punishment, which was a release, a good talking to or in a case of a young boy he could be let off for the night and dance the next day or be completely sent back because of pity that he was so young and can't stand the ordeal of a man. A man who was sincere was a man to be admired and respected. You do not laugh in his presence. You talk easy and kindly to him and he will do the same to you. These men are not spoken back to, you have to go along with them.

The dance was the same all through the four days of it. The people or a relative of a dancer gave away with his permission any horse or blanket or money to show the unselfishness of the dancer and their own gifts to the goodness of the sun, Giver of Life, health, crops and all the great things here on earth.

When the dance was completed the men were assembled near the sacred teepees and the sacrifice of their flesh began. This was for the full health for the year, the health of relatives, crops and food throughout the year.

The relatives in good health and in poor health also gave up a piece from their arm as a sacrifice. An awl was punched through the skin near the shoulder and the puffed part exposed was cut in a sort of dip on the exposed part. Every scar on a shoulder represented how many dances a man or a relative gave sacrifice in their lives. After this they were fed by a man who knew the job of putting a man back to his normal way of eating. A little food at first, just a pinch about one or two inches square, just a little dab of meat, rice, a pinch of bread and fruit. For their first taste of water, this was before the food, a sage weed of four pieces was touched on each dancer's lips, it satisfied a man like a good cup of water. After this more water was given, then the food. When the main food was given to them and everybody finished, there was a little talk by the leader praising the men for their fortitude, faithfulness in their completion of the great Ponca Indian Sun Dance. Then they all changed back to their civilian clothes brought by relatives and the people broke camp and went to their respective homes, the Sun Dance Lodge and the sacred pole was left to the elements.