



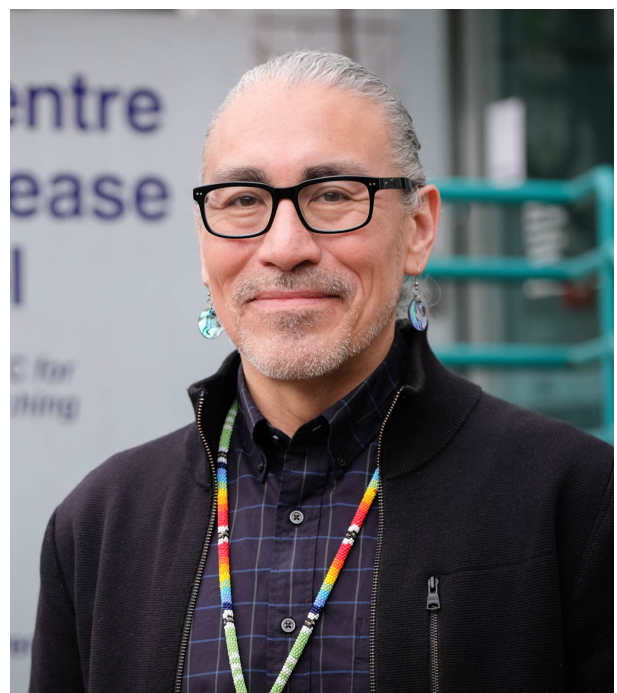
Celebrating our Kin: Two-Spirit Showcase

"The coming in process as an Aboriginal person who is LGBTQ comes to understand their relationship, place, and value within their own family, community, culture, and history"

- Harlan Pruden, [Two Spirits, One Calling | Emerging Voices](#)

Meet Harlan Pruden!

Harlan is a Two-Spirit Nēhiyo (Cree Nation) scholar and community organizer, who works with and for the Two-Spirit community locally, nationally and internationally. Harlan is a co-founder of the Two-Spirit Dry Lab, North America's first research group/lab that exclusively focuses on Two-Spirit people, communities and/or experiences. Harlan is also the Managing Editor of the [TwoSpiritJournal.com](#). Harlan served as a Co-Chair of the National Native HIV/AIDS Coalition, one of the first national efforts within the HIV/AIDS field to include all of the Two-Spirit organizations and groups in the United States. Before relocating to Vancouver



in 2015, Harlan was a co-founder and a Director of NYC community based organization, the NorthEast Two-Spirit Society.

To listen to some of the knowledge that Harlan carries, check out [Two Spirit Healing and Teachings with Harlan Pruden and Jesse Dame \(Cloud Connections Conference\)](#)

Medicine of the Month:

Ode'min (Anishinaabemowin), **Niiohontésha** (Kanien'keha), **Strawberry** (English)


Wild strawberry is a food **and** medicine relative who has **deep roots** in many Indigenous nations, including **our teachings** and **ceremonies**. For many, strawberries are known as the **heart berry** because of their shape, the ways in which they **teach us about connection**, and their medicinal properties which help to protect and **improve heart health**. There are also teachings about strawberries that are tied to the **process of birthing**, with strawberries traditionally being used as a medicine for the womb.

For **longhouse peoples**, strawberry is known as the **leader of the berries** and is a member of our **Creation Story** - coming directly from the **Great Tree of Life** in the Skyworld, travelling to Earth in **Skywoman's hands** then planted and grown out of her daughter's body after Turtle Island was **danced into being**. Strawberry drink (recipe included in links below!) continues to be an **essential part** of many of our ceremonies, **nourishing our heart centres** and connecting us to each other, **Earth and Sky - All Our Relations**.

Anishinaabe teachings include that of the **two brothers** and how strawberry came to grow as a medicine on **the grave** of the younger brother. Through this story, we come to understand that strawberry helps us to **move through grief** and arrive at a place of reconciliation, forgiveness, peace, and freedom.

Strawberries are **high in vitamins** and **minerals** including vitamin C, manganese, folate, potassium, as well as antioxidants and fibre. They help to improve heart health and **protect against heart disease**, by improving **(good)** cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood platelets function, decreasing oxidative stress, reducing inflammation, improving vascular function, and regulating blood sugar.

Traditionally, strawberry plant is also used to treat **digestive disorders, skin problems**, and to **strengthen the uterus** during and after pregnancy.

Remember, the medicine is not only in the fruit! It is **also in the leaves** - so eat those stems along with the fruit 

- [Strawberry Teachings - Wabano Centre](#)
- [Strawberry Moon Teachings with Kim Wheatley](#)
- [The Cherokee Legend of the First Strawberry](#)
- [Strawberry Teachings with Albert Dumont](#)
- [Jihso:dahk – The leader of the plants \(+ Strawberry Drink recipe\)](#)

Additional Readings

- [Summer Solstice, a Spiritual Dance - Anishinaabe](#)
- [Flowers | - KANIEN'KÉHA LANGUAGE INITIATIVE \(Mohawk Dictionary\)](#)
- [Anishinaabemowin \(Ojibwe\) summertime words](#)
- [Spring Birds in the Cree Language](#)
- [JUNE 2020 LENAPE WORD-A-DAY CALENDAR](#)