

The StarMaiden Mystery School

Module 1

Re-Awakening the Sacred Template of the Divine Human

Is not the south the Source of life, and does not the flowering stick truly come from there? And does not man advance from there toward the setting sun of his life? Then does he not approach the colder north where the white hairs are? And then does he not arrive, if he lives, at the Source of Light and understanding, which is the east? Then does he not return to where he began, to his second childhood, there to give back his life to all life, and his flesh to the earth whence it came? The more you think about this, the more meaning you will see in it. --

---Black Elk

Ancient Technology

“The Medicine Wheel represents the circle of all life. When you sit in the wheel and evoke the sacred, all life comes to sit in council. The human, only one member of the web of life, can use the ceremony of the wheel to restore contact with all the relations of life. The animal relations, plant relations, stone people, spirit relations, all things come to sit in council. Our connections with the world are thus restored and the healing of the Earth begins anew. The wheel of life, the medicine wheel, is a map for everything in the universe, a blueprint of the web of life. As Black Elk said, this wheel exists in all things. Within each of us, too, the Medicine Wheel exists as our inner council.”¹

The information about the Medicine Wheel comes predominantly from studies and teachings of indigenous cultures, because these cultures utilized this ancient technology in very profound ways to create dramatic results in their everyday lives. Much of what we will teach may seem to have a Native American flavor to it, and rightfully so, since this area was inhabited by Native American Indians most recently, therefore, this is the predominant information we will have access to. However, it is important to know that “the Medicine Wheel was never an invention of the American Indian mind. It is a universal power source that was entrusted in ancient times to the Red Race for safekeeping until the time arrived in human history when it would be needed to harmonize all esoteric traditions for the benefit of mankind. This truth was hinted at in many American Indian legends.”² Once you begin working with the wheel, you will begin to be reminded of many times throughout history that “adaptations” of the wheel have been used within all spiritual traditions. Even the Christian symbol of the Cross, can become an archetypal symbol that has roots in the Medicine Wheel. So to use this technology can awaken archetypal

¹Buhner, Stephen. Sacred Plant Medicine, p. 118.

²Meadows, Ken. The Medicine Way.

knowing deep within the psyche. It plugs you into your divine purpose that is embedded in your DNA. It turns the key in the lock that puts you in touch with your own guidance in a profound way. It resets the clock. The Medicine Wheel is a diagram of human consciousness. By recreating this image in the physical world (not just our inner world) we amplify the information, clarity, and understanding we receive. Make no mistake, you can gain plenty of clarity and information by simply taking yourself into your inner wheel in meditation. But bringing it through to the physical and actually utilizing it, by even just the exposure of being inside of it in a sacred way, cause spontaneous, automatic and autonomic changes to your DNA and your consciousness. In layman's terms, it works on a sub-conscious level to heal and redirect your life. You get an energetic adjustment to your life usually through inner understanding and inner guidance. It is as if you have this giant receiver to Creator and you can dial up the kind of information and assistance you need or desire, just by sitting in the gateway that corresponds to that particular type of information.

To indigenous people, the word "medicine" means more than just a substance to restore health and vitality to a sick or run-down physical body. "Medicine" means energy or power – a vital energy force that could be drawn upon and directed. It can also mean knowledge and wholeness. The Medicine Wheel might then be defined as "a Circle of Knowledge that restores wholeness and gives power over one's life." The Medicine Wheel was developed and used by some tribes more than others, but to many it was the principal method of explaining life and a means to personal empowerment and life enhancement.

Because the Medicine Wheel does not belong to any particular tradition, there is an inherent lack of dogmatism in its study and use. You do not have to learn a set of beliefs or dogmas before you can progress. Using the wheel is quite simple. With just a few simple instructions you can begin to develop your expertise in its use and it will develop from there. In fact, you are encouraged to find your own perception of truth within a system, which is itself, which is itself, but a map or a framework in which discovery can be made. So by using the wheel, you are not ascribing to follow any other "doctrine" or become a Red Indian "devotee." In fact, the quest for Truth, which is what you are on, is lost immediately when you transfer your power into the hands of another. The study and use of the Medicine Wheel is about finding your own power—YOUR OWN MEDICINE!

