

Educational practices in Nunavik (nutarqiritjusiugait)

Educational practices depend on the values and knowledge put forward in the culture of the parents and families who apply them. Inuit knowledge (*Inuit Qaujimaqatugait IQ*: "what Inuit have always held to be true") incorporates four fundamental laws (*maligait*):

1. Work for the common good;
2. Respect life in all its forms;
3. Maintain harmony and balance;
4. Prepare for the future in a continuous manner.

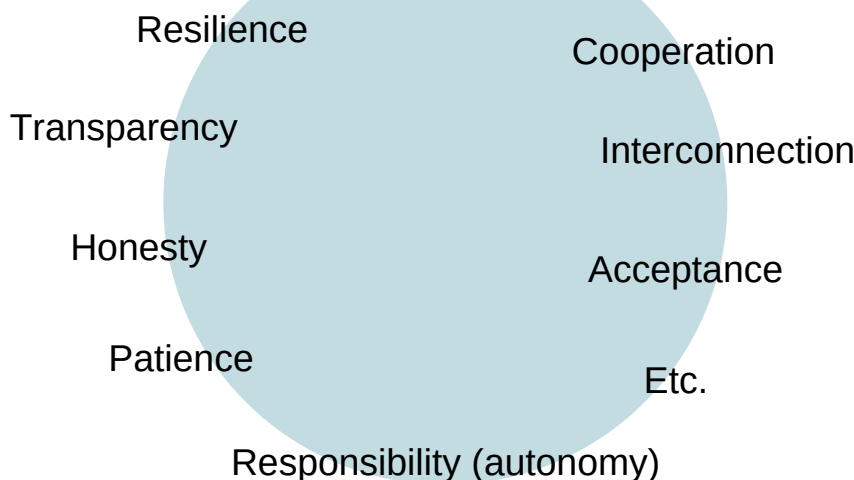
This knowledge, notably carried by the wisdom of elders, animate the traditions.

Guiding principles

They are supported by guiding principles that ensure balance, harmony and well-being:

1. *Pijitsirniq*: Concept of service;
2. *Aajiqatigiingniq*: Concept of consensual decision making;
3. *Pilimmakarniq*: Concept of skills and knowledge acquisition;
4. *Piliriqatigiingniq*: Concept of relationships/collaborative work (common goal);
5. *Avatimik Kamattiarniq*: Concept of respect for the environment;
6. *Qanuqtuuruunarniq*: Concept of ingenuity in the search for a solution.

Some core values



A connected and holistic approach to education and the individual

Inunnguiniq ("making a human being") is a holistic approach to child development that includes the values of QI. It values reflection, loyalty and respect for parents and ancestors.

Inuit value learning from practice and experience, respecting the developmental pace of each child.

From birth, the Inuk child is connected to his or her ancestors, extended family, community, and the land. In addition to blood relatives, two other important figures are part of the young child's environment.

Sanajik (godmother)

The relationship is established from birth, it is often the first person that the child will see, that he will hear. The relationship is frequently maintained through gifts. Traditionally, while dressing the child, or cutting the umbilical cord, the child's *sanajik* speaks to the child, looking at him or her closely, and makes wishes (*pitsik*) intended to make the child skilled, *pisitik*.

The *sanajik* has a special place in the child's life. She is traditionally present at his birth and at each of his first feats. The child gives "his first" to his *sanajik* (e.g. first bird hunted)

Sauniq and Saunirsuniq

Sauniq refers to the emotional bond between two people with the same name. As soon as a family welcomes a new child, that child is given an eponymous name, and becomes the namesake of that person, whoever that person may be, a person who wanted to be given a namesake, a person who was wanted to be the namesake, or a person who has died. The child maintains the memory of a deceased person (*irqaumatsiguti*), or a living person, with their strengths and weaknesses. The eponym (*Sauniq*) plays an important role in the moral education of his namesake (*Saunirsuniq*).



