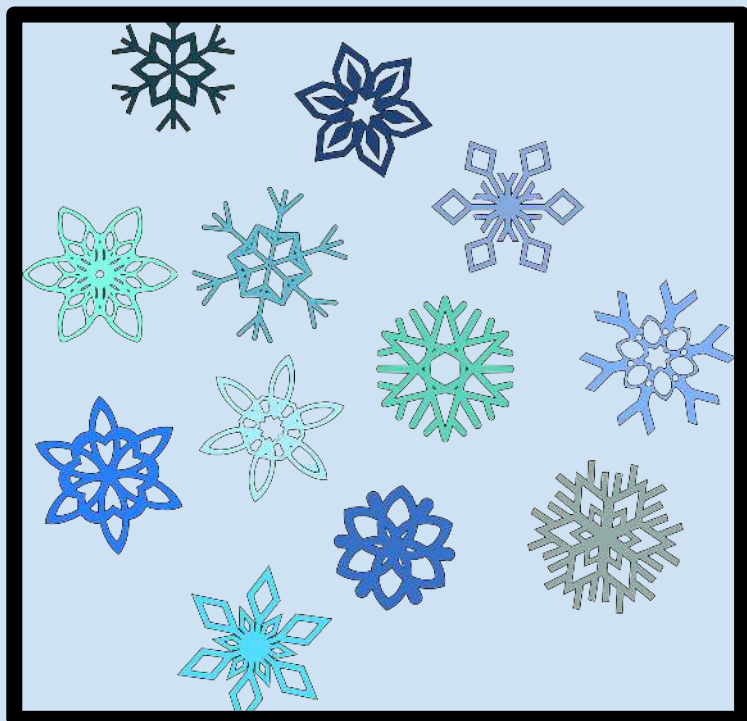


# December 2023 Mail-Out!

December is here and the weather is cool and crisp around here!

Please see our monthly offerings below. As always, we welcome your feedback and would love to chat with you about what to include in future mail-outs! Gilakas'la!

- Your Indigenous Online Education Support Team



## Paper Snowflake Art!

Join Kris and Richard online to create beautiful works of art.

December 19th, 9:00-10:00 or 1:00-2:00.

Please RSVP to  
[richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca)



## Chat & Chew:

Looking to meet our staff? Have questions for us or just want to hang out, share a meal, and have a chat?

**Meet us online every Tuesday  
from 11:30 - 12:00 pm!**

Link:  
<https://bit.ly/chewchat>



# Food is Medicine



## Food is Medicine:

Please enjoy the information and recipes attached.

These recipes were compiled by Elders in nations around BC and contains tons of lovely information about healthy, traditional food sources and how we can incorporate them into our meals!

YUM!



## Gifts From The Land:

As the weather cools, there are many opportunities to harvest traditional foods and medicines.

Have you seen any yellowfoot chanterelle mushrooms? How about shellfish or licorice ferns?

Are people in your community involved in harvesting some or all of these?

**We would love to see what kinds of plants and animals are being harvested in your communities right now!**





## **Celebrating Winter Solstice:**

How do you like to celebrate winter solstice?

Please find the attached list of ideas to celebrate this year. The article outlines big ways and small ways to celebrate Winter Solstice.

I hope that you are able to celebrate in whatever way works for you and your family!



## **Winter Photo Contest:**

Capture what Winter looks like where you live!

### **Categories:**

- Black & White
- Colour

**Please send your beautiful photographs to [richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca) to be featured on our website!**

