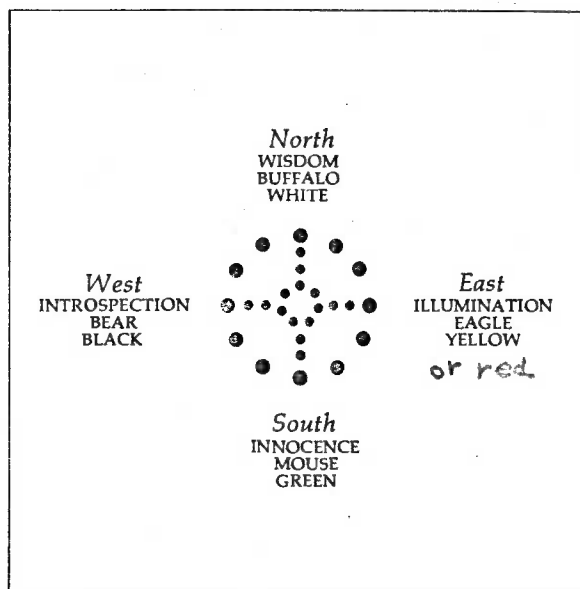


In his overwhelmingly beautiful book SEVEN ARROWS [Harper/72], Hyemeyohsts Storm, himself an Amerind, tells the stories of his people and shows how the stories exposit the Medicine Wheel, which is the shaman's pictograph of "the People" [i.e., the Plains Indians] in their Way of Life, which combines philosophy, psychology, sociology, and education with religion. Nowhere does he offer indices or tables of equivalents: to find out what animal you are, and what color, you must expose yourself to the stories! [Loree and I agree I'm Black Coyote--Black, because my beginning-place (read, "genes") is the West, the Looks-Within (i.e., introspective) Place; Coyote, because a gentle trickster bent on illumining people, situations, the world.] To become a Wise One, one must walk all 'round the circle, so as to see everybody and everything from everybody's perspective. Here're pp.6f:



*The Powers*

Among the People, a child's first Teaching is of the Four Great Powers of the Medicine Wheel.

To the North on the Medicine Wheel is found Wisdom. The Color of the Wisdom of the North is White, and its Medicine Animal is the Buffalo. The South is represented by the Sign of the Mouse, and its Medicine Color is Green. The South is the place of Innocence and Trust, and for perceiving closely our nature of heart. In the West is the Sign of the Bear. The West is the Looks-Within Place, which speaks of the Introspective nature of man. The Color of this Place is Black. The East is marked by the Sign of the Eagle. It is the Place of Illumination, where we can see things clearly far and wide. Its Color is the Gold of the Morning Star.

At birth, each of us is given a particular

Beginning Place within these Four Great Directions on the Medicine Wheel. This Starting Place gives us our first way of perceiving things, which will then be our easiest and most natural way throughout our lives.

But any person who perceives from only one of these Four Great Directions will remain just a partial man. For example, a man who possesses only the Gift of the North will be wise. But he will be a cold man, a man without feeling. And the man who lives only in the East will have the clear, far sighted vision of the Eagle, but he will never be close to things. This man will feel separated, high above life, and will never understand or believe that he can be touched by anything.

A man or woman who perceives only from the West will go over the same thought again and again in their mind, and will always be undecided. And if a person has only the Gift of the South, they will see everything with the eyes of a Mouse. They will be too close to the ground and too near sighted to see anything except whatever is right in front of them, touching their whiskers.

There are many people who have two or three of these Gifts, but these people still are not Whole. A man might be a Bear person from the East, or an Eagle person of the South. The first of these men would have the Gift of seeing Introspectively within Illumination, but he would lack the Gifts of Touching and Wisdom. The second would be able to see clearly and far, like the Eagle, within Trust and Innocence. But he would still not know of the things of the North, nor of the Looks-Within Place.

In this same way, a person might also be a Golden Bear of the North, or a Black Eagle of the South. But none of these people would yet be Whole. After each of us has learned of our Beginning Gift, our First Place on the Medicine

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Wheel, we then must Grow by Seeking Understanding in each of the Four Great Ways. Only in this way can we become Full, capable of Balance and Decision in what we do. *Seven Arrows* speaks of this Growing and Seeking.

### *The Touching*

To Touch and Feel is to Experience. Many people live out their entire lives without ever really Touching or being Touched by anything. These people live within a world of mind and imagination that may move them sometimes to joy, tears, happiness or sorrow. But these people never really Touch. They do not live and become one with life.

The Sun Dancer believes that each person is a unique Living Medicine Wheel, powerful beyond imagination, that has been limited and placed upon this earth to Touch, Experience and Learn. The Six Grandfathers Taught me that each man, woman, and child at one time was a Living Power that existed somewhere in time and space. These Powers were without form, but they were aware. They were alive. Each Power possessed boundless energy and beauty. These living Medicine Wheels were capable of nearly anything. They were beautiful and perfect in all ways except one. They had no understanding of limitation, no experience of substance. These Beings were total energy of the Mind, without Body or Heart. They were placed upon this earth that they might Learn the things of the Heart through Touching.

According to the Teachers, there is only one thing that all people possess equally. This is their loneliness. No two people on the face of this earth are alike in any one thing except for their loneliness. This is the cause of our Growing, but it is also the cause of our wars.

Love, hate, greed and generosity are all rooted within our loneliness, within our desire to be needed and loved.

The only way that we can overcome our loneliness is through Touching. It is only in this way that we can learn to be Total Beings. God is a presence of this Total. *Heamavihio*, the Breath of Wisdom, and *Miaheyyun*, Total Understanding, are but two of the words in the Cheyenne language which express this Wholeness.

### *Medicines*

This brings us back again to the Medicines. Each of us has as his personal Medicine a particular animal reflection. The characteristics of this reflection are determined by the nature of the animal itself, and also by the location of our individual Beginning Place on the Medicine Wheel. These two things, our Medicine Animal and our Beginning Place on the Medicine Wheel, together are the Beginning Gift to each of us from *Miaheyyun*.

For example, there are Eagle People, Elk People, Bear People, Wolf People, Pheasant People, Otter People, Buffalo People, Mice People, Rock People, Cloud People, and as many other kinds of People as there are kinds of living beings on this earth. And within each of these different kinds of People, there are the other differences of the Four Great Directions. Thus an Elk Person might be born a White Elk of the North, a Green Elk of the South, a Black Elk of the West, or a Yellow Elk of the East, depending upon the Direction of their Beginning Gift.

It would be impossible for me to tell you here of all the different Medicines, but I will speak to you of one of them, the Mouse. Mice live all their lives next to the ground, building their