



rites of PASSAGE COUNCIL

“The Calling”

“Deep in your heart you know whether or not you want to experience a vision quest ceremony. Already you feel the ancient stirring within you. The time has come. You must go into the wilderness, to the breast of Mother Earth, and seek vision, understanding and strength for yourself and your people. As the Hebrew prophet declared, ‘Where there is no vision the people will perish.’ Truly, the survival of the social order depends on your providing visionary leadership as an active force working for the welfare and growth of your people.

The prophet was not just speaking of the general good of society at large. He was also saying that the individual human spirit must be renewed and revitalized by the quest for vision. He reminds us that vision is good for all of us, that if we do not have it we will perish. That is why, deep in your unconscious, where you hear the voices of your ancestors you know that the time has come to leave everything behind and go alone to the Sacred Mountain.

Nevertheless, a decision to participate in a Vision Quest Ceremony is often made without clear awareness of the implications. Examine your motives. Ask yourself, “Why do I want to do this?” Look carefully at your expectations. If, like Prometheus, you want to steal the fire from the sacred altar of vision, what you steal will probably die in your heart. Do you hope to take a recreational dance through a phantasmagoria of altered states? If so, you will forget what you saw within a few months. Are you expecting a ‘quickie’ self-transformation, hoping you won’t have to work too hard? If so, you will return from the sacred mountain feeling cheated, puzzled, and no more prepared to serve your people than you were before.

Many there are who quest for vision. Few there are who return to actually demonstrate the reality of their vision for the people of the world. God said to Moses: ‘Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground.’ Moses did as he was told. Carrying the burning bush in his heart, he returned to his people and proceeded to make his vision a reality.

But there are many who do not see or remember the burning bush, nor do they recognize the sacredness of the ground on which they stand. They keep their sandals on. They cannot hear the voice of Spirit above the static of their lives. To every vision quester the charge is the same: to shoulder the vision of ‘doing’ and live your myth.” Book of the Vision Quest by Foster and Little

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Recommended Reading

Book of the Vision Quest: by Steven Foster and Meredith Little.

The Healing Wisdom of Africa: by Malidoma Some

Please complete & bring these forms with you.

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The Severance Phase

Initial Preparation: Commitment, Becoming clear about intention, Psychological, Spiritual and Physical Preparation. Do not undertake the heroine/hero journey without clear intention. Beginning a journal will be helpful. If you prepare well your solo time will be meaningful. Prepare for this passage as if you were preparing for your death. Anything that you take to your death unresolved you will carry into your next life passage. Every rite of passage runs opposite the flow of life in that it begins with the mythological or symbolic death. Begin a journal. The information you place there will instruct you for years to come.

Important Questions to Consider: What am I marking, formalizing, celebrating, or ritualizing? Where would my ceremony fit within the three stages of a rite of passage?

1. Do I want to mark a **severance**? (Separation, termination, parting, letting go or conclusion)
2. Do I want to mark a **threshold**? (Transition, change, adjustment, shift in role, status or task, period of extended depression, transformation, a time of betwixt and between, period of uncertainty)?
3. Do I want to mark an **incorporation**? (Return, joining, union, reestablishment of harmony, new responsibilities, new beginnings)?

Other questions to consider: Why was I born a human being on this earth? Why must I die? What do I really want to do with my life? With what gifts/skills am I blessed? Am I using them? Who are my people? What is my understanding of God? What are the great monsters of my life? What must I do to face them? Who are my teachers? Who are my true friends? What do I feel most passionate about in my life? What fears do I let control me rather than following my passion?

Suggested Ceremonies Of Preparation: One Day Medicine Walk and Death Lodge. Follow the guidelines in the enclosed information. You may have other ceremonies that are personal to you. We encourage you to listen to your own wisdom.

The Death Lodge

Psycho-Spiritual Preparation

In many indigenous cultures it was understood that one must make good or finish all unfinished business before their death or what was not completed would follow them into their next life passage.

“Imagine yourself to be at the verge of death. The word goes out to the village: “So and so is dying!” All your old friends (and enemies too) will come to visit you for the last time. The events of your life, good or bad, will pass before your eyes. You will remember with pleasure and regret. Now is the time to cleanly sever from your “days and ways” and to “make it good “ with everyone who comes to say good-bye.

