

The Effects of Shamanic Healing

and

Other Healing Practices on General Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

This thesis not only explores the relationship between spirit and matter but it also explains it in relation to shamanic healing; the explanation and relation helps us to understand *The Effects of Shamanic Healing on General Well-Being*.

Shamanic healing is practised throughout the world with techniques being very similar, creating a core shamanic experience which can be used as a standalone therapy or in conjunction with other therapies whether of allopathic nature or otherwise.

Shamanic healing is based somewhat on animism, as well as the ability to enter altered states of consciousness and work with spirits.

Beliefs in regards to afterlife, daily practices and techniques are discussed including a real example of soul retrieval and extraction; the power of sound, the role of the psychopomp and the necessity for compassion.

We look at some of the work and ideas from today's shamans, both native and non-native, and the concept of living in harmony with nature and each other. When we combine ancient wisdom and techniques with the awareness of today's scientists we are able to fill a void, enabling us to bridge the gap between a traditional way and the allopathic way. When the past can inform the future, we can offer more hope to the individual on their journey to well-being.

We encountered some research problems as we sieved through masses of material in order to get what was considered traditional and core aspects, but the coverage spans traditions, both native and non-native, the past and the present in a qualitative and somewhat clinical fashion.

The study is relative to the questions of whether shamanic healing really does work and the object was to reflect an unbiased account of its efficacy on general well-being.

The research hypothesis is that shamanic healing can and does effect general well-being when practised by a proficient shaman or practitioner; and the research design was to find suitable literature that supports not only the knowledge but also offers proof by way of case studies.

The methods used to support the hypothesis are primarily the use of literature from well-respected shamans and real life documented case studies on how shamanic healing has affected the individual with and without other alternative or allopathic medicine.

The usual shamanic tools were used for the study including drums, rattles, feathers, breath, crystals and sage and more often than not, counseling skills were employed to assist the client to get in touch with their inner feelings whilst holding a spiritual and protective space, woven together with love and compassion.

Some of the literature is outside of the shamanic arena per se but still remains relevant in this study. Authors such as Dr Ernest Holmes, in particular his book *The Science of Mind* offers an in-depth look at the relation of spirit and matter. Other respected works such as: *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung - The Practice of Psychotherapy* and his later publication: *The Earth has a Soul - C. G. Jung on Nature, Technology & Modern Life* all offer an amazing insight into our consciousness and collective consciousness and the importance of psychotherapy within the healing relationship. Modern day shamanic teachings as well as traditional teachings all inform the study and bring to life the truth and efficacy of shamanic healing and its techniques.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the enlightenment of shamanic healing and lift it from a place that is often misunderstood or at worse seen as *quackery*, to a well-respected place which it deserves. Shamanic healing is a powerful tool that each one of us can learn to integrate into our own lives to enhance not only our lives but our health.

Analysis and conclusions have come primarily from, and are based on, the outcomes of the case studies from what is believed to be a non-biased position.

Chapter 1 offers an *Introduction* into what is expected throughout the thesis, Chapter 2 sets the *Ground Work on Being* and looks at different aspects of our humanness and spirituality. Chapter 3 encompasses *Shamanic Healing* and offers both traditional and modern concepts. Chapter 4 takes us through *Methodology, Materials and a Case Study* whilst Chapters 5, 6 and 7 respectively cover other *Alternative Medicine*, the *Results of Shamanic Healing*, and a *Conclusion*, the conclusion of which was different to the author's original expected outcome. The conclusion reflects diversity and an opportunity for all to embrace well-being.

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And last, but far from least:

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You have all been such a blessing – Thank you.

Kenzo Amariyo

LIST OF TABLES

Table of Change

Pre-contemplation Stage	A logical starting point for the model, where there is no intention of changing behaviour; the person may be unaware that a problem exists.
Contemplation Stage	The person becomes aware that there is a problem, but has made no commitment to change.
Preparation Stage	The person is intent on taking action to correct the problem.
Action Stage	The person is in active modification of the behaviour.
Maintenance Stage	Sustained change occurs and new behaviours replace old ones. (This stage is also transitional)
Relapse Stage	The person falls back into old patterns of behaviour. Then the cycle begins again. This may sound negative, but often, (not always) the individual will relapse at least once prior to reaching a place of <i>permanent change</i> . During this relapse, the behaviour is usually not as bad as it was originally; with the behaviour improving at each relapse.

Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente Cycle of Change^{4-Appendices}

Table of Investigation

Look At	Skin Color – Condition of Hair – Nail and Tongue Diagnosis – Breathing Pattern – Body Language – Posture – Signs of imbalance or sickness
Listen To	What the Client is Saying - What the Client <i>isn't</i> Saying - How they Speak – Their Tone – Their Speed
Smell	Do they have Body Odor (which could be them not showering because of a low mood, or because they can't afford the water bill, or it could be no money for toiletries) Halitosis?
Touch/Feel (With Permission)	Check for <i>Ah-Shi</i> points – General Aches and Pains – Stiffness – Lack of Mobility – Excessive Heat or Cold spots – Check Pulse – Blood Pressure
Ask	Family Health History – Their Health History - Their View on their Illness – Symptomatology – What they Wish to Achieve
Deal with the Whole-Being	Don't forget the spiritual life, their beliefs and how that may impact what you as a practitioner need to do or how you need to structure your session
Plan of Action	What Therapies would be Best Suited – Are they Happy with your Suggestion

Table of Senses and Suggested Healing Methods

Sense	Alternative Medicine
Hearing	Sound healing which could include music, including music with repetitive loops for hypnosis and relaxation. Mantric healing, vibrational healing, Pranic healing (Breath work), hypnosis, meditation, counseling.
Visual	Visualization, meditation, chromo therapy, hypnosis, Pranic healing, journeying.
Olfactory	Aromatherapy, visualization (past aromas), meditation, hypnosis.
Gustatory	Ascension Eating - high vibrational food, herbal therapy (Phytogenics), juicing therapy, supplement therapy, fasting, meditation, visualization.
Tactile	Massage therapy, yoga therapy, Reiki, shamanic healing, spiritual healing, Shiatsu, osteopathy, chiropractic.

Table of Six Case Study Results for Shamanic Healing

Case Study	Age	Gender	Condition	Sessions	Outcome
1	45yrs	Female	Grief	4	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Counseling Techniques
2	12yrs	Female	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	1	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Bio-Feedback and Counseling Techniques
3	59yrs	Female	Overwhelmed & Suicidal	15	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Counseling Techniques
4	36yrs	Male	Depression & Anxiety	2	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Counseling Techniques
5	52yrs	Male	Unexplained Crippling Back Pain	1	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing, Massage and Counseling Techniques
6	69yrs	Female	Ulcerated Leg	4	Was starting to be successful, but client chose not to come back, as she was aware that family would stop giving her the help they did if she recovered, so she stopped coming when she saw the ulcer was healing – very sad!

Full Case Study Information Available ^{11-Appendices}

CONTENTS

<u>ABSTRACT.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>LIST OF TABLES.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Chapter One.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>INTRODUCTION.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Chapter Two.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>GROUND WORK ON BEING.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Chapter Three.....</u>	<u>85</u>
<u>SHAMANIC HEALING.....</u>	<u>85</u>
<u>Chapter Four.....</u>	<u>145</u>
<u>METHODOLOGY, MATERIALS AND CASE STUDIES.....</u>	<u>145</u>
<u>Chapter Five.....</u>	<u>157</u>
<u>ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE – OTHER THERAPIES.....</u>	<u>157</u>
<u>Chapter Six.....</u>	<u>180</u>
<u>RESULTS AND LEARNING FROM SHAMANIC HEALING.....</u>	<u>180</u>
<u>Chapter Seven.....</u>	<u>209</u>
<u>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</u>	<u>209</u>
<u>ADDITIONAL WORK WITH SPIRIT.....</u>	<u>214</u>
<u>REFERENCES / RESOURCES.....</u>	<u>231</u>
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</u>	<u>259</u>
<u>APPENDICES.....</u>	<u>262</u>

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Shamanic healing has been around for hundreds of years, as has alternative medicine. Many Native cultures still rely heavily upon either shamanism in one form or another and/or alternative medicine. Yet, in today's world, there appears to be very little understanding and much misunderstanding around shamanism or shamanic healing within the general public, and quite often the same goes for alternative medicine.

I wanted to do this research on this particular subject because I felt that it was vital to our understanding of not only shamanic healing and the spirit world but also because I felt it would be an intrinsic gift to society if I could show: *The Effects of Shamanic Healing and Other Healing Practices on General Well-Being*. Showing positive outcomes and bringing more understanding has the potential to open the minds of many more people in regards to them considering receiving shamanic healing and experiencing wholeness within their life.

What was important in this research was that I could set a firm foundation that was set on tradition and modern day practices, offering experiences from both Native shamans and shamans of today. But this wasn't enough, I also felt the research needed to include a way to bridge the gap between science and spirituality, and also alternative medicine and orthodox medicine. I wanted to show how both sides are, indeed, simply opposite sides of the same coin. I wanted to reflect how both perspectives were not only of equal importance, but also that each could work side-by-side and, in fact, how both alternative medicine and orthodox medicine can work synergistically. Society today tends to favour one way and not the other, but if we look constructively, we will be able to see that, actually, both forms of medicine are required and both can work and flow together if we permit

them to do so. Yin and Yang are opposite energies that flow in harmony, complementing one another. Their synchronicity forms the bond that gives them their quality relationship. This flowing harmony and ability to complement one another as opposed to competing with one another is what makes them whole; alternative medicine and orthodox medicine can also have this flowing energy, this harmonic convergence of ideas if permitted to do so, the result being many more options for healthcare for all.

When we read literature such as C.G. Jung on the *Collective Consciousness* or Dr Ernest Holmes on *Divine Unlimited Potential*, they beckon us to look deeper into our own being and our connectedness to the universe, to the deeper realms that are beyond both our normal sight and, often, our imagination. Literature such as Caroline Myss' *Anatomy of the Spirit*, and even Alberto Villoldo's *Healer, Shaman, Sage*, all beg us to open up and explore our inner workings, our spiritual side of life and start to embrace who we really are as opposed to who we *think* we are. When we start to read such literature with an open heart, we start to water the seeds of creation within, we start to open our minds and hearts to new learning; this new learning is what will carry us into new experiences where we can, in time, learn to embrace so much more of our being.

We live in a world where people are crying out for guidance. They are searching, searching for something more than what they currently experience, many are searching for a purpose in life. Through growth and transformation via healing, I believe that people can find that purpose, they can find that guidance, that guiding light.

The purpose of this research is to show people that despite their past and despite their present condition, help is at hand and we can all tap into something that is far more greater than ourselves, if only we would take the plunge and trust with an open mind.

When I started out in shamanic healing, I didn't know what type of clients would come to me, I didn't know how or who I could help. I have been completely blown away with the opportunities that have presented themselves to me over the years and it is these experiences that I aim to share.

This study will answer questions such as: Can eye ulcers and cornea scarring be healed through shamanic healing and/or other healing techniques? Can post-traumatic stress disorder in children be healed through shamanic healing? Can people let go of their deceased spouses? Can pain and trauma be healed when it feels as if it has crystallized in the body? Can a nine-year-old leg ulcer be healed? Can forgiveness to self, cure unexplained crippling back pain? Is there such a thing as Intuitive Acupuncture?

These are all questions that I feel are extremely relevant and their results relevant to the study. It was because of questions such as these that it was decided that qualitative research via case-studies would be best suited to this study, so over a long period of time, many clients would be seen.

The methodology was a mix of traditional and contemporary methods and the results were outstanding. However, this wasn't enough. We needed to first set out a basic understanding of who and what we truly are, we needed to first look at whether we have a spiritual anatomy, whether we could indeed communicate with spirit, whether we could actually harness a supernatural power and use it to inform matter. We needed to know whether the spiritual really did inform matter; all these concepts are discussed in the following chapters.

The structure of the research commences with a foundational underpinning of several basic topics that are relevant to the study and to personal healing. Then, it looks more deeply at Shamanic Healing and also looks at how shamanic healing is practised; and although many shamans may do things differently, this was one shaman's way of working, and the basic concepts are pretty

standard. The research also looks at other alternative medicine that has been effective alongside shamanic healing.

The problems encountered were not in the healing sessions themselves, but in the writing up of the report, trying to write the study in a way that would be both easy to comprehend and engaging; it also needed to reflect research and tradition, which were vital components.

Although this research is far from comprehensive, I believe it is enough to expand the minds and hearts of those who read it. It is not designed to be the be-all and end-all of such study but perhaps more of an encouragement to others to take this study further, to build on the little knowledge that I have in light of such a huge subject and encourage the enlarging and understanding of minds.

When we can encompass the spiritual side of life, we are, as humans, ready to start the journey back to the center, the center of our being.

Chapter Two

GROUND WORK ON BEING

In order to approach this subject effectively I felt it was necessary to commence by clarifying two points. Firstly, I felt I needed to clarify what *general well-being* is considered to be and what it means for us as individuals; and secondly, I felt I needed to clarify what we *are* in respect to spiritual beings. One thing we need to get a good understanding of is that just as our physical being has a physical anatomy, so too does our spiritual being have a spiritual anatomy. Whereby our physical body is made up of bones, muscles, organs etc., our spiritual body is made up of meridians (energy lines), energy points (acupressure/acupuncture points) chakras (energy centers) and an electromagnetic field, also known as a luminous energy field or aura. This electromagnetic field surrounds our body connecting us to each other and the rest of the universe.

Anatomy of the Spirit by **Caroline Myss PhD (1996)**^{1-Bibliography} is said to be one of the boldest presentations to date of energy medicine. As an internationally acclaimed medical intuitive, with fifteen years of research experience, Myss states:

.....how every illness corresponds to a pattern of emotional and psychological stresses, beliefs and attitudes that have influenced corresponding areas of the human body.....that all physical and emotional obstacles are illusions. Her advice being to: Always seek the energy meaning of a situation and follow it.

So if we look after our minds, our body, our emotions and our spirit; in other words, if we develop a positive thought pattern, eat the right foods and deal with our hurts, our pain, our fears, all of which we would naturally start to do if we were to embark on a spiritual path towards enlightenment; we

would surely reap the rewards from such a change in lifestyle, and we would feel the benefits on many levels. Such drastic and life altering changes would be seen and felt throughout our entire being. When our chakras and whole energy system commences a realignment within itself, as it re-attunes itself back to God; the Greater Consciousness, the Great Mystery, or even the Collective Consciousness; (call it what you may), the god within – that intrinsic spark of creation that lies and lives within us all, will start to experience wholeness which means we will start to experience well-being.

No matter how much we try, it is impossible to heal our physical body whilst neglecting our spiritual body and vice versa, and expect well-being. No matter how much we try, we cannot separate one aspect of us from another, we are multi-facet beings and we need to treat our being accordingly on each and every level. The term *well-being* reflects our *being* as being *well*; our *being*, meaning in its entirety not just one aspect of it.

General Well-Being for Multi-facet Beings

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that: *Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.*^{1-Resources}

The Awakening Network (TAN) states that: *General well-being is the result of a dynamic balance between various aspects of ourselves. It automatically flows into our lives, when the spiritual, cognitive, emotional, physical and behavioural parts of our lives are integrated, balanced and working well.*^{2-Resources}

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that: *There is no consensus around a single definition of well-being, but there is a general agreement that at minimum, well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning. In simple terms, well-being can be described as judging life positively and feeling good. For public health purposes, physical well-being (e.g., feeling very healthy and full of energy) is also viewed as critical to overall well-being.*^{3-Resources}

So it seems that in order to achieve well-being, one must approach it from more than one angle and, being multifaceted beings, it stands to reason that each aspect of us will have very different needs. So let us now extrapolate from the above in order to come to some sort of conclusion as to how we can assert healing on all levels in order to establish optimal health and well-being.

Healing brings order from disorder, it brings equilibrium, peace to places that there is no peace, it brings balance, it naturally works in order to bring optimal functionality. But true healing happens on all levels, not just one or two levels. If we look at each aspect of our being, we can start to form a picture or idea of what each aspect requires collectively in order to gain that same optimal functionality, to gain that same wholeness and well-being. When we can understand our collectiveness, and can bring healing into our own being, we help to heal the world not just ourselves – *The Ripple Effect*. A ripple effect being a situation in which ripples expand across the water when an object is dropped into it, the effect from the initial state can be followed outwards incrementally; so when we heal ourselves, it has that same expansive effect across the water, in this case the universe, the greater consciousness, incrementally.

If we would all commit to taking responsibility for our own being, on all levels, we would all live very different lives. When we realize and comprehend that we truly are interconnected and that we truly are an intrinsic part of one another, we can then make better choices about how we treat

ourselves and others. When we can see that the pebble we throw into our own *piece* of lake or consciousness will send ripples through the lakes or consciousness of others via the greater consciousness, we start to understand the unnecessary harm that we send out into the universe, sometimes on a daily basis, albeit sometimes unbeknown to us. Bad words, negative thoughts, hatred, resentment, anger, unforgivingness, criticism, jealousy etc., the list is endless; they are all pebbles affecting the rest of the universe. Imagine the effect we would all have if we made a conscious choice to send out only good vibes, only good energy; if all the pebbles we threw were pebbles of love, compassion and forgiveness: What a difference we would feel and what a difference others would feel in their lives. If we could only understand that to hurt another is, ultimately, to hurt the universe, the greater or collective consciousness, the god within; to hurt our own being. The world needs a major shift in our personal and collective psychology.

The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: The Practice of Psychotherapy (1954)^{2-Bibliography} says:

Knowing your own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darknesses of other people. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious. The most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely. Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.

It is important that we each take responsibility for our own awakening in recognition of the impact in which it will have on the world as well as our personal being. There comes a time in our lives when we must choose to stop placing the blame for our own hurt at another's feet and accept responsibility for our own actions, thoughts and speech. Jung's words were very wise words which reflects our personal and interpersonal need to heal on many levels, it reflects our deep-seated need to be whole.

So if we look at each aspect of us individually, we can see that the basic needs that we all have are pretty much the same throughout humanity. There may be cultural differences, or familial differences, but ultimately the underlying needs are the same.

We have known for a very long time that in order to keep our physical body in shape, it requires such things as: aerobic exercise which is known to support the heart, pump oxygenated blood around the vital organs and to improve efficacy of the lungs. Fresh air to oxygenate the blood and fill our lungs and nourish our skin. We know that stretching the muscles and joints will help to strengthen them, keeping them fit and healthy. Often people will opt to incorporate yoga or tai-chi into their daily lives in order to obtain its benefits. But these things alone are still not enough, we have to seriously start to think about the food we eat and whether we really do become that which we eat. We need to look at letting go of the need to live to eat and embrace the idea of eating to live. With so much stress in our own small worlds, so much unrest in the wider world we often turn to unhealthy foods that we know are not good for us in order to bring a false or temporary sense of comfort. The fuel we feed our body is as important as the need for clean air is for our lungs. We need to embrace a natural, healthy diet in order to be free of, or at least lessen the effects of ill-health. We need wholesome foods that not only feed our body, but also feed our soul. Foods that will assist us as spiritual beings to raise our rate of vibration as we journey on towards enlightenment.

If we want to support our spiritual path we need to eat foods that are considered to be high vibrational (HV). When we eat high vibrational food (HVF) we offer long term support to our entire being on all levels. We talk more about HVF and Ascension Eating (AE) later on.

Sleep is also a major necessity for health and well-being. When we lack sleep or deprive ourselves of sleep, we also starve ourselves of vitality, of optimal functionality and repair on all levels. One major instigator for sleep is relaxation. When we permit ourselves, or learn how to relax, we permit

the mind to slow down, we permit the incessant thoughts to slow or cease, just for a while. When we relax the mind we find it much easier to fall asleep and stay asleep. Relaxation can be obtained through a number of healthy activities such as sport, being in nature, soaking in a bath, the use of aromatherapy oils, a massage or even from swimming, reading, engaging in a hobby such as gardening or even meditation which may also incorporate use of mantras, Pranic healing or even Kundalini yoga. We have so many avenues these days to assist us in relaxation, in assisting us to let go of the worries just for a while so that we can reap the benefits of good sleep.

Our mind is a phenomenal part of us, a part that we don't fully comprehend, but nonetheless, it is there, working for us, always switched on unless we train ourselves to switch it off. We so often fill our minds with negativity rather than positivity. We often permit it to engage in unhealthy desires, thoughts and wishes when we could be using it as it is supposed to be used, as a creative void, waiting for us to sow good seeds. Instead it becomes our battleground where we so often reminisce on what we said, what they said, what we wished we had said and then we draw in our vision to enliven and stimulate those same thoughts. We turn our creative void into nothing more than a dramatization of our life as it is or could be. We have already mentioned how sleep and relaxation can help the mind, but we also need to look at what we feed our mind. With so much stimulation from television and movies, the internet and games we drown ourselves with over stimulation and much of it may be negative or unhealthy to say the least. If we truly want to experience mental health and well-being, truly desire to have a relaxed mind, we must learn to retrain our thoughts, retrain ourselves to put in more positive things than negative. We must start to realize that positive self-talk is healthy and uplifting, it has the ability to bring us out of a negative cycle of self-limiting thoughts into a place of self-actualizing thoughts. Positive self-talk has been used for a very long time as a way of bringing healing, but it isn't the only way to help us attain a positive psychology. Another way to manage negative self-talk is via the use of mantras which work not only on a psychological level, but also on an energetic level, weaving its healing vibrations throughout our

entire being. The beauty of mantras are that they can be tailor made specifically for the individual. Personal mantras can be extremely powerful, speaking directly into our unconscious mind, bringing strength and inner power. Our minds are there to create, and we need to choose to create positive things that will build us up not pull us down. When we learn to take control of how we use the creative void, we begin to recognize the power of the conscious and unconscious mind, and as we take responsibility for how we are using it and for what we create with it, we start to see change throughout our lives.

To take charge of our minds, we also need to take charge of our emotions, as often it is due to our emotions that our thoughts become so fiercely charged. They become like an erupting volcano which is sometimes just waiting to happen. We all have hurts in and from our lives. Some hurts we have created ourselves, other hurts and wounds have been created based on how we have been treated, the things we have endured, the pain we have gone through. We all hold a working model of life, of people, of the world, and sometimes because of no fault of our own our working model sadly becomes very dysfunctional, and that same dysfunctional model is what will feed and reinforce the emotions and the negative mind. You can chop down the dead pieces of the tree, but if the roots are still being fed it will grow back. You can chop back the weeds, but unless you remove the roots, they will once again grow. We so often try to bury our weeds when we should be looking at them and dealing with the emotions, the anger, the hatred, the disappointment, the hurt and start to heal. Healing often, but not always, requires another to help us along the journey, but that also requires trust, and for many, trust is too much to pay.

Whether it is our past, our present or even our future fears and hurts, healing incorporates forgiveness to self and others whether that be for abuse, loss, grief or even tragedy; these are all vital aspects of our healing journey. The healing power of forgiveness must not be overlooked; not necessarily for the benefit of the accused, but certainly for ourselves, for our own being, we have to

become our own arbitrator and settle the dispute within ourselves, for ourselves. It has been said that holding onto unforgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die! The only person we hurt when we refuse to forgive is our own being and this alone can often be really difficult to hear and accept. Forgiveness isn't about the other person deserving forgiveness, it is about US, you and I DESERVING the fruits of forgiveness through compassion, love and understanding. Life brings many hurts and it comes in many shapes and forms, but we have to find that silver lining even if it is just for our own sanity, our own mental and emotional health, or even for our physical health. When we find a silver lining in every situation, it enables us to move on in life from a place that would have previously disabled us, whether that be mentally, physically, emotionally or even spiritually, to a place of enablement.

Robert Muller said: *To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness.*

When we desire untold peace and happiness, we free ourselves to be able to fully embrace the spiritual side of life. When we start to live a more balanced life, we will start to raise our rate of vibration as spiritual beings in a spiritual world. Raising our rate of vibration means looking at our whole being on all levels. As mentioned earlier, this also comes down to the foods that we eat. We need to be eating foods that are high in enzymes, high in vibrational energy, and by energy I do not mean calorific measurement or carbohydrate content. We can also help to raise our rate of vibration through engaging in good interpersonal relations, good mental and emotional health and striving for general well-being. Dealing with our past emotions or even our present emotions, hurts or rigid mind-sets is intrinsic to the rate at which we vibrate. We cannot escape that inner abyss forever. There will come a time for each and every one of us when we will have to walk through our self-created gates of hell and face our inner demons. Fear is a huge block to mental and emotional health

as well as to a progressive spiritual path. For many, outside help may be required, such as counseling or other psychotherapeutic avenues.

Engaging in *Transpersonal Counseling* or *Shamanic Healing* or even through the practice of meditation and the vocalization of mantras will all assist in the raising of our vibration and the moving along on our spiritual journey through life. We are all different yet all the same, the same in that we are all human, but all different in that we have all suffered different things in our lives and we all react or respond differently to those same things. As mentioned earlier, it is what happens to us in life that enables us to put together a construct of the world, and that could be a good or bad construct, and although we all live in the same world, our individual worlds, our internal workings of the world, will have been constructed very differently. **Charles Swindoll** states: *Life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it and so it is with you.*^{1-Appendices}

We function at optimal levels when we nourish ourselves with the understanding that we are multi-facet beings. For many of us, holding onto a spiritual belief system, whether that be a belief in an external or internal force, is also paramount to a healthy, vibrant spirit, personal edification and growth.

As part and parcel of well-being we also need to comprehend the idea of our electromagnetic field that surrounds us and the energy points and centers that are found in that same energy field. These same energy points are called chakras and just like the rest of our being, they too need feeding, they require nourishment which is said to come from our electromagnetic field. Opening up and feeding our chakras is what feeds the spiritual body, enhancing the light or glow that can be felt or sometimes seen by others. It has been said in Shamanic traditions that our emotions affect our chakras and our chakras inform our DNA which then has the ability to *grow* a new being. In other words, our emotional health and psychological health is paramount to our overall health even on a spiritual level; so if we can heal our hurts, our chakras will work more efficiently and affect our

DNA in a positive manner, and although there is no specific scientific evidence to back this up, it could still be worth considering!

Embracing spirituality and engaging in the bigger picture, whilst realizing the interconnectedness of life, the oneness of the universe, is paramount to deep and lasting healing. When we remember that I am in you and you are in me, we start to lower the defences we build for protection and self-preservation. When we embrace true spirituality we come to the understanding that it has nothing to do with religion per se, but more to do with togetherness, being part of the whole, an intrinsic part of not only humanity but of the entire ocean of life, the entire universe. Our oneness with life does not limit itself to other human beings but to all beings, whether they have wings, two legs, four legs or even fins. The circle of life holds all life as sacred, and we must hold all things as sacred too if we want to fully embrace well-being on the deepest levels. It has been said by many cultures that we are even connected to the trees and the streams, and why wouldn't we be?

We live in a spiritual world. We just need to remember. When we can remember, we can start to remember who we truly are, what Divine potential runs through our very veins; then and only then can we rise above our self-limiting beliefs and become what we already are, an intrinsic spark of creation in a world of our own making, whilst holding the seeds of life within our soul. The life-giving water is always available to us when we seek it. It is always filled with life and love waiting to nourish our entire being, if we just believe and seek.

When we realize that the pebbles we throw send ripples through the whole ocean, the whole universe, we will grasp the concept of one consciousness or greater consciousness. When we can internalize such a concept we can then start to realize and honour our universal responsibility to be the best we can at all times.

We need only three things for wellness or well-being: a healthy mind, body and spirit.



(Image borrowed from 'Like Success' @ likesuccess.com)

Much of the above is self-explanatory and there is a huge amount of information available via books and via the internet; but there are aspects of the above that I feel require further mention, aspects to do specifically with the spiritual side of life. So with that in mind let us delve deeper into those aspects which reflect and help us to somewhat understand the *anatomy of the spirit*. Those aspects are *Raising Our Rate of Vibration*, *The Chakra System* and *Ascension Eating*.

Raising Our Rate of Vibration

Many of us are aware that we are said to be made up of energy-creating matter, vibration and light, and that all things vibrate at different frequencies in order for us to perceive them; the slower the vibration, the denser the *thing*; even some scientists recognize that we are in-fact a vibrational construct. As humans, we have become accustomed to believing only that which has been proven, or that which scientists have assured us of as being correct. We rely on the intelligence of our being to lead us into understanding and truth, thinking that we are intelligent because we have evolved, when in actual fact we have evolved because we are intelligent beings. Intelligent beings who knowingly or unknowingly are connected to all things around us.

C. G. Jung *The Earth has a Soul* (2002)^{3-Bibliography} talks about anthropomorphism and how we need to project ourselves into the things around us. He states:

My self is not confined to my body. It extends into all the things I have made all the things around me. Without these things I would not be myself; I would not be a human being. I would merely be a human ape, a primate.

Jung's approach is one of interconnectedness. He was aware of the natural world and aware that in some intrinsic way, on some energetic level, we are all one, individual, but ultimately all one, all part of the same intrinsic consciousness, what he termed *The Collective Consciousness*; all part of the same circle of life. Jung was aware of a connection between all things; he believed that no man lives within his own psychic sphere like a snail in its shell, separated from everybody else, but lives a connected life with his fellow men whether he realizes it or not, by his unconscious humanity, the collective unconscious. Jung opposed a separatist ethos and saw it as an expression of alienation and incompatibility of individuals; he was aware of the god within, a greater force at work within us and for us when we choose to raise our consciousness, raise our rate of vibration and become aware, become conscious, self-conscious, conscious of the *self* in all its entirety.

Dr Ernest Holmes in his amazing book *The Science of Mind* (2007)^{4-Bibliography} talks implicitly about *Absolute Intelligence* or *Divine Intelligence* and how it is manifest throughout the universe. He talks in depth about interconnectedness, about our spiritual self, about self-actualization. Holmes shares his wealth of understanding in regards our connectedness to God and god and nature, the world around us, reinforcing the energetic world we live in and are part of as beings of vibration and light. We all hold a *Divine Intelligence* within us. We cannot but hold it for we are all part of the greater universal intelligence; we are all part of the universal intelligent mind, part of that same universal consciousness. Although some may appear to be less intelligent than others, it is simply because

they have not yet rediscovered that same intelligence that lies sleeping, dormant, waiting to be rebirthed or awakened.

We have required that same intelligence to enable us to discover the natural laws of the universe. It is from our intelligence and from our ability to use that same intelligence that we have been able to come to the understanding that we are so much more than what many of us originally perceived.

When we embrace the idea that we are more than just our physical bodies and that we do function because of vibration and light, we can then start to come to terms with the idea that perhaps there are ways of improving or raising our vibration. And if things vibrate at different rates, then perhaps we can harness ways to raise our vibration in a manner that can affect the entire universe. If we all encompassed the idea of raising our rate of vibration we could all have a much more beneficial effect, not only on ourselves and each other but also on Mother Earth.

Although most of us are not able to see or hear, or not able to perceive, these different energetic frequencies, these different vibrations, this does not mean that they do not exist, and just as we cannot see the air we breathe, but have come to terms with the idea that it is still there, so too do we have to come to terms with the idea that we are, in fact, spiritual beings in existence through vibration and light. As we all begin to heal and evolve, as we work on ourselves to let go of old mind loops, old ideas and beliefs, we find that we naturally start to increase our rate of vibration. The more we continue to grow, the more sensitive we become to sensing or perceiving different rates of vibration, or the energetic vibration of others or even *things*.

Raising our rate of vibration will permit us to have a clearer, easier connection to God (which will mean many different things to different people). To raise our rate of vibration, we have to become more spiritual, we have to start to heal, to forgive, to let go, to have and show compassion. To raise our rate of vibration we need to start to understand and to embody the principles of Christ or of a Higher Consciousness depending on how you want to view things. We need to start to birth from

deep within that same Universal Consciousness. How else can we raise our rate of vibration? The closer to God we personally become, the more we will understand what is best for us and for the universe, the lighter we will live on the Earth, the higher our collective vibration will be.

As we start to draw closer to God, the Divine, we will naturally start to draw on the wisdom of God; our intuition will direct us, not just in our spiritual walk but also in our everyday living. We will feel prompts to change our eating habits, to surrender unhealthy habits. We will know that we need to let go of crutches and support systems that no longer serve us. We cannot expect to raise our rate of vibration if we do not draw closer to the cause behind that same vibration. To get the best out of an engine you need to feed it what is good for it. The same is true for our bodies and not just on a physical level, on all levels. We are multi-facet beings and as such we need to look after ourselves on a multi-facet level. We will hear and see more clearly, and be able to receive spiritual guidance much more readily as we draw closer to God and as we continue to raise our rate of vibration. The term 'God' in this text is meant as a name for the source of creation, the power behind the universe, the love and compassion that created us. You may not gel with that word, but it is only meant as a descriptor, a way of assisting some to be able to comprehend the Great Mystery, the Greater Consciousness, call '*It*' what you may – one source many names.

We can all work towards raising our rate of vibration and the more effort we put in, the more we will directly impact the results which we achieve. There are several things we can do to help maximize our rate of vibration. Here are just a few. We can raise our vibration by:

- Cleansing our chakras and energy field on a regular basis (more on chakras later)
- Spending time daily *connecting* and working with the higher source
- Changing our eating patterns and habits and the quality of food that we consume
- Dealing with our *stuff* from the past and the present

- Changing our attitude if needs be towards others, ourselves and life
- Freeing ourselves from the prison of *negativity* that may reside inside our minds and hearts
- Be around people who are more spiritual than ourselves, people who are further on in their walk

Some people's vibration will be naturally rising in line with Mother Earth as she continues to raise her own vibration. As our vibration begins to rise, we will over time, perhaps years, notice that we have become much more aware of and open to different Spiritual awarenesses. These same spiritual awarenesses will feed us and transport us safely into a somewhat spiritual womb where we can embrace new learning in readiness to birth or transform into who we were born to be.

As our rate of vibration continues to rise we will continue to become more conscious of our path, our life, the spiritual realm. Our consciousness will be raising its own vibration in accordance with the collective consciousness. As we raise our consciousness and our rate of vibration, we will naturally ascend through different levels of awareness. As we are all different and all grow at different rates, our individual paths or growth will happen at different times of our lives. But we are not in competition, our life path is not a race, it is not about how far we have travelled but more about how many hearts we have touched (including our own) along the way.

Looking at the different levels of vibration, we can see that there is a gentle transition from one level to the next, each level being a new learning and a new stage of growth. The first level of vibration brings a much more open heart as we become much more receptive to clairvoyant or clairaudient experiences. This is a level where we notice that our healing abilities are either just becoming apparent or are becoming more heightened, permitting us to make a difference in our own life. This stage may last for years and we may not even notice the subtle move into the next level.

As we move into the second level we discover that we are becoming more in tune with the Divine, the Great Mystery; at this level we are more able to bring deeper healing to self and others. This healing may be on all levels: the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual. We experience this level as a very transformative level when the things of the past can more effortlessly drop away. We are often ready for big changes and open to the idea of letting go. We may notice that our work is more focused and more directed to the whole person, which is a blessing to ourselves and our clients. Our perception and view of life is changing and continues to change as we start to evolve further into the world of healing. We find that we are much more deeply rooted and grounded in our path and take a Holistic approach to life.

As we continue to evolve, we find ourselves at the third level, a level of vibration where we are working much more intensely with Spirit/God; we have gone from talking our walk to endeavouring to always walk our talk. We are far from perfect but we have dealt with much of our childhood pain, our past, our present, and perhaps even the fears of the future. Here, we find ourselves desiring more of God and less of our worldly life, the closer to God/Spirit we draw, the lower we see ourselves. Servanthood is embraced as we begin to understand that to serve is an honour. At this level, we start to become a much clearer channel. We start to reflect more of God and less of ourselves. Change no longer seems unnecessary but becomes a welcoming factor in our life. Although these changes and levels of vibration appear to be very clear cut, they are far from that. They are not separate levels like individual rooms that we choose to walk into. Far from it; there is always an overlap. Sometimes we go back for a while, sometimes we don't. But as long as we are moving towards God, there will always be a natural flow; like the ocean roving the sand, it comes and goes with consistency but always leaving evidence of change and transformation. As a spiritual being having cleared our chakras, our luminous energy field; as someone who has cleared away unhelpful imprints from the past, and has dealt with emotional *stuff*; as someone who has worked through the recapitulation stage of life, we start to transcend into a true *Light Being*.

Finally, the fourth level. The ultimate level of vibration is for those of us that can completely merge with the Divine, the Collective Consciousness, the Creative Force. It has been said that this level of vibration is purely for great Spiritual Teachers; and although many of us may feel that this stage is not attainable in this lifetime, it doesn't need to prevent us from aiming towards it. Each level has a beginning, a middle and an end and it isn't for us to decide how far we can or can't go in this life. This level also coincides with the fourth dimension, which we will look at later on.

We all need to start to increase our level of vibration. It may seem as if this is a sacrifice, a letting go of the old, the familiar, the more worldly things, but it is a necessary part of us growing spiritually. Our focus needs to make a huge shift in line with our new vibration, our thoughts need cleansing and we need to start living our life without so many attachments to our emotions and belongings. So many people allow emotions to run their life; they are governed by their emotions affecting their being. Emotions are powerful forces that can lead us astray like wild horses if we do not take the time to tame them.

We all need to be living out of our hearts and spirit, not out of our heads or out of our emotions. Our head is where we try to rationalize things, where we try to think things through all the time. Our head is where we create all the reasons why we shouldn't bother, why we won't succeed, can't succeed; why we don't need to raise our rate of vibration when, in fact, we should be creating every reason why we should do all these things. We truly need to live from our hearts, in love, and from our spirit's compassion; when we can give ourselves over to a Christ Consciousness, and live with the integrity, the values of Christ, we can be sure of entering into a phenomenal part of our life.

As each one of us starts to raise our own vibration, it will encourage others to do the same, then eventually the *minority* will become the *majority*, and this is when there will be a huge shift, a shift in energy, vibration and consciousness, not just within ourselves but within the world in general. As

we affect our own being, we help to make a difference in the world. As we all work to being the difference in the world, we all collectively make a difference in the vibration and light of the universe. We all want change in the world, but that same change has to start with us. We **ARE** the difference we have been looking for. During one of my many times in solitude, whilst communing with the Greater Consciousness I was given a message to share; although not all will believe in hearing messages from God/Greater Consciousness, some will, so it feels only right to include it – so here it is:

*‘Our world, our Earth, has been waiting for us, but she will wait no longer. The time is now. The time has arrived. People of the Earth **MUST** change; they must start to evolve, to raise their vibration. Without this, they will be lost, not forever but for a long time. The time is now. We must flow with the Earth's changes, we must work with the Earth not against her. She is pregnant with a new world, a different species of people, she is ready to give birth. The Earth has felt her labour pains for a long time, she has been a long time waiting this birth. **NOTHING** will stop this happening, it is a natural cause and effect. The times are evident. We only have to look around and we can see the devastation, the hunger, the poverty, the greed. None of these are the ‘Fruits of the Earth’. They are the fruits of unconnected people with low vibrations – the time is now.’*

The Chakra System

We have learnt that just as we have an anatomy of our physical body, we can also assume that we have an anatomy of our spiritual body which is made up of an electromagnetic field which connects us with the rest of the universe. The power centers or power packs that feed the body are situated throughout the spiritual body and are said to run along the meridians or energy lines, and are called chakras. Many people believe there are seven main chakras or major chakras and many minor chakras. One way to view the chakras and our spiritual body is to look at the galaxy. The stars could

represent the minor chakras, the planets could represent the major chakras, whilst the sun and the moon could represent our mind and body. All individual aspects, all separate parts of the whole, microcosms within themselves, but when seen as part of the whole, suddenly, the microcosms become macrocosms in a mutually dependant but synergistic relationship. If we take a trip to Peru, we will find that often the Peruvians use a nine major chakra theory. We will also find that the major chakras are divided into the *Sky* and *Earth* chakras.

So within our spiritual body, we all have what is called a *Luminous Anatomy*, otherwise known as an auric field, aura or luminous energy field which not only includes the chakras but also the acupuncture points and the meridians. The chakras are usually seen as swirling or spinning discs of energy. Some like to view them as flowers, predominantly lotuses, and others view them as wheels. In Sanskrit, the word *chakra* means wheel, a wheel that spins, a mini *wheel of life*. However they are depicted, they are usually shown in their corresponding color which is fairly consistent right across the board whether from India or Peru.

Our chakras are linked to our spine and central nervous system and are said to protrude three to four inches outside of our body and into our luminous energy field. They are said to spin clockwise and that each has its own frequency and are perceived as one of the colors of the rainbow. These colors and frequencies are to do with how we vibrate as an individual which is all linked into how we live our lives and what we think and feed our physical and spiritual body. The chakras on a new-born baby are said to display their true colors, as the rainbow, and that it is as we grow up that the colors can become dull, or even change due to the trauma and loss in our lives. As a result, toxic waste and residue can be left behind in our chakras, inhibiting how they spin, and the speed in which they spin which is said to have a direct effect upon our well-being. As our chakras work on frequency, and the frequency they transmit are said to inform our DNA, this could be problematic as that same frequency may potentially be that which will manifest itself in the physical as sickness and/or

disease. Universal energy nourishes our luminous energy field, which then attempts to feed our chakras, but with toxic waste and residue collecting in them, they are sometimes unable to receive that which they need; this in turn, can create an imbalance within our chakra system, which in turn can create an imbalance within our physical body.

We look at our bodies and think *this is the real form*, a body, the whole, when in actual fact it is not. It is a sum of its parts. We are so much more than just a physical body with a mind and emotions. We are part of the Divine Potential, a small part of a large universe held together by vibration - frequency and light. That same vibration and frequency forms all living matter in the universe. When our luminous energy field is not able to feed our chakras, we change the vibration on which our body is working, the result being imbalances such as disease and sickness. If we can clear our chakras and re-nourish them so that they can and do spin as they should, we can remove a lot of the unnecessary imbalances in our lives.

