



PREGNANCY AS SACRED

NOTE: “It is very important to not make any assumptions when considering the individual’s experience and practices with respect to cultural teachings and practices. Because different people are taught different practices, it is important to be curious about which teachings they connect with, so as to not make assumptions about their beliefs and values.” (From the Klinik Community Health Center, Manitoba, Canada).

IHUDSAKA: "MAKING ONESELF STRONG"

In the Dakota Way of Life, women are viewed as Sacred. They are Sacred because new life comes through them. They carry their baby for nine months, giving good health & nourishment to the Sacred Being that lives inside of her. Her body is her baby's home! Women are life-givers as our Creator has planned; our people are still here, generation after generation, due to the strength of the woman to carry life and give birth. As life-givers, we must ensure that we are keeping a clean, uncontaminated home for our unborn.

A SACRED TIME:

Long ago in our culture, when a woman

became pregnant, she did not co-mingle with the others so much. This was considered a Sacred time for her, as she carried new life within her. She was held in high esteem and treasured. Her mother-in-law and grandmothers helped her. She was taken care of. When the baby was born, she spent much time alone with her baby to nurture him or her. On the Lake Traverse Reservation, we did not have a hospital until the early 1930's. Before this time, all babies were born at home. The grandmothers acted as the midwives and delivered the babies. Even today, some SWO women prefer having their grandmother help them deliver their baby.

*Shared by: Myrna Thompson, SWO tribal member,
Dakota Pride*