Before arriving at base camp, set aside a formal time to visit with the persons and events that have composed your life karma. If you feel the need, write out your last will and testament. Make provisions for the disposal of your body. Commemorate the events and crises of your life from the “detached” perspective of one who is about to die. Cut the cords attached to all the exhausted placentas of your past. Now that your former life is at an end, you will die cleanly and nobly, forgiving and forgiven.” The Book of the Vision Quest, Foster & Little

When it is said of someone that he/she died a “good death”, it is understood to mean that they lived a good life, how you die will reflect the way you lived. Prepare yourself well for your quest, for the preparation will be reflected in your experience during your solo time in the wilderness.

Medicine Walk

“As preparation for your quest we suggest that you take a one day medicine walk, being aware of what is being called forth within you. What life transition or life decision are you wishing to mark with your quest?”

The following account might help you prepare for the vision quest ceremony. It is based on an American Plains Indian model but is adapted and synthesized for modern use.

The medicine walk is a day’s journey upon the face of the earth. As a ceremony of preparation for the vision quest ceremony, the medicine walk serves as a mirror. In it, signs and symbols of your inward journey are reflected. The walk is a distilled form of the vision quest ceremony. This walking fast, of no physical harm to your system, will give you an idea of how you will react to a three day and night prayer fast.

During the medicine walk, certain aspects of nature, which reflect the nature of your own “medicine power,” are attracted to you. With your help, they weave a symbolic story which indicates future life direction, your inherent gifts and challenges, and the kinds of ceremonies that you might perform during the vision quest ceremony.

The medicine walk is customarily taken one month before the actual vision quest ceremony. You prepare the night before by packing an emergency kit, your journal, and a minimum of 2 quarts of water. No food is taken on this day until after the sun has set. Inform someone of the location and duration of your walk -- in case you do not return. Get a good night’s rest. An important dream may arise on this night. You begin at sunrise and you walk in some natural place. If you must drive try and get there before dawn. Set forth on a wandering, intuitive course without consciously attempting to reach any goal. As you wander, be open and receptive to what nature is reflecting back to you. Be aware if you are feeling “called” in any one direction or to any particular place or object. Listen to and sense the consciousness of all that is around you. Know clearly that every aspect of nature is keenly aware of your presence.

The beginning and end of your medicine walk, “the threshold”, must be marked by ceremony to honor your recognition of entrance into and return from the sacred world. The ceremony that you perform at these points may be elaborate or simple, but it must involve your focused attention and gratitude for your teaching and safe keeping.

Dietary Preparation

During the last week of preparation, we recommend that you be aware of the types of foods that you are eating. Concentrate on the intake of fresh fruits and vegetables. Drink plenty of liquids. Supplement with vitamins if necessary. We do not prescribe any particular regimen except that you are in good physical shape. Get plenty of sleep. Various physical activities and meditative practices can be considered ceremonies of preparation. They will enhance your sense of readiness and self-worth as a candidate. In the end you are the best judge of what is best for you.

Fasting During Threshold Phase

“Food will not pass your lips during your ceremony (three days and nights). You have chosen to follow a “cloud of witnesses,” ancient and modern, who have traveled this ceremonial path to spiritual insight. As a ritual tool, fasting is the oldest and finest.

The fasting process is one of readying the body so that the seed can be planted. The seeker empties the body so that the spirit may be cleansed and filled. Abstinence from food encourages death, who wants to fill your emptiness. As you live naked, vulnerable, in alignment with death, your life is enhanced, made brilliant and terrifying.

A brief fast such as this does not endanger most people. The physical effects of the fast will be mainly psychological. With no meals to organize your day for structure, you will discover how much of what you think is physical hunger is social programming.

During a fast, certain psychological states find greater ease of expression. The psyche is open to orchestration by the elements and rhythms of the natural world. The environment rushes in to fill the void in the pit of your stomach. Sunrise is your meat and the moon is your drink. The dark wind sets a banquet for you. Although your physical strength slowly wanes, another kind of strength builds up in you---- the silent, immovable strength of the stone you sit upon. Even as your knees shake, your weakness, your “spirit knees” stand firm, treelike.

