

The Lakota are a native American tribe in North America.

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. The spider picked up the elder's willow hoop, which had feathers, beads and offerings on it, and began to spin a web in it. The spider spoke to the elder about the cycles of life, how we begin our lives as infants, move on through childhood, on to being adults, finally we get to old age where we must be taken care of as infants again, completing the cycle.

The spider continued spinning his web, saying ' In each time of life there are many forces, some good, 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 steer you in the wrong direction and may hurt you. So these forces can help or interfere with the harmony of Nature. '

When he finished the web he gave it to the elder and said, "The web is a perfect circle with a hole in the centre. Use the web to help your people reach their goals, making good use of their 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 elder passed on his vision to the people and now many Indian people hang a dream catcher above their bed to sift their dreams and visions. The good is captured in the web of life and carried with the people, but the evil in their dreams drops through the hole in the centre of the web and is no longer part of their lives.