

Chapter 21

Practicing Medicine Wheel for Holistic Healing

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When patients come to a practitioner for help, their problem can often be summed up as physical, mental, or spiritual fragmentation. They are in some sense broken open, not whole. The practitioners' job, in a nutshell, is to renew their patients' sense of wholeness, their experience of inner and outer unity. Medicine Wheel is, therefore, not only a practical tool with which to mend a patient's mental health, but also a transformative practice with which to re-weave a patient's soul, or the whole person.

### **Minimum Education Requirements to Practice Medicine Wheel**

Health practitioners trained in any field of medicine that touches upon mental health are qualified to practice Medicine Wheel with their patients. Here I use the term *Medicine Wheel* in its broadest sense – to denote any ritual, mental, or spiritual practice that revolves around (pun intended) circles or spheres. Medicine Wheel is a creative practice, applicable in psychotherapy that encompasses imaginal cosmologies spanning the history of humankind. This breadth of practice is due to the fact that the idea or image of circle-sphere-wheel is a universal archetype for unity or wholeness – it is, in one word, holistic. The Lakota say, “I am standing at the Earth's center. In a sacred manner I see the tribe gathered around me. Behold me. I AM” (Padilla, 1995, p. 12). Indigenous shamans were the first practitioners of Medicine Wheel, but one need not be a shaman to utilize its basic principles and processes.

Among mainstream psychologies taught today, I have found transpersonal psychology, humanistic psychology, archetypal depth and Jungian psychology, and spiritually-oriented psychology particularly open to and nurturing of Medicine Wheel practices. Transpersonal psychology encompasses them all, in the terminological sense that *trans* embodies omnidirectionality beyond the *personal* human, and extends throughout the cosmos. Humans, then, “stand in” as the hub or center of their personal Medicine Wheel, whose spokes emanate equally

in all directions to the cosmic sphere that surrounds them. In this way, the realm of psychology can be envisioned as the holistic web of life itself, woven by the archetypal patient-practitioners, who are personified according to their own mythic traditions. Grandmother Spider Woman, for instance, fits the mythic narrative of a female Native American patient-practitioner. In this shamanic practice, it is important to note that the patients also stand in as their own psychologist-practitioners, where psychotherapy and life are interwoven in the same web – the patient-practitioners' Medicine Wheel that is in continual transformation or rebirth. Thus, this chapter fully empowers patients to co-create their own best-practices manual out of the physical, mental, and spiritual materials available to them in life – nature as experienced through all of their faculties in real time. It is that simple.

### **Credentials or Licenses Required to Practice Medicine Wheel**

There are no licensing requirements to practice Medicine Wheel. However, the following universities and institutes teach disciplines that circumnavigate the practice of Medicine Wheel: transpersonal psychology at Sofia University in Palo Alto, California; existential, humanistic, and transpersonal psychology at Saybrook University in Pasadena, California; existential-humanistic psychotherapy at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology; archetypal depth and Jungian psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute near Santa Barbara, California; and spiritually-oriented psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. While no credentials or licenses are required to practice Medicine Wheel on ourselves or with patients, it may be more effective when the patient-practitioner has been trained in some form of transcendent therapy; some form of visual therapy; and some form of movement therapy. Transcendence, vision, and motion correspond to our three realms of practice: spiritual, mental, and physical. Again, the prefix *trans* indicates an all-pervading, all-encompassing practice,

where its name embodies its action of transcendence through all three of the spiritual, mental, and physical realms. In this constellation, *vision* is the image of an idea or mental construct, and *motion* is the ritual acting out of image and idea in the physical world. Transcendence is the fundamental transformative act, inclusive and accessible.

Examples of transcendent therapy are meditation techniques, prayer, and hypnosis; examples of visual therapy are guided visualization techniques, affirmations, and mandala-drawing therapies; examples of movement therapy are dance, yoga, and simply walking. The movement therapies are all centered around (pun intended) balance – the hub or still center within the human body, riveted to the still center of the outer world or cosmic sphere. Thus, balance engenders a holistic sense of “my place in space” in three dimensions – the personal Medicine Wheel.