According to Ken Meadows, this circle of power served many different purposes and had many different uses. It appears that just about every tribe had a different way to use the wheel that added a new dimension to both the wheel and the life of the user. Its most powerful use was its use as a map of the Mind. It was a chart to lead its user to the discovery of the Inner Self, to the divinity within, and to a knowledge of the true purpose of one's life. It was a working tool with which to fashion one's own self-development. It was a device for tuning into the Earth's psychic energies and to the unseen forces of Nature. It was a working laboratory in which metaphysical tasks could be safely carried out. It was both a teaching aid and a learning package that uncovered the meaning behind some of the deepest mysteries of life.

Traditional Symbolism of the Directions

In traditional wheels, each direction represents a fundamental part of creation. Since most wheels in this area have the Earth Mother as their base, they predominantly use the elements as a beginning point: earth, water, air, fire, and ether. From the elements stem all other energies that are held in any given door or gateway. I like to think of the wheel, itself as the hard-drive of a computer, and the elemental energies as the software. Each of the elements are put in a particular place for a specific reason. Where you place them matters to the outcome you are working for.

The goal for this weekend is to give you a basic fundamental understanding of how the wheel works, and anchor and awaken a basic understanding of each of the elemental aspects of the wheel within you, so that you can begin to access guidance in a deeper and bigger way on your own. You will also be provided with exercises that you can do daily or as often as you like to keep these wisdom pathways open. Some of these exercises are based on the teachings of Grandfather Stalking Wolf, an Apache Elder. They are exercises of the Apache Scout designed to create “Spiritual Fusion,” a synthesis of all the realms we live within, rather than just the physical. They are very simple, yet very profound. They work to train the reptilian part of our brain. This part of our brain is the vast amount (80-90%) that we don’t use anymore, our survival instinct. It is a very active part of the brain, and can be trusted but must be trained. Those connected to the Earth have these pathways “switched on”, and can act with instinctive awareness that everything around them is alive. With this awareness, communication with all of these areas is possible. Once trained, we will be able to build a stockpile of energetic doorways to access big power for healing when necessary. Through continued use of these simple yet powerful tools, we will begin to build pathways of consciousness in our subconscious mind. I have associated each of these exercises with a gateway of the wheel. They are as follows:

South – Water – Sit-Spot Meditation, morning and evening

West – Earth – Long Form Meditation

North – Air – Fox-Walking

East – Fire – Wide Angle Vision

Sit Spot – This is a simple practice of doing your morning and evening prayers outdoors and connecting with Mother Earth and Father Sky, even if it is only for 5 minutes in the morning and evening. Make it a point to do it about the same time and in the same spot every day for at least three months.

Long Form Meditation – This meditation is designed to help you access your “inner vision.” By practicing this meditation often, you will become quite familiar with the terrain of your inner world. I will be leading this meditation several times throughout the weekend. I will also post a recording of it on the Facebook page so you can listen anytime you choose. Eventually, you will be able to do it on your own without any prompting.

Fox-Walking – This is a walking meditation. When done slow enough, the scouts could actually “disappear” as they began to move at the same pace as the Earth (1 step every 80 seconds).

This practice of a fox stalking walk, using the ball-toe-heel pattern, is another way of accessing and training the reptilian brain.

Wide-Angle Vision – This is an apache practice that activates and begins to train your brain to respond to you. It is the conscious act of broadening your senses and your vision to take in more than just what is in front of you. You can practice it during your sit spot time or any time you want to awaken this part of your wilderness awareness. Another way to practice is to slip into wide-angle vision and then fox-walk.

Elemental Doorway Exercises

These exercises are based on the exercises found in the book, *The Medicine Way*, by Kenneth Meadows. They are divided into categories based on the Earth Elements. Each direction has several exercises, which we will complete at least once during our time together. Many of them only take a few minutes, but serve to focus the energy of the doorway into your consciousness. During your own private practice, you can choose any or all of them in any sequence. You can also just choose to “sit and listen” or pull a card in any doorway and get answers you may be searching for. Your own inner wisdom will begin to guide this process, and will become much more clear the more you use it. They are very simple and can be a touchstone for you that will open a doorway to your inner world.

As you move through the doorways, take notice of the order in which the doorways are chosen. See how it feels to move through them in this way. Does it make sense to you? Why or why not?

