

Kids Page

by Noqah Adkins



In this lesson of the Medicine Wheel we are going to learn about two other animals that also teach us about balance. Close your eyes and imagine that you are standing in the center of the Medicine Wheel, now turn and look toward the West. There you will see



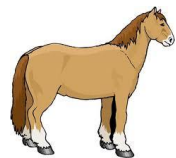
Bear (Yonv) and Horse (Soguili)



Bear is an animal that prefers to live alone. The only time they do not live alone is when a mama bear has babies. She keeps them with her until they have learned how to feed and protect themselves; then they prefer to go off on their own solitary adventures. Bears are considered "predatory omnivorous" (that means they eat plants as well as other animals) they eat berries, and other plants, fish, and other animals. Most bears begin hibernation in early



October and rouse themselves in April or May. They're usually not holed up for the entire time (hibernation is more like a series of very long naps); but the American Black Bear can go 100 days without waking up. Be warned -- if you disturb a hibernating Bear, it will wake up.



Horses are animals that do not like to live alone; they prefer living together in a herd; they feel safer that way. Horses take care of each other; the alpha horse is usually a mare (alpha means leader) leads the herd to where there is plenty of grass and good water. Also, the lead horse takes the herd to the safe places at night time and in the winter. She also makes sure all other herd members are doing their jobs right and keeps the younger horses in line, and when she needs to she will discipline the others if they are not behaving. Horses are called herbivores because they eat only plants; and they are prey animals because other animals, like bears, eat horses if they can catch them. Creator gave horse strong legs so she can run fast away from danger; and eyes on both sides of her head so she can see all around her.



Take time to study bear and horse. Read about them in the library; and if you can go observe them in their natural setting. Bears are predators, horses are prey. Bears can't run far, horses run far and very fast; bears live alone, horses live in herds; horses are domesticated and live with man, bears are wild and do not make good pets. They are two different qualities of the West. Sometimes we humans need to be bears and take long rests (teenagers and small children need more rest than others), or go spend some time alone getting to know ourselves (this is called introspection), and sometimes we need to stand strong and brave not running away. There are times when we need to be like Horse and need the love and protection of others. From horses we can learn to be with others in a good way; to be a member of a family and contribute to the well-being of our communities; and sometimes we need to run away from danger or trouble.



The way of Bear and Horse, together can help us live a balanced and happy life.