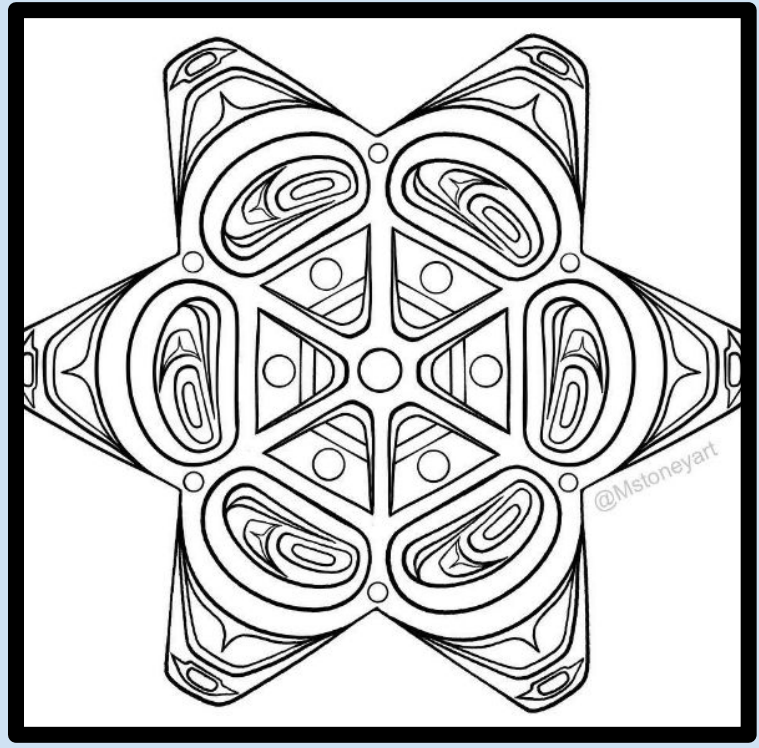
Category winners will be given prizes!



## Winter Solstice Craft Ideas:

Giselaine has compiled a list of even more exciting Winter Solstice craft ideas.

We hope that these ideas inspire you and your family!



## Michelle Stoney Colouring Art:

Gitxsan artist Michelle Stoney has generously shared some of her designs with us to pass along to you.

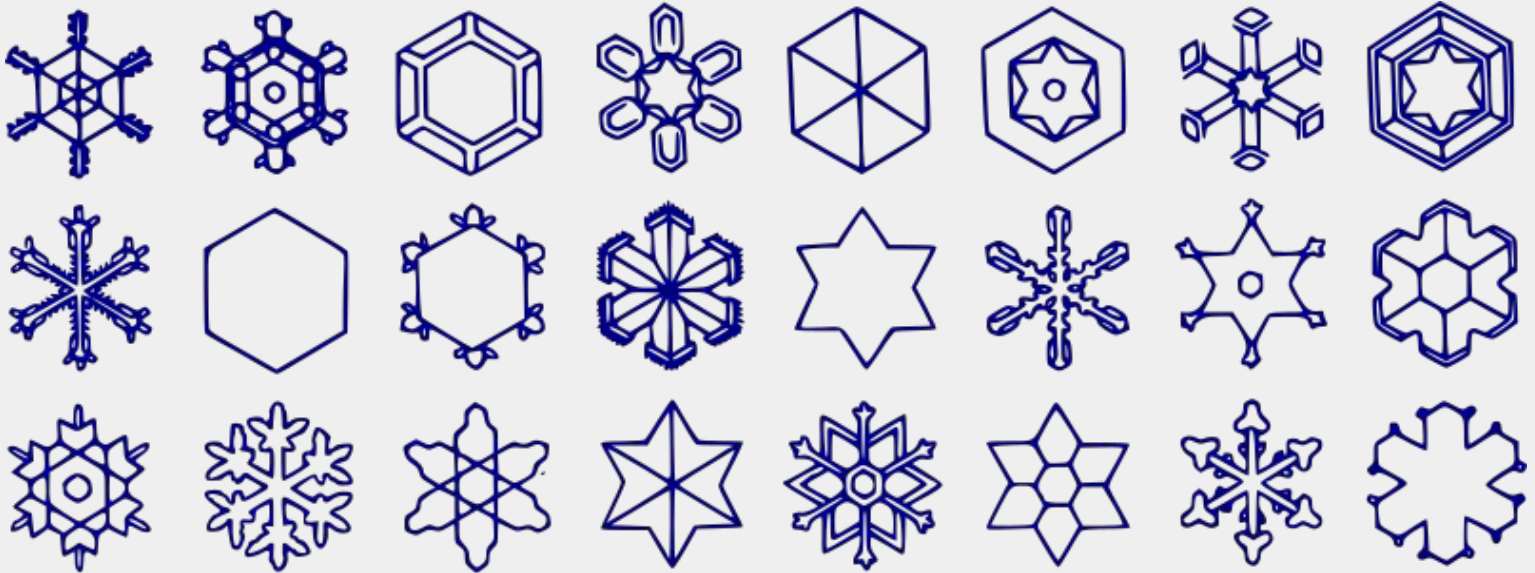
For more information on Michelle and her art, please check her out on social media.

