

# The Sacred Tree and Medicine Wheel

---

... in Our Biology Course

## II. Important Concepts

---

Audrey, Eilidh, Paige



- Symbols express and represent meaning to provide purpose and understanding.
  - The Medicine Wheel, an ancient symbol, is expressed using the four grandfathers, the four winds, the four cardinal directions, and many more.
- 
- The Medicine Wheel helps us see or understand things we can't see with our own eyes, like ideas and not physical objects.
  - The four symbolic races are all part of the same family, the four elements must be respected equally for their gift of life.
  - The four aspects to our nature is the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual. They must be equally developed in a healthy, well-balanced individual through the development and use of volition. They have the potential to grow into powerful gifts.

- Volition is the force that helps us to make and carry out decisions and is used to develop the four aspects of our nature. It's placed at the center of the medicine wheel because it is a primary force.
- Our vision is our potential and by trying to live up to our vision we grow and develop as people.

---

- The four aspects of nature can be developed when we have a vision of what is possible. We all have the capacity to change and grow.
- A person's identity consists of body-awareness, self-esteem, self-concept, and self-determination.
- Values are the way human beings' pattern and use their energy. If there is an imbalance between our values concerning ourselves and our values concerning others, we cannot continue to develop our true potential. Imbalance means individuals and whole communities suffer and can even die.

# III. Symbolic Teachings of the Sacred Tree

---

By Jordan, Kailey, and Miranda



# Overview

---

- The Sacred Tree is a symbol that represents purpose and understanding in some Indigenous communities.
- Symbols like the Sacred Tree help to give guidance towards life's true meaning. The Sacred Tree also provides meaning and encouragement for many communities.
- There are four meanings within the teachings of the Sacred Tree; Protection, Nourishment, Growth, and Wholeness.
- *"The presence of symbols in a community, as well as the living out of a belief in these symbols, is a measurement of the health and energies present in the community."*

# 1. Protection

---

- The Tree symbolizes protection in the way that it provides materials for shelter against the elements, such as shade from the sun and firewood from the cold.
- The Sacred Tree also provides a central gathering place and creates a place of unity for the people.
- The Tree also provides protection for who we are as a human being. It stands as a symbol for what we can become and what we are capable of.



## 2. Nourishment

---

- The Tree symbolizes nourishment, such as the fruit that is produced from the tree can feed its people. But also, in the health of the tree. If the tree is healthy and we eat its fruit, it can sustain us.
- The leaves of the Tree represent the people. Much like a family tree and ancestry. We all stem from one place and grow in our own direction. Symbolically, the teachings that the past generations leave behind either flourish or stunt the growth of the future generations. For example, if the parent is unhealthy, that might lead to a mentally unhealthy child, and so forth.
- In relation to this, the community is interconnected in the way that we give to others and provide service. If we give something to someone else, it make the giver feel good because they provided happiness for another in their close community.



## 3. Growth

---

- *"Growth symbolizes the importance of pursuing life experiences which provide positive growth and development."*
- Growth happens in four directions, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. These developments are attributed to inner reflection and change. Often these changes are invisible outwardly until there is an obvious change within the person.
- The growth of someone's roots can be seen as a representation of the accomplishments we've made.
- The growth of the Tree can also represent the cycles of life; much like the seasons.

## 4. Wholeness

---

- The teachings of the tree provide a foundation for the organization of ourselves.
- This unity is achieved by understanding the balancing of the opposite yet related qualities of life in our process of growth as human beings. Such as the consequences of certain actions and being able to process those.
- If we have been hurt, this is where the central place within ourselves is that we can start to try and rebuild what we've lost for a stronger version of ourselves.



# IV. First Principles

---

Hannah, Taryn, and Jailyn

"Everything is connected in some way to everything else."

---

- Everything on the earth needs everything else to live
  - You can't just eliminate an entire species and expect it to have no effect on anything



"Nothing stays the same except the presence of cycle upon cycle of change."

