**Council Fire Opening Ceremony #3**

**The Four Winds/Directions-version 3**

**Overview:** Council Fire Openings set the stage for a great and memorable council fire for your program. It is written to be used at the beginning of a Longhouse council fire gathering. Featured here again is an ode to the 4 Winds or the 4 Directions. ***This ceremony only encompasses the 4-Directions portion after the main council fire has been lit.*** Although the physical setup is somewhat complex, it is especially striking when performed at Longhouse ceremonies.

The central fire is a heavy & large log-cabin style with 4 smaller fires built in teepee style, laid at each direction. Make the smaller fires from split kindling that has been allowed to soak with starter fluid or about 15 minutes. As a substitution for teepee fires, candles or can torches on the ground can be used. Candles will likely need some form of protection to keep from blowing out in the outdoors.

A special torch is needed to light each of the 4 smaller fires. This torch can be specially decorated for effect.

**Participants:**

* Chief
* Medicine Man, Sachem or Elder
* Others as desired

**Relevant Ceremonial Pieces:** You may wish to incorporate this ceremony with other ceremonial components to form your full ceremony. The following are basic suggestions. Your creativity is your limit.

* Parade to Ceremonial Location
* Inductions
* Officer Inductions
* Special Awards
* Ceremonial Closing

**OPENING CEREMONY**

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|  | *(The method in which the main fire is to be lit is pre-determined. It can either be lit by “magic” means or by the Torchbearer igniting it.)* |
|  | *(Council Fire is lit.)* |
| Chief / ALL | *(Chief shouts the Longhouse salutation, then all repeat/shout in approval)* |
| Chief | Wakanda, the Great Spirit is pleased and smiles upon his children. As you see, there are 4 smaller symbolic fires around our council fire. As the Great Central Fire reaches out to the corners of the earth, so at our sacred council fire, we must now light our 4 symbolic fires, one for each direction… |
| Medicine Man | *(Carries a pouch containing either sand, corn meal or flour.* ***In silence****, walking to the South fire, he takes sand from the pouch and reaching as high as he can and lets it filter to the ground. He then does the same for the West, North and East fires. He then walks a path around the outside of all 4 direction fires…)* |
| Medicine Man | May the place wherein I dwell be blessed, may good thoughts possess me, may my path of life be straight and true, above, below and about me. May the life I love be hallowed.*(Casting a handful of sand into the central fire…)*May the road of light lead good friends to me |
| Chief | *(Lights the special torch from the central fire and carries it to the South fire)* |
| Chief | From this Great Central Fire, we light this South fire, the Lamp of Beauty. *(PAUSE)* |
|  | *(Walks to the West fire)* |
|  | From this Great Central Fire, we light this West fire, the Lamp of Truth *(PAUSE)* |
|  | *(Walks to the North fire)* |
|  | From this Great Central Fire, we light the North fire, the Lamp of Fortitude. *(PAUSE)*  |
|  | *(Walks to the East fire)* |
|  | From this Great Central Fire, we light this East fire, the Lamp of Love. *(PAUSE)* |
|  | *(Tosses torch into the Great Central Fire.)* |
| Medicine Man | *(Once again, approaches the central fire and casts a handful of sand above the fire and says…)* |
|  | May this fire, the symbol of All Above, be the home fire of our children and our children’s children. May the Four Winds carry off our troubles, even as they do this sacred meal. |

Adapted from: Ernest Thompson Seton’s Birch Bark Roll