According to **Dr Alberto Villoldo** in his book: *Shaman, Healer, Sage*.^{5-Bibliography}

.....the chakras are said to extend luminous threads that reach beyond the body, connecting us with trees, rivers, people and all other living things which reflects our interconnectedness, yet, our chakras are coupled to our bodies for only a short while. At death, they withdraw from the physical body to re-join the eighth chakra before continuing on the Spirit journey.

Detailed information and diagrams of the chakras as well as information on the corresponding organs, physiological responses, appropriate flower essences etc. have been included.^{2-Appendices}

Ascension Eating – High Vibrational Food

Let medicine be thy food and food thy medicine – Hippocrates

For some, *Ascension Eating* (AE) or *High Vibrational Eating* (HVE) is to do with praying over our food prior to the consumption of it and also during the preparation of it. Although I am sure this will have some effect, even if it is merely a psychological effect, it isn't enough to change or transmute *Low Vibrational Food* (LVF) into *High Vibrational Food* (HVF). I was shown in 2012 that ascension eating, which means the consumption of high vibrational foods, was the best way to eat in order to raise my rate of vibration, take my healing practice to a new level, whilst supporting my entire being on all levels as it ascended through the spiritual dimension of spheres two and three in readiness for the fourth dimension. I sometimes refer to this method of eating as *The Genesis Way* as I truly believe that HVE was the way nature intended us to eat and the way that is depicted in *The Beginning*.

So what **IS** HVF? Let us take the necessary time to grasp what may be a new concept for many, but before that, let me clarify what it **ISN'T**. As you read about HVF you will think, 'Well, isn't that just the Raw Food Diet (RFD)?' Firstly, no. On the RFD you will find that most raw foodists incorporate oil, but oil isn't included in HVF because of the process it has been through. On ascension eating (eating HVF), if you want avocado oil, you eat avocados. You don't process the food other than via the digestive tract to get the oil. If you want nut oil you eat raw nuts and it is as simple as that. So there are subtle differences between this way of eating and the raw diet. Secondly, and more importantly, HVF isn't about losing weight, curing cancer, detoxification etc. These things may come about as a *side effect*, but they are not the theory behind this way of eating. HVF is consumed with the intention of raising your rate of vibration in order to bring about a much deeper healing to yourself or clients. It is about being as pure a vessel as you possibly can in order to channel a pure energy, Divine Energy. Ascension eating is a natural way of eating. It takes a huge amount of commitment and takes a lot of self-discipline because it is an extremely strict way of eating. But even the Saints, Ancient Ones, and the Wise Ones practised asceticism! Ascension eating is said to activate the body's natural ability to heal itself through high vibrational foods which

means foods that are (preferably) organic, vegetarian or vegan foods consumed in their raw state (if they are safely edible in their raw state). Ascension eating avoids added sugars, salt, animal proteins, artificial additives, colorings, flavorings and processed foods and are organic simply because they lack (hopefully) the chemical sprays that non-organic foods have been sprayed with.

This way of eating takes a holistic approach to the body, working on a physical, mental, emotional AND spiritual level whilst activating the body's immune system and cleansing toxic wastes naturally. It is not about curing or healing ailments (but that is sometimes a side-effect); its focus is about bringing a natural balance, creating homeostasis in body, mind and spirit, where all parts of the individual can function at an optimum level which in itself can bring health and wholeness – general well-being. Ascension eating or the consumption of high vibrational food is said to assist many degenerative diseases, as many degenerative diseases are considered to be due to toxicity and nutritional deficiency, but that is not the focus for following this way of eating. It is designed to offer a simple approach to food, offering a high amount of digestible enzymes, minerals and other nutrients which not only feed and stimulate the body which can then break down disease more easily, but also foods that can feed the mind and raise our rate of vibration which IS important for our spiritual walk. The cleaner our body becomes, the easier it will be to resist infection and deal with disease. The cleaner our body and mind becomes, the higher our vibrations will rise, which will transform our path and support us in the fourth dimension when we are working more closely and directly with the *source*.

In today's world we keep our body full of toxins and wonder why it is unable to resist disease! Daily we subject ourselves to pollutants whether through alcohol, drugs, poor diet, cosmetics or other body products, some of which are known to be carcinogens; so ascension eating is firstly an effective way to raise your rate of vibration but secondly, it will act as an intensive detoxification regime, eliminating toxins naturally so that the body can start to repair itself.

Most people notice results in the first 1–4 weeks. Some of the results experienced have been, but not limited to:

- Increase in energy
- Increased alertness and clarity of thoughts
- Weight loss
- Increased fitness and muscular strength
- Excess fluid loss
- Regular bowel movements
- Decreased constipation
- The need for less sleep
- Improved sleep
- Loss of flatulence
- Loss of digestive upsets including reflux
- Less bloating
- Less headaches
- Less mucus production
- More balanced moods
- Improved skin tone
- Reduced pain associated with arthritis and/or rheumatism

- Easier menses
- Less irritation
- Less acidic and more alkaline urine
- A rising of vibration
- Deeper inner connectedness
- Feeling more intuitive
- Increased confidence and a great sense of achievement

Judging on past results from different people, these are just some of the results people may experience. We are all different and our bodies will respond differently in different time scales. One of the major changes noted was from a lady. Other than weight loss, the change was found in her knee. Joan had had a knee condition for over thirty years, and during her first month on ascension eating, the problem disappeared and never returned. This way of eating is said to regenerate the body, restoring it back to optimal health by feeding it the nutrients that it needs, not the foods that people necessarily desire! There is quite often a huge difference between what we *want* and what we *need*; our wants encourage us to live to eat, our needs encourage us to eat to live. In today's world people's diets are governed by gluttony, oversized portions and foods saturated with either fats or sugars and this has become somewhat the *norm*. It would be wiser to say the norm for a guaranteed dysfunctional body!

When we eat for pleasure, it requires so much more self-discipline to change eating habits and many people who don't *eat to live*, but live to eat, may need to look at their relationship with food and what purpose it serves for them; for many, food is a source of comfort, of which they reach out

to during difficult times. The unfortunate thing about living to eat or comfort eating is that it can quickly become a habit.

High vibrational foods are salads, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds, all of which are fresh and raw; you can juice them or eat them. You are not limited to how much you eat, but you do need to ensure you aren't sticking with one type of food, i.e. nuts or fruit, in order to ensure balance. It is from eating a variety of these foods that you will take in the necessary nutrition to maintain a healthy body and raise your rate of vibration.

So what CAN you actually eat?

See ^{3-Appendices} for more information on Ascension Eating and a list of High, Medium and Low Vibrational Foods. It isn't an exhaustive list but it will give you the general idea.

Psychology of Change

So if all this information is available and true, why don't people readily change? Why aren't people quick to transform their lives? According to the psychologist Abraham Maslow, people have a hierarchy of needs. His theory of a *Hierarchy of Needs* came from his 1943 paper: *A Theory of Human Motivation* ^{6-Bibliography}. He claims that humans have an inert need to work through their first four levels of growth as well as being willing to move onto their spiritual needs and come to a place of *Self-Actualization*. Maslow states that we move between our levels of need as and when we can, with the aim of satisfying those needs so that we can eventually move closer to self-actualization. But in order to grow and evolve on any level, we have to want and be willing to change, and that isn't always easy. Meeting our needs sometimes means that we need to deal with the past, the present or even the future. Meeting our needs in order for us to grow and arrive at a point of self-

actualization may mean changing some behaviours, changing some life patterns, changing some psychological blocks. It may even mean going through some healing.

Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente – *Changing for Good* (1983)^{7-Bibliography} indicates that

during the process of change, a person, at any given time, is in one of the six stages of change. The six stages are said to be:

Table of Change

Pre-contemplation Stage	A logical starting point for the model, where there is no intention of changing behaviour; the person may be unaware that a problem exists.
Contemplation Stage	The person becomes aware that there is a problem, but has made no commitment to change.
Preparation Stage	The person is intent on taking action to correct the problem.
Action Stage	The person is in active modification of the behaviour.
Maintenance Stage	Sustained change occurs and new behaviours replace old ones (this stage is also transitional).
Relapse Stage	The person falls back into old patterns of behaviour. Then the cycle begins again. This may sound negative, but often (not always) the individual will relapse at-least once prior

	<p>to reaching a place of <i>permanent change</i>.</p> <p>During this relapse, the behaviour is usually not as bad as it was originally; with the behaviour improving at each relapse.</p>
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Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente Cycle of Change^{4-Appendices}

Many people lack spiritual growth and sometimes this can be because of their basic needs not being fulfilled, whether consciously or unconsciously. Yet despite this, I do believe that in every person, whether they have become conscious of it or not, that there is a desire for change and spiritual growth, an inbuilt seed of hope for something greater and more meaningful. Often it takes loss, grief or even despair to act as a catalyst to bring that spiritual seed into the light, into our consciousness. Often the dire situations that life serves us are the very source that feeds that spiritual seed and brings light and growth to it.

We must remember as spiritual beings that in order to experience light, one must first experience darkness, for out of the darkness we create light. We need look no further than the Bible to see that in the beginning was darkness, and out of darkness light was created; and we don't have to be Christians to understand the concept that was being offered even back then in Biblical times. We can also look to Viktor Frankl's book: *Man's Search for Meaning*^{8-Bibliography} in order to understand how, when all our needs are threatened, as spiritual beings we can still dig deep and find meaning in life, and we can all choose to use that meaning to get us through the dark and into the light. Viktor Frankl talks about his experiences as an Auschwitz concentration camp inmate during World War II and describes his psychotherapeutic method, which involved identifying a purpose in life to feel positive about and then immersing himself in imagining that outcome. Frankl believed that how he, or any other prisoner imagined the future, would have a direct effect upon their individual longevity.

Many of us may or may not relate to such dire situations, but nonetheless we are all empowered with the same choice to take the bad within our lives and find a silver lining which will not just help us through the situation, but will help us to grow and evolve into a self-actualized individual able to help others into their own light.

Many people yearn for change, but not so many want to be the change. If we all decided to be the change that we wanted to see in the world, the world would be a very different place; many people hang onto their physical side of life when in reality, we are all here to remember our spiritual life as spiritual beings.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



(Borrowed with permission from Gallery Hip @ gallerhip.com)

We live in a society where it appears to be natural and normal to be seduced by our senses, and others' sensuality as well as sexuality. It is considered as normal to be addicted to our senses. We smell food and must eat it. We see someone pleasing to the eye so we want to devour them, often

sexually as well as psychologically. Food, sex, alcohol, drugs – all designed to make us think and feel that we are in control of ourselves, our thoughts, our minds, our emotions, our actions, our lives, but we are actually, often, out of control.

When we can live a balanced life, we can live our life in homoeostasis – as a balanced individual on all levels. THAT is when we are in control. We have to stop living for ourselves and start living for self, being self-aware; self-aware of the reality that we are spirit beings NOT just human beings, as we tend to live our lives according to what we think or believe we are. If we are human, we do what we believe humans should be doing. We drive our bodies into the ground just like many do their cars. They seldom give it a check-up until it breaks down, and seldom give it the right nutrients. As spirit beings we lose focus on the external world as a means to an end and focus on our internal world, what Spirit/God is saying to us, what our spirit is informing us about, what our spirit is guiding us to; we lose the humanness in order to embrace the spiritualization of our matter. We become what we are instead of becoming what society thinks we should be.

As spirit beings we don't look after ourselves from the outside in, which is like trying to look after your car by washing and polishing it but not bothering about what goes on inside, leaving all the trash, and all the rotting waste. Spiritually, we do the opposite. We lose interest in designer clothes, in the best house, the best car, the most money, the high title and begin to honour our body. We begin to heal our past, stabilize our present and inform our future. We start to become the single light that can light a thousand candles, we become the light of a thousand candles but a single light. We start to recognize our togetherness, our commonality in spirit. We start to recognize the you in me and the me in you. We start to understand the concept of one ocean but many drops of water and realize the togetherness and individuality of both. We begin to see and honour the god in me and the god in you and recognize that the two are in fact one. We start to lose sight of the mathematical equation that $1+1 = 2$ and start to realize that in the light of humanity, in the light of the spiritual,

1+1 = 1; 1 billion drops of ocean still equals 1 ocean. There is no longer 2 but only 1. 1 universe, 1 spirit, 1 earth, 1 body of humanity of which we all play an equal part, just that some play it better than others.

Life as many of us know it is a delusion, or an illusion, for when we fail to live as spirit beings, we live a fake life, a life where we have chosen to play a part in a masquerade, a masquerade that life is something else, that life is tangible. We become caught up in a *life soapie* where the real world, the spirit world watches, hoping that one day we will find the door out of the dream, out of the illusion and enter into the real world, the world of recognition that we are spirit, that we are spiritual beings in a spiritual world. A great example of this is *The Truman Show* (A concept movie – Transcript of: *A summary of The Truman Show* is available^{5-Appendices}) – A world within a world where the creator was a man, a man who controlled Truman's (*True-man's*) whole life. Everything that seemed to be real was fake and in the end, through struggle and heartache and nearly losing his life, he finally manages to escape the pressure, the confines of what was supposed to be a real world. It cost him everything he was born into and he had to be willing to walk away in order to find real life. He was completely surrounded with an imitation of love, imitation of real life; he lived in a man-made reality show until one day he ceased being *in* the dream and stepped out in order to *be* the dream. He stepped out of his current reality and into another world, a world he didn't yet know, a world he didn't yet understand. There was nothing in it that he knew but with strength, determination and an inner belief, he walked away from all that told him otherwise and followed that inner voice to freedom. He let go of all he knew, all that had seemed so real for all of his life, he let go of hopes and dreams, of people, of familiarity, in order to reach out and embrace the new, the unknown. He dared to be different.

The Truman Show is a 1998 American satirical comedy-drama science fiction film directed by Peter Weir, produced by Scott Rudin, Andrew Niccol, Edward S. Feldman, and Adam Schroeder,

and written by Niccol. The film stars Jim Carrey as Truman Burbank, adopted and raised by a corporation inside a simulated television show revolving around his life, until he discovers it and decides to escape.....Wikipedia.

When we live our lives purely from a physical perspective we live a simulated show revolving around our own life. Our goal in this life is to discover this for ourselves and choose to escape into a real world, a world as a spirit being. Once we discover the truth, we are free to explore and expand our being into more of what we are, which will be reflected in our daily lives as we evolve and spiral upwards towards our ancestral inheritance.

Knowing and understanding that we are more than just a physical being is one thing, but deciding how to change, how to evolve, how to become that spiritual being can be difficult. One thing we will all have in common, always, is that once upon the path to freedom, we will all need to transcend what we believe to be our physical needs and focus on our spiritual needs; and in order to touch that higher consciousness, that enlightenment, we must all heal our wounds, the wounds of the past, the wounds of the present, and ensure that they cannot become the wounds that inform our future. We can blame many people for our past, even our present, but we cannot blame anyone but ourselves for our future. We all have to make decisions in life and we all have to learn how and when to make good ones. So once on the road to freedom we will, no doubt, encounter different forms of healing, different forms of alternative medicine, all on offer often promising to bring healing, wholeness and general well-being; but what is *alternative medicine*? And how do we know what we need?

Alternative Medicine

Alternative medicine covers a huge spectrum of therapies. The World Health Organization (WHO) lists over 100 recognized therapies, but what works for one may not work for another.

We are at a time where many people have become and continue to become discouraged with orthodox medicine, but orthodox medicine DOES have its place in health care as does alternative medicine; there is room for both perspectives and as with all things, we need to embrace both perspectives and find a balance within the whole spectrum. Just as Yin and Yang depend on each other, so too does alternative and orthodox medicine depend on each other. The idea here is not to raise one up and belittle the other, but to simply *show the way* in which by encompassing both systems we can actually offer a holistic approach to life.

The main role for alternative medicine is that of preventative medicine whereas orthodox medicine, although some of it could be seen as preventative, takes more of a curative approach. It may strive to prevent things from becoming worse but it still aims to treat a diseased state, whether of body or mind, as opposed treating a healthy body in order to prevent the diseased state from manifesting in the first place; hence why we only visit the doctor when we are sick! Alternative medicine strives to offer us different therapies to empower the individual to be their own physician, and although that does not replace medical doctors of any field it does encourage the individual to take responsibility for their own general well-being. Things can and do go wrong and this certainly does not mean we have failed, but that we need to look deeper into what our body is telling us and what it requires.

For some people, prevention is not part of their way of life, so their lives revolve around constantly finding or at least looking for a cure and trying to *fix* things. For many others, it is just the opposite. Prevention is primordial, it is inbuilt within them. It is a natural, normal way of life and they make all attempts possible to prevent disease from entering into, or developing within, their organism as a whole; their ethos is simply *why wait until it is broken?*

In order for our body, mind and spirit to reach a place of balance, a state of homeostasis, we need to be open minded to different therapies. We need to be open to embracing change and open to reaching for a quintessential healing named *Tao-de-Qi*. Tao-de-Qi is a phrase or name I coined to reflect the need for an ethical way of working which embraces, in many different ways, a multi-facet approach to healing the whole person whilst harnessing the creative power of the universe. If we can work with the force of creation, harnessing that same energy, and work it into and through ourselves and our clients, we should feel pretty confident about bringing transformation and change into our clients' lives.

This is not a new healing system, nor does it replace ancient healing systems. It is simply a phrase used to encourage a multi-facet approach to healing where we, as practitioners, are confident enough to incorporate several different techniques of healing in order to more fully meet the needs of the client. So often as a client, if we want acupuncture we have to go here, but if we want yoga therapy we then have to go there. As a client seeking alternative medicine as a way of holding onto, or even reaching, a place of health and well-being we need to feel that we can go to a one-stop clinic, time is limited and usually, so are finances. And that is what Tao-de-Qi is about. It is about being able to incorporate mantras and Pranic Healing into a healing session if needs be. It is about teaching yoga therapy postures so that the client becomes empowered and able to help themselves. It is about offering massage, perhaps acupuncture, as well as something such as Shamanic Healing and counseling. Although this may sound like a lot of work or learning for the practitioner, I do feel that it does enhance the sessions. My sessions always incorporate Shamanic Healing and counseling, but they are so integrated into each other they are one treatment. I use mantras or Pranic Healing as and when necessary, and if needs be will teach the client what they can do at home to continue the treatment. So in some respects, my healing sessions are a conglomerate of my life learning. My psychiatric training informs my work, my psychotherapy training informs my work, everything that I have learnt I use in a synergistic manner to bring about healing, change and

transformation. My healing sessions are never completely the same. They are consistent with the client's needs, not my desire or preferred treatment method. The methodology that we choose to use will affect the outcome. The more we limit ourselves with what we can offer, the more we limit the chances of a complete healing and continued well-being. We have to be willing to stretch ourselves and use the tools best suited to the individual. As practitioners, we can so easily fall into the habit of treating each client the same way. If we continually remember to take a holistic approach to life, to health and well-being and work with ourselves and our clients to bring about the desired change we will have a positive impact upon our small world and our community.

Often as practitioners we fail to meet the needs of our clients because we have not undertaken our own inner healing. We can't direct a traveler on a road we haven't traveled, and although that **doesn't** mean we must suffer all things to help people, what it **does** mean is that the more we work on ourselves, the more we heal our own broken parts, the easier it will be to help others on their healing path no matter what level you are working on. What often separates a healer from a shaman is simply the decision to go within their own darkness and deal with the fears, the self-created demons and come out the other side healed and whole.

If, as alternative practitioners, we can ensure that all clients receive a specifically tailored plan of care, then we will bring a unique experience to each and every client and will increase the chances of them living healthy and whole lives. Healing is as individual as we are as people. What works for one may not work for another, and for this reason I see intuition as taking an important role in alternative medicine. In order to offer our clients the very best of ourselves, we must first aim to be the very best we can be, but secondly, we must approach our work and our clients from a non-denominational place in order to be able to bring about the transformational change required. But treatments and counseling, massage and mantras are all well and good, but if each session is not woven with love and compassion, we leave the very source of life out of the treatment. Acceptance

is vital for congruent, compassionate, respectful relationships between doctor or therapist and client. So going back to the idea of Tao-De-Qi let us now briefly look at the underlying meaning of the chosen words.

Tao-De-Qi:

Tao noun: also noun: Dao – *(in Chinese philosophy) the absolute principle underlying the universe, combining within itself the principles of yin and yang and signifying the way, or code of behaviour, that is in harmony with the natural order. The interpretation of Tao in the Tao-te-Ching developed into the philosophical religion of Taoism.*

Dé/Te: – “virtue”, “personal character,” “inner strength” (virtuosity), or “integrity”. *The semantics of this Chinese word resemble English virtue, which developed from virtù, a now-archaic sense of “inner potency” or “divine power” (as in “healing virtue of a drug”) to the modern meaning of “moral excellence” or “goodness.” Compare the compound word taote (Chinese: 道德; pinyin: Dàodé; literally: “ethics”, “ethical principles,” “morals,” or “morality”). De can also mean:– Rise, go up, climb, ascend. [升; 登.]*

Chi or Qi noun: *the circulating life force whose existence and properties are the basis of much Chinese philosophy and medicine. In traditional Chinese culture, qi (more precisely qì, also chi, ch’i or ki) is an active principle forming part of any living thing. Qi is frequently translated as “natural energy”, “life force”, or “energy flow”. Qi is the central underlying principle in traditional Chinese medicine and martial arts. The literal translation of “qi” is “breath”, or “air”. - Wikipedia*

Tao-de-Qi denotes an approach, the way, or a code of behaviour or practice that is in natural harmony and keeping with natural order whilst working with, and using the active principle, the life

force or energy flow otherwise known as Qi. Tao-de-Qi is about harnessing the substance of all living matter including the Earth and working with it through ways or avenues of methods and tools. The carpenter creates and transforms *something* by using *energy* through *tools* and *methods*. We can work in the same way. We create and transform *ourselves* or others by using *natural energy* through *tools* and *methods* in order to bring about the desired transformation and change.

So what is alternative medicine?

Alternative medicine is considered an umbrella term which is used to cover many types of therapies or medicine that are not considered orthodox medicine. Over the years, more and more Alternative Therapies have been identified and considered as acceptable paths of healthcare but despite this, there has been little money spent on research in regards to their efficacy and safety, and on top of that, further education in way of continual professional development is required in order to ensure that practitioners stay abreast of new developments in line with our counterparts in orthodox medicine.

There are many aspects of alternative medicine that require development and change and many areas that require some degree of conformity if alternative medicine is to be taken seriously in today's world. One such area that requires some conformity is in the documentation of practice. This needs to happen in order to bring practitioners up to speed with orthodox practitioners. But it isn't just about the need for conformity, it is also about bringing documentation up to speed in order to offer protection for the client and practitioner which will then also create a more level playing field for both types of medicine.

If we as alternative practitioners wish to be seen as equals with our orthodox counterparts then we have to raise the standard of practice in line, at least with them. It stands to reason that we, too, must adopt the same type of protocols and standards that they have in place, which may also mean a

standardized registration platform. This also means that the manner in which orthodox practitioners operate, in regards to conduct and professionalism, needs to be the same benchmark for alternative practitioners in order to ensure that our own standards of care in our own practice follow that same standardization. However, this could take years to accomplish and would require the support of its practitioners. If the general public can't see anything different in the professional management of our work from that of the orthodox practitioners, it will reinforce that Alternative Medicine is NOT quackery, nor is it an airy-fairy new-age trend that will sooner or later disappear into the history of what used to be. Standardization, if encouraged or enforced, will mean that governments will also need to be willing to offer funding for alternative medicine research and perhaps for practitioners in order for there to be an equal footing for educational opportunities.

Many people would like to use alternative medicine or therapies but cannot afford them. If the alternative way, or traditional way, could be made available through healthcare packages, even if it was only via private organizations, then I feel there would be an even bigger rise in the number of people opting for Alternative Therapies. Much has changed over the years. We have come a long way, but there is still a long way to go.

For change to happen and happen in a fair way, I believe that there needs to be people from the alternative field of medicine in places of power, such as government. It is these people who are involved in the writing of policies, and the defining of acceptable education and training in the medical field. Without this, and left in the hands of the Orthodox or, worse still, those who are clueless about the alternative field, I feel decisions made will be in favour of orthodox medicine which will keep alternative medicine as its shadow rather than as an equal.

Integration is an important aspect of bringing the two fields together and I am unsure as to whether this could truly happen as it will need a complete change of attitude of those already in orthodox

medicine. Attitudes and perceptions can only change if those same individuals are re-educated; for many, that change in attitude will only happen when they see the proof, the evidence, that alternative medicine really does work and when they realize that doctors in alternative medicine do not pose a threat to their identity or credibility, but simply stand by their side as equal medics working within a different context.

There is much to be forgiven towards those who brought orthodox medicine into the arena. Much damage was caused to the efficacy of alternative medicine and it will take a long time to regain the full respect from society that it once had. If we, as practitioners, can up our standards in regards to documentation and standards of practice and improve our knowledge via continual professional development and can show, through evidence-based documentation, relief or cures for symptoms without severe side-effects, and sustained well-being, I feel this will go a long way in reestablishing alternative medicine as an original and acceptable way of health and wholeness.

The two main misconceptions about alternative medicine is firstly in the name, as *alternative* suggests *instead of* something else, in this case instead of orthodox medicine; and in one regard it *can* be used as an alternative to orthodox medicine because we all have a choice. This confusion is also brought about from having other names for alternative medicine such as complimentary medicine, holistic medicine, traditional medicine, indigenous medicine and even natural medicine which then, once again, infers that such medicines are again different from alternative medicine and each other. This can be very confusing for people as not everyone realizes that these are different names for the same collection of therapies. My personal experience of one client, when offered alternative medicine, was a response of:

'No, thank you. I am not looking for an alternative, I am looking for something complimentary.'

Secondly, the other main misconception is in regards to the history of alternative medicine which has been around for thousands of years. It was the first medicine available having been around much longer than orthodox medicine. The truth is, alternative medicine is actually the *orthodox* medicine, and orthodox medicine is actually the *alternative* way.

With orthodox medicine having an air of superiority, it soon became the norm which then pushed the traditional (alternative) medicine into the shadows, and rather than orthodox medicine being seen as an alternative or a complimentary medicine to what was already available, it was offered as a more scientifically proven and, therefore, a more superior medicine. Although these misconceptions do need to be addressed in order for the wider public to gain and appreciate a better and more complete understanding of the position of alternative medicine, I feel that nothing will change unless education is seen as an important and major role, in order to re-educate not only the general public but also the orthodox medicine field as to what alternative medicine actually is. People need to be made more aware that alternative medicine can be used with or instead of orthodox medicine, as a choice, an option, not as a way of causing a divide between the two fields. If the entire health field was to come under one umbrella, eventually, there would be no divide; all healthcare would be just seen as a larger pot from which we had to choose from. But even that would be riddled with problems as people would naturally want to change aspects of alternative medicine. An example here is in acupuncture. Some individuals in the UK wanted to change the traditional names of the acupuncture points to more Western names, and make the names more uniform to the English language. I feel once you start to take away tradition from the therapy, you are in serious danger of losing its spiritual aspect and turning it into nothing more than a physical therapy with no spiritual component. This can also be seen in the UK with Reiki. Reiki has now been accepted as a mode of healing which is now taught in some colleges, so it doesn't matter about how *ready* or how *good* you are or how *connected* you are to the source. Anyone can become a Reiki 2 practitioner or master, which I feel is a great loss as it removes the true Reiki master from

his role and places it in the hands of others who perhaps have no spirituality about them at all. Reiki was not built on physical concepts but spiritual concepts and was shared not with everyone, but shared with those who were deemed responsible and ready to take on such responsibility. Those learning Reiki in college are not necessarily ready to take on any responsibility let alone spiritual responsibility and ethics. I fail to see the connection between non-spiritual people, many of whom are still smoking, drinking heavily, taking recreational drugs, using foul language and sometimes sleeping around, and Reiki! The two just do not go together and although that does not paint a picture of all students, it is a good picture of many. The habits mentioned do not offer a purified vessel. They reflect a strong connection to the ways of the world, not the ways of the spirit.

Education of alternative medicine needs to be, in my opinion, based around teaching the general public that we are multi-faceted beings and that we need to treat our entire being, on all levels. If the general public and orthodox practitioners could widen their understanding of the person being a multi-faceted being, the healthcare offered would be more beneficial and holistic. Education would help people to understand that the two branches are of the same tree, both different ends of the same spectrum. There needs to be harmony and recognition in the meaning and attainment of wholeness, well-being, an acceptance of that which is different, and a respect for all methods of healthcare. Orthodox practitioners and much of the wider public need to understand that the alternative field isn't less than, or more than, and that we need both sides of the coin or both ends of the spectrum in order to create wholeness. We need mutual respect, remembering that we are all part of the whole, all part of the same sacred circle of life.

If we start to look at how we can use alternative medicine to bring about the best effect for the individual, we will see that the best way to assist in achieving holistic health in any patient is via a thorough investigation into the signs and symptomatology of each patient. Look at the table of investigation below for ways of accomplishing that.

Table of Investigation

Look At	Skin Color – Condition of Hair – Nail and Tongue Diagnosis – Breathing Pattern – Body Language – Posture – Signs of imbalance or sickness
Listen To	What the Client is Saying - What the Client <i>isn't</i> Saying - How they Speak – Their Tone – Their Speed
Smell	Do they have Body Odor (which could be them not showering because of a low mood, or because they can't afford the water bill, or it could be no money for toiletries) Halitosis?
Touch/Feel (With Permission)	Check for <i>Ah-Shi</i> points – General Aches and Pains – Stiffness – Lack of Mobility – Excessive Heat or Cold spots – Check Pulse – Blood Pressure
Ask	Family Health History – Their Health History - Their View on their Illness – Symptomatology – What they Wish to Achieve
Deal with the whole-being	Don't forget the spiritual life, their beliefs and how that may impact what you as a practitioner needs to do or how you need to structure your session
Plan of Action	What Therapies would be Best Suited – Are they Happy with your Suggestion

Then, when we have a platform on which to build, we can more effectively choose the appropriate therapies. It may only require a couple of therapies, it may require more, but if we can choose the best therapy for our client or patient we will get the best results. We may need to employ some

massage for general relaxation, accompanied with some minor osteopathy to correct certain ailments; they may require a supplement for their diet along with acupuncture, or their diet may need changing altogether via the educating of the patient. If the patient can understand the *Why* it is needed and can *See* and *Feel* the benefit of what the practitioner is saying and prescribing, they are much more likely to continue any home advice given and come to follow-up appointments and, on top of this, success builds trust.

As an example: I had a client who was suffering from much stress, daily headaches, limited mobility in the neck and was feeling much older than what she was. Simply by offering a back and shoulder massage with aromatherapy oils (to help relieve the stress), blended with some minor manipulation on the cervical aspect of the spine, we managed to completely prevent further headaches, and as a result, she had the full range of motion in her neck restored. Her home advice was to complete one to three yoga postures which I taught her, to assist in the maintenance of flexibility of her neck and shoulders, which she practised religiously as she knew how much the therapies helped her. She was advised to become mindful of her posture whilst working at her desk, and to change the seating to something more supportive. She followed all the advice and, based on the success of her four sessions, she felt she was able to trust in my advice.

Integrating alternative medicine should be a natural process which flows consistently from visit to visit and patient to patient. It may be necessary to change some of the therapies as you go along in order to stay abreast of problems and, as such, offer preventative medicine rather than just a cure.

When we look at our patient we need to see them as spiritual beings, not just physical beings, even if they don't see themselves as spiritual beings. When we can remember that we are more than our body, we will remember that there is another aspect to our being that is just as important as the physical aspect. Just as we have an anatomy of our physical body we also have an anatomy of our

spiritual body and unless we have a basic understanding of such anatomy, we cannot hope to offer a full and complete treatment to ourselves or our patients.

One aspect of the spiritual body could be seen as the *yin* and *yang*; it could also be seen as the positive and negative energy that runs throughout our energetic system. According to the theory of yin and yang, the entire universe is based upon the balance of these two extremes. Yin and yang are inter-dependant and fluid. They are able and need to flow; when the yin of something recedes, the yang increases in order to fill that space, so to speak, and vice versa. This could also be seen as the tidal ebb of our spiritual body. Yin and yang exist in all that has life force. Just as the tides of the ocean move back and forth, so do the tides of yin and yang. Due to this natural polarity, nothing in the universe is completely stable, as its natural flow permits all things to change; as the immediate environment changes, it can affect the balance of yin and yang.

Yin is often seen as being dark, female, passive, damp etc., whereas yang is seen as being light, active, male, dry or hot. When these same principles are put into practice in regards to a patient's presentation, we are able to define whether yin or yang is deficient or in excess, and in which organ or organs it corresponds to and, therefore, we are able to choose our treatments based on the correcting of the immediate problem or cause. So instead of treating six patients the same way for an ulcer, we would not see the ulcer as the issue to be corrected (although that **doesn't** mean we cannot offer temporary relief for its symptoms), but we would see the imbalance of the yin and yang in respect to the corresponding organ or organs. When we can see the symptomatology of a patient as an effect rather than a cause, it will assist us in correcting those same imbalances which are within, which will assist in the re-establishing of balance. Once the body is in a state of balance, there will be great health or general well-being. Over the years there has been much talk about *Life Energy*, otherwise known as *Qi*, or *Chi*. There are said to be nine types of Qi which are divided into three different levels or categories. The type of Qi that can be stimulated or manipulated with

acupuncture is called *Jing Qi*, which is the vital energy that circulates the channels regulating blood and digestion, etc. Life energy or Qi runs through all things. We are all made of the same *stuff* as the universe. In the theory of Tao, it talks about the essence of a formless, nameless force that moves all things, or which some call the mother of substance. It runs through each one of us, it runs through the trees, the flowers, the animals, it is a conscious intelligence that operates on the Earth, in the Heavens and through all living creatures including humans. We are all individual microcosms and all part of the big macrocosm, all part of the same substance. We all come from the same ocean of life energy. What is part of me is part of you and what is part of you is part of me. We all hold the same life energy within us, we are all individual drops of the same ocean, the only difference is that some of us are less aware of where or what we have come from.

If we all understood our relationship to the whole, we would perhaps feel better about ourselves, we would perhaps feel more empowered, more able to achieve, more worthy of love and respect. How we view ourselves, or how we view where we came from, has a direct impact on our ability to achieve that which we desire in life. If we truly know and understand the principles in which that same universal energy flows through us all, we would have a better knowledge of the power that is within each one of us. If each person could find their own power, they would perhaps spend less time trying to gain power from outside of themselves.

Nature represents, and is, a reflection of balance. If we take the time to observe nature, we can learn how to obtain balance within our own lives. The observance of nature will assist us all to live in a balanced and appropriate manner, it will assist us into a place where we can and do feel full of life energy. If we permit it into our lives, it will move us to the place we need to be in life in order to grow and evolve.

Disease of our organs can be said to happen when our spiritual body is out of sync, out of balance, neglected or malnourished. Disease can be said to be not a cause but a result, a result of an

unhealthy body both in and out. When we look to heal the disease, we fail the patient and ourselves, for if the disease really IS caused by deeper issues such as an out of balance spiritual body, or repetitive negative mind loops, then we need to look to heal the deeper issues otherwise we fool ourselves. If the disease is because of the dis-eased or stressed spiritual or physical body and we fail to bring healing on a deeper level, then will it not manifest itself once again in the same organ, or even manifest itself as something else or somewhere else? How many times have we heard about someone being cleared of cancer, just to find that it came out somewhere else? And yes, it could have been coincidence, but then again we have to entertain the idea that it could also have been because the original defect was based in the spiritual body or at a molecular level within the physical body and was not healed.

Healing the whole body is paramount if we want to give the best service to our patient or even to ourselves. We have to refrain from seeing the physical aspect of the human body as a separate entity or sole entity and start to treat the whole; and we can only do that when we come to terms with the different aspects that we have as human beings.

So let us look at those different aspects again, but on a different level. Our physical body is an amazing piece of equipment. It permits us to move in all directions. It provides a home for our mind and has a phenomenal ability to heal itself when in the right environment. The psychological aspect of our body, the mind, is an amazing aspect, a phenomenal part of us, and as I believe that we are all part of the *thing* that created all, part of that same creative force, it stands to reason that I also believe that the same creative energy runs through each one of us. We are all part of the same circle of life, all animated through the same substance, that same essence that created everything, and that it is simply a matter of us recognizing that the divine essence (call it what you may) is within us as well as around us, working through us to the extent of which we can comprehend *It*. The greater the understanding of our inherent strength and capabilities, the more likely we are to be able to foster

those same strengths, those same capabilities and the greater the chance of us being able to embrace the qualities of that which gives us life, that which animates us. As we start to look past the physical, we start to unravel the inexplicable magnificence of our being, the physical body we can both see and comprehend, but the mind we can't see but that we have, through science and psychology, began to grasp the basis of which it lives and acts within us and for us. But as we delve deeper still into our being, we come to the less understood aspects of our being; our soul, our spirit, and although they are not necessarily what this is about, they are however an integral aspect of our being which we need to have a basic understanding of.

So if we have and live through such an amazing piece of equipment, how can we maximize the activation of the self-healing components? One way I have managed to foster the activation of the self-healing components is through the use of trance states otherwise known as altered states of consciousness. I have found on many occasions that during an actual healing session, if the client is guided into a trance state or altered state of consciousness, it precipitates the healing process. But one may ask – *what is a trance? What is an altered state of consciousness?* Which leads onto the use of hypnosis in order to precipitate healing.

Hypnosis

According to **The London College of Hypnosis**^{4-Resources}

*Hypnosis is an inferred psychophysiological state characterized by increased suggestibility, and is thought to be an altered state of consciousness, **Hypnotism** is the study and use of suggestion with or without the presence of hypnosis, while **hypnotherapy** is a form of therapy in which the use of hypnotism constitutes the core of the treatment.*

Simply speaking hypnosis is an altered state of consciousness. Clinical hypnosis or hypnotherapy, therefore, is the use of an altered state of consciousness, or trance, for therapeutic endpoint. This means people are not treated with hypnosis but are treated in hypnosis. It can be said that hypnotic states are relaxing. They permit one to let go of preconceived ideas and become open to suggestion or direction, which acts upon the subconscious part of the mind, bypassing rational thought. It is by working with or in the subconscious aspect of the mind that the healer or hypnotist can help the client into new awareness, new understanding and healing. It is whilst being open to suggestions or influences that the mental, physical, emotional AND spiritual aspects of the individual can be orchestrated in such a way as to receive insight and wisdom.

From a shamanic healing perspective, or at least from my own experience working in the field of shamanic healing, the above isn't so much about planting suggestions in the client, but more about soliciting the suggestions from within them and acting upon the messages that the body as a whole is giving us. As the client relaxes, they pass through different levels of trance or states of consciousness which have a direct impact upon the brain waves. I will say at this point that the shaman, or shamanic healer, will also pass through a different state as they enter into a more relaxed and focused place in order to be more open and aware of changes of energy within their client. As their client relaxes deeply there will be a change in brain waves, and it is this change which will help to facilitate growth and transformation.

Science Daily states,^{5-Resources}

Alpha waves are electromagnetic oscillations in the frequency range of 8-12 Hz arising from synchronous and coherent (in phase/constructive) electrical activity of large groups of neurons in the human brain.

As the client starts to relax deeply and starts to enter into a deeper state of consciousness, you can notice rapid eye movement (REM).

According to **Medical News Today**,^{6-Resources}

Rapid eye movement sleep, or REM, is one of the five stages of sleep that most people experience nightly. It is characterized by quick, random movements of the eyes and paralysis of the muscles.

With practice you can tell when a client is at an optimal level or in an optimal space, ready and receptive, by using calibration skills which enable you to tune in to what is going on with the client energetically on all levels. I have found by experience that being able to sense what your client is feeling or perhaps thinking isn't necessarily about being psychic, but may simply be about calibrating one's energy to the client's energy, remembering that we are made up of the same vibration and light. When we permit ourselves to tune in to another's energetic frequency, we permit ourselves to truly feel what they feel, and sometimes see what they see. This alone permits us to have a deep compassion, one that we can act upon because we can then understand on a much deeper level, and sometimes understand more fully the experience which often words fail to reflect. This intense sense of connectedness and love creates a deep compassion which extenuates any differences and further creates the desire to facilitate healing and change.

Another method I adopted for certain clients, namely young children twelve-years or older or clients that found it difficult to remain in a relaxed state, was bio feedback. I used it to establish a rate of relaxation in order for me to be able to facilitate healing at an optimal time. Bio feedback measures stress responses via a monitor with electrodes that can be clipped onto the fingers. By using the bio feedback, it enabled me to be able to measure how relaxed or what type of trance my young client was in, and to gauge how stressful she was at any given time. Having such accurate and crucial feedback enabled me to employ measures to ensure that my client felt no unnecessary

psychological stress due to the traumatic problem that we were dealing with. Using bio feedback I was able to facilitate change and healing much more rapidly because I was not relying on the client's limited verbal feedback. This also works well for adults who perhaps have limited words, or are unable to express themselves or how they are feeling.