---

- Cycles, as the word implies, all happen in patterns for a reason
- Without cycles we would quickly run out of resources
  - Life cycle, Water cycle, Carbon cycle, etc.
    - Cycles recycle the current resources

# "The process human beings use to develop new qualities may be called 'true learning'"

---

- People gain new qualities by observing others around them
- "There are four dimensions of 'true learning'"
  - First: the ability to "respond to realities that exist in a non-material way such as dreams, visions, ideals, spiritual teaching, goals and theories."
  - Second: the ability to "accept those realities as a reflection (in the form of symbolic representation)."
  - Third: the ability to "to express these nonmaterial realities using symbols such as speech, art or mathematics."
  - Fourth: the ability to "use this symbolic expression to guide future action"



"Human beings must be active participants in the unfolding of their own potentialities."

---

- If you're not trying to succeed in life or accomplish anything, you cannot reach your full potential
- This part of the book seemed to emphasize how people grow and that change is an important part of life

# The Gift of the East

---

"The East is the place of all  
beginnings"

---

The east is where you can start over, new beginnings, fresh starts,  
and a place to learn each time you go.



# "The capacity to watch over and guard others"

---

Being human makes you naturally want to help others, but it is difficult to do because it's one thing to see the situation others are in but it's another to care enough to help or even to know how to help.

This gift of the east usually needs to be relearned many times by people in order to fully understand it

"the capacity to focus our attention on  
the events of the present moment"

---

This gift is the ability to focus everything in your being on the here and now. To not lose focus and think of the past or the future but to live in the present moment.

"We will learn to love as a child to  
loves"

---

This statement shows the gift of childhood, the gift of purity, and innocence. A child loves unconditionally and does not question others but loves with their whole being.



# The Gifts of the South

- ❑ Symbolizes a time of preparing for the future, of getting ready for days ahead
  - ❑ The ability to choose goals and to pursue them ( second stage in the development of the human will)
  - ❑ Teaches us the love our bodies and mind desire, teaching us to discipline our bodies (to obey commands)
  - ❑ Overall, teaches us the capacity to express feelings openly and freely in ways that do not hurt other beings
- 

## **Symbols**

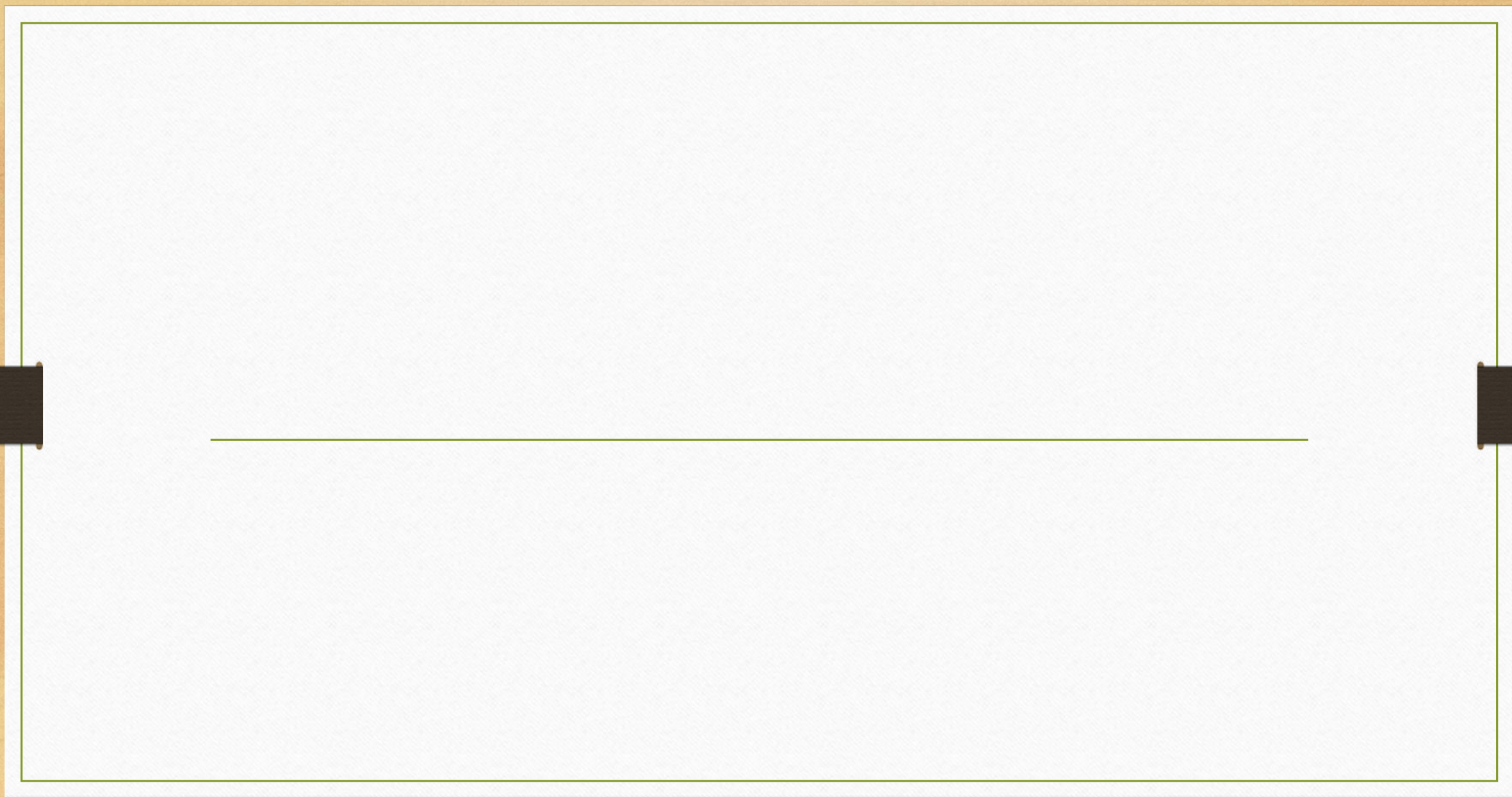
**Rose bush:** Symbolizes the desire of how we control love

