

WALKING THE SACRED WHEEL A Year's Journey of Initiation

The East Gate: Way of the Visionary



**FROGS RETURN MOON
April 20 – May 20**

**Sacred Wisdom Circle Institute
Salt Lake City, Utah**

LESSON PLAN

Month Two:

WEEK 1: Continue doing the daily devotions you learned in the introductory lesson throughout this moon. This includes smudging, meditation, and daily journaling of your observations and experiences. Read “Week 1: Balancing the Earth and Sky,” which includes the sections titled “Stability,” “The Web of Power,” and “Walking to Be Still.” Do Exercises 1 and 2 along with your questions for the week. If you are studying for certification of any kind, remember to send your answers to the weekly questions, along with a copy of your journal, to the Institute via your private account. If you are not subscribed for a yearly program. Be sure to submit payment via Pay Pal for Planting Moon (May 21 – June 20).

WEEK 2: Read the material for Week 2, Establishing Right Relationship, and do Exercise 3. If you are seeking certification, be sure to send your answers to the weekly questions, along with your journal entries for the week, to the Institute via your private account. You can scan your journal entries and submit those via PDF.

WEEK 3: Read the material for Week 3, Nourishing Personal Clarity. Do Exercises 4, 5, and 6 and the weekly questions, and be sure to send your answers and your journal entries for the week to the Institute if you are seeking certification.

WEEK 4: Read the Week 4 material on the element of fire, and do Exercise 7 and answer the final questions for Frogs Return Moon. If you are seeking a course completion or teaching certification, be sure to mail your answers and your journal to the Sacred Wisdom Circle Institute. Also include any glossary words that you encountered during this module to the Institute so we can include them for future students.

East Gate: Way of the Visionary

FROGS RETURN MOON (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

Week 4: Balancing the Earth and Sky

Invocation Blessing Song

Behold Great Mystery, Creative Force, Spirit That Moves Through All! We call to the Seven Directions of the Sacred Wheel!

We turn to the Keepers of the East, direction of the new beginnings, of inspirations, of illumination and creativity, of the dawn and spring, new births and childhood. Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We call to the Keepers of the South, direction of vitality, of high noon and hot sun, of summer and vigorous growth, of youth and passion. Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We invite the Keepers of the West, direction of introspection, of the evening, of autumn and maturity, deepening and ripening. Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We respectfully summon the Keepers of the North, direction of the night, of winter, of wisdom and transformation, of dropping inessentials to reveal the core. Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We look up to the sky and call to the beings of the sun, the moon, the clouds, the stars, and the endless blue, and we ask that you bring your spaciousness and mystery to this work. Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We put our hands on the ground and ask that the great substance of the Earth give grounding to the work, and that the Earth's beauties give us beauty and that the entire world—the animals and plants and rocks, mountains and rivers and seas, the elemental forces of Earth and Air and Fire and Water, and all the human beings, all the elders, children, teachers, all the red, yellow, black, and white—join in this blessing. Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We call to the Sweet Mystery that is the Sacred Center! Hold us and cradle us in your divine protection! Be with us, teach us, show us your ways!

We claim this work to serve, to bless, and to share knowledge for wisdom building and for bringing wholeness to our hearts and to our world. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

(Note: The beginning prayer and final blessing of this lesson appear at the beginning and end of each lesson. These prayers mark the cycle of energy within that lesson and create a circle of connection.)

THE ELEMENT OF FIRE

In the Wisdom Tradition, the elements of the directions are believed to have their source in the Spirit World and are seen to be infused with powers beyond the physical realm. Each element can take many forms; that is, water can be solid (ice), liquid, or gaseous (clouds). Each form contains a different aspect of the element's energy, and each has a special store of wisdom that may be garnered by forming a relationship with it. For instance, by knowing the wind (i.e., having a relationship with it), people could tell if storms were approaching; they knew where food could be found by talking to the wind, and news of danger was carried to them on the wind.

Each element can be contacted and spoken with to discover what it knows, and this can often provide the support you want for your soul's growth. By communicating directly with the elements and thanking them with humility, your connection to spiritual realms grows because you are speaking to the primal forces of life. You learn that to tap into the tremendous powers of these elements, all that is needed is respect for them, a belief that you are able and worthy to contact them, and have the desire to do so. All of this is not so amazing when you consider that our bodies are primarily made up of the same materials as the elements. We are 80% to 90% water, we breathe in air and use it for most body processes, we are made of the same minerals that the Earth is made from, and we produce heat by using the "life force" in these minerals and elements (which is why we call it "burning" calories).

Communication with the elements teaches you how to become more fully integrated with the powers that surround you so that you become a co-operator with Nature, rather than being alien or victim to these forces. Adding elemental communication to your abilities can be of great service to all. Most people know of the phenomenal gardens at the Findhorn Community in Scotland. Before the Caddys and Dorothy McClean came to the area, the soil was known to be a very poor producer of vegetables; however, by learning to communicate respectfully with the elements of the place, and by honoring the Devas of the plant kingdom, they found helpers of the community could grow a single broccoli stalk that fed them all winter.