Trance States or Altered States of Consciousness

For me, there are two main types of trance: a *meditative* trance and a *hypnotic* trance. The two reach the same subconscious part of our mind but are brought about by different actions. A trance is a state of disassociation brought on by a *repetitive cognitive loop*. We go into a trance state because it is not necessary for our mind (consciousness) to put all its cognitive resources into maintaining a repetitive activity. This can happen any time of the day. A factory worker may just go through the motions of packing boxes; they have disassociated due to the repetitive cognitive loop, a repeated behaviour. They have gone into a trance. Day dreaming is a trance state, which is brought on by a repetitive cognitive loop. Any time you go into a trance, your mind is divided into two parts - the observing you and the automatic you. When you walk down the street, you do not have to think about how to walk. You automatically disassociate with walking and just do it, because you have done this activity thousands of times before, so only very little consciousness is required. The same happens when you drive the car. It is an automatic response, you can disassociate from it because you have done it for so long. The observing you is then free to think, dream (not whilst driving), create, whatever, whilst the automatic you is operating your legs or driving the car, or packing boxes etc.

The difference between a meditation trance and a hypnotic trance is what causes the trance generating loop or repetitive cognitive loop. If the loop is connected to a stimulus outside of your mind, like the voice of a hypnotist, healer, a clock, music, or from listening or speaking/singing

mantras etc., that is a *hypnotic trance*. If the loop is completely inside your mind, such as repeating a mantra to yourself, or focusing on silence, that is a *meditation trance* or *meditative trance*.

So a trance is a state of consciousness which can be brought on by an internal repetitive cognitive loop (meditative trance), or by an external repetitive cognitive loop (hypnotic trance). In healing, I am working with the individual in a hypnotic trance as the repetitive cognitive loop is external to the individual i.e. music playing, me talking quietly, softly, hypnotically.

There are several known states of trance. The first two most people are aware of. The third trance, *theta*, is usually more associated with healing. The *delta* level some people enter into naturally but is not often used in therapy or healing. So let us take a quick look at the different levels of trance.

Beta Level

This level is the level we use when using machinery. We are fully present, focused, our mind is not permitted to wander as it could be dangerous. There is no room for day dreaming. We have to be alert.

Alpha Level

This level is used by everyone at some time or another. It is the same as day dreaming, or getting lost in a book or movie. We are fully engrossed in what we are doing but are still aware of our surroundings and can dip in and out of this level of consciousness. We quite often do this when performing routine tasks, e.g. walking the dog. Our mind is focused on something else as we meander effortlessly through the park, not watching where we are going, or at least not consciously. We are using automatic pilot; this is often done when washing dishes, working in a factory, ironing, or any other chore that requires little attention.

Alpha is a good level to be at in our spiritual practice as it allows us to switch off from everyday happenings and be open to receiving messages and guidance from Spirit or our Higher Self.

Theta Level

This level happens at sleep where we experience *rapid eye movement* (REM). When not asleep, this level acts as a creative and receptive level where the individual is able to accept positive suggestions without the critical faculty interfering. An example could be, when we are in beta level and someone is saying something positive to us which could help us to change our situation. We will probably start to analyse what has been said and why they said it etc. If the same positive suggestion was said whilst in the theta level of consciousness, the positive suggestion would slip straight into the subconscious mind without all the thinking, without all the analysing. This is a good level to be in to receive music or ideas for painting or, once again, to receive guidance from Spirit/God. This level is also used during hypnotherapy and although the client is in a deeper level of trance, they are still aware of their surroundings and are still able to bring themselves back to full consciousness at any time.

Delta Level

This is a much deeper level of trance. This trance can be reached during profound sleep and is also the trance of those who enter somnambulism. Somnambulism is a trance state used by people who sleep walk or talk. There will be no memory of sleep walking or talking as the conscious mind is asleep.

During this level you can also use positive suggestions which will be received without critical thinking. This level of trance should only be used by professionals. You need to maintain extra high ethics whilst working with a client at this level as they are extremely vulnerable to you, as they will not remember what has been said on awakening unless instructed to do so by the therapist. This is why it has been suggested that should someone be sleep walking, that you instruct them to go back to bed, and they will.

This level of trance has been used to find information about the past, about past lives, but you need to ensure you do not abuse your client's trust. If working inappropriately at this level, you could cause psychological or emotional damage. This level is also said to be the level in which spirits can enter and use the body. With this in mind, the therapist needs to ensure that the environment they are working in is a safe place. There needs to be a good, healthy relationship between therapist/practitioner/healer and client/patient. For this level of work to be optimal, a lot of trust is required from the client. Whilst in a state of altered consciousness, (i.e. a state other than beta and alpha to some degree) the processing of our mind or critical thinking is reduced and thus allows positive affirmations to sink straight into our subconscious without us using our criticizing faculties. In the same way, the removal of negative energy or the imparting of positive energy is thus not interfered with as the patient is not in their normal consciousness to use critical faculties. Hence, when I encourage a client to see healing energy pushing their negative energy or emotions out of their body, they are not able to turn round and say, '*How is that going to work? This isn't real.*' Instead, they are more likely to follow the instructions expectantly BUT always conscious of what is being said and done to some degree, and always in control and able to end the session at any time. This whole process facilitates the healing, but the word healing is used in such a broad context that it requires some sort of explanation.

Healing of a Spiritual Nature

Healing comes in many shapes and forms, whether that be as acupuncture, Pranic healing or even yoga, but here we are going to narrow the lens down and focus on a handful of healing practices, and although there are many healing practices that work really well, we will look at those later on under *alternative therapies*. The ones we will look briefly at here are often termed as being part of *the healing arts*. These healing practices play a major role in holistic health, however they are

largely discredited mainly due to lack of scientific evidence. Time is slowly reversing this grave error as people slowly warm up to the idea that we are, in fact, electromagnetic beings in an electromagnetic world all interconnected on many levels. If science tells us something is real, we believe it, because science is said to be based on factual evidence. YET, when those same scientists come up with new evidence for or against a theory, they are permitted to change their minds, their views, their beliefs, based on the new set of facts. But the truth is, if they were facts in the first place then the conclusion would not change! So they don't necessarily base their results upon facts, but perhaps more accurately what they consider the closest to what they deem as facts. We must learn as individuals to not simply believe based on someone else's findings, no matter how intelligent they are, no matter how knowledgeable they seem to be, especially when it comes to the spiritual world and healing, because the spirit world is not based on human facts nor human understanding. You cannot, no matter who you are, try to claim that you fully understand the workings of the spirit realm, the energetic world, when our minds are riveted in the physical world not the spirit world. It is only when we consciously choose to let go of our worldly knowledge and embrace the more spiritual things in life that we can ever hope to reach deep into our own spiritual knowing, our own spiritual belonging, our own unconscious mind, which is nothing more than part of our conscious mind which has been temporarily forgotten or sleeping just under the surface of our knowing. Only then can we reclaim our lost or forgotten knowledge of who and what we are and what we are part of.

For many years, scientists claimed apples were good for us. Then, suddenly, they weren't because the acid in the apples had the potential to dissolve our teeth! With purely facts and no wisdom, we lose sight of reality, we lose sight of the bigger picture. We have to start letting go of the mind-set that we live in a physical world, or a black and white world, and start to embrace the fact that we live as spirit beings in a spirit world full of color and hue, and that we are just here in a physical vehicle for just a short time. And perhaps the whole reason we are here is to learn to remember, to

wake up and make our way back to the center, the center of all creation, the center of ourselves and the center of one another.

If we desire to help another through the use or application of spiritual techniques, we must first clean up our own act, for we can only deliver purity through a pure vessel. If you pour good wine into a dirty glass, will it not taint that which is in the glass? So many people claim to be healers in one form or another, yet they continue to be addicted to drugs, alcohol, even sex; they eat unhealthy food all day long, smoke copious amounts of tobacco and spend much time consumed by T.V. often watching soapies or violent movies, and listening to music that lacks peace, love or compassion. I never could understand the idea of watching violence for entertainment and especially when you are supposed to be a beholder of light, of harmony, of peace. If we want to make and be the difference in people's lives, in the universe, we need to stop playing around with spiritual things. We need to stop pretending to live spiritual lives in the face of others, whilst behind closed doors continuing on living our lives like the rest of the human race. It is not about being better than another, it is about authenticity. It is about walking your walk not just talking it. If we have been set aside for a spiritual journey into the healing arts, we must first clean up our own backyard. We must first heal our own hurts, our own rejections, our own pain. We cannot truly hope to help another on a journey we have not traveled. Yes, we can guide them and point them in the right direction, but nothing replaces the knowledge, the expertise, the wisdom, the courage, the strength of (s)he who chooses to walk through his own gates of hell, face his or her own often self-created demons, and then have the strength, the tenacity to come out the other side, changed, healed and whole; and then take that learning to help another.

I encourage anyone who is or desires to be a healer: seek counseling of some sort and work through the issues of your childhood, and if you are going to say you don't have any, you need it more than others, because if you cannot see the dross that remains hidden in your heart or mind, you will never

clear it. We are all human, and we all carry *stuff* as I like to call it. Our own personal healing journey will never stop. It is an ongoing journey towards enlightenment which will not be reached in this life time. We become enlightened by our journey and our willingness to change and heal, but enlightenment comes when we cross the threshold, when we pass through the veil into the light. Enlightenment, like wisdom, isn't measured by how many hours you studied but by how many hearts and souls you touched in a lifetime, how many hearts and souls you accompanied on a healing path. The light of your crown chakra will shine in direct proportion to your growth. If people cannot see a halo, we are not shining brightly enough, which simply means we have not fully become enlightened. In order for one to receive a full healing they need to be open and have trust in the healer, in the process, so that the healing can be facilitated on ALL levels. I have offered healing for many years, and I have also been a professional counselor for many years, so I have much experience on the importance of healing the whole - body mind and spirit.

As a counselor, I can see that counseling plays a vital role in the healing of the individual. Many people, but not all, need to talk about their problems. They need to talk about the things that are eating away at them and presenting themselves physically within their bodies. I have had many successful sessions with clients from such therapy.

HOWEVER, and there is a however, this alone, as with any other therapy of any kind, IS NOT ENOUGH. There has to be some spiritual healing for the individual client or patient to be able to receive a full healing. Many of our emotions, our hurts, are held within our chakras and our energy field, and they require a safe removal. I use *transpersonal therapy/counseling* for many of my clients as it adds the necessary spiritual dimension to the talking therapies. Transpersonal therapy acts somewhat like *shamanic healing*; it permits meditation, visualization, imagination, color, sound, texture, extraction, regression. It permits the client to conceptualize that which they

otherwise would not be able to comprehend. When we have brought something into our awareness, we can then deal with it, heal it, and release it, whatever is required.

Disease

A disease is said to be a disorder of the structure or function of a human, animal or plant, especially one that produces a specific set of symptoms or one that affects a specific location of the structure or function, and that is not simply a direct result of physical injury. Because of its nature to be similar in most people, and because of its inherent activities upon such structure or function, we can safely assume this to be consistent and so meets the term disease. In other words, it is a reflection that your structure or functions are not at ease, they are at dis-ease, out of synchronicity.

According to the medical dictionary from the *Free Dictionary*, disease is *a pathological process having a characteristic set of signs and symptoms which may affect the body in whole or part or may affect its aetiology or pathology.*

So if disease can affect not just our physical structural anatomy but can cause a disruption at a cellular level, then it stands to reason, surely, that it could also disrupt the flow of energy on a spiritual level; so any necessary healing needs delivering on all levels not just the physical or psychological level.

Healing the Whole Body

We seem to have reached a milestone in civilization where, finally, many medical people from the orthodox medicine side, as well as many non-medical people, have woken up to the idea that we are multi-facet beings and that to bring healing to a body means to bring healing to their soul. We have

to understand the whole. We can treat the individual parts and it will have some effect on the whole, but we have to ultimately treat the whole person. But this isn't really a new milestone. This is people awakening and returning to the truth. They are finally letting go of the illusion of one body and one mind and remembering that it is also one spirit, and within that personal *oneness* is the realization that it is only a microcosmic piece of life which makes up the whole macrocosm. We are slowly but surely returning to our roots. We are awakening to the truth of what we are made of. Only when we understand our energetic being can we hope to heal all levels.

Bringing healing to our physical aspect may mean taking medication to help with symptoms and control, but that doesn't mean that that will need to be for life. Good health is a cycle. What you do today and how you treat yourself on any level will have a direct impact on how you function tomorrow, next week, next month etc. Bringing healing on a physical level may mean engaging in yoga or tai-chi or some other form of exercise that brings not only strong muscles but also engages your spiritual aspect. Diet plays a key role in health. You can't keep eating junk food, or keep living off tinned food, or keep feeding your sugar addictions and expect your body to keep going. We have to respect our physical limitations and nourish the body with adequate food and water and at times supplements, but even many supplements are filled with fillers and chemical constructs. Wisdom is always the key, and prevention is better than cure, but cure is better than disease and death; so if we embark on a spiritual path, our intuition will guide us into the best possible way to live our life on a physical level. Our intuition does not come with baggage. It does not carry around the hurts of our childhood, the abusive relationship, it does not live in fear or shame. Our intuition comes from a healthy part of our being and can be the guiding light which leads us from an unhealthy state to a healthy one. Carl Jung talks much about intuition and perfect synchronicity. He talks about how, if we are open and willing we can be led by intuition, and that when we are in tune with our intuition, divine coincidences occur, otherwise called synchronicity. All we have to do is be open and listen,

but sadly many people are too busy listening too and feeding their hurt and their ongoing mind chatter.

The mind is an amazing creative aspect of each one of us. Many use the power of their mind constructively, whilst others use it destructively. Many use it knowingly, others seem to be a slave of their own mind and their own thoughts. Our mind can become mind-full or mindful, the same word but with two very different connotations. In order to be free, one first needs to free themselves from the constraints of their own minds, their own limitations. Spirit/God/The Divine Essence once told me:

The prisoner frees no-one, not even himself. It isn't until the prisoner ceases to see the limitations of the cell and embraces the opportunities presented to them that they are able to free themselves.

In other words, we are all prisoners of our own mind, our own doing, and until we can accept the limitations of our cell, in this case our mind, and then see these same limitations as opportunities to grow, we will never become free. First we have to see the obstacle and see it as an opportunity in order to be able overcome it. The athlete cannot jump a hurdle if they don't know it exists!

Our minds are often like two wolves fighting for dominance. One day we are all positive and know what we need to do, the next day we are negative and can't be bothered to do that which we put our heart to yesterday; two wolves fighting for dominance and control. Many would say it is just a case of choosing to wake up happy, choosing to be positive; I personally feel that that is a very naive statement which often comes from those who just think that *thinking positive* will change all. For me, I believe it is much deeper than that. I believe it truly is a case of two wolves fighting for control, and that it is not just a case of think positive but more a case of the wolf you feed will be the wolf that wins. We have to feed the psychological aspect of our being, just as we feed our body. We cannot hope to move forward on any level if we fail to feed the mind. The mind is a hungry,

creative vat that requires something to be put into it. It is there waiting to work for us or against us depending on what we feed it. But it is not that our mind is willing to bring harm to us. It is not that our mind is willing to cause illness or even fear. The mind itself is nothing more than a servant of our thoughts, our thoughts being seeds ready for sowing, and what we sow we will reap!

This can be a hard lesson for many to learn, and that doesn't necessarily mean that everything that happens to us is our own making; even with this I feel we have to have some intelligence and not get carried away with a blaming of all things on all people. Our minds create that which we feed it. We need to look at that which we are looking at and listening too, that which we are watching or hearing. In other words, are we filling our mind with violence, rape, abuse, foul language, disrespect, judgement, criticism, hatred, jealousy or are we filling our mind and ears with love, harmony, peace, gratefulness, appreciation, acceptance, compassion, empathy? The latter tends to come more from participating in spiritual applications, from reading spiritual texts, from developing a relationship with the Divine. The less desirable is often fed from watching hours of T.V., playing console games for hours on end, reading fictional books and fantasizing about them, listening to music from musicians who sing about such things. We have to take control of our choices and not only learn from them but also foster the desire to be a more holy person, a more spiritual person, and that isn't about being self-righteous but about being self-actualizing, which goes back to Abraham Maslow and meeting your individual needs.

Now we come to the emotions. Oh, how the emotions can be like a tempestuous sea, like a roving, calm wave embracing the sand or like a wild, unprecedented wave of rage and torment. The sea reflects emotions; and we ourselves are subject to that same tempestuous emotion. The weather we have in our own lives which may be from our past, our present or even our fears about the future all have a direct impact on how we feel. If we can control our emotions, we can control our mind and our tongue; when we can control our tongue, we can cease whip-lashing others out of anger and

hurt. If we can control our mind and our tongue, we can control our whole being. When we have tamed the wolves within, we can much more easily continue to feed the good wolf, and slowly but surely the less desirable wolves will die of hunger and thirst. But be not fooled; do not think that you have conquered them forever, for the skeletons of your past, your present, your future will lie scattered in the depth of your mind, not as a hindrance but as a reminder that you are not invincible and that at any time, you can bring back to life the dead wolves. As **Clarissa Pinkola Estes PhD** 1992 ^{9-Bibliography} says in her amazing book *Women Who Run with the Wolves*, '*You can breathe life back into them.*'

If we look deeply enough we will find other skeletons, skeletons we have forgotten about. Some may be good skeletons, skeletons that we need to actively breathe life back into, and as we breathe the breath of life back into them, we need to shout to them and tell them to awake, and as we watch we will find the bones slowly re-join themselves and start to move. When life has been breathed back into these bones we must continue to feed them, whether that be a skeleton of love or hope or even peace, feed them like we have never fed them before, and eventually we will see they suddenly have meat on them, they are rejuvenating themselves, ready to be reintegrated into our being.

We so often permit the good things to die while we keep the bad things alive. We feed them with fear, negativity, doubt, hopelessness, unforgiveness, hatred and wonder why we feel a lack of self-confidence, a lack of self-esteem. We wonder why our life continues to repeat old mind loops, old behaviour patterns, old cycles and never quite manages to get off the roundabout to hell and onto the cycle of change. Change does not just happen simply because you said you want it to happen. Change is an action word, and it requires one thing transforming into another which takes work. It takes work and commitment. But sadly, many have sown so much negativity into their own lives that they have themselves so deeply embedded in their own quagmire. They fail to see the light of

hope, they fail to see that with much work they can still change their lives. So many people are so busy looking at the tree they fail to see the forest. We have often spent years destroying our mind, our body, our emotions and even our spiritual being. Do we really think we can fix it overnight? It may take a while before we feel the difference, but are we not all worthy of such self-respect as we embark on our individual path towards self-actualization?

Healing the emotions is a vital step in healing. Often the healing of emotions can come from forgiveness to self and others. It can come from embracing the *talking therapies*, counseling or psychological interventions of which there is a wide choice. Never underestimate the power of talking through your pain. It can bring wisdom and enlightened moments for personal understanding, it can show you things that you would never otherwise have known, it can bring healing on a very deep level, but only if you and the therapist are truly authentic. It is the authenticity that permits the loving, compassionate space, the safe space that you require in order to open up and face your fears, your pain, your wounds, whether that be in the heart, the mind or the soul. We have to want to heal in order to revisit the pain, but like a child with a cut we have to be willing to permit someone to help us to clean the wound in order to facilitate a true healing. We so often clean or not clean the wound and apply a Band-Aid. It helps to keep other impurities out, but it does not stop us becoming infected from the debris that was left in the wound to start with. If you want that calm sea of emotions, you must first deal with the earthquakes that are happening at a deeper level. Many will say, '*God will heal me,*' and I completely agree. God will heal us all, but it won't be by waving a magic wand. It will not be through telling us to buy a staff and strike a rock three times. It will be by giving us the opportunities to heal; in other words, we can actively choose to forgive someone, and if we have asked for healing in regards to unforgiveness towards someone, we can bet our bottom dollar that God will orchestrate a divine coincidence, a divine meeting, a divine moment of synchronicity in order for us to practice our desire for healing.

As I believe that we are all part of the *thing* that created all, part of that same creative force, it stands to reason that I also believe that that same creative energy runs through each one of us. *We are all part of the same circle of life.* All animated through the same substance, that same essence that created everything. It is simply a matter of recognizing that the divine essence (call it what you may), is within us as well as around us, working through us to the extent of which we can comprehend *It*.

Spiritual healing plays a major role in holistic health. It is vital that in order for a client to receive a full healing it needs to be facilitated on ALL levels. I have offered healing for many years so I have much experience on the importance of healing the whole - body mind and spirit.

There are many therapies that can and do offer healing for the body and mind, even for the emotions, but to truly reach into the soul, into the spirit of the individual, into that deep unconscious place that holds the secrets to our lives, the keys to unlock the doors to freedom, one needs to embark on a deeper healing, a healing that is based in the spiritual aspect of the individual and supported by the spiritual realm. So let us now look at a handful of effective healing methods that work on the spiritual level.

Some Types of Healing

Absent / Distant or Remote Healing – Absent or distant healing is often referred to in relation to Reiki. Absent/distant healing is an option for those who are not able to visit the Reiki practitioner or healer. They may be at home in a quiet environment and aware that the healing is going to take place at a certain time, they may not. Either way, absent/distant healing is said to be effective because it is working on an energetic level, with the practitioner acting as a vessel and therefore sending positive, healing energy to the individual energetically. Remote healing is said to work very

much in the same way, albeit differently because although the shaman or shamanic practitioner is still working within the constraints of energy, (s)he is also said to be working within the individual. Often shamans will spiritually journey to another place or time in order to find out what the problem is and how to fix it. Just as there is a huge difference between a Reiki treatment and a shamanic treatment, there is also a huge difference between absent healing and remote healing when it comes to healing the individual who is not present at the time of healing. Shamans are said to be able to enter the person's body or whereabouts by way of projecting themselves energetically or by visualization in order to remove unwanted objects (hurts, etc.) in order to bring freedom and health. So, unlike Reiki which is more about channeling positive energy into the client, remote healing is working on a shamanic level and not only channeling positive energy into the client but also using other methods such as extractions or ceremony and rituals to bring about a transformation on many levels. It has also been said that a shaman can connect to the client via throwing a spiritual thread which connects to the sick person, and this same thread is used as a pathway so that the shaman can walk to the person and perform the healing. I have used what could be deemed as *voodoo* via remote healing. What I have been led to do is to use a representation of the person. I often use a soft cotton *voodoo doll* and perform ceremony and ritual over it, anchoring it as the individual after cleansing it. This is then followed by chants or singing a soul song, a soul song being words to a rhythm which naturally flows out of me, I may be led to drum, play the flute or use any other healing method. This is one such occasion where it is necessary to trust in your intuition and the guiding force within. One method I have been led to use on many occasions in remote healing is acupuncture. In these cases, I replace the cotton voodoo doll with a plastic doll used in acupuncture training, I use it because it has all the meridians on it and all the acupuncture points which then guide me as to where I need to *needle* them. This method was used on a young lady who had three or four ulcers in her eye. Orthodox medicine couldn't heal her and they were looking at operating on her eye as she had lost much of her vision. Within about four or five sessions, all the ulcers had

gone and she had her vision restored. This lady was amazed, and so was her doctor. The results for this wasn't purely because of remote acupuncture on the eye, but because of the whole healing sessions which were spent *tracking* and *removing* imprints, hurts, etc. from the entire energetic body; but as with all things, it also comes down to the connection the healer/shaman has with the divine source and the purity of which they are living their life. I happen to be a vowed eremite working shamanically so I live my life very much *away* or *separate* from normal life.

Pranic Healing – comes from the Sanskrit word *Prana* meaning *breath, life force, vital principle*. You will find the term *Prana* talked about extensively in yoga, it has been recognized as a primary source of life. Prana is an intrinsic part of Indian medicine and other healing modalities. In Chinese medicine it is referred to as *Chi* or *Qi*, in Polynesia it is called *Mana*, and in a broad sense, from a Christian perspective, it is called the *God force* or *divine energy*, used predominantly in relation to the source of life which runs through *living* beings; many Christians believe that that same *Prana* or *God force* does *not* run through inanimate objects. Pranic healing works primarily with our breath but is often combined with mantras, visualizations and the use of color. Although Pranic healing may use color, there is a separate healing therapy called *chromo therapy* or more commonly known as *color therapy*. Chromo therapists are said to be able to use light in the form of color to bring about a balanced state of being through the balancing of the client's energy: And in regards to the use of mantras in Pranic healing; mantras are breathed in and out with rhythm and control in order to bring about stability and healing. Pranic healing is gentle and relaxing and is a good accompaniment to other healing practices; although effective for many clients, as a standalone treatment used with visualizations and color, some clients will encounter difficulties due to their problematic, or perceived problematic creativity in the use of visualizations which could have an impact on the treatment and possibly even their confidence to participate. I have personally found

that if a client has difficulty *seeing* a color, it is helpful to give them a silk scarf of the color you wish them to visualize. Silk is a beautiful fabric to touch. It has a nice soothing effect on our senses, and by using silk to put them in touch with their senses, it appears to assist them in the visualizing of the color. The silk seems to indirectly affect, via the necessary color, the pre-frontal cortex.

Pre-frontal Cortex^{6-Appendices} *In mammalian brain anatomy, the pre-frontal cortex (PFC) is the cerebral cortex which covers the front part of the frontal lobe. Many authors have indicated an integral link between a person's will to live, their personality, and the functions of their pre-frontal cortex. This brain region has been implicated in planning complex cognitive behaviour, personality expression, decision making and moderating social behaviour. The basic activity of this brain region is considered to be the orchestration of thoughts and actions in accordance with internal goals. The most typical psychological term for functions carried out by the pre-frontal cortex area is executive function. Executive function relates to the ability to differentiate among conflicting thoughts, determining good and bad, better and best, same and different, future consequences or current activities, working toward a defined goal, prediction of outcomes, expectation based on actions, and social “control” (the ability to suppress urges that, if not suppressed, could lead to socially unacceptable outcomes). The frontal cortex supports concrete rule learning. More anterior regions along the rostro-caudal axis of the frontal cortex support rule learning at higher levels of abstraction - Wikipedia*

When we can assist our clients in the overcoming of obstacles, whether real or perceived, we can help them further along in or on their journey to self-actualization. From a spiritual perspective, if we are going to assist our client via working with their pre-frontal cortex, we also need to work with the regional chakra – which in this case is the *ajna* or *brow* chakra. The related color is indigo and the use of this chakra is for the brain, eyes, truth, intelligence, enlightenment, delusion, depression, and stress. When we treat a client, or even ourselves, we MUST remember to treat on all levels and from all sides.

Mantric Healing – comes from the word *mantra* meaning *a word* or *words* which have been strung together to facilitate healing through sound and vibration. One of the most famous and renowned mantras is ‘OM’, which is said to be a mystic syllable and is considered to be the most sacred of mantras. Mantric healing works on different levels and, once again, is considered gentle and relaxing. At *spiritvoyage.com*^{7-Resources} Ramdesh Kaur shares a beautiful mantra which is said to grab onto the healing elixir of the Divine and allow you to steer it into a particular direction - either into yourself, into another person, the whole planet, or anything on which you focus your intention. The words to the beautiful mantra are: Ra Ma Da Sa Sa Say So Hung. It is said to mean the following:

Ra – means the sun and connecting with that frequency gives you energy.

Ma – means the moon and it aligns you with receptivity.

Da – is the energy of the Earth, grounding you in your roots.

Sa – is infinity and as you chant this, your energy rises upwards and outwards, drawing in the healing of the universe.

When you chant *Sa* a second time, you pull the energy of infinity into you.

Say – is a way of honouring the all-encompassing Thou. It is personal, like a secret name for God.

So – is a vibration of merger.

Hung – is the infinite, the vibrating real. It is the essence of creation. (*So Hung* together means I am Thou).

Mantric healing is a tool which can be used to enhance other therapies or treatment or be used as a standalone therapy.

Reiki Healing – is a very gentle healing system. It requires very little input from the client. It is more about the client *being* and the practitioner *doing*. It works gently on emotions, but can still work on a deeper level. This tends to be the less *scary* option for people who perhaps have never had healing before. In traditional Reiki, although different methods may be employed, the only tools used are the practitioner's hands which act as a conductor for sacred energy.

Spiritual Healing – is still relatively gentle. It is a good way to work on all aspects of the client's being. Like Reiki, it requires minimal input from them, but they can benefit immensely from having input into the session. In spiritual healing, although different methods may be employed, such as the use of color and visualizations to assist in the removal of negative energy, the only tools used are the practitioner's hands.

Shamanic Healing – delves deep into the art of shamanism. It isn't always gentle, but that doesn't mean it can't be. It is a much deeper level of healing which works well on all levels. It can require input from the client, but that, too, is a choice. Shamanic healing works in and with the luminous energy field, otherwise known as the aura or auric field. It also works within the chakra system. Shamanic healing employs many different methods including, but not limited to, journeying, regression, extraction, visualization, breaking of ties, aura and chakra cleansing and balancing, spiritual counseling and even ceremony and rituals to mention just a few. Shamanic healing also employs several tools of which the practitioner or shaman will select, based on what the issue at hand is. The main tools of the shamanic practitioner or shaman will include a rattle, drum, smudge

stick, feathers, wands, staff and crystals to say the least. Shamanic healing, when executed by a fully trained shaman, can bring about a more intense healing than other methods.

There are many, many more healing practices, far too many to mention here. One good thing about healing is that we are able to offer healing not just on all levels, but also in a way that can work with all of our senses. The following table reflects some of the healing methods and the senses they can effect.

Table of Senses and Suggested Healing Methods

Sense	Alternative Medicine
Auditory	Sound healing which could include music, including music with repetitive loops for hypnosis and relaxation. Mantric healing, vibrational healing, Pranic healing (breath work), hypnosis, meditation, counseling.
Visual	Visualization, meditation, chromo therapy, hypnosis, Pranic healing, journeying.
Olfactory	Aromatherapy, visualization (past aromas), meditation, hypnosis.
Gustatory	Ascension eating - high vibrational food, herbal therapy (phytogenics), juicing therapy, supplement therapy, fasting, meditation, visualization.
Tactile	Massage therapy, yoga therapy, Reiki, shamanic healing, spiritual healing, Shiatsu, osteopathy, chiropractic.

We are very much sensory beings and we need to use those same senses to provoke and assimilate healing on a multidimensional level. The lake of experience runs deep. Many of us just skim the surface. We have to learn to look at the bigger picture and remember that the entire universe reflects us as beings, as spiritual beings. Lava reflects anger, volcanic eruptions reflect rage, the nurturing dolphin reflects our nurturing instinct, the air reflects the breath we breathe, the electromagnetic field reflects our electromagnetic field and our connectedness to it, the flowers reflect the seasons

and the butterfly reminds us to know what season of life we are in and that we all go through the cycle of: *life – death – birth - life*.

If we want to understand ourselves, if we sincerely desire to understand our fellow being and bring healing to a painful world, we have to be willing to learn. We need to open our eyes and look around, and realize that the very people that hurt us are the ones who need our help. It is easy to help and heal those whom we love or admire, but what about the ones who we don't like quite as much? We need to live in an impartial world, and we need to live in our own personal impartial world, sending out love to ALL beings, not just a few!

This concludes this chapter and we will now proceed to look on a much deeper level at one specific healing method and spiritual model, that of **shamanic healing**.

Chapter Three

SHAMANIC HEALING

So here we are at the central pivot of this learning. Everything spoken of so far has been to lay somewhat of a foundation for this chapter to rest on. It has given us a basic understanding of who and what we are individually and collectively within the universe. It has given us an idea of what we need in order to live in harmony with ourselves in a state of general well-being, but what it didn't do was delve deeper into one specific healing method – that of shamanic healing. That is what we are going to do now; look deeper with, hopefully, an unbiased view of an ancient healing method.

Shamanic healing has been around for thousands of years, not just in the Americas but around the world. It is sometimes dressed differently, it sometimes has different names, but the underlying philosophy remains the same. As shamanic healing relies heavily on the communing with other spirits in other realms that seems a good starting point.

Whether or not the spirit realm and spirits are real is a far reaching question for many, which brings with it complex answers and, often, inconceivable results for us as humans. The answer to such questions can have a major impact for our culturally shared beliefs, for the way we conduct ourselves in life, for how we relate to one another, to nature, and to all living things; such questions can and will impact on how we continue to exist from this point on. The difficulty we have here is that beliefs can and do change. What one believes today may not be what one believes tomorrow, and that is because beliefs are usually based on our communities' beliefs. They are often a culturally based and shared opinion that we have adopted as a child. As we grow, we often start to analyse our

beliefs and throw out the ones that no longer fit our understanding of life. So we can't base all things purely on beliefs as they are too easy to change.

But what I have found is that we can base many things on our personal understanding or our personal perspective, and although the same experience will be different for all, it will nonetheless give us some central themes that we hold in common. Questions like: *do we have a non-physical aspect that interacts with or affects our physical body?* Or, *do we have an aspect which has the ability to move freely on the earth without a physical vehicle?* Or even, *do we have a non-physical aspect that we can actually converse with and be heard?* Questions such as these may seem mind-boggling to some, but are pretty elementary to others. So we need to look at why it is mind-boggling to one and not the other, and if we look deeply enough or raise enough questions, we will see it comes down to experience. From experience, I can say spirits are real. I have seen the spirits of deceased individuals since I was five years old. From a mental health perspective and from one who trained in mental health, I can say with much conviction that I am not deluded, I am not suffering with a psychosis or other mental health issue and I do not use substances to bring about such occurrences. So if I am wrong, there must be some other reason for these occurrences. These sightings have occurred all throughout my life. I am not able to will them to happen and they don't happen all the time, but they do happen and they are natural occurrences that I have no control of. So with such experience throughout life, I cannot ever accept that spirit beings do not exist – they simply do and they exist in reality not in my imagination. To further support my theory, my experience and the theory of others, I will share one such experience which happened when I was only seventeen years old.

I was working in a nursing home for the elderly. I was working with a nurse at the time. It was late evening and we were turning an elderly man in his bed whilst changing his sheets. As I cradled the man in my arms so that the nurse could put the clean sheet under him, I felt something which is akin

to a breeze when it touches your face. What I felt passed straight through my body. I felt it come out of my back. The feeling was so strong that I naturally turned my head to see what it was. At that particular time, I didn't *see* anything. I only felt it. I knew what it was and said to the nurse, 'You don't need to rush, he has just died.' In complete disbelief the nurse laid the man back down to check him, and upon examination she was able to confirm that the man had passed quietly away. What I felt was his spirit passing through me as it left his body.

Experiences like that never leave you. You don't forget them and you certainly can't deny them. Does this spiritual or energetic component relate to God or the Divine? I believe it does. I believe our spirit is directly related to the Divine, as we are all interconnected. Is it provable? This is where the difficulty lies. How can you prove such things other than relying on the experiences that people have? It is not necessarily measurable in the same way that science measures things in the physical realm, and we can't set up an experiment with spirit, as not all see or sense spirit and we wouldn't be able to determine imagination from reality. The current methods of studying our physical, tangible reality is so different to how we could study the spirit realm, especially as our belief systems and spiritual experiences are centered on the intangible. Assuming that we do have spirits that can communicate with us leads onto whether or not these spirits or spiritual forces can have an effect on healing, whether it be through direct techniques from themselves, or whether it occurs due to the beliefs of the practitioner, the atmosphere of the healing room or even the patient. These are all valid issues which require exploring, and through exploration, cross-cultural studies, examples, personal experience and the knowledge and wisdom of others, I will attempt to demonstrate to the best of my ability not only that spirits are real, but also the relationship between the spiritual realm and the physical realm and how spirit informs matter. With these important issues opened up it will permit us a deeper understanding of how shamanism and other healing practices help us to heal.

Shamanism is a way of living. It was a common practice in ancient times and still continues to be practised today. Some call it a religion, while others view it as a set of techniques and philosophies; how it is viewed is irrelevant to some degree. What matters is whether or not it has a positive impact upon our being in way of healing. Shamanism is based on interaction with the spirit world. In ancient societies the shaman played a key role within the community, acting as a spiritual leader, healer, herbalist and teacher among other things. They were highly respected by the community, and their gifts and their wisdom was honoured. It has been said that shamans are a type of medicine man or woman distinguished by the use of journeying to other worlds and through their personal healing journey. They journey by entering into an altered state of consciousness usually brought about via external sound and rhythm. It is the shaman we are going to concentrate on rather than a shamanic practitioner who uses some shamanic techniques.

Agreeing that spirit is real is one thing, but can the shaman really commune with spirit in order to affect matter? This is a question that will continue to be a rhetorical question for those whose culture understands shamanism and a mystery for other cultures. Shamanic cultures believe that not only does spirit affect matter (which includes our body) but that the spiritual realm and the physical realm are reflections of one another. It has been said that to understand the law of cause and effect, look to nature. In regards to shamanic cultures, to question these realities is as preposterous as asking a priest if God exists. The answer will always be, 'Of course it does.' Every religion and every belief system has its core beliefs and convictions and to question these often seems ridiculous to those who share such beliefs.

Ken Wilbur speaks in his book: *The Marriage of Sense and Soul* (1998)^{10-Bibliography} about the difficulties between science and spirituality. It was thought that due to the *authority* given to scientists in empirical science that their *power* dramatically affected how people perceived the spirit

realm. Anything that was not proven was deemed irrational or non-existent, and that pretty much stands the same today.

If scientists state it's real, we accept it. If they come back later and say it isn't, we may tut and complain, but many of us will then change our view and accept it because they, the authoritative ones, the ones who know, said it was so. In regards to science, the spiritual experience is often devalued; paranormal experiences, miraculous cures, or any other abnormal phenomena is often considered hype, fraud or plain ignorance if it lacks quantitative data to prove its existence. As time has gone on, and with science gaining more and more popularity for people who were or are looking for the truth, much of the ancient spiritual knowledge of how to coexist with the spirit world has been lost or forgotten. As many cultures pass on their knowledge verbally, it is becoming increasingly difficult to hold onto important truths that were discovered thousands of years ago. As with all things, over the centuries verbal instruction starts to become disjointed or confused and often loses its power and intent. For some, what was in the past is no longer relevant for today; but we take that perspective at our own peril, for there are thousands of years' worth of spiritual wisdom and knowledge that is still highly relevant for today and the future.

Shamanism has stood the test of time. It may look different on the outside when we look around the world, but the basic precepts, the basic values are the same. It has been and always will be a bridge between spirit and matter, a bridge between the spirit realm and the physical realm.

Martin Prechtel, a contemporary shaman, says in an interview with Derrick Jensen on *Saving the Indigenous Soul*.^{8-Resources} *For the majority of human history, shamans have simply been a part of ordinary life. They exist all over the world. It seems strange to Westerners now because they have systematically devalued the other world and no longer deal with it as part of their everyday lives.*

At this point we may want to consider what a shaman actually is, and although it may conjure up many ideas in today's minds, this is what **Martin Prechtel** explains as a shaman, from the same source, *Saving the Indigenous Soul*:

Shamans are sometimes considered healers or doctors, but really they are people who deal with the tears and holes we create in the net of life, the damage that we all cause in our search for survival. Shamans deal with the problems that arise when we forget the relationship that exists between us and the other world that feeds us, or when, for whatever reason, we don't feed the other world in return. (Full copy of the interview available)^{4-Appendices}

We need, as spiritual human beings, to remember:

It's like my old teacher used to say (says Prechtel): "You sit singing on a little rock in the middle of a pond, and your song makes a ripple that goes out to the shores where the spirits live. When it hits the shore, it sends an echo back toward you. That echo is the spiritual nutrition." When you send out a gift, you send it out in all directions at once. And then it comes back to you from all directions.

What we sow we reap, good or bad. Even the Bible tells us:

Cast your bread upon the waters for you will find it in many days. (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

Although shamanism may differ in its presentation on the outside across the globe, the techniques used across many diverse cultures are very similar and therefore considered to be *core shamanism*. It is this *core shamanism* that acts like a golden thread weaving shamans and shamanism from around the world together as one; they become the shamanic tapestry that holds the light and points the way. This macro-cultural approach is especially relevant in today's culture as it permits shamanic healing techniques and spiritual knowledge and wisdom from the past to be utilized today. In a *throwaway* culture of time, it is important that we maintain the circle and hold on tightly to the wisdom of our elders, the techniques of our ancient healers, so that we have something of quality to

pass on to the future generations. With ancient history, wisdom and techniques available, it also permits those who are not born into a tribe or shamanic culture but whom feel called to such a path to be able to fulfil that calling. Practitioners such as Myron Eshowsky, Sandra Ingerman, Michael Harner and Susan Marcantonio are all on a heartfelt quest to continue to embrace and respectfully make use of, and work with, that same ancient, spiritually based, core shamanism in order to bring a fresh awareness of spirit to a contemporary world.

Unbeknown to many, shamanic healing can be used in conjunction with orthodox medicine. There are practitioners today who combine their knowledge of alternative medicine whether that be psychotherapy, counseling, massage or other healing methods with orthodox medicine and achieve outstanding results.

In different places around the world, patients with mental health issues are viewed very differently than in the western world and are treated very differently, often using power animals and/or soul retrieval. Orthodox medicine and alternative medicine CAN work together, if only we would permit it. There are tribal doctors that are certified to practice in local hospitals; in Arizona, a Navajo surgeon combines her knowledge of American Indian culture and practices with her medical training to put patients at ease and improve her surgical outcomes.

Shamanism is an effective therapeutic model as is intercessory prayer and other natural healing models, all of which are worth investigating further. Shamans *journey* or travel to ask for help from spirits on behalf of their patients; those who conduct intercessory prayer somewhat journey, if only in their thoughts or heart, to ask for help from spirit – the Lord, the Holy Spirit, God – on behalf of their patient or fellow members. Praying in this way has been demonstrated to help the healing process. Prayer is an element of most major religions and, therefore, opens many doorways. If healing practices, whether of core shamanism or religion, can gain scientific validity it will help

bridge the gap between science and spirituality; this would be an amazing milestone and one which would lead us into a brand new arena where science and spirituality could finally walk side-by-side.

Whether through prayer, shamanic healing, or other forms of alternative, energy-based medicine, the time has come to utilize all such methods and techniques to facilitate healing, but in particular, the spiritual wisdom of shamanic healing has the potential to impact our health, and these healing methods and techniques are not limited to human beings. They can be used on animals, trees, plants and all of creation.

