

INTRODUCTION OF THE RED RIVER FORKS TOOL

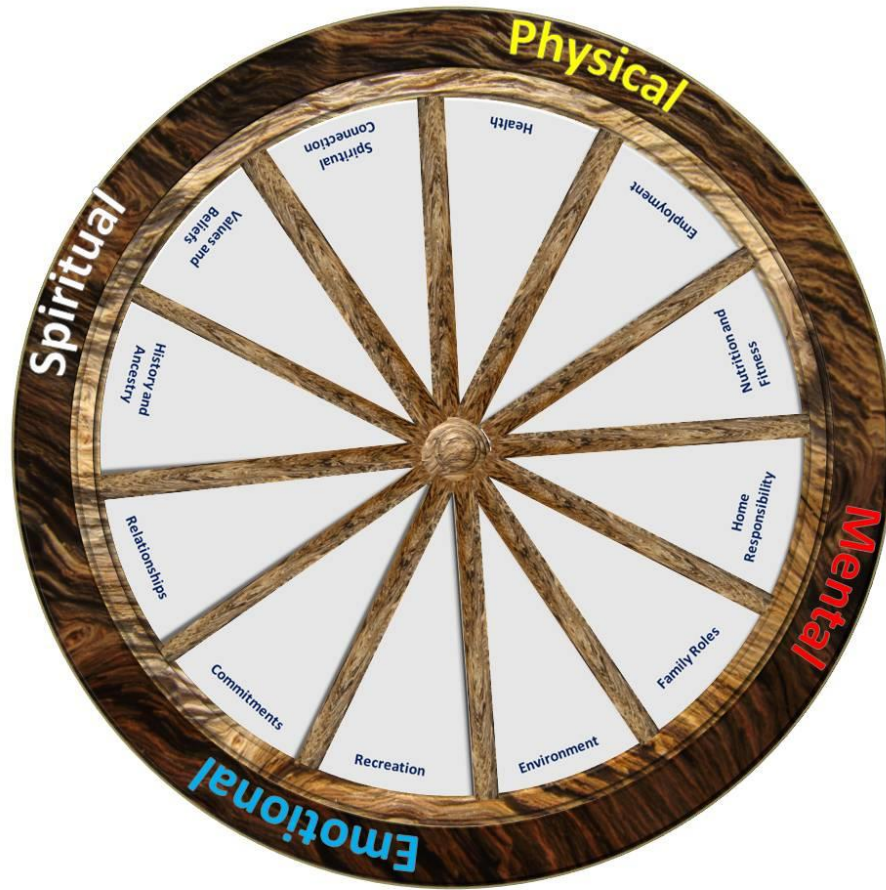


By the very nature of the beginnings for Métis people we receive different messages from our mother and father. One being of Aboriginal impacts and the other of Caucasian, as well to further enhance or complicate matters, in 2011 our family roots have mixed, mingled, gone in many directions but in the end we are still Métis people.

It is with this background in mind that the tool Red River Forks has been created, to offer users an opportunity to reflect on what lessons their parents provided them and even more importantly what was actually learned. Ideally children are born into and raised in kind, loving and stable homes and those children in turn become kind, compassionate people who impact the world in positive ways. The reality is that most often, despite the best intentions in the world, children are given or understand a mixture of positive and negative messages, depending upon the patterns of the parents, extended families, communities and our society at large.

