



Introduction to the Medicine Wheel and Bundle Ceremony

The Medicine Wheel

The Medicine Wheel is an ancient symbol that spans many cultures and for thousands of years. Over the millennia it has evolved differently in different native tribes. Each tribe has slight to major different traditions involving the Medicine Wheel. There can be color and animal variations but the basic premise of the Medicine Wheel is the same.

The Medicine Wheel celebrates how life is connected, how we are part of the universe and how it is part of us. As such, the ritual can be varied and very meaningful. Below is not everything that can be done involving the Medicine Wheel, but an idea of how to use the Medicine Wheel in a personal ceremony. As you grow in your knowledge your use of the Medicine Wheel will be expanded.

In the New Haven Native American Church (NHNAC) we represent the Medicine Wheel in many ways. The most common way is comprised of seven stones and a cord or hoop. There are three red stones in the center, a white stone to the north, a yellow to the east, a green to the south, and a black (or dark blue) to the west. The cord or hoop goes around the outside of all the stones. The hoop and stones have symbolism both large and small.

When representing the Medicine Wheel in this manner, you place the first red stone in the center. This stone represents Sky Father, the masculine creator and protector of the universe. Sky Father has many names in many cultures, and the name you choose to assign him is your choice. The vocabulary is not important, the connections are. The first stone also celebrates that part of you that is your protector, the immune system.

The second red stone is the Earth Mother, the female creator or Nature. It is placed south of the first stone either to the right side or in a straight line behind the first stone. Symbolic of the natural world around us, this stone also reminds us of our own creative powers governed by the endocrine system.

The third red stone is often called the Heart Stone, and represents our own will and desire. It naturally represents our circulatory system and is placed south of the first stone to the left side forming a triangle with all the other stones, or when using the straight line method, place the Heart Stone between the Sky Father and Earth Mother stones. In this way, we tie ourselves with the masculine and feminine of creation and show our connected place with them.

After placing the three red stones in the center of the Medicine Wheel, you place the black or dark blue stone in the West Point. (The Lakota Sioux start with the west point, but other tribes start with different points. You may adjust your starting point according to what feels right to you according to your personal beliefs. For this, we will start with the west, as do they.) The West Point represents the black buffalo standing the ocean surf and also represents the wisdom of the ancestors, all ancient learning, and a reminder that we did not arrive here on our own. The West Point is the filter of the wisdom that checks our life, and as such also represents the liver, kidneys, and gallbladder -- the filtration system of our own bodies.

The North Point is the wolf on a tall white snow covered mountain. This represents the spiritual realm and the closeness of spiritual or divine beings to us. The North Point also represents the lungs with which we breathe and the entire pulmonary system.

The East Point is the eagle watching the yellow sun rising. This represents the Sees Far people, inspiration, enlightenment, or the Holy Spirit. The East Point also governs our digestive system, the bowels of the body.

The South Point is represented by the mouse on the green earth. The symbology is seeing our small place in the Universe and introspection. We must check our own hearts, motives and desires at all times. The South Point represents the physical structure of our bodies, bones, muscles, sinews and so forth.

Finally, the cord or hoop that ties everything together is usually represented by a red string or some other tie. Placed around the stones, this symbol that all things are bound together in the great wheel, the circle of life that is ever moving. The cord or hoop represents our nervous system, our body's own great tie. Once the Medicine Wheel is bound together, all points represent the universe around us and our place in it. (Sometimes this bond is also represented also by a multi colored abalone shell.)

The Bundle Ceremony

The Sacred Medicine Bundle, which can also be referred as a Medicine Bag, is a wrapped package used anciently to house a variety of sacred objects. NHNAC requires all people who wish to be a Medicine Man or Medicine Woman to create their own Sacred Medicine Bundle and Ceremony for the opening of that Bundle. This assists in giving Medicine People another layer of legal protection.



Your Bundle and Ceremony should contain or represent the significant items that you use in your Healing Ministry. Whatever they are, they are individual. That is the main thing to remember when writing your Bundle Ceremony. It is your personal devotional, your connection with the divine, the universe, nature, life and healing. A Bundle Ceremony can be as simple or as complex as you make it. To increase your legal protection, NHNAC highly suggests that all Medicine People to include the following:

1. The stones and hoop string of the Medicine Wheel.
2. Representations of your Medicine and Healing Ministry.

3. A spiritual offering (It is traditional to use some type of spiritual offering in your Bundle Ceremony. Whether you burn sage in your abalone shell, use essential oils, smoke herbs in your Sacred Pipe, or so forth the real purpose of the offering is to show gratitude and connection. It does not matter what offering you use but it should represent what is meaningful to you.)