The Relationship Between Spirit and Matter in Regards to Shamanism

The basic premise of shamanism is that everything is alive – with spirit. The earth we walk on, the air we breathe, the vines of the forest, the birds, the plants, the animals – everything. Even our ancestors have or are *spirit*. *Spirit* is used here to mean a spiritual aspect that is different from, but is connected too, a physical aspect; and when that physical aspect dies or withdraws from a *living state*, the spirit continues to live. But spirit is not reserved purely for that which has or had a physical existence. Shamanism also believes that there are spirits that live in an intangible world that have never lived in a tangible way. Some of these spirits may be animal totems or spirit helpers or allies. Spirit can refer to the creative force of the universe, to the concept of God, or to the vast, impersonal universe that supports all of creation. It can refer to aspects of nature such as tree spirits or the spirit of the wind. It is a widely used and accepted term.

Faith in the existence of spirits is a fundamental principle of shamanism and many other cultures. Another word for this belief is *animism*: the belief that places, creatures, people and nature have a sentient life force, a distinct spiritual essence that animates them and makes them alive. In regards to the tangible, it is the belief that all physical beings have a spiritual aspect that is related to and

connected to the physical being until death, where that same spiritual being can then still function as a separate aspect. The physical body cannot function without the spiritual body, but the spiritual body can function without the physical body, which could be seen as demonstrating that the physical body is a mere vehicle for the *real self*.

Every level of being, from a plant to a stream to the landscape itself, has a unique spirit, and we must relearn respect for this aspect of life. Traditionally, shamans would ask the permission of a tree spirit or plant spirit before cutting it down. This was done to honour the spirit that embodies the physical aspect of the tree or plant. For the same reason, if a shaman wanted to enter a forest they would first find the guardian tree and ask permission from the guardian spirit. If they were told they must not enter the forest, they didn't. It was as simple as that! All around the world shamans rely on communing with spirits. It is an intrinsic part of shamanism. It is as normal as getting up in the morning and expecting to eat or drink. It wasn't something they did out of self-discipline, it was something they did as part of their natural life.

Serge King: *Kahuna Healing* (1983)^{11-Bibliography} talks about Kahuna healing and how the Kahuna (shaman) receives initiations into ancient healing councils whose powerful healing energy is channelled into the client.

Ake Hultkrantz: *Shamanic Healing and Ritual Drama* (1997)^{12-Bibliography} talks about the Cree's belief in the *manitous* (which means spirits) that exist universally in the natural world and how they also believe in a *Supreme Being* called *Manitou* or *Kitche Manitou* meaning *Great Spirit*. This way of thinking is called animism. Joseph Campbell describes the philosophy of animism as being: *all the forces of nature, imbued with a life force*.

In some cultures the elements of nature take on specific roles in relation to humans such as protectors or guides. In some shamanic cultures, the spirits of the sun, water, thunder, mountains,

the bear and the crow are considered guardian spirits, particularly of the shaman, and although these spirits are sometimes seen with the physical eye, they are usually invisible; and for many Westerners, invisible often equates to non-existent. For shamanic people, invisible forces are often amongst the most powerful allies in their lives, believing that our relationship to spirit impacts on the quality of our life.

A harmonious relationship with spirit can be cultivated in many ways, including: honouring our ancestors, showing thanks to animals and plants that give their lives to sustain us, and respecting our body and treating it well. Many of these qualities are missing in today's world. Often, we no longer give thanks to those closest to us never mind our ancestors. We don't show much thanks, appreciation, or respect to the animals that have been slaughtered, nor do we fully appreciate the plant life who give of themselves to sustain us. The attitudes of today are partly to blame for the lack of balance in the world and in our own personal worlds, and for this reason the shaman who masters the *human to spirit* relationship intervenes and tries to restore health and balance otherwise known as health and *well-being*.

The Spiritual World

In shamanic cultures worldwide there is a world which can be seen with our physical eyes and another world perceived with non-physical eyes. The non-physical world is of primary importance for any shaman. Some native people consider this non-physical world as the real world.

Many shamanic cultures divide the spiritual world into different realms, such as the lower, middle and upper realms. Some people call these same worlds spheres or levels, numbering them as one, two and three, with three relating to the upper realm or world. It has been my experience upon my journey that there are in fact four realms, which we touch on later. All realms are said to be intersected by some kind of axis point; for some, this is the *axis mundi*:

The axis mundi (also cosmic axis, world axis, world pillar, centre of the world, world tree, in certain beliefs and philosophies), is the world centre, or the connection between Heaven and Earth. As the celestial pole and geographical pole, it expresses a point of connection between sky and earth where the four compass directions meet. At this point travel and correspondence is made between higher and lower realms. Communication from lower realms may ascend to higher ones and blessings from higher realms may descend to lower ones and be disseminated to all. The spot functions as the omphalos (navel), the world's point of beginning. - Wikipedia

The human body can express the symbol of the world axis. Some of the *Tree of Life* representations as found in the chakra system merge with the concept of the human body being a pillar between heaven and earth. Religion regards the body as a temple, and prayer as a column uniting or bridging the earth to heaven, our body to the spiritual world. So whatever culture we live in, if we are praying we are sending prayers upwards. We don't generally think of sending them downwards, because by sending them upwards we are sending them via the axis mundi, the *world tree*, up through the levels to God, the Divine Source, Greater Consciousness and so on. As healers and shamans, we stand as portals, as vessels, for God's spirit, the *Source of Life*, to flow down through us and out of us. This is why it is thought we receive the energy through our crown chakra. As it pours through us, it can leave our body via our other chakras or even through our hands or our direct connection to the earth, our feet.

The image of a human being suspended on a tree or a cross locates the human at the axis where heaven and earth meet. If we think back to the image of Christ being crucified on the cross (and in those days they also crucified people on trees not just a wooden cross), we can then understand that the message was pointing to the spiritual path being a life of sacrifice in order to walk closer to spirit. The cross also reflects the four directions which means many things on many levels depending on what culture we are looking at. Something we need to ask ourselves is was Christ

showing us the axis mundi and was his message one of: *as human beings, we stand between the spiritual world and the physical world as spiritual pillars and that we are already connected and that we just need to learn, or remember how to make use of the axis?* Christ said that no-one comes to the father except through him – was he saying just as he communes with God the Father, so too can we? And did this image of Christ on the cross also represent Heaven (the sky – the spiritual realms, the different spheres) above us, and Hell below (Hell representing the earth, and all the trials and tribulations of living in a world without God, without the spiritual realm)? Do the four directions of the cross, also represented by the four rivers leaving the Garden of Paradise and the four directions from the American Indians, all represent that no matter from which direction you come, the directions, the paths, will still lead back to the central point which is the axis mundi? These are very deep questions that we may need to ask ourselves individually, for depending on our perception of life or the culture in which we live, we will come to very different conclusions.

One popular shamanic concept is that the shaman traverses the axis mundi to bring back knowledge from the other world, the other realms, which reflects the shaman in ascent and descent. There are other myths or stories which also reflects the need to ascend to gain knowledge. One such story is *Jacob's Ladder*. If we need to ascend the ladder, the ladder being the axis mundi which represents our journey to God, our journey into the spiritual realms of knowledge and truth, then we also need to descend the ladder in humility in order to bring those same truths back into the physical world to help others and the world heal. But this isn't the only place we can see the axis mundi.

Plants and trees also serve as images and reminders of the axis mundi. The cosmic tree symbolizes the uniting of the three planes spoken of; the branches represent the sky, the trunk represents the earth and the roots represent the underworld.

The *Tree of Life* and the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* in Genesis represents two aspects, with both being said to stand at the center (axis mundi) of the *Garden of Paradise* of which four

rivers are said to flow; just like the cross of Christ, with the cross representing the four directions. There is no coincidence that in the beginning we were shown a *Tree of Life* at the axis point, and later on we were shown the *Tree of Christ* or *Cross of Christ* at the axis point.

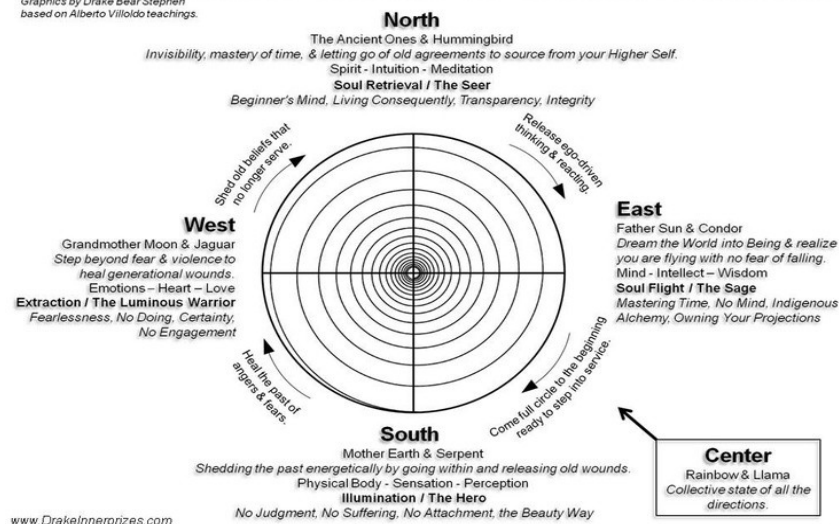
Throughout many shamanic cultures worldwide, we can see a *tree* as representing the axis mundi and connecting the spiritual realms; but it isn't always a tree. Sometimes the axis is represented, as already discussed, by a ladder and sometimes it is represented as the rainbow. But what is the real message about the axis mundi if it isn't about our inter-connectedness, if it isn't about the web of life that holds us all tightly knitted together, if it isn't about balance, and our responsibility as part of the cosmic whole? We will never find all the answers to all our questions, but we must not let our lack of knowledge prevent us from bravely stepping up to the challenge and blessing, of truly living as a spiritual person in a physical world. If our conviction is that all life, be it spirit, animal, human, or plant, is connected, then our actions, thoughts, beliefs and intentions towards the whole would be to live in harmony in a multidimensional universe as a multidimensional being.

The shaman honours this web of creation, this multidimensional, woven web of life; they are well aware that if the world of spirit is a tapestry, then we as spiritual beings represent the individual threads in which the shaman helps to weave into place in order that we can be woven into the best we can be. Many cultures believe we are *sung* into existence by the spirits, in which case honouring our soul's song should be the seed that pushes us forwards and upwards on our own personal shamanic path to bring change and transformation into our own lives. When we can heal ourselves we will know how to help others to heal. As always, change starts with both you and me. We must be willing to reach out and be the change we are looking for. But how can we change, how can we transform our hurt and tears into blessings, our pain and sorrow into laughter, if not by working with spirit to help transport us safely through the realms of learning and transformation?

The *medicine wheel* or *sacred hoop* has been used for generations by different cultures but specifically by American Indians to facilitate change and transformation. The wheel or hoop can be used to facilitate healing and to seek direction not only upon our physical path through life, but also upon our spiritual path through this life. A medicine wheel can be made outdoors by selecting twelve stones (although you can also use four stones) to create a circle. You enter and leave the circle from the east side, the side that represents the road or doorway into the spiritual realm. When you have entered and blessed the wheel, when you have called in the spirit allies or ancestors, the medicine wheel is then closed by placing the last stone. You are then ready to work the wheel.

The Medicine Wheel of Transformation

Graphics by Drake Bear Stephen
based on Alberto Villoldo teachings.



The medicine wheel is an important concept to every shaman. As the community's primary connection to the spiritual world, or the community's *axis mundi*, the shaman is required to go through arduous training, learning to move and operate effectively between the worlds. The shaman learns to speak to the plants, dance for rain, make plant medicine and find the buffalo. (S)he journeys on behalf of her patients to ask the spirits to heal their bodies and to acquire knowledge.

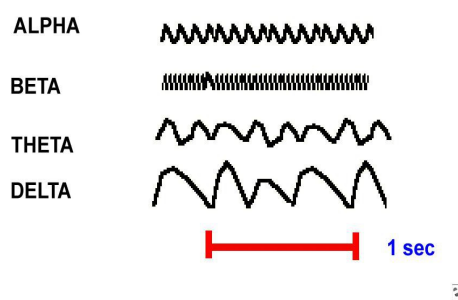
They are often seen as the doctor, counselor, healer and leader. Shamans are well respected guides who help members of their community to navigate through life, from birth to death to beyond the grave. They are there to help in the physical world and the spiritual world; in dealing with the day to day problems of living as well as the sacred. To be considered a shaman is an honour. It is a recognition of your hard work, your devotion, your commitment and your compassion. When you truly live and work as a shaman, you live as Christ, as a servant for those who follow and trust you.

Journeying

The cornerstone of the shaman's profession is the journey. The ability to journey or travel into the spiritual dimension to work directly with compassionate spirits is what sets the shaman apart from other kinds of healers and medicine people. If we go back to the *Jacob's Ladder* parable we will remember that Jacob had been sent on a journey by God, but not only was the message of the journey apparent in the physical, but also in the spiritual for his dream also spoke to him about journeying. The whole dream was a message about taking a spiritual journey and finding the Lord, or God, at the end of it. This clearly depicts (for me) that we are all called to journey into the spiritual realms of life, but that we are not all ready. The shaman stands in the gap for those who are either not yet called or not yet ready and accesses the information for them. The shaman prepares for his journey as you would any other journey, for there are always things to put in place before you leave home. Many shamans believe that their soul or spirit actually leaves their body while they are journeying and that it voyages to different levels of the spirit realm. This is why you will sometimes hear about the necessity to keep the shaman warm whilst he is journeying due to the drop in body temperature. Many believe that the shaman's soul or spirit leaves the body but remains intact via a spiritual thread which enables him to return safely to his body.

In order to journey, the shaman enters an altered state of consciousness or trance state which we have already discussed. The methods used to enter this state vary between cultures, but typically there is some form of repetitive sound causing a repetitive generating loop. Often this sound is from a helper who sits and drums or uses a rattle. Some cultures are said to *sing* the shaman into other realms. Whichever method is used, the commonality is a continuous beat or trance generating loop whilst the dreamer, the shaman, sleeps or travels. This continuous rhythm is often called a *sonic drive* and is said to help *push* the shaman into the level of consciousness required where she can perceive the spiritual realms and receive a message to bring about healing. The frequency of the sonic drive is similar across cultures, and ranges from four to seven beats per second. This range corresponds with the frequency of an electroencephalogram reading of brain waves recorded in the *theta* or *delta* state.

Medscape^{9-Resources} states: *The electroencephalogram (EEG) is the depiction of the electrical activity occurring at the surface of the brain. This activity appears as wave forms of varying frequency. EEG waveforms are generally classified according to their frequency. The most familiar classification uses alpha, beta, theta, and delta. Most waves of 8Hz and higher frequencies are normal on a waking adult.*



As spiritual beings made up of vibration and sound, it stands to reason that when we align our vibration with a certain trance state that we will naturally flow into that state. On a larger scale, if

we know the frequencies of that which we desire and align our frequency to it, we will become it. Bringing this information together with Jacob's Ladder gives us a fresh understanding, that as we climb or ascend the ladder to spiritual enlightenment, spiritual knowledge, we change our rate of vibration in alignment with that which we are connecting with, the end product being when we reach the top of the ladder to where it was said the Lord or God, or spiritual enlightenment is, we become that which we have connected with or that which we have synchronized our vibration with.

It is said in physics that kinetic energy is the energy of motion. An object or matter (body) that has motion, whether it is vertical or horizontal, has kinetic energy. There are many forms of kinetic energy - vibrational (the energy due to vibrational motion), rotational (the energy due to rotational motion), and translational (the energy due to motion from one location to another). Kinetic energy is defined as the work needed to accelerate a body of a given mass from rest to its stated velocity. Having gained this energy during its acceleration, the body maintains this kinetic energy unless its speed changes. The same amount of work is done by the body when decelerating from its current speed to a state of rest. Can this be applied to our spiritual life? To journeying?

If we think back to the famous Einstein equation of:

$$E=mc^2$$

We will remember that (m) **matter** multiplied by (c) **speed of light squared** = (E) **energy**. *Why would you need to multiply matter by the speed of light to produce energy? The reason is that energy, be it light waves or radiation, travels at the speed of light. That breaks down to 186,000 miles per second (300,000 kilometres per second). When we split an atom inside a nuclear power plant or an atomic bomb, the resulting energy releases at the speed of light. But why is the speed of light squared? The reason is that **kinetic energy**, or the energy of motion, is proportional to mass.*

*When you accelerate an object, the kinetic energy increases to the tune of the speed squared.*⁷⁻

Appendices

Could this be why or how shamans are said to be able to journey from one location on earth to another location? Can shamans travel at the speed of light? Could this be what enables the shaman to leave their body and traverse into the spiritual realm? Could this be what enables the shaman to spiritually travel to another persons body in order to bring healing? These are all valid questions.

The notion of a particular repetitive sound to affect the mind we can believe, it is consistent with scientific fact, but what leaves us questioning is whether or not the shaman's journey is a function of the internal workings of the mind or whether it is an external journey, where (s)he somehow leaves her physical body to traverse a non-ordinary reality, the spiritual realms.

Shamans are said to be able to travel long distances. They can be gone for hours, even a few days, and return with detailed descriptions of places they have not visited in ordinary reality. In many shamanic cultures the ability of the shaman to journey was not just a test of his abilities but was also a survival need for the community. The shaman would journey to find the location of the bison or deer so that on his or her return, she was able to instruct the hunters where to find food.

Once on the shamanic journey, the shaman will meet one or more helping spirits or allies. Some of these spirits she would have already have built a relationship with over the years. The spirits are compassionate and willing and ready to help the shaman bring healing into her own life and the life of others. The spirits can be in many forms; they may be animal, human or even plant, they could be ancestors from generations gone by. But a notable similarity between the traveling shaman and Christianity, and other religions for that matter, is that the shaman appears to *not* connect directly with God, the Divine Source, but with intermediaries. Christians pray to God through Christ. They don't tend to pray directly to a God Source, even though Christ is said to be the physical

manifestation of God. My suggestion is that once a person either reaches the top of, or near the top of Jacob's Ladder, they will reach a place where they no longer converse with intermediaries, as their rate of vibration would have attuned itself to the Source, and therefore will have no more need for intermediaries. I believe the intermediaries are there to help people on their personal spiritual quest, but then there will come a point where personal and spiritual transformations have elevated the individual to a different sphere. I believe the top or near the top of Jacob's Ladder is the starting point, the gateway, the portal into the fourth dimension where God, the Source, abides. We speak more of this later on. However, intermediaries or not, the shaman is careful to show respect and pay tribute to the spirit allies; it is not uncommon for shamans and other medicine people to leave tobacco as way of saying, 'Thanks.' It is a well-known fact that when taking or cutting plants, a medicine person or shaman will often give thanks and leave tobacco or some other gift as a sign of respect to the spirits that are helping them. If the spirit is an animal, the shaman may imitate the animal's movements as a way of communicating to it and showing respect for it. By dancing the animal or imitating its moves, it is said that the shaman *calls down* or *calls in* its power and wisdom.

Stephen Larsen's *The Shaman's Doorway* (1998) speaks about the relationship of shamanism to both our psyche and society as a whole. As a psychotherapist with a vast knowledge of shamanic traditions, Larsen shows the relevance of the shamanic path to our modern world. He talks about how *Life dismembers us* and how ancient shamanic techniques can alter consciousness. He talks about how our *demythologized* and *industrialized* environment can and often does lead us to alienation and confusion.^{13-Bibliography}

Shamanic Healing

As we have already seen, shamans interact with the spiritual world or non-physical world. They interact in order to bring about change, healing, transformation, not only in their own lives but in the lives of others, in the lives of the whole community. Community is important as we are all part of the sacred hoop of life. When one hurts, we all hurt; when one is blessed, we all are blessed. The river of life runs deep through each and every one of us, all entitled to the same respect, all endowed with the same spirit of love. Shamans are catalysts, drawing things to them, instigating change, bringing what is under the surface to the surface, linking the physical world to the spiritual world. Shamans create balance and health from imbalance or disease, but their work doesn't just stop with the people. They are caretakers of the animals, the plants, the whole of creation whether seen or not seen; they bring healing to the world, and to the earth. Their aim is to positively impact the physical world by bringing rain when it is necessary, leading hunters to the bison, healing bodies but not just the bodies of the two-leggeds. They work extensively to bring about harmony, balance and peace in a world that is often hostile with hurts and deep pain.

In today's culture we tend to view the physical realm and the spiritual realm as two completely separate places unaffected by one another. How wrong that is! It couldn't be any further from the truth. Many of us think, 'How can beating a drum, shaking a rattle, singing a song, chanting, praying, dancing, performing ceremonies bring change? Surely they can't really make a difference? Surely it is only in the minds of those that believe?'

We can look to science for the answer, but it does not have the answer; and how could it? How could science know how spirit, ritual and ceremony can affect the material aspect of life? How it can affect matter? But these questions and their answers are elementary to the shaman, to shamanic cultures worldwide. When we stand at the edge of a lake and look into the stillness of the water, we can see all that is around us; the sky, the trees, the birds, even people, and it is said that that is how it is in the spiritual world. The physical world is the lake and it reflects back to us the spiritual

world, if only we would take time to see, if only we would take time to listen and hear the message that nature has for us. But we must not listen with our ears for we will miss the message. We MUST listen with our heart, our soul.

When we look at a coin we see one coin, one coin that has two sides. When we look at the world we must see one world, one world that has two sides; neither side is bigger or better than the other.

They can't be, because they are both equal parts of the same coin, the same world. It is impossible to have one side bigger than the other, for then we would have created an imbalance. If the coin or the world is not balanced, it will not spin as it should upon its axis point. Balance is key to all things and key in all things. By delving into the spiritual realms and requesting help and assistance from spirit, the shaman acts to create harmony. Where there is harmony there is health, no matter which realm we are in; harmony is the key to true health and well-being.

As traditional holistic practitioners, shamans recognize the oneness of all life. They recognize how the body and mind are connected but not just at an individual point, but interconnected to other souls. They recognize that although we all live within our own small matrix with our families, that we are still part of a greater matrix, a matrix that includes the natural environment, the thoughts and intentions of others, as well as a host of other elements, all of which can and does affect individuals in different ways. So when you go to a shaman for healing, they look at the condition of your body, mind and spirit, they look at your personal matrix and whether it supports you. They look at all things, but they also listen. They listen to what you say and what you don't say, they listen to what your consciousness permits you to speak whilst hearing the voice of your unconscious.

So do the shamans actually do the healing? Some will say, 'Yes, with the help of the spirits.' Others will say, 'No, they are only vessels, they are instruments within themselves and that healing is always from spirit, from God.' I feel there is truth in both. The shaman is definitely a vessel and an instrument, and ultimately the healing does come from God, but he/she stills is required to follow

intuition and at times use physical techniques such as extraction. In the least, I would say the shaman is partaker of the healing. The shaman acts as a portal for the healing energy to flow through, and she accesses the portal in order to be able to fly to other realms.

Shamans are not orthodox doctors. They do not treat the heart, the liver, the lungs etc. They do not treat the disease as such. They treat the cause behind the illness. They track it back to its roots, they work with the root cause to deal with the problem, recognizing that sickness in the body is still a reflection of a sickness or imbalance in the spirit. They recognize that there is a problem in part of the physical body, but that is not what they treat. Orthodox medicine isolates body parts to the extent that at times the patient no longer has a name but a condition. Shamans do not isolate any part of the patient. How could they when they know that each part is part of the whole? What affects one part will have a ripple effect on other parts.

In Hawaii, their traditional medicine believes that cures are said to be most effective when people are engaged physically, mentally and emotionally in their own healing process, and I couldn't agree more. I purposefully engage the patient in brief counseling in order to put them back in touch with their mind, their body and especially their emotions. I have found that as soon as we hit the emotions that is the best time to start the deeper healing practice. Whilst they remain in touch with their emotions, they find it easier to feel the pain that needs to heal, feel the pain that they avoided or have buried, feel the wounds that require healing, but *without* reliving the trauma. My client or patient's beliefs, attitudes and willingness to cooperate with me, the extent of their engagement on all levels of the healing process is indeed one of the most important aspects of their healing. It is definitely crucial to the success or degree of success of their treatment. Healing must be tailor-made to the individual because we are all different, and even if two patients had the same complaint, their treatments would still need to be different. Why? Simply because we are all different and all have different needs.

Causes and Prevention of Illness

In an ideal world, with ideal habits and good mental health, we would all be preventing illness.

We would all be living our lives from a preventative perspective; but we don't live in an ideal world where we can always maintain perfect health, and with so much pressure on us in today's world, there is no wonder people fail to maintain a healthy, happy body and prevent illness.

If we look back at the last time we visited an orthodox doctor, I am sure we will all remember the experience of the orthodox way of care. We all realize and have learnt to accept that the cure often comes in tablet form, and then when we have side-effects to the medicine, we take more medicine to help with the side-effects, and then more to help with the next set of side-effects and on we go. Lifestyle, obesity, hormonal imbalance, age, stress, these are all factors that are often used to explain away the difficulties we are having which often isn't really helpful at all. Changing these factors for some will make a huge difference, and for some it will make a minor difference and for the rest, there will be no change at all and they will often be left to their own devices.

When shamans look for the cause of illness they look to the spiritual, for it is recognized that physical manifestations of illness or injury are usually due to a spiritual imbalance. This doesn't prevent them from addressing the signs and symptoms but it does mean that they are going to look for the deeper meaning in the imbalance. They will look at the past and the present, they will look at what led to the illness or injury as well as what you may be doing consciously or unconsciously to hold onto or cause the illness. When we intend to bring healing to another we must be willing to work with their energetic body, knowing that spirit affects matter; in other words, tangible things are impacted by intangible forces and both coexist. We also have to look at the rest of the personal matrix in order to address imbalances and disharmony on all levels.

This in-depth shamanic healing method helps with the cure and with prevention of further illness. When we can prevent unwanted illness or injury from occurring, we can continue on in balance. When the shaman journeys to find the answer, it may not be what we want to hear, it may not be what we thought it was and it may be on a deeper level than what we currently understand. If we are willing to see the journey that the illness or injury took, we can often see at what point the reality of it kicked in. If we have a chill today, it may not be because it is cold but because three days ago we were caught in the rain and remained wet for four hours. Upset intestinal activity may not be the extra piece of chocolate cake you ate today but may be the burger you ate yesterday. We can't just assume that what is today is to do with today. We must be willing to travel back in time to source the problem. The burger you ate yesterday may be because you were stressed or feeling anxious, so the stress or anxiety would need to be dealt with to realign and rebalance the entire energetic system on all levels. Everything we do we are doing for a reason and sometimes it is just a question of being mindful and aware of what is going on at all times within our body, mind and spirit. So often we spend our days rushing here, rushing there, grabbing this to eat, grabbing that to eat. We fail to notice our needs, and when we do notice them, we are so often too busy with life, so we fail to make time for those needs; and then we wonder why we become ill, why our body parts break down. Many of us would never treat our cars how we treat our body. We would never treat another like we treat ourselves. We go through life acting as if our body is this indestructible vehicle when the reality is that it is a finely tuned instrument which needs treating with respect and care.

When we are born, we are usually born in our natural harmonious state without disease, and interference of any kind can impact that same harmonious state, eventually bringing disease. It matters not what the problem is; what matters is that it is dealt with as soon as possible. Interference could be on a physical, mental or spiritual level. This could be spiritual intrusions – whether of the individual or the place they live, cultural pressure and expectations, loss of aspects of our soul, old

hurts, our lifestyle, a poor diet, poverty, the list could go on. It is all relevant to our health and wholeness.

Building a solid foundation for health and engaging in regular practice in such things as meditation, yoga or tai-chi as well as building and maintaining a relationship with the Divine, God, the Source, even with our Mother Earth, will help in keeping us on the right track to freedom, freedom from ill health and injury. The Ojibway culture includes the observance of rituals such as taking a bath, making offerings to spirits, acting ethically, nurturing others as all part of their healthy lifestyle; these are all practices that we could all include into our daily lives. We just need to make that choice. The Ojibway and many other Native cultures ensure they are respectful to the animals they eat, often praying for the animal spirit and only taking as much as they require; this is a common thread that tends to run right through the shamanic world. Lack of respect in these areas could be seen as one reason for illness, and most illnesses are considered to have a physical, psychological and emotional aspect. If we want to heal the whole person we must start to look at all levels and resist the temptation to look at only one level of existence.

Diagnosis

In all forms of medicine, when a patient comes with a problem a diagnosis must be made before therapy or medicine is prescribed; and for a shaman, this is no different. Usually, this phase of treatment involves talking with the patient about their physical symptoms, as well as their emotional and/or psychological state of being and making observations of any signs. This way of treating is often akin to today's holistic practitioners and can also include talking about family history and any significant circumstances of their lives.

So what is the difference between a shaman and an orthodox doctor? Apart from the obvious differences such as training, etc., the key difference lies in their approach to diagnosis and treatment, which also includes a more in-depth discussion about symptoms, psychological and emotional health and of course, their spirituality. The shaman also discerns the energetic aspect of the condition or person, remembering that many physical manifestations arise from energetic or spiritual issues. This discernment is often, but not always, gained whilst in an altered state of consciousness; in other words, whilst journeying, and the ability to enter this altered state and travel into other dimensions to engage with spirits is crucial to the shaman's success in healing.

Journeying is the shaman's gift which entails a high level of responsibility and commitment to their own walk, commitment to their patient and to their community. The ability to be able to *divine* or *see* an illness is an important part of treatment, some shamans can also analyse the patients energetic body, some see the colors of the aura, and this is used to determine the nature of the illness.

Spirit Allies

It is important to remember that in shamanic healing the spirits are often said to be the ones who actually perform the cure. According to **Jeremy Narby: *The Cosmic Serpent* (1998)**^{14-Bibliography} in the Amazon region:

It is the invisible, life-creating maninkari spirits who walk to Ashaninca shamans in their visions and tell them how to heal.

A shaman is said to be a conduit or vessel to the spirit realm, permitting the power of the healing spirit to flow through them in order to facilitate the healing. It is said to be very tiring to be a

conduit and at times dangerous, especially when working with techniques such as extraction. If shamans are not careful and fail to take the necessary precautions, they are said to be at risk of being possessed by harmful spirits which have been removed from their patients; they are also able to take on their patient's illness. Although taking on another person's illness is a common thread that runs through much shamanism, I personally don't feel you have to take on another's illness or disease in order to bring healing – what sense is there in that? If we are working on a spiritual level, which we are, then there are ways and methods to remove illness without causing yourself harm. I knew one shaman who took pride in taking on other peoples illness; he saw this as a gift to his clients, even though he was perpetually ill himself. One has to raise questions here about the sense of deliberately taking on illness (assuming that is possible) and the place of pride! It seems senseless to heal one and harm another – even if it is yourself!

Spirit allies are said to be protectors of the shaman. This is why a good strong relationship with the spirit allies is critical. This is all part of the journey, and once you learn to manage and work with what could be the scary world of spirit, you start to realize and see that this scary spiritual world is, in fact, reflected in the scary world we live in; surrounded often by negative energy which affects us all differently and on different levels. This experience and revelation then prepares us to go to the next level of learning, where we no longer require the help of the spirit allies but are ready to connect directly to the source.

During some types of healing work the shaman actually merges with her helping spirit, embodying the abilities of the spirit in physical form. If the spirit is that of a previous human, such as an ancestor, the shaman's voice may change in tone or sound as it embodies the voice of the other. There are times when the shaman will dress in a costume depicting the spirit she intends to embody. It is from this ritual that the merging often occurs. The shaman will dance, sing or imitate the spirit in order to merge, especially when the spirit to be merged with is an animal spirit. For many of us,

these methods of healing would be very scary. For the shaman, this is a normal way of being, a normal way of life. It isn't extraordinary, it is simply ordinary.

However, there are different ways to merge with the spirit world. **Michael Harner:** *The Way of the Shaman* (1992)^{15-Bibliography} talks about how:

The Beast Gods are summoned by dancing, rattling, and drumming, and the dancers work themselves into a frenzied condition in which they imitate the actions and cries of the animals. Those dancers assuming the personality of the bear, may even wear actual bear paws over their hands. But this dance of the Beast Gods is more than simple imitation, since the Zuni dancer, like a North American Plains Indian doing an Eagle or Buffalo dance, is striving to go beyond imitation to become one with the animal.....a Zuni dancer wearing a mask of one of the kachina gods is doing more than impersonating the kachina. Transported into an altered state of consciousness by the dancing, drumming, rattling and whirr of bull roarers he becomes for the time being the actual embodiment of the spirit which is believed to reside in the mask.

Extractions

Extraction is a method that is commonly used by shamans. It is not a new technique by any means and is considered to be very effective. Why do we need extractions? Throughout our lives, we are exposed to negative thoughts and feelings. They may be our own, or they may be from others. It is a natural part of life to deal with such negativity. However, sometimes for various reasons we may not have dealt with the negativity that surrounds our life. This can in itself cause ill health on many levels.

When negative emotions and thoughts have not been dealt with and have been held in the body or spiritual body for a long time, they can become toxic, and can cause what is called a crystallization

of energy. This is when the negativity crystallizes and forms itself into a solid form of some sort which embeds itself in the body. This doesn't have to be a *literal* solid form in our body, but it doesn't mean that it can't be; but it is often on a spiritual level. Some clients actually sense it as if it is a solid form, they sense it as if it has materialized physically; this may be felt or seen as a stake, or barbed wire, or even a knife, or it may be seen or felt more as a mass of darkness which often has a color to it.

Just like our immune system can usually eradicate toxins, so can our luminous energy field usually manage to destroy and eradicate the negative emotions that we have either hung onto or that have been aimed at us from others; like anger, jealousy or hatred. When under a constant barrage of negativity, the defence systems of our luminous energy field can become overwhelmed and toxic and unable to eradicate all the negative energy, leaving crystallizations. These negative crystallizations need to be removed, and they are usually removed via extraction. If it isn't removed, sooner or later it will create ill health and a body that is out of balance and struggling to function as it should.

Shamans track down negative energy that is stored in the luminous energy field, chakras or physical body, where it can be carefully removed once a cleansing has been performed. The cleansing is to assist in the loosening of the dense energy which is found either as a mass within itself, or a mass surrounding a crystallized object. It is this same dense energy that holds the crystallized object in place. As logical beings, we must resist the temptation to think of it as not *real* just because we cannot see it in the physical sense of the word, and we must resist the temptation to become apathetic, thinking of it as harmless. It *is* real, it is just that it is in the spiritual realm, and for that reason the shaman must take great care in extracting the dense energy or crystallizations and ensure that it is all removed safely. Great care must be taken so as to not *drop* the crystallization into other

parts of the body or into another chakra which could then cause other physical, psychological or even emotional problems and illness.

Sometimes the client or patient can feel the process of the extraction physically. Sometimes the client will start to recall pictures, feelings, etc. of past events or past lives that may be related to the dense energy or crystallization. The shaman may know what the crystallization represents, or where it came from. He may know why it became crystallized in the first place, but this isn't always necessary. It isn't always necessary for the shaman to analyse the energy, it is more important to remove it. During or even after an extraction, the client may feel nauseated or shaky. They may feel somewhat different and not be able to articulate the feelings, and sometimes they will have this inner knowledge of what it was all about which will assist them in putting the issue to rest; or it may come on their way home. They may even dream it or *see* it during a quiet moment of contemplation. Shamanic healing will be different for everyone because we are all different and will all respond differently, and have different needs. To work holistically, we need to treat all of our clients or patients the same, and we do that by treating them differently, treating them differently because as individual drops of the same ocean, they all have their individual needs. When we treat the individual in order to bring a full and comprehensive healing, we treat them all the same.

Negative or toxic energy is often attracted to us and sometimes this is because of an affinity, just as we are attracted to certain types of people. Therefore we need to be aware of and careful of what we draw to us. Energy has frequency and vibration, so when anger, for example, lives in us that same vibration and frequency can be drawn to us. If we have self-hate, the vibration of hatred can be drawn to us. For this reason, it is not always enough just to perform an extraction. Sometimes there needs to be healing brought into our life on other levels. If the crystallization was to do with anger, then the anger needs to be dealt with in order to prevent further and future crystallizations of anger. Many people who work in the healing field focus on one aspect; surgeons focus on the physical

level, therapists may focus on only the psychological or emotional level, but to bring about a full healing we need to tackle the problem from all angles: psychologically, emotionally, physically, spiritually and historically.

But we don't need to just worry about crystallized energy and it being embedded within the body, we also need to deal with and heal any intrusive entity or intrusive energy as this type of energy embeds itself within the central nervous system.

Alison Skelton, on *Shamanic Extraction Healing* ^{10-Resources} says:

Intrusions are more able to take hold when there has been loss of power or if the Soul is fragmented and depleted through Soul Loss. In a previous article I invited you to imagine the Soul as if it were like a school of fish. We can see that if enough of the school is missing, the system is more vulnerable to further loss, and to opportunistic energies which may move in to fill the void.....they can just as easily be self-created thought forms that have become toxic over years of negative self-talk and poor self-image, or from living in a spiritually toxic environment.

Intrusive energies or entities, which can be referred to as *intrusions*, are not managed using the same techniques as what is used for crystallizations, as they are fluid and able to move around. Both crystallized energy and intrusive energy or entities can cause and exasperate psychological and physical problems which can often lead onto depression, anxiety, addictions, mood swings and chronic fatigue syndrome to say the least. In fact, many *inexplicable* illnesses of any sort could be caused from either crystallized energy or an intrusive energy or entity.

Intrusive entities attach themselves to a chakra which then gives them access to your central nervous system where they live like a parasite sucking you of your vital energy and life force. This intrusion may not intend to harm you in any way, but the sheer fact that it is living off you will, undoubtedly, bring harm in one way or another in time.

Intrusive entities could be someone you know, or it could be a lost, discarnate spirit. Either way, the intrusive entity needs to be extracted. Intrusive *energies* are removed via extraction with a crystal and then released with fire, back into the universe where the energy is assimilated into nature.

Intrusive *entities* are also removed with a crystal, also released with fire, but are taken to the spirit realm, to the light, by luminous healers.

Crystals have the ability to convert energy, which means they are able to easily convert negative energy into something else, such as positive energy. Clear quartz is considered to be the best crystal to use for the extracting of intrusive entities or energy because of its stability. Many people use the Vogel crystal, as it is known for its purity and its power to execute the job and its ability to hold a soul. Due to the stability of the clear quartz, energy is naturally drawn to it which makes the extraction process easier. The ideal extraction crystal is thought to be a flawless double terminated quartz which would be approximately four inches long without any surface fractures. When the crystal has fractures, the energy can leak out and could affect the shaman, and if the crystal has inclusions, clouds, or intersecting planes, the intrusive entity is said to be able to experience great pain when inside the crystal. No matter how negative an intrusive entity may be, the role of the shaman is to heal not harm and every entity needs to go to the light and receive healing. Intrusive entities are usually lost souls seeking healing and direction but not always, and not all discarnate spirits enter your luminous energy field. It is more likely to be those that you have an affinity with such as family, friends, patients or those with an emotional affinity. Once the intrusive energy or entity has been removed the client will need to go through an illumination process to bring healing and the intrusive entity or energy will need to be released.

Shamans perform much of their work with their hands. They track and manipulate energy within the client's energetic body. As with all treatments, the shamanic extraction is no different. It commences with the shaman examining the client and making a diagnosis. The shaman reads the client's

vibrational body to feel for interruptions of the natural state.

Shamans work in collaboration with their spirit guides or allies whilst performing extractions, with some believing that these helping spirits sit in the mouth of the shaman, especially if the shaman is sucking the energy or entity out of the body. Keep in mind that spirit guides are energetic beings so do not have to be the size of a human being. The sucking technique is said to be dangerous and requires the shaman to be able to put full trust in the allies. Many believe that the shaman is so completely merged with their allies that the allies are able to ingest and transmute poisons without the shaman coming to any harm. We will sometimes see the sucking technique depicted in movies or even documentaries, where the shaman draws out poison whilst the allies neutralize it before the shaman spits it out; although effective, this technique can cause nausea and vomiting. *Sucking* isn't the only technique used by the shaman, but it is one that is considered powerful.

Dr Fred A. Wolf, a physicist, said of his shamanic-extraction-healing experience with a Peruvian Shaman:

He took some of the perfumy liquid that he carried with him in his mouth and spat it on my head. He then put his lips on the top of my head as if to kiss me there, then sucked on my head, drawing the liquid up into his mouth. He turned to the side and spat it out on the ground. He repeated this specifically at a place on my forehead, and then around my sinus regions on my brows.

The dark liquid so often referred to in such shamanic extraction techniques is believed to be tobacco juice, animal blood or even the shamans own blood. This is not to trick the client or patient into believing that the substance itself was sucked out of them; it is to represent the illness being removed. This technique can have a powerful result on many levels. We so often believe what we see, so to see something physical, to see something with our very own trusted eyes being removed, can have a huge effect on our perception of the healing and our recovery.

No matter what technique is used, no matter what tools are used, the shaman has to listen to the voice of the spirit, the voice of the allies, the inner-voice, the greater voice. It is a journey of subservience for the shaman and not all people are open to holding a servant's heart. There is no room in shamanic extraction healing or any other healing for the ego. The egocentric healer is more concerned about their opinion being heard, how good they look and what others think about them. The path of the shaman is as a servant, following the promptings of spirit to bring about change and transformation to the individual who has placed their trust in them.

Soul Retrieval

When a shaman diagnoses part of the soul or spirit as being lost, you can nearly guarantee that it will be accompanied with some form of psychological disturbance such as depression or low or no self-esteem to say the least. This diagnosis is referring to a fragmented mind, a fragmented psyche. It is a well-known theory within shamanism that as a result of some pain or trauma, past or present, a part of the psyche can splinter off, otherwise known as *soul loss*.

