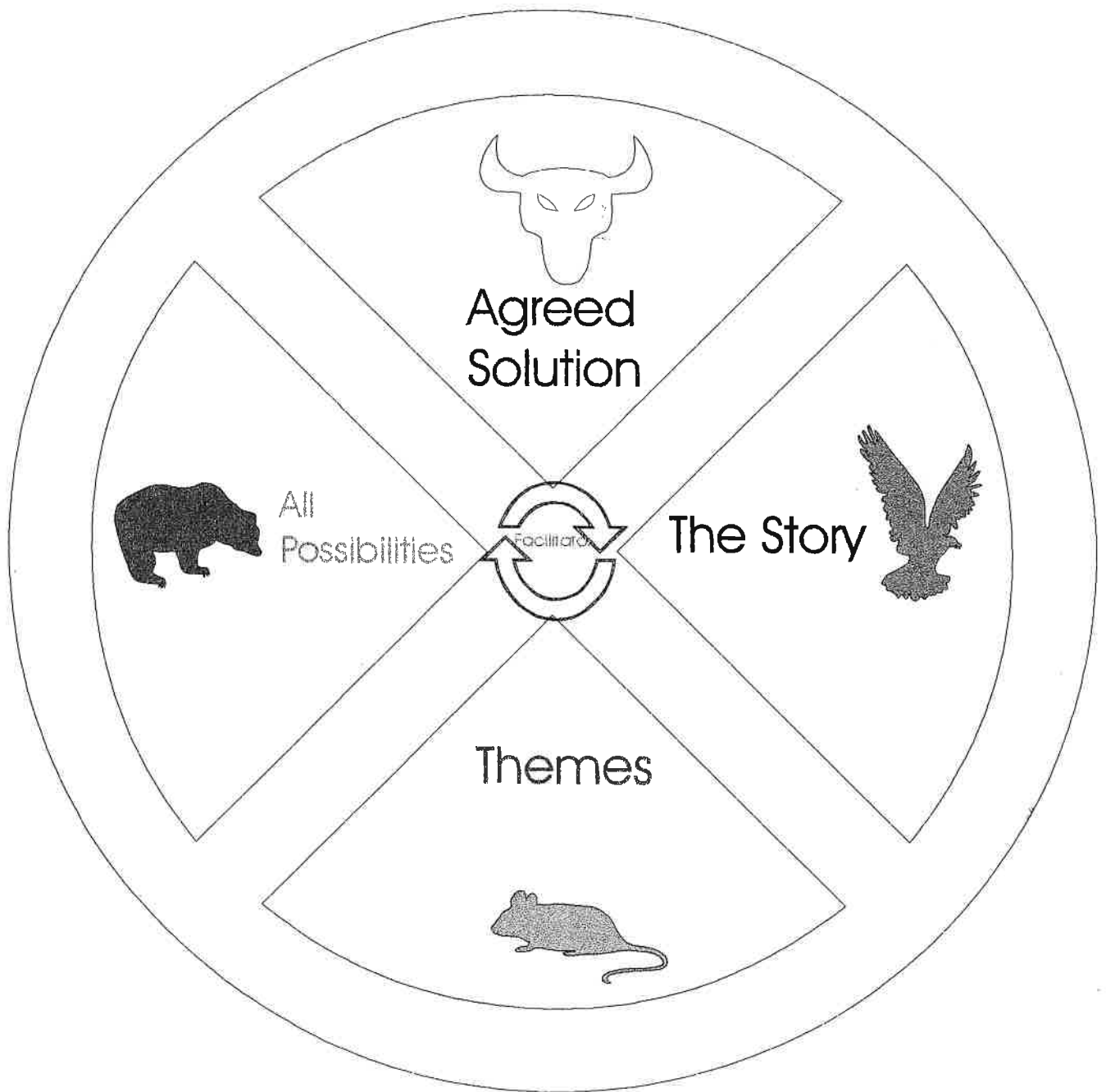


Pey Wapun



Aboriginal Conflict Resolution

PEY WAPUN - ABORIGINAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Ongoing conflict is a circular process wherein two or more people engage in a process of behavior that is self-perpetuating. For example: She nags so he withdraws, he withdraws because she nags, she nags because he withdraws, this is a circular process. The circularity of conflict suggests a circular solution.

Aboriginal people have long viewed the universe and that which exists within it as being a circular pattern. The circle is found in the seasons of the year (fall, winter, spring, summer) repeating themselves in a circular manner; the stages of life (early life, youth, adulthood, old age); the four parts of one's being (mental, spiritual, emotional and physical). All of the components of nature fit into the circle. The circle represents wholeness and the inter-relationship between everything within the universe. This wholeness is an underlying principle of aboriginal culture.

Pey Wapun is developed from cultural norms, values and beliefs; it is NOT mediation adapted to culture but rather a cultural perspective and set of values adapted to the resolution of conflict. Mediation assumes neutrality and the absence of connection to the people in conflict prior to the initial mediation session, Pey Wapun asserts the necessity of a deep understanding of both parties gained through prior contact and balanced by the facilitator.

GOAL

It is the objective of conflict resolution to bring peaceful settlement to the circular process of conflict by using a circular process of conflict resolution. Through this process the participants learn the life skill necessary to re-use the process in an ongoing spiral manner, thus when the facilitator is removed from the circle, the solving circle continues without the facilitator.

Again, because this is a circular process, the ending of a conflict around one particular issue impinges upon the story in the western quadrant. That is to say the story changes, it develops into something different. As each issue is resolved through the circular process the story changes until the point where all of the initial issues have been resolved.

The point at which the facilitator is able to remove her/himself from the circle occurs when agreement has been reached around the themes expressed initially or when the parties involved have developed the Pey Wapun skills and are able to continue. As the facilitator readies to remove themselves from the circle the agreements reached to date can be more formally expressed in a way which is suitable to all involved (ie: tape recorded agreement, video tape, written, exchange of gifts or gesture).

NOTES

“Peywapun” Aboriginal Conflict Resolution Model