Water Element Doorway Exercises

Sit-spot – This is a simple practice of doing your morning and evening prayers outdoors and connecting with Mother Earth and Father Sky, even if it is only for 5 minutes in the morning and evening. Make it a point to do it about the same time and in the same spot every day for at least three months. I have placed this practice in the Water Doorway since this doorway is associated with emotions and our inner child. This practice is a very simple way to connect to the perpetual child within all of us.

Directional Quest – Who Am I?

“Sit with your back against a tree (if you can find one) and face the South, the direction of Water. If this is not possible, you can sit near a body of water, or sit in the south in the wheel. Take with you a token of the kingdom that is related to Water—the Plant Kingdom. A few seeds, grains or beans...When you are comfortably seated, hold these in your left hand placed over your navel. Rest your right hand over your left hand. You have now established a focal point. Now ask the question: “Who Am I?” and just sit and wait for the answer. This is a question which implies more than the identity of the personality self. It is concerned with your permanent self, your Spirit Self. Ask the question 4 times then relax and just watch and listen. An answer may not come right away. When it does it is likely to be in an unexpected way.”³ When it comes, record it in your journal. Then do the exercise below.

The Give-Away

“The Indian regarded needs as those things which, when denied, caused long-term pain. Needs are what we feel we must have, but can only be supplied by others. Satisfy the need and the pain vanishes—but only for a short time and then there is the need again, crying out to be satisfied. Needs continue, so only short-term pleasure is obtained by satisfying needs.

Desires were regarded as things that do not require outside help to satisfy. Desires were what you could obtain for yourself and always brought pleasure. Since the Water Doorway is related to emotions, consider now what ‘needs’ of your emotional life you would like to have banished in order to attain emotional harmony. What emotional needs would you like to give-away? Associate the needs you are giving away with the seeds you are holding in your hand. Bury the seeds which represent the needs. You are thus giving up that which has caused you pain. You are giving those needs to the Earth to be transformed. Such a symbolic act will impress itself on the subconscious mind which will then act on the ‘instruction.’

Finally, consider what positive emotional attributes it would be desirable to give to others as an ‘offering’ to bring them pleasure. What has been a healing balm for you when you have suffered emotional hurt? The compassion and understanding of someone else, perhaps? Then determine to give your compassion and sympathetic understanding to whoever may seek your counsel, advise, or help.

Before leaving, thank the spirits of the Water Doorway, the spirits of Nature all around you and the Great Spirit, for the help and understanding that has been imparted to you. As a gesture in ‘earthing’ your intention, leave an offering on the ground where you have been sitting. An Indian never took anything from Nature without also giving something in return and often carried such an offering in a pouch.”³

Water Element Doorway Exercise

“Erasing Personal History

1. Take your notebook, pen, and these instructions and sit by yourself in someplace that represents Water to you. This can be the Medicine Wheel, or down by the creek, or wherever sings to you. Create your mind space where you are perfectly relaxed, perfectly at peace with yourself and perfectly safe in your sealed and strengthened aura.
2. Meditate on the Medicine Wheel. It is a symbol of the universe and of the ‘little universe’ of your own personal reality. It represents, too, the physical plane of existence—its four directions indicating the Four Primary Powers, the invisible realities by which all material things are enabled to manifest, ---all contained and encircled within the embracing love of the Creator. Consider too, the center of the circle—the

³Meadows. p. 101-103.

aperture through which the Infinite becomes Finite. Make a note of the thoughts that come into your mind.

3. Consider the fire in the center of the circle. Imagine that there is a flame within you around your heart area, which never goes out. Picture in your mind this inner flame as you think about the flame in the center of the wheel. Both of these flames have been created by you for a specific purpose—the purpose of opening yourself to your own Source of creativity and power. The fire represents the inner light within you, the Spirit Self that never dies. It represents also the Sun which brings light and life to the material world around you and it represents the spiritual Sun, the divine Source at the center of Creation. Think on these things for a few moments with the realization that the path to creative power and wisdom is thus illuminated and opening up before you. Make a note of your thoughts.
4. Now concentrate on the smoke from the flame. This smoke represents the element Air and the breath of the Divine that keeps the flame alive. Think about this and note your thoughts. Consider the circle in which the fire is burning and which is indicated by the stones. This represents the protective aura around you, the ‘womb’ that contains you. Connecting with the fire in this ritualistic way creates a communication center which forms a link between your everyday self—your ‘worldly’, ordinary self—and your inner Self, your High Self, your Spiritual Self, your Source. Record any thoughts about this.
5. Read carefully the thoughts that follow and meditate on them. Savor each point. Take it slowly as you recall past experiences and bring them to mind as vividly as possible, then push them aside gently and move to the next point. Make a note of these memories.

