

NATIVE AMERICAN MEDICINE WHEELS

Very simply put, a Medicine Wheel is a circle. The wheel, or hoop, has been used by nearly all indigenous peoples around the world to illustrate spiritual, religious and societal teachings. It has been a tool for aligning with the seasons of the year and for tracking chronological events and genealogy, as well as planetary and astrological occurrences.

“Medicine” means wisdom or essence. It also refers to anything that improves one’s connection to all of life and to the understanding of the “Great Mystery.” For the Native American, Medicine is a way of life, a way of living in balance and harmony with the universe. The Medicine Wheel, then, is an earth-based teaching which honors the Creator and the Sacred Family as it follows life’s cycles through the seasons.

The building of a Medicine Wheel is done in ceremony, incorporating specific rituals – elements of precision, drama, prayer, song and humor. Generally, stones were used in the making of a Medicine Wheel. Each stone that was placed grounded the spirit or quality, the “medicine,” of a particular direction, animal, mineral, plant or color in a visible way, much like using gravestones to remember the spirit of the deceased. The number of stones and the specific symbolic meaning of each stone varied according to the different tribes’ traditions.

Once built, the Medicine Wheel becomes a sacred, ceremonial center... a place to pray and meditate, a place to contemplate our higher purpose, a place to strengthen our connection with nature, with Great Spirit and with “all our relations.”

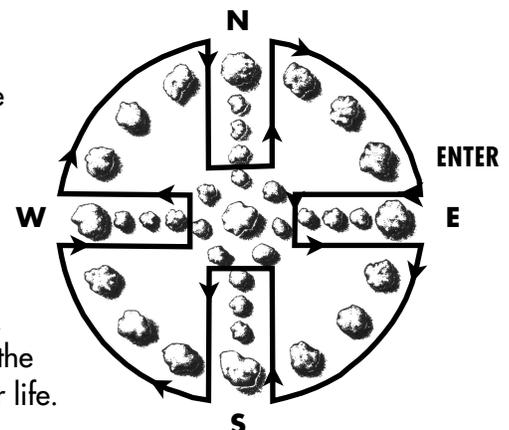
“Walking the Wheel” slows us down so that we can become more fully aware of life around us. It helps us access and connect with all of the energies of the universe. Walking the Wheel opens us to greater self-awareness and supports us in our life-journeys as we learn and grow and change. It shows us that even though we approach life from different perspectives, we can do so in harmony.

Native guidance reminds us that Great Spirit is always near us, wanting us to find those experiences that will strengthen our relationship with the Divine. Perhaps you will consider this information, process it and integrate it into your current understanding of spirituality. As we learn how to live in a sacred manner, how to walk in a harmonious way with all of creation, we put our steps on the path of love and gratitude. When enough people on the planet are walking on that path, our world will be a better place.

Walking the Wheel

Walk the Eastern Pathway in toward Creator and back out to the outer circle. Move Sunwise (clockwise), walk the Southern, then the Western and the Northern Pathways in the same manner. Multiple times. Or you can walk only the pathway in which you are seeking guidance. Or enjoy it as a walking meditation.

