

**“Ohenton Kariwahtekwen”  
GREETINGS TO THE NATURAL WORLD  
Iroquois Thanksgiving Address**

Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now, we bring our minds together as on as we give greetings and thanks to each other as people.

We are all thankful to our Mother, the Earth, for she gives us all that we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk about upon her. It gives us joy that she continues to care for us as she has from the beginning of them. To our Mother, the Earth, we send greetings and thanks.

We give thanks to all the waters of the world for quenching our thirst and providing us with strength. Water is life. We know its power in many forms-waterfalls and rain, mists and streams, rivers and oceans. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the spirit of Water.

We turn our minds to all the Fish life in the water. They were instructed to cleanse and purify the water. They also give themselves to us a food. We are grateful that we can still find pure water. So, we turn now to the Fish and send our greetings and thanks. Now we turn toward the vast fields of Plant life. As far as the eye can see, the Plants grow, working many wonders. They sustain many life forms. With our minds gathered together, we give thanks and look forward to seeing Plant life for many generations to come.

With one mind, we turn to honor and thank all the Food Plants we harvest from the garden. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans, and berries have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength from them too. We gather all the Plant Foods together as one and send them a greeting of thanks. Now we turn to all the Medicine Herbs of the world. From the beginning, they were instructed to take away sickness. They are always waiting and ready to heal us. We are happy there are still among us, those special few, who remember how to use these plants for healing. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the Medicines and to the keepers of the Medicines.

We gather our minds together to send greetings and thanks to all the Animal Life in the world. They have many things to teach us as people. We are honored by them when they give up their lives so we may use the bodies as food for our people. We see them near our homes and in the deep forests. We are glad they are still here and we hope that it will always be so.

We now turn our thoughts to the Trees. The Earth has many families of Trees who have their own instructions and uses. Some provide us with shelter and shade, others with fruit, beauty, and other useful things. Many people of the world use a Tree as a symbol of peace and strength. With one mind, we greet and thank the Tree life.

We put our minds together as one and thank all the Birds who move and fly about over our heads. The Creator gave them beautiful songs. Each day they remind us to enjoy and appreciate life. The Eagle was chosen to be their leader. To all the Birds from the smallest to the largest we send our joyful greetings and thanks.

We are thankful to the powers we know as the Four Winds. We hear their voices in the moving air as they refresh and purify the air we breathe. They help us to bring the change of seasons. From the four directions they come, bringing us messages and a giving us strength. With one mind, we send our greetings and thanks to the Four Winds.

Now we turn to the west where our grandfathers, the Thunder Beings, live. With lightning and thundering voices, they bring with them the water that renews life. We bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks to our Grandfathers, the Thunderers.

We now send greetings and thanks to our eldest Brother, the Sun. Each day without fail, he travels the sky from east to west, bringing the light of a new day. He is the source of all the fires of life. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Brother, the Sun.

We put our minds together to give thanks to our oldest Grandmother, the Moon, who lights the nighttime sky. She is the leader of woman all over the world, and she governs the movement of the ocean tides. By her changing face, we measure time, and it is the Moon who watches over the arrival of children here on Earth. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Grandmother, the Moon.

We give thanks to the Stars who are spread across the sky like jewelry. We see them in the night, helping the Moon to light the darkness and bringing dew to the gardens and growing things. When we travel at night, they guide us home. With our minds gathered together as one, we send greetings and thanks to the Stars.

We gather our minds to greet and thank the enlightened Teachers who have come to help throughout the ages. When we forget how to live in harmony, they remind us of the way we were instructed to live as people.

With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to these caring teachers.

Now we turn our thoughts to the Creator, or Great Spirit, God, and send greetings and thanks for all the gifts of Creation. Everything we need to live a good life is here on this Mother Earth. For all the love that is around us, we gather our mind together as one and send our choicest words of greetings and thanks to the Creator.

Now our minds are one.