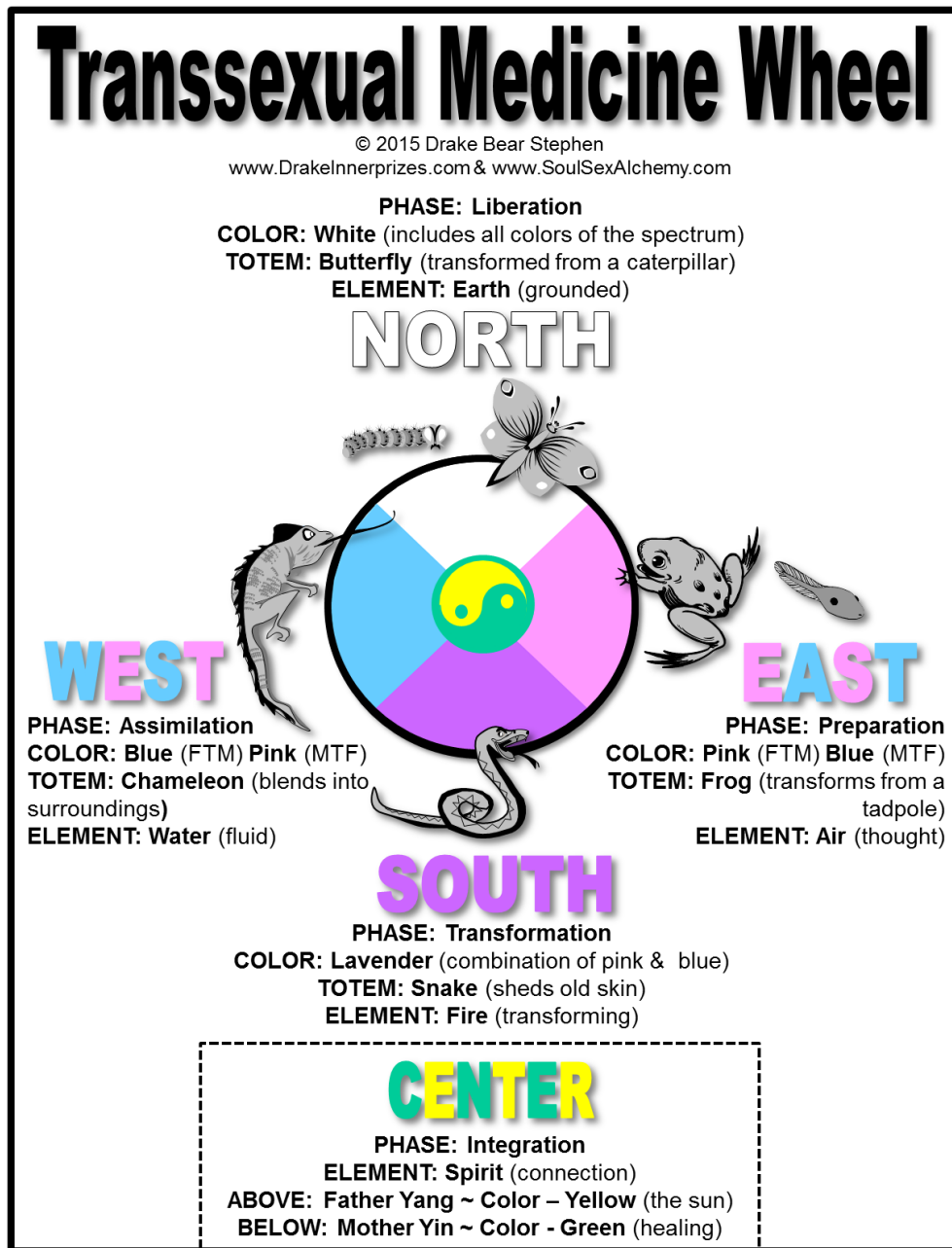


SOUL SEX: Transsexual Medicine Wheel

Excerpt from *Soul Sex: The Alchemy of Gender and Sexuality*

by Drake Bear Stephen BA, CHT

www.SoulSexAlchemy.com



TRANSSEXUAL MEDICINE WHEEL

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Most gender and sexuality models are linear. An alternative form, based on a circular model, is the Transsexual Medicine Wheel. The concept of the medicine wheel originated with the North American indigenous tribes who also called it a medicine hoop. Medicine wheels were used for healing, spiritual rituals, prayer, meditation, visual reminders of higher principles, and physical connection points to the Spirit World. The medicine wheel is also used as a cosmological model of the four directions. It represents the concept that all things are interrelated. As a round wheel it is the circle of life reminding us that everything in the universe cycles through phases and returns to begin again. Traveling the circumference of the medicine wheel is a journey of self-empowerment.

The Transsexual Medicine Wheel represents the transition of a transsexual individual to the life and body of desire. Each direction on the wheel has an archetypal animal that represents the qualities associated with that point in space and time. There are many animals that represent survival and transformation and can be great symbols for individuals with non-conforming identities such as:

- The crab, turtle, and lobster that have hard shells of protection but a soft inner being.
- The chameleon that can change its appearance to adjust to its surroundings.
- The snake that sheds its skin when it no longer fits.
- The caterpillar/butterfly and the tadpole/frog that transform as they develop.
- The coyote who is the traditional trickster and shapeshifter.
- The phoenix that perpetually rises out of the ashes of destruction.

EAST

On the Transsexual Medicine Wheel, illustrated above, the journey begins in the East direction. Here is the place of Preparation. The element Air represents the thought process that has led to the beginning of the transformation. The totem is the Frog, which is an animal that knows the process of transformation, having begun life as a tadpole. The color is pink for female-to-male transsexuals and blue for male-to-female transsexuals, representing the traditional colors of female and male for the Old Self that began with a birth assigned gender.

SOUTH

In the South, the Transformation begins with realization that the past no longer serves. It is released as a new way of viewing the world is acquired. The element Fire represents the birth of the new self through combustion and passion. The totem is the Snake, which is an animal that knows how to shed its skin when it no longer serves it. The color lavender represents a blend of masculine blue and feminine pink.

WEST

Moving to the West, the Assimilation phase begins. This is a process of adaptation of the new self into the world. The element of Water represents the fluidness required to connect and interact with the world. The totem is the Chameleon, which can change its appearance an adjustment to environmental conditions. The color is blue for female-to-male transsexuals and

pink for male-to-female transsexuals, representing the traditional colors of male and female for the new self in the gender of choice.

NORTH

Moving to the North, finally Liberation is felt as jubilation. Having successfully manifested a new life is a source of joy and empowerment. The element of Earth represents the feeling of being completely grounded by growing roots into a place of belonging. The totem is Butterfly, which is a symbol of transformation itself. It begins life in one form as a caterpillar, spends transformation time in a cocoon, and then emerges as a beautiful butterfly. The color, white, is a composite of all colors in the spectrum.

CENTER

The final direction is the Center. It is the place of integration. The self is now in right relationship to itself in the Inner World and itself in the Outer World. The self has learned to go with the flow and be in balance. The element of Spirit represents the connection to the Below, who is Mother Yin and to the Above, who is Father Yang. The color for Father Yang is yellow, representing the sun. The color for Mother Yin is green, representing the healing energy of the earth. After the journey around the wheel, home will always be in the Center. Periodically, when it is necessary, a journey to any of the directions may be required to recalibrate, but a rapid return to the Center will always follow.