Gilakas'la - Maarsii - Thank You,

- Richard Turenne - *Indigenous Education Support Teacher* - [richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca)
- Kris Prince - *Indigenous Support Worker* - [kris.prince@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:kris.prince@sd71.bc.ca)
- Giselaine Ballentine - *Administrative Assistant* - [giselaine.ballantyne@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:giselaine.ballantyne@sd71.bc.ca)



# Paper Snowflake Art!



Join Richard and Kris online to create some beautiful paper snowflakes!

**Details:** December 19th - 9:00-10:00, 1:00-2:00

**Material needed:** paper, scissors, a great attitude

Please RSVP to Richard at [richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca)

Once you respond, more details and the Zoom link will be provided.

Want to practice? Check out this online snowflake maker:

<https://dangries.com/rectangleworld/PaperSnowflake/>

# Food is Medicine



*"Share Foods with those you love"*

Elder May Sam WJOLEEP and STÁUTWY First Nation





# BANANAS

*"A common food that all enjoy as it is quick and tasty"*

## HARVEST & STORAGE

- ❖ Bananas are a fruit available year round from the grocery store.
- ❖ The banana plant is not a tree, but rather the largest herbaceous flowering plant in the world, producing edible, seedless berries – a banana!
- ❖ Sweet bananas originated in Asia and Australia, and today are grown in over 130 countries. The banana plant grows in tropical climates, and cannot grow outdoors in Canada.
- ❖ Bananas must be harvested when fully green, and then transported over long distances from the tropics to other world markets. When the banana gets to its final destination, they are exposed to ethylene, a ripening gas, and the banana will then begin to turn yellow.
- ❖ Apples and potatoes naturally produce a large amount of ethylene gas. If your bananas are too green when you get them home, you can put them in a brown paper bag with an apple or potato to speed up the ripening process.
- ❖ Overripe bananas can be easily stored in the freezer for up to 3 months, and then added to smoothies or in baking.

## PREPARATION

- ❖ Sweet bananas are best eaten fresh, or cut-up on cereal, in a fruit salad, or on a peanut butter sandwich.
- ❖ Bananas also have a smooth texture, and are a great addition to smoothies, shakes or in fruit salads. They also add great flavour and natural sweetness to baked goods and pies.
- ❖ Bananas make a great first food for babies. Simply fork mash and enjoy!

## NUTRITION

- ❖ Bananas are a rich source of vitamin B6, and also a good source of vitamin C and fibre.
- ❖ Bananas do contain some potassium (although other fruits and veggies may be better sources, including potatoes, mushrooms and spinach). Potassium is good to increase mobility and muscle health, as well as prevent cramping. It can also reduce the formation of kidney stones and promote good urinary tract health.



# EAT BANANAS 3 WAYS

MEAL

## BANANA OATMEAL MUFFINS

1 cup whole wheat flour	¾ cup milk
1 cup oatmeal	1 egg
1 tsp baking soda	½ cup brown sugar
2 tsp baking powder	¼ cup oil
1 tsp salt	1 cup banana, mashed
1 tsp cinnamon	½ cup blueberries or chocolate chips

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat oven to 400° F. In a small bowl, mix together the dry ingredients (flour, oatmeal, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, brown sugar and salt). In a separate, larger bowl, whisk together the wet ingredients (egg, banana, milk and oil). Then, add the dry ingredients into the wet, and stir gently until everything is just combined. Gently fold in the berries or chocolate chips. Drop batter into muffin tins, until they are ¾ full. Bake 20-25 minutes. Enjoy!

SNACK

## 3 INGREDIENT BANANA BREAKFAST COOKIES

2 very ripe bananas  
1 cup uncooked oats  
¼ cup chocolate chips  
Cinnamon (optional)

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease or spray a cookie sheet. In a bowl, mash banana with a fork, then mix in oats and chocolate chips. Place spoonfuls of batter spread out on cookie sheet, press down to flatten into small disc (about the size of a golf ball). Sprinkle with cinnamon (optional but yummy). Bake 15 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool and enjoy!