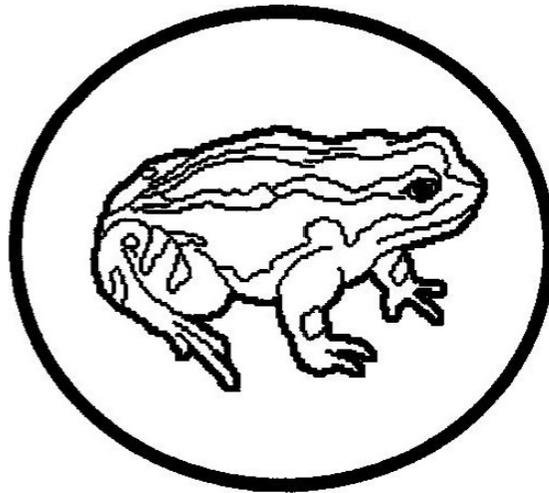
The element of fire in the East has a special significance for Wheel work because of its power and dynamic properties. When used ceremonially, smoke and heat from fire carry our intentions to the Spirit realms. This is the most basic significance behind the burning of incense, and it is central to Native American use of the Sacred Pipe. When the pipe is lit and shared, all present are united with the world of Spirit through the smoke and the prayers carried on it. When we smudge, we use the smoke to purify our objects, and we use the heat of saunas, steam baths, hot springs, and Sweat Lodges to purify our bodies.

Priests and initiates of some traditions choose to get into such an intimate relationship with fire that they can firewalk without injury. Although this sounds very dramatic, the process is very basic. To firewalk, you must know how to merge your Spirit with the Spirit of the fire. You learn how to draw your physical energy to areas of safety in your body, and you must ask your inner wisdom if, through the clarity of your intention and purity of will, you are ready to walk on fire without injury. Although these skills do need to be passed on to you, and they require guidance from an adept firekeeper, this can be done in less than a few hours. In our Inipi Ceremonies, we conclude the Ceremony with a firewalk.

During this last week of this month, we will ask you to form a deeper connection with the energies of fire. This is a month for clarity, cleansing, and right relationship to yourself and to the Web of Power. Spend this week processing your spiritual journey through this element: examine the fire of your marriage or relationships, and explore the fire of your passion for your work in the world. We invite you now to come to the warmth of deep relationship to your spiritual Self and be nourished by the element of fire.

We gratefully acknowledge the elders who have contributed to this work, especially Peter and Eileen Caddy and Dorothy McClean.

Sweet Mystery that is at the Sacred Center, and all Divine Energies, thank you for holding us and cradling us in your protection as we bring wholeness to our hearts and to our world! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! It is good.



STUDY GUIDE: FROGS RETURN MOON

Week 4: Exercise 7 Build and Tend a Fire

What you will need: Wood, kindling, matches, a place to build a fire outside, your journal and a pen, and about an hour “to burn”

For this exercise, go to a spot in nature where you can use a fire pit or build a fire directly on the ground. This can be private land or a public park, if burning is allowed. Occasionally, when winds are strong or the foliage is exceedingly dry, the Forest Service will post a “no burn” order; please be aware of this, and check to ensure burning is possible before you drive too far from home. If it is not possible to go a quiet place in nature, you could use a fireplace or chimney, or you could make this an opportunity to burn trash from your garden in your backyard (if that’s allowed; check with your local fire department). At a bare minimum, use an outdoor barbecue and small pieces of kindling to create your fire. If for some reason building a

fire outdoors is not an option, use your visioning to create this experience in the imaginal realm. Mentally see or sense the complete scene from beginning to end.

The wood you gather for your fire would preferably be at least 2 feet in length. Gather assorted sizes so that you can build the fire up gradually, and have enough extra wood beyond the amount needed to start the fire so that you can spend some time “feeding” wood to the fire. Give the fire and your stewardship of it your full, undivided attention.

Use the time you spend tending your fire to deepen your relationship with the element of fire in any way you are drawn to. Notice all you can about the fire and its process and notice your relationship to the process; that is, pay attention to whether you have difficulty getting a fire started, what it takes to get it started, and how you feel about that. What parallels do you notice between the fire’s life and your own? What qualities of the fire do you share, and in what way? If you can’t start the fire as easily as you imagined, what is lacking? Notice any emotions that may come up for you during this process.

It is important to be respectful of the land and the fire. Be sure to clean up the area after you have finished so that you leave it as you found it, and make sure the fire is completely out before you leave. If it’s windy out, you may want to dig a trench around the embers, or you may need to make a stone boundary to ensure the fire won’t start up again if leaves or branches blow across the hot coals.

When you have finished with this exercise, take a moment to thank the fire elemental for what you received, and journal about your observations and experience.



QUESTIONS FOR FROGS RETURN MOON: WEEK 4

1. In what gentle and creative ways do you find to use your infinite power?
2. What techniques, processes, and states of mind have you become familiar with since the start of this course?
3. Speak about your understanding of smudging and grounding and why they are important in ceremonial work.
4. Write about Mad Bears Anderson's idea of not being a receiver and how that applies to your life?
5. Are you aware of any areas of your life where you experience power loss or soul fragmentation?
6. How does the concept of "Right Relationship" apply to your Life?
7. According to the teachings of these lessons, how does "wisdom" arise?
8. What did you learn about yourself when tending your fire?
9. How is fire different than the other three elements? Why do you suppose the East Gate is associated with the element of fire?
10. Describe your own relationship with fire.
11. In what ways does fire depend on other elements for its "survival"?
12. What things would you have to learn to live without if there were no such thing as fire?
13. Relate the principals you learned about fire building to other relationships in your life.