Yet in practicing the physical, ritual Medicine Wheel, the ability of patient-practitioners to balance in the still center is the specific result, not the prerequisite. Whether the patient-practitioners are physically, mentally, or spiritually broken open, they can still practice Medicine Wheel perfectly. Ritual movements and objects, mental exercises, and transcendent techniques are virtually arbitrary. Trust that the right healing tool will exist, will come. Be available – it is that simple; include yourself in the web of life. We come into balance with nature through practicing our own nature, which some have described simply as *love*. Choosing from among the healing tools of my own received traditions, here is an exemplary quote from *Pantacle* by an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Rosicrucian practitioner and founder of The Martinist Order, de Saint-Martin (2013). His words describe a chain of Medicine Wheels linked together:

Thus, from the first divine contract and the pure region where truth abides, a continuous chain of mercies and light extends to humanity, through every epoch, and will be prolonged to the end of time, until it returns to the abode from which it descends, taking

with it all the peaceful souls it shall have collected in its course; that we may know that it was Love which opened, directed, and closed the circle of all things. (p. 25)

While humans express spiritual experiences according to the religious traditions with which they are familiar, that is not a limitation, but rather a spherical container that transcends its own boundaries because of the universal nature of spiritual experiences. Sharing a received teaching, the Indian avatar Sathya Sai Baba offered: “There is only one religion – the religion of love” (Baba, personal communication, June, 1985). “Sai Baba” means “Mother Father,” so this adornment was received from an ancestor. Practicing Medicine Wheel brings healing from one’s ancestors and animal guides through surrender to love. Nature spirituality, an expression of love, is perhaps the most universal form of religion; and nature, or the web of life, as the object of scientific disciplines like psychology, is thus the medium through which the patient-practitioner transcends from science to spirituality and vice versa. This inborn, transcendent capacity is that of nature’s healer, the shaman. Nature spirituality is inborn in humans. We are shaman.

### **Additional Training Medicine Wheel Practitioners Seek**

Some Medicine Wheel practitioners will be fortunate to find indigenous practitioners, or shamans, with whom they can study in person. Other practitioners will find shamanic courses of various quality and authenticity offered online, virtually. Reputable shamanic programs that offer in-person and online components, and that are readily accessible online include: The Foundation for Shamanic Studies; the Society for Shamanic Practice; the Four Winds Foundation; and Dance of the Deer Foundation.

Medicine Wheel practice is most effective when transmitted person-to-person, or when received by the visionary shaman in the dreamtime (Hummingbird, personal communication, November, 1989). Additional training in practicing Medicine Wheel is shaman-specific, according to such factors as geographical location, cultural milieu or cultural choice, and genetic

lineage. In terms of physical, mental, and spiritual realms, shamans living in the mountains may be more inclined to use a mountain as their place for physical ritual, with items from mountains as the objects in their ritual; or they may use a mountain as viewed from above as the subject of visualizations and mandala drawings, and transcend more effortlessly while meditating on a mountain, as opposed to on a riverbank or an ocean shoreline.

Repetition of the names of god-goddess is one form of meditation. An example of invoking a Native American god, Yahowah, is provided in a later section. Depending on the shamans' genetic lineage, they may prefer to invoke different gods, such as Shiva or Buddha. Names of gods used as mantras can be researched online, where you will find invocations such as Om Namah Shivaya and Om Mani Padme Hum. If the shaman is of multicultural lineage, it may be beneficial to invoke a variety of gods in turn, appropriate to the required healing.

Mandala-drawing therapies transfer the circle-sphere-wheel idea of wholeness, or unity, from inside the shaman's mind to the outside world in two dimensions. This mental transcendence from inner to outer world comes to fruition as the shaman's Medicine Wheel rug – a two-dimensional pattern created on the ground, or floor of the therapy room – in the center of which the shaman balances. If the shamans' geographical location is mountainous, they may create a stepped pattern out of square, multi-colored fabric layers to stand on. If they live in the desert, they may prefer a neutral solid-colored fabric. When the shaman trusts that the desired healing is available through their own life experiences, practicing Medicine Wheel becomes a delight. They may receive news of an appropriate Medicine Wheel rug coming their way as a gift, or by simply purchasing it for themselves. All of these are examples of receiving shamanic adornments (Irwin, 1994).