Recipe adapted from: <https://princesspinkgirl.com/3-ingredient-chocolate-chip-oatmeal-breakfast-cookies/>

DRINK

## BANANA BERRY SMOOTHIE

2 bananas  
2 cups frozen berries  
1-2 cups water or milk  
2 cups spinach  
½ cup yogurt (optional)  
½ tsp cinnamon (optional)

**DIRECTIONS:** Place all of the ingredients into a blender. Blend until smooth and pour into glasses. Serves 4-6.





# HERBS

*"Spice up your life."*

## HARVEST & STORAGE

- ❖ Herbs and spices are plants, roots and seeds and add delicious flavour to our food. They provide our bodies with a bounty of nutrients.
- ❖ **Herbs** come from the leafy and green part of the plant. Some examples are: basil, oregano, thyme, rosemary, parsley and mint.
- ❖ **Spices** come from the root, stem, bulb, bark or seeds. Some examples are cinnamon, cloves, ginger and pepper.

## PREPARATION

- ❖ **To dry**, place them in a warm place with good ventilation and out of direct sunlight. Next to a wood stove with a fan running nearby is ideal.
- ❖ Spread them out so they are only one layer thick and turn them every day so they will dry evenly.
- ❖ A dehydrator works well too as long as it does not get too hot. Do not turn it over 100° F.
- ❖ Once herbs are completely dried and crackly, remove any brown leaves or unwanted material.
- ❖ At this point a cool dark place will best preserve them. You can keep aromatic leaves and flowers whole and then crumble them up just before use. This helps preserve the good smells/aromatics.
- ❖ Your finished product should look and smell like the plant did when it was fresh. If it has turned brown and lost its scent, it has probably lost nutritional and medicinal value. Dried herbs generally last about a year.

## NUTRITION

- ❖ Herbs contain many antioxidants, essential oils, vitamins, phytosterols and many other plant-derived nutritious substances, which help our body to fight against germs, toxins and to boost immunity level. This helps us to fight off getting sick!



# HERBS SEASONINGS

MEAL

## BAKED FRIES

4-5 large potatoes or sweet potatoes, washed and cut into circles  
3 Tbsp olive oil  
1-3 tsp of herb flavour shaker (see below)

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat the oven to 375° F. In a large bowl, mix together the oil, potatoes and herbs. Add the cut potatoes, and stir to coat. Place the potatoes on a baking pan with parchment paper. Cook for about 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serves 4-6 people.

SNACK

## HERB FLAVOUR SHAKER

*Single serving or bulk measurements*

1 Tbsp or (1 cup) dried mustard  
1 Tbsp or (1 cup) paprika  
1 Tbsp or (1 cup) garlic powder  
1 Tbsp or (1 cup) onion powder  
1½ tsp or (½ cup) black or white pepper  
1 tsp or (½ cup) basil  
1 tsp or (¼ cup) thyme

**DIRECTIONS:** Mix all the herbs together and then store in a shaker. Adds so much deliciousness to chicken, fish, rice, potato and more.

DRINK

## NETTLE SEAWEED FLAVOUR SHAKER

1 cup sesame seeds  
¼ cup powdered nettles  
¼ cup of powdered seaweed

**DIRECTIONS:** Toast sesame seeds over medium heat in a dry pan (optional). Grind sesame seeds in a blender or coffee grinder. Grind nettles and seaweed into powders. Blend all ingredients and store in a glass jar in the refrigerator. Add to rice, salmon cakes, fish and soups.





# DRIED BERRIES

*"Nature's fast foods, happiness is a bowl of fresh berries."*

## HARVEST & STORAGE

- ❖ Berries are one of the most delicious foods to find on a walk or a hike. Berry picking is a tradition for many families in the summer months.
- ❖ Berries are one of the most important and nourishing foods in our diet.
- ❖ Drying Berries for the winter season is an important practice so we have foods that provide our bodies with the much needed nourishment and flavours in the fall and winter.
- ❖ Some popular dried berries are **huckleberries, salal, thimbleberry, rosehip** and **salmonberry**. Other common berries are also great dried: **blueberries, cranberries** and **cherries**.

## PREPARATION

- ❖ Wild berries are arguably best eaten as you pick them! They are also enjoyed fresh, as desserts, on salads, on peanut butter toast and cereal.
- ❖ **To Dry berries** – you can use a dehydrator or your own oven. Lay your berries out on parchment paper on a baking sheet. For small berries leave whole or slice into small, thin pieces. Turn your oven onto the lowest setting and place baking sheet in the oven with a wooden spoon holding the door slightly open. This is done to allow the moisture to leave the oven as the berries dry. Allow to dry for 6-8 hours or until all the moisture is removed from the berries.
- ❖ **To freeze berries**, wash and remove the tops. Then, place in rows on a cookie sheet and place in the freezer. Once solid, you can use a spatula to take the berries off the tray and transfer to a freezer bag. They will keep for several months and are great in smoothies, on ice cream or yogurt.

