Teachings of the Medicine Wheel Ontario Native Literacy Coalition 2010

Medicine Wheel Teachings and the Four Directions

The Medicine Wheel teachings are among the oldest of First Nations people. A Medicine

Wheel is a circle divided into parts (usually four), which relate with and counterbalance one

another to form a whole. It is called a wheel because it revolves endlessly. The Medicine Wheel

Teachings are based on the four directions, the Eastern doorway which represents the Spiritual

aspect of a human, the Southern doorway which represents the Emotional aspect of a human, the

Western doorway which represents the Physical and the Northern doorway which represents the

Mental aspect of a human. The Eastern doorway is the direction of birth and rebirth, meaning

new things to learn and/or a new level of understanding. It is the direction from which light

comes into the world and therefore the direction of illumination. The Southern doorway is the

direction of the sun at its highest point. It is the direction in which we prepare for the long cold

days ahead. The south is the place of the heart and sensitivity to feelings and emotions. The

Western doorway represents the physical qualities of a human which include taking care of our

bodies. The west is the place for body awareness, nutrition and physical activity. The teachings

in this direction emphasize physical wellness. The northern doorway represents wisdom. It is a

place where the intellectual is stimulated and challenged. Teachings from this direction include

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doorway represents wisdom. It is a place where the intellectual is stimulated and challenged.

Teachings from this direction include analyzing, critiquing, reflecting, organizing and problem

solving concepts. This only describes one aspect of the Medicine Wheel Teachings. The

Medicine Wheel is always represented in a circular shape as all things are connected, there is no

beginning or no ending in any concept and every component is divided equally in four sections.

Balance is the key and every element must be represented equally.