The shamans' cultural milieu or cultural choice may determine what movement therapies are available to them, and what ritual movements and items are appropriate for them to use. For instance, a healer living in San Francisco who self-identifies as Pagan may seek additional training in Wiccan ritual. Because Wiccan ritual objects are readily accessible in specialty stores, the shaman can choose whether to purchase or make a wooden magical wand – a traditional Wiccan tool for casting a magic circle. Shamans will bring their ritual wands to the therapy session, for the purpose of casting a healing circle around themselves, tailored to their current psychological imbalance. Holistic healing practitioners will act as spirit guide on the shamans' journey of transformation, providing a safe environment for their shamanic vision quest together. Specifics of the Wiccan Medicine Wheel may be similar to or coincide with specifics of the Native American Medicine Wheel, or they may not. Pagans might use candles of prescribed colors for each of the four cardinal directions, set up on the floor at four equidistant points on the circle surrounding the practitioner. In Wicca, the direction candles may be brown at North, blue at West, red at South, and yellow at East. One configuration of Native American Medicine Wheel practice uses colored-in quadrants, with black between North and West, red between West and South, yellow between South and East, and white between East and North. Other shamans situate the cardinal directions of their Medicine Wheel in the mid-points of each of the colored quadrants. Wiccans or shamans sometimes just use an inner visualization, or a small altar-sized version, of the Medicine Wheel. Here we are working towards a three-dimensional practice of Medicine Wheel, for therapy room, home, or outdoors.

The Medicine Wheel rug can be circular, square, or rectangular – centered in an imaginal circle-sphere-wheel. Alternatively, the Medicine Wheel can be demarcated using small stones positioned in a circle around a larger shaman stone. Shamans might also place smaller stones

demarcating the spokes of the Medicine Wheel, emanating to the outer circumference stones. As in all Medicine Wheels that are laid out on the mountain, ground, or floor for practice, the shaman stands in the center, with the shaman stone at their feet. As the shaman's personal Medicine Wheel develops, it will become more and more three-dimensional with each adornment received. Whether the shamans construct their Medicine Wheels out of physical stones in a permanent outdoor circle on the ground, or out of an imaginal indoor circle demarcated by the corners of a rug at Earth's cardinal directions, they are equally effective due to the archetypal nature of Medicine Wheels. All of nature is the shaman's sphere.

### **Evidence-Based Research on Effectiveness of Medicine Wheel**

The subtitle of the *Journal of Indigenous Research (JIR), Full Circle; Returning Native Research to the People*, is itself a testament to the effectiveness of Native practices in healing Native communities. In *JIR*'s first Issue, T. Thomason (2011) offers a succinct article entitled, "Best Practices in Counseling Native Americans." Therein, he addresses the question, "Are Native American counselors more effective with Native clients than non-Native counselors, or is there no difference?" (Thomason, 2011). His research found that half (50%) of respondents said that Native American counselors are more effective than non-Natives; 20% said there is no difference; 18% said it depends on the cultural competence of the counselor; and 12% said it depends on how traditional the client is. Another of his research questions asks, "How important is it to incorporate spirituality into counseling with Native American clients?" (Thomason, 2011). A majority (55%) of respondents said that it is very important; 41% said it depends on whether spirituality is important to the client; and only 4% said it is not important (Thomason, 2011).

The National Indian Health Board (NIHB, n.d.), has a Behavioral Health webpage that describes Native prevention and treatment practices. The section entitled, “Evidence-based Practices, Practiced-based Evidence, and Best, Promising, and Common Practices that may be of interest to MSPI projects or others working to address methamphetamine use or suicide,” hosts an article on the “Red Road Approach to Wellness and Healing” (NIHB, n.d.). That approach integrates Native American healing methodologies, philosophy, and values with contemporary methods of chemical awareness, education, and chemical addiction therapy. The article finds that Medicine Wheel practice has grown to be a globally diversified approach to recovery, health, and healing. It also recommends the website, <http://www.crcaih.org/medicine-wheel-inc.html>. “Red Road” discusses the company, Medicine Wheel Inc., owned by Thin Elk, who has worked with over 400 tribes in North America. The Red Road Approach, a system of practice originated by Thin Elk, has been presented worldwide by a diverse sampling of indigenous cultures, organizations, and government entities (NIHB, n.d.).

Another article in the National Indian Health Board’s (NIHB, 2014) “Evidence-based” section comes under the subsection, “Common Practices for Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Programming.” The article, “Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative (MSPI): Tribal partners’ common and shared practices brief,” describes how the initiative integrates and teaches cultural activities within more structured prevention programming. (NIHB, 2014). The research initiative found that successful components include dancing, drumming, traditional camps, and ceremonial practices. Significantly, these cultural activities were the most valued by MSPI participants, and were the activities that MSPI staff most enjoyed conducting (NIHB, 2014).