Whereas extractions are to remove things from the body, soul retrieval is, as it says, to retrieve something, to bring something back; in this case the soul or and aspect of the soul that has left. When an aspect of the soul or psyche splits off, it is usually for self-protection and preservation, but the client suffering such loss is in danger of never reintegrating that lost aspect. It could, if not found in time, be lost forever. Soul loss can leave the individual feeling numb, incomplete, detached; the loss can manifest itself in many ways, including through depression, addiction, immune disorders, lack of energy, lack of self-esteem, lack of will or determination, leaving the client with feelings of hopelessness and at times suicidal ideation. When the client has reached such a low and is in a place of suicidal ideation, they are at risk of unconsciously drawing negative energy or entities to them. These same negative energies will whisper in their ear; they are spirits

who will infiltrate their mind with ways of committing suicide. Only a strong person will be able to resist these pressures, these voices, especially as they are already wishing they could die and leave the pain of this world, or at least the pain of their personal world.

Here is one such true story:

Mia was a middle-aged woman. She made the best of life and situations as they arose, she had a heart to help others and took opportunities when they arose to be the difference in other's lives; she was a natural healer. One day, suddenly, an unexpected twist in life happened – LOSS. It came out of the blue. It was the loss of her two children. It was a tragic event, leaving Mia feeling and thinking like her world had ended. As the grief began to take over her life, she found herself feeling down, very down; some would say depressed. On the surface, all was fine. She used the distraction of daily activities to stop her feeling the pain, or at least some of it. She was aware of the feelings inside and how she felt life was over. In order to cope, she put her heart and soul into inspiring others, helping others to heal, to get through difficult situations. She helped people to overcome their grief, but her own was still there, like a whirlpool in the quiet moments of her day. Nothing seemed to help her, even though she had made such a difference to others. After about five months, the feelings of suicide had become very strong. She was finding it difficult to block out the voices, the voices of negative spirits instructing her how to end her life. Everyone around her, except for one, thought all was okay; but Mia was good at that, not sharing with the world her pain, because she felt people had enough of their own pain without carrying hers. That one close friend became increasingly worried but didn't know what to do or who to turn to, knowing that Mia would not appreciate her sharing her pain with others. What Mia didn't know at that time was that a piece of her psyche had split off. A piece of her soul had broken away, looking for somewhere to hide, somewhere to find safety. Mia felt numb. She felt dead inside, she felt depressed and suicidal. She even looked into assisted suicide because she knew she wasn't *brave* enough to end her life herself.

Over the next several years, Mia worked on herself to bring healing back into her life, her heart, her soul. She did all she could do to make life worth living again. But despite all she did, there was still a numbness, a lack of vitality for life, a lack of enthusiasm. On the surface, all looked fine, but underneath, deep, deep down, there was still an underlying feeling of loss, of being *down*. She still couldn't help remembering the children's birthdays, which was always a painful reminder of her loss, bringing tears but no release from pain. She was a prisoner, a prisoner of grief, wrapped in the chains of torture which were holding down her heart and soul. One night whilst drifting into sleep, she caught a glimpse of a female spirit. She just saw it as it floated past her and disappeared. She couldn't see the spirit properly. She could only see what was, for her, a white dress flowing behind as the spirit went by. She thought no more about it. A couple of weeks later whilst away from home, she saw the same spirit again, at the end of a corridor. This time she could see it more fully, once again in a white dress. She recognized her, but wasn't quite sure and asked her who she was; the spirit replied with, *'I am part of you, I broke away because of the pain.'* It was at that point that Mia realized why she had felt like she did for so long. She knew she needed to retrieve this part of her. Just as she was thinking to ask if she was ready to come back, she saw the spirit whiz towards her in a blur and it somehow went straight into the top of her head, through her crown chakra; she knew it was back. She felt nothing happen inside. There were no amazing feelings, nothing; but she knew, undoubtedly, that that part of her was back. The next day, she felt different, her words were, *'I feel as if I have been resurrected. I feel back to my normal self, I feel excitement, I feel happiness, I feel enthused, I feel whole.'* It was at that point that Mia realized that she had unwittingly gone through a soul retrieval.

That was the beginning of the rest of her life.

Mia was a very fortunate person. The lost aspect of her soul had healed over time and was ready and willing to be reintegrated into her. She didn't have to go looking for it. A shaman didn't have to

go and find it, which is what happens most of the time. This piece of Mia had found *her* and taken the opportunity to leap or fly back into her being, bringing hope and wholeness. Not everyone is so fortunate. Had Mia not continued to work on her grief, work on her forgiveness, work on her whole being to bring healing on all levels, perhaps this outcome would not have been the same. We can all learn something from Mia. We can all learn about our own personal responsibility to look after our own being. It is all well and fine visiting the shaman or any doctor, but we must take responsibility for ourselves and not completely leave our own healing, whether of body, mind or soul, to another. We must put in the work and do as much as we can to help ourselves. Not only will this raise our consciousness, raise our rate of vibration, not only will this raise our self-esteem and confidence, but it will also help us to heal the greater consciousness, and help us to heal others. One thing I have learnt on my path is that we cannot direct a traveller on a road we haven't travelled. We can point them in the general direction, but we can never bring healing like we can if we can share our own journey, our own healing process.

If a shaman diagnoses soul loss, his role in that healing is to seek, find, heal and return that lost aspect safely to the client. This is a complex process. The shaman may need to travel in time and space to find the lost soul. She may need the guidance or assistance of her allies, but once the piece of soul is found, there needs to be some healing. The soul piece may require lengthy conversation with the shaman about the situation, about what happened, about its feelings, fears, grief, etc. The lost piece needs treating just as the shaman would treat the physical aspect of his client. Healing is paramount. The lost piece needs to be healed, needs to desire to come back. It can't be made to come back, otherwise it could just break off again. When both the shaman and the lost piece feel it is time, the shaman gently guides it back to its home, back to its place of origin, back to the soul that awaits it. On arrival back at the physical body, there can be reluctance to return, as the lost soul remembers again the pain, the heartache. If there is reluctance, the shaman must work on the lost soul piece and the client to bring healing. The client may need to ask for forgiveness from the lost

piece for what could seem to the lost piece as a *failure to keep me safe*. The relationship must be rebuilt. This is paramount in order for the lost piece to feel secure, to feel safe, to feel confident about returning, knowing that the soul's home will keep it safe from future trauma as best it can. This can be envisaged as a relationship between a parent and a child; the child ran away because it didn't feel safe and was scared, and now the parent needs to reassure it that all will be okay.

Soul retrieval is not a *mind-thought* application. It *isn't* a placebo effect or a *make believe* occurrence. It is real, it is powerful, it is the coming together of soul, spirit and a lost part. It is ultimately the road back home, the road back to healing and wholeness.

Most shamanic traditions believe that the soul piece needs to be blown through the crown chakra and the heart. Mia's experience was that it went straight in through the crown chakra of its own accord. She never felt anything to do with the heart until the next day. She wasn't aware of anything entering her heart chakra but she was aware of its return, as in the heart she was now endowed with feelings of joy and love.

Not everyone needs soul retrieval and not everyone will be willing to undertake a soul retrieval, but one important clue that shows the shaman that soul retrieval is necessary is when the client speaks of the trauma and states, '*I have never felt the same since,*' or when they experience *a piece of them as missing* or *a deep numbness*. This was exactly how Mia had felt. She felt at the time of loss, the time of grief, that she had lost something critical to her existence, her words were, '*I have never felt the same since,*' and had never felt the same until that lost piece was retrieved.

Technically, someone who has died has complete soul loss, as their entire soul has left their body and crossed over into the spirit realm. It has been said that in the past, shamans have chased after the soul, venturing into the land of the dead in order to find the soul and return it! This raises many questions about ethics, about whether that is right, about whether we all have a time to go and

whether it is a case of when it arrives it arrives. One such story was in relation to a young boy who had died and the shaman travelled to the other side, the spiritual realm and apparently found him playing with other boy spirits and had a hard time persuading him to go back with him!

Like all doctors, shamans are expected to heal and help or even save lives, and I guess each case would merit its own investigation and conclusion on whether it would be ethical to bring back a soul from the dead or whether it is okay to bring back anyone from the dead. Personal choice, quality of life, these are the types of things that would perhaps require looking at; but I guess we would have to trust the shaman and trust as to whether or not his/her allies have said for him to bring them back. As with all things, this seems to be a very grey area. One thing we need to remember also is that in many soul retrievals the journey itself is metaphorical as opposed to literal. Mia's case was different. Her lost soul aspect revealed itself not metaphorically but literally as a spirit.

Soul retrieval can have a major effect upon the physical, psychological and emotional aspects of the individual. This profound effect is what brings shamanic healing and psychology together. Although the two are definitely two extremes and come from two very different places, there are some commonalities such as the belief that those who have suffered a severe crisis require a holistic package of care, and the recognition that the anguish felt is far deeper than just in the physical body. Psychology today has a much deeper understanding of the psyche and how it reacts or responds to pain and trauma. Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist who founded *Analytical Psychology*, also known as Jungian Psychology or Jungian Analysis, speaks about the unconscious, with him defining the individual or personal unconsciousness as complex mental activity which happens without the person being aware of it. Jung also coined the term collective unconscious, a term introduced to represent a non-personal form of the unconscious where parts of the mind, although containing memories and impulses of which the individual is not aware of, belongs to all

of mankind as a whole. Jung believed that the collective unconscious is very much distinct from the personal unconscious which arises from the experiences of the individual, whereas the collective unconscious also contains archetypes, or universal primordial images and ideas.

With this in mind, we can see the relevance of ministering healing on all levels. Soul retrieval and other shamanic healing works to bring the personal unconscious activity into consciousness; by doing this, the shaman can work with the individual to bring healing. When the personal unconscious receives healing through conscious connectivity, it helps to heal the whole, not just the whole being, but the whole of the universe. It helps to bring healing to the collective unconscious. When we start to look at our being as a whole being we can then start to address the issues that would otherwise not be noticed.

Both shamanism and psychology agree that a person's psyche responds to severe pain, and here we are not necessarily talking about physical pain. We are talking about trauma which includes emotional and psychological trauma. It is agreed that it responds to pain by avoidance, by separation. In shamanism we call it soul loss, in psychology it is called disassociation.

Transpersonal psychology or therapy is another branch of psychology which blends very well with and has many similar if not the same techniques as shamanism, albeit under a different name.

Transpersonal therapy explores states of consciousness, transcendence of the individual, transpersonal experiences in regards to the spirit realm, calling on the deeper levels of the patient's mind and soul and pulling them together to bring about change and transformation. Having trained in psychiatry many years ago and as a trained integrative counselor, as well as having two decades in the healing field, predominantly the shamanic field, I can understand the need to blend the distinct paths in order to offer a full comprehensive package to healing and balance. All parts of our being must work in synchronicity in order for us to be the best we can be at any given time. Once we drop the illusion of being one dimensional beings and realize just how deep we run and the

magnitude to our existence, then and only then can we even hope for, least of all perform, a holistic healing that is not only mind-spirit-body altering, but offers a healing so deep it changes the being for ever.

Plant Medicine

Plant medicine has been around for thousands of years. Even if you had never heard of shamanism or shamans, you would have heard of plant medicine or herbal medicine. Traditionally, shamans were expected to know their herbs, especially local ones, in order to help the community. Often, this knowledge was passed down from the wise ones, the elders, the previous shaman, and often this knowledge was learnt by the observance of nature, by watching which plants the animals used and when, and at other times the shaman would practise on himself. Plant medicine is also used for its spiritual component, not just its physical ability to heal. It is the indigenous healers' knowledge of plant medicine that has contributed extensively to the development of modern medicine; that is, orthodox medicine. Plant medicine is one such healing method that orthodox doctors are more readily accepting, probably because it can be tested scientifically, but even now much of the plant world is left in the dark because of lack of scientific evidence.

For years herbal remedies or folk medicine have been used. Slippery elm is well known for helping balance digestive upsets. Valerian is well known for inducing sleep, peppermint for food induced migraines, chamomile to soothe skin irritations, myrrh to heal wounds, frankincense to open spiritual awareness. This is just a handful of uses which doesn't even scrape the surface of what is available and their healing properties. Plant medicine has been used since the beginning of time. Even the Bible mentions them, and all around the world you will find people with knowledge of plants and knowledge on how to use plants medicinally.

For many, the plant is just a plant, and just as one reaches out for an aspirin without any due thought, so too do some people reach out to plants without any due thought. The plant is treated as a resource to bring relief or healing to a sick or out of balance body. To the shaman, the approach is very different. To start with, the shaman would approach a plant and first ask permission to take it or some of it. If the answer was *no*, it was *not* taken, as simple as that. Great care would be taken in the cutting of the plant and ensuring enough was left for the future. This was of great importance. Thanks was given to the plant or bush and often a small offering of tobacco was left. The plant was treated with respect. It was treated as a sister or brother would be treated. It was treated as part of the shaman's life, not just a plant. For the shaman, the plant has a spiritual aspect. It has a spirit and you can talk to that spirit and receive information on its healing properties. Shamans are required to know the exact part of the plant to use. They are required to know when they can use it, how to prepare it, what it is used for and to be aware of any side-effects. They were known to be as knowledgeable in their world of plants as any pharmacist is of their world of chemicals. Yet in today's world, so much respect is given to the pharmacist, and none or very little to the shaman when it comes to the medicinal world. Much of today's natural healing methods are still considered *quackery*, which leaves many wonderful methods of healing in the dark struggling for the light. It was the indigenous people that taught Western medicine about aspirin. It would be wise for Western medicine to remember its roots and to put more finances into the testing of such medicine.

Some shamans hold some specific plants in especially high regard due to their sacredness. These plants were known to induce a heightened state of awareness and knowledge when ingested. These plants were said to communicate with the shaman, imparting wisdom and knowledge for healing once they had been ingested. These sacred plants are best known as hallucinogenic plants. The hallucinogenic plants which were used ceremonially were said to change the mood but also change the shaman's perception. Colors would be enhanced, spirits may appear, especially the spirit of the plant which would have been invoked through ceremony. At times, the sacred plant could even

appear to be god-like; and whilst under the influence of the hallucinogenic plant the shaman would ascend into the spiritual realms, but the conduit may be the plant. This way of experiencing specific hallucinogenic plants was not for recreational purposes. It wasn't a *chill out* time. For the shaman it was a journey or experience taken in order to learn and bring transformation to the community.

In today's world, you often read about so-called *shamans* or *healers* offering retreats and leading groups of people to ingest such plants, often bringing much harm and at times fatalities. This is the usual misuse or misdemeanours of something that was meant to be held as sacred and certainly NOT to be confused with true shamanism.

The Shaman as Psychopomp

The shaman's responsibility for his patient does not stop at death. If someone is known to be close to death the shaman would work with the soul and ensure its readiness for the next journey in life – death. But death is not the end as many believe. Death is merely a doorway to freedom for your soul, whether this is for eternity or whether this is until it is ready for a reincarnation; either way death is the release of what is often a tired or malfunctioning body and a release for the soul. The shaman is active in ensuring there is a peaceful transition into the spirit realm. The shaman or psychopomp acts as a guide for the souls of the deceased, guiding them through the spirit realm to a place of rest. It has often been said that sometimes the individual at death can become confused or lost and unsure of where to go. This is said to be the case in sudden, unexpected deaths where perhaps the person was not ill and not expecting to die, such as in a fatal car accident for instance. The shaman does not think twice about coming in and out of the spirit realm. It has been said that he lives with one foot in each camp, one foot in the physical realm and the other in the spiritual realm. That is not how I experience it. To live with one foot in each camp depicts someone split

between two realms. For me, the shaman lives in the spirit realm, offering his physical appearance here on earth; and even though he is present in the physical body, his mind, his heart, his emotions, his intent, his entire soul is still in the spirit realm.

Ceremonial Healing

Ceremonial healing is a naturally interwoven piece of shamanic healing. Most everything about and in shamanic healing is ceremonial or ritualistic, it is part of what sets it aside from many other practices. Although some ceremonies are fairly consistent throughout certain shamanic cultures, you will still find that each shaman has her own unique signature on the ceremonies that she performs. Just as in all things, we may all follow the same path, but we will follow it differently because we are all different. Even if the shaman was to copy exactly a set ceremonial routine, it would still be a different experience and bring a different experience to all who partake in the ceremony, simply because each shaman engages with their own allies, their own spirits, and each shaman has her own personality and preferred way of working, their gifted ways. Individual shamans have their own rites, their own songs, their own dances but there is still consistency within that culture. There are many ceremonies, rituals and dances throughout shamanic cultures. Many will have similar goals whilst many will be very different in their approach, desire, and outcome.

One particular ceremony or dance is the *Hopi Snake Dance*, which is said to be the most widely publicized ritualistic dance. The performers dance with snakes in their mouths, (rattlesnakes – and no anti-venom is taken prior to this ritualistic dance). This dance requires two weeks of preparation and was thought to have originated as a water ceremony, as snakes were the guardians of springs. Now it is used as a rain ceremony and to honour the Hopi ancestors. The snakes are considered the tribe's brothers, relying on them to carry prayers requesting rain to the gods and spirits of their

ancestors. There are many ceremonies, rituals and dances performed throughout shamanic traditions. Here are just a few: The Sun Dance, The Stomp Dance, The War Dance, Death Ceremonies, The Green Corn Festival (which includes the First Fruits Rite), Healing Rituals, Peyote Worship, Pow-Wows and Vision Quests to say the least.^{10-Resources}

In today's medicine there is neither time, space nor understanding of the power of ceremonies, the power of ritualistic dancing. The closest one is likely to get to a ceremony is a support group, a group of like-minded or like-sickness people drawn together perhaps weekly or monthly in order to offer support to one another. This may be coordinated by a counselor or other professional. It may even be patient led; but this is nothing in comparison to calling on God, the Spirit, the Life Force. This is nothing in comparison to the power created in a tribe of spiritually organized faith and beliefs. Despite the fact that much tradition has been lost over the years, tradition still has much going for it whether we realize it or not; today, shamans still practice traditional ceremonies, recognizing their importance in healing. Ceremonies and rituals are something that can be taught to all in order for the individual to partake in them at home; by bringing ceremonies into the lives of our clients, our patients, we encourage spirituality and oneness with life - a gift that is worth giving.

The Healing Power of Sound

If the world was said to have been spoken or sung into existence, then we must conclude that sound has a creative force. We must conclude that creating through thoughts and visualization is not enough, otherwise the world could have simply been *thought* into existence. Now, obviously not everyone believes the world was spoken or sung into existence and that is fine, but what we can take from this is that all those years ago, when the Bible was first being transcribed, someone felt it was important to share the idea that *sound* is a powerful tool. In other societies we can see the

power of sound through the use of mantras, words that have been built on power and vibration, words that may not make sense in the English language but have been built from the meaning of letters and sounds that have been put together. We know only too well that words can and do hurt and can and do heal; the result being partly about the intention behind the words and partly to do with how it *sounds*. Words, musical notes, vibrations, they are all part of the healing power of sound.

Singing bowls have been used for centuries. They are used to create a sound that can resonate with different aspects of your body, of your chakras. Sound healing is a therapy in itself where the client can lay down and have specific singing bowls placed at different places around them. The singing bowls have different *notes*, just like any instrument, and depending on what your body requires for healing you will be drawn to a specific note or notes. If you have ever been into a healing shop and experienced the very large crystal singing bowls, you will know that you can run your finger around the rim and that is enough to have the bowl sing, and the resonation and vibration is absolutely amazing. You can feel the vibrations penetrating your entire being, truly magnificent. On a small scale, but still worthy of mention and still effective in healing, are the singing bowls that the Buddhists use. Small but effective.

Going back to the Bible, God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. Light was created from sound, from vibrations. Light was created through voice, through speaking out the desired *thing*; this clearly reflects the importance that sound has for healing. Thought may be an important factor, but sound and vibration seal the deal! First we need to dream up our creation, or think our creation, then we need to send out the vibrations of sound, permitting the vibrations of thought or inner seeing to merge with sound. Sound carries the thought and through vibration it manifests itself into being. We live in an amazing world, not separate from it but part of it. We must start to realize our own potential in life.

The difference between some shamans from the past and the present day shaman is often witnessed in the lack of sound during their ceremonial healing practice. Whilst many shamans today will still use rattles, drums, herbs, feathers, wands etc., many do not engage in the singing of healing, the chanting of the healing. Traditions show shamans chanting or singing whilst healing. Today, many have lost that art and fail to grasp the true healing power of sound. If you sing or chant whilst your intentions are strongly fixed upon the healing, you are channeling your thoughts through the voice and into the song or chant which vibrates throughout the universe; the ripple may be small, but is heard or felt by all, consciously or unconsciously.

Science Kids^{12-Resources} states:

- Sound comes from vibration. These vibrations create sound waves which move through mediums such as air and water before reaching our ears.
- Our ears vibrate in a similar way to the original source of the vibration, allowing us to hear many different sounds.
- Dogs can hear sound at a higher frequency than humans, allowing them to hear noises that we can't.
- Sound is used by many animals to detect danger, warning them of possible attacks before they happen.
- Sound can't travel through a vacuum (an area empty of matter).
- The speed of sound is around 767 miles per hour (1,230 kilometres per hour).
- The loud noise you create by cracking a whip occurs because the tip is moving so fast it breaks the speed of sound!

- When traveling through water, sound moves around four times faster than when it travels through air.
- The scientific study of sound waves is known as acoustics.
- Although music can be hard to define, it is often described as a pleasing or meaningful arrangement of sounds.
- The sound of thunder is produced by rapidly heated air surrounding lightning which expands faster than the speed of sound.

So in other words, we need vibration and sound and if we can send that vibration via water, it will travel four times faster than if it travels through air. So instead of vibrations traveling at 767 miles per hour, they will be traveling at 3,068 miles per hour. With that in mind, it is hard to say that what comes out of our mouths does *not* affect the world! If we can accept that although vibrations are not seen by the naked eye unless captured on a monitor or a device they are in fact real, and without them, without vibrations, there would not be any sound. Imagine, a world where we didn't hear the wind, where we didn't hear the tiny drops of rain, the rustle of the leaves, the howl of the wolf, the flap of wings, the meow of the cat, the laughter of the baby; vibration is responsible for much of our pleasure in life. So if we can take those vibrations consciously into our healing, we have an amazing power, an amazing gift at our disposal.

The Bible teaches us to speak out that which we wish to create. We can do this via traditional prayer, mantras, singing, speaking; there are so many ways to utilize this gift. We can encourage through talk (vibrations), our clients or patients to speak out that which they desire from their healing.

As bodies that are made up of so much water, does it not stand to reason that as we pray, as we chant or sing, that those same vibrations will transmit themselves through our entire being, traveling

faster due to our water content? The amount of water in the human body ranges from 50-75%. The average adult human body is 50-65% water. Infants are around 75-78% water, which drops by the age of one to around 65%. Although these measurements vary according to gender, age, fitness and body composition, in regards to adipose tissue or lean muscle, they still serve to reflect just how much water we are, and just how much amplification we have when vibrating and creating sound. As vibrating beings, does it not stand to reason that perhaps the more we can assist our body to vibrate, or the more we are able to increase our rate of vibration, that we will also be able to intentionally create much faster that which we are trying to heal?

Looking at a growing foetus who is surrounded by water, we can assume that it does sense and later hear the vibration of what the mother is saying, not just what she is feeling; it is thought that a foetus becomes aware of vibration at sixteen weeks' gestation. With that in mind, it reminds us that during pregnancy we have an optimal time to send vibrations of love and acceptance, of reassurance and compassion to another part of the universe, a growing microcosmic amoebae within.

Many ancient shamanic healing practices are based on using sound to induce certain states of consciousness, or certain trance states in order to precipitate healing. The shaman calls or entices the client's consciousness into a different state, a state where it can receive, a state where critical thinking is temporarily switched off. The shaman is aware of his power, he knows what he can do from a spiritual perspective, he knows the force behind him and within him, so he can go forth creating with healthy, positive intent. If we look back at the Bible, we can see that Christ commanded the winds to stop, He commanded the seas to calm; now this could be about Christ being God, or it could be about Christ living in recognition of who and what He is or was - a powerful, vibrating being, who could control the weather through intention, vibration, and sound!

From a shamanic perspective, we could still say that Christ spoke to the spirits in connection to the elements and commanded those same spirits to stop and be calm. No matter how we look at it, the

message is still the same: we have the power to change the unthinkable, through vibration and sound. Incredible!

We are so much more than what we think we are. We are actually the universe, learning and experiencing itself. So often we look out, we look out towards what we perceive as the universe, when in reality we must all learn to look in, look within, because that is where we will find the answers. The answers to life are held within each one of us. We must learn to open the box, the lid to knowing, and without fear dare to dive into the unknown, which isn't really the unknown but the forgotten knowledge of life and creation. We spend so much time facing the wrong direction, living in an illusion of the world being outside of us, when the reality is we are the world, we are the universe, the cosmos, and as we come together in unity, our vibrations will resonate and create an orchestra of sound; and that same unity, that same sound, will create something beautiful which will be reflected in or manifest in the physical world and our individual worlds.

Shamanic chants are used to invoke healing, but they are not used parrot fashion. They are not used like a magic stick. They are used with wisdom and knowledge, wisdom and power. They are used with faith in the power of language. As speaking or singing is formed by the stringing together of words to create sentences, and words create sound, and sound is created via vibration, then we can rest assured that no matter what cultural language the shaman chants in, the desired affect will be the same. You don't have to understand what the shaman is doing in order to receive a healing. Your mind may not understand but your soul, your spirit, your inner being will be able to respond to the vibration of which the shaman chants. The understanding will be on a deeper level. Through singing, storytelling, chanting, through speaking and praying, shamans from around the world bring harmony and health. They bring balance and well-being into the lives of others. The vibrations and sounds of the rhythmical drum, the rhythm of the rattle and the voice of the shaman are all used as

hypnotic tools that can either push the shaman to other worlds or push the client into other realms of consciousness.

Our language creates the world, whether we speak it, sing it or chant it. It is the responsibility of each and every one of us to create the world responsibly. When the shaman works with spirit, they do so responsibly and with integrity. Together, the shaman and spirit create the perfect symbiosis. The shaman's symbiotic relationship to the universe or with the universe and all in it is linked to the power of sound, and through that sound comes the power to nurture, restore, heal and sustain. Why does the shaman or anyone else go to such extremes? Because of the inner love of not only humanity but of all of creation.

Love and Compassion

Love and compassion are fundamental elements of spiritual healing, whether you be a shaman, a healer, a Buddhist monk or even a priest; without love and compassion we have nothing. But this love and compassion does not stop here. It expands into other realms, into the spiritual realm where spirits abide. We rely on love and compassion from the spirit world in order to care about our needs, and desire to help us heal. Just like us, spirit is not obligated to love us and have compassion for us, it comes down to choice for us all, and that choice is dependent on how we have evolved and where we are on our spiritual journey. But what is compassion if it isn't sympathy? The difference between sympathy, empathy and compassion is quite simple. When the shaman has sympathy for us, he or she feels for us; they can see that we are suffering, they feel somewhat sorry for us. When the shaman has empathy, he can actually feel our pain, he can feel our suffering not just see it. But neither of these require action on the shaman's part. But compassion, compassion is much more active. Compassion is seeing the pain (sympathy), feeling the pain (empathy) and *choosing* to do

something about the pain in order to lessen the affliction. It is fairly easy to show love and compassion to those whom you already love, but the test of a great shaman is to show love and compassion to those who they don't naturally feel close too. The shaman may not particularly *like* the person who has come to him for treatment, but he must learn to put aside his feeling, he must learn to overcome that worldliness in order to be able to offer love and compassion.

Every shaman has gone through their own suffering. Just because they are called to be a shaman does not protect them from hurt, pain, grief, trauma, anxiety, depression, loss etc.; these are simply part of the learning of humaneness, these are the knowledge paths that shape us, buffet us, make us strong and shine the light of love. The pain we all suffer in life can do one of two things; it can destroy us or build us. The choice comes down to us. We must all choose to rise above the pain and be the best we can. The shaman stands in the gap for us all to help us overcome this pain. They themselves are said to have walked through their own gates of hell, dealt with their own demons, many of which may have been self-created, and once they have defeated all, they come out the other side, transformed by the fires of life, the creative force of chaos. Just like stars are born from chaos, so too are we born (if we allow it) into a greater version of ourselves, if we can love ourselves and treat ourselves with compassion. We must all face our own fears, deal with our own torment if we wish to grow and heal.

When the shaman truly touches your soul, communes with your spirit in a spirit of love and compassion, it is not unusual for the shaman to cry, for they are feeling your pain, sharing your grief, cradling your heart in their hands. Compassion is a beautiful gift if only we choose to hold it and embrace it.

Here is a beautiful true story of love and compassion:

It was a few weeks before White Eagle was due to go aboard ship. She was engaged in normal daily activities when she experienced the vision. It was of herself standing at the back of a ship with an older gentleman. He was going on the ship to scatter the ashes of his late wife.

Several days into the cruise, having forgotten about the vision, she met an elderly gentleman wanting a massage. As his massage commenced, there was music playing softly in the background as the ship rolled gently back and forth. White Eagle poured a little oil into the palms of her hands and gently rubbed them together to warm the oil and release the aroma of the oils; she lay her hands gently upon his back and was suddenly struck with grief. She knew it wasn't her grief. She knew it was his. With tears rolling down her cheeks for feeling his grief, she said to him, 'What is all this grief?' But before he had a chance to answer, she remembered the vision and said to him. 'I know why you are here. Your wife has died and you are here to scatter her ashes.' Needless to say, he swung his head around in disbelief, complete shock, and said, 'How do you know that?' White Eagle replied, 'I had a vision of you before I came to the ship. I didn't know what you looked like, but I knew why you were going to be here.' By this time, the man was sobbing. He used to come on cruises with his wife, but now she had died he wasn't going to come anymore. He wanted to come one last time in memory of her and scatter her ashes at sea. The turmoil leading up to him coming had made him leave the ashes at home, but what White Eagle felt to offer him was a simple ceremony at sunset that day; they would meet at the back of the ship and would offer a prayer and say farewell to her in order to assist him in letting her go. As he did not have the ashes, water was used to symbolize the ashes, the letting go, the returning too, where her spirit came from. The water represented the fluidity of life and love.

They met just before sunset. It was a beautiful evening, the sky was still blue, the orange from the sun was painting a beautiful picture on the horizon and they spent a few quiet minutes before they

commenced. White Eagle said a few words and he said his goodbyes and with a few more words and a blessing, they poured the water overboard to release not only her but also his grief.

Later on that night, White Eagle spent several hours grieving, crying, sobbing, and although they were her tears, it was not her pain. It was the pain she had taken from him in order to bring some relief to him. She shared his grief so that he did not have to suffer alone. She took it upon herself to lighten his load. After she had released all the grief she was carrying she fell into a deep sleep where she could go through her own healing in the arms of Spirit. When she woke up, the grief was gone.

She saw him briefly the next morning as it was time to disembark. She had gone to look for him to ensure he was okay; they shared a few last words and she reminded him that he still had reasons to keep going, reasons to live. That was the last White Eagle ever saw or heard from him again.

Love and compassion requires action!

We can look once again to the Bible to see the non-judgemental attitude of Christ's love and compassion to healing all people no matter what they had done. We can see that same loving intent, that same selfless attitude within Buddhism. It doesn't matter from where we come, where we are going, what we believe; what matters is our intentions in life, which should be not only for the shaman but for all, and that is the intention to bring peace, calm and love, not harm. If we evolve our inner being to a place where we can offer love and not harm, the world will naturally be a different place.

The shaman reaches out to all. He does not choose who he will work with or heal depending on what they have done in life. He is not called as a judge but as a healer, knowing that even the most brutal murderer will be carrying the pain of what he has done, even if he is not aware of it. The shaman reaches out to all, knowing that no matter how bad the person may seem, they are still part of the circle of life, still part of the sacred hoop, and still a part of himself. We all make up

humanity, and we are all responsible for what we do with our piece of it. It is this same connection that permits distant or absent healing to work, this same connectedness that permits remote healing to be affective. Love transcends all, if only we permit it too.

Without love and compassion, whether from a shaman or any other type of healer, healing is nothing more than a technique. It is bound to have some effect but not the all-encompassing effect it would have otherwise had on all levels if offered with the giver's heart, good attitude, good intent and compassion.

The shaman's love is not just for humanity but for the entire universe and it is this that drives him onwards and upwards, it is this same love that encourages him to always bring healing into his own life.

Prayer and Distant/Absent or Remote Healing

When we remember that we are all part of one, all part of the sacred hoop, all part of a greater consciousness, then we remember the inherent capacity that lies within, whether we acknowledge it or not, to affect another. Just as a stone thrown in water sends out ripples affecting water that is further away from the point of the stone's entry, so too does that which we throw or place into the greater consciousness send out ripples affecting aspects of the greater consciousness that is further away from ourselves. We can see this as a fact. If you blow into the air, the air that is currently present, prior to your blowing, will be changed; it has to be, because the circumstances have changed. Your breath has influenced and moved what was already there. The air had no choice but to flow in the direction it was pushed. If the air was blowing towards your breath when you blew out, then your breath would have gone in a different direction because of the force of the air coming towards you; these are basic facts. This is simply how nature works, just like yin and yang, moving backwards and forwards, filling voids and creating change.

In the same way, we can expect prayer or distant or remote healing to do the same. We aren't talking about controlling another. We aren't talking about magic tricks. We are talking about basic energetic movement. Our prayers, our thoughts, our intent, our healing is the stone in the greater consciousness, being directed to one specific point. So I don't have to be at the point I wish the stone to fall, I don't have to get in a boat to paddle ten feet out to drop the stone. If I can throw it, I can throw it from the shore. Likewise, we don't have to be with the client in order to send healing (just throw the stone).

For many, the shaman passively offers herself as a channel whilst spirit works through her, and I do believe this is sometimes the case. But I also believe that many times the spirit is working with the shaman, not just through them. In Reiki, yes, it is widely accepted that the Reiki practitioner or master is a channel – end of. Shamanic healing isn't Reiki and doesn't work in the same manner. Shamans rely on spirit to inform their work, but much of the work is done via the shaman, whether using drumming, journeying, extraction, soul retrieval, crystals etc. The work is still being applied via the shaman who is working with the spirit.

Prayer is considered a passive healing method, and although some groups pray fervently and with much authority, it is still considered passive with the supplicant asking for healing for the client and then leaving the outcome to God. Other healing practices can also be considered passive, but with much of shamanic healing it is much more active in its delivery, with the shaman taking a much more hands on approach.

Larry Dossey^{13-Resources} at dosseydossey.com speaks of one mind:

The recently developing Era III goes even further by proposing that consciousness is not confined to one's individual body. Non-local mind – mind that is boundless and unlimited – is the hallmark of Era III. An individual's mind may affect not just his or her body, but the body of another person at a

distance, even when that distant individual is unaware of the effort. You can think of Era II as illustrating personal effects of consciousness and Era III as illustrating the trans personal effects of mind.

It's important to remember that these eras are not mutually exclusive; rather they coexist, overlap, and are used together, as when drugs are used with psychotherapy, and surgery is used with prayer. The evidence supporting Era III implies that there are no boundaries to consciousness, that it is infinite in space and time. If our minds are unbounded, then they must unite or come together at some level. This means that in some sense we are literally one. The implications of this unity are profound. If our minds are connected, then we can, and do, share any and all experiences. All the joys and sorrows of life can be mutual affairs. This means we are never alone, which relieves the twin burdens of loneliness and isolation, two major factors in illness.

Dr Ernest Holmes^{4-Bibliography} in his amazing book *The Science of Mind* which speaks extensively about *Divine Limitless Potential* also talks about this same greater consciousness, this same *one mind* that we all engage in whether we recognize it or not. When we fail to understand our depth, our divinity, our greatness, we run the risk of creating much unnecessary harm to others. When we become enlightened beings, knowing what we are made of and knowing the creative power that lies within, albeit dormant in many of us, then we become the amazing, limitless, creative potential we were or are designed to be. How exciting!

In 2014, I had been contacted by a young lady whom we shall call Ruth. Ruth was in her late twenties. She visited Sri-Lanka six years previously, where she was a volunteer for eight months with a center that helps street kids. Whilst over there she picked up the herpes virus. The virus came up in her eye and glands, leaving her with scarring to the cornea, ulcers in the eye and nerve damage, all of which had caused the loss of most of her sight in that eye. After unsuccessful

treatment, she was offered a cornea transplant or six-to-twelve months of antivirals which she was told could cause kidney damage.

Needless to say, Ruth did not consider this a viable option. There were too many risks involved, so I offered her some remote healing. After only four sessions Ruth was due to go back for a hospital check-up. This is part of what the text she sent me said, after her check-up:

I went for my check-up. Three out of four ulcers in my eye have gone. Thank you, and my scar over my cornea has reduced in size so thank you again. All I can say is a whole-hearted amazing thank you.

I continued to use remote healing on Ruth and on the 10th June 2014, only five days later, Ruth sent me another text after her check-up which said:

Eyesight is better, it was 0.2 and is now 0.6 which is amazingly better as there has been no improvement since October until your healing. Still got a tiny bit of one ulcer left and the cornea is thinning too. Thank you again for all your support and your healing as it is definitely working.

Brilliant; I continued on with the remote healing. Then, on the 19th June 2014, I was pleased to have news about Ruth's next check-up. It had been nine days since her last check-up and I had continued on with the remote healing. The text Ruth sent after the check-up was this:

Yippee! The virus has gone, feeling loads better. Scarring has reduced in size. A huge thank you and blessings. ALL the ulcers are gone, and the scarring has reduced in size so my sight is clearer. Yippee – Thank you.

Now, I don't know about you, but I was well and truly blessed by such a report. Some of you will think it is a coincidence, others will believe it to be a miracle. I support the latter! But at the end of

the day, it matters not whether it was or is a miracle OR a coincidence (cooperative incidence).

What matters is someone who had been suffering for a very long time was healed.

In the **Journal of Scientific Exploration**, in an article by **Dean I. Radin et al**; titled - *Anomalous Organization of Random Events by Group Consciousness: Two Exploratory Experiments*^{14-Resources}

collective consciousness is explored by a group of researchers who outlined the following definitions of consciousness in relation to non-local mind, the greater or collective mind (a copy of the experiments available).^{10-Appendices}

Non-local consciousness extends beyond the individual. It is an ordering principle which can insert information into disorganized systems creating a higher degree of order. Awareness and consciousness are not the same thing; the ordering power of consciousness can occur outside of awareness. Individual and group consciousness can insert order into the world as well as being able to extract or receive information from the world (which re-iterates what we have already looked at in regards to there being a greater consciousness of which we all use whether we are aware of it or not).

With this in mind, we can look once again to healing and prayer, and both are founded on the same concept which is that we are more than just our physical body, which we have looked at in the *Introduction*; that our consciousness, our intention, and our focused efforts can affect the material world, without being limited by space, place or time. But not only can it affect the material world, but also the spiritual world, which is why absent, distance or remote healing can and does work if done appropriately. This also reflects that the same is true when working as a group or community in unison; even the Bible states: *where two or more are gathered together, or in unison, there I (God) am also*, so even the Bible is talking about collective intent, collective consciousness. With this in mind, that also means that consciousness, with intent to heal, can be transferred onto objects which can then be used for healing; so such things as crystals, medicine bags, drums, wands and

even handkerchiefs or prayer cloths can be conduits for healing with the healing transferring to the individual in receipt of the object. It is nothing new for charms or talismans or medicine bundles to be used to bring forth healing. It isn't necessarily the object itself, but the intent that has been consciously put into it that matters. This healing work is about people either singularly or communally calling on a higher power – spirit, God, or the patient's higher self - to bring about balance, bring about healing. These experiments show us what many have believed for thousands of years, which is that we are all part of the same greater consciousness, and all able to affect a non-local aspect of that same consciousness through love and compassion. If this teaches us anything it must be that we truly do need to take responsibility for our thoughts, our speech and our actions.

Chapter Four

METHODOLOGY, MATERIALS AND CASE STUDIES

We have already looked at what shamanic healing is and how it works in regards to body, mind and soul. We have also looked at spirit helpers or allies and helpful relations with them as our guides and teachers; but now we need to narrow the aperture down, bringing our focus into modern day healing outside of shamanic cultures per se and, in particular, to the methods of practice that some of today's shamans are using.

Shamans and healers all work differently. They are all at different levels of growth, both personally and spiritually. To suppose that what you receive from one you would receive from all is both naive and untrue. I work how I was taught, and others will work how they were taught, but difference doesn't necessarily mean that one is right and the other wrong; just as different approaches of counseling work differently for different people, so too do different approaches of shamanic healing work differently for different individuals.

So before we go further we also need to clarify and recognize that in many cultures a shaman, although a *healer*, is very different to a *healer* or even a *shamanic practitioner*. In this instance the shaman is, as we have discussed at length in previous chapters, whether from a shamanic cultural background or not; a *shamanic practitioner* is one who makes use of shamanic tools or techniques but is *not* a shaman; and a *healer* is someone who uses other tools or techniques to bring healing such as a *Reiki master*. The segregation of the term *healer* is not meant to uphold one over the other but to bring forth and acknowledge the depth of insight, wisdom and teaching that each level can and often does bring. One of the main differences between practitioner, healer and shaman is that the traditional shaman was a leader, whereas today's shamans may not necessarily be leaders in the

same way; but they are still often upheld as leaders, having a deep concern about the health and well-being of the community.