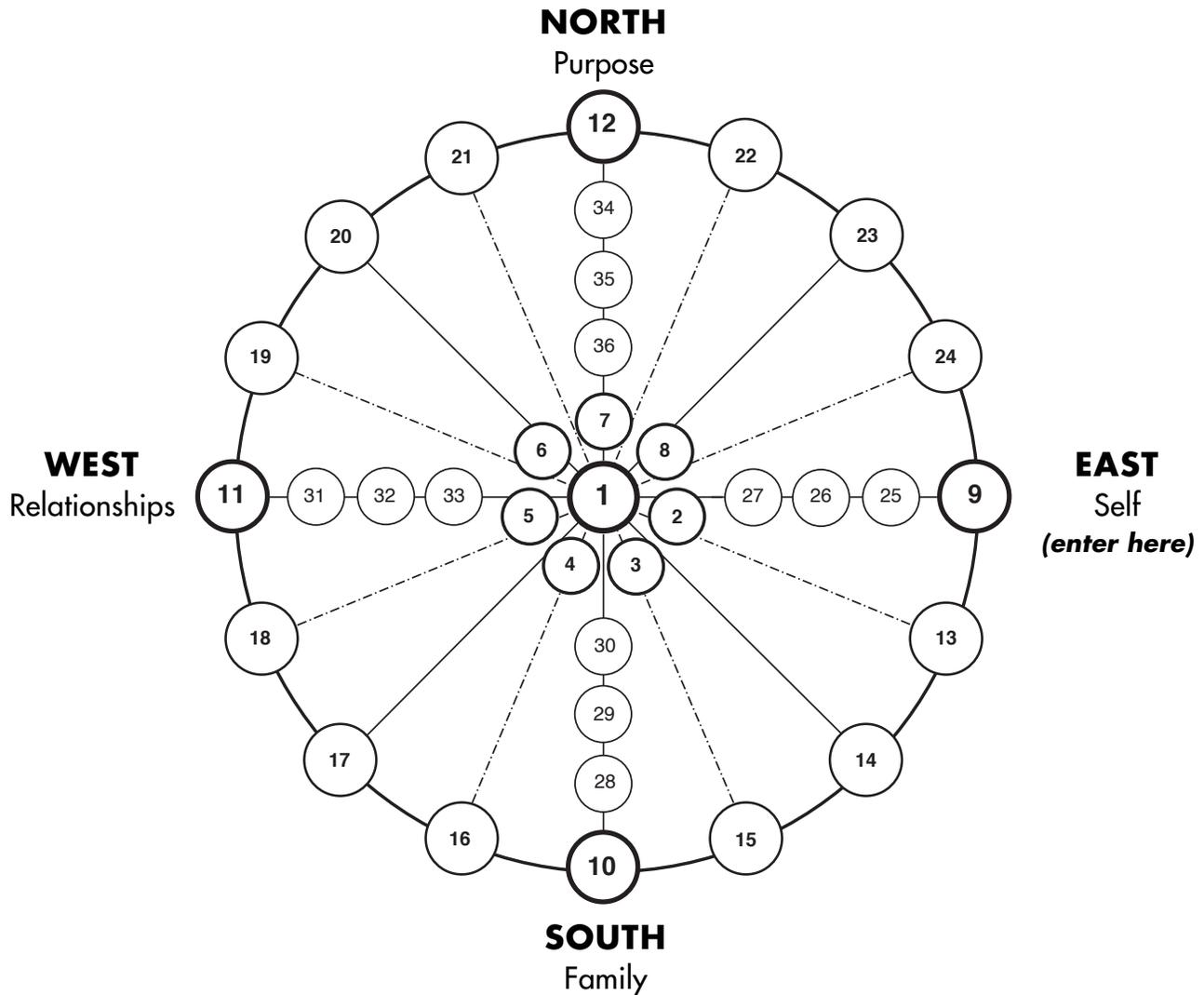
In any manner you choose, “Walk the Wheel” respectfully. Walk it to honor and give gratitude to Mother Earth... to connect with the energies of the universe... to bring balance and harmony to your life.



The pathway stones you see here, part of Sun Bear’s Wheel, are described on the back of this sheet.

NATIVE AMERICAN MEDICINE WHEEL

from Sun Bear and the Bear Tribe



SACRED FAMILY

- 1 Creator
- 2 Earth Mother – Tortoise
- 3 Father Sun – Lizard
- 4 Grandmother Moon – Loon

ELEMENTAL CLANS

- 5 Earth – Turtle
- 6 Water – Frog
- 7 Fire – Thunderbird
- 8 Air – Butterfly

SPIRIT KEEPERS

- 9 East – Golden Eagle
- 10 South – Coyote
- 11 West – Grizzly Bear
- 12 North – White Buffalo

MOONS & TOTEM ANIMALS

- 13 Aries – Budding Trees – Red Hawk
- 14 Taurus – Frogs Return – Beaver
- 15 Gemini – Corn Planting – Deer
- 16 Cancer – Strong Sun – Flicker
- 17 Leo – Ripe Berries – Sturgeon
- 18 Virgo – Harvest – Brown Bear
- 19 Libra – Ducks Fly – Raven
- 20 Scorpio – Freeze Up – Snake
- 21 Sagittarius – Long Snows – Elk

- 22 Capricorn – Earth Renewal – Snow Goose
- 23 Aquarius – Rest & Cleansing – Otter
- 24 Pisces – Big Winds – Cougar

SPIRIT PATHWAYS & TOTEM ANIMALS

- 25 Aries – Clarity – Hummingbird
- 26 Taurus – Wisdom – Owl
- 27 Gemini – Illumination – Firefly
- 28 Cancer – Growth – Rabbit
- 29 Leo – Trust – Salmon
- 30 Virgo – Love – Wolf
- 31 Libra – Experience – Whale
- 32 Scorpio – Introspection – Mouse
- 33 Sagittarius – Strength – Ant
- 34 Capricorn – Cleansing – Raccoon
- 35 Aquarius – Renewal – Earthworm
- 36 Pisces – Purity – Dolphin