The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC, n.d.) hosts an online report, “Inter-Tribal Prevention Strategic Plan Dissemination Materials.” These materials include an overview of the Strategic Prevention Enhancement (SPE), which lays out a framework in which behavioral health, alcohol, tobacco, other drug abuse including prescription drugs, and suicide can be addressed within the cultural context of the tribes. The GLITC’s (n.d.) evidence-based prevention is culturally-based, and culturally responsive. The SPE plan is based on evidence, from nationally-based prevention science, that “Culture is Prevention” (GLITC, n.d.). Three essential aspects of the programs are: credible program practitioners; culturally-based prevention activities that include participation in traditional ceremonies, rituals, sharing stories, oral instruction, and modeling; and materials that include culturally relevant setting, dress, ornamentation, symbols, graphics, and sensory substances. The GLITC (n.d.) finds specifically that a process of change and growth comes about when using the Medicine Wheel, which is currently recognized as an inter-tribal symbol across Indian Country. Though different tribes draw, interpret, and practice the Medicine Wheel in different ways, it is a shared approach to life and the world. The GLITC (n.d.) further reports that it functions as a holistic model for many tribes. Stemming from the Native belief that all things in life and on Earth must be in balance in order to grow in a healthy way, each quadrant of the Medicine Wheel, while unique, is equal to the other quadrants. Natives ascribe unique developmental aspects to each direction of the Medicine Wheel, so that following the circle will allow one to grow in an effective and culturally responsive way (GLITC, n.d.).

### **Medicine Wheel is Effective for Psychiatric Disorders**

Native American mental health programs cover the full range of psychological problems and psychiatric disorders. Medicine Wheel has been shown to be effective within the microcosm of Native American mental health programs. Whether you are a Native American patient-practitioner, or a counselor from another indigenous genetic lineage, practicing Medicine Wheel

will be beneficial. Because it is archetypal, it can be an integral part of treatment for any disorder, ranging from mild depression, to addiction, to schizophrenia. It is a creative, transformative practice that can be utilized to augment any other mental health practice over a limited, or an indefinite, period of time. While Medicine Wheel is grounded in the person's specific "my place in space," it extends beyond – transcends – the boundaries of physical, mental, and spiritual existence. Because Medicine Wheel is a timeless archetypal practice, it opens depth upon depth of the shaman's soul, and is therefore ideally taken on as a lifetime practice for self-transformation.

There is a well-known saying in holistic healing traditions: "When the student is ready, the master appears" (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, personal communication, 1977-1978). But we don't acknowledge how often that master appears in the form of an image (Hillman, 1981/2004). Shamanic images are often regarded as a negative symptom of mental illness, when perhaps we should first honor them as master shamans themselves. I was drawn into the depths of my own soul, through Medicine Wheel shamans received over the decade just prior to teaching a course on Jung's *Red Book* (2009) at Pacifica Graduate Institute. In 2002, as I began work on a master's degree, I began to receive the Medicine Wheel shamans, first, in the form of a circle with simply a dot in the center – an archetypal Sun God image – the dot representing the firm anchor I was to need for the arduous work ahead. Second, as I struggled to make sense of Literary Theory, two dots appeared, marking opposite positions on the circumference of the circle, connected by a line across the circle. That depicted the technique into which I was being initiated: the Renaissance natural magician's art of opposites. Through reading the Inquisitional tortures of my genetic past, the European aspect of my soul was reborn.

After some time, with two more dots and a line intersecting the circle at right angles to the previous line – forming the cross and quadrants of the traditional Medicine Wheel – I braved the vision quest of Critical Race Theory, reading crucifying novels by Native American authors who had suffered greatly. Then a new circle, with the rebirth of my Native American soul – with two equilateral triangles inscribed therein to form a hexagram – completed the circle of reintegration between my European Sun God soul and Native American Moon Goddess soul. I wrestled with writing my thesis on Renaissance natural magic for another year, graduating with a master's degree in Literature and Writing Studies in 2006.