Without ballast in your belly, you begin to understand what Sun Bear means by “walk in balance on the Earth Mother” -- compensating for the loss of strength by applying weight of spirit. You walk carefully, economically, in harmony with the terrain. Because you are not under pressure to get anywhere, you begin to notice what lies in your immediate field of vision. You have time to pause, look, examine, and communicate.

Anomalies of size, shape, color, function, and species catch your eye: a piece of white quartz, a freshly dug burrow, a blossoming flower, a smooth stretch of wash sand, a rodent track, an ant hill, a pile of bear scat, the sudden drone of a hummingbird, a snake, a lizard doing pushups, a bunch of native grass, a kiss from a deer fly. You walk amid the bounty of the earth and measure these things with the myths, values, and perceptions of a fasting mind. The fast teaches you your own pace, your own way of composing your time with Grandmother Earth, your own methods of charting a “map” of your place of power.

When you stop to rest, you have nothing to put into your body but water. You cannot sit down with the evening paper and some munchies and enjoy the view from the terrace. All you get is the view. And because you have nothing else to eat, you eat the view. You hear your empty belly gnawing on the silence. A cool breeze stimulates taste buds; you salivate shamelessly. You feel your body turning inward upon itself for food, eating up your stores of glycogen and other sources of quick energy. The shadow of death nudges your heartbeat up and engenders a strange mixture of feeling: exhilaration and exhaustion. Your body is reduced to imitating the animal hunger that exists in the life around you.

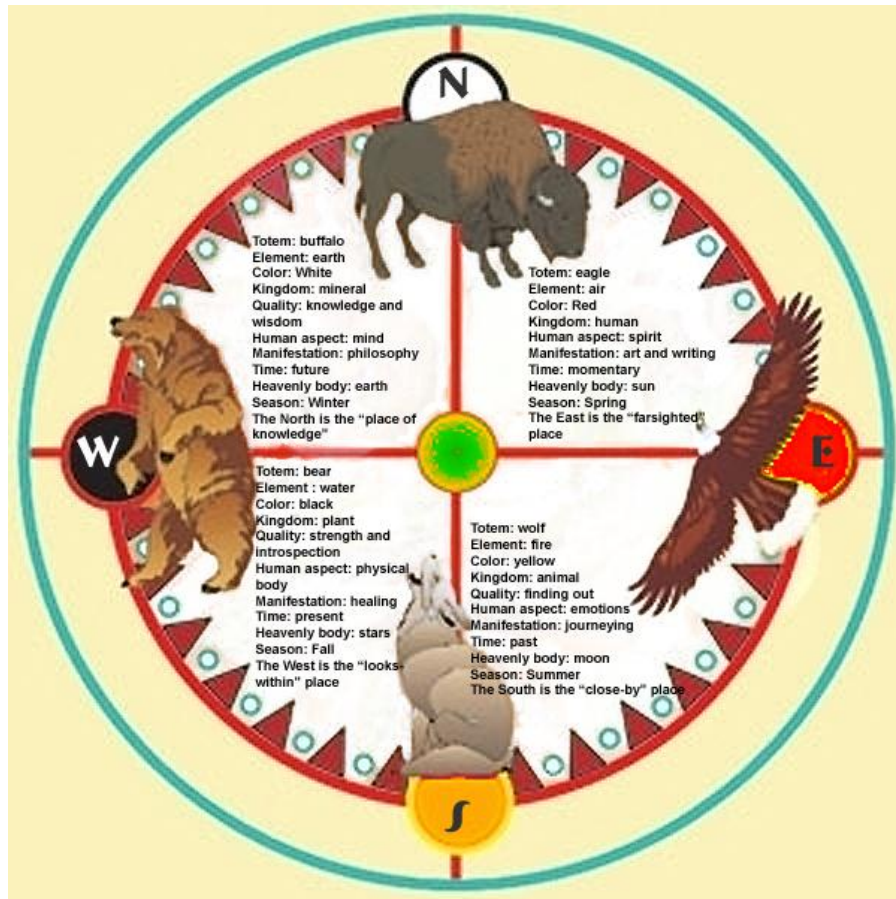
Your civilized veneer begins to crack. Your sacred ancestors, no strangers to fasts such as these, compel you to look down at your hands, scarred and roughened by repeated embraces from Mother Earth. How beautiful and mortal they are! You watch the way you occupy space, aware of the signs and the marks you leave behind: urine stain on a rock, boot marks in the dirt, a blackened stone from your fire. The earth becomes for you a single, whole, living entity, a Goddess.” Book of the Vision Quest, Foster and Little

