**Council Fire Opening Ceremony #7**

**Candle Lighting the Council Fire**

**Overview:** Council Fire Openings set the stage for a great and memorable council fire for your program. It is written to be used at the beginning of a Longhouse council fire gathering. Featured here is the use of candlelight flame to eventually light the Council fire.

There is one central fire with plenty of soaked kindling around the edges.

Each Big Brave, Son and Daughter is given an unlit taper candle (with a paper plate drip guard at the base) as they enter the fire circle.

There may be a ceremonial candle or flame to already burning when the Longhouse enters the fire circle. This is used to start the candle-lighting sequence.

**Participants:**

* Chief: Ceremonial Leader
* Other Longhouse Officers & Chiefs: As desired to spread the flame to sections of candles.

**Relevant Ceremonial Pieces:** You may wish to incorporate this ceremony with other ceremonial components to form your full ceremony. The following are basic suggestions. Your creativity is your limit.

* Parade to Ceremonial Location
* Inductions
* Officer Inductions
* Special Awards
* Ceremonial Closing

**OPENING CEREMONY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scene | *(Fire is unlit as Longhouse membership gathers in a circle around the Council fire. Each Big Brave, Son and Daughter is given a guarded unlit taper candle as they enter the fire circle. All stand silently.)* |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats during this gathering time until instructed to stop.)* |
| Chief | All around is darkness. I light this candle from the light of the Great Spirit.  *(Chief lights his candle)*  It is no longer dark. Although this is a tiny light and lights only a small area, we all can see it. Each of us knows it is a beacon to every one of us.  But this tiny light can grow and can be multiplied, even as our brother Chiefs are now doing.  *(Chiefs move in to light their candles from the one candle.)*  Now the light is brighter and lights a bigger area, and we can see more than before. Bu this is only the beginning; for once there is light and people who are willing to share it, it will grow; and though it is shared, it will become bigger, greater, until all who want can have the light.  *(Chiefs (except Longhouse Chief) fan out to light candles at equal points of the circle. Everyone in turn lights his neighbors candle. Chiefs then stay in that position.) Once all candles are lit…*  See how fast the light can spread. Notice how well we can now see. This light makes it possible for us to see our friends, see their smiles and actions. And others can see our light. As this light brightens our council ring, the light can brighten our lives and the lives of others. The smallest light held by the least of us is important to the whole world. |
| Chief | I ask the Chiefs now to come forward and bring light our Council fire. |
|  | *(As the Chiefs touch flame to the edges of the Council Fire…)*  Now we light our Council Fire with this same light that has grown from such a tiny flame. Watch as our Council Fire takes up the flame and continues to grow. |
|  | As these small flames have now become as one Mighty Light, let us blow out our candles and rejoice in the warmth and light that we have each contributed to. The Great Spirit looks upon us and is pleased. Let us conduct ourselves with dignity and show our pride in being Native Sons & Daughters. |
|  | **CONTINUE WITH CEREMONY** |
| Chief | I now declare this council of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse to be open. Let us begin. |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats until instructed to stop.)* |

Adapted from: The Complete Book of Campfire Programs by LaRue A. Thurston