



**Linda's T'ai Chi
November 19, 2023**



In the late fall of 1620, after months at sea, 102 depleted, sick and suffering Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock. They had survived by eating dried meat, hard biscuits and beer (lots of beer). By the time they arrived, the water, stored in wooden barrels on the ship had become rancid and contaminated. The Pilgrims had no knowledge of local food sources upon arrival. Almost half died that first winter from scurvy and pneumonia. If it were not for the generosity of the Indigenous Wampanoag people the rest probably would have died as well.

But they took pity on the pilgrims and taught them how to tap maple trees for syrup, harvest blueberries and cranberries and cultivate corn, squash and beans. The blueberries and cranberries probably cured the scurvy. These foods sustained the Pilgrim descendants for centuries following the first arrival. One year later, in the fall of 1621 the two peoples came back together for a harvest celebration that the later Europeans called Thanksgiving. But this gathering was not an occasion for celebration. It was a coming together to share knowledge, skills and to show force. Although the Wampanoag hunted, their diet consisted mostly of scallops and oysters and 80 percent plant-based foods.

I can only image how grateful the Pilgrims were of the Wampanoag people for their knowledge, skills, generosity and kindness. Since that time, we have come to learn that gratitude is good for our health and wellbeing. Research studies on the effects of gratitude suggest that those of us who can express gratitude have higher levels of subjective wellbeing, feel happier, less stressed and feel a greater sense of control over our environment, experience personal growth, find purpose and accept ourselves.

So, this Thanksgiving and frankly, ever day, I am grateful to you, my students. You have brought such joy to my life. Thank you.

My wish for you this Thanksgiving is to savor each moment, stay anchored in the present, enjoy moments of awe, and be grateful every day.



Artist rendition of that first gathering

With a solemn request to the universe for peace, end of suffering and good will among ALL people.

Peace,

Linda

The Wampanoag tribe (Wam-pa- nog)

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, also known as the People of the First Light, has inhabited present day Massachusetts and Eastern Rhode Island for more than 12,000 years. After an arduous process lasting more than

three decades, the Mashpee Wampanoag were re-acknowledged as a federally recognized tribe in 2007. In 2015, the federal government declared 150 acres of land in Mashpee and 170 acres of land in Taunton as the Tribe's initial reservation, on which the Tribe can exercise its full tribal sovereignty rights. The Mashpee tribe currently has approximately 3,200 enrolled citizens.