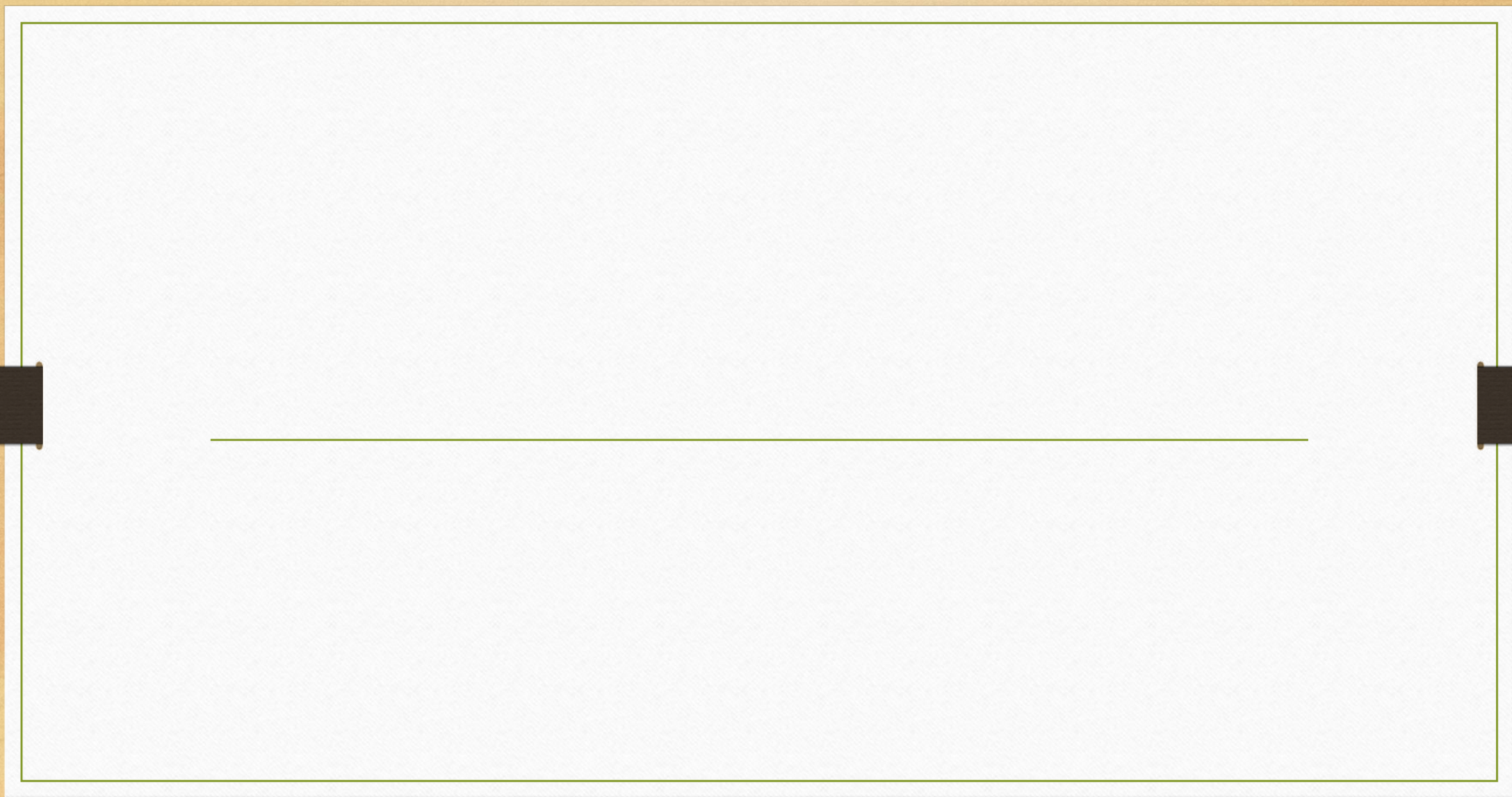
- Can be delicate and inviting
- However, also may contain thorns hidden beneath itself to tear anyone who would try to own it

