



Jennifer Randolph  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
The Northeast Native Network of Kinship and Healing Inc.  
[jen@kinshipheals.org](mailto:jen@kinshipheals.org)  
508-663-3874

**Dear Sir/Madam:**

When Thomas Bena and I first met, it was at Stillpoint. We walked from the barn through the woods and along the water. We spent time sitting on the hill and down in the circle of rocks discussing our work, the different and shared visions we shared for the island community. Thomas then offered me an invitation to continue to explore the land as he left to attend a meeting. I walked along bright green moss trails that felt like magic with fresh snow still on tree branches. I sat and, in the stillness, felt the connection between myself and our non-human relatives all around me. It was in that heart space that I opened myself up to some of the questions Thomas had posed. Would I be willing to share knowledge, cultural understanding and my tribal belief system with a community outside of my tribe? Did I have the time to help others when my own work for my tribal community was so demanding? What benefit to my tribal community would there be in me helping the island community at-large? As I walked back from the woods and water's edge, I was willing to explore those possibilities, something previously I would have outright refused.

What changed my mind wasn't my conversation with Thomas. It was being on the land, spending time in the stillness and being in relationship/connection to our non-human relatives. In that space of relationship/connection the things that divide us (gender, race, wealth, politics) can melt away allowing us to open our hearts and our minds to different perspectives and possibilities. The land is just as important to the vision of Stillpoint because it helps open us up to things we may not have previously considered. It is actually a vital part of the Stillpoint vision.

I understand that there are now efforts to have the Land Bank purchase even more of the property which will include the lots adjacent to the barn. As it is now, no more than 12 people will be allowed on the Land Bank trails, so those attending an event at Stillpoint may not be able to access those trails on any given day. Having been in that space I can't express how disappointing this is. Thankfully, Stillpoint now owns 14 acres of land with their own space for walking and gathering, to include those acres in the Land Bank's holdings would, in my view, kill the whole vision of the project.

I think we all know how concepts of "proper" land usage and conservation have been used historically to remove indigenous people from land and the damage it caused. Thomas has a vision to open this space up to everyday islanders to re-connect to the land. Re-connection can be just as healing as removal is damaging. Stillpoint is a space for re-connection, to find our commonalities in our humanness so that we can have hard conversations.....to find ways to live in peace.

Science is now validating many indigenous land stewardship practices, including healthy/balanced relationships with land, animals, plants, and humans. I ask the Commissioners to keep in mind the importance of relationship/connection and ability for the everyday islander to be able to have access to the property/project Thomas calls Stillpoint.

Yours truly,  
*Jennifer Randolph*