## NUTRITION

- ❖ Berries are full of healthy nutrients including vitamin C, vitamin E, fibre and riboflavin. Berries are high in nutrients, which are responsible for giving them their colour. This is why nutritionists say to eat foods with many colours.



# EAT DRIED BERRIES 3 WAYS

MEAL

## OATMEAL BERRY COOKIES

1 cup whole wheat flour  
½ cup oatmeal  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp baking soda  
½ cup dried berries (huckleberries, thimbleberries, cranberries, raisins etc.)  
½ cup chocolate chips  
Pinch of baking powder

¾ cup butter  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 egg  
1 tsp vanilla

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat oven to 350° F. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, oatmeal, cinnamon, dried berries and chocolate chips. In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to blend together the butter and sugar. Then add the egg and vanilla and blend well. Add the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients, and blend on low until just combined. Roll the thick batter into small balls (about ½ the size of a golf ball), and press down with a fork. Place on a cookie sheet and bake for 8 minutes. Let cool before eating. Enjoy!

SNACK

## ROSE HIP JAM

*This simple jam has become a favourite spread for sandwiches, fruit and crackers. It is a tasty way to get the wonderful nutritional benefits of rose. You can buy deseeded rose hips bulk in most herb stores or health food stores.*

½ cup deseeded, dried rosehips (make sure there are no seeds or stems)  
About ½ cup apple cider or apple juice

**DIRECTIONS:** Grind dried rose hips in a clean coffee grinder. Add apple cider or apple juice to the powder until it forms a jam consistency. Let sit several minutes to let it absorb fluid and add more as needed. Place in a jar and refrigerate. This will only last two weeks when refrigerated, but you can freeze it. You can modify the recipe by adding cinnamon powder, vanilla and other spices. Enjoy on crackers, apple slices, sandwiches or dessert.

Recipe from: Tracy Bosnian

DRINK

## BERRY TEA

### HARVESTED:

1 tsp elderberry  
1 tsp huckleberry leaf and berry  
1 tsp thimbleberry or blackberry leaf  
1 tsp rosehip

**DIRECTIONS:** Combine all berries and leaves with 3 cups of hot water and serve.

### STORE BOUGHT:

3 tea bags of any herbal berry tea  
3 cups of hot water

**DIRECTIONS:** Steep tea bag in hot water. Serve and enjoy!

### ICED BERRY TEA:

**DIRECTIONS:** Chill berry tea above and serve over ice.







## Acknowledging the Winter Solstice is a Decolonial Act for Indigenous People | NDN Collective

The winter solstice is an opportunity for Indigenous people to reconnect to the natural world, sharpen our senses, and access our most powerful selves.

[ndncollective.org](https://ndncollective.org)

<https://ndncollective.org/acknowledging-the-winter-solstice-is-a-decolonial-act-for-indigenous-people/>

### **THE WINTER SOLSTICE IS A SPECIAL TIME FOR THOSE WHO HONOR AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE PATTERNS OF OUR NATURAL WORLD.**

On this day, the sun is at its lowest point in the sky, traveling across the sky world above us in a short stride, resulting in the shortest day and the longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. For Indigenous people across the globe, the natural world is a source of teachings about natural and universal laws. In understanding the interconnectedness of all things, we recognize that the cosmos– the sun, moon, stars, and other planets– affect us and connect us in undeniable ways.

The winter solstice is an event that has been observed for millennia by many of our Indigenous ancestors. While some Tribal Nations have traditionally held special ceremonies during celestial events like the winter and summer solstices, others may have simpler ways of observing these moments. Some Tribal Nations have maintained teachings around solstice time, while others may be seeking to revive the teachings, practices and ceremonies that were forcibly taken from us.

In its period of darkness, the winter solstice is an opportunity to go inward with deep intention, to care for our spiritual selves, our bodies and minds, our loved ones and families, and to prepare for the longer days ahead.

