Joe’s Guide to Dish Setting

*Gaa-tibaajimod(told by) Joe Nayquonabe Sr. Gaa-tibaajimotawaajin(transcribed by) James* Clark

# **Introduction/Reasoning**

The reason this was brought about was due to an overwhelming request to let people know how Joe sets a dish at the drum he and his nephew take care of. In addition, there are instances of the community members needing assistance that Joe deems it necessary to set a dish as well

# Process

* The reason you’re putting the dish down is because someone in your life is in need of assistance and you are asking the drum for help
* To start off you’ll want to prepare a meal (from scratch?) that you made, no matter the size, that day and bring Asemaa to the dance hall. There is no need to bring silver wear, dishes, or plates
* Once you get to the dance hall then you’ll want to approach the drum keepers and let them know you want to put a dish out and why (physical, emotional, service members, and both good and bad life instances for example) so they can let the speaker (who will speak Ojibwe for the dish that is directed at the drum) know
* The speaker will instruct the people so they know where and how to set the dish out, anytime during the dance these people can offer the speaker a gift of any sort, but it is not required
* The drum members will encourage those in attendance to accept that food and in doing so they are helping the person/people for whom the dish was set
* Something to note is that dishes are not to be set for personal gain or decisions, only that the creator look over those included in the dish
* People will line up to eat and accept the food. There is no order, only first come first serve
* Everyone is encouraged but not required to accept the food
* Once the dish is near or fully empty, the helper will either bring it back to the kitchen, or the people who set the dish
* However, if it is not empty then the helper will offer the rest to the guests in the audience
* During this time, the drum will not be sounded until the dish is finished and away from the drum unless there is unnecessary noise in the dance hall preventing the speaker from being heard
* If this occurs then a member will hit the drum only once for everyone’s attention
* If there are multiple dishes then the process will start over until everyone’s dishes are finished
* Then the dance will continue on, the dishes will be done either before or after the ceremonial songs
* On occasions people can put a dish out to remember those that have passed on, these are typically done at night
* Even if they’ve started, don’t feel discouraged, the drum keepers will make sure it gets put out
* Also, once a child is brought into the dance hall for the first time the parents are encouraged to set a dish for the child and welcome a new member into the community, and in this instance the helper will pass the dish around instead of lining up

# **Additional instances of dish setting**

* Community members put dishes out with asemaa on their own accord apart from the drums for their own reasons
* If there is something that will affect the community as a whole then the drums will have dishes set before them (i.e., 1999 treaty court case), this can also be an outside community (Chernobyl, 1986) that will be affected as well and overall to aid those inside and out of the community for the creator to look over them
* If people are in need of an urgent dish, or during the off season then they can bring a dish to the homes of where those drums are taken care of. There is no off time to set a dish whenever the community needs it

# **Conclusion**

“These drums were given to us to help, and one of the ways we are able to do that is by setting dishes. To stress they were for there your ancestors, you and for future generations”

# Gifts (not required)

Tobacco (asemaa), money (zhooniyaa), blankets (waabooyaanan) not limited to only these items