Nature merges with your body and soul and you restore an ancient connection with your own indigenous spirit. The rocks, the sun, the moon, the animals and plants begin to speak to you. Nature is in your bones and your own nature is rooted in the earth.

As part of your first aid kit you will carry with you a powdered form of electrolyte (Gatorade powder) that will aid in the release of stored toxins from your body and prevent the reoccurrence of nausea and vomiting.

The Meaning of the Great Wheel of Life

Finding Your Place in the Circle



Teachings come in many forms. When people invest in a particular form, that teaching is enriched and attains energy of its own, it becomes alive. The Great Wheel of Life is one such vital form. It is an ancient circular symbol that has been used by native peoples from around the world for thousands of years. It is a kind of mandala that represents the total universe and teaches us of ourselves and our right relationship to all other living things. It shows us the path we must all walk to be fully human. It shows the way back to our home, to our center.

The teaching is that we all enter life from one direction on the wheel. This becomes our birth imprint from the cosmos. Some enter from the south, some the east, others the north or the west. We are born with a basic understanding and gifts from that part of the wheel. Our life's task is to continually seek balance of all the directions. One simple way to learn of the medicine wheel is to look at the four directions and their meanings. Know that the meanings and aspects of each direction will differ according to the various hemispheres and cultures around the Earth.

East/Spring/Air: The place of sunrise and spring mornings. It is the place of beginnings and of vision. The ground is thawed, the seed is planted and begins to sprout. Here is the mountain where we go to seek vision and illumination and clarity. Here we fly on the wings of the eagle. In Psychoanalytic terms the function here is intuition. From the heights of the East we can see far into the future. This is the place of Spirit/Higher Power, informed and energized by the fire of the sun. Here we learn that all we imagine can be made real.

South/Summer/Fire: The place of innocence and trust. It is here we learn of emotion and passion. Here we learn to touch with our hearts, and to be touched. This is the place of feelings. Here is when we are totally in the moment and are willing to see once again through the eyes of a child. Only then can we see the world alive and shimmering, continually new and splendid. Only then can we feel our deep connection to all of creation.

West/Autumn/Water: This is the place of inner work. Here the sun sets, the night time comes. This is the time to go deeply within, into the darkness to find the inner light. Here we touch the deepest part of our souls. Here the great mother bear goes into hibernation for the winter. The snake sheds the skin it has outgrown. This is the place of drawing inward; the place of taking in the harvest; and receiving nourishment on an emotional level. It is the place of psyche.

North/Winter/Earth: The ground is frozen and in order to survive we must learn to cooperate with one another; we must learn of the Give-away. All the knowledge and experience we have gained is not for ourselves alone but must be shared with our people if we are to survive. This is the place of the adult mind, of thinking and logic. This is the place on the wheel of our elders and great teachers. This is the place of rest and renewal; of reverence and grace; of letting go and trusting.

Each of the directions can be thought of as a lodge. We are often gifted and comfortable under the direction in which we were born. We must guard against becoming overdeveloped in one direction, not learning the teachings of the other three. Each direction has its dark side. **East-** spiritual pride, spaciness, unbounded emotion, addiction, and being lost. **South-** being a victim, pain games, sad stories we tell ourselves; workaholism, brutality. **West-** self-absorption and depression, manipulation, head-tripping. **North-** tyrannical control, intellectualizing, knowledge without wisdom, arrogance.

Please bring with you four objects. One to symbolically represent the individual qualities found in each one of the four directions.