### **THE WINTER SOLSTICE FALLS ON DECEMBER 21 THIS YEAR.**

In the spirit of self care, community care, accessing our ancestral memory and our most powerful selves, here are 14 different ways that you and your loved ones can spend the winter solstice in observance of a natural phenomena that comes only once a year. Take what works for you from this list, and if possible, consult with elders and your own traditional teachings for guidance on the best ways to acknowledge this event and deepen your spiritual connection during this time.



## ON SOLSTICE DAY...

### **1. TAKE THE DAY OFF OF WORK OR JUST SLOW DOWN AND REST**

Whether you have to pull a full or double shift on winter solstice day, or if you have the day off already, set aside time to just, be. No guilt. No intrusive thoughts about what needs to get done. Set down your electronic devices and smart phones, and be present in the moment. And if you have kids, housemates, friends or loved ones, spend that quality time together and totally unplugged from technology.

### **2. COOK AND SHARE A HEALTHY, COMFORTING MEAL WITH LOVED ONES**

As Indigenous people of the Earth, kinship is what has always held us together. Sharing space and time to cook, eat, and nourish our bodies and our loved ones' bodies through the preparation of healthy meals is both physical, communal and spiritual. Seek out traditional and clean foods to prepare, or cook your favorite recipe from a loved one!

### **3. REFLECT ON THE PAST YEAR**

Take time to reflect on the highs and even lows of the past year. Acknowledge and celebrate your growth, your resilience, your strength and the blessings you may have overlooked. And last but not least, let go of what doesn't serve you in order to create space for the positive ahead of you in the coming year. Make amends with others if you need to and set yourself up for new possibilities, new friendships and deepened connections.

### **4. GIVE THANKS FOR ALL OF YOUR BLESSINGS**

It's so easy to get wrapped up in what isn't working for us, what didn't happen for us in the past year or loss we may have endured. But the fact that we are all still here, breathing and living right now, is evidence of SO many blessings. Start with the small things, like, clean air, a warm space to be in, your physical abilities, the gift of your intelligence and creativity. Recount these things in your mind, in a prayer or meditation, or even write them down on a piece of paper. There is no limit to how long this gratitude list can be! And in fact, the longer the list the better.

### **5. CLEAN AND HONOR YOUR LIVING SPACE BY DECLUTTERING**

Our homes are the sacred spaces where so many important things happen. We rest in our homes, we eat in our homes. We gather, commune, and even raise children in our homes. Creating a sacred space in your home sets you and your family up for success each day. Create an atmosphere on solstice day that allows you to just be present in your home and to focus on the things that nourish and inspire you. This might mean getting a lot of the heavy lifting-type cleaning done in the days leading up to solstice day.

## **6. SHOW THE PEOPLE WHO YOU CARE FOR THAT YOU APPRECIATE THEM**

This could be as simple as a written card, a text message, a phone call or a home visit. You can show up for them with a favor, a simple gift, or just with your presence. Not only express your gratitude for them and the ways they have brought value and nourishment to your life, but ask genuine questions about how they are doing, and be an attentive and compassionate listener.

## **7. CHANNEL YOUR CREATIVE ENERGY THROUGH ARTS, CRAFTS AND EXERCISING YOUR IMAGINATION**

One of the most powerful gifts that we all have, is the gift of our creative thoughts. We are born with creativity, and we exercise this daily with our thoughts and actions, actively co-creating the world around us. We are ALL creatives in some way! Channel your creativity by dreaming up something new, by making something with your hands and your mind, and savor the process. Sew, bead, paint, write, cook, design, change the layout of your bedroom or living room, and even strategize movements. The possibilities are endless!

## **8. DRINK NATURAL AND MEDICINAL TEAS**

Our natural world is rich with medicines, for both body, mind and spirit, and our ancestors knew the power of drinking medicinal teas. If possible, prepare and drink teas from your or other Indigenous homelands. Drink tea with loved ones. Pray over your tea, pray to the root and plant nations, to ancestors, and to the water, and know that you are activating medicine on a cellular and even generational level.



## **9. PRACTICE SPECIAL SELF-CARE RITUALS FOR SELF AND OTHERS**

Care for your physical and spiritual self with a warm shower or bath, with rich lotions, essential oils, etc. Put on a luxurious face mask if that's your thing. Give yourself a manicure or pedicure. Get a massage or give a massage. Braid someone else's hair for them, or ask them to braid your hair. Name your practice, and make time for that.