Although we have talked much about the power of shamanic healing, we need to really start to look at whether shamanic healing really does effect general well-being and, if so, in what way, and how does it stand alongside other healing or alternative practices? And although much of that has been discussed generally, we now need to bring it down to a handful of case studies, but in particular one case study, so that we can really look at evidence for it or against it. But before we can do that, we need to look at the methodology of shamanic healing, and as shamans and shamanic practitioners can all work very differently, we need to narrow it down to one method of working, whilst remembering that although the delivery of the healing may differ substantially, the core intent is always the same, which is to bring healing and wholeness to the individual.

Methodology

Preparation

The preparation time prior to receiving any client is an important time. It isn't just about ensuring the room is clean and warm, nor is it just about preparing your drum or music, or ensuring crystals or anything else you work with is ready. Preparation time is primarily about the shaman, about the shamanic practitioner. It is about opening sacred space and creating a sacred space in which to receive your client or patient, both words used interchangeably. It is about cleansing yourself in readiness for your client. It is about preparing your mind, your heart, your spirit to give of itself and be the best channel or vessel for healing energy to flow through. The shaman or shamanic practitioner can't expect to bring about the best healing if their mind is full of the argument they had earlier that day, or if they are suffering from an unsettled stomach because they have just eaten or

eaten what is not good for them. They are expected to be the best they can be at all times.

Preparation time can be done first thing in the morning, and then again before the next client. It may involve smudging and purifying the room or the self.

Sage is a popular choice for smudging in shamanic healing as it is known to remove toxic or negative energy to say the least. Sage is burnt and often a feather is used to distribute the healing cleansing smoke around the room or sacred space and over the shaman. Sage is also often used during the healing to remove unwanted energy. Sweet grass is another popular incense for burning before, during and after healing sessions. Many American Indians believe that sweet grass should not be burnt alone but burnt with Sage; it is said that to burn sweet grass alone can invite too many spirits into the sacred space, some of whom would not be conducive to the healing environment.

The Healing Session

The client enters. You have the usual introduction of yourself if you haven't already met the client previously; and before you go any further, you ensure that the client understands how long the session will be and ensure that they have paid for enough parking; this prevents them from becoming agitated later on when they realize that they haven't put enough money in the parking metre - such stress can have a detrimental effect on the session. You also ask if they need to use the bathroom, for the same reason; often they have rushed to get to you and don't always feel they can ask to use the bathroom. You invite the client to sit. I usually have them sit on the couch with their feet over the side, then, when they are mentally relaxing, knowing the car is okay, and they are physically relaxing, knowing they have used the bathroom, you then ask them to turn off or silence their telephone or any other device that could interrupt the session. You will be surprised how many people are willing to stop the healing session to answer the phone! As they start to bring their

awareness into the room and away from their work, their home life or even their journey there, you will start to see a slowing down of their mind, their thoughts. This is assisted simply by speaking in a soft tone to them.

Now they are settled, you may start to engage on a deeper level. You may start to ask questions about their problem, their concern, what it is they are hoping to get from the session. Many shamans or shamanic practitioners do not bother asking questions; they move the client straight to the couch and *get on with it*. I personally have found that by using counseling techniques prior to and during the session, you are able to guide the client more fully into the place they need to be. Often, once they have relaxed, they start to talk from their heart; they start to pour out what is really bothering them. You will notice a change in body language, in eye contact. There may be a sudden restless leg or wringing of the hands. You will be able to see what is happening if you listen with your ears, listen with your heart, watch with your eyes and feel with your spirit. I have found this technique takes the client into a receptive state much quicker than just placing them on the couch. Within usually five-to-ten minutes, and occasionally longer, the client will reach their emotions, they will access the pain within. This is a very important time. The goal isn't to make them suffer, but to take them into their heart so they can feel and at times see the pain, and work with the shaman to remove it. You don't offer sympathy. You may be empathic, but you don't want to put a Band-Aid on the issue. The tears are a sign of being open, open to feeling the hurt, the disappointments, the betrayals, the let downs. Once the client is in the emotions and open, it tells you that they are ready, ready to work with the shaman. At this point, the client is asked to lay down. The shaman stands at the head, encouraging the client to close their eyes. Sometimes a dark colored face cloth is put over their eyes; this is for a few reasons. The reasons being: it helps to remove any unwanted light to the eyes; it also catches tears as they run down the side of the face; if the client finds it difficult keeping their eyes closed for long periods of time, it allows them to open their eyes without any distractions. Many women wear mascara, even though it is suggested that they don't wear it to the session, and

once they have been crying it makes a mess of their face, so they use the cloth afterwards to tidy up their makeup. Always ensure the client has access to a mirror before they leave so that they don't have to worry about looking a mess. If you are working with a client who finds it difficult to visualize color, you can use a cloth which is the color you need them to visualize. This way, when they need to, they can open their eyes and see the color they are working with. This technique also offers a blind shield to what the shaman is doing. Some clients become nervous when they see the shaman *doing odd things*. This may be something as simple as extracting energy via a pulling technique. No matter how much you explain to the client about what you may be doing, they sometimes still worry or become distracted and want to start asking, 'Why?' And although there is nothing wrong with asking why, the healing session isn't necessarily the best time to discuss it.

Whilst the client is lying quietly, focusing on their breathing, the shaman opens or re-opens up sacred space, pulling down a protective energy field firstly over the self and then over the client. The shaman has ensured his crown and root chakras are firmly connected to the universe and, likewise, I encourage all clients to see a silver or gold thread going up from their crown chakra, which I touch as I mention it in case they do not know where it is, a thread that goes far up into the sky and connects with whatever it is they believe in – Christ, Buddha, God etc.; I then encourage them to do the same from the soles of their feet, but this time going deep, deep down into the earth. This exercise anchors them spiritually. Then, whilst encouraging them to take a few deep breaths, you place your hands first on the top of their head. This makes contact, and you must have already discussed *touch*, and whether they are happy for you to touch them. As you touch their head gently but firmly, you start to tune into the clients breathing, connecting with them so that your breathing cycle is synchronized with their breath. They breathe in you breathe out, you do this for a few cycles. Now it's time to track. You use your hands and eyes to see and feel anything in the energy field or the body. You check in with the client from time to time, asking them how they are feeling, what is going on with them. They will be (if you have followed through properly, and if they are

open to working with you) in a theta trance, but they can still respond whilst in the trance. This is often where they may say things like, '*I feel something odd in my abdomen,*' or somewhere else; this is a cue that healing is required. It is in this state that you can extract things, extract spirits, perform soul retrieval, heal wounds. It is by encouraging the client to work with you that you will have the most success. They know where they hurt, you don't always; you only think or feel you do, but you can be wrong and although spirit is working with you and through you, it is still vital that the client takes part in their own healing. It will be empowering for them and build their self-confidence.

The client needs that empowerment through assisting you in their healing. This way, later on when doubt creeps in, which it does sometimes, they can remind themselves of what happened in the healing session. When the client takes no part in their own healing, takes no responsibility with their own healing and allows you to just *do* the healing, they have no personal experiences from a personal perspective other than what you did to them which can lead to much doubt.

Back to the healing - it is during these times that clients can feel physical or crystallized formations of toxic energy, and they can be left feeling amazed as they assist you in its removal. We **MUST** empower clients. When we teach them how to deal with their own negativity, we empower them to heal themselves. We will never run out of clients, for those whom we have truly brought healing to, with the help of our allies etc., will forever be grateful and be our advertisement. The average healing session tends to be around one-and-a-half hours from start to finish. Once the healing session is coming to a close, you let them know; this is when you clean up and finish up. Their energy field will need smoothing out and they may need some sage blowing over them. Always leave five-to-ten minutes for checking in after the session.

The scope for a healing session is far too wide to be able to fully discuss it here. Here we can only look at the basics, but the session may require the shaman to use the drum, or rattle, feathers, music,

journeying, soul retrieval, crystals. The scope is endless and dependant on what the issues at hand are.

Closing the Session

At this point, you bring the client's awareness back into themselves. You encourage them to take a few deep breaths. You draw back the protective bubble that was laid over them, and tell them to sit up when they are ready, reminding them there is no rush. This is an important time for the client; they are coming back from being in a supernatural trance if you like and many of them would never have experienced anything like it in their life. They may be wondering what happened and whether it was a dream, whether they had imagined it. Many will be feeling either very heavy or light from letting go of so much trauma, so much heartache. The idea of sitting them up is not just about seeing how the session was for them, it is also about you ensuring that the client is in a safe place; not depressed, not suicidal, not still in a trance. All these things are imperative to their well-being, to their safety for driving or walking home. It is the shaman's responsibility to ensure they are in a safe enough space to leave the healing room. Sometimes it is suggested that they go and get a cup of tea or coffee, and just sit a while longer before heading home or back to work. This ensures they have sufficient time to process what has happened or at least to fully come back into this reality. You may also want to book another appointment for them. This closing time gives them a short time to be able to ask questions, be there for them. This is vital; they need to feel as if they are a spirit and a heart not a number on a conveyor belt! It is your responsibility to give as much assistance as you can. Tell them they can e-mail you between appointments if they need to. If they have been through a major healing with much emotions or hurt, tell them that over the next three-to-four days other *stuff* may come up. Tell them this is quite normal. Instruct them on how to let it go, how to keep themselves okay and safe. If felt necessary, tell them that over that three-to-four day period, if

stuff comes up and they want to call you they can. Remember, this can be a very frightening time for them. Often they have come innocently hoping for healing and become overwhelmed when they don't know what to do with the residue that can surface when they have been through a deep healing. Be there for them. They are your client and it is your job, your calling, to help them and if it isn't your calling, perhaps you shouldn't be doing it!

Materials

The basic materials or tools used in shamanic healing are the shaman's hands, breath, rattle, drum, feathers which are often made into a wand, a staff and often, but not always, an array of carefully selected crystals and of course some sage to burn. Many use a mix of sage and sweet grass. Many of these smaller tools are often found in a shaman's medicine bag. The other *materials* or *tools* are those that assist him/her throughout the healing session, namely the spirits, the allies and/or totem animals.

When we think of tools, many of us would think about them as we would a carpenter's tools, but it isn't as simple as that. The carpenter's tools are important, and if he uses them incorrectly he could completely ruin a masterpiece; but if the shaman uses his tools incorrectly, he could ruin a person! He could cause further damage rather than healing. So as with all things spiritual, great care **MUST** be taken, and the shaman must be committed to working towards the greatest of ethics.

So let us look briefly at the tools.

- **Shaman's Hands** – The shaman's hands acts like a conduit, so that they can draw healing energy towards the client. They are a channel for healing to flow through.
- **Breath** – The shaman's breath is also powerful. It can be used to blow lost pieces of the soul back into the client, or to blow away unwanted energy. The breath is a powerfully charged tool when used appropriately; it is also used to ignite the sage. Traditionally, the breath is used to

bring fire, to encourage flames to catch, to feed the fire. The breath is never used to *blow out* a fire; water is used to put out fire.

- **Shaman's Rattle** – The shaman's rattle creates the sound that can break through negativity. It can vary in tone and volume with some sounding like they could crack open your head. Rattles can transmute and remove unwanted energy. They have been used for thousands of years. Some believe that the reason we give babies rattles is so that as they lie or sit there, shaking their own rattle, they are breaking up and removing the negative energy around them.
- **Shaman's Drum** – The shaman's drum is the river or rhythm that can carry both the shaman and the client into a different space, a different place. The drum is known to be one of the most powerful tools in shamanism as it carries you along your journey. When we listen to the beat of the drum, it reminds us of our connection to Mother Earth, when we listen we can hear our Mother's heartbeat. Drums resonate throughout our body. We can feel the vibrations deep within. We already know that sound and vibration brings transformation, and so it is within.
- **Shaman's Feathers/Wand/Staff** – The feathers, wands and even staffs of shamans are used to remove and protect. They can flick, smooth, swoop and draw down the power from above, bringing clarity of body, mind and spirit.
- **Shaman's Crystals** – The crystals are individual healing aids all by themselves. Their individual properties affords them the title of healing stones or healing crystals. Crystals have been used for thousands of years. They are even mentioned in the Bible! Healers who work primarily with crystals will probably have an array of crystals, all different sizes, shapes, colors and all with different healing properties. The shaman may only have one or two, or just a handful of faithful crystal beings that help in the healing process. The crystals do not need to be polished, nor do they need to be the most expensive crystals. Crystals are chosen for their

healing properties and are often crystals that have been handed down from other shamans in a shaman's bundle, or from significant others. Many feel that we do not choose the crystal but the crystal chooses us.

- **Sage/Sweet Grass** – The shaman's incense is often sage or sage and sweet grass, but that isn't to say they won't use anything else. Sage is well known for its healing and protective qualities and sweet grass is said to be used to draw in positive energy. Sweet grass is also said to be unsafe when burnt alone for it can open the doors wide open and let too much in; the burning of sage with the sweet grass is said to bring protection from too much energy being drawn in. Sage is often burnt alone due to its cleansing, relaxing aroma.
- **Medicine Bag** – The medicine bag is as important as the tools that are found in it. Often the medicine bag will have been handed down through generations. It is a sacred bag and needs to be treated just so. The medicine bag is said to hold the shaman's power. To lose it or have it stolen would be shameful.
- **Totems/Allies** – The shaman's totem animals and allies are always an intrinsic part of the shamanic work. They are the power, the energy behind the success. Healing energy comes from a higher source than the shaman who is an active vessel, working with and drawing from the ancient ones.

Shamanic healing is naturally a holistic approach within itself as it ministers to the individual on many levels. When the client is ready and willing to work on the issues that arise through the shamanic work, a huge transformation can and undoubtedly will occur. Obviously, if the client only has one or two sessions, then the results will be limited but, as on so many occasions in which I have personally witnessed, if the client comes back on a regular basis then a huge transformation can and does manifest itself.

Shamanic healing works wonderfully on removing stagnant and negative energy. It works wonders on dealing with the negative and often destructive thought patterns that we carry around with us. It can help enormously in dealing with and releasing grief and dealing with abuse. I have included several case studies^{9-Appendices} to show the powerful results that can be obtained through shamanic healing but here is one client's journey in particular that I would like to include as an example of shamanic work; a young client that I had the pleasure of working with.

Sample Case Study

Karen was only thirteen. She had been in a horrific car accident two years earlier and although she had been given trauma counseling, she was still anxious which affected her cognition and ability to function normally in everyday situations. The anxiety as well as the underlying anger towards the person who caused the accident was enough to impact her everyday life.

Through shamanic healing, and in this case I used *Soul Retrieval* and *Biofeedback* (full case study in^{11-Appendices}), Karen was able to journey with me downwards into the darkness of her own soul so to speak, down into the depths of her own underworld where she felt gripped with fear. She was able to journey to find the piece of her that was missing; the little girl who was lost and terrified, the little girl who didn't want to face the world because it was a mean and hard place to be in. Karen was able to talk to that aspect of herself and give the *little her* counsel, in order to make it feel safe enough to return to and with Karen. After much counsel and healing, Karen asked the little girl if she was ready to come back with her; she was, so we were able to reintegrate that lost and now found aspect of her; we were able to reintegrate that part of her lost soul back into her body.

The results were very evident for Karen, which she was able to see and feel. This way of healing had assisted her to feel whole again instead of feeling that part of her was missing. This enabled her to then find the forgiveness that she required in order to forgive the person who caused the accident.

The forgiveness was also another key to her unlocking another door to healing, which was turned when she released the unforgivingness and bitterness. The deep healing brought much release emotionally and psychologically, which also had an impact on her physically as well as spiritually. Karen became much less over-sensitive to others and became more relaxed and able to enjoy life. She stopped having anxiety attacks when she approached cars, and no longer had emotional breakdowns when traveling.

Karen has since continued to grow and develop and take the positives from the experience; the positives being that neither her or her mum were killed in the accident and that it gave her first-hand experience of the power of shamanic healing.

So let us now look at some other alternative therapies that work well alongside shamanic healing.

Chapter Five

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE – OTHER THERAPIES

So as we can see from the last chapter, shamanic healing can and does make a huge difference and certainly when offered by a shaman. It is a powerful alternative to other methods of healing and even other methods of orthodox medicine. But as with all forms of therapy, whether from alternative medicine or orthodox medicine, one aspect which is imperative to the success of the treatment is the client's or patient's ability or even choice to work with you, to take some responsibility for what is happening in the actual healing session. Not only does this assist the shaman, but it also serves to empower the individual, and empowering them means they are better equip to help themselves after the sessions and through other life crises.

My goal is never to have the client keep returning over and over, but to teach them how to handle themselves; this way, when they can handle their own issues, they too can help others to do the same. They may come back from time to time, but my goal is never to keep them dependent on me, but rather to empower them to realize their own divine potential. This in itself can have an amazing affect.

So in this chapter, not only do I want to look a little deeper into what alternative medicine is, how it came to be known as alternative medicine and how it can affect us, I also want to look at a handful of alternative therapies that work well alongside shamanic healing; and although I am sure all therapies will work well alongside shamanic healing, I wanted to pick out a handful of therapies that I have personally used with excellent results.

History and Origin of Alternative Medicine

Alternative medicine was never meant to be a *literal* alternative to orthodox medicine, but that doesn't mean it can't be. It was and remains to be a somewhat misunderstood term for a medicine that can happily abide alongside orthodox medicine.

Every time we take a hot bath because of aching muscles, we are using alternative medicine. Every time we drink medicinal herbal tea or take herbal supplements, we are using alternative medicine. That heat pack, that cold pack, that rubbing of the dock leaf on the nettle sting, the vinegar on the insect bite, the ice pack on the swollen foot, the Tiger Balm on muscles, the warm water with lemon to aid with cleansing, these are all from the alternative medicine systems. We use essential oils, whether via oils or body sprays or even air fresheners, and often don't stop to think about what we are doing, or what form of medicine we are using.

The truth is alternative medicine has been around for as long as one can remember in one form or another. It was here before orthodox medicine, and that is a fact and no-one can dispute it. As orthodox medicine took over in popularity, alternative medicine started to take a backseat in many countries, and with its results not always being as quick as that of orthodox medicine, coupled with many charlatans of the day, alternative medicine slowly started to recede in its use or popularity as orthodox medicine moved forward to fill the gap. Remember the yin and yang, they move together. Yet, as I say that, I now feel that it is time for alternative medicine to move forward once more, not in order to push back orthodox medicine, but in order to create a place of balance which will bring harmony.

One major difference between the two medicine ways is that alternative medicine becomes a part of your life. It becomes a daily medicine whether through food, supplements, yoga, Pranic breathing etc. It becomes a way of life in order to help your body to remain fit and healthy; its main aim is

that of preventative rather than cure. However, it is accepted that there are times when prevention hasn't worked and a cure is necessary.

Alternative medicine is a way of living. It is an approach to life, an approach where '*Let thy food be thy medicine*' comes into its own. It is a way of living and remembering that prevention will always be better than cure, and where the alternative way is often considered the best way but not the only way, a way where we can choose to live an ALTER–NATIVE medicinal life. In other words where we can change or *alter* the *native*, the natural, the indigenous characteristics or aspects of our being, which also refers to our spiritual being not just our physical or even cultural being.

If we look a little further to the deeper meaning of the word *alternative*, we will see:

Alter – Meaning a change in character or composition, typically in a comparatively small but significant way.

Synonyms: change, make changes to, make different, make alterations to, adjust, make adjustments, to adapt, amend, improve – THE NATIVE

Native – Referring to or in relation to:

Synonyms: innate, inherent, inborn, intrinsic, instinctive, instinctual, intuitive, natural-born, deep-rooted, deep-seated, hereditary, inherited, in the blood, in the family, natal, congenital, bred in the bone, ingrained, built-in, connate, connatural.

So what we can see from this is that *alternative medicine* is about taking the opportunity to alter(the)native through medicine, in this case natural medicine in one form or another. So once again, alternative medicine is where we can change or *alter* the *native*, the *natural*, the indigenous characteristics or aspects of our being, good or bad. This also refers to our spiritual being not just our physical or even cultural being, and we can do so via medicine, natural medicine; also known as

traditional medicine, indigenous medicine, complementary medicine, holistic medicine and of course, alternative medicine.

The term *alternative medicine* was never a mis-placed unfortunate name. It is an awakening medicine; alternative medicine is a medicine of a some-what spiritual nature, where we can look after our whole being, body, mind and spirit. We could ask why then, if alternative medicine is so great, does it appear to not work in many situations? My answer would simply be because we often wait until we are already sick, or too sick, already in a diseased state before we decide to make changes. Remember, it is here to be adopted as a way of life, a way of being, not to be applied as a Band-Aid, although many times it still works well as a Band-Aid.

Alternative medicine can't replace those parts of you that are permanently damaged or removed. It can only assist in the healing of what is left. Even if you believe in miracles, even miracles have to follow a spiritual lineage of cause and effect. It is said that Jesus created miracles and I do not doubt it at all, but he didn't do it by some magical trick. He did it by working with the universal laws of nature, the universal laws of cause and effect. The universe teaches us about cause and effect and as we are a reflection of the universe we must accept and adopt an attitude of natural law.

We have to step out of our preconceived ideas of being merely a physical being and step into reality, into the reality of alternative medicine where one starts to realize, to comprehend and internalize the concept of wholeness. The world is one, our world is one and together we make the one. $1 + 1$ does not make two, that is mathematics on a physical level; on a spiritual level, $1 + 1 = 1$, a greater sum of its parts, every one drop of the ocean when separated, becomes individual drops of the same ocean, when added together those same individual drops make just one ocean - not many oceans.

We are multi-facet beings and we must look to heal our whole being not just one or two aspects. We need to heal the whole in order to be whole and it is as simple as that.

Holistic Philosophy of Alternative Medicine

The philosophy of alternative medicine is and always has been about taking a holistic approach, not only to the individual but also to life in general. Holistic medicine is a concept that involves preventative and therapeutic medicine that emphasizes the importance of the whole person, the whole being. Yet, as I say that, in regards to orthodox medicine and even some alternative medicine practitioners, the holistic approach often only includes the body, mind, emotions and environment. Sadly, the spiritual aspect is often neglected. From an alternative medicine perspective, holistic medicine should look after the entire being, including the spiritual. It should look at the person as a whole as opposed to looking at individual functions or organs.

Holistic medicine encourages the empowerment of the individual towards self-care, self-healing and self-respect. It harnesses the power of natural substances such as plants and oils, as well as many other therapeutic practices which include those practices that are based in the spiritual realm of life.

Although there are well over one hundred documented alternative therapies available, some of the more popular ones include:

Acupuncture – Acupressure or Shiatsu - Astrology – Aromatherapy – Biofeedback – Chiropractic – Counseling and Other Psychotherapies – Osteopathy – Massage – Yoga Therapy – Spiritual Healing – Homeopathy – Shamanic Healing – Pranic Healing – Macrobiotics – Mantric Healing – Vitamin Therapy – Naturopathy – Nutrition – the list goes on.

All around the world we will find many different natural therapies, some of which we may never have heard of, others that are popular to that specific time or place and many others that are known worldwide. The field of alternative medicine is growing and will continue to grow.

Alternative Medicine Around the World

Alternative medicine has been around for approximately six thousand years, having started in Asian countries such as China and also in India, although in India alternative medicine was and still is known today as Vedic medicine or Ayurveda medicine.

Much of what is now categorized as alternative medicine was originally developed as independent systems of medicine such as traditional Chinese medicine and the Ayurvedic medicine of India. These independent systems of medicine were developed in relatively remote areas of the world, with no contact with pre-scientific Western medicine. Other alternative medicine such as homeopathy was developed in Western Europe and often in opposition to Western medicine, whereas chiropractic and osteopathic manipulative medicine developed in the USA.

Today, alternative medicine is much more accepted but has a long way to go in order to be fully accepted by not only the general public but also by the orthodox medicine system. With more and more practitioners and, as with all things, at times unethical practitioners, regulation is already having to be introduced in order to look after the general public; but it is unfair to dismiss such a powerful way of healing just because of a few rogue practitioners. We get those even in orthodox medicine.

However, I do believe that alternative medicine **IS** the best possible treatment for wellness compared to any other medical system, simply because it focuses on the whole person, body, mind, spirit, emotions and environment; but this isn't to put aside orthodox medicine, as that also often plays a significant part in well-being. Alternative medicine, as mentioned earlier, focuses on prevention rather than just cure, but we aren't all in a healthy state by time we discover alternative medicine, in which case orthodox medicine may still be needed to help bring the individual back

into harmony. My goal here is not to separate the two modes of medicine but rather to reiterate the importance of inclusiveness and the power of the individual to make their own choice.

How Alternative Medicine Helps in General Well-Being

Alternative medicine offers treatments and therapies that are relatively free of negative side-effects, and primarily focuses on prevention rather than cure. There are alternative medicine systems available that can work on different levels of being. Yoga or tai-chi can help with physical stature as well as the mind, counseling and other psychological therapies can also assist in looking at and dealing with deep-seated problems. Traditional Chinese medicine can help keep the energy flowing freely, help with pain and other illness, and Ayurvedic medicine can help in connecting body, mind and spirit. There are so many different approaches to take towards general well-being, many of which work on a multi-dimensional level and many of which overlap one another.

The key to health and wholeness, to general well-being, is through creating a body that is balanced and working in harmony with not only itself but also the environment in which it lives. Stress is a major cause of ill health, so general well-being is also about ensuring your mental, emotional and spiritual state is well not just your physical state.

Alternative medicine helps with general well-being because of its natural ability to reach places that orthodox medicine does not reach. Many of the alternative medicine available lacks theoretical proof of how and why they work, if in fact they do, but that doesn't make them useless. We don't always have to know why or how. What is important is that it does work and creates no damage.

Alternative systems of medicine often work on an energetic/spiritual level, which means that often, but not always, the results are not obvious immediately. The results are often subtle and often take longer than orthodox medicine to bring about change, but what is important is that it does at least

bring change and assist in general well-being. The fastest route isn't always the best route or the most wholesome route; often we have taken years afflicting our being.

Alternative Medicine from a Financial Perspective

Here in the UK healthcare is free, but if you want something that the doctor doesn't consider necessary, you can expect to pay for it. Although a free NHS is a real blessing, it does have a bearing on whether or not one chooses alternative medicine over or alongside orthodox medicine. With many people already struggling to make ends meet, the additional costs for healthcare are often too much. On a tight budget, one has to decide whether the £8.60 per month prescription drugs are a better option than perhaps the £26 per month Chinese herbal remedy.

Unfortunately, many times cost comes before personal choice and often comes at a detrimental effect due to the many side-effects from prescription drugs.

In other countries such as North America, where healthcare is subsidised only through healthcare insurance, the likelihood of alternative medicine being a choice is higher. However, not all alternative medicine is accepted modes of healthcare in regards to insurance.

When the day comes where alternative medicine is subsidised or offered for free as part and parcel of care plans or packages, I believe there will be a huge surge in the use of alternative medicine. Until such time, I believe it is for those who can either spare the money or are able to find the extra finances.

Popular Therapies I Use with Shamanic Healing

Massage – continues to be a popular therapy whether for relaxation or for a much deeper therapeutic result. Massage causes several physiological changes to the body, relaxation being one such change and a change that is considered to be a predictable response of the nervous system when massage and touch are applied. The pressure used in massage upon the muscles can be from various techniques, all of which are designed to relax, tone and invigorate the muscles, whilst stimulating the flow of blood and the removal of toxins. Massage is a good way to start a shamanic healing session, especially if the client is very tense or wishes to combine shamanic healing with touch therapy as it permits the client to relax first and to release normal day-to-day stresses. Massage therapy works well with many other therapies including acupressure, Shiatsu, osteopathy and of course, a favourite, aromatherapy.

Aromatherapy – has been around for many, many years. Cleopatra knew the health benefits of using essential oils hence her being renowned for soaking in milk baths with rose petals. Today, there is a huge range of available essential oils that we can access to improve our health and general well-being. *Aroma* is about the scent of something, it is about using the olfactory sense and *therapy* is in regards to using the scent as a treatment. Aromatherapy works on your whole system. It can be taken in via the pores of the skin, through inhalation and some can even be ingested, but the latter is not recommended unless under the guidance of a professional practitioner. Aromatherapy oils can be mixed in carrier oils, or mixed in water for body sprays or even air sprays. They can be added to your shampoo, body cream, bath or even a couple of drops placed on your pillow or handkerchief. Essential oils have a vast array of uses. One popular use is to include them in a massage. I use them in massage for their therapeutic qualities and to help with relaxation and if you combine aromatherapy massage with shamanic healing and the client doesn't like you burning sage during their shamanic healing session, you can opt to use essential oils instead in a diffuser. If you use sage

essential oil, it doesn't have the same smell as dried sage, but it will still provide the ambience and medicinal benefits that you are after.

Yoga Therapy – has also been around for thousands of years. Yoga comes in many branches and the branch of yoga you choose will depend on what you desire. Some focus more on the physical aspects, others focus more on the meditation aspect. When I use yoga therapy, I select appropriate asanas in order to assist the client with their physical, mental or emotional problem. The focus is less on performing a slow relaxing routine and more about slowly but effectively performing each asana or position. The focus is in order to correct a problem, regardless of whether that be lower back pain, a stiff neck, general aches and pains or even grief. Yoga therapy can be tailored into shamanic healing to help with all aspects of healing. It can be effective for many conditions including but not limited too:

- Stress & Anxiety
- General Aches & Pains
- Back pain
- Arthritis
- Chronic Fatigue
- Fibromyalgia
- Migraine
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Restless Leg Syndrome, to say a few

Yoga therapy can be more effective than simply following a yoga routine, as the asanas can be specifically adjusted to suit the current needs of the client. Whereas in traditional yoga practice you may have full routines to follow, which may consist of six to ten asanas, in yoga therapy you may

have only two or three asanas to complete, perhaps two to three times per day. The idea of yoga therapy isn't to give the client the same benefits that yoga practice will give them, it is to give them what they need at that time in order to assist them on their road to recovery. That doesn't mean they shouldn't do yoga practice, nor does it mean that they can't participate in yoga practice in the future.

Pranic Healing – is a great addition to any shamanic healing session and if it is done well, the client won't even be aware that they are engaging in Pranic healing. Pranic healing is an ancient method that uses energy medicine. Prana, which is where Pranic comes from, is a Sanskrit word meaning life force, otherwise known as qi, or chi. it is used to transform, balance and direct the body's energy to assist in healing. As part of shamanic healing, it is easy to incorporate the use of Pranic healing, as directing the prana is a natural part of the session as you encourage and direct the client's breathing. Pranic healing can be used to help push out negative emotions, crystallizations of matter, and can also be used to bring in positive, life changing energy. Under the guidance of a professional practitioner, Pranic healing can be used to bring healing energy into certain organs or limbs. It can also be combined with color therapy or mantric healing. Pranic breathing cycles are often included in yoga routines; they help to center and focus the prana in a meditative manner. Pranic breathing can also be done via attuning your breathing to your client's; when they breathe out, you also breathe out but directing the healing energy into their body. When they breathe in, you also breathe in whilst drawing down the healing energy into your own body via the crown chakra. When breathing out the healing energy, you can either have your hands on their head and direct the healing energy out through your hands or, instead, you could choose to gently blow out the healing energy into their crown chakra. These techniques can also be used on specific areas that require healing.

Mantric Healing – is another healing therapy that has been around much longer than many other therapies. We have discussed it briefly in an earlier chapter. A mantra is a sacred utterance. It may be a sound, a syllable or even a word or string of words. They are considered to hold spiritual powers because of how they are created. Mantras are often used to aid meditation but often to *call in* or *create* that which we desire in our life such as peace, love, compassion, a longing for truth etc. Although mantras may be words, they may not make any sense in the English language. They are not designed to necessarily conform to the rules of language as we know it, but rather they are created to conform to spiritual or energetic frequencies. Some of the earliest mantras were composed around three thousand years ago in India but now also exist in Buddhism and Jainism to mention just two. Mantras are melodic phrases often with spiritual interpretations and meaning, but not always; sometimes it is the musical sound that is uplifting and meaningful. But mantras are not just melodic, they are also considered to be mathematically structured with numinous qualities.

When used in meditation or shamanic healing, mantras can clear the mind and refocus the energy on the *now*; they stimulate areas of the brain bringing many health benefits. Mantras help to move the client into a deep state of consciousness. They can also focus on specific areas that require healing.

One beautiful mantra that is lovely to sing, which we covered in an earlier chapter, is the Ra Ma mantra. The words are: ***Ra Ma Da Sa Sa Say So Hung*** – just to recap, its meaning is:

Ra – means the sun and connecting with that frequency gives you energy.

Ma – means the moon and it aligns you with receptivity.

Da – is the energy of the Earth, grounding you in your roots.

Sa – is Infinity and as you chant this, your energy rises upwards and outwards drawing in the healing of the Universe. Then, when you chant it a second time,

Sa – you pull the energy of Infinity into you.

Say – is a way of honouring the all-encompassing Thou. It is personal, like a secret name for God.

So – is a vibration of merger.

Hung – is the Infinite, the vibrating real. It is the essence of creation. (***So Hung*** together means I am Thou).

Not only is this a beautiful mantra to listen to and sing, it is well known as a mantra that stimulates the body's natural ability to heal itself. There is no coincidence that the first half of the mantra, Ra Ma Da Sa, is associated with the earth's healing energies whilst the second half, Sa Say So Hung, is associated with universal healing energies. This mantra is said to be able to boost the immune system, strengthen the mind and emotions, and calm the nerves so it is a good mantra for overcoming past or present trauma on all levels.

Acupuncture – is a system of alternative medicine in which fine needles are inserted into the skin at specific points along what are considered to be energy lines, otherwise known as meridians.

Acupuncture is the ancient Chinese art of healing. It has become popular the world over, not only as an anaesthetic agent for surgical operations but it has also proved remarkably effective in many diseases which are resistant to conventional forms of therapy. Besides being free from the side effects commonly encountered in drug therapy, it is simple, safe, effective and an economical form of therapy. Acupuncture is slowly but surely being integrated into mainstream, modern medicine.

During acupuncture, six effects are produced by the needling of specific points or areas. The effects are: analgesic, sedation, homoeostatic or regulation, immune enhancing, anti-inflammatory and quickening of motor recovery.

Electro-acupuncture is similar to traditional acupuncture in that the same points are stimulated during treatment and, as with traditional acupuncture, needles are inserted on specific points along the body; but the difference is that they are then attached to a device that generates continuous electrical pulses. This device is used to adjust the frequency and intensity of the impulse being delivered, depending on the condition being treated.

Although we have several meridians running throughout the body, the *San Jiao* meridian is the only one that isn't associated with a bodily organ. This meridian is also known as the Triple Burner. It is broken into three parts: the upper, middle and lower burner. The upper burner distributes the lung qi and fluid, the middle burner helps in the fermentation of food and the lower burner separates usable energy from unusable energy, the clear from the turbid. The San Jiao moves bodily fluid throughout the entire body and regulates water metabolism.

Osteopathy – is based on the principle that the well-being of an individual depends on their bones, muscles, ligaments and connective tissue functioning smoothly together. Osteopathy is a system of healing that is based on the theory that many diseases, not all but many, are associated with disorders of the musculoskeletal system. Diagnosis and treatment of these disorders involves palpation, manipulation and massage. Using body massage and bone manipulation techniques, this therapy is used to treat a variety of aches and pains including, but not limited to:

- Backache, including Lumbago and Sciatica
- Knee and Elbow pain

- Frozen Shoulder
- Cervical Spondylosis
- Headaches and Migraines, just to mention a few.

Osteopathy has become a sought after treatment. It can be used as a standalone treatment or it can be combined and gently blended with massage therapy or shamanic healing.

Shiatsu – is a physical therapy that supports and strengthens the body’s natural ability to heal and balance itself. It works on the whole person – not just with the physical body, but also with the psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of our being. Shiatsu originated in Japan from traditional Chinese medicine, with influences from more recent Western therapies. The first syllable in Shiatsu, *shi*, means fingers and the second syllable, *atsu*, means pressure. Therefore, Shiatsu means, ‘to apply pressure on the body with the fingers’, but although Shiatsu means ‘finger pressure’ in Japanese, in practice a practitioner uses touch, comfortable pressure and manipulative techniques to adjust the body’s physical structure and balance its energy flow. This touch may involve gently stretching limbs or applying pressure from the whole of the forearm. It is a deeply relaxing experience and regular treatments can alleviate stress and illness and maintain health and well-being, hence why today Shiatsu has become more prevalent all over the world. Shiatsu can be received as a treatment for specific ailments, it can either be incorporated into a massage or can be used as a standalone treatment. If Shiatsu is used as a complete treatment, the therapist will use a mixture of finger or feet pressure, as well as stretching and stimulation techniques. It is designed to *loosen up* the stiff, unhealthy body, bringing about a greater sense of well-being.

Acupressure – like Shiatsu and acupuncture, it has been around for thousands of years. It is an ancient healing art using the fingers to gradually press key healing points which stimulate the body’s natural self-curative abilities. Using the power and sensitivity of the hand, fingers or a

special probe, acupressure therapy is effective in the relief of stress-related ailments, and is ideal for self-treatment and preventive health care; it is also good for boosting the immune system.

Acupressure releases tension, increases circulation, reduces pain, and develops spirituality and vibrant health. It works on the same principle as acupuncture in that it uses the meridians and bio-energetic points to bring about change, the main difference being it does not use needles.

Crystal Healing – is yet another ancient healing technique. For those who doubt this, you only have to look through the Bible to see many references, especially in the Old Testament to crystals. Crystals were used then and they are used now. There is no coincidence that these beautiful crystal beings were felt to be precious enough to use on a regular basis.

Crystal healing or therapy is non-invasive, relaxing and can bring great results to all people. It doesn't matter what is wrong with you, these beautiful beings can help on many levels. Not only are crystals good to use during massage and other therapies, they are a major addition to the shaman's toolbox or medicine bag. Shamans may not carry a huge bag of them around with them, but they will use them to assist in shamanic healing. It is thought that crystals have healing properties. Many crystals are said to be able to do similar things, and it is up to the shaman or crystal healer to ascertain which crystal or crystals will work best.

Crystals are said to have their own electromagnetic vibrations and it is these very vibrations that interact or even interchange with the body's electromagnetic field and energy centers - the chakras; to bring healing and remove blockages. Crystals are said to bring peace and harmony. Some are said to keep you safe, offering protection. Others are said to keep you grounded and some, such as the smoky quartz, are said to help in times of emotional trauma or when feeling suicidal, which doesn't replace your doctor or mental health worker.

Shamans will carefully select the crystals they use, but there are times when crystals may choose the person they need to work with. Although a crystal healing session given by a crystal practitioner may differ somewhat to how a shaman will give a healing session with crystals, there is still a commonality between the two. Crystals are placed on different areas of the body to stimulate or even quieten the energy. Some believe the color of the crystal is important so they will look to choose either a color crystal that they are drawn to or a color crystal to match the color of the chakra that they are working on or in; and as there are an array of crystals, the shaman will be able to find a crystal that coordinates with each of your chakras.

There are so many crystals, all of which have different characters, different colors, or even a different feeling about them. They are as individual as we are, and all have different qualities and many purposes. Although several may be used for the same condition, there may be specific ones that are more suited to a certain individual.

Many people choose to carry crystals around with them. Some of us sleep with them, or keep them next to the bed to help with restful sleep and peace. Some talk to them, others keep them at work to help keep them focused, while others just love to be in a room full of them.

When having a specific crystal healing, often the shaman will create intricate patterns over or around the clients body, they may use other tools such as polished stones or even shells. The point of the intricate pattern isn't to astound the client, nor is it a playtime for the shaman; the intricate patterns and selected crystals or stones are carefully placed, often in geometric order, to bring balance and harmony to the client or patient's energy field, electromagnetic field. The crystals are there to help to rebalance the individual and assist in bringing healing on several levels. Crystal work is usually a very gentle and relaxing time, and most people come away feeling light and clear in mind, body and spirit.

As wonderful as crystals are, there are some ethical issues with crystals. With the supply and demand increasing, there are concerns that too many crystals are being taken from the earth. Vast areas of the earth are being ravaged for profit. What we need to remember as shamans, practitioners and even clients is that these same crystals are in and on the earth for a purpose and it isn't just for our benefit. We have to start to think about our attitude to the earth. These crystals that look so beautiful are taken, often relentlessly, with no regards to the crystals themselves and no regard to our Mother Earth. We must stop and think about what we are doing. These same crystals are like huge energy centers which provide healing and balance for our dear Mother Earth. If we continue to take, take and take, there will be little left for her and she needs healing too. If we continue to strip her of her own healing tools, her own healing centers, what will become of her? Will she become out of balance, sick? When we purchase crystals we should do so responsibly. We should buy what we need not always what we want. Many shamans are given crystals, they are handed down from generation to generation, their healing powers or essence remains strong and clean. When we bless others with crystals that we no longer require, we help the earth. That is one less crystal someone is buying.

Crystals are either in their raw state or polished. Either way, after a while they will require cleansing. Don't forget, we have taken them out of their natural surroundings, so they cannot so easily discharge negative energy appropriately. Some people will wash their crystals in soapy water and permit them to air dry after rinsing, others prefer to keep them in the sun to recharge. I personally do not agree with this method as many or most of the crystals have spent their life growing inside a womb-like structure. On the outside we see a rock, but on the inside is the beautiful gem. If a crystal is naturally in the dark, it seems incorrect to leave them in direct sunlight. where normally they would have felt the warmth of the sun on their outer side but would have been sheltered from its bright light.

