

## When you return home after being at Standing Rock

You are a human person who has experienced something unique and intense. Returning home may bring a mix of relief, happiness, and also some unexpected experiences and feelings. Not everyone has these experiences, but many do. Having any of these, or none of them, or all of them is expected. So you will not be taken by surprise if you have these experiences we offer these suggestions.

What you might notice:



You may have some surprising emotions.

You may be tearful or sad. On the other hand you may feel extremely happy to see your family and friends. People who experience intense situations may often have these unexpected feelings. It might be helpful to speak with a trusted healer or counselor to explore these.



You may find yourself forgetful or having a hard time concentrating.

There is so much whirling about in your mind you may notice that you struggle with remember a word here and there. You may notice that your mind drifts when you are supposed to be listening to someone. This happens sometimes and it may be helpful to note that it is happening which may help you refocus. You may need more rest at this time to heal and reconnect.



You may be puzzled about how much to share with your family and loved ones.

You may have seen good things that you want to share with your family and you may have seen some not good things that you don't want' to share with anyone. Both are important but figuring out just what you want to share may be difficult. Speaking with a trusted healer or counselor might help you sort through this.



You may feel that you have been changed by this experience, but other people do not notice.

Your spirit has been touched and changed by both the good and the difficult things you saw and experienced. This is a very personal journey that you must allow yourself to heal and grow from. It might be helpful to speak with a healer or counselor who you feel safe with and to use your medicine.



You may even feel impatient with your family and loved ones and everyday concerns may seem mundane. You may even find life to be boring or meaningless for a time.

You may find it difficult to move back into your daily routines at home, at school or at work because they may feel insignificant after your intense experiences. Time spent with family and friends and your routines may help you reconnect. You may also wish to visit a trusted healer or counselor to sort through this time.



## What to do?



Keep to your daily routine or create one.

Pay attention to basics—eat nourishing food, sleep well, get your usual amount of exercise.



Be patient with yourself.

Ask your loved ones to be patient with you. It may take a while before you can talk about your experiences.



Take time to think, talk, and get back to everyday life.

Do not be surprised if your loved ones expect you to just jump into life as usual, but do talk with them to let them know that you have experienced something special and will need to reconnect slowly but surely.



Do reconnect with your family and loved ones.

Maintain your connections with your new friends and relatives you have met at Standing Rock. Remember all your relations.



Do find a safe place with no responsibilities for a few minutes, pay attention to your breathing and let your body relax.

If you find yourself irritable or stressed, you might try some simple calming approaches, such as humming, visualizing a calm place, relaxing your head, neck and shoulders.



Do reach out to your spiritual advisors and mentors.

You may need to speak with a healer or counselor to understand what is happening and to move through the intense feelings you may have.



Do connect with your community and all your relations.

Attend community gatherings and circles where your people pray, recreate, share food, and laugh. Being part of your community may help you feel like you again and may help you feel better.