

### A Mi'kmaq Creation Story:

On the other side of the Path of the Spirits, in ancient times, *Kisulk*, the Creator, made a decision. *Kisulk* created the first born, *Niskam*, the Sun, to be brought across *Skitckmujeouti* (the Milky Way) to light the earth. Also sent across the sky was a bolt of lightening that created *Sitqamuk*, the earth, and from the same bolt *Kluskap* was also created out of the dry earth. *Kluskap* lay on *Sitqamuk*, pointing by head, feet and hands to the Four Directions. *Kluskap* became a powerful teacher a *kinap* and a *puoin*, whose gifts and allies were great.

In another bolt of lightening came the light of fire, and with it came the animals the vegetation, and the birds. These other life forms gradually gave *Kluskap* a human form. *Kluskap* rose from the earth and gave thanks to *Kisulk* as he honored the six directions: the sun, the earth, and then the east, south, west and north. The abilities within the human form made up the seventh direction.

*Kluskap* asked *Kisulk* how he should live and *Kisulk* in response sent *Nukumi*, *Kluskap*'s grandmother, to guide him in life. Created from a rock that was transformed into the body of an old woman through the power of *Niskam*, the Sun, *Nukumi* was an elder whose knowledge and wisdom were enfolded in the Mi'kmaq language.

*Nukumi* taught *Kluskap* to call upon *apistanewj*, the marten, to speak to the guardian spirits for permission to consume other life forms to nourish human existence. *Marten* returned with their agreement, as well as with songs and rituals. *Kluskap* and his grandmother gave tanks to *Kisulk*, to the Sun, to the Earth, and to the Four Directions and then feasted. As they made their way to understand how they should live, *Kluskap* then met *Netawansum*, his nephew, whom *Kisulk* had created in his human form from the rolling foam of the ocean that had swept upon the shores and clung to the sweetgrass. *Netawansum* had the understanding of the life and the strength of the underwater realms and he brought gifts from this realm to *Kluskap*, including the ability to see far away. They again gave thanks and feasted on nuts from the trees.

Finally they met *Nikanaprekewisqw*, *Kluskap*'s mother, a woman whose power lay in her ability to tell about the cycles of life or the future. She was born from a leaf on a tree, descended from the power and strength of *Niskam*, the Sun, and made into human form to bring love, wisdom and the colors of the world. As part of the earth, she brought the strength and wisdom of the earth and the understanding of the means of maintaining harmony with the forces of nature.

They lived together for a long time, but one day *Kluskap* told his mother and nephew that he and his grandmother *Nukumi* were leaving them to go north. Leaving instructions with his mother, *Kluskap* told of the Great Council Fire that would send seven sparks, which would fly out of the fire and land on the ground, each as a man. Another seven sparks would fly the other way in and out of these seven sparks would arise seven women. Together they would form seven groups, or families, and these seven

families should disperse in seven directions and then divide again into seven different groups.

Like the lightning bolts that created the earth and Kluskap, the sparks contained many gifts. The sparks gave life to human form; and in each human form was placed the prospect of continuity. Like Kluskap before them, when the people awoke naked and lost, they asked Kluskap how they should live. Kluskap taught them their lessons and thus he is named “one who is speaking to you” or the Teacher-Creator.

Source: This segment is based on a story taken from the ancient teachings of Mi'kmaq elders. The ancient creation story was compiled by Kep'tin Stephen Augustine of Big Cove, New Brunswick.