

The Dream Catcher

We believe that wisdom and knowledge come to us in our dreams. So the First Nations people are encouraged to remember their dreams. Dreams are visions that provide protection, guidance, assistance and good luck. Charms are used to reinforce our dreams. Charms come in the form of Dream Catchers, which are hung above beds. These charms are usually made and given to babies at birth, however anyone can have a Dream Catcher. This web was usually woven on a hoop of ash. The charm has a hole in the middle which allows good dreams to pass through and the web catches bad dreams. Thus a person sleeps peacefully throughout the night.

The Dream Catcher represents the Sacred Hoop, the Great Circle of Life of which we are all part. The web design is symbolic of our brother, the spider. The spider's web is spun in one continuous strand. So is the dream catcher making it symbolic of eternity, reminding us that the spirit is eternal and lives on even after death.

The Dream Catcher is made of the four elements necessary for life to exist: Earth, Air, Water and Fire.

Earth is symbolized by the hoop and the beads used in making the frame and supports. Metal, after all comes from within the mother earth, as do the beads which are in reality, sand, rock or clay.

Air is symbolized by the feather attached to the Dream Catcher, as well by the breezes that blow through it and around it.

Fire is represented by all of these things which make up the Dream Catcher, for without the help of Father Sun, none of these things would exist.

Water too is symbolized by the materials making up the Dream Catcher, for without water, we would not have the soft hide of the deer to wrap the hoop, nor the sinew or feathers from the bird. They all need water to exist.

While the four elements are necessary for life to exist, they must all be treated with the greatest respect. As in all things, there is a balance, and these elements, when revealing their other side, can do a great deal of harm. Think of the devastation of earthquakes when the mother earth shudders; or the power of the wind as it twirls around, lifting houses and buildings. And so it is that the Dream Catcher must be treated with respect, for within it dwells the power of all the elements – good and bad.