



# The Hopping Stone Vision

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Deep in the southwest deserts, an old medicine man and young brave stand atop a great plateau. Together they silently survey all the Earth.

After what seems like ages of absorbing all that can be seen, the old man taps his medicine stick on the ground.

From twelve different directions great streaks of lightning strike the Earth, and from each place the lightning strikes, twelve great stones begin to form. As the stones form, the old man begins to sing an ancient song.

Drawn, irresistibly, by the old man's song, the twelve great stones slowly weave their way through the vast obstacles that stand between them and the plateau. They pass over enormous mountains and vast stretches of water. They roll through dense forests and jungles. They cross great deserts and glaciers -- growing stronger, larger, and more powerful with each passing moment.

Finally, all twelve stones reach the mesa and silently gather around the old man and brave.

*"You see these twelve great stones?"*

*"Yes, Grandfather."*

*"Build a sacred circle with them."*

With prayerfulness and great care, the brave gathers the stones and places them in a sacred circle.

*"Do you know what you have done, my son?"*

*"I have built a medicine wheel."*

*"Yes. Go now and show me your place. Walk into the Sacred Circle and sit upon the stone that represents your position in the Great Circle of Life."*

As the brave moves towards the Sacred Circle, the old man begins to chant -- and all twelve stones begin to glow.

For a few moments, the young brave prayerfully circles the medicine wheel trying to find the stone that represents his particular place: his personality and temperament, his strengths and weaknesses; but none of them feels right to him, so he chooses the one that best seems to fit: he chooses the Red Man Stone and sits on it. But after a few moments, his seat begins to smoke and he leaps off the great stone calling out in pain.

*"The Red Man Stone is red hot!"*

The old man looks at him and smiles mischievously.

*"Perhaps you are not meant to be a Red Man this life. Try another stone."*

Worried and confused now, the young brave stares at the glowing circle of stones.

For along time he stares and refuses to move.

He calms his mind. He concentrates. He carefully studies the texture, shape, color and size of each great stone, searching for the one that feels most like him.

Finally, the young brave takes a deep breath, asks the Great Spirit for help and walks over to the White Man Stone. But as soon as he sits upon the great rock, his seat begins to smoke, and he leaps off screaming again.

*"The White Man Stone is red hot, too!"*

Seeming to delight in the young brave's dilemma, the old man answers:

*"Then you are not meant to be a White Man this life. Try again."*

More perplexed than ever, the young brave tries again, this time choosing the Oriental Stone -- with the same results: His seat catches on fire and he leaps up again!

*"ALL OF THESE STONES ARE RED HOT!!! How do you expect me to find my place in the Great Circle if I cannot sit on any stone?"*

The old man smiles and looks deeply into the young brave's eyes.

*"Perhaps you are not meant to sit on any single stone this life. Perhaps you are meant to hop from stone to stone."*

*"Then I shall have no place to sit in the Sacred Circle!"*

*"Perhaps your place is the Hopping Place -- which is no place, and all places; the last place we must master before we can leave this world and join the Great Spirit Who lives in the center of the Great Circle."*

Stunned by the old man's revelation, the young brave is silent. As if struck by some great bolt of lightning, he cannot move or speak. He can only tremble as new thoughts and feelings rush into his mind and heart.

For a few moments, the old man leaves the brave to his thoughts. Then he speaks again.

*"Listen."*

The young brave listens and begins to hear the twelve stones arguing.

*"Do you hear the stones arguing with one another?"*

*"Yes, Grandfather."*

*"And do you know why they argue so, day and night, age upon age, without ceasing?"*

*"Because they do not understand one another?"*

*"Yes. And do you know why they do not understand one another?"*

*"No."*

*"Because they sit in one place all the time and can not yet hop as you do."*

The old man looks deep into the eyes of the brave and then continues.

*"Since you are a hopper, your job is to hop from stone to stone and help them understand one another. If you do this, my son, you shall find peace in your heart and help bring peace and happiness to the Great Medicine Wheel of Life. This is the task the Great Spirit has given you."*

Another long silence descends upon the old man and brave. They both stare at the glowing red stones for a long time. At last, the old man turns to the brave and speaks again.

*"Remember this vision, my son, and share it with those whom the Great Spirit sends to you. For this vision is not only given to you. It is also given to the other stone hoppers who have come to the Earth to unite the Great Medicine Wheel of Life."*