Erasing Personal History means getting rid of the garbage of the past, of old beliefs and attitudes which you have been carrying around with you everywhere and which tie you still to a treadmill routine from which there appears to be no respite. Personal History can be defined as ‘a strong attachment to a pattern of life.’ It is a pattern so strong and you are tied to it so firmly that your thoughts and actions are conditioned to perpetuate it.

We all have strong attachments to our Personal History. Without such attachments life would appear to lack continuity and purpose, so why should we try to do away with them? Why attempt to wipe clean our personal history ‘tapes’ that program our thoughts and actions?

Because Personal History is not as you might have supposed, a sort of curriculum vitae of your academic achievements, your qualifications and work experience, your marital state, and so on. IT IS WHAT OTHERS KNOW ABOUT YOU. It is what others think about you. Your Personal History is the picture other people have about you—about who and what you are—and which you endeavor to keep alive.

Your parents, for instance, brought you into the world and raised you; they know who you are and what you are, or rather, they think they do! That is Personal History. And you may go through life reinforcing that personal history. Then there are friends, work colleagues, the boss, neighbors...all who know you—or they think they do—and because of that knowledge, that Personal History, they expect you to behave in accordance with it.

You continue to do what people expect of you, behaving the way they expect you to behave in accordance with that Personal History.

Personal History is fitting in with a package of other people's expectations. Personal History makes you feel obligated to explain and justify your actions and behaviors because of the way others expect you to act and behave. But, of course, if you have no Personal History, explanations are no longer necessary!

There are, then, people who know all about you and what makes you tick, but when you ask yourself questions like: Who am I? Where did I come from? What am I here for? Where am I going?—meaning the REAL YOU, the you who is thinking and perceiving, the Spirit You, the Watcher Within, you're perplexed.

One reason why you have never been able to find answers to such profound questions before is that you have been trying to live like someone else. You have been trying to be what others expect you to be and that is really not who you are at all, or what you want to be. So what everyone else knows about you is false. Does the need to erase Personal History begin to make sense to you now?

6. Think carefully now about those aspects of your life that may have been conditioned by the positive or negative attachments which came from your parents, from teachers, from people who have been close to you in the past and have had a strong influence on your life at some stage. Perhaps in recalling such matters you find yourself thinking, **"Things would have been so different IF..."** And there you have it. The things that follow that IF are the very attachments you need to release. So spend some time now going over in your mind the circumstances of your life and make a note of all the attachments you can identify. List them in your notebook. Finish this part and move to the next.
7. Now you are going to let all those attachments go. They are going to be banished from your life. So meditate on the following:

Your physical parents conceived you and gave you the opportunity of incarnating at this time, and your mother bore you and delivered you into this physical world. Now, in your mind, thank them for that.

Yet your parents are not your real parents. They were but the physical vehicles of the Great Spirit through which your earthly experience came to be. Your true Mother is the Earth. Your true Father is the Sun. Think about that.

Your physical parents gave you physical nourishment. Thank them for that. Perhaps they brought you trials and troubles and failed to respond in the way you wanted, but they have given you their share of the Karma you needed and chose. Thank them for that. Perhaps they expected of you more than you were able to give, or loved you more than you were able to love them, but you were a mirror-image of them for in you they sought only to see

success where they had failed, and see their hopes fulfilled in you. Thank them for that, and forgive them for that.

They did the best for you they knew how. They may have failed in many ways but while they were your first teachers they were learning too. Thank them for that and be grateful to them for what they have NOT given you as well as what they have given.

Your parents showed you their own imperfections. Thank them for that for your imperfections are many, too. Forgive them for anything you feel they did not do for you. And forgive them for whatever they did that has caused you pain. Now forgive yourself for whatever you thought or said or did not do that caused them pain. But above all, your parents gave you physical incarnation. So be grateful. Thank them and bless them for all they have done for you.

Now, as an adult, LET THEM GO. Let them be your FRIENDS.

