bad names
never thinking we are all the same

Yes, the only time we cry
is when we see SOMEONE ELSE die
It'll never happen to me we say
Yes, just shed our tears, turn our backs and walk away.

Willow Woman



Directions

One who looks to the East may find the new lighted road
One who looks to the South may find the new beginnings of life
One who looks to the West may find the secrets of the warriors
One who looks to the North may find the ways of the old.

All these directions are good for you
We all should choose one way to look and learn from
and all these directions have a center of a beginning
so when you choose, be one who looks to the East, South, West and North

But, also remember, it is important that you begin at your center
then you too, may find the secrets of the beginnings and the old
and the new lighted ways.

Vision Dreamer

Lament to the Young Indian

Look at me — I am proud; I am Indian; I am free;
Can you see it in my braided hair or in the pretty beaded
necklace my youngest sister made for me?

Oh, I'm doubly proud of this roach clip here — all beaded fine, don't
you see?
And I use this beaded bottle opener here, at least three times a week.
I can sing the latest war dance songs from the tapes I buy at the store.

Come hear the drumming on the steering wheel!
Yeah, it's just right on key.
It's nice to be me — proud, Indian and free.

What's that? What are you asking Me?
Oh no! I never go to the Long house there, that's not the place for me.
No, I never did dance there — My Adida's tennis shoes aren't right,
you see.

What's that? What are you asking me?
To help you out to drum and sing around the Longhouse Christmas
Tree?
Oh no! I'm booked that night you see — There's this neat band playing
over at Sonny's!

Yes, I am proud — I am Indian — I am Free — ?

Willow Woman

Letters to a Troubled Community

Responsibility May Be Best Solution

To the Concerned People
of Warm Springs:

Monday, October 23, an
emergency meeting was called
to confront the rising concern
about the tragic deaths, acci-
dents, suicides and other vio-
lence developing from abuse of
alcohol and drugs in this com-
munity.

Every person here is some-
how touched by loss of loved
ones, friends, and employees
when the horror of such terrible
things happen.

When will our people wise up
and stop being so permissive
with the children we love so
dearly? Why do we allow them to
believe drinking is okay? Why do
we keep teaching them how to
drink and use dope?

Our children watch us "have
fun" by drinking or smoking
dope in front of them. They learn

to beat each other up, like we do,
and they assume our attitudes of
"oh well, who cares", or "what
else is there to do?"

In the meeting many alter-
natives were shared by the 98
adults in attendance. Some of the
alternatives were:

1. An Indian Survival School
2. Traditional spiritual guid-
ance and values
3. A formal Bible school
4. A monitoring system of
local stores and taverns to
prevent contributing to minors.
5. Indian Whipman system
6. Parents serving time in
jail with minor child for any
alcohol or drug offense
7. Ride-Along Program with
tribal police to see first-hand
some of the problems of the
community.

One broken-hearted parent
told of losing a child before

realizing they didn't talk enough
together. The parent said,
"Don't wait 'til you lose a child
before you find out how much
you love them."

HOW ABOUT YOU? We
would like to see and encourage
more community people to be-
come involved and taking the
responsibility they deserve. The
more of us that get involved and
responsible, the sooner we see
progress and results.

One head dealing with a
problem makes us feel alone
with our problems. But when we
all share those problems, we
realize we're not alone. Many
heads are better than one.

Let's all get with it, it's
worth it. Follow-up meetings will
be Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m.
in the Community Center.

Sincerely,
Billie Jo McConville

Smart Too Late

To the young people of this
community:

I am a young Indian woman,
just turned 21 this year. I am
writing this to those who will
listen to the experience of one
who has already been through
the gruesome life of alcoholism.

I started the life of a drunk
when I was barely 15 years old.
When I was 17 I was in a
treatment center for hard core
alcoholics. I left the center and
went back to alcohol which led
me straight to Skid Row. It's not
an easy life down on Burnside. A
lot of people go that way and
never get out. I was lucky to have
people who cared enough to
make me listen. The reality is
that there are better ways.

We all think it's fun, cute, or
just being tough to get drunk.
What's cute about being so
sloppy drunk that you throw up
on yourself or someone else?
When we're drunk we're tough —
can fight anyone, no matter the
size or the sex. What about the

accidents that can happen, and
do. When someone is hurt or
killed, is that having fun?

It took me too long to realize
this. I pray the rest of you don't
wait until it's too late to care.

Now I have two beautiful
little girls, both only babies. I
don't want them to see me in the
condition that alcohol brings.
It gives them the idea that it's all
right to drink, Mama does. Do
you want to teach your children
that? I don't. There are better
things to learn than to tip a
bottle!

You can be an alcoholic at
any age, it's not only the old.
Nobody's too young.

The parents of today are
crying out to save their children
from the disease of alcoholism or
death. Hear them. Be open-
minded. Listen to what they have
to say. Don't shut everyone out
or one day you'll find out it's too
late to think about it. I pray
someone has heard my words.

Smart too late
Old too soon