The Medicine Wheel is a circular symbol representing the wholeness of traditional Native life. It is a perfectly balanced shape without a top or bottom, length or width. It represents constant movement and change. It also represents and symbolizes unity, peace, harmony and courage. It is a testimony of the human being’s ability to survive and to maintain balance. The ultimate goal is to strike a harmonious balance in life. The circular form of the Medicine Wheel shows the relationship of all things in a unity, a perfect form, and suggests the cyclical nature of all relationships and interactions. Everything in the universe is part of a single whole.

A medicine wheel is CIRCULAR and CYCLICAL

The four cardinal directions are: EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH

We start in the EAST because the sun RISES THERE

Mother Earth is below and Father sky is above, giving six directions.

**Chart of gifts**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Direction** | **East** | **South** | **West** | **north** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Four Seasons** | Spring | Summer | Fall  | Winter |
| **Four times of day**  | Sun RISES | Sun HIGHEST | Sun SETS | night |
| **Four sacred plants** | Tobacco | Cedar | Sage | sweetgrass |
| **Four animals** | Eagle flies the highest | Deer is generosityGives itself for food, clothing, and shelter | BUFFALOLook within for guidance | WHITE BEARFasting, strength, truth, and wisdom |
| **Four elements** | Water | Fire | Earth | air |
| **Four stages of life** | Birth | Youth | Adult | elder |
| **Four aspects of human being** | Spirit | Heart | Body | Mind  |
| **Four races of humans** | AsianYellow | Aboriginal/ indigenousRed | AfricanBlack  | EuropeanWhite |
| **Four food groups** | Fruits and vegetables | Meat and fish | Wheat and breads | Milk and milk products |
| **Gifts from within** | InnocenceSpontaneityJoyPurityTrustHopeCouragetruthfulness | GenerositySensitivityLoyaltyNobilityLoveDeterminationPassionateCompassionkindness | DreamsPerseveranceRespectHumilitySelf-awarenessReflectionCommitment | WisdomThinkingAnalyzingUnderstandingPredictingOrganizingCategorizingDiscriminatingCriticizingProblem solvingImagining |