

# The Lakota Sioux

## Medicine Wheel

**Guide to Leadership Development**



*Presented by*

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# Balance & Harmony is the key to life.

For all *good* there is *bad*.

Nature and Humans are related.  
Many aspects of nature are used to describe  
human attributes.

Use the *Medicine Wheel* as a resource to  
better understand others and yourself.

*To assist in managing group dynamics.*  
*To find balance in your life,*  
*both personal and professional.*

## There are 4 primary characteristics on the *Medicine Wheel*.

Most people are a mix of several characteristics,  
but identify primarily with one.

**Each characteristic is related to  
a direction:**

*North, South, East or West*

**a season:**

*Summer, Winter, Fall or Spring.*

**and an animal:**

*Buffalo, Bear, Eagle or Mouse.*





## North Buffalo



*Associations:* warrior, winter, white, now, body, freedom, personal power, purity  
*Characteristics:* decisive, assertive, brave, initiator, persuasive, puts ideas into actions, perseveres, implements  
*Favorite saying:* "Let's get it done"  
*In excess:* perfectionism, pushy, taskmasters, ignore feelings, can't/won't delegate

## West East Bear Eagle



*Associations:* sunset, autumn, past, spirit, traditions, reflection, insight, solitude  
*Characteristics:* evaluates merit of ideas, good editor, loves theory, analytical, wise, introspective,  
*Favorite saying:* "I think..."

*In excess:* indecisive, judges self and others, dogmatic, drowns in fact & detail, overly cautious, stubborn



*Associations:* explorer, spring, yellow, future, sunrise, knowledge, birth  
*Characteristics:* gathers new info, curious, takes risks, energetic, charismatic, brainstorm, likes innovations, visionary, youthful mind  
*Favorite saying:* "Let's try it"

*In excess:* impulsivity, interrupts, takes on too much, easily bored, poor with details, scattered with follow-up

## South Mouse

*Associations:* artist, summer, red, now, present, introspective, family, growth.  
*Characteristics:* receptive, innocent, empathic, hard-working, bighearted, nurturing, positive, resourceful, deep thinker, patient, non-judgmental, intuitive, empathic.  
*Favorite saying:* "I feel..."  
*In excess:* can't say "no", ruled by emotions, bad with time management, gullible, poor with anger, gives self away



○ *Consider the characteristics of each leadership style.* ○

**You may identify with more than one style,**  
but choose the one whose characteristics best match you

Think about your **strengths**, *challenges*, and which style is  
most difficult for you to work with and why.

Then consider *how you would like others to work with you.*  
Discuss these thoughts with other individuals who share your  
leadership style and see if they agree.

Share with co-workers and family members to gain a better  
understanding of each other.

*Every Style is different* but when you connect individuals to their  
Lakota Leadership Style you can effectively use what you've  
learned to work more effectively with others.

## Here are some tips on how to connect with each style

### Buffalo

1. Present the case quickly, clearly, and with confidence
2. Show them how they will be involved
3. Communicate the challenge of the task
4. Recognize their leadership role
5. Give them public recognition
6. Use them in tasks requiring motivation

### Eagle

1. Show appreciation for their ideas
2. Listen and be patient during idea generation
- 3 Support divergent thinking
4. Accept variety in tasks
5. Give them deadlines and follow up to encourage project completion and implementation

### Bear

1. Allow time for decision-making
2. Provide data, facts, and figures
3. Do not get put off by "No"
4. Minimize the emotional expressions you use
5. Appeal to tradition, sense of history, and correct procedures

### Mouse

1. Be aware that they can't say no
2. Allow time for them to develop cohesion within the group
3. Listen and allow them time to express ideas
4. Provide positive reassurance

*Use this information in your daily life.*

**Identify the Lakota Sioux leadership styles in others and apply what you've learned to work with them.**

**Consider how you act and react with others and how you might change your behavior to become a stronger leader and team member.**

*“Mitakuye Oyasin” is Lakota for*  
**“We are all related”**

*Keep this in mind as you interact with others and remember to treat everyone as you would like to be treated – with respect and understanding.*

