



LEGEND OF THE DREAM CATCHER



Long ago when the world was young, an old Lakota spiritual leader was on a high mountain and had a vision.

In his vision, Iktomi, the great trickster and teacher of wisdom, appeared in the form of a spider.

Iktomi spoke to him in a sacred language that only the spiritual leaders of the Lakota could understand.

As he spoke Iktomi, the spider, took the elder's willow hoop which had feathers, horse hair, beads and offerings on it and began to spin a web.

He spoke to the elder about the cycles of life...and how we begin our lives as infants and we move on to childhood, and then to adulthood. Finally, we go to old age where we must be taken care of as infants, completing the cycle.

"But," Iktomi said as he continued to spin his web, "in each time of life there are many forces -- some good and some bad. If you listen to the good forces, they will steer you in the right direction. But if you listen to the bad forces, they will hurt you and steer you in the wrong direction."

He continued, "There are many forces and different directions that can help or interfere with the harmony of nature, and also with the great spirit and all of his wonderful teachings."

All the while the spider spoke, he continued to weave his web starting from the outside and working towards the center.

When Iktomi finished speaking, he gave the Lakota elder the web and said..."See, the web is a perfect circle but there is a hole in the center of the circle."

He said, "Use the web to help yourself and your people to reach your goals and make good use of your people's ideas, dreams and visions.

"If you believe in the great spirit, the web will catch your good ideas -- and the bad ones will go through the hole."

The Lakota elder passed on his vision to his people and now the Sioux Indians use the dream catcher as the web of their life.

It is hung above their beds or in their home to sift their dreams and visions.

The good in their dreams are captured in the web of life and carried with them...but the evil in their dreams escapes through the hole in the center of the web and are no longer a part of them.

They believe that the dream catcher holds the destiny of their future.