Smudging

Burning Herbs for Purifying Space and One Another

“Smudging is a word sometimes used for the purifying smoke ceremony. Typically an abalone shell, a bowl, or a hollow rock is filled with dried herbs that are lit and the fragrant smoke is spread around the circle or space with a special feather. Several plants can be used: dried desert sage for cleansing and purifying, dried cedar for balancing body, mind, and spirit, dried lavender for walking the beauty way and braided sweet grass for conferring blessings.”

“Smudging has many effects on the individual and collective psyche. It serves as a demarcation of time, notifying everyone present that Sacred Time is beginning. It is a signal for the mind to be still and in present time. One of the profound attributes of smudging that makes it an important tool for ceremony in that it provides everyone in the group with a shared sensual experience. As the sweet smelling smoke encircles the area it is easy to feel the presence of Spirit entering and filling all those present.”

“Some believe smudging with feathers of different birds produces differing results. Hawk feathers are used to encourage vision and inspiration. Owl feathers are believed to bring deep insights about one-self. Eagle feathers are usually reserved only for those who are in leadership roles. However any large feather can be used.”

Ceremonial Circle by Sedonia Cahill and Joshua Halpern



Sweat Lodge Ceremony

The prayer lodge or sweat lodge as often called is a primary shamanic tool for prayer. A version of it was used by indigenous people from around the world as a way of purification, healing and getting ready for ceremony and other momentous events. It has been used in various forms and traditions all over the world.



The lodge is a large, round, inverted basket woven from long branches that are laced together. It is made in such a way that it symbolizes the turtle, with the lodge itself being the body and with an altar mound made of dirt, representing the head. The mound alter is placed about a foot outside and to the left of the lodge doorway with a column of earth connecting it to the body. There is a path from the lodge door to a fire pit a few yards away. Inside the lodge we will make prayer ties to hang from the branches. We will use six colors each having a special meaning. Each invites the spirit of its color into the lodge and asks blessings from that relation. **Yellow** holds the energy of the East, Eagle, Air, male energy, and the illumination and clarity of new beginnings. **Red** holds the energy of the South, Snake, Fire, The Child, faith, trust, and innocence, passion, The Warrior. **Black** holds the energy of the West, Bear, Water, female energy, the place of introspection, and goals. **White** holds the energy of the North, Buffalo, Mineral Kingdom, The Elder, gratitude and wisdom. **Blue** holds the energy of the Great Above, Father Sky, Great Star Nation and all things above. **Green** holds the energy of Earth, The Plant Kingdom, and all things green and growing. **Purple** holds the energy of Great Spirit, God, Goddess, Source, Higher Power, or heart of the people.

Inside the lodge there is a deep pit in the center, large enough to hold many rocks. There will be four “rounds” (segment of time) in the ceremony. The lodge is covered with many tarps and blankets so that no light can get through. Rocks that have been heated in the fire pit are brought in at the beginning of each round and carefully placed in the pit inside the lodge. The fire keeper closes the door flap, the leader dedicates the lodge and the first round begins. When the Water Pourer notifies the Fire Tender the flap is opened. Each of the four rounds of prayers and songs honor the spirits of the four directions. These rounds allow the participants different viewpoints for the purpose of purifying themselves. Each round will address different aspects of creation and of ourselves allowing participants to reconnect with All Our Relations through prayer. In humbling ourselves we enter the lodge crawling through the opening. We move around the lodge in a sun wise direction. Since sacrifice originally meant “to make sacred” we approach every act in a sacred manner.

Elements of the Threshold Phase

When you genuinely pray you must pray with the fervor and intent of the ancient ones who went before you to the heart of Grandmother Nature to seek her vision. When you step through the threshold circle into the sacred world you will become invisible to those at base camp as you will be in the world of Spirit.

Sacred Time and Space: To experience time and space as sacred one must simply be still and remember that you can make any place holy if you find it yourself, occupy the space there, open all of your senses, and truly respect the smallest details of what is happening all around you.

