Insights into Religion and Spirituality: Broadening the Discussion
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The term ‘religion’ doesn’t not quite fit the description to a ‘T’ of the Beliefs and Traditional Values of Native American Diné People. The English term religion, a system of beliefs seems to include proselytizing converts and preaching ‘the gospel’ by spreading the Word of the faith throughout the world. Gaining scholarly knowledge about the Diné Cultural Ways of Knowing and Traditional Beliefs and its Values are taught as a way to follow sacred paths daily to the very young Navajo children at an early age – Diné Ways of Knowing is a Way of Life; not by proselytizing. Navajo children grow up with the meaning of how sacred it is in the environment.

Spirituality is the 4th Sacred Physical part of each individual on Mother Earth; each of us is created of Four Holy elements; the same environmental elements with which Sacred Mountains are made; we are sacred creations of the Holy Ones:
1. **Air** - Ních’i we must breathe air to survive.
2. **Water** - Tó for prevention of drying-out and dying of thirst, water is necessary.
3. **Heat / Energy** - Hadoh, heat dóó Hak’az, cold to stay warm and cool.
4. **Soil / Mother Earth** - Nahoosdzáán Tleezh be able to move with stability and own a personal space – Earth and its soil is needed to be stationary.

The Sacred Five-fingered Individual: Sacredness of the four parts of physical body of the Individual Self are:

1. **Physical** part that is visible.
2. **Intellectual** part that may be or not be visible.
3. **Emotional** part that is very delicate and may not be visible.
4. **Spiritual** part that binds the four parts to become a whole healthy person.

Focusing with respect toward healthy living and keeping the individual self sacred by heeding Diné Ways of Knowing beginning at **early dawn daily** (tomorrow is a new day).

1. **Thinking** Nitsáhákees for today begins with prayer **Sóhodizin**.
2. **Planning** Nahát’a the day by asking for help in prayer.
3. **Fulfilling and working** Dijí naanish ‘ádoolnílgií today’s plan.
4. **Evaluating** T’áa’ ná’nél’í today’s plan and work done with evening prayer **Sonááhodizin**.

Four Sacred Mountains of the Diné

You always have a Home between the Four Sacred Mountains guarded by the Holy Ones. Mountains are symbols of Strength, Dziil; these mountains are mentioned in daily prayers as we plead for Strength, good Health and Happiness.

- **Sisnaajini** East
  - Yoolgai dził
    - Whiteshell Mountain
  - **Tsoodzil** South
    - Dool’izhii dził
      - Turquoise Mountain
  - **Dook’o’ooziid** West
    - Díichíí dził
      - Abalone Shell Mountain
  - **Dibéñitsaa** North
    - Baashzhinii dził
      - Black Jet Stone Mountain

**Taboos:** Daily Ways of Knowing to heed: Honor Sacredness in Your Home between the Four Sacred Mountains - **not Homelessness; the latter is a Child of the Monster Poverty**.

Mike Mitchell, the Late Diné Scholar/Medicine-man