**Council Fire Opening Ceremony #5**

**Peace Pipe Offering to Mother Earth, Wakan Tanka & the Four Directions**

**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 is the use of the Peace Pipe to call upon Wakan Tanka (The Great Mystery), along with the Spirits of the 4 Directions and Mother Earth to give thanks for all that is good.

There is only one central fire used here, although with the 4 Directions also being called upon, for greater effect, a ceremonial ground torch, stake torch or small fire could be used could be used to represent each of the 4 Directions.

A ceremonial Peace Pipe is necessary. It can be lit (smoked) or unlit depending on preference. If unlit, the Chief will pretend to puff smoke and send it skyward.

**Participants:**

* Chief: Ceremonial Leader
* Medicine Man, Sachem or Great Elder
* Additional 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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| Scene | *(Council Fire is unlit. The method in which the main fire is to be lit is pre-determined and will happen magically when summoned by the Medicine Man extolls the fire to appear...)* |
| Medicine Man | I know not if the voice of man can reach the sky, I know not if the Mighty One will hear us pray; I know not if the gifts I ask will be granted, I know not if the word of old has been received; I know not what will come to pass in the days to be, I hope that only good will come, my children, unto you. |
|  | *(Fire magically comes to life) (PAUSE for several moments)* |
| Medicine Man | *(With hands raised to the sky)*  Now I know that the voice of man can reach unto the heavens, now I know that the Mighty one, our Great Spirit has heard me when I prayed; now I know that the word of old has been heard. Now I know that Tirawa Atius… Heaven, our Father hears man’s prayers. I know that good, and good alone has come, my children unto you. |
| Chief/ALL | *(Shouts the Longhouse salutation and ALL return the shout)* |
| Chief | *(Moves forward with [lit or unlit] Peace Pipe in hand. He may choose to light it from the council fire. He performs this pipe ceremony)* |
| Chief | *(Will walk clockwise around the council fire, stopping at each direction point of the fire, take a puff of smoke and point the pipe stem outward in that direction)*  **(NORTH)** To you, **Wazi-Yata**, who dwells in whence comes the cold. Send us the cold winds and let the tribe live.  **(EAST)**, To you, **Wiyo Hinyanpata**, who dwells where the sun continually returns, send us good days and let the tribe live.  **(SOUTH)**, To you, **Ito Kagata**, who dwells in the direction we face with outstretched arms, may the sun shine out in full to us and let the tribe live.  **(WEST)**, To you, **Wiyo Peyata**, who dwells where the sun falls, help us with the strength of the thunder. |
| Chief | (Blowing a puff of smoke and pointing the pipe stem toward the earth)  I offer this to Maka-kin, our Mother Earth, whence comes all good gifts. |
| Chief | (Blowing a puff of smoke upward and pointing the stem of the pipe skyward)  I offer this to Wakan Tanka, Great Spirit, for all the good that comes from above. |
| Chief | Our gathering for this Council is now complete. We have gathered the spirit of our ancestors who came before us and we have summoned the Four Winds. We thank you, Great Spirit, for each new day that we are allowed to live upon our Mother Earth. The Great Spirit has blessed us with a strong and mighty Longhouse that has gathered here, our lamps have lit the way. Let us now begin this council. |
|  | **CONTINUE WITH CERMONY** |

Medicine Man portion adapted from a Pawnee ceremony called the Hako

Pipe Ceremony adapted from Native American tradition