



The Four Directions

We are told in legend from our elders that Kesi-Manitou (Great Spirit) created the two-legged from a drawing together of the four elements, earth, wind, water, and fire. The two-legged were the last to be created on our Mother Earth. Once created, Kesi-Manitou gave instructions to the first two-legged to follow the four roads laid out before him to learn about the world around him.

The roads were the Yellow road to the East, the Red road to the South, the Blue road to the West and the White road to North. The man was told to follow each road with careful steps and to make each step gentle and to always walk as though it was the first step on Mother Earth.

The first road the man followed was the Yellow road to the East and the rising sun. There on the Yellow road, the man came across Kohkom Apakosis, Grandmother Mouse. There, Grandmother Mouse taught the man how to sustain his body through all the teachings on hunting and gathering in the world around him. For just as the Mosum Pesim, the sun, gives us energy and life, all the things in our physical world sustain our physical bodies. Even though Kohkom Mouse was small, she was an expert at finding food and medicines.

As a gift to remember the teachings, Grandmother Mouse gifted the man tobacco (it was willow fungus in the North) to burn in his pipe to connect him to Kesi-Manitou and to carry his words to Him.

After learning all the teachings from Kohkom Mouse, the man began to follow the Red road to the South. At the end of the Red road, the man found Mosum PaskwowMostos, Grandfather Buffalo. Mosum PaskwowMostos was old, wise, and carried knowledge of many things in the world around Him. Teachings about the stars, the waters, the legends, the weather, all the knowledge that would grant wisdom to whoever would listen to learn the teachings.

After learning all he could from Mosum PaskwowMostos, the man was gifted Cedar branches and was told to use it to cleanse his mind, his thoughts, and to rid himself of any darkness or doubts around him. He was taught to use it to cleanse the physical world around him so that knowledge and wisdom could flow freely.

The man then began to walk carefully down the Blue road to the West. At the end of the Blue road, the man was greeted by Mosum Muskwa, Grandfather Bear. Mosum Muskwa was adorned in wonderful regalia and was dancing the steps of the Powwow.

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Mosum Muskwa taught the man all the dances and how to tell the legends taught to him through dance. Mosum Maskwa also taught him how to make regalia and carvings to honour all the spirits in the world around him. After he taught all that he could, Mosum Maskwa gifted the man with Sweetgrass. He taught the man to use the Sweetgrass to cleanse his spirit and to connect him to the spirits around him and, though lighting the Sweetgrass, to talk to the spirits around him.

Once the man had learned all he could from Mosum Muskwa, he began to follow the White road. At the end of the White road to the North, there the man found Mosum Kihew, Grandfather Eagle. Mosum Eagle was very solemn and serious, for he carried with him all the teachings of ceremonies.

The man was taught of the lodge, the Sundance, the pipe ceremony and all the ceremonies that were gifted to those on Mother Earth to maintain the balance between good and bad. The man was taught that in order to keep that balance, he must attend ceremony to tie all the teachings together as one for all time.

Mosum Kihew then gifted the man Sage to use in ceremony and to bind all the four sacred plants to represent the balance of the mind, the body, the spirit, and the world around us.

After all these teachings were gifted to the man, he was instructed to pass on the teachings freely to all that would listen so that the teachings would remain strong throughout generations. This is the story and the promise that was made by our ancestors for a thousand generations and gifted to us to carry on for a thousand more generations.

Ekosi Maka