

What Does It Mean to Be “Indigenous”?

- First to occupy an area*
- Peoples who have never adopted a nation-state type of organization.*
- Relate to everything else in the Cosmos.*
- People are seen as families or communities rather than individuals.*
- Everything is seen as alive and having needs and rights.*
- People concern themselves with the health and well-being of everything.*
- Reciprocity and Balance are central organizing principles of Indigenous Worldviews.*
- No member of the Cosmic Family should take more than he or she gives or give more than he or she receives.*
- Everything in the Cosmos is deserving of Respect.*
- Species of animals are siblings or close relatives of human communities.*
- Plant species are conceived similarly as relatives or nations with rights and needs that people must respect.*
- Clan identities integrate people intimately with other Beings.*
- Everything in the Cosmos is Sacred.*
- All Communities and their Environments are inconceivable except as a single, integrated whole, each part dependent on the others for health and survival.*

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“Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor” Tuck and Yang, 2012
“Aesthetics of Survivance” – Gerald Vizenor, 2019

