



## Why Women carry water in traditional ceremonies

It is said that we as human beings were all given responsibilities to nurture our relationships to all Creation and honour responsibilities connected to that teaching.

We do this with respect, gratitude and love with our body, minds and spirit honouring the natural harmony on the planet. It is a necessary relationship that is reflected in our male/female roles as human beings. Men were given the role of taking care of fire and women the role of taking care of the water.

Anishinaabe Kwewag (Indigenous Lifegivers “women”) have the powerful ability to carry life which is born of sacred ancestral birth waters called forth by our Grandmother in the sky the Moon after nine months. This process has taken place for time immemorial and reflects the great sacred harmony of carrying/caring for the force we call “Life”. It is therefore a woman’s responsibility to give thanks and take care of the force that brings all life to the Earth just like our Earth Mother.

Water is Life and women are life givers and so it is a traditionally recognized responsibility for women to take care of that which is necessary for Life.

“In ceremony such as a water walk, only women carry the water, indicating that women are caretakers of water, and carry life within themselves (childbirth).”

— Josephine Mandamin 2017