Sacred Center: The sacred center is you. The Chinese word for nature translates to mean “self-thus” -- As nature goes, so goes the self. We are not separate from nature, we are simply not aligned with our own true nature. When this ancient connection is restored, we will recognize the trees, rocks, and wind to be our brother and sister. We are simply an extension of the life blood that flows through the Great Mother.

Dialogue With Nature: I encourage you to talk out loud to the animals, rocks, trees, wind, sun, moon and all living aspects of nature. Ask your questions, express your gratitude and frustrations and listen and watch for a response. Any running dialogue you have going on in your head you can take to the nature spirits that exist in all things around you.

Your Power Place: Finding your place on the Earth reflects your ability to be fully present with who you are within your body, relationships, and community. As you search for your power place, listen to your heart. Converse with your spirit guides and the spirit that moves in all things around you in this place. Address them with respect and reverence. Invoke the spirits of your ancestors and all those you would like to bless this place. Dialogue with them. You will have to live with your choice for three days.

The Stone Pile: As the shaman travels to the spirit world to assist in another's healing, the echo of the drum is his connection back to his people. The stone pile will serve as this connection for you. The heaping of stones is an ancient symbolic act that denotes: “This is the way. This is the meeting place of two worlds. Someone died and is buried here. Peace to all who pass.”

Your Purpose Circle: Christ entered the garden and as he prayed he asked that God’s will be done so that his people may live. You will enter your purpose circle to pray and seek vision so that your people may live. You will build your circle out of rocks. This circle is the tomb and the womb of the Great Mother. It is here that you will die and be reborn. On the 3rd night you will enter this circle to pray and receive your blessings from the great mystery

Fire: As a force, element, spirit, god or goddess it has always been an integral part of ritual and ceremony for all cultures. It is the symbolic place of destruction and creation symbolized by Kali the Hindu goddess of fire. It is the doorway to the world of Ancestors. The phoenix is destroyed in the fire and rises from the ashes as a symbol of immortality. God appears in the form of a burning bush as Moses is initiated into his vision and purpose. Fire is the creative force that exists before opposites emerge.

The Gift of A Medicine Name: In many indigenous cultures the name you are given at birth carries within it the imprints for your life purpose and mission. On an unconscious level this still occurs today. However, we are often scripted with our family's generational messages with the names we are given. Often we must work through this in order to claim our true identity. When one is initiated into manhood or womanhood one often acquires a new name that will call forth in them the personal qualities necessary for their next life passage. Your experience in nature will confer this name upon you.

The Cry For Vision: In the noble threshold circle described by Black Elk of the Oglalla Sioux, he walks back and forth between the cardinal points of his circle and the center, crying out, "O Great Spirit be merciful to me that my people may live." Vision and purpose are bestowed on you not for your benefit but for the well-being of your people. If you cry for yourself alone your cry will not extend beyond your own mouth. We are all linked by the Web of brotherhood / sisterhood and with vision come the responsibility to bring it back to your people. One is not said to have had a vision unless it is made real for the people to see. Cry not for what you want but for what you need.

The Vision: Remember that the world of spirit and the world of nature / physical reality are not separate. This is part of the great myth that modern culture operates by. Do not be fooled by the grandiose stories of others. Vision is more often bestowed through the physical world. Animal tracks, trees, wind, thunder, the rocks under your sore butt, urine stains in the dirt -- all of these will speak to you of your purpose. In earlier cultures it was understood that you did not quest to somehow discover what your purpose was but rather to remember who you are. You must remember who you are and reclaim your place in the circle of life. This place has always been there waiting for you to return.

The Spirit World: Many individuals will not have a tremendous experience with the spirit world. Of those who do, some will be frightened and unable to deal with it. Remember everything has spirit. Be very clear about the spirits that you call into your purpose circle and the intention for which you call them. In some native teachings--- If they suspected bad spirits coming to them, they would give it the task of going to get Great Spirit. If it was truly bad it would not return. Some experiences of the spirit world may be projections or hallucinations of the one questing. However, know for certain that some will not. Drums and rattles can be used ceremonially to enter into trance states of consciousness and call on the spirit world for guidance and blessings.