Later, I needed a way to bring what had been a four-year spiritual and mental vision quest into the physical realm: my disembodied soul needed feet. I received the adornment of a Navajo rug on which to stand, woven in the “storm” design. By and by, this Medicine Wheel rug taught me about the four houses of the wind in the cardinal directions, and the lightning bolts that connected them to the center *hogan* or home. Still out of balance, I needed a shaman stone to anchor my feet to the center of Earth. So, after some time, I received a large Shiva Lingam stone to be my *hogan's* shaman stone. That completed a three-dimensional embodiment of the first Medicine Wheel circle I had drawn, with the simple dot in the middle: I was in balance on the Earth, as the Great Mother orbited the Sun.

In time, I received my Native name, Three Eagles, and her ritual invocation, while walking footstep-by-footstep up a Sierra mountain trail. A year later, I needed a ritual garment to embody that Sun God spirit guide of the East. After some time, I received the shamanic adornment of a buckskin coat with long fringe along the arms, delightfully similar to the ritual buckskin coat my Uncle Henry wore in a portrait painted by my grandmother. With that long fringe along my outstretched arms, it was clear that the ancestors had given Three Eagles her

wings. After Golden Eagle, other animal guides began to come as shamanic adornments: Two-Horned Bison of the North, Harbor Seal of the West, Lynx Bobcat of the South. The next year I received a Lakota Sioux war club from a Native whom I met in the Sierras. I would come to surrender that to peace, to love, in the *hogan*. The next year brought an Apache storyteller's rattle, from another Native at a powwow, which I would use to invoke my animal guides of the four directions. And later, I received a Chickasaw shell gorget [pendant] Medicine Wheel during a visit with my own tribe – a personal adornment from Te Ata's grandson, H. Thompson.

In the Sierras, I climbed the great boulder mountain we called Indian Rock, where I grounded that shaman stone in the sphere of my heart, with Sky above and Earth below. The cosmic Medicine Wheel ritual was complete enough in 2010 for me to begin giving guest lectures at Pacifica. Then in 2012, after a 10-year Medicine Wheel vision quest, I began to teach my course on Carl Jung's *Red Book* (2009) at Pacifica, and to teach Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ courses at Ojai venues, in my home, and online. So you see that, as our masters, Medicine Wheel shamans are also patient. Our entire life is a vision quest. We are shaman. The Medicine Wheels come for us.

**Sample Session in a Clinical Setting;**

**Excerpts from Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ Techniques,**

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Directions from the practitioner to the patient are in quotation marks. Three Eagles' directions to the practitioner are not. K. L. Evans, Three Eagles, drew the figures in Coso petroglyph style.

“Together we'll practice Three Eagles' Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™. Later, as you begin to create your own personal Medicine Wheel at home, we'll practice that together here

also. Sit comfortably on a chair or floor cushion, at the foot of our Medicine Wheel rug, facing me. I'll face East, practicing Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ rituals and techniques as your shamanic spirit guide. Towards the end, I'll indicate when you're to perform the ritual movements and invocations with me. As you progress through our transformational sessions, we'll perform Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ together."

### **Insert Figure 1**

Medicine Wheel storm rug, with shaman stone and storyteller's rattle.

### **Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ Music**

#### **Meditation stills the mind in the soul.**

"With eyes closed, meditate in silence to the transcendent music of IAWHE 3 (2015), from their CD *Medicine Wheel Vision Quest*" (available through [www.iawhe.bandcamp.com](http://www.iawhe.bandcamp.com)).

Turn on the CD and play track 4, "Yahowah Chant."

Turn off the CD.

### **Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ Invocations, Visualizations, and Shamanic Adornments**

#### **Invocation centers the body on Earth circling the Sun.**

#### ***Medicine Wheel of the four seasons.***

Stand at the foot of the central shaman stone, arms at your sides, palms open towards the shaman stone and the East.

### **Insert Figure 2**

"Summer . . . Fall . . . Winter . . . Spring . . ."

#### **Receive inner balance through the outer world.**

#### ***Medicine Wheel of the seven directions.***

Continue that ritual stance, with palms open towards shaman stone and the East.

THUNDERBIRD INVOCATION

“I stand on the Stone

in the navel of the storm.

The lightning rod binds Earth to Sky.”

Slowly raise your Thunderbird arms out to the sides, palms up, as you recite.

**Insert Figure 3**

“Before me is the East

behind me is the West

on my left hand is the North”

Turn just the right palm down.

**Insert Figure 4**

“On my right hand is the South.”

Bend the right elbow, palm vertical, facing forwards.

**Insert Figure 5**

“Above me is the womb of Sky”

Lower the left arm, palm facing forwards.