**Horse:** Symbolizes how we discipline our bodies

- Responds to our every command
- Never attempts to direct our journey

By: Hafsa and Tinu







# Gifts of the West

---

By: Ifra, Jadyynn, Max

## Key Points

- Self-Realization
- To accept ourselves as spiritual and physical beings
- - by discovering your own path even through the darkness of the west
- The two teachers are the Black bear and turtle.
- - Black bear- gain insight by shutting out the rest of the world and has great strength within
- -Turtle- Inner journey of perseverance

- Sacred Objects
- - Raises a person awareness about spiritual significance in ordinary things
- The meaning doesn't come from the objects but rather the story behind it
- Those who can't see the universe's guidance are like birds who are not yet ready to fly
- Distain for being alone or for others spiritual activities show the emptiness of one's own spirit
- To develop as people, we must be able to see where we are, were, and are going



# Gifts of the North

---

By: Connor, Kam, and Victoria

# First Section Running Man

---

- White snows remind us of the white hairs of our elders
- The medicine wheel essentially helps you better understand the earth
- The mind can be trained to become a highly trained instrument if taught right
- We will often feel at the beginning that the task is too great
- The higher we climb its slopes, the steeper and more difficult the way becomes
- Over the years we have stopped using the tremendous ability to remember things as given by the creator

# Completion

---

- Being able to remember things in great capacity is our birth right given to us by the creator
- The final lesson in the development of the will is the capacity to finish what we've started
- The closer one gets to completing a goal the more difficult a journey becomes



# Detachment

---

- The gift of detachment bestows upon the traveler the ability to see the past, the present, and the future as one
- Detachment means freedom from hate, jealousy, desire, anger, and fear
- It means being able to put behind us all the knowledge we have acquired on our journeys, for even knowledge itself can be a burden

# The Final Gift

---

- It is possible for the traveler to be so enamored with the gifts of any directions that they may forget the journey
- Should a person abandon the journey, great harm can come to them, and imbalance can be created within them
- The boldness of the eagle is balanced by the humility of the willow and the prudence of the turtle
- The final lesson of the north is the lesson of balance, for wisdom teaches how all things fit together
- The person who would dwell in the north forever with shutting out the gifts of the other directions will be gripped with the icy grasps of the winter

# V : The Gifts of The Four Directions

---

## The Medicine Wheel

- The Medicine wheel is an ancient symbol of the Universe.
- It is a teacher of the realities of different things



# Humans and the Medicine Wheel

---

- When the wheel is used by a sincere human it shows that within them there are many hidden gifts yet to be developed
- When proper conditions are met(courage, willpower etc.) These gifts can develop. But until then they remain hidden like fruit hidden within a tree
- The wheel can be used as a model of what we can become if we developed ourselves to our full potential

# The Five Aspects to Being

---

All representations teach that human beings have aspects to their being.

- Physical
- Mental
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Volitional

Often People use animals to symbolize certain qualities. For example, some have used eagles to symbolize courage.