On a piece of paper draw a simple representation of your mother and father. They need not be likenesses—simple stick figures will do. You are drawing only symbols. If one or both of your parents are dead, draw them just the same, for the attachments and dependencies exist and continue in most cases long after physical death.

Now in a spirit of gratitude and love, forgiveness and appreciation, release your dependencies on your parents and place the picture and the list of attachments in the fire along with a pinch of tobacco. Recognize that you are releasing the false dependencies that have burdened and impeded you. You are now free from them. You have discharged the blockages that have prevented the love that is within your heart to flow out unconditionally as the natural love of a child wishes to do. You have made your peace with the Past. You have begun a more meaningful relationship with the ones who made this incarnation of yours possible. Now they can be your friends.”⁴

(You can repeat this process for anyone you are in relationship with that you find strong attachments to.)

Go back and finish any journal notes you need to finish. Then go to the center of the circle for centering when you are through.

Earth Element Exercises

Long Form Meditation – This is an apache practice that reinforces pathways in the subconscious mind to realms connected to Spirit. We will be doing many forms of this meditation throughout the weekend which you can practice on your own. Doing practices like this at least once a day will strengthen your connection to your Source. There will be a recording of this meditation on the Facebook page.

⁴Meadows. p. 104-107.

“Directional Quest – Where did I come from?”

Go to a place that represents the Earth to you, either in the Wheel (the West) or someplace among the trees where you can sit quietly and face the West. Take with you a token of the ‘kingdom’ of the West—the mineral kingdom. A small crystal. Hold this in your left hand resting on your navel, with your right hand on top. This will focus your efforts. Ask the question: “Where did I come from?” four times. Again, the question of your Quest is not concerned with your temporary, personality self, but with the Real You, your High Self or Spirit Self. Repeat the question a few times and then wait expectantly for an answer—being relaxed and at ease but alert, watching and listening.

The Giveaway

The Earth Doorway is the place of ‘earthy’ things and of the physical, so in determining the ‘give-away’ it is a matter of identifying what physical actions, habits and idiosyncrasies are causing you pain, discomfort or embarrassment, which you would like to get rid of. Or, perhaps in review your physical ‘needs’ you may wish to give away your dependency on physical things. This does not mean the denial of physical things, merely the dependence on them to attain satisfaction. What such a ‘Give-away’ sets out to achieve is that whether you have a physical object or not will make no difference to the way you are. If your Give-away is a negative physical condition, consider its polar opposite which you would like to replace it with. Associate those things you want to banish from your life with the gemstone in your hand. Now bury the gemstone beneath the surface of the soil near where you are sitting. Give them to Mother Earth to transform into positive qualities. Consider now what you can give away of yourself to bring benefit to others. Physical effort, perhaps? In other words, determine to become a ‘doer’. Walk your talk. Before you leave, thank the Spirit of the Earth Doorway, the spirits of Nature, the Great Spirit for what has been revealed to you, and Mother Earth for her transforming power. Leave an offering.”⁵ Come back to the circle.

Earth Element Doorway Exercise

Death As An Advisor

1. Go to the West Doorway of the Wheel and get comfortable. Listen to the reading (p. 129-131).
2. “Write down your own death in two ways, the death you fear but which is a likely outcome of the way you have been living and of the society in which you live, and the death you would like it to be.
3. When this task is completed, spend some time considering what parts of your past are holding you back from being what in your heart you want to be and prevent you from doing what it is you want to do. List these things on a separate piece of paper.

