

Inner Realm



Navigating Your Journey, The Shamanic Way

by Sylvia Golbin

My journey as a Shaman began 35 years ago when I realized that my life was not turning out the way I had hoped and expected. At the time, I did not realize that I would eventually call myself a Shaman. I went into therapy.

Today, having shape-shifted from a therapist, to a life-coach and - finally- to a Shaman, I offer guidance to others who want to walk the medicine path. This is a path of healing and learning that is unparalleled in Western culture. Because the teachings and practices of Shamanism come from a time before technology and Cartesian science, they pre-date the modern Judeo-Christian world view and give us access to our more primal selves. As Carl Jung intuited, our collective unconscious, a jointly-held, energetic field that contains conglomerated primal images called “archetypes,” operates sub-rosa to influence and create our waking experience. Our dreams are often confused and frightening because, beneath our waking consciousness, we are confused and frightened. It is the job of our “ego,” that much maligned gate-keeper, to hold our unconscious fears in check so that we can function in a somewhat predictable and seemingly safe environment.

So, how can Shamanism - the territory of medicine-men and witch-doctors - help us to escape from the nightmare aspects of modern existence? The answer lies in

understanding that our ignorance of indigenous cultures has cut us off from the gifts of wisdom and healing that are hidden in indigenous beliefs and practices. Reclaiming the power that comes with this knowledge can enable us to expand from reactive, ego-selves to powerful, co-creative essences. This is the Shamanic journey.

In fact, we are all indigenous people. Once, our ancestors lived in harmony with the land, watched the sun rise and set, gazed at the stars and wondered about the mysteries of the universe. Today, many of us never notice the sky and our mysteries are found in books or on TV. We have lost touch with nature and also with our essential selves. This process has happened gradually during a time we call "History." Today, many people believe that we live in the "end-times." From the indigenous point of view, this could be a good thing.

The difference between the modern Judeo-Christian and the ancient indigenous cultures is that, while Armageddon is believed literally by the former - it is interpreted figuratively by the latter. For indigenous people, the end of time does not mean the end of life on earth. Rather than the dead rising from their graves, indigenous cultures teach that the walking-dead (modern zombies who have lost sight of the purpose and meaning of life) will wake up and realize that they are creating the nightmare of modern existence and begin to create a sacred dream. Indigenous teachers tell us that this is the time when the Eagle (the mind) and the Condor (the heart) will finally learn to fly in the same sky. By combining technological knowledge with the wisdom of the heart, we can turn from the story of Armageddon to the story of Dis-Armageddon.

What if war, environmental degradation, poverty and disease were not necessary? Could paradise on earth, in fact, become a reality? To the indigenous mind, the answer is a resounding, YES! And, the Great Spirit of Life - the unseen power that pervades and envelops all that is - wants this to manifest. To assist with this change we need to become masters of the universe.

Mastering time is the first step. As we master time, we realize that there is no before and after, only the present moment. We come to see that both personal and collective history is a story that we are telling ourselves about what happened. This story gets projected into the future which is why history seems to repeat itself. The most important

question to ask about our story is this: “How well does it serve us?” Very often, our stories of the past keep us stuck in negative patterns that create slightly different versions of the same suffering and failure. Because she has mastered time, the Shaman can journey into the past to retrieve soul parts that have become dis-associated through trauma or neglect. She can also teach us how to journey into the future to retrieve and align with our highest destiny.

Mastering power enables us to move from re-action to action. History is filled with stories of oppressors, victims and rescuers. Stepping out of this “triangle of dis-empowerment” is necessary if we are going to change anything. Aligning ourselves with a power animal is one way to shift our consciousness around our own power. Working with this animal, we can access parts of ourselves that transcend our logical minds and bring the primal power of our animal guides into our consciousness. Another way to access power is to connect with a lineage of luminous beings from the past and - also - from the future, that will teach us to step into our own power.

The final mastery is the mastery of intention. Intention is the tool of manifestation. Our intention can only be effectively engaged if we have mastered time and power. That is why what we intend with our ordinary consciousness has limited success. Real power manifests when our intentions align with the intentions of Spirit - with the intention of creating the greatest and highest good for all beings.

The Shamanic Journey points the way to personal and planetary evolution. To navigate successfully, we must master time, power and intention and also be impeccable - totally congruent in word, action and thought. This is the mythic journey of the hero and heroine who brings the world into balance and sustainability.

Sylvia Golbin, MA MS, Earth Wisdom Teacher and Life Coach, brings the healing wisdom of indigenous cultures to westerners through ritual, journey work and energetic cleansing. Sylvia is available for private healing sessions. She may be reached at 201-787-0920, or on the web at www.consultnorthstar.com