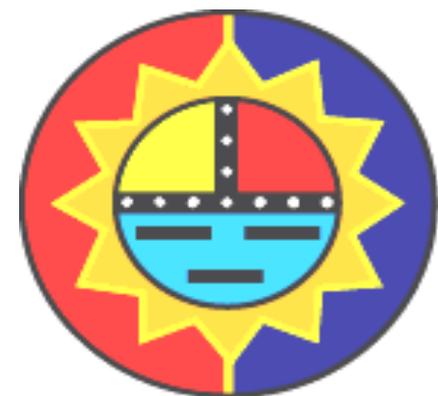


USING THE MEDICINE WHEEL

By Rick Runningbear.....



The Medicine Wheel is more than just an interesting geometrical structure with beautiful stones to behold. It is a functional spiritual tool to help one overcome various obstacles and problems of life. It exists to give the user a spiritual medicine in an orderly and precise way.

Let's imagine that I have a problem in my life that is causing me harm and I have not been able to overcome it. I go to the Medicine Wheel. I go when it is quiet and peaceful all around the Medicine Wheel. I put sage into the shell and set it on fire then I blow it out and it sends out a cleansing aromatic smoke.

I carry the smoking sage to the edge of the outer circle of the medicine wheel. I walk slowly all around the circle wafting the sage smoke towards the inside of the Circle. When I have done this I also waft the smoke over myself and as I do this, I go through a mental process of eliminating negativity from within me. I return the shell with the smoking sage to its resting place outside the Circle.

I now approach the Circle and walk around it until I come to the "medicine point" that has the stone of my "birth moon". At this point I enter the Circle. I place a small amount of tobacco on the Center Stone which acknowledges that all good medicines come originally from Creator. Then, I begin by going to the Eastern direction medicine point where the stone is the "Pipe Stone" (Catlinite) and the primary medicine

there is **PRAYERFULNESS**. I touch the red colored pipe stone with my hands in order to feel its energy. I seek to receive the medicine of prayerfulness into my being. I open my senses to feel the medicine working in me.

After receiving the medicine of **PRAYERFULNESS** in which see Creator's guidance, I seek to have **HOPE** that I will be successful. I go to the medicine point that has the Obsidian stone. This is the "Long Snows Moon" and the animal totem is the Elk. I put my hands on the obsidian stone and quietly feel its energy. I meditate on hopefulness. After receiving the medicine of **HOPE** I go over to the pedestal that has the Amber stone. The animal totem is the ant, the strongest of animals. The medicine here is **STRENGTH**. I put my hands on the amber stone to feel its energy. I open myself to receive the medicine of strength to overcome my problem.

After awhile I leave that point and go to the point that has the Garnet stone. This is the "Ripe Berries Moon" on the outer circle and the medicine is **DETERMINATION**. Now that I have **PRAYERFULNESS, HOPE, AND STRENGTH**, I need **DETERMINATION** to let nothing stop me from overcoming my problem. I put my hands on the Garnet stone to feel its energy. I meditate on determination and open myself to receive that medicine.

I now travel to the Harvest moon medicine point to the outer circle. The stone here is the Amethyst and the animal totem is the Brown Bear. The medicine here is **VICTORY**. I put my hands on the Amethyst to feel its energy. I meditate on the sure victory I am about to have in overcoming my problem.

Finally I travel to the "Earth Renewal Moon" in the outer circle. This stone is the Quartz crystal and the medicine is **FREEDOM**. I put my hands on the quartz crystal to feel its energy. I know once I have **VICTORY** over my problem that it will result in my **FREEDOM**. I open myself to receive the medicine of **FREEDOM**.

I have now armed myself with a full arsenal of powerful spiritual medicines. I depart the Medicine Wheel either at the Western gate or at the point where I entered at my birth moon. As I leave the area of the Medicine Wheel, I continue to meditate and to feel the medicines I have just received from the Medicine Wheel. During the rest of the day I often reflect on these medicines and seek to feel the effects I received from them. I confidently put these medicines to use in overcoming my problem.

The Medicine Wheel is a visible manifestation of Native spirituality. This is just one of many ways to use the Medicine Wheel.



Rick Runningbear

