

Solution to alcohol problems can bring unity

To all Alaskans:

A tribal option: 80% of all suicides are alcohol related; 90% of all incarcerations are alcohol related; There will come a time when we, as a people, need to take a "moment of silence" and a long hard look at the way we live. Alcohol, suicide, and the incarceration of our people, has taken control over our lives. At first, we were overwhelmed by all these problems leading to our

self-destruction.

Many of our people while attending conferences, annual meetings and workshops have adopted policies of no substance abuse while conducting business. They feel that we are there representing "our people" and should act accordingly. There is a powerful force leaning towards a better life as a direct result of these people's spirit and determination.

For those of us who choose not to drink or use drugs, self-determination has become a reality. It is something that came from within our hearts and our spirit. It is not something that came from an external source. Thanks to the

prayers, of our Elders, we are now able to stand up for who we are and where we came from.

Hopefully, as 1991 becomes a reality, we could take that "moment of silence" and come to terms with this alcohol problem.

We could also see the solutions as a way of bringing our people back together in unity and lasting peace.

-Robert Sam,
AVAIL INC. (Alaska Village
Alcohol Information League)