

Chief Seattle's Letter

Every part of the earth is sacred. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow, every humming insect. All are holy.

We know the sap which courses through the trees as we know the blood that courses through our veins. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters. The bear, the deer, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the dew in the meadow, the body heat of the pony, and human beings, all belong to the same family.

The shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water, but the blood of our ancestors. Our land is sacred.

The air is precious to us and shares its spirit with all the life that it supports. The wind that gave our grandparents their first breath also received their last sighs. The wind also gives our children the spirit of life.

Will you teach your children what we have taught our children? That the Earth is our mother? What befalls the Earth befalls all the children of the Earth.

This we know: the Earth does not belong to us, we belong to the Earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. We did not weave the web of life, we are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

-- Chief Seattle of the Suquamish Indians