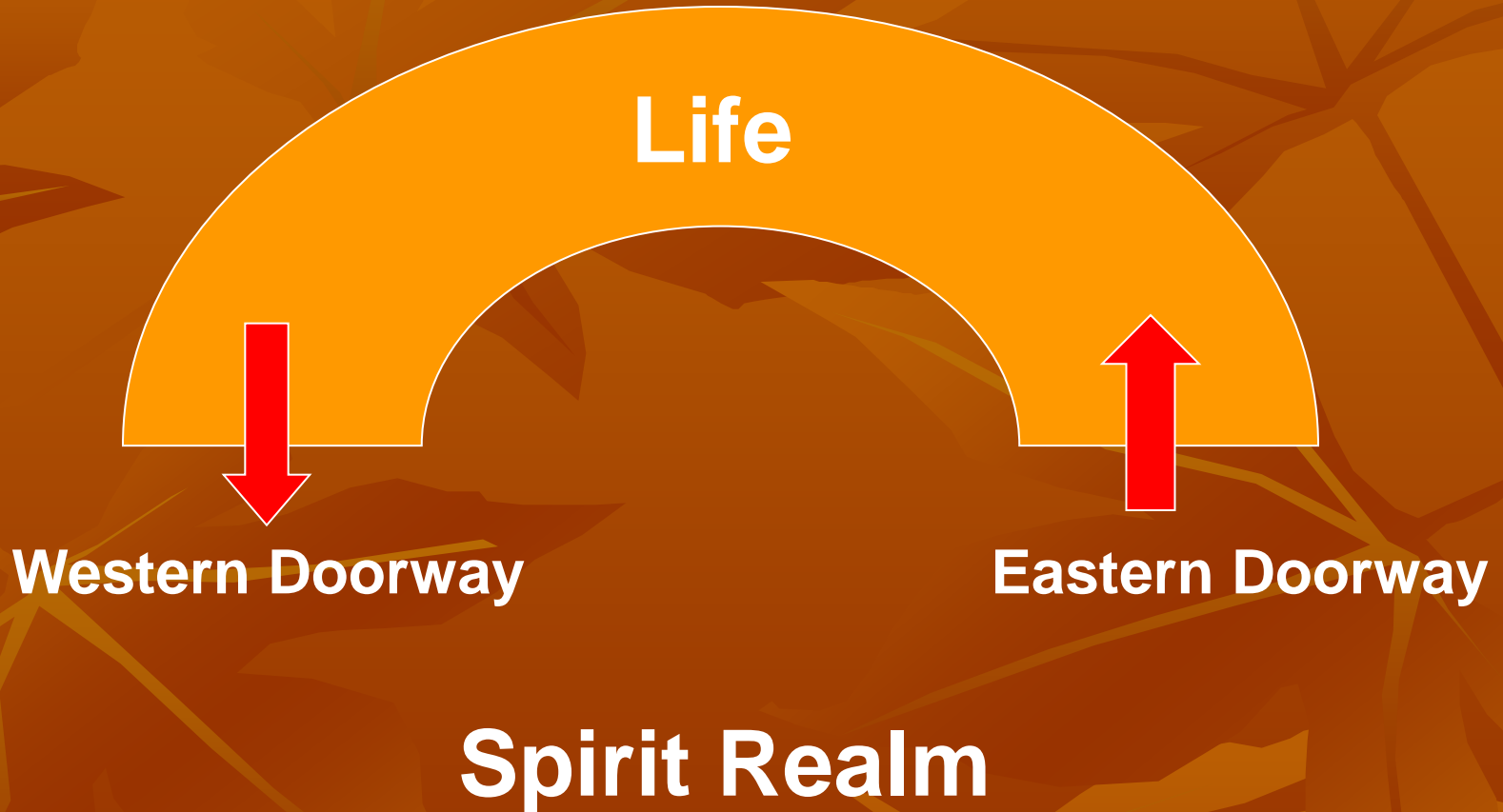


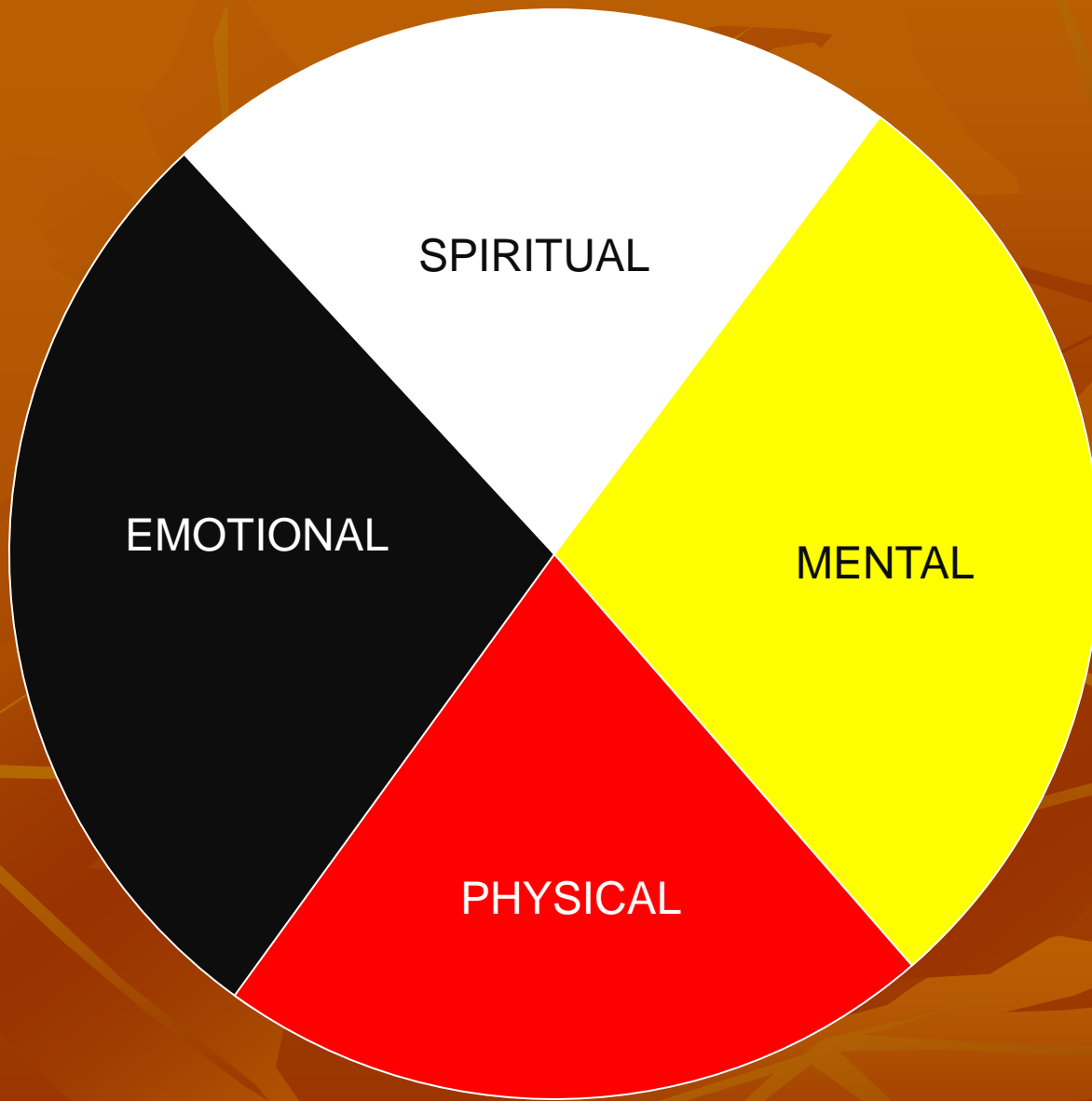


# An Aboriginal Perspective on Health and Wellness

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# Aboriginal View of Life





# Historical Trauma

- Aboriginal people in Canada today have survived a phenomenal period of history
  - Couldn't vote until 1960
  - Status was removed from Indian women if they married a non-Indian
  - Aboriginal veterans were denied benefits
  - Residential School System
  - 60's Scoop
  - Prohibited from attending post secondary education

# Growing Up Indian

- Infant mortality rates as high as 10 times the national average
- 3% of the population, 40-50% incarcerated
- Unemployment rates as high as 90%
- Suicides rates 5-6 times national average
- 8 out of 10 Aboriginal women suffered family violence
- 1988 – 22% of homicide suspects and 18% of victims
- Addiction
- Poverty

# Today's Reality

- Poverty
- Isolation
- Disengaged from the community
- Chronic diseases
- Technologically challenged
- Political interest/disinterest
- New Aboriginal “middle class”

# Aboriginal Health

- Chronic Disease
  - Cardiovascular
  - Hypertension
  - Diabetes
  - Obesity
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Social Factors
  - Violence
  - Suicide
  - Injury
  - Substance abuse

# Aboriginal Health

- Overall Considerations
  - “White Death”
    - Flour
    - Sugar
    - Lard, etc
  - Removal of Ceremony
    - As trauma increased, traditional methods of coping were removed
  - Control
    - With no way to control their lives, Aboriginal people learned to survive without
  - Choice
    - When control is removed, people start to lose the ability to make choices, especially healthy choices, in order to address their wellbeing

# Aboriginal Health

## ■ Today's Reality

- History leaves us unsuited to participate in our own health
- History of mistrust with mainstream service providers
- Resignation or expectation of ill health
  - I'm going to get diabetes

# What Can We Do?

- Understand that “sameness” does not mean equity
  - Your reality is not everyone’s reality
- Spirituality can be an integral part of healing
- Culture is not just spirituality
- Partnerships are essential

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