To begin your Bundle Ceremony, you open your Bundle and place your representation of the medicine wheel before you. Next you take out all the meaningful symbols of your Ministry and reflectively arrange them around the Medicine Wheel. (Examples: a bag of herbs, a bottle of essential oil, a cloth representing the earth, religious symbols, family photo, and so forth.) Lastly you take your offering and do the following:

1. Taking your offering in both hands you lift it skyward and say, “Oh Wayakin Sha Eloiy” (Pronounced: Oh Why-ache-in Sha El-o-ay) or “Holy Sky Father”.
2. Holding your offering down to the Earth you say, “Oh Wayakin Pa Eloiy” or “Holy Earth Mother”.
3. Holding the offering to the west you say, “Oh Wayakin Himiyu” (Pronounced: Him-e-you) or “Holy Ancestors”.
4. Turning to the north you say, “Oh Wayakin New Haven Hemene” (Pronounced: Hay-men-nay) or “Holy Heavenly Guides”.
5. To the east you say, “Oh Wayakin Huntka” (Pronounced: hun-Tka) or “Holy Ghost”.
6. Holding the offering to the south you say, “Oh Wayakin Hahoh” (Pronounced: hah-Oh) or “Holy I am”.
7. Finally, move the offering in a circle before you, and press it to your heart, symbolizing taking all into yourself in remembrance, gratitude and connectivity and say “Oh Wayakin Haho” (Pronounced: A-Ho) or “Holy Acceptance”.

Most people personalize the Bundle Ceremony in a verity of different ways and you will find your Ceremony will evolve with you throughout your life. An easy tip to start writing your Bundle Ceremony is to begin with something to get you in the correct frame of mind. This can be song, prayer, chants, meditation, or anything that will assist to calm, center, ground, and focus the mind on gratitude and feelings of being a part of a whole, healing, connection with the universe.

Because of the sacred nature of your Medicine Bundle, many will perform their ceremony on some type of altar, normally a piece of cloth laid out. Many, when they acknowledge the points of the medicine wheel, feel like singing, praying, meditating, and so forth. It is quite acceptable and honorable to acknowledge each sacred direction and the symbology they represent in this manner.

Keeping your Bundle open is the symbolism that you are going to be engaged in your Healing Medicine or Ministry. When you close your Bundle, it represents you are closing your Ministry and will be focused on other things. Many find great joy in closing their Bundle with songs, prayers, burning of incense, and so forth.

If you must put your Bundle away for practicality's sake, consider a sign or token that will remind you that your Healing Ministry is still open. Some wear the bundle cord or carry around a small item from

their Medicine Bundle. Others simply gather together but do not tie the bundle before stowing safely out of harm's way. Whatever you choose to do with your Medicine Bundle is up to you. Remember it is your sacred reminder that you are a Healer and must always act in ways that do good. Seek always to "Fist, Do Good" and share your healing gifts.

Your Assignment

- 1) **Begin building your personal Bundle. Obtain the Stones, Coverings, Abalone Shell, Sacred Pipe, and so forth.** (Most of these things can be procured at any Rock Shop.)
- 2) **Write out your personal Bundle Ceremony and practice it until it becomes comfortable to you.**
- 3) **Send a printed transcript of your Medicine Bundle Ceremony to the Church so we can keep a copy on file.** (*See the address below.*) **In your transcript include the following:**
 - a) **Your name, current address, and signature.**
 - b) **A photograph of your Medicine Bundle.**

The approved NHNAC Chief/Mentor will read your ceremony and perhaps give suggestions if needed. (If there are any suggestions, prayerfully read the commentary and make whatever changes you think are appropriate.) Once your Medicine Bundle Ceremony has been approved for all Medicine People of the Church to use and follow, it will be placed on file and become "bona fide." This will then give you the legal protection to practice your religion and Healing Ministry under the covering of Ceremony.

- 4) **After you have mailed your Medicine Bundle Ceremony to the Church, email a jpeg passport style photograph along with your name to info@NHNAC.org.**

This picture will be used for your Official Minister Identification Card so a jpg format is required. (If for some reason you cannot email a jpg picture file, send a physical photograph with your bundle. The photograph will be copied and used for your Medicine Person Card. Note that a copied photograph will not be very clear when printed on your card.)

A passport style photograph is the following:

- a. The size is 2 x 2 inches.
- b. It includes a full face, front view with open eyes. It presents the full head from top of hair to shoulders.
- c. The photo background is white or off-white.
- d. The facial expression is natural.
- e. The lighting in the photo should be normal.
- f. There no sunglasses or hats in the photo.

Because of the expenses and time it takes to add a new Medicine Person into our ministry, any Medicine Person's Bundle Ceremony that includes an offering will be expedited to the top of the process. We do not have a paid clergy so all offerings go to paying the expenses and moving forward the Missions of the Church.

Thank you for continuing on the Sacred Healing Way and supporting the Church's missions. Please send your Bundle Ceremony to:

New Haven NAC
P.O. Box 2045
Ava, MO 65608

If for some reason you do not hear back from the Church in a timely manner, please continue with the your training under the Education tab at www.NHNAC.org and contact the President of the Church by email at ManFoundStanding@yahoo.com or on his cell phone at (417) 543-2729.