## **10. GO TO A CEREMONY OR HOLD A PERSONAL MOMENT OF PRAYER IN YOUR HOME**

If you have access to a ceremonial space, go to that space. Show up with something to give while you receive. This looks different for everyone, depending on tribe, nation, and regional and clan teachings.

## **11. PAY ATTENTION TO THE MOVEMENT OF THE SUN**

The sun is revered by Indigenous nations for a reason. It literally gives us life! It's so valuable to observe the natural patterns of the sun and to consider the teachings we have related to the sun. By sitting in deep observation on solstice day, and in fact, on any day, we sharpen our senses and our intuitive relationship to the natural world.

## **12. LIGHT A FIRE**

Winter solstice and winter in general is a time of fires, and fire is an old soul. Fire is also comforting, beautiful and mesmerizing to look at. You can put medicines on the fire, like sage or cedar. You can sit around a fire and feel its warmth. You can cook over a fire, put offerings into a fire, even pray, sing and tell stories next to a fire.



## **13. MAKE OFFERINGS**

While we ask for good things for the upcoming year and give thanks for our blessings, it's so important to also give back and make offerings. Reciprocity, even to the spiritual world, matters. Set out food, make prayer ties, or whichever offering is prescribed by your own teachings.

## **14. SET INTENTIONS FOR THE LONGER DAYS AHEAD**

In the same way we co-create each moment of our day, we have the power to co-create the future that is ahead of us simply with the power of our thoughts. So set and declare your best intentions for the coming days, for the winter season, and upcoming year. Write your intentions down. Journal your intentions. Pray about them and ask for support. Believe that you can achieve those things, whether they are personal, physical, spiritual, relational or professional.



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**We know and our ancestors knew that in order to show up for our communities as good relatives and as energized agents of change, we have to be grounded and strong.** Replenishing your spirit in a time of growing social unrest is also a revolutionary act.

We all have the power to create a world where we are better and more connected, and it all starts within– within self and within community– in carving out time and space to reflect, grow and always give back. Remember we must also show care and compassion to our relatives who are less fortunate, who are living in less than ideal situations, who are grieving or struggling with their most basic needs. Remember our Earth and our non-human relations. Remember those who are suffering injustice in different corners of the world. And remember the generations that have come before and those who will come after us.

With warmth and solidarity, happy winter solstice.



*by* SARAH SUNSHINE MANNING

**Sarah Sunshine Manning, NDN Collective Director of Communications,** is a citizen of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho and Nevada, and Chippewa-Cree of Rocky Boy, Montana. Manning directs NDN Collective’s communications strategy and impact. She also serves as producer of the NDN Podcast While Indigenous and as editor of the NDN blog. Manning has Bachelor’s degrees in American Indian Studies, Social Science-History, and licensure in Secondary Education. She has a Master’s degree in journalism and mass communication.