Others like to leave them outside during a full moon to drain any unwanted energy and recharge them once again. I feel this is a much more acceptable way to recharge the crystals. You can of course place them in a black silk bag and then place them in the light of the full moon which will, once again, protect them from the bright light. Others like to place them in a bag and bury them for a while. This is definitely a more natural way of recharging them. It stands to reason that some crystals will have been exposed over time to bright light, for even stones or rocks can open up, but that doesn't necessarily mean the crystals are happy like that. We so often look at a crystal and see nothing more than a beautiful object in which to decorate our lounge or bedroom with, with little concern as to whether or not it will work well with our energy or whether it will be happy in our home. We must remember that crystals are electromagnetic and this same electromagnetic resonance can and will mingle with ours and all those in close proximity to it.

Take care when adorning your children's rooms with crystals. Although you mean well, the collective electromagnetic vibrations may be too much for your child and may start to affect your child in a less desirable way. Too much crystal energy or the wrong type of energy could have a significant effect upon the body, mind or spirit, and not necessarily in a positive way.

Counseling – or psychological therapies or even psychotherapy has the potential to change lives. With an open mind, it can bring healing, forgiveness and a complete transformation of a soul. Whether used alone or accompanied with shamanic healing, counseling is a great way to be able to look at the past and explore the future, it is a great way to get to understand why you are like you are and why others are like they are. Counseling has the potential to bring the unconscious into the conscious, it has the potential to open your psychological doors and create freedom.

Many clients that have undergone counseling have found it to be supportive and an opportunity for them to let go of the things that hold them back. Counseling can be long term or short term, it can be explorative of your past, or even your spiritual life. It offers a safe place to be able to share your troubles knowing that you are not walking the journey alone.

A counselor stands beside you on your journey into the unknown realms of your heart and soul. They are not there to tell you what you must do, what you must think. They are there as a guide to help you to navigate your journey. But if you want to see an even more powerful transformation, then incorporate it with shamanic healing.

When we combine counseling and shamanic healing, we create a space to be able to ask appropriate questions in order to find the necessary information to make the healing session much more effective. One could say that if you are working intuitively, or working in the Spiritual realm, then the information is not necessary as you are not reliant upon what the client tells you.

This is both true and not true. When we encourage the client to speak about how they feel, what they think etc., we encourage them to enter into themselves, to engage in a personal and ethical conversation where, more often than not, new awareness arises. This in itself can be healing and, at the least, help facilitate healing.

Counseling plays a vital role in life. We often engage in it informally without us actually being aware of it. Every time you take time out to talk to your children or others, asking them questions about how they are, listening and offering not always advice but sound choices for them in order for them to be able to move forward, you are practising counseling on a general or basic level.

For counseling to be effective in a shamanic healing session it must always be used at the beginning, during (when necessary) and at the end of each and every session. You can often see by a person's body language and other signs if someone is feeling down or somewhat depressed, but

unless you offer unconditional positive regard and a safe space to open up, you may never realize that actually, they are not just down, but suicidal. If a client is suicidal and sufficient work is not accomplished, you could be placing them at further risk of suicide. When you open a can of worms, as a professional you need to know that you are capable of either being able to deal with the worms in that session or capable enough to be able to put the lid back on the worms, SECURELY; and ensure that the client is in a safe place prior to releasing them.

Two specific models of counseling are *integrative* and *transpersonal* - The term integrative counseling is used when several distinct models of counseling and psychotherapy are used together.

There are many models of counseling, some of which you may have heard of before or experienced.

Here are just a few:

- Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)
- Gestalt Therapy
- Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP)
- Client Centered Counseling or Person Centered Counseling
- Humanistic Therapy
- Psychosynthesis or Transpersonal Therapy
- Transactional Analysis

It doesn't matter which model of counseling is used. What matters is the outcome. As an integrative counselor, different models of counseling will be used because we are all different, we all have different needs and we all respond differently. What one would find helpful, another may not.

Counseling is a natural process which guides itself. It is an inner journey for the individual of which the counselor is both a spectator and a supporter as she/he accompanies you on your journey. You are required to be open and honest to the counselor, but more importantly, to yourself. Nothing is gained with denial, but much is gained through truth and acceptance and the realization that we are

one and we all have things we need to accept in order to change. Change is the golden thread that runs through all therapy. Without change, you accomplish nothing. Change needs to be embraced not feared, and accepted as a natural and positive part of life.

Transpersonal therapy describes any form of counseling or therapy which places an emphasis on spirituality, the human potential or a heightened consciousness. It supports those on a spiritual path, offering support as the individual grasps inner truths about themselves, their life, their future and maybe their past.

Transpersonal therapy offers a safe environment for the individual and an opportunity to explore their deeper self via psychosynthesis. By honouring the *higher self* and recognizing the need to bring the whole person together as one through change and development, a sense of authenticity is reached which is deeply needed in order to help the individual seek a new, more spiritually oriented version of themselves. Transpersonal therapy takes a deeper look at the spiritual side of life. It explores the intangible, the sub-conscious, the unknown.

So there we are, we can now start to see why well-being is so important; we have looked at a handful of therapies that can assist the body to heal, we have looked at different aspects that require healing, but not a huge emphasis has been placed on our mental health.

Mental health plays a vital role in our general well-being. Without good mental health we can often view the world very differently and view it as a scary place to live. Poor mental health can lead to depression, or even worse, suicide. It can break families apart, destroy what was a good marriage and drive even the closest child away. Mental health still carries a bit of a stigma, even today, but the truth is we all have mental health, and it is either in good shape or poor shape, just like our body. Our minds can be healthy or unhealthy, and just like on a physical level, what we put into our mind can and often does affect what we think and how we live our lives.

When most people think about people with mental health issues, they often think about *sick* people, people who are *mentally sick*, but they tend to think of them in a different light to the physically sick. Yet, in reality, there is no difference whether your physical aspect is sick or whether your psychological aspect is sick. We create division because we fail to understand that depression is no worse than the depression of your immune system, and having a nervous breakdown is no different to your heart breaking down. They may all be different in regards to whether or not they are life threatening issues, but physical illness should not be seen as acceptable and mental illness as not acceptable. We have no right to treat people with mental health issues as *less than* the rest of society. At the end of the day, we all have mental health issues of some sort at some time or another in our life, whether that means being stressed out at work, or obsessional about cleanliness.

Mental health runs along a continuum. We all have varying degrees of good and bad mental health, the difference is how much it affects our life and how much control we have over it. Postnatal depression is a mental health issue as is stress, jealousy, hatred, obsession, anxiety, fear. What makes the difference is simply the degree in which we have it.

What We Need in Order to Achieve General Well-Being



Chapter Six

RESULTS AND LEARNING FROM SHAMANIC HEALING

The results from shamanic healing proved to be quite remarkable, and although I was able to give shamanic healing to many clients, I have only included a handful in this study; but that doesn't take away from the many successful sessions that were had.

The sessions were mainly face-to-face with some being given remotely. So let us look at a summary of a handful of success stories in regards to shamanic healing.

One lady had three or four eye ulcers and cornea scarring in one eye from a virus she had picked up some years previously. All orthodox medicine treatment had failed. The only thing left was eye surgery. In around five remote shamanic sessions which also incorporated remote acupuncture delivered by using an acupuncture doll, the ulcers were gone and she had improved vision and no longer required surgery, all to the amazement of her consultant.

One lady was having difficulty in transitioning between two jobs. She was finding it very difficult to let go of her current job even though she knew she needed to move on. When she came to see me, I invited her to get into a relaxed and centered space. When she did, I gave her an apple, which was representing her clients. From connecting with the apple, the fruit of her labour, she was able to recognize how she had planted her identity in them. I took the apple away, and on exploration of her feelings she was able to see that she now felt she had no identity, it had been firmly rooted in her clients. On returning the apple to her, she then felt her identity return. This was the learning she needed in order to be able to go away and rebuild her identity in the Greater Consciousness, in something that would last. That was the only session she required.

One lady had been enduring abuse from her spouse for twenty years. With shamanic healing and counseling she was able, over the course of a year, to find her power which had been stripped from her. Having been pushed down the stairs when pregnant, amongst other horrific experiences, she was able to heal and recognise that one of her own sons was following the same abuse pattern with his wife and child. This knowledge helped her to go to the authorities and inform them of her concerns about her grandchild and son's wife. Today, she stands strong. She stayed with her husband, but with different boundaries.

Shamanic healing truly did bring some amazing results, but shamanic healing when accompanied with counseling and at times other alternative medicine brought even more amazing results. The

results seemed to be much quicker and more deeply rooted when accompanied with other alternative medicine therapies.

To some, reading about the healings will seem amazing; and they are truly amazing, and I am truly blessed for being given the opportunity to have such an intrinsic part in the lives of others. But one thing we have to remember is that this isn't about people rushing out and taking some shamanic healing workshops. It isn't about completing a shamanic healing course. It is about the individual's personal healing journey and growth, and mine spanned over three decades, including my shamanic journey which spanned two decades.

In order to get the results that I achieved, I had to be self-disciplined. I had to be on my own healing path. I needed to be obedient to the ancestors that were teaching me. In order to get such amazing results I had to be all that the path encompassed. I also had to be prepared to walk through my own gates of hell and face my own demons, many of which were self-created, but this is a normal part of being a shaman. This is what often sets the shaman and healer apart. I had to be willing to be broken so that I could be put back together as I needed to be. I was made whole. I had to learn self-control in all areas and be willing to actively live the walk not just talk the walk.

My personal journey cost me everything. In order to follow this path or at least my path, I had to leave everything behind; people, loved ones, homes, pets, the lot. I had to let go of life as I knew it in order to create space for what my journey entailed. But my journey has also been an amazing journey; it has taken me around the world, it has permitted me to live in different countries and given me the pleasure of meeting so many beautiful souls. Australia carried me through the transition. Sedona, Arizona cemented all my learning, and England and Central America provided more opportunities for my work.

I had to be and learn all that we have discussed so far in this study. So with that in mind, I feel it is important to recap on what was learnt along the way because of its impact on the results. It is this very learning that has informed the healing sessions and given them direction and life; it is this very learning and willingness to trust in an unseen force that has enabled me to work with the spirit world in order to bring healing and well-being into the lives of many other people; and for that, I am truly blessed.

We started out taking a general look at what the thesis would include; then we started to focus on who or what we are as humans, and in order to do this we looked at our bodies as physical matter with a physical anatomy, and at our spiritual aspect and the idea of us having a spiritual anatomy or spiritual body.

We discussed the idea of consciousness as an individual concept of our minds and also as a collective consciousness, which is available to all as first suggested by C. G. Jung. We came to understand that when we face our own darkness, it enables us to manage the darkness of others better, because we have already travelled that road and are somewhat more equipped.

We looked at the different aspects of our being and how we can manage them efficiently to enable well-being on all levels, and saw how through using different states of consciousness, through the use of hypnotic states, that we could access not only different parts of our mind but that we could also influence the mind due to us being more open to positive influence without our critical thinking getting in the way.

We have discussed how not only shamanic healing but also how psychotherapy, yoga and many other natural therapies or alternative therapies can benefit our whole being. We have looked at what we put into our body and the role certain foods play in our quest for health and wholeness; all these

things can be seen as paramount in helping us to enter the cycle of change; but not just enter the cycle, but also to remain in the cycle without continually returning back to past habits.

We have been able to see just how important all these things are in order to transform ourselves, our mind and our emotions; not forgetting that love and forgiveness can also lead to healing within itself. Transpersonal therapy was highlighted as a way to lead us into a deeper understanding of our own being, our personal and cultural beliefs, and into personal change. The further on we went, the more it became clear that we are more than just our body, and we could start to see the importance of looking after not just our physical body and spiritual body, but also our mind.

Understanding that we live with and in a collective consciousness taught us the need for mindfulness, making us more aware of what we were putting into that same collective consciousness; permitting us to know how our own thoughts and actions can and do have a significant ripple affect into the greater consciousness.

We learnt about our chakras and luminous energy field, and how we are all interconnected on a very deep level not just to each other but to God, the Divine Intelligence, the Divine Source or Creator of all Life, whilst realizing that it was not the name of the Source that was so important but the Source itself. We learnt that if we put aside our self-limiting beliefs, we can actually evolve into a reflection of the Source through the connection too, and the use of, unlimited Divine Potential as Dr Ernest Holmes calls it.

When we understand the psychology of change and human motivation it permits us to move on from one place to another, whilst ensuring that our basic needs have been met. We also learnt that as we are made up of vibration and light, that we would need to continue to raise our rate of vibration in order to continue to purify ourselves and be the light in the world that we are looking for.

We looked at how alternative medicine, otherwise known as traditional or natural medicine amongst other names, in its broadest context can and does have a significant impact on health and well-being, and at the difficulties that alternative medicine has in being recognized and viewed as equal against orthodox medicine. We have recognized the need for more scientific research into individual therapies and into the spiritual side of life, so that through thorough investigation people can come to terms with that which could, for many, be a frightening concept. Through continued scientific investigation, I believe we could actually build a long awaited bridge, not just between the spiritual and the scientific, but also between our own body and spirit and between alternative medicine and orthodox medicine.

We could see by contrast that orthodox medicine appears to focus primarily on fixing as opposed to preventing, often resulting in excessive use of prescribed drugs which bring their own problems within themselves, and how orthodox medicine tends to look at and focus on the symptomatology but not usually the whole person, the whole being. We were also able to recognize that there is little or no time, space or desire to work with the spiritual side of the individual within the realms of orthodox medicine.

We looked at a handful of healing methods that are widely used and often adapted in order to bring about health and wholeness in individuals.

As we moved on, we were able to look at many areas of our spiritual aspect and life, looking deeply at the shaman and her or his role within the community and how they are more than just a healer.

We looked deeper into the relationship between spirit and matter within the shamanic context and how all things are living. The more we delved, the bigger the spiritual world became, and then we discovered the axis mundi and how it is considered to be at the very center of existence, a via-duct

if you like, connecting heaven and earth. This also brought up the concept of Jacob's Ladder and the Cosmic Tree and how they all relate to us personally.

We learnt how powerful journeying is and how in these altered states of consciousness our brain waves alter; and Einstein's equation reminded us about energy, kinetic energy or the energy of motion, which also served as a reminder that a widely held belief is that all things, all matter, is the manifestation of energy. This concept is not a new concept but one that has been around for many years.

Shamanism assisted us to look at the spiritual cause of illness or disease and how to treat a patient via shamanic healing. It reminded us of our spirit allies, both ancestral spirits and animal allies and our need to build strong relations with them if we want to work with them effectively.

We looked at a powerful example of shamanic extraction and soul retrieval, both of which were real experiences taken from real case studies.

We also briefly looked at plant medicine and how the plant world needs to be respected as living beings. I will deviate here for a moment in order to share with you a very powerful example of this.

I wanted to cut some heather from the garden in order to dry it and make a herbal remedy. I had been out and spoken to both of my heather plants. I knew that one wasn't ready to be cut because I could feel it, and on talking to it, it confirmed my feelings. A little later, I asked my companion, who loves the garden and who knew how I felt about respecting plants, to cut me a handful of heather. I clearly told him and showed him which bush to take it from. I even told him why he must not take it from the other bush. I even made him repeat back to me which bush it was that he must cut it from.

A couple of minutes later, he returned with the heather. I held out my hand and thanked him. But as he placed the heather in my hand I was hit with trauma. I knew instantly that he had taken it from

the wrong bush. I was pretty mad with him, and without asking I told him matter-of-factly that he had taken it from the wrong bush, the bush I had instructed him not to take it from. He looked pretty shocked and sheepish that I knew; he had looked at the two bushes with his physical eyes and seen that the bush I told him not to take it from looked healthier than the other one, so based on his limited knowledge he decided he knew better. He did apologize and I did go out to give healing to the heather plant and apologized for my companions ignorance. I also returned the cut heather as I felt I couldn't use it because of the trauma. I placed it back with the bush so it could die in its natural surroundings.

So don't underestimate the plant world, they have feelings too!

We also looked at how shamans act, not just as healers and leaders but also as the psychopomp, ensuring that the spirit of any deceased leaves the body peacefully and goes to its resting place.

We saw the importance of ceremony, sound, love and compassion; and as if that was not enough, we looked at the power and truth about distant, absent and remote healing, hearing about a powerful case study where eye ulcers and cornea scarring were healed through remote healing.

Shamanic methodology and tools brought the healing process to life. It moved it from mere information into a more practical application, it brought to light a real case study which reflected how powerful shamanic healing really is, and its importance for bringing a deep and long lasting healing on all levels. We could see that shamanic healing in particular can and does have a major impact on the general health and well-being of the individual, and how it can be amplified by adding other natural therapies to the sessions such as counseling, massage, acupuncture, mantras and Pranic healing, for instance.

By implementing the learning and knowledge we are able to permit it to inform our personal walk and our healing sessions, helping us to enter into each session with no preconceived ideas of what

would or must happen. When we can do this, we open the aperture wider for Spirit to bring healing and wholeness, to bring general well-being which, at the end of the day, is what we are hoping to achieve.

The results of shamanic healing enabled us to further see and analyse critically the work itself, and whether the healing received really was a long term and life changing healing or whether it was just a placebo effect.

When we think about shamanism we tend to think mostly about shamanic healing, but shamanism is not just about healing. It is about a way of living, a way of being. If we focus simply on shamanic healing we will see only how spirit affects matter in the sick or unbalanced individual; if we focus on the whole way of being, shamanism, we will see the whole, we will see how spirit affects and informs our way of being, our way of living upon the earth. Whilst shamanic healing brings healing into other people's lives, shamanism as a whole brings healing not only into other people's lives, but also to the earth, to the animals, to the tree people, the cloud people, the rivers and streams. It brings healing to the winged ones, the stone people. The list is endless.

Shamanism teaches us to walk gently on the earth, leaving no footprints. It teaches us to take only what we need, leaving plenty behind to sustain future generations, and it teaches us to ask before taking, even if all we want is a flower, a leaf, or even a blade of grass. Shamanism teaches us that the earth does not belong to us, and that we belong to the earth. It teaches us about the cycles of life and how we should respect and honour each cycle, not liking one more than the other. It teaches us acceptance, love and above all, compassion.

Shamanism reminds us who we are, what our purpose is in life, and although the idea of an invisible world is scary for many, we must remember that Spirit is here to help us be the best we can be in this life time, if only we were open and ready to listen.

Genuine spirituality is not imagined, it is not mythological. It is reality, but it is this same reality that needs much more investigation in order for people to understand it and come to terms with what seems, for many, an unreal and scary world. When you have lived all your life thinking one thing, it can be very hard to change what you believe, but that is how we grow and evolve, by believing one thing then having someone show us something different.

We spend so much of our lives trusting only in what we can see, hear, touch, smell or even taste, and we do so at the expense of our sixth sense. We do so at the expense of intuition, and our innate ability to spiritually see and hear. We are taught from a young age to trust in what we can observe through our senses, especially our eyes, and if we cannot understand something or understand it through our senses, we are often very quick to dismiss it. We live in a time where we must be willing to blend the physical with the spiritual, science with spirituality, and permit a bridge across what has been for many years a void in our lives and/or the lives of those around us.

Dr Carl Hammerschlag in *Dancing Healers* (1988)^{16-Bibliography} describes this concept precisely.

“What we see as science, the Indians see as magic. What we see as magic, they see as science. I don't find this a hopeless contradiction. If we can appreciate each other's views, we can see the whole picture more clearly. To heal ourselves or to heal others we need to reconnect magic and science, our right and left brains.”

Shamans act as healers, leaders, counselors, psychopomps and teachers. They were relied upon for locating herds, remembering the creation stories and keeping them alive. They pass on history and healing herbs. Shamans were relied on to bring the rain when it was needed and to receive wisdom from above. They were not only the caretakers of their community but of the earth.

If we could bring some of the aspects of life from shamanism and implement them into our own lives, we would live very differently and heal very differently; but shamanism isn't about pushing

away today's medicine. On the contrary, shamanism is open to embracing both, the shamanic way and the orthodox way, recognizing that they are both part of the web of life and to turn away one mode of healing is folly.

When it comes to healing, we do not have a *one size fits all* remedy, we often have to reach out to different modes and models of healing in order to rectify an imbalance within our body as a whole. Often it is today's medicine, that being orthodox medicine, which pushes away tradition and traditional practices, especially those practices that rely heavily upon the spirit world; but there are some orthodox doctors that are reaching out. They are broadening their boundaries, partly because they have expanded their own learning and partly because the demand for less invasive procedures and less medication with less side-effects is growing. However, we are still a very long way off from reaching equality in the healing or medical field. If we are all to heal fully, including the healing of the earth, we must be willing to combine the wisdom of the past with the wisdom and knowledge of today. We must be willing to combine the past with the present in order to create a better future, not just for ourselves but for those who walk the earth after us.

To be able to fully utilize shamanic healing and other natural methods of medicine alongside orthodox medicine, we need to be able to conceptualize the true meaning of the word *healing* rather than just put it aside as tradition or a new-age concept.

If we can come together as medical professionals, whether orthodox or natural, and partake in some shared world views, it would make the dual diagnosis and treatment process of our patients possible. But lack of positive qualities and ethics in some healers and/or doctors could be seen as a stumbling block in today's world. If we could all work towards encouraging a positive mind set of the patient, and encourage positive, but realistic expectations, we would greatly assist the healing process. With specific techniques and materials from both the natural and the orthodox way of

health, coupled with appropriate procedures, we would further increase the chances of healing on all levels.

But method alone is not enough to bring about a revolutionized unity towards health. We need more than just method. Our belief systems play a huge part in our attitude, our expectations towards healing, and these same belief systems and attitudes can have a major impact on our healing process and its efficacy. Our mental health influences how we treat ourselves on a daily basis, and in today's world we are indoctrinated with the need to comfort, and much of that comfort tends to come from food or possessions, and then we wonder why so many people are overweight or obese as well as stressed over their debt and enduring ill health.

In today's orthodox medicine our spiritual beliefs are often put on the shelf when we become sick, with little or no time to treat a patient in a way that compliments their beliefs; and with so many belief systems on offer, it reduces the likelihood of a *shared worldview* due to lack of knowledge.

In order for there to be a global paradigm shift and a move into a place that incorporates different models of healing, different belief systems, the shaman or practitioner or even orthodox doctor will need to develop their own knowledge of their clients' beliefs about healing. Alongside this, they will also need to be confident and able to explain to the client or patient in terms they can understand, the philosophies and methods that are being used in their treatment.

Some orthodox doctors are already more aware of the necessity to accept treatments that do not fall into the same category as orthodox medicine. But we, as shamans and other healers, are a long way off from gaining full acceptance and respect from those in orthodox medicine. It should be a two-way door where we as shamans and healers can freely come and go, sharing experiences and knowledge, taking pride in the fact that we can discuss and perhaps share experience in order to

offer the best treatment possible. But it feels more like a one-way door, which is opened by only a handful of orthodox doctors and closed again when they have heard or accepted enough.

Despite the current difficulties in regards to the acceptance of alternative medicine, and in this case specifically shamanic healing, one thing that cannot be denied is its existence. For thousands of years people have been relying on traditional medicine to heal. When we live in a Western world we tend to view all of life through the Western view lens, but in reality much of the world lives very different to us. Today, there are still entire cultures that rely more on traditional medicine than any other medicine. Some are forced to because of poverty but many others choose to rely on traditional methods because they believe in them.

Institutes of health are actively researching traditional methods of healing in the hope of bridging the gap between the alternative medicine world and the orthodox world, but this is going to take years before the bridge is firmly built and in place. However, institutes of health alone are not enough. We need the cooperation of healers, teachers, shamans, parents, politicians and of course scientists, all who need to be open and willing to look at the world from a different perspective.

We need people who are not afraid of challenging their own limitations and limiting thoughts in order to look deeper at the spiritual world that we live in. Only open hearts and minds will hear the song of tradition, only open minds will be able to receive the wisdom of the elders that has been passed down from generation to generation.

At the end of the day we are not concerned with, or at least we shouldn't be concerned with who is right and who is wrong, because at the end of the day there are fors and againsts on both sides of the fence. Alternative medicine and orthodox medicine both have good things and not so good things. They are simply opposite sides of the same coin. Differences are immaterial, they are not important; what is important is that we can view both sides of the coin as one healing system, then instead of

differences and inequality we would simply have just a larger choice of healthcare from which to choose from.

We need practitioners from a range of different perspectives that can work together in harmony and peace to bring about the best healing effect one can for each and every patient. If we hang onto our own ideas as being the right way and the only way, how on earth can we hope to help others who come from a different worldview?

As practitioners we so often take a microcosmic view of healing. Practitioners must start to open the aperture of their minds and embrace a wider idea of healing. There isn't one shaman or doctor who has the answers to all illness. This is a mystery of life, this is what should encourage us to step up and out of the box and try something different, try another method, a different therapy not just another pill!

The orthodox doctors carry much knowledge that can assist the shaman or healer, and the same with the shaman; they carry so much wisdom about the spiritual side of life, the spiritual side of health and wholeness. We only have to look at some of the case studies presented. We could perhaps write some of the case studies off as placebo effect, or coincidence, but you cannot write them all off. The proof is in the healing. Sooner or later there will come a time when unbelievers will have to stop trying to explain healing away as a counterfeit therapy and accept and embrace it for what it truly is – amazing.

In regards to the results, the case studies reflect that shamanic healing works best when the client takes an active role in the healing sessions. By doing so, it was noted that they felt more empowered and the teaching aspect (through participation) of shamanic healing was paramount to the reduction of anxiety and stress around issues that came up after the sessions. Clients felt they were able to use

some of the same techniques which they had learnt during their healing sessions on themselves confidently at home.

On client participation, it was noted that fewer sessions were required in order to reach the same place of healing. Without the client's participation, there were at times, no lead to help you find issues, and although that wasn't a problem because the shaman is trusting in a higher force, it has the potential to be a problem if the client is concerned about finances and the amount of sessions that would be required.

It was found that shamanic healing, when performed by a professional shaman, was extremely powerful and emotive. It was an excellent avenue for removing toxic or negative energy, and an amazing way of removing hurt and bringing forgiveness to self and others. Shamanic healing proved itself over and over. It reflected continuously its ability to naturally release pain and hurts from the past and present, and it made a huge difference to those with post-traumatic stress disorder, grief, low self-esteem and many other emotional, physical and psychological problems. But what was more interesting is that it was found that the sessions that included basic counseling skills before, during (if necessary) and afterwards had an even greater impact. It was found that by engaging in brief counseling prior to the healing session, the client or patient was able to move quicker into their feelings where they were more able to access their hurt. By accessing the hurt prior to the commencement of shamanic healing, it was noted that the client was able to work with the pain more easily and readily and have greater anticipation of it being either removed or healed. By using counseling skills and techniques on closure, it was noted that not only did it assist in bring the client back to the present, it assisted them to understand what had happened. This type of closure assisted the client to be able to process the journey easier and increased their confidence in not only the healing session but also in their ability to heal and change.

Clients who had been holding onto hurts for twenty years found they were able to let go and move on. These techniques showed a remarkable recovery and an increase in return visits. Many of the clients wished to continue on with shamanic healing sessions to continue looking within in order to remove other obstacles that were either holding them back or hampering their everyday lives. Many women found their voice, some being able to put a stop to abuse. Several children found their confidence and one even found the lost part of her soul.

With all this in mind, it leaves a question - do we need to leave shamanic healing to the shamans?

If we are talking about bringing healing into other's lives, then yes, leave it to those who know what they are doing, just like you would with any profession; but if we are talking about bringing healing to ourselves, then my answer would be the same as this shamans response:

I have come to the realization that we have to discover the shaman within. I teach my students that no amount of travelling with the Indians will bring you to your own wisdom and power. I have found that it frequently achieves exactly the opposite, distracting us from a true encounter with Spirit. The shaman is a self-realized person. She discovers the ways of Spirit through her inner awakening. Antonio would remind me that the Buddha was not a Buddhist, and that Christ was not a Christian. One sat under a Banyan Tree until he gained illumination. The other went to the desert for forty days. In the sixth chakra we experience our own awakening. We shed the ponchos, the robes, the rattles and feathers, and all other exterior markings.

An awakened third eye allows the shaman to know who he is. It gives him knowledge of the past and future and allows him to envision alternative destinies.

The truth is we all have the capacity to be or start to be the shaman in our own lives, if only we believed, if only we were willing to drop the robes of the world and put our heart and soul into our own healing, our own learning.

Training in any alternative medicine will set your feet firmly on the path towards healing, training in the shamanic arts by a reputable shaman will accelerate your healing process possibly one-hundred fold, especially if it is accompanied with counseling and other appropriate therapies to meet your needs.

Yet, as I write this, I find myself in a more illuminated space, and having gone through more than three decades on a healing journey, through the healing systems and practice and especially that of the shamanic arts, and after seeing many, many clients or patients, I am left with a somewhat surprised realization which is: even shamanic healing isn't the end of the road. It isn't the be-all and end-all I thought it was so many years ago. I have come to the realization that it is the doorway into something bigger.

I am left with no doubt whatsoever about the efficacy of healing practices and other alternative medicine, and especially that of shamanic healing and its ability to make a difference upon general well-being; but my training and journey through not only life but also through the healing arts has led me to the understanding that all of these things, all of these beliefs, all of these practices work on what one can call *on* and *in* the second and third dimensions of space and time. Many of them work in relationship to spirits from higher dimensions, some of whom can be considered teachers, guides or even gurus, but this in itself is simply another learning, another stage of growth.

My enlightenment from this whole experience is that within us all is the true shaman/healer/sage, and that within us all is a natural healing component which is set as *default*. I am led to believe that when we drop the robes, the rattles, the feathers, when we cease the beating of the drum and go deeper into the life-death-rebirth journey, one comes to the understanding that we can hear the natural beat of our Mother's drum. We can hear the heartbeat of Mother Earth as she beats her own rhythm within us.

As we go beyond the current teachings and learnings that work in and with the second and third dimensions, we start to realize that what we have achieved is only the beginning. It is only a slither of what there is to be had when we reach further up into the fourth dimension, the dimension where Spirit lives, where the Great Source, the Divine Source, the Greater Consciousness lives. This is the dimension where I believe creation began.

The training of the second and third dimensions bring us the knowledge and understanding that we need in order to progress, but the reality is that when we surpass the third dimension, the shamanic dimension, we lose all need for titles. We drop the healer title, the shaman title the doctor title, for suddenly we realize that they were necessary titles whilst we were still learning the way and still in that realm. We realize that they were just labels to help us and others understand *this from that*.

When we come to the end of the third dimension of learning we walk through another door, a black hole into a whole new meaning to life.

We walk from what we saw as light into what we will see as darkness, but this is not a negative place. This is not a darkness to fear but one to cherish. As we walk into this darkness, we start to understand that the darkness is our own unconscious, it is our own lack of knowledge and that as we progress in this new dimension, the dark begins to be replaced by the light. As our new-found knowledge starts to give birth to itself, the light starts to emerge; or perhaps the dark simply starts to recede. Either way, we find ourselves not needing the crutches of the third dimension but needing the freedom of the fourth. When we discover the fourth dimension we discover that in each of us there truly is a healer, but not a healer in the old sense but in the sense of, in each of us lies in wait the seed of creation, the creative force which created the heavens and the earth and all of life.

When we discover the fourth dimension, we truly discover that we are all part of the mystery of creation and that we all hold that same inexplicable spark within to create and re-create all that we

are meant to be in body, mind and spirit. We may have already known that before, but once in the fourth dimension it becomes so much more real in a more powerful way.

When we enter into the fourth dimension something magical happens. We begin to truly sense God or the Divine Source, call *It* what you may; but we begin to sense *It's* energy differently. We sense it around us and within us in a new way. We start to truly see ourselves in all of nature. We see our connectedness with the grass, the rocks, the mountains, the ocean and all living creatures. We begin to understand that we are the web woven by the weaver and that that same miraculous weaving ability is planted securely in each and every one of us. Suddenly, all we knew becomes all we know. The information transforms itself into reality, into a new meaningful experience where we suddenly become, or our knowledge suddenly becomes, experience rather than just the knowledge.

We begin to see and understand more fully the threads that hold us all safely in the tapestry of life. We begin to realize that we are all pieces of the same tapestry and yet, in the most amazing way, we are also free to weave our own web and create all we wish to create in and around us.

The fourth dimension shows us that the healing techniques previously used are useful, but primarily for our own development. They can and do bring healing to others, but the greatest gift was not just that you helped another being, but that you helped yourself; you opened up to what could be. The second and third dimensions are where many stop and many hope to attain, but that is not the end of the journey. It is simply the road that leads you to the destination, the road that leads you back to the beginning, back to the very source of life.

When we step into the fourth dimension, we step into the unknown. We step into a new beginning, a new birth that leaves you feeling amazing; but be not fooled into thinking that this means you have attained enlightenment, for this is not the end but the beginning.

Embarking on this leg of the journey home will once again reshape you, re-educate you. It will demand much more of you. It will demand you change your attitude, your habits, your slothfulness, it will demand you take even more care of your body. The truth that wine can only be as good as the wineskin that holds it really hits home. If the third dimension takes you through the cleansing waters of life, the fourth dimension takes you through the refiner's fire, where even more dross is removed, where all the impurities are picked out, where all the roughness is chiselled and smoothed until you start to shine like a new penny.

This new dimension requires a new consciousness, a new awakening. It requires that our higher consciousness is permitted to guide us into a greater life of servanthood. The second and third dimensions give us titles like shaman/healer/sage/doctor/therapist etc. The fourth dimension gives us the title of *servant*. As we grow in enlightenment, and as we climb up the ladder to enlightenment, we also, simultaneously, climb down the ladder to humility. We put on our cloak of humbleness as we prepare to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to others, not through physical death but through the death of our egocentric state. We realize that by becoming less, we become more, and the more we drop of our worldly ways the more we are able to embrace heavenly or spiritual ways.

Whether we believe in a Buddha Consciousness or a Christ Consciousness matters not in this work as it is the healing of the self that is most important.

As we start to clean up our act, we start to truly be able to bring healing into the lives of others. Suddenly, we no longer need the rattles, the drums, the crystals; for within we have crystallized our own being in our higher consciousness, we have started to be the god within and embody the power which comes within. Miraculous events can now start to happen, but now it isn't because we are this

or that but because we have started to harness the natural healing powers that lay dormant within each one of us. We have become a suitable channel, a new wineskin ready to be used differently.

My personal journey has shown me that our journey upwards and inwards is to take us back to the beginning, ready for a new level of learning, a learning that encompasses all that we truly are; not what we think we are, not what we are told we should be, could be, need to be, but all that we truly are on a creation level.

This journey will break you, heal you, re-educate you and shape you into what and who you are to be. I know because I have walked the journey. Yet this amazing journey has not just been set aside for me or for a few others. It is a journey open to all who dare to be different, all who dare to walk through their own gates of hell and deal with their self-created demons and come out the other side ready to re-live life as the Godly, Spiritual, Holy person they were meant to be; working from a spiritual platform, a creative state of being, using and working in and with the creative force of life.

We need the healing systems of the world when we live in realms two and three, but in reality, when we look at the whole picture, we only need the healing systems of an intrinsic God – call it what you may. But this in itself is only one side of the coin. It isn't a question of, *'If I enter into the fourth dimension will I be able to cure others?'* It is a question of *how committed are you to change?* I found that the deeper I went into the spiritual side of life the more self-aware I became, the more conscious of self I became and the more self-disciplined I was expected to be.

I found in realm three, the shamanic realm, the biggest jump in consciousness and healing happened when I moved to eating high vibrational foods, when I engaged in ascension eating; that is when I discovered that my whole system was changing. It started to regenerate; my yearly cold never returned, a thirty-year knee problem disappeared in the first month and I felt amazing! I no longer needed eight to nine hours sleep a night but anything from two to six hours sleep a night which was

wonderful as it permitted me more time to do the things that I needed to do. My healing sessions were more powerful and I found it took less energy to bring about transformation and change. But the benefits were not just for me. The longer I remained on my path, the better the healing sessions were, the clearer the direction became and the better the results. It truly did make a remarkable difference.

I would say that out of all the healing systems I have personally used, I believe without a shadow of a doubt that as a standalone therapy the techniques used in shamanic healing by a shaman are far more effective than other healing systems used by and based on the average *spiritual* person offering healing.

What I have found from my experience and from what I have been taught is that the power of the healing session and its ability to bring a complete healing comes down to the state of and spiritual evolution of the individual. If the healer has passed through the third dimension into the fourth dimension, their healing outcomes will be different to those who are still in the second dimension or third dimension; they will see much more positive outcomes with all techniques, but for the ultimate healing to take place the practitioner or shaman **MUST** have not only entered the fourth dimension but must also be a spiritual eater – one who eats to heal, one who takes full control of their physical senses, their passions, their carnal nature and desires, bringing them into full submission to the higher self; if one truly desires to experience healing, we must be willing to be the healing tool in our own life and the life of others. We need to be that self-aware, self-disciplined individual who has given their life completely over to the calling of *servanthood* or *servitude* meant in the most positive and beautiful way.

The rainbow appears only when the conditions are right. The salmon swim upstream only when

the time is right. The termites work tirelessly at that which they wish to accomplish as do the ants and the bees. No-one truly arrives at an amazing place or experiences a true awakening without the right conditions and sacrificial hard work. Even those called to a certain path still have to go through a cleansing, they still have to work sacrificially to help create the conditions required in order to fulfil their goal.

You will know when you have reached the fourth dimension as it is a place of *awakening*, awakening in a way you have never perceived before. You will know when you are pleasantly subdued and overcome with an intrinsic love of humanity, a love so great that you give your own life to its edification and personal enlightenment.

If we look to nature we can so often see a reflection of how amazing our lives can be, but often we fall short because of short-sightedness or lack of belief in self. Well-being needs to happen on all levels. If it doesn't, it isn't well-being, the *being* isn't *well*. But as with all things well-being requires the individual to care enough about themselves to stimulate and provoke the inner self-discipline which is required in order to surpass the daily temptations of the world into greed or over indulgence in order to bring order into their life.

If we look to nature we will see there is always order. Even what may appear as chaos on the outside is born out of order. The natural laws of cause and effect come into play in our lives just as they do outside of our lives. We can no longer go on deceiving ourselves into thinking that the cure for our lives, on which ever level we seek, is found outside of ourselves. The cure will be and always has been from within, but we have to travel the outward road first in order to be able to travel back to the center, the center of our being.

Well-being can be affected in a positive manner from any healing practice as long as the practitioner is in a wholesome state, but our well-being will never be fully whole or fully integrated unless we

realize that we have to become our own physician; and that isn't to do away with doctors or other medical help, but to realize that ultimately we must take control of ourselves. When we start to take control of our life, we will also start to realize that we truly are what we think and eat, hence why Hippocrates said, *'Let thy food be thy medicine and thy medicine thy food.'* He also said, *'It is necessary for a physician to know about nature, and be very eager to know, and if he is going to perform any of his duties (he needs to know) what man is, in relation to what he eats and drinks, and in relation to his habits generally, and what will be the effect of each upon each individual.'*

If we truly want well-being in our lives we have to start to take responsibility for ourselves, our actions, our choices. We have to come as individuals to a place where we truly want to be the difference in our own lives; thus healing becomes a side-effect, a knock-on effect in the lives of others.

What truly happens when we start to enter upon the path of enlightenment is that our vibrations start to rise, and that has an outward effect on others; it starts to draw their vibrations upwards so that they too can start to make better choices. When we increase our rate of vibration, we act like a magnet to draw up other people's vibrations which can give them the life, the encouragement, to start to make changes. But how does one start to raise their own rate of vibration? A powerful way is through ascension eating, eating your way up to heaven, to enlightenment so to speak, and that is not referring to death and dying and going to a place that many hope exists. Ascension eating, which we discussed in an earlier chapter, raises our vibration to the extent that natural and long-term healing can often occur. It brings heaven to earth, it brings our Higher Consciousness into our reality where all parts of the whole are affected for the better. Ascension eating is: *The action of eating specific foods in order to create a spiritual rising to an important position or a higher level of consciousness* – Unknown Source.

So why did Hippocrates say we must know about nature? Because he knew that nature was a reflection of ourselves. He knew that if we understood how nature worked we would then understand how our bodies work. We can also look to the solar system to see a reflection of our spiritual body, our chakra system and electro-magnetic field. Whether we like it or not, we all have a spiritual, electro-magnetic body, we all have a spiritual anatomy just like we have a physical anatomy.

So how do we feed these chakras, how do we eat to live rather than live to eat, how do we truly affect our spiritual body? My learning, my journey has shown me the most effective way to cleanse our chakra system, to rejuvenate our body, mind and spirit is through the food we eat. We clearly have a rainbow body and we must respect it and nurture it. Our chakra system has many colors and it is no coincidence that those same colors are seen in a rainbow. I have been shown that we should eat the colors of a rainbow, and that the color of the food we eat corresponds to the chakra of that same color. So if we want to boost our root chakra, we need to eat red foods such as red apples, red peppers, tomatoes etc. If we want to boost our heart chakra, we need to eat green foods such as cucumber, green apples, grapes, lettuce etc., and so on and so forth. Just like the rainbow, we have the same colored foods that can be eaten raw with a multitude of colors in-between.

*A **rainbow** is a meteorological phenomenon that is caused by reflection, refraction and dispersion of light in water droplets resulting in a spectrum of light appearing in the sky. It takes the form of a multi-colored arc. Rainbows caused by sunlight always appear in the section of sky directly opposite the sun.*

Rainbows can be full circles; however, the average observer sees only an arc formed by illuminated droplets above the ground and centred on a line from the sun to the observer's eye. In a primary rainbow, the arc shows red on the outer part and violet on the inner side – Wikipedia

Just like the rainbow, our own rainbow, our chakra system, is a spiritual phenomenon that is also caused by reflection, refraction and dispersion of light that flows through our crown chakra into our body, which is high in water content, resulting in the spectrum of light appearing from our chakras and into our luminous energy field or aura.

So we can now see how important our food is and why we need to be more selective with what we eat. We need to be prepared to honour our whole being through ascension eating.

