

HOW TO do A SHAMANIC JOURNEY

1 - Introduction

Central to shamanism is the concept of the Shamanic Journey. Without Journeying there is no Shamanism.

The Journey is the act of altering consciousness in a safe and controlled way in order to access the Inner Worlds. The Inner Worlds are seen as a Separate Reality, as landscapes.

The purpose of Shamanism is Power. Not power as Domination but as in Independence. It is Personal Power. Its effects are Joy, Health, Luck, Serenity, Resilience.

When a person has sufficient Power he or she can enter into more Harmony. Harmony is Inter-Dependence. There will be more harmony with others, with nature, with life and death, with the Spirit World and with Oneself.

When sufficient power and Harmony is present Synergy will be the result. This is where the Normal World and the Spirit World are fused in a positive way.

Everyone can Journey. In fact, every time you dream, you Journey into the Inner Worlds.

Shamanic Journeying differs from person to person. Some people journey mostly on vision, seeing images, while others journey on sound. A few people journey through a landscape of feelings, colors or thoughts. Everyone is unique and not one method is better than another.

Journeys can be sharp and clear, but they may also be fuzzy, shifting and interruptive. This is OK. The trick is to ride the wave, to surf.

Open up all your senses. Learn how to use all of them. Move your attention towards seeing, the feeling of motion, temperature, taste, thinking (also a sense), smell, touch, listening, etc.

Whenever you can, test these senses. Sit down and see, hear, taste, smell, feel your balance, the temperature, electricity, motion or stillness. Do this during many different times of the day and in different places as well as during different actions (eating, walking, sleeping, working, talking, etc)

Some people are bothered by their “mental chatter”. For this there is a very simple solution : let the mind talk, let it doubt, let it say “what if it is all imagination?” Of course it is! The Inner World, the Alternative Reality is made up of Imagination. The same way a cake is made out of dough...

You may think, but just continue the experience.

If your thinking blocks you too much, slow down, breathe, and center yourself. Then continue.

In a successful journey you let go of your need to control. You suspend your will to disbelieve. Let go, but remember, at the same time you are in complete control because any time you want to end the journey, all you have to do is just stop.

Let go of expectations about what a journey may be like. The key is to trust that what is happening is exactly what is meant to occur.

See it as an adventure and have joy. You cannot fail.

The benefits of Journeying:

- the drumming helps you calm down and center. It also gives energy.

- you enter into your Inner World, the Shamanic Spirit World. By journeying towards this reality you to strengthen your Imagination and Creativity. It reinforces your Flexibility and Attention.

- When you dream in your sleep, you have almost no control over events. But by Journeying you

gain control. You can bring questions and find answers, a better understanding and solutions.

- you can find and bring back parts of yourself that you've lost. For instance motivation or creativity, hope or perspective. We can lose these parts, but also find them back in the Inner World.

- you'll learn to work with 'Allies'. These are sometimes called Totem Animals or Power Animals. They are Trans-Personal Aspects which are part of our personal and Collective Consciousness. By working with them you learn to listen, let-go and be guided. They serve as guides, protectors, friends.

- we are beings that work through stories. Journeying is in essence following or **co-creating** a story.

Preparation

In order to journey you will need several things:

- an open mind
- a clear intention
- drumming or rattling sound

You can drum or rattle yourself, or let someone else do this for you. If not, you can play a recording of drumming and or rattling. A 15 minutes recording is enough. The drumming/rattling has to be rapid and monotonous, but not too monotonous. You may vary in pitch for instance.

On my site you will find a recording of shamanic drumming you can download.

Link :

I also advice a :

- a blindfold
- a quiet place to do the work, and
- a mental impression of an entrance to the Spirit World

Find a quiet and comfortable location where you will not be interrupted. Avoid distractions like telephones ringing, children yelling, TV and radio.

When you become good at journeying you will be able to do so in your any place and any time. If, while you are journeying and a noise or distraction does occur, rather than letting it distract you, simply use it to go deeper into your journey. Say: "Anything that grabs my attention, puts me deeper into the journey".

The most important elements of journeying are having an entrance, intention, concentration, confidence, acceptance, no-interpretation and beauty.

1) Your starting point will be an entrance. This can be an access to the earth that you may known or you imagine. A well, a cave, a tunnel, a hole in the center of an old stump, a stairs going down to a cellar. It can even be an entrance to a subway station.

