



*Ancient Spirit Rising:
Reclaiming Your Roots & Restoring Earth Community
by Pegi Eyers*

STUDY GUIDE PART 4

“Rejecting Empire, Decolonization, Nature Spiritualities and Reconnecting to Place”

Ancient Spirit Rising was written as an inquiry into the various ideas and actions we take for granted, in today’s world of diverse spiritual paths and practices. For many of us, and within our own circles and movements, some of these subjects are being talked about for the first time. As an author and life-long learner, it is my pleasure to offer this Study Guide as a way to delve into the issues and new directions as offered through the pages of *Ancient Spirit Rising*. For individual readers, or book clubs created in circles or online, this Study Guide can also be offered on request by Pegi Eyers through a series of two-hour Zoom webinars. This five-part *Ancient Spirit Rising* Study Guide is a guideline for telling your own stories, discussing difficult issues in a warm and supportive environment, looking at the journey ahead, and asking important questions. How you, your book club or group use the questions, prompts and dialogues is entirely up to you – please engage at your own pace and in your own way.

STUDY GUIDE PART 4 is based on chapters 17 – 22 of *Ancient Spirit Rising*

- 17 On the Use of the Term “Indigenous” and Enlarging Settler Re-indigenization
- 18 Anishnaabe Prophecy
- 19 Rejecting Empire
- 20 Where Are You Located?
- 21 Eco-Soul (Manifesto)
- 22 Earth First

Prompts for Self-Inquiry and Dialogue

1. Introductions around the circle ~ what is your ethnicity or heritage? From that self-inquiry, can you describe your positionality on Turtle Island? (For example, Settler, Indigenous, POC, Black, recent immigrant, New Canadian, and others.) Which First Nation is closest to you, and whose traditional lands are you living on?

2. By the UN definition white folks are certainly not “Indigenous” (*Ancient Spirit Rising* ~ Page 158-9 paperback ~ Page 159-60 eBook/PDF). What are other terms we can be using to describe our process of reconnecting to our roots and re-landing on Turtle Island?



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3. First Nations everywhere are telling us that reconnecting with nature and the sacred is the cultural and spiritual transformation that is needed right now. “Unbecoming modernity” and recovery from the dictatorship of the western paradigm with its humancentric and unsustainable systems is happening at a rapid pace. What are some practices you can share that open your heart to the land and/or Earth Community, and how does the awakening of your eco-self translate into your art, your work, your philosophy and/or your activism?

4. The Seventh Fire Prophecy is both a warning and a promise of a better future if we can put aside our egos, our cultural and racial bias, and come together for mutual healing and the healing of Mother Earth. First Nations believe that we have entered the time of the Seventh Fire, and that we must now choose between the two roads of materialism or spirituality. It is said that if the light-skinned Settlers choose the right road, the Seventh Fire will light the Eighth and final Fire - the internal fire of peace, love and human harmony. What are your hopes and fears as you witness how things are progressing today, both in alternative and mainstream community?

5. Clearly, we need to reject the hubristic notion that human beings are a “God Species” that rule the world, and that continued “progress” is the only way forward. Rejecting the hegemonic lies of capitalism, decolonizing ourselves in heart-mind-body-soul, and moving into “ecological civilization” is the great work of our time. We are being invited to learn from First Nations, to understand the IK of our home landscapes in order to practice sustainability and relate to the environment properly. Can you share any elements of TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) from your own area? For example, wild foods, locations of spring water, sacred sites, or stories about markers in the landscape. See the chapter “Where Are You Located: Strengthen your Local Connection to Place - Action Points” for more ideas (*Ancient Spirit Rising* ~ Page 212 paperback ~ Page 213 eBook/PDF).



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- 6. There is a fine line between the re-centering of Indigenous values and cultural appropriation. What is the difference, and how do we steer clear of making those mistakes as we strengthen our own bonds to the land and the other-than-human world?

- 7. Please expand on one aspect of neurodecolonization (or the unlearning of our colonized habits) as it may apply to your own process. (*Ancient Spirit Rising* ~ Page 158-9 paperback ~ Page 189 eBook/PDF).
Reject consumer capitalism. Reject the impact of commercialism on your identity formation. Reject the impact of commercialism on your spiritual life. Reject artificial values that are not your own. Reject the success = happiness myth. Reject hierarchy and privilege. Reject domination. Reject self-importance. Reject the notion that human beings have some kind of special “entitlement.” Reject adolescence (unless you are an adolescent). Reject self-indulgence. Embrace Critical Thinking Skills. Embrace your True Self. Embrace Community. Embrace the Sacred. Embrace Massive Change.

- 8. Wisdom from the past can empower the future, such as deep bonds and collaborations with others. What have been your most enriching experiences with local community and kinship groups? For example, nature walks, community foodshares, community gardens, localvore, farmer’s markets, ceremony, arts centres, peer-to-peer businesses, wealth-sharing, greenspace protection, ecologic restoration and/or grassroots activism.



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9. Have there been times in our life when you practiced “Earthing?” How did it make you feel? What are some of the benefits of Earthing?

10. The animist and ecomystic experiences of our ancient past are just as possible (and likely) today. Have you had direct communications with the other-than-human world in the wild, or even in urban spaces? Is there a particular encounter you would be willing to share?

11. One of the most exciting movements today is the popularity of ecopsychology and ecotherapy. Not only are we healed on the emotional, physical, mental and spiritual levels by spending time in nature, immersion in the wild deepens our experience of the timeless human/nature/cosmos relationship. Have you experienced or witnessed any momentous epiphanies or healings from immersion in green spaces?

12. What does the new “Earth Story” mean to you?