

“Peoples of the Pilgrimage: A Story of Integrative Learning”

(orally re-told, not read aloud, introducing Frey’s ISEM 101 The Sacred Journey to his students – Fall ‘19)

Synopsis: Land of Diversity; Central Mountain and Summit; Pilgrimage and the Discarding; At Summit: See Shared and Diverse, and Clearly with Insights; Over the Years: Respect, Celebrate Difference while no Difference that made all the Difference, and Seeing Clearly to Adapt to Meet Challenges.

In the great land, there existed many **different peoples**. . . . Each had their own **traditions**, . . their own **languages**, . . their own **customs**. . . .

Over there, one people lived in the **desert lands**, with their **unique clothing**, from their open-toed sandals to their broad-brimmed hats, well adapted to the hot, dry climate.

For some reason?, many of these people were **scientists**, . . who had gained **competencies** in such fields as wildlife ecologists, animal and veterinary scientists, human biologists, computer scientists, . . even some social scientists.

Another people lived in the **juggle lands**, with their **particular clothing**, from their water-proof boats to their warm, dry jackets, well suited to the constant rain.

Interestingly, they were mainly people of the **humanities**, . . . having **learned** to become historians, anthropologists, or experts in literature.

And over there, still another people lived in the **cold, icy north country**, with their **tried and true clothing**, from their thick animal-skin, mukluk boots to their seal-skin mittens and hooded parkas, keeping them warm.

As it turned out, many were **engineers**, . . who had **developed** their skills to become mechanical, electrical, chemical engineers.

And right here on the **Palouse**, still another people lived, the **college campus people**, with their **stylish attire**, from their Vans or Birkenstocks, denim jeans and hoodies to their held-in-hand cell phones, all items most appropriate to this climate.

These indeed **stylish** people, were of course . . . **artists**, . . who had **perfected** their talents to become musicians, sculptors or creative writers.

And in this great land, there were still **other people**, over there, and over there, . . each wearing clothing suited to their climates.

There were some **business and accounting** folks over there, . . . and over there, well, you **fill in** the blanks.

Now in this great land, their **towered a great Mountain**, right at the **center** of this great land, with each people located in **all the directions** from the mountain – north, south, east and west – and with each people located just about **equal distance** from the mountain.

At the top of this great mountain, at its **Summit**, there the **Sun always shined, always** at a perfect temperature, with **perfect weather, year-round, always**.

And the great **Mountain** cast its **shadow** over each of these lands.

Now there was **one practice** that each people **shared in common**, . . . a **Pilgrimage**. It was a **difficult journey**, one of great **personal sacrifice**, conducted by the desert, the jungle, the artic and the campus peoples, **up the slopes** of the **great Mountain**, **until finally reaching the high Summit**.

With each Pilgrimage to the Summit, the different peoples **started** out from **their own lands**, **following** their own **pathway** up to the Summit, . . . wearing the **clothing** best suited for their lands.

As each people **ascended** the Mountain, along the way **a few items** of clothing would be **discarded** – a favorite pair of rain boots here, sandals there, those cherished Vans over there – **no longer needed**, . . . **not suited for the changing** climate.

As they **continued**, closer to the **Summit's perfect environment**, more clothing would be **dropped** along the way, **no longer needed** – a prized broad-brimmed hat there, much loved jeans here, hooded parka over there, even the **cell phones** were left there! Could you image?

And with **great effort** and **sacrifice**, the Pilgrimages continued up the Mountain, until **finally** all the peoples had **arrived at the Summit**. With **all their clothing**, that had once distinguished and separated the varied peoples, that had brought much **meaning** and even **identity**, **no longer needed**, . . . now had been **discarded** along the way.

At the Summit, under the **gaze** of the bright **Sun**, . . .

the **First** amazing thing each of the peoples realized, **besides** that each wore only their “**birthday suits**”!!, . . . was that each was **exactly like** the others. The **same skin**, just in **splendid shades**, . . . **the same blood** followed in their veins, . . . **the same bones** provided support, . . . and each of the peoples had the **same minds**, . . . **the same hearts**, . . . and **the same souls**. Each people was no different than another.

And interestingly, as they **looked back** along the path each people had come up and saw what each had **discarded**, that which had brought so much **meaning** and **identity**, that had defined each people separately, each of those people, if only temporarily, could **more easily identify and celebrate**, and even **critique** their **differences**.

While they could **celebrate their differences** while in their distant lands **below**, the Pilgrims at the **Summit** were reminded of their **common, shared humanity**.

the **Second** marvelous thing each of the peoples experienced, while under the **gaze** of the bright **Sun**, and after they got over their initial **embarrassment!** was that they could **see so much more clearly**, as if a **dense fog** had been **lifted**. They could see the “**big picture**” of things, . . . they could gain **insights** and **inspirations**.

From the Summit's heights, the **lands below** could be **envisioned anew**. Seeing **new connections**, . . . **new patterns** emerging.

Over the years, as these Pilgrimages continued, so too continued a **deep respect** for one another. Neighbors were **friends**, . . . **not foes**, . . . to **cooperate with**, . . . **not fight against**. **None** saw themselves as somehow **superior** to the next – scientists over artists, artists over engineers.

While they celebrated their **differences**, they also acknowledged that there was **no difference**, and together, . . . it **made all the difference!**

Over the years, as these Pilgrimages continued, when a **challenge** came up – a disaster, a plague – something that **threatened** the people, they would **take the insights** and **inspirations**, the novel patterns and new connections offered at the Summit's peak, while under the gaze of the bright Sun, and **apply** them to **adapt** and **meet** whatever challenge would arise.

The scientists and humanities folks could clarify and understand the challenge, . . . while the engineers could construct that which would be needed to meet the challenge, . . . and the artists could sing and tell the stories that mobilized the people into action, and then, once the threat was overcome, could memorialize the heroism of the people.

And so it was, the **various Peoples of the Pilgrimages** – the scientists, the artists, the engineers, and the anthropologists, all the peoples of this great land lived **pretty successfully**, . . . while under the **shadow** of the **Great Mountain**, . . . under the **gaze** of the **bright Sun**.