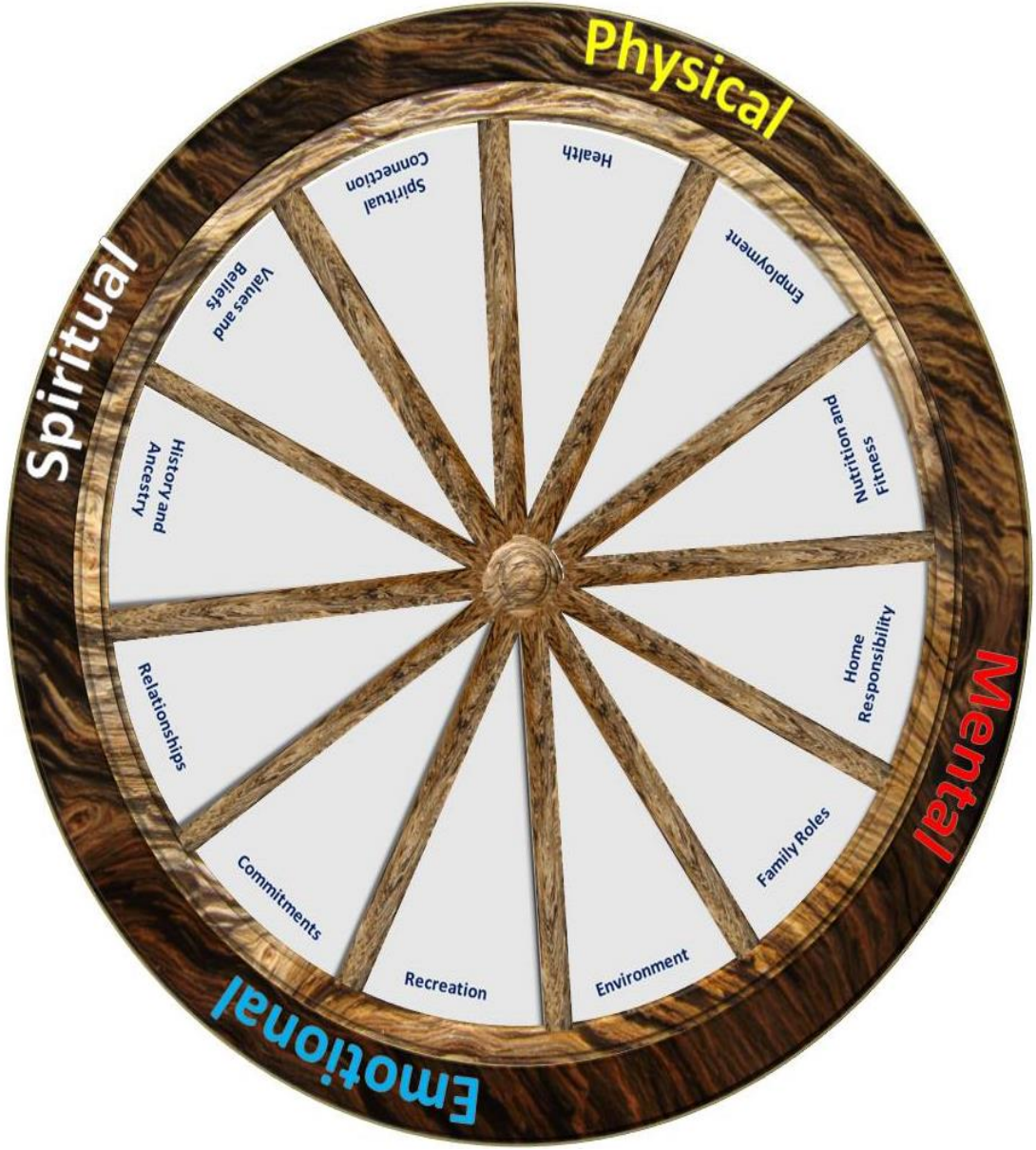
Each of us, do the best we can with the knowledge and resources we have been given. This is true whether we are law-abiding or law-breaking, male or female, employed or unemployed, educated, skilled or with little training. Individuals set out to accomplish something with a positive outcome in mind, it is in the doing that sometimes negative or ineffective coping skills alter the end result. When we start to view our lifestyle objectively, if we haven't been too negatively impacted, we can move towards a balanced, healthier life.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING RED RIVER FORKS