⁵Meadows. p. 127-129

4. Finally, compile a third list. This one is a list of conditions and circumstances you are in and would like to have changed. Perhaps you are unhappy at work. Perhaps you are
5. limited by restrictions and circumstances. Perhaps you are deeply in debt. Lonely? Frustrated? Neglected? List them all down.
6. Now we are going to let go of all these things. They will 'die' in the flame along with your own 'programmed' death, to be transmuted so that you are no longer weighed down and imprisoned by them. Free then to 'travel' to the Fire Doorway, the place of your Enlightenment—where you can begin to take charge of your own Future. Go over the lists you have written. Let your mind dwell for a time on each. Turn them over in your mind. Then LET THEM GO. Release them. Imagine them being taken away, lifted from you like a great burden off your shoulders. FEEL the relief as the burden you have been carrying is no longer weighing you down. Let go of the past. You cannot change what has happened. It is done. But you can break the chains of the past that are enslaving your Present. Imagine those chains being cut. Throw the chains down. You are FREE. See the death that 'would have been' being taken away. It no longer has a hold on you for in facing it and confronting it, you have vanquished any power it had over you. You no longer fear Death because you have already confronted Death and transformed it from an enemy to an Advisor. You have taken your Power and are no longer powerless in the face of Death.
7. Ask the fire to consume all those aspects of your past that have been limiting your life and leading you to that programmed death. Ask to be released from the thoughts and concepts that have been enslaving your mind and your Spirit through false beliefs and customs. Ask that you no longer be a victim of circumstances or of the mind conditioning of other people. Ask that you learn to choose the rest of your life consciously and become what YOU desire to be, and to choose your own death.
8. Now burn all the papers with a little tobacco. The paper containing the account of your programmed death should be burned last of all. As you watch it being consumed in the flame, see your death as it would have been. Death no longer holds any fear for you. You have faced it and as the flame consumed the paper, you have watched it vanish before you. Yet you are still the same, conscious you. Death has been swallowed up in victory.
9. Now pass your hands gently through the flame and place them on your forehead. Then again and place your hands on your heart. Finally, pass your hands through the flames again and place them over your solar plexus. You have now symbolized the bringing of the Divine Flame into your mind, your heart (Spirit) and your body. The divine gift of freedom has been given and accepted. Return to the West door and continue.
10. Now think on this: You have given to the Fire—the Divine Spirit—all that has hindered you and it has been received and taken from you. You have watched it be transmuted so that transformation can take place.”⁶ Write down your thoughts and return to the Center for Centering.

⁶Meadows. p 131-134

Fire Element Exercises

Wide Angle Vision – This is an apache practice that activates and begins to train the reptilian part of your brain to respond to you. It is the conscious act of broadening your senses and your vision to take in more than just what is in front of you. You can practice it during your sit spot time, when you are fox-walking, or any time you want to awaken this part of your wilderness awareness.

“Directional Quest – Where Am I Going?”

Return to your place among the trees and face the east or go to the east door of the Medicine Wheel. Take with you a token of the kingdom associated with Fire—the Human Kingdom. A strand of your hair or nail clippings will do. Hold them in your left hand at your center point with your right hand over the top. Then put your question for a vision of the future: ‘Where am I going? What is my intended Path? What is my purpose beyond self?’ Wait patiently but expectantly for a response. Record it in your journal.

The Give-Away

Fire is associated with the Spirit so ask yourself what spiritual matter may be impeding your progress to enlightenment and spiritual freedom. Could it be your ‘need’ for freedom—your ‘need’ to do exactly as you like? Are you hurt by constraints and frustrations? Then the path to freedom may lie in giving away your need of it in order to attain contentment. Think about that. When you have determined what it is you want to banish from your life, associate it with the token in your left hand. Then bury that token in the ground. Consider what positive spiritual qualities should replace it and seek the transforming power to enable them to be brought about.

Then consider what positive attributes you can give to bring a blessing to others. What of your Spirit can you ‘give away’? Is it your time? Time is a great gift to ‘give’ to others for time is a measurement of life and you can give no greater gift than your life. Consider how you can devote some of your time to bring pleasure to others.”⁷ Record your thoughts in your journal, leave your thank you gift, and return to the circle.

Fire Element Exercise

Fire Activation Dance

Water helped us erase our personal history, to free ourselves from the attachments that were hindering our development toward enlightenment and self-realization. Earth helped us face our own death, to show willingness to accept change and to leave behind those burdens of the Past that were obscuring the Present. Now with Fire we will seek enlightenment and truth, we will activate our intentions and establish our link with our ‘true’ parents—the Earth, who is our Mother, and the Spiritual Sun or Creator who is our true Father. These also represent the female and male energies of Creation. Since the fire element is also about movement and Divine Right Action, we will activate these energies

with a Fire Activation Dance. When we move our bodies, we alchemically activate all the elements in our body. Dancing with intention, “turns on the switch” in our brain and causes this literal transformation to take place. Once we are complete, we will return to the center for centering.

Air Element Exercises

Fox-walking – This is an apache scout practice of a walking meditation. When done slow enough, the scouts could actually ‘disappear’ as they began to move at the same pace as the earth. This practice of a fox stalking walk, using the to-first, then heal pattern is another way of accessing and training the reptilian brain.

