

## A Year with Navajos

While doing research for a doctoral thesis, a young man spent a year with a group of Navajo Indians on a reservation in the Southwest. He lived with one family, sleeping in their hut, eating their food, working with them and generally living their lifestyle.

The grandmother of the family spoke no English, yet a very close relationship formed between the grandmother and the doctoral student. They seemed to share the common language of love, and they intuitively understood each other. Over the months, he learned a few phrases of Navajo, and she picked up words and phrases in English.

When it was time for the young man to return to the university to write his thesis, the tribe held a going-away celebration for him. It was marked by sadness since he had developed a close relationship with all those in the village. As he prepared to get into his pickup truck and drive away, the old grandmother came to tell him goodbye. With tears streaming from her eyes, she placed her hands on either side of his face, looked directly into his eyes, and said, "I like me best when I'm with you."

What a statement about the quality of friendship! True friendship is letting those around you not only "be themselves," but "be their best." As a leader in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, that is an obligation that you daily carry.

After all, people know what you are by what they see, not by what they hear.

--Beecher Hunter