It is very important to clearly imagine it. You do not have to have entered it (like the well) but the sensation in your mind must be vivid.

Sometimes you can also use the image or sensation of a doorway. Simply open and enter.

You can also use a picture, like a favorite painting as a doorway. Just imagine that the frame of the picture is the frame of a doorway or window, and then enter.

2) Intention is one of the most important tools used by the shaman. State a single intention for that experience.

For your first effort your intention might be: "to meet my Totem Animal". When you meet it during the journey, ask it for its name, introduce yourself, ask it what it has to tell you, ask for advice. When you leave, thank it. Say goodbye. Like when you've met a friend.

And when you have met your power animal, on yet another journey you might ask it, "what advice would you have for me about a current opportunity or dilemma you are facing. It is best to have only one intention per journey.

3) The third element is Concentration. Keep your concentration as much as you can. Just know that concentration fluctuates. One moment you have more than the other. Just come back to the journey if you lose concentration and focus. Know also that an image can be very clear one moment and the other it may be vague. This is normal.

4) Confidence is also important. Be confident the journey will succeed. See things positively. Focus on what worked. Do not focus on what didn't go to your opinion. Too many people do perfect journeys but convince themselves they didn't or it only worked a bit. They have expectations, especially on the visual aspect of journeying. So they deny the auditory, the kinesthetic, the emotional and cognitive. They think it should be a continuous clear visual experience – like going to a high-tech 4D cinema.

5) Only note what comes to you as you direct your attention inward to the non-ordinary reality and keep your attention. Do not interpret.

6) Accept what comes to you. If you love wolves, but a rabbit comes as a Totem, then accept the rabbit. If it is a rabbit and a wolf and a salmon then accept that.

7) Beauty ... the Other World is Beautiful. There is no suffering, no death, no hate, no fear; If your experience has fear or anger, then know this message comes from the ego. Same with doubt. Just accept it is there, it comes from you and it isn't Spirit. It will fade if you don't resist it, do not try to escape it or control it.

The Journey

1) Lie down or sit down and relax.

2) Take a few deep breaths.

3) Put on your blindfold. You can also close the curtains.

4) State your intention.

5) Start the drumming or rattling.

6) Visualize your entrance and restate your intention several times.

7) Enter the entrance. Like Alice in Wonderland, you can change size.

8) Enjoy the journey. Open all your senses. For some it will be visual. Others will hear things, feel things, know things. Remember it can be clear and unclear and fluctuate.

9) As you are journeying to find a power animal, look for an animal that shows itself to you several times, or tells you it is your totem. It may tell you by speaking, dancing, writing or whatever other way. It is telling you "I'm your totem and am willing to work with you. Trust that it is your power animal.

10) In case you see little or think there is nothing (there always is, we just don't observe well), create the image in your mind. The same way you day-dream. Chose the animal you perceive vaguely and give it form. Journeying is a co-creation. The Spirits are formless, we give them form and substance. If there seems to be nothing, then create a picture of an animal you like. Make it go to the left and right and perhaps jump and run – and then slowly let go of the controls. It will move by itself.

11) Ask it for it's name. Ask it what it can do for you. Ask it what you can do for it in return.

12) Take a look around the Other-World; take a tour. Be a tourist.

13) Return from your journey. Journey between ten and fifteen minutes in the beginning. When the recall sounds it is time to return. The four to five slow-beats are the sign it is time to say goodbye. Say goodbye and thank the spirit. The fast-beats are the line you follow to go straight back. No need to rush and you do not have retrace your steps. When you have returned relax for a moment. Don't try to get up right away. Notice how you feel. Reflect on what experiences you had and what you learned. Do not interpret but write down your journey in a clear and simple way. Note the details. Share it with someone if you want.

14) Interpretation. After a while you may want to interpret. This is good. The meaning of symbols is highly personal. What's a wolf to you isn't the same as it is to me. Therefore be careful with books, websites and lists of predetermined interpretations of what type of spirit means what. Make up your own mind. If you want to know what the meaning of Bear is then take your drum and journey towards Bear. Then ask the bear. It's that simple.

Thank the Spirits daily for their presence and help in daily life, in our dreams and in our journeys.

If you have any questions :

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