

Tuq&urarniq-What You call Others-Without Name Calling

Tuq&urarniq : Addressing others by their namesake or, on the basis of friendship, kinship, or nickname without using actual names.

Tununiq Inuktitut Dictionary... **Tuq&urarniq**: inuuqatiminik qanutuinnaq tuq&urasuunguvut atiruarnagu, suurlu ilagijanga piqannarijanguunniit.

Years and years ago Inuit barely used names, instead, they would call each other through tuq&urarniq. Tuq&urarniq is considered to be a positive and encouraged among all Inuit. It keeps the culture strong. It keeps family ties strong. Tuq&urarniq shows respect for the individual(s), language, relationships, friendships, culture and especially the elders. Best of all, tuq&urarniq shows respect for one self. When you respect yourself, you tend to respect others in return.

A family would live in one camp. Another family would live in another camp. In some cases, there would have been only few families in one camp. There were no permanent communities like today, as people moved around where hunting was better. I guess it was easier to keep track of relatives with fewer people and in one place. Today, people have relatives all over the place. Even with relatives everywhere, Inuit still use tuq&urarniq to identify or call their relatives/friends. Tuq&urarniq is a big part of Inuit culture.

Today like years ago, Inuit parents still encourage their children to call others without using names. It is considered rude to pronounce\announce the names of people older than yourself. Children are not allowed to pronounce their parent's names. Children however can pronounce other children by name. As a child, it's extremely scary to call an older person by name. If you do, people may attack you verbally and embarrass you to keep you in line. Even younger grownups find it difficult to say an older person's name (old habits are hard to get rid of). Children are encouraged to call all their relatives by kinship, by friendship, nickname, not by their actual names; therefore may grow up not knowing the actual names.

When I was a child, I knew Daniel's father but not by his real name. I only knew him as "Daniel's father". I only found out Daniel's father's real name when I became older. Even today, I'm embarrassed to address Daniel's father by his real name in front of people older than me. I still refer to him as Daniels' father. If I should mention his father to Daniel, I will say "your father" instead of his real name. There are some elders from my past whose names I don't know, but I know them as someone's father, mother, grandmother/grandfather etc. as we were not allowed to know their actual names. I only found out their real names when I was old enough to ask and not offend anyone or embarrass myself. Today, some children tend to use names rather than using terms of relations, friendship or namesake. This is very embarrassing for the older people to see and hear. Most people that I know, will not allow their children to use names to refer to older folks. This shows respect to the elders and vice-versa. A person likes to be respected.

Children named after a person will be called the same way the person was called by the relatives. Very often, they will be treated like the original person. "**Tuq&urarniq**" may be through **blood**

relation(s), by adoption, through marriage or friendship. It also depends on who calls who. A female will call some of her relatives differently than a male would call his. Some cultures find the Inuit tuq&urarniq difficult to understand as they are very detailed when it comes to relationships. Tuq&urarniq is quite complicated in the Inuit world. Inuit take great care as to who their relatives are.

Blood relations... mother/father, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle (angak) is your mother's brother and akkak is your father's brother, aunt, grandmother/grandfather, cousin from the mother's side, cousin from the father's side, older brother/younger brother, older sister/younger sister, etc.

By adoption... Step brother/sister, step mother/father, step grandfather-step grandmother, step uncle-aunt), etc. Most of the time, adopted children are treated equally to their biological children; In some cases they are treated better than their own. In isolated cases, especially years and years ago, adopted children may have been mistreated.

Through marriage...Nukaunnguq (What you call someone married to your spouse's younger brother or sister), angajunnguq (What you call someone married to your spouse's older brother or sister), ukuaq (Daughter in-law, by both genders), ningauk (Son in-law, by both genders), sakik (Father/mother in-law, by both genders), sakiq (Your wife's brother, your husband's sisters), sakiqpaaq (mother/father in-law's parents), aik (your spouse's sister, or your brother's spouse) etc.

As a male or a female, Tuq&urarniq changes...A man/woman will call all his/her siblings "qatannuti" regardless of the sex. Both male and female calls brother/sister (Angaju or nukaq) depending who is older or younger. An older sibling is angaju (female or male) and younger sibling is nukaq (female or male). A sibling who is older is referred to as "angaju". In cases where there are many brothers/sisters, there are further identifiers. It may be angaju (older sibling), angajukuluk (my good older sibling), angajuqpaaq (eldest sibling), angajuruluk, angajuralaaq (My little big brother), or simply call him another name through tuq&urarniq by namesake. I call my brother "illuq" a "cousin", and never call him by his name unless I'm referencing him to someone who does know him as my "illuq". My mother would say something like; "Where is your illuq" ? Again, she would not mention his real name. Everyone around us understood. I only started enquiring what "illuq" meant when I grew up.

Friendship... Tuq&urarniq is also an individual choice. A person may call a friend any name they wish, even if the name is not all that good. The nickname tends to change as children grow into adulthood. A child may go through many nicknames throughout their childhood.

Tuq&urarniq can also be very private. A child may call a friend a certain way and just between them. Others have no right to use that nickname but the friends themselves. However, there are exceptions. Younger generations tends to inherit the names that their parents used to describe friends and family members. My mother called this lady "Anaana" and one of my sisters called her the same even though this lady's name was not hers to say. This happens when both parties are okay with it. Anyone may not use the nickname without consent. I have a very good friend that I call with the nickname that I came up with and never really call him by his actual name.

Again, this shows respect for my friend. In return, he has a nickname for me and only uses my real name professionally or in serious situations. I usually know when to be serious or not, from the way he called me at our initial meeting/gathering.

There may be another reason for Tuq&urarniq. It may even be that a name is given to you because of your character and the way you handle yourself. As a child I was often called “Qaqsauq” (loon) because I wore my kamiik (Seal skin boots) improperly, especially around the heel section. A child does not like to be called names but this sort of treatment is considered as character building as long as people don’t go over board. As a grown man, they no longer call me qaqsauq. They now refer to me by name or as Tigullaraq’s or Ootoovak’s son. I’m also known as “ilisaiji” a teacher.

Cape Dorset/Kimmirut set a great example when it comes to tuq&urarniq. You really have to pay attention to know whom they are talking about because they may not mention a name. To be part of their conversation, you may have to ask whom they are referring to. In other places, it is usually easier to know whom they are referring to, as they tend to mention names as well as what they call them. Cape Dorset and Kimmirut are traditional when it comes to this department. I take my cap off to Cape Dorset and Kimmirut!

Tuq&urarniq keeps the families and relatives together. A person does not want to disappoint/disrespect a relative, a friend or namesake.

Tuq&urarniq is somewhat different from community to community. There are slight variations in each community, but many similarities.

Tuq&urarniq is part of the Inuuqatigiit curriculum (Nunavut Approved Curriculum) and teachers are expected to teach the unit. A teacher has to know the family functions and relations in the community. A local person will know the family trees. Ask around and find out about “tuq&urarniq” or “Tuqturarniq” in your community.

Elijah, Tigullaraq and Ootoovak’s son
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