The Stone Pile

The buddy system requires that each of two partners be responsible for the other during the threshold time. Though they never see each other (unless an emergency arises), they check on each other's condition each day by visiting the stone pile erected in a prominent place midway between their respective camps. There they leave a sign that they are all right. If a sign is not left at the appointed time and place, the other buddy must go and find out what, if anything, is wrong. If the buddy cannot be found, base camp is notified and a general search is raised.

Piles of stones dating back ten thousands of years can be found in the desert places all over the earth. These piles still stand as mute testimony to human community. Erected at boundaries, along trails, at crossroads, near hunting sites, springs, power places, and townships, they bespeak our respect and care for our people. In the modern world, huge piles of stone and concrete abound, but they are devoid of such meaning. Now you have the opportunity to experience the ancient implications of erecting a small heap of stones in order to communicate with a brother or a sister.

The buddy system is not foolproof. Should there be an accident, its discovery could possibly take up to 36 hours. This is one of the basic risks if your intention is to be alone. Any fear you may feel regarding the danger must be honored by the impeccability of your performance as a buddy. Remember, every day of the threshold period you will be walking to the stone pile and returning from it. You will be fasting and experiencing some feelings of weakness. The walk itself can be a ceremony in which you celebrate your own mortality and the beauty of human love and responsibility.

On the last morning take down all signs of the stone pile. In gratitude,
unheap the stones, give them back to the Earth.



The Ancient Art of Story Telling & Myth Making



What are the stories you have come to value? What stories do you share with your friends, children, or partner? Stories are the oldest form of healing art that exists. In earlier cultures (before written word) the story tellers of the village were the ones who held the fabric of community life together. Stories have served as ways of passing on cultural and family traditions, weaving one generation to the next.

When you return from your solo time you will bring back with you a story of your experience. Embedded in the telling of this story are reflections of your strengths, challenges, blessings and vision for what is about to unfold in your life. Together we will listen to each story unfolding and clarifying the mysteries of your experiences and offering each other our own understanding of each story.

As you gather this input you will begin to construct your own personal hero or heroine's myth that will serve as a kind of guiding star for years to come.

The Give-Away Ceremony

Aho! Child of Earth!
Do you know the secret of the Give-Away?

For the more you release,
The more you receive,
For that is nature's way.

Aho! Child of Earth!
Do you believe in reaping what you sow?

A drop of wisdom,
Will bring the truth
And you will truly know.

A Give Away Ceremony will be done at the end of our time together. We will unfold a Give-Away blanket in the center of the circle. Each person will be invited to place an object that has special meaning for them. Then each one in the circle will be invited to receive an object from the blanket.

The Give Away originates in part from the concept that those who have been blessed will in turn share those blessing upon others. The purpose of the give- away is sharing. The lessons connected to this ceremony teach people how to release possessions and to let go of the ideas of importance connected with those belongings. The more prized the possession and the greater the sense of ownership, the more powerful the lesson.

Wealth is measured in many different ways by people across the planet. One important measure of wealth is a person's ability to assist others. Developed talents, and the willingness to use them to aid those in need, set a person apart from others who seek self-gratification. This type of individual is a symbol of a potential leader among his people. Selflessness is a sign that the giving individual is able to stand apart from the attachments of the physical world. The physical life of this person is usually well developed and carries the medicine of the ancestors.

Your gift ultimately symbolizes some aspect of yourself that you are inviting Spirit to strengthen in your life and bless you with three- fold.

Sacred Path Cards by Jamie Sams

Please bring with you one personal object that has a story of importance to you that you are willing to part with in the spirit of this ceremony.