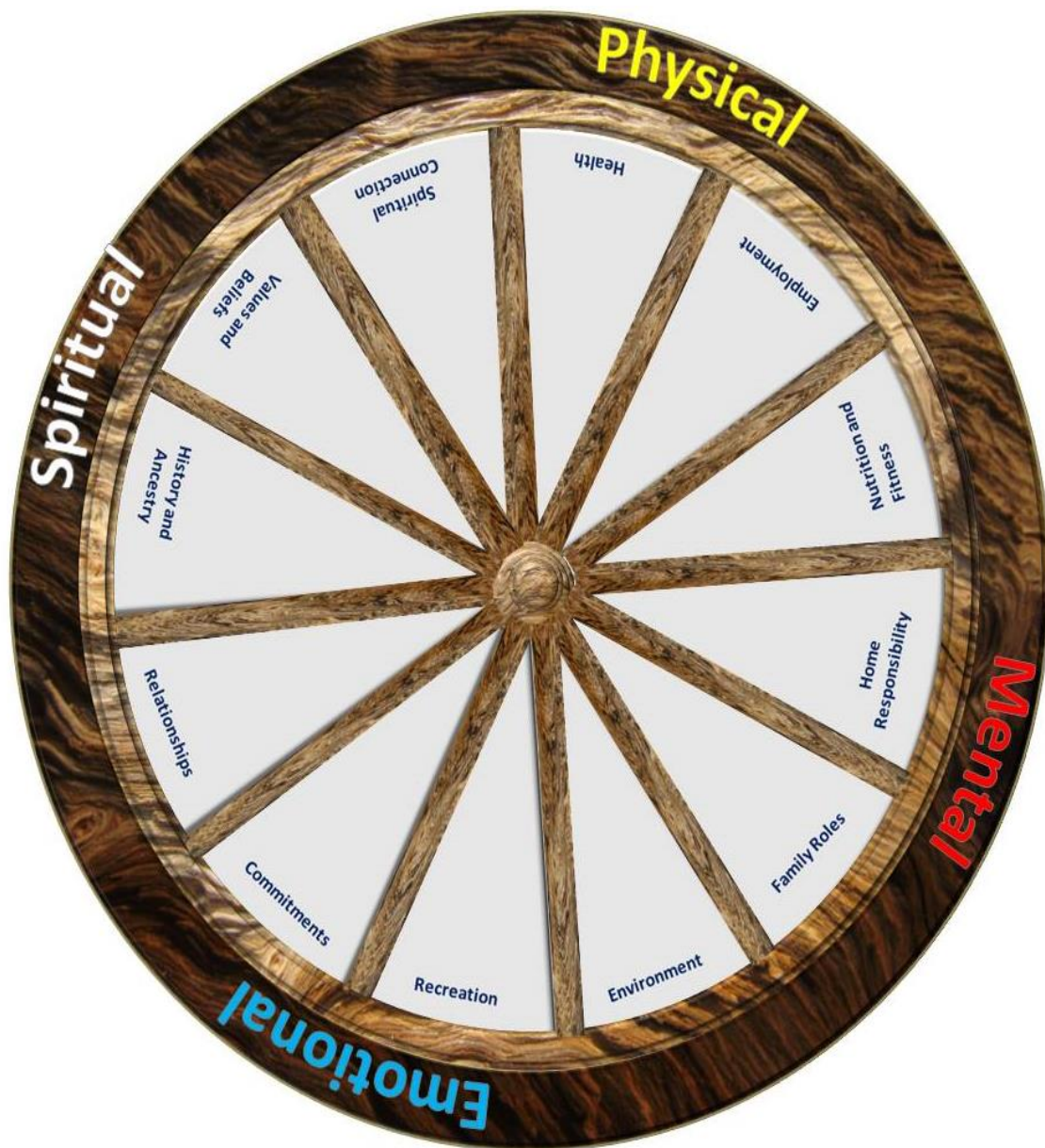


Each wheel of the cart represents one of your parental figure, in some cases this will be parents, in others it may be foster, step or adoptive parents, grandparents or aunt/uncle who raised you. In completing the Red River Forks resource, we look at what we learned from our (parents) caregivers culture, that affects us especially when we don't think about it or are unaware of it. Sometimes we recognize that how a person is looked at by the community is different than how they are viewed at home, so it may be helpful to show or consider that inconsistency.

Each segment of the wheels, (found on the following page) indicates an important attribute or aspect of life, which contributes to who you are. There are two wheels, one will represent your father (or father figure) and one will represent your mother (or mother figure). On the wheel representing a father: Draw a picture that illustrates what you understand from your father and how he lived, from his perspective or culture, (what you learned about/from him) regarding that attribute. Work your way all around the wheel. Some may want to use a picture they find in a magazine to paste in a segment and that works well too. On the wheel representing your mother, do the same things as you work around the wheel for her culture/ Teachings.



Father



Mother

The cart represents what you carry from your parents, extended family, community or society. Visualize four sections in the cart: In the first section draw a symbol which best represents you. In the second draw a symbol that represents the event/person/lesson which has provided the most important impact or life lesson for you. In the third draw a symbol which represents an event/person/lesson which has created resiliency or strength in you. In the last section draw a symbol that illustrates the heaviest burden or concern that you carry.

Between the poles of the cart draw a symbol of what you most want to strive for in your future.



Cart

For your consideration:

What surprises did you find as you considered the many attributes of your parents? What surprised you most as you considered your self? What baggage can you remove from your cart and replace with more effective, kinder beliefs regarding yourself and your life?