**Insert Figure 6**

“Below me is the navel of Earth.

Love is the lightning bolt

calling ancestors and animal guides.”

**Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ Music**

“Next, sit still in a relaxed meditation position, on a chair or floor cushion. With eyes closed, we’ll continue vocalizing the IAWHE Embodied Invocation to music, while visualizing the descending and ascending Medicine Wheels.”

Turn on the CD *Medicine Wheel Vision Quest* by IAWHE 3 (2015), and play track 3, “IAWHE Mantra” (available through [www.iawhe.bandcamp.com](http://www.iawhe.bandcamp.com)). Proceed with vocalized meditation.

Turn off the CD.

“Now, drawing the attention inwards, continue this practice of IAWHE Embodied Invocation silently, enlivening the Medicine Wheel with your soul’s gaze. Envision your body within a translucent sphere, as you repeat the invocation silently. And when you feel centered in your Medicine Wheel sphere, slowly open the eyes, balancing the soul’s inner vision with the body’s outward vision. For meditations with eyes open, you can repeat the IAWHE Embodied Invocation aloud or silently, as you go about your day. IAWHE can be invoked while sitting, standing, or walking.”

### **Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ Practice, Assignments, and Assessments**

Ours is a transformative rebirth, wherein the shamanic practitioners’ own souls constellate gods-goddesses, ancestors, and animal guides within their personal Medicine Wheel.

#### ***Week 1: Balance the shamans’ footsteps on the Earth Medicine Wheel.***

“Please stand with eyes open, to practice the ‘IAWHE EMBODIED INVOCATION’ as a walking meditation. Follow me as we circumnavigate our Medicine Wheel, invoking IAWHE aloud as we perform the arm motions.” . . . proceed . . .

“Next, we’ll circumnavigate our Medicine Wheel, invoking IAWHE aloud, but without the arm motions.” . . . proceed . . .

“Last, we’ll circumnavigate our Medicine Wheel, invoking IAWHE silently within the soul, embodying IAWHE with our footsteps on Earth Medicine Wheel.” . . . proceed . . .

### **Assignment**

Always ask the shamanic practitioner to write down the assignment in their journals.

“In going about your daily life this week, invoke IAWHE whenever the practice comes to mind: aloud or silently; sitting, standing, or walking.”

### **Assessment**

The following week, after you have performed all the Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ ritual invocations for your patients, ask the shamanic practitioners to:

“Please share the results of your vision quest this week.”

“Describe the kinds of balance your soul received during your vision quest this week.”

“What physical, mental, and spiritual qualities or aspects came into balance through everyday Earthly life?”

In this way, grounding their bodies in Earth shaman stone, the shamanic practitioners deepen their trust that life will provide the required healings naturally. After you have discussed the shamanic practitioners’ feelings of self-confidence and balance, ask them if they have any further self-reflective assessments. The shamanic practitioners invariably learn both good and bad things about themselves each week, so remind them that opposite footsteps are life’s way of maintaining balance.

Continue *Weeks 2 – 4* sessions from Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ Techniques (available at <https://www.threeeagles.net/medicine-wheel-techniques/>).

***Week 5: Embody nature’s four elements as the shaman stone.***

“Please stand, in preparation for practicing a new transcendent ritual of the four directions. This time, as we call out the four directions in turn, we invoke their respective elements: North – Earth . . . West – Water . . . South – Air . . . East – Fire. All the while we are standing, centered as the human shaman stone, hub of our personal Medicine Wheel. Let’s perform ‘INVOCATION OF THE ELEMENTS’ together.” . . . proceed . . .

### **Assignment**

Always ask the shamanic practitioner to write down the assignment in their journals.

“Practice ‘INVOCATION OF THE ELEMENTS’ daily. In the dreamtime, gather the four elements from Earth’s distant directions, and ground them inside your human shaman stone, bringing them to life as adornments, to share with others as healing powers.”

### **Assessment**

The following week, after you have performed all the Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ ritual invocations for your patients, ask the shamanic practitioners to:

“Please share the results of your vision quest this week.”

“Describe how you felt as human shaman stone.”

“After gathering the four elements from the four directions, and bringing those shamanic powers down into life, in what ways did you share the adornments?”

In this way, we include ourselves in the circle of life. We are shamanic practitioners. The Medicine Wheels come for us (©IAWHE, n.d.).

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