Equipment Check List

- Tent
- Nylon ground cloth to go under tent
- Large Tarp (8X10) with metal grommets.
- Backpack
- Sleeping bag
- Foam or rubber pad (for sleeping on hard ground)
- Small clasp knife
- Matches (waterproof) or small lighter
- 2 One gallon plastic water containers.
- Boots (water tight construction)
- Toilet paper, a plastic spade, a few zip lock bags and other toiletries
- Two plastic garbage sacks
- Journal, pencil (not optional)
- Comfortable hiking shoes (maybe the same as your waterproof boots)
- Waterproof rain suite and poncho
- Warm weather clothing & cold weather clothing
- Bathing suit
- Biodegradable soap and shampoo
- Two towels (at least)
- Camp chair or cushion

Optional Items

- Rattle, hand held drum, or other musical instrument
- Camera, paints
- Sacred objects
- Sun hat and sun glasses
- Tooth brush, tampax
- Sun screen

Emergency Kit

- Emergency first aid procedure checklist (will be provided)
 - Bandana
 - Small candle
 - Matches or lighter
 - Small clasp knife
 - Small first aid camping kit
 - A few hard candies or tube of honey. (Quick energy for emergencies)
 - Whistle and compass
 - Small flashlight
 - Electrolyte replacement drink(Gatorade Powder)
 - Insect sting kit (required for persons with known allergic reactions)
- Get the suction type. called "The Extractor" if you can.

RELEASE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK

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In consideration of the services of The Rites Of Passage Council, their agents, owners, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf (herein collectively referred to as "The Council", I hereby agree to release and discharge The Council, on behalf of myself, my children, my parents, my spouse, my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that hiking, camping and fasting entail known and unanticipated risks which could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, property or to third parties. I understand that such risks simply cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.

The risks include, among other things: slipping and falling objects, collapse, temperature exposure (hypothermia, sunstroke, sunburn, heat exhaustion), dehydration, animals, insects, equipment failure, improper lifting or carrying, and drowning.

Furthermore, The Council guides have difficult jobs to perform. They seek safety, but they are not infallible. They might be ignorant of a participant's fitness or abilities. They might misjudge the weather, the elements, or the terrain. They may give inadequate warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction.

2. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.

3. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless The Council from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of The Council's equipment or facilities, including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of The Council.

4. Should The Council or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.

RELEASE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK
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5. I understand that should any member of The Council deem my behavior or thought processes to be unsafe to myself or other participants I may be discharged from the program. Refund will be prorated.

6. I understand that should I voluntarily decide to discharge myself from the program I forfeit all fees and costs incurred in my preparation and tuition of the program.

7. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I have no medical or physical conditions which could interfere with my safety in this activity, or else I am willing to assume -- and bear the responsibility and costs of all risks that may be created, directly or indirectly, by any such condition.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against The Rites Of Passage Council on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein.

I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by the terms of this document.

Signature of participant: _____

Print Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____

Phone: hm _____ wk _____ Date _____

Signature of witness _____ Date _____

Please return signed copy, thank you.

Confidential Health Questionnaire

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

Phone #'s: Day _____ Evening _____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____

- | | Yes | No |
|--|-----|-----|
| 1. Do you wear a Medic Alert Tag?..... | ___ | ___ |
| 2. Have you ever had a heart attack of any kind? | ___ | ___ |
| 3. Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have
high blood pressure, heart murmur, or heart disease?..... | ___ | ___ |
| 4. Do you experience anaphylactic shock form insect stings?..... | ___ | ___ |
| 5. Have you ever experienced a seizure of any kind?..... | ___ | ___ |
| 6. Do you have allergic reactions to any environmental
substances, foods or drugs? Specify _____ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. Do you have hemophilia? | ___ | ___ |
| 8. Have you ever had lung disease?..... | ___ | ___ |
| 9. Do you have any disabilities of back, hips, knees, ankles,
or other joints? Specify _____ | ___ | ___ |
| 10. If you walked on level ground for a mile at an average pace would you
get out of breath, have pains in the chest or legs or develop muscle fatigue..... | ___ | ___ |
| 11. Are you taking <u>any</u> medications or herbal supplements currently or within the past year?...
Specify <u>(on back)</u> _____ | ___ | ___ |
| 12. Do you have hypoglycemia or Diabetes? (Circle) | ___ | ___ |
| 13. Are there any reasons why you should not fast 3 days and nights or camp alone? | ___ | ___ |
| 14. If you are under the care of a physician would she/he disapprove
of your entering this activity?..... | ___ | ___ |
| 15. Any other medical information we should have? | ___ | ___ |

Your doctor's name and phone # _____

In case of emergency notify:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # Day _____ Evening _____