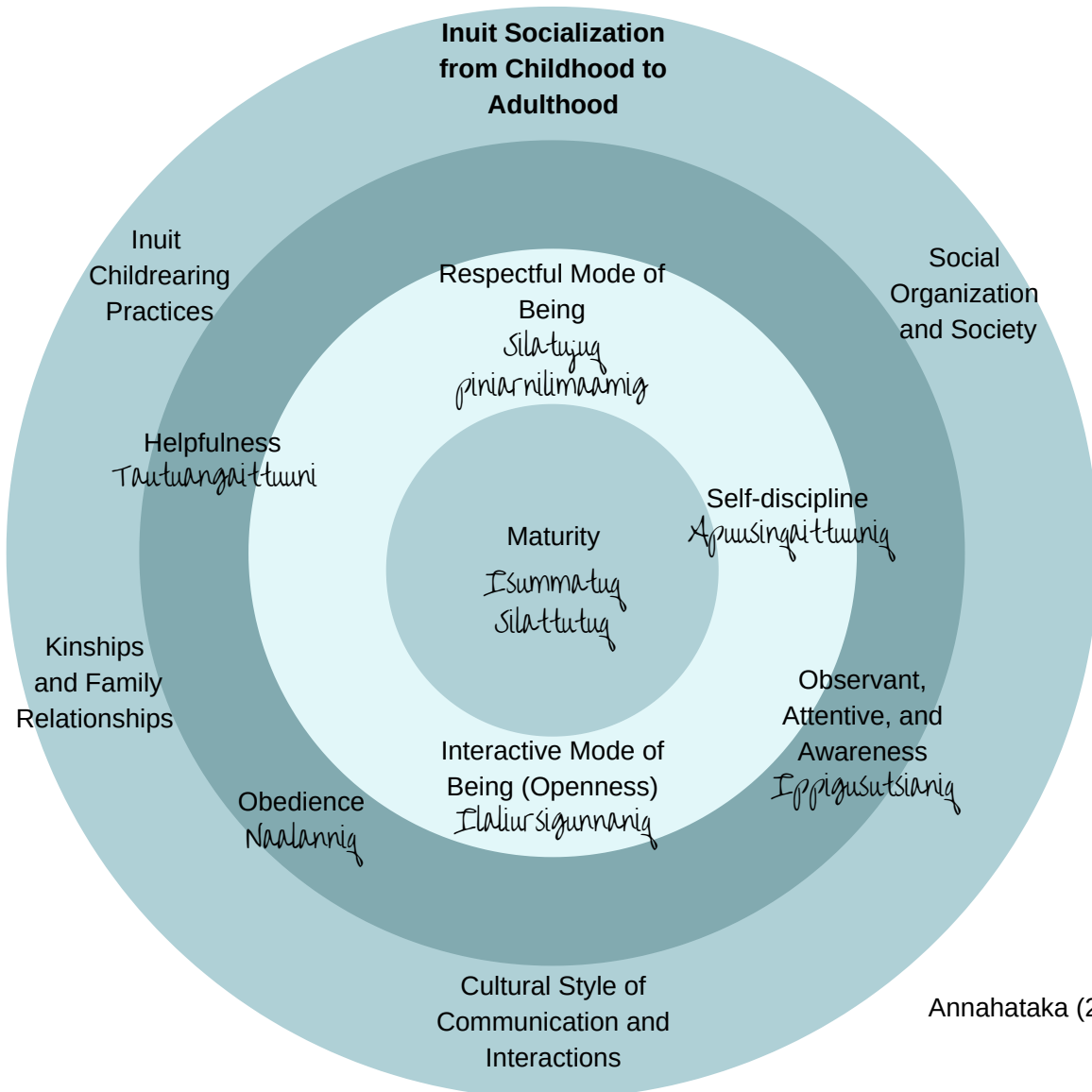
Silatunig: Respectful state of being in the world



A young child is said to be **silaittuq** ("devoid of sila," unreasonable) when he or she does not follow adult rules or does as he or she pleases (Saladin d'Anglure, 2006a: 93).

He is **silatujuq** when he reaches the age of reason and follows the advice and counsel of adults (Saladin d'Anglure, 2006a: 93). To an adult, *silaittuq* means lack of caution, judgment, reserve, self-control, intelligence, and may even mean insanity. Conversely, he will be *silatujuq* when he acts with judgment, discernment, responsibility, and common sense (Saladin d'Anglure, 2006a: 93).

Childhood is an important time for the development of *isuma* (thinking ability), which is essential to the will and ability to learn (Briggs 1991: 267).



Annahataka (2014)



Educational methods

- Valuation of autonomy: children are considered to be responsible for learning by themselves, by accompanying, by observing "those who know"
- Confidence that children can learn from their mistakes
- The work of education and discipline carried out by parents (*inirtriniq*) implies on their part restraint and parsimony in their interventions:

- No yelling or screaming at small children. to avoid a feeling of humiliation
- No reprimand, no delay, as this teaches the child to be angry, to yell to solve problems, to run away.
- The parent uses a playful tone and asks many questions to keep the child involved. This gives the child a chance to practice appropriate behaviors when they are open to learning and not emotionally charged

The main discipline strategies are: storytelling (e.g., telling a story about the sea monster, or about the northern lights) and "putting on a play." For example, when a child doesn't listen (hits, has a fit, etc.), then:

No punishment.
Parent waits for a
quiet moment to
address the behavior

If the child hits, the
parent does not get
angry, does not yell, but
acts on the
consequences of the
behavior.
"Ooooww. That hurts!!!"

The parent suggests
that the child
misbehave. For
example: "Why don't
you hit me?" "The child
must then think

The parent asks a
question that highlights
the consequences of
the behavior. For
example, "Don't you
love me?" "Are you a
baby?"



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