# GIFTS FROM THE LAND



Yellowfoot Chanterelles



Oysters



Clams

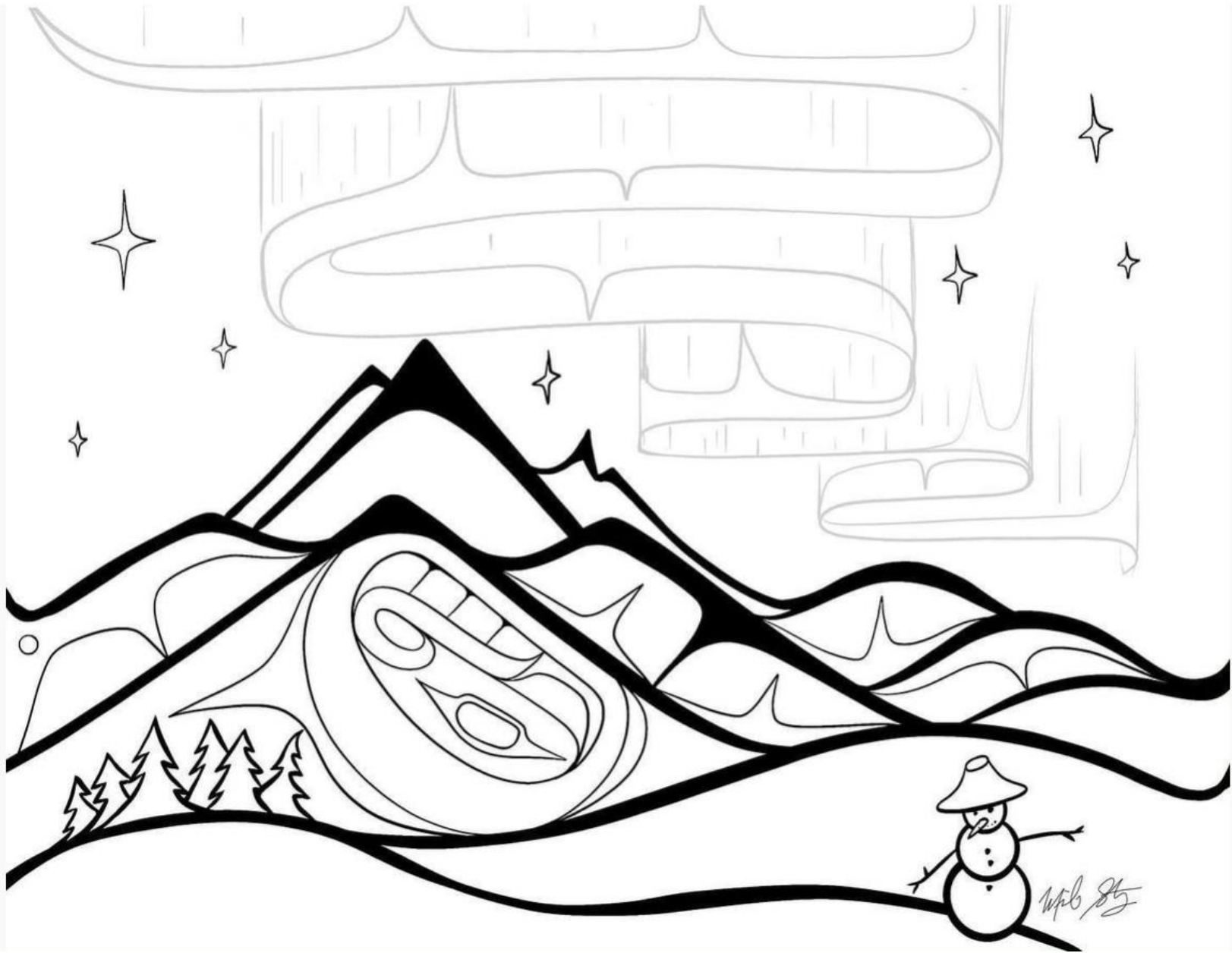


Licorice Ferns

Year-round, the land provides us with an amazing abundance. Do you or your family harvest plants or animals from the land?

Let us know at [richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:richard.turenne@sd71.bc.ca)!







# Winter Solstice craft ideas

Hi everyone! Here are some craft ideas you can make this winter solstice season to hang in your window, on a branch outside, or as gifts.

When you're outside playing or hiking, bring a bag and collect twigs and small branches, acorns or pinecones and anything else you find interesting.

Supplies to put things together: thin rope, yarn, thread or ribbon, glue gone or wood glue

Supplies to decorate: paint, markers, crayons, buttons, beads, ribbons, yarn, small rocks ... use your imagination ... look around the house and on the ground outside.

Tie or glue the branches together then glue on berries, buttons, pieces of yarn, or acorns. (TIP: paint your acorns different colours). You can also use cinnamon sticks instead of twigs.

## Making stars:



**Use cookie cutters to cut different shapes in orange peels.** Make a hole with a large needle and string some rope through it to hang. (TIP: Orange peels and dried orange slices are great to wrap with cinnamon sticks to hang or attach to a gift).

**Rope star:** cut a star shape out of a piece of cardboard (use an old box for the cardboard). Wrap some colourful yarn or rope around the cardboard and decorate with whatever you like.



**Making wreaths with fir tree branches, or acorns, or pinecones.**

- The branches can be tied together in a circle then decorated with anything you like.
- The acorn wreath can be made by gluing the acorns in the shape of a circle ... or ... to be more secure, ask an adult to drill small holes in them and string the acorns through a piece of wire or rope.



**You can hang all your lovely crafts on a string or a branch and hang it in your window.**



**We'd love to see what you make! Send us pictures and we will put them on our website.**