Directional Quest – Why Am I Here?

“Go to your place among the trees and face the North or the North Door of the Medicine Wheel, and take a token of the animal kingdom (a feather). Hold this in your left hand over your center, with your right hand covering it. The question to be asked on this quest is “Why am I here? What is my soul’s purpose in this life?” Again, stay alert, watch and listen. Record your ideas in your journal.

The Give-Away

Air is associated with things of the Mind so ask yourself what you need to give away of your mental life in order to find truth and wisdom. What areas of your thinking do you wish to banish from your life? The negativities? The despondencies? The hateful and destructive? The lustful? The greedy needy? The revengeful? Determine what it is you want to get rid of and what its polar opposite is with which it should be replaced and associated with this feather in your hand. Then bury the feather as a sign of banishment, and of its being transformed.

Then ponder: ‘What must I give away to bring blessings to others? My thoughts. How? By sharing inner thoughts and mental discoveries with others. Why? Because truth and wisdom cannot be locked away as in a vault. It must flow or it will stagnate, wither or die. New understanding is received to the extent that what has been learned is passed on so that others may benefit.’⁸ A book or a class is a tangible example of a Give-Away of the Air Door.

Air Element Exercise

The Sacred Pipe Ceremony

Through your journey around the Medicine Wheel you have come to recognize your oneness with the universe and its powers, and your relationship with all who share the Earth environment with you. You have come to realize also that at the center of it all dwells Creator/Creatrix, Wakan-Tanka, and that center is everywhere, within you and within everyone and everything. You have come to know the spirit of the four directions. You have come to know the powers of Light and Life, of the Sky father above and powers of Love and Law of the Earth Mother beneath.

Having journeyed to the North on the path of knowledge and wisdom, we can now pause to contemplate the American Indian's most treasured possession—The Sacred Pipe. The Sacred Pipe is at the core of Medicine teachings and ceremonies. It is a summation of the American Indian's wisdom and outlook on life, for the Pipe is more than a spiritual tool, more than a ceremonial implement. It is even more than a symbolic representation of all that exists and shares a common source and a common breath, for it contains an 'aliveness' that can unlock some of life's deepest mysteries. It represents the masculine (the stem) and the feminine (the bowl) coming together in sacred union. It was a way to bring all aspects of Nature together to "pray with" those doing the ceremony. In this way, all of heaven and earth unite to support the prayers being offered. To close our journey together around the wheel, we will participate in a pipe ceremony.

Re-Integration – Using the Wheel after this Retreat.

Make no mistake. You are altered. Your life will never be the same. And that is a good thing. When you go home, things may not look or feel the same. Here are a few tips to help you integrate what you learned here with your world “out there.”

1. Be kind to yourself. Take it easy. Try to abstain from mind-altering substances (alcohol, drugs, sugar, TV, radio, etc.) for at least 24 hours. Let the teachings that your body has taken in establish themselves.
2. After about 24 hours go back to your usual routine, and simply notice if anything feels different. Notice your thoughts and emotions. Use your journal to process them.
3. Do the Apache Scout practices. Sit-spot is a good one to start with, even just once a day.
4. If you would like to work with the wheel at home, you can use 4 small rocks and a tealight. Set them up in front of you in the configuration that we have established: North-Air, East-Fire, South-Water, West-Earth, Center-Ether You can put them on a desk in front of you, or in the floor inside or even outdoors so you can sit inside the wheel. If you are using a desk, you can just sit behind the direction you want to work with.
5. Balancing your “shield” or wheel, is as simple as just sitting in each direction and listening for guidance. If you want to do more here are some suggestions for each doorway:
Begin in the South and ask these questions: Am I giving with my emotions? Am I clear, clean, and current? Is there anything I need to release?

Move to the West: What am I holding in my body? Am I metabolizing energy? What else do I need to know?

North: What am I receiving with my Mind? Am I learning and growing? Are there places I need to adjust? What am I allowing to live in my mind? What do I need to change?

East: Am I determining with my Spirit? Where am I going? What is my next step? Am I on the right track? What are step-by-step actions I can take to achieve my goals?

Talk to the Earth. Get outside with your bare feet on the ground. Let her know how much you love her and how much you appreciate this life.