When I started out on this PhD, my intention was to highlight how powerful shamanic healing is in the right hands, and how my experience had led me to see that in many ways it was a much more intensive system than other healing systems and how it often brought about a much more complete healing on all levels, and it is and does. But somewhere along the way I was led to see that as powerful as shamanic healing is, nothing is as powerful as when you include it with ascension eating, coupled with a spiritual life. Implementing ascension eating is not an easy task, but it is worth implementing it if you truly want to experience a fuller spiritual life and see greater healing results whilst here on earth.

We all need to make the decision to be heaven bound not earth bound, to be bound to a spiritual conduct that not only makes a difference in our own life but in the lives of those around us. We all desire change but only a few will dare to be that change. Healing comes from within and is exponentiated through what we eat, how we think, what we do. Let us all take on our moral responsibility to be all we are meant to be as multi-facet beings.

The fourth dimension, the dimension of ascension, awakening, enlightenment, takes us away from being healers and healing others per se. The Ascension way leads us to understand that actually, all those years of learning, all those years of perfecting healing techniques, although it helped many people, it was to help us to heal ourselves. The way of ascension focuses purely on being, being in

the moment; there is no longer any need to be the healer, for that becomes, instead of the main focus and drive, a secondary thought. Why? Because it has become normal, we now recognize our default setting; we no longer have to try to be that which we already are.

Those who come into contact with you start to feel better just being in your presence. Your handshake, your hug, your eye contact now has a different meaning and effect because of who and what you are becoming. You now start to affect all life, whether you want to or not. You are becoming a true catalyst where what is under the surface will surface. This is a wonderful experience. You start to comprehend the servant role which you have undertaken and you start to serve with honour. Your payment is watching others change, evolve, heal and knowing that all those years of hard work, all those years of personal sacrifice, being buffered, refined, polished as a seed of creation, was worth it. You no longer need to worry about buying a bigger, better drum, a louder head splitting rattle, for you have enough of the creation force within to bring about change without material tools.

The Way of Ascension brings a feeling of release, such as when you finally reach the top of the mountain, you stand back and go, 'Phew – I made it.' With internal satisfaction you now look back and reflect, realizing that the learning was the journey itself, which offered you the opportunity for self-awareness, self-exploration, and self-acceptance. You stand for a while at the top of your mountain, knowing and remembering how remarkable it all was; the struggles, the pit falls, the tears, the pain, the cuts, the bruises, and of course the laughter. You give a sigh of relief, have one last look around at the view before setting off with that enigmatic smile of the Cheshire Cat, and head off into the distance, ready for the next cycle of life.

In the fourth dimension, you become as God, or become fully one with God, creating light out of darkness. You no longer rely on spirits, animal totems, guides, angels, for they are primarily for

those living and working in levels of ascension one to three. When you cross the threshold into level four or the fourth dimension, you stand on your own two feet, unsupported by external supports, but fully supported and fully integrated inwardly by the Greater Consciousness, God, the Divine Mind. You become the totality of your being, reaching and moving Divine Potential, fully creative and in harmony with self and the world around you. You not only walk in peace, you also bring peace, for you are peace. You finally become that which created you. You return to the source in unimaginable ways; not because you are so great, or have deserved so much more, but simply because you trusted the process and travelled up through the levels of light into the darkness of your own unconscious, into the greater or collective unconscious.

This level is like the womb; dark, warm and nurturing for all that you wish to create in your place of servitude. This isn't where you create worldly desires but where you create health and peace for others around you and the world in general. This isn't your arrival at enlightenment, but your final journey TO enlightenment.

Table of Six Case Study Results for Shamanic Healing

Case Study	Age	Gender	Condition	Sessions	Outcome
1	45yrs	Female	Grief	4	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Counseling Techniques
2	12yrs	Female	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	1	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Bio-Feedback and Counseling Techniques
3	59yrs	Female	Overwhelmed& Suicidal	15	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Counseling Techniques
4	36yrs	Male	Depression & Anxiety	2	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing with Counseling Techniques
5	52yrs	Male	Unexplained Crippling Back Pain	1	Very Successful, used Shamanic Healing, Massage and Counseling Techniques
6	69yrs	Female	Ulcerated Leg	4	Was starting to be successful, but client chose not to come back, as she was aware that family would stop giving her the help they did if she recovered, so she stopped coming when she saw the ulcer was healing – very sad!

Full Case Study Information Available^{11-Appendices}

Chapter Seven

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The title of this work is: *The Effects of Shamanic Healing and Other Healing Practices on General Well-Being* and the conclusion is that the effects of shamanic healing are truly amazing on general well-being and specific issues if performed by a competent shaman. In addition, it was found that when shamanic healing was accompanied by other alternative medicine, specifically counseling, that the healing was accelerated.

It has been noted that further scientific research into shamanic healing, shamanism and the whole spirit realm concept would bring much more meaning and understanding to not only shamanic healing but also other healing practices that work with the spiritual realm. It is also noted that qualitative or even quantitative research could prove difficult due to the nature of this study.

The shortcomings of this study are that the healing sessions were conducted by one shaman. It could be worth considering further research where several shamans at the same degree of training and personal development were working in the same way, and at times different ways with the same type of issue, i.e. grief. This may help us to conclude whether certain ways of working were important or whether it purely came down to the expertise of the shaman.

However, we also have to keep in mind that people are all different and as shamans we are not treating the effect but the cause. So six different people with the same condition may need treating very differently. We also have to keep in mind that people heal at different stages in life, and at different rates, so to suppose that all clients with grief could be treated the same way is in fact ludicrous.

It would also be worth comparing the results between shamans and other healers to prove or disprove that the level of personal growth is relevant to the type or depth of healing received. I believe what I have done, in comparison to what could be done, is just a tiny piece of work, and although it has borne exceptional results, there is still much more room for further study and research.

One thing we can all take from this study is that there does seem to be another dimension from what we physically live in; there is, in my opinion, no doubt about Spirit and the spiritual dimension. I have now seen too much to be able to discredit the idea; having experienced the spirit world since five years old and having had several first-hand encounters with Spirit leaves me no option but to say I can confirm that Spirit exists and there is a time and place beyond earth.

Although I have only included six out of many more case studies, I felt these six represented a diverse range of age and complaints. One important aspect was the importance of including the client or patient in their own healing. It was found that when they were included, they felt more empowered which had a direct impact on how they coped when they went home and issues arose. By empowering and teaching the client how to remove toxic energy, they were then able to start healing themselves. I feel very strongly about empowering clients rather than keeping them reliant on myself. The clients felt more supported and were more inclined to come back for *top up* sessions or to work on other issues.

Shamanic healing is, in my opinion and experience, head and tails above other alternative medicine, but that doesn't render other alternative medicine as useless, nor does it suggest that they do not have a place in healing; they do, but it was found that shamanic healing had a more profound effect on the whole body, on the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual aspect of the individual than most other healing practices.

The success of the sessions were down to both the shaman and the client. The lady in the last case study, the lady with the ulcerated leg, could physically see that her nine-year old ulcer was beginning to heal, she told me herself that she could see it was healing; but sadly, she felt she would lose too much help in her daily life should she become healed. Consequently she chose to stop coming. Her excuse was that her appointments clashed with her afternoon naps, and when offered appointments at any other time to suit her, she declined saying she was too busy. This proves what I have always said, the client must want to be healed. If they don't you cannot heal them fully. They need to be willing participants.

It has been my experience, and I feel the study reflects this experience, that the shamanic healing and any other healing practice can only be as good as the person giving it. If the healer still smokes, over indulges in alcohol and is using recreational drugs, lives off pizza or tinned foods etc., and never feels the need for quiet times in solitude, we have to ask ourselves, how spiritual are they and how effective will the healing be? If our doctor lived like that would we have all faith in him/her?

I am aware that if the healing comes from a higher source such as a spirit, then they can use anyone, however we must also remember that the wine can only be as clean as the glass you pour it in. If the glass is really dirty, you would naturally expect it to change the taste of the wine. Keeping yourself clean and in a healthy state and abstaining from damaging substances etc. is, in my opinion, all part and parcel of spiritual growth as we move from being of the world to being in the world, growing and evolving into a more spiritual person.

So as this thesis or journey comes to an end, I feel we can sum it up by asking ourselves, in the light of what we have read, the following questions:

- Can an individual really act as a channel for spirit to work through and with?
- Can spirit really affect matter through the use of certain healing techniques? and

- Can we really affect other people with our thoughts and intentions?

These are three very important questions and the answers that we come too could have life changing effects. From a scientific perspective, the answer at the moment would probably be *perhaps it can*, but from a shamanic perspective, the questions are elementary, the answers are obvious. We can see from the case studies alone how spirit informs matter, how the spiritual affects the physical. There is no doubt about spirit informing matter. The question would never be, ‘Can it work?’ or, ‘Does it work?’ The question would always be, ‘Are you open to it working in your life? Are you ready for the healing?’

But with this, let us also remember that healing is not just about having someone else *fix* you. We all have to take some responsibility for our own healing, our own well-being, which has been reflected over and over again throughout this thesis. There are so many ways we can all help ourselves and others, even if we are not a *healer*. We all have the ability to send positive healing energy in one form or another to others, whether that be through prayer, thought or intention.

How we live our lives is imperative to our health and general well-being, how we live and learn throughout our lives is imperative to our success as a healer, shaman, sage, therapist or even yoga teacher.

What we must remember is that inside us all is that same intrinsic spark of creation and it is by igniting this same spark that the fires of change and illumination rage.

If I was going to recommend anything, it would be that if you need healing, seek out either a traditional shaman or a modern day shaman, but don't be seduced by drums, rattles or even attire. Take time out, connect with your inner self and ensure the person who is going to affect your whole being is professional, ethical, moral and has your well-being at heart.

I hope this study has been an enjoyable read and that you have been enlarged by it.

Blessings

Kenzo

ADDITIONAL WORK WITH SPIRIT

These are TRUE accounts

The Silent Witness

Tanya was a middle-aged woman in a long term relationship. She was very much into spiritual things and clearly understood about energy and the spiritual side of life. She came to me for some healing after a significant event. The healing session itself was not anything exceptional, but the event she experienced is worth sharing. Here I will share her story. These are my words of her verbal account.

It was New Year's Eve 2010. Tanya and her partner, a good hearted man, had decided to stay home to see the New Year in. They decided to watch the firework display on the T.V. at midnight. They were quietly chatting to each other and had drunk only a couple of glasses of champagne, so neither of them were particularly intoxicated.

During the conversation, Tanya noticed a distinct change in the atmosphere. She felt there was suddenly a very hostile environment around her partner. She asked him what was wrong, but was met with a hostile response of, *'Oh, nothing.'* Quite disturbed about the sudden change and completely oblivious to anything wrong that she may have said, she responded with, *'Now what have I said wrong?'* which was met with more hostility. Tanya went on to respond with, *'All I wanted was a quiet drink to see the New Year in,'* which resulted in her partner saying, *'You wanted a drink, you can have a drink. Here,'* and with that, he stood up and to her amazement he proceeded to pour what would have been over half a bottle of champagne over her head.

She sat still, and for a brief moment she felt a deep concern for her safety. As she wiped the champagne out of her eyes, she was in time to see him raise his hand to hit her across the head with the empty champagne bottle. At that same moment (and all this happened in seconds), she recollects

seeing and sensing a presence, a spirit, an energy, somewhat like a cloak or perhaps an orb come straight through the wall behind her, covering her completely, like a blanket. And with that a sense of calm came over her. She knew she would be alright, no matter what happened.

She sensed the same energy not only cover her, but extend itself right up to her partner, to at least his hand with the bottle in it. At that moment, her partner seemed to come to his senses and put the bottle down.

Tanya, in absolute disbelief, left the room to clean herself up. Needless to say, she remained apart from him for a while before going to bed.

Even now when I see her, she still can't believe the amazing way that Spirit protected her, the sheer fact that the protection was there instantaneously. She didn't have to call on it, nor 'conjure' it up. It just was. If nothing else, this serves to remind us that when we serve Spirit, we are protected and help is there when we need it.

Sarah's Healing

It was 4:20PM my time. I had just scheduled a healing session for mid-week, but the healing wasn't going to wait that long: I felt to start the session now.

I entered into the tipi with Sarah. The log fire was burning and the sweet, pungent smell of sweet grass was filling the air. She lay on her back on the couch that had been prepared for her. She looked quite relaxed and as she lay back and closed her eyes, her soft fair hair fell back off her face. The healing soon commenced.

As I stood beside her at her left side, I could see that there were many *red areas or spots* running down from her left inner arm, down her side and towards her hip. I lifted up the scalpel under the

direction of my spirit physician. I began to cut away at the red areas and as I began to cut, I realized they were all interconnected. It was like cutting away seaweed, lumps all joined together by interconnecting fibres. As I cut the red areas out, the connecting network easily pulled away from her body. This network went all the way down to her hip and into her groin. After removing all the red areas, it left what looked like a very open and raw wound.

I was guided to another nodule or red area, just under the upper body which I had missed, hidden from view because of her lying on her back. After carefully removing it, I was given a jug of what looked like water to pour over the open wounds. As the water or liquid touched the open wounds, it was like cold water hitting something hot; it was like steam coming up from the wounds, but without any sound. As the steam or mist settled, I could see that it had sealed all the open wounds. It had formed a transparent skin type covering, offering protection.

Following this, I placed a clear quartz crystal upon her third eye whilst I placed my hands on her left wrist. Energy was channelled upwards towards her body. I then placed my left hand on her groin, pointing up towards the body. Energy was now traveling in both directions through my hands and into Sarah's body. As the energy met in the middle, it looked like fork lightening as both streams of energy clashed, revitalizing the areas.

Sarah was now beginning to sweat. The log fire was burning brightly, and the now potent smell of burning sage was filling the air. I smudged her entire body with the burning sage, using a feather to fan the healing smoke around her.

Sarah continued to perspire, her body now starting to gently shake. She was going through a massive healing. It wasn't long before she began to vomit. At first she was bringing up a large black mass which seemed difficult for her to get out so I pulled the rest of it out. This was followed by a thick green substance. I gave her sips of fluids. This enabled her body to continue to purge. She

vomited again and again, this time it was a lot clearer and frothy. I continued to offer her sips of fluid until all vomiting had subsided.

She lay there sweating, gently shaking, I wrapped her up in skins to keep her warm and enable her body to sweat out all that it did not want. By this time she was falling asleep, into a deep sleep. I placed an amethyst in her left hand, a rose quartz in her right hand. I left the clear quartz on her forehead and placed obsidian at her feet.

The fire was topped up and the sage continued to burn as Sarah went through the remainder of her healing. I sat crossed legged on a skin beside her, gently rocking backwards and forwards as I quietly chanted a song.

The air was thick and heavy, yet filled with peace and a sense of a miracle, Sarah quietly slept.

Some hours later...

Much time had passed. It was now dark outside and peace still filled the air. Sarah had stopped perspiring, but her hair was drenched with perspiration that was now beginning to dry from the heat of the log fire.

Slowly she started to come back from wherever she had been. I sensed that wherever her journey had taken her, it was to reclaim lost parts of her soul. As she became more alert, I helped her to sit up a little, as she was still quite weak. She managed to slowly have a few mouthfuls of beef and potato broth which would help to give her some strength back.

Silence filled the tipi. There was no need to speak. What was done was done, there was no point trying to explain it away with words that fall short of all miracles. It isn't what you can explain that is always important, but what you experience, especially when the experience is beyond our language and understanding.

Time passed. It was time for Sarah to leave. I helped her off the couch and out into the bright night, where the darkness of the sky had fallen over the landscape, the stars shone in all their glory and the whisper of the wind could be heard rustling through the trees.

It was done. She had received her healing, she had reclaimed the lost parts of her soul.

Removing the Stake

It was late in the afternoon. Maria had come to see me because life was becoming too overwhelming. Her constant tiredness and weariness coupled with the hurts of the past and present were all taking their toll on her. I spent some time assessing Maria's needs, or at least trying to; there was so much going on for her and in her. She was all over the place, flitting from one thing to another. It was hard to keep up with her.

After about twenty minutes, I asked her to lay on the couch. I could feel her apprehension, but I could also feel her hope that this session would bring some release to what was becoming a never ending life of pain.

I performed my usual ceremony and asked Spirit to be with us. I followed my usual routine and tracked along her body. Once I was sure which chakras were compromised I commenced the cleansing. As Maria started to relax, the pressures of life started to fall away. The relief which this was bringing also made a way for her to release some of the hurts of the past and present.

Tears slowly began to fall down her cheeks as quiet sobs came from the depths of her heart. She was finally finding some release, release from all the hurts, the let downs, the disappointments, relief from the accusations and abandonment. So much pain and heartache in such a small body.

Where she had gained the strength from to keep going only she knows. Many would have already

given up, but not Maria. She had an inner strength that kept her hanging in there. She had someone and something to keep going for.

The healing had been going on for nearly an hour now. I had cleansed all that I had seen, but yet I felt very strongly that there was a crystallization somewhere that I had not found. Crystallization of negative energy happens when the negative energy has been in the luminous energy field for a long time. The energy can take a form, but the form is only metaphorically speaking, it is not literal.

I asked Maria how she was feeling and she said, while sobbing, that she felt she had a stake sticking in her. This was the information I was looking for. I asked her to show me where the stake was. I followed her hands to her diaphragm area, I carefully felt around the crystallization and took hold of what she felt to be a stake. After loosening it off, I pulled it from her. You could see the relief on her face. I continued to work on the area bringing healing, until what had felt like a hole closed up and was just feeling like a bruise.

I completed the remainder of the healing and allowed Maria time to process what had happened. It was a huge healing that she had been through. The look of relief on her face was noticeable. Something that had been affecting her for a very long time had gone. It was now lifted and she knew it.

For the first time in a long time, Maria felt she was taller. The load had been so heavy she had felt quite short, now she was able to hold her head up high and walk tall.

Maria left a different person that day, a much lighter person.

This is why it is important that we all deal with our negative emotions, those that we have created ourselves and those that we have allowed others to place on us. To be truly free, is to be truly emotionally free.

Release

Mark was a young, easy-going man who had had many challenges in his life; challenges with his family, friends and his work life. Mark had a brother that he was especially close to, someone that he looked up to and admired a lot, despite his brother's self-created difficulties. One day, Mark was informed that his brother was dead; an accidental death so they say. This had a major impact on Mark. The only person he looked up to was now gone.

Time went on and Mark found himself thinking and feeling much the same as his brother had felt; very lonely, insignificant and as if the world could not accept him as he was. Such feelings were leading him deeper into depression and deeper into the habits that his brother had been caught up in, causing a negative cycle of self-destruction.

When Mark came to me, he felt he had nowhere else to go. The medication hadn't really helped, the support with his habits was not really working and he felt that all was lost and the only way out was to join his brother.

As I started to work on Mark, I could feel that his brother was with us. He was there in the room, the connection between them was so strong. I asked his brother if there was anything that he wanted to say to Mark and there was, so I relayed the message to Mark, which was about getting on with life and letting him go. I also asked Mark if there was anything he would like to say to his brother and Mark spent quite a few minutes talking to his brother, telling him how much he looked up to him and how much he missed him. They had quite an intimate time together but they both knew that it was time to say goodbye.

When the time felt right, I guided Mark to say his farewells and explained to them both that there were spirit beings, helpers, waiting to take his brother to the light. As I watched, a bright light

appeared and the brother started to ascend with the beings. I could see that the brother was looking back at Mark but I wasn't sure why. Suddenly, Mark started to feel that there was a cord that was attached between him and his brother at the third chakra, and the higher his brother went, the more Mark started to feel as if the cord was pulling him up off the couch. They still hadn't let each other go, even though they had both said their goodbyes. I quickly cut the cord that was keeping the brothers connected and Mark suddenly felt as if his whole back had suddenly come back down onto the couch. The connection was broken. Mark was now able to look and see his brother as he ascended with the spirit beings to the light.

Mark came for a couple more sessions after that, but his feelings of being lonely and insignificant had gone. He was once again starting to feel like his own self and starting to look forward to the rest of his life in the knowledge that his brother was safe. He no longer felt that he wanted to die to be with his brother and consequently came off his medication, broke all addictions and started to get on with his life.

Little Spirit Girl

I was sitting at my desk in my cabin when I was aware that out of the corner of my eye I could see a little girl. I looked, but she was gone. I continued writing and became aware again that she was standing behind me but to the side. I slowly looked again, but again she was gone.

She looked a shy little girl with shoulder length hair and a nice face. I continued writing. Once again, she came back, but this time I didn't turn my head. I could just see her out of the corner of my eye. I spoke to her, telling her that she doesn't need to be afraid, I won't hurt her. She replied, *'You can see me?'* *'Yes,'* I replied. It seemed to make her feel more relaxed. I turned towards her and this time she stayed. We looked at each other and I asked her what she was doing here. She replied,

'I am looking for my family. We were all on a ship and it sank.' The feeling I had was that they were all dead. I told her, *'You will not find your family here. You must follow the light, otherwise you may become earth-bound.'* She disappeared.

The next day I was busy doing my massage when she reappeared. She stood there smiling at me, now feeling very relaxed with me. She watched me working and then when I began to do some healing, she put her hands on the passenger I was healing and helped. Her little hands looked so sweet. She must have only been about eight or nine. She closed her eyes and participated in the healing. I reminded her that she needed to follow the light and with that, she disappeared and I never saw her again.

Let Me Go

It was a usual day in port. Most of the passengers had got off the ship to enjoy tours and the freedom to wander around, so the salon was quiet. A beauty therapist had asked for some healing. She had been feeling quite down. Her fiancé had died in an accident several years ago. She still wore the engagement ring, she had never had another boyfriend and was reluctant to move on in her life.

She lay down on the couch whilst I sat at the head. I lay my hands on her head and almost instantly her boyfriend not only appeared, but spoke. It was an unpleasant feeling as I felt and heard the strain in his voice as he uttered the words, *'Let me go. You are keeping me earth-bound. You are holding me back.'* The voice was very distorted and quite freaky. As I spoke the words to her the tall barricade that she had built around her heart began to crumble. As it crumbled, it opened up the way for the reservoir of tears to come tumbling down. She was finally finding a release. Finally she was able to *let go* and open up the way for herself to move on.

This wasn't the end of her healing, not by a long way, it was merely the beginning. She had a long way to go, but now she had released her fiancé, he was then able to *go to the light* and she had created a space for her own healing to commence.

Forgive Yourself

I was in Sedona, Arizona, offering massage to people. I had a man lying face down on my massage couch. He had been suffering with severe back pain for several years. He had seen doctors, surgeons, specialists, but no-one could find anything wrong with him. All that they knew was that it was getting worse and soon, he would be in a wheelchair.

I started the massage as I usually did with relaxing music playing in the background and working on the lower limbs. Knowing that he suffered great pain I took care to give him a deep but gentle massage. I worked on his back for quite a while and moved as I always did up towards his head to do some healing.

I placed my hands on his head, closed my eyes and allowed energy to flow through me. After a couple of minutes I opened my eyes and to the right of me, or the left of him, I could see this little girl. She looked about two years old, with blonde curly hair and a beautiful face.

It seemed a little odd at that moment so I continued on, just to be told by Spirit that I needed to ask him who this little girl was. I resisted as I thought he might think I am crazy. But in the end, after being nagged to ask him I did.

I am so glad I followed Spirit. He went on to say that that was his little girl. He was a truck driver and was getting ready to leave for another journey. His wife and little girl were outside ready to say

goodbye to him. Unbeknownst to them both, whilst they were saying their goodbyes the little girl had gone around to the front of the truck and sat down in front of the wheel.

They did not realize this until it was too late. As the engine roared, the large wheels of the truck slowly edged forward and crushed her. She was dead.

It had been the worst time of his life. He had been carrying around so much grief, so many guilty feelings, blaming himself and feeling that he had killed his little girl. All these negative emotions, all this emotional pain was taking its toll on him. This guilt had been slowly creeping up his spine, causing pain and was slowly crippling him. He really needed to forgive himself.

I talked to him about forgiveness and reassured him that it wasn't his fault. We looked at that perhaps we all have a designated time on this earth, and that something will remove us all one day.

I stayed with him awhile, while he talked some more and we talked about his feelings. He was pretty taken back by the fact that I could see her and describe her. That was the evidence he needed to know that I was telling the truth. It was then that he knew he needed to forgive himself in order to be able to walk properly again, pain free.

He got up off the couch, and to his amazement he actually said he no longer had any pain. He was quite surprised about this and began to move around and do the things that he knew he couldn't normally do. To his amazement, he could do them. He was healed. He had found the key to unlock the door to his healing process.

I continued to offer him advice on how to remain healed and he recognized that it was his grief and guilt that was crippling him.

He left a changed man that day, a healed man and that was the only time I ever saw him.

Find My Son

It was a usual cruise, going between Sydney Harbour and the South Pacific Islands. I had had my usual day massaging. In the evenings it was nice to be on deck or hang out with friends. This evening, I felt I wanted to stay in my cabin to connect with spirit.

It was getting late. I needed to be up early the next day, so I put down my pen which was always busy writing in my diary and went to sleep.

I never locked my cabin door as there were a couple of crew members that I used to do healing with, so they knew that my door was always open.

I started to sense a presence of someone, a man, in my room. It was a heavy presence and strong enough to awake me from a deep sleep. I looked around and realized no-one was there. I went back to sleep and the same feeling awoke me again. Feeling a bit uneasy with such a strong presence, I locked my door and went back to sleep.

Then it happened. This time the presence was so strong I sat bolt upright and, remembering that the door was locked, I realized I was in the presence of a spirit. I grabbed my pen and paper as I knew that I was about to receive a message.

The spirit was of a tall man in his forties. He had worked on ships and died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack, leaving behind his wife and children.

I asked him what he wanted, he said, *'Find my son, he is on this ship. Tell him to let me go, he is keeping me earth-bound. Tell him I love him.'*

With that the spirit was gone. I was left wondering how on earth I was supposed to find his son. I didn't know whether that was a crew member or a passenger. That is all I was left with.

The next morning the message weighed heavily on my mind. I prayed to Spirit, asking for help in finding this man.

We were at the end of the cruise. It was the evening before passengers disembarked and I was aware that if I didn't find him tonight and he was a passenger, then it would be too late.

I spent some time wandering around the ship, walking in passenger areas, walking around the decks in hope that if he was a passenger, I would be drawn to him or him to me.

It was getting late so I decided to call it a day and go to my cabin to write in my diary as I quite often did, with the door wide open so people felt they could drop in. I finished my entry and got up to close the door just as one of the firemen went by.

He always used to say hi but this time he stopped, so I made conversation with him asking him where he was from, whether he had brothers and sisters etc., and slowly but surely I started to feel that he was the son.

I asked him about his dad and if his dad used to work on ships. He said, 'Yes,' and I said, '*He died of a heart attack didn't he?*' He looked so shocked. Once again, I had been led to the right person.

I invited him in and explained to him that I had a message from his dad. He said he was a devoted Catholic and found it hard to believe that I had a message from a dead person.

I went on to describe what his dad had said to me and told him the message. His eyes welled up as he went on to tell me and show me that he wore his dad's ring on a chain around his neck, and how much he missed his dad. He said he was only eleven years old at the time and it broke his heart when his dad died. He was now in his twenties, a young man with so much to offer and so full of grief.

He went on to ask me how to let his dad go, so we talked a little about how to release him.

It was now the early hours of the morning. The crew member still wasn't sure whether *letting Dad go* was going to make a difference, so he suggested that he would try it in the morning and let me know how it went.

I was happy with that; at the end of the day, I had done as I had been asked. I had found the son and delivered the message.

The next day I saw the young man and he didn't need to tell me that he had followed my suggestions. I could see he had received a release. He was smiling, his eyes were sparkling, he had a lightness around him, around his spirit.

Nevertheless, he told me that he had done as I suggested and that he couldn't believe the difference it had made to him and how much lighter and happier he felt. He couldn't thank me enough and went on his way.

I saw him a few times after that, but that was the only time we had a real talk.

Bad Energy

It was a dark winter night. It had been a long day and I was drying my hair in front of the bedroom window as I would normally do, when suddenly I could feel that a man had suddenly entered the bedroom, a spirit, and not a nice spirit. I continued on with drying my hair to see or feel what he was going to do. Suddenly I could feel that he had a piece of wire (not physically) wrapped around both hands leaving a couple of feet between them, and that he wanted to throw it around my neck and pull it tight. I quickly spun around to face him. He was a mean man and the vehemence he held towards women was very strong. I ordered him to leave. He was gone in seconds.

I felt he was connected to the neighbour's house. I cleansed our house and placed a protection around it, something I had not yet done as we had only just moved in.

From that night, I was aware that he stood outside the neighbour's house at night, looking up through our window with that same vehemence. The energy from him was so strong, even I felt like moving away from the window, away from his stare. It felt as if he was aiming something at me and that if I stayed there it would come straight through the window. He had to go.

The energy this man or spirit gave off was so strong that even the dog would not go all the way up the road at night. He would just stop and look ahead as if he was looking at something or someone.

It was time to remove him, time to send him to the light. I collected the things that I felt I needed to cleanse the area, and in the evening, which is the only time he came around, I cleared the area and prayed over it, sending him to the light. He knew he would have to go. I felt he had been there for years and he was probably the reason why the neighbour's house had never sold.

After the clearing, the dog was happy to go up and down the road. He came with me when I went to perform the clearing. It was as if he knew that I was going to remove the spirit. After that, there was no bad energy around the house, and I was able to go back to standing in front of the window at night.

A Cleansing

It was early evening. I had just heard about a suicide in a trailer park nearby. A youngish man who had become depressed had not been seen for four days. He lived alone other than with his beloved cats. He had put a pistol to his head and pulled the trigger. No-one had realized he was dead, or at least not until they decided to check his trailer.

I don't want to even imagine how horrendous the scene must have looked, not to mention the smell as it was summer in Arizona. The trailer had been closed up for a few days and I don't even want to think about the trauma the cats must have gone through. Such a waste of life.

This particular evening, I felt very strongly that I needed to go and cleanse the trailer park. When someone takes their own life, it opens up a gateway for negative spirits to enter the space. I needed to cleanse the area and remove all negative spirits.

I approached his trailer and saw the man sitting next to the trailer on a log. He looked at me and said, *'I didn't mean to do it. I didn't mean to pull the trigger so hard.'* There was not a lot I could say to him, I told him he needed to follow the light and with that, he was gone.

I burnt some herbs and cleansed around the trailer leaving some burning herbs on a tree stump close by. I continued to walk around the park praying and cleansing the area from all unwanted energies.

It wasn't until I reached the creek at the other side of the park that I could feel a really negative spirit. I had been standing facing the creek, listening to the song of the water as I often did, when I felt the presence of the spirit behind me. I could feel that the spirit wanted to push me over the edge, into the creek to harm me. I turned around to face the spirit and told him to follow the light, he was reluctant, but with that he was gone.

This is why suicide is not a good way out, it creates so much negativity for those left behind and in the vicinity.

I continued on until I felt the park cleansing was complete and that the park was free of negative spirits. Then I went on my way.

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(**Martin Pretchel:** *Saving the Indigenous Soul – An Interview with Derick Jensen*)

The Sun Interview

Saving The Indigenous Soul

An Interview With Martín Prechtel

By Derrick Jensen

April 2001

Martín Prechtel was raised in New Mexico on a Pueblo Indian reservation where people still lived in old, pre-European ways. His mother was a Canadian Indian who taught at the Pueblo school, and his father was a white palaeontologist. Martín loved the culture there, and the land. “I spent the whole of my very early life,” he says, “in a state of weepy terror about the possibility of total annihilation of this beautiful world at the hands of a few white men who couldn’t understand the beauty we had in this way of life.” He began to work against this dangerous, beauty-killing power. “The natives called it ‘white man ways,’” he says, “but it was more than that. Its infectious power had eaten the whites, too, and made them its obvious promoter. This horrible syndrome had no use for the truly natural, the wild nature of all peoples.”

In 1970, after his first marriage ended and his mother died, Prechtel went to Mexico to clear his head. Seemingly by accident, he ended up going into Guatemala. He travelled around that country for more than a year before he came to a village called Santiago Atitlán. The village was inhabited by the Tzutujil, one of many indigenous Mayan subcultures, each of which has its own distinct traditions, patterns of clothing, and language.

In Santiago Atitlán, a strange man came up to Prechtel and said, “What took you so long? For two years I’ve been calling you. Let’s get to work!” So began his apprenticeship to Nicolas Chiviliu, one of the greatest of the Tzutujil Mayan shamans.

The apprenticeship lasted several years. As a shaman, Prechtel would learn how to correct imbalances in people's relationships with the ancestors and the spirits. He also had to learn the Tzutujil language. (Women taught him at first, and because women and men talk differently, he was a great source of amusement when he began to speak in public.)

Though not a native, Prechtel became a full member of the village. He married a local woman and had three sons, one of whom died. When Chiviliu died, Prechtel took his place, becoming shaman to nearly thirty thousand people. He also rose to the public office of Nabey Mam, or first chief. One of his duties as chief was to lead the young village men through their long initiations into adulthood.

Prechtel wanted to stay in Santiago Atitlán forever, but during the time that he lived there, Guatemala was in the throes of a brutal civil war. The ruling government — with its U.S.-backed death squads — had outlawed the thousand-year-old Mayan rites. Ultimately, Prechtel was forced to flee for his life. "I was going to stay," he says, "but before my teacher died, he asked me to leave so that I wouldn't get killed. He wanted me to carry on the knowledge that he had passed to me."

Prechtel brought his family to the U.S., where they "just kind of starved for a while until Robert Bly and men like him found me." (Bly, a poet active in the men's movement, has high praise for Prechtel, whom he describes as "a short kind of pony that gallops through the fields of human possibility with flowers dropping out of his mouth.") Though Prechtel's wife decided to return to her native Guatemala, he remained in the U.S. with their children and currently lives not fifty miles from where he grew up.

*Prechtel is the author of *Secrets of the Talking Jaguar (Tarcher)*, in which he writes — musically, clearly, and respectfully — about the indigenous traditions in Santiago Atitlán. He gives glimpses of his training, yet never reveals details that would allow readers to steal the Mayans' spiritual traditions the way others have stolen their land. In his most recent book, *Long Life, Honey in the**

Heart (*Tarcher*), *Prechtel describes the structure of the village, the Tzutujil priesthood, and everyday village life before the arrival of the death squads. In addition to his writing, Prechtel paints scenes from the daily activities and mythology of the Mayan people and is a musician who has recorded several CDs.*

Prechtel appears around the world at conferences on initiation for young men. (“I’m working with women on that, too,” he says, “but it’s a little bit slower — mostly because I’m not a woman.”) He also leads workshops that help people reconnect with their own sense of place and the sacredness of ordinary life. “Spirituality is an extremely practical thing,” he says. “It’s not just something you choose to do on the weekends.... It’s an everyday thing, as essential as eating or holding hands or keeping warm in the winter.”

When I went to interview Prechtel at his home in New Mexico, I was embarrassed to find that my tape recorder wasn’t working. Fortunately, his present wife, Hanna, had a recorder I could use. It worked for about forty minutes, then started to run backward. Martín apologized, saying this sort of thing happened all the time. “I just seem to have this effect on machines,” he said. “My dentist won’t let me come in his front door anymore, because I freeze up all his computers.”

I made a note never to travel with him.

Hanna was able to coax the recorder to work again, and we finished the interview. My own tape recorder began working again the next morning, when I was about seventy miles away.

For the majority of human history, shamans have simply been a part of ordinary life. They exist all over the world. It seems strange to Westerners now because they have systematically devalued the other world and no longer deal with it as part of their everyday lives.

Jensen: What is a shaman?

Prechtel: Shamans are sometimes considered healers or doctors, but really they are people who deal with the tears and holes we create in the net of life, the damage that we all cause in our search for survival. In a sense, all of us — even the most untechnological, spiritual, and benign peoples — are constantly wrecking the world. The question is: how do we respond to that destruction? If we respond as we do in modern culture, by ignoring the spiritual debt that we create just by living, then that debt will come back to bite us, hard. But there are other ways to respond. One is to try to repay that debt by giving gifts of beauty and praise to the sacred, to the invisible world that gives us life. Shamans deal with the problems that arise when we forget the relationship that exists between us and the other world that feeds us, or when, for whatever reason, we don't feed the other world in return.

All of this may sound strange to modern, industrialized people, but for the majority of human history, shamans have simply been a part of ordinary life. They exist all over the world. It seems strange to Westerners now because they have systematically devalued the other world and no longer deal with it as part of their everyday lives.

Jensen: How are shamans from Siberia, for example, different from shamans in Guatemala?

Prechtel: There are as many different ways to be a shaman as there are different languages, but there's a commonality, as well, because we're all standing on one earth, and there's water in the ocean wherever we go, and there's ground underneath us wherever we go. So we all have, on some level, a commonality of experience. We are all still human beings. Some of us have buried our humanity deep inside, or medicated or anesthetized it, but every person alive today, tribal or modern, primal or domesticated, has a soul that is original, natural, and, above all, indigenous in one way or another. The indigenous soul of the modern person, though, either has been banished to the far reaches of the dream world or is under direct attack by the modern mind. The more you consciously remember your indigenous soul, the more you physically remember it.

Shamans are all trying to put right the effects of normal human stupidity and repair relationships with the invisible sources of life. In many instances, the ways in which they go about this are also similar. For example, the Siberians have a trance method of entering the other world that is similar to one used in Africa.

As Christians are born with original sin, Mayans are born with original debt. In the Mayan worldview, we are all born owing a spiritual debt to the other world for having created us, for having sung us into existence. It must be fed; otherwise, it's going to take its payment out of our lives.

Jensen: You've mentioned "the other world" a few times. Most modern people would not consciously acknowledge such a place. What is the other world?

Prechtel: If this world were a tree, then the other world would be the roots — the part of the plant we can't see, but that puts the sap into the tree's veins. The other world feeds this tangible world — the world that can feel pain, that can eat and drink, that can fail; the world that goes around in cycles; the world where we die. The other world is what makes this world work. And the way we help the other world continue is by feeding it with our beauty.

All human beings come from the other world, but we forget it a few months after we're born. This amnesia occurs because we are dazzled by the beauty and physicality of this world. We spend the rest of our lives putting back together our memories of the other world, enough to serve the greater good and to teach the new amnesiacs — the children — how to remember. Often, this lesson is taught during the initiation into adulthood.

The Mayans say that the other world sings us into being. We are its song. We're made of sound, and as the sound passes through the sieve between this world and the other world, it takes the shape of

birds, grass, tables — all these things are made of sound. Human beings, with our own sounds, can feed the other world in return, to fatten those in the other world up, so they can continue to sing.

Jensen: Who are “they”?

Prechtel: All those beings who sing us alive. You could translate it as gods or as spirits. The Mayans simply call them “they.”

Jensen: There’s an old Aztec saying I read years ago: “That we come to this earth to live is untrue. We come to sleep and to dream.” I wonder if you can help me understand it.

Prechtel: When you dream, you remember the other world, just as you did when you were a newborn baby. When you’re awake, you’re part of the dream of the other world. In the “waking” state, I am supposed to dedicate a certain amount of time to feeding the world I’ve come from. Similarly, when I die and leave this world and go on to the next, I’m supposed to feed this present dream with what I do in that one.

Dreaming is not about healing the person who’s sleeping: it’s about the person feeding the whole, remembering the other world, so that it can continue. The New Age falls pretty flat with the Mayans, because, to them, self-discovery is good only if it helps you to feed the whole.

Jensen: Where does the Mayan concept of debt fit in?

Prechtel: As Christians are born with original sin, Mayans are born with original debt. In the Mayan worldview, we are all born owing a spiritual debt to the other world for having created us, for having sung us into existence. It must be fed; otherwise, it’s going to take its payment out of our lives.

Jensen: How does one repay this debt?

Prechtel: You have to give a gift to that which gives you life. It's an actual payment in kind. That's the spiritual economy of a village.

It's like my old teacher used to say: "You sit singing on a little rock in the middle of a pond, and your song makes a ripple that goes out to the shores where the spirits live. When it hits the shore, it sends an echo back toward you. That echo is the spiritual nutrition." When you send out a gift, you send it out in all directions at once. And then it comes back to you from all directions.

Jensen: It must end up being a complex pattern, because as you're sending your song out, your neighbors are also sending theirs out, and you've got all these overlapping ripples.

Prechtel: It's an entangled net so enormous the mind cannot possibly comprehend it. No one knows what's connected to where.

Jensen: How does this relate to technology?

Prechtel: Technological inventions take from the earth but give nothing in return. Look at automobiles. They were, in a sense, dreamed up over a period of time, with different people adding on to each other's dreams — or, if you prefer, adding on to each other's studies and trials. But all along the way, very little, if anything, was given back to the hungry, invisible divinity that gave people the ability to invent those cars. Now, in a healthy culture, that's where the shamans would come in, because with every invention comes a spiritual debt that must be paid, either ritually, or else taken out of us in warfare, grief, or depression.

A knife, for instance, is a very minimal, almost primitive tool to people in a modern industrial society. But for the Mayan people, the spiritual debt that must be paid for the creation of such a tool is great. To start with, the person who is going to make the knife has to build a fire hot enough to produce coals. To pay for that, he's got to give a sacrificial gift to the fuel, to the fire.

Jensen: Like what?

Prechtel: Ideally, the gift should be something made by hand, which is the one thing humans have that spirits don't.

Once the fire is hot enough, the knife maker must smelt the iron ore out of the rock. The part that's left over, which gets thrown away in Western culture, is the most holy part in shamanic rituals. What's left over represents the debt, the hollowness that's been carved out of the universe by human ingenuity, and so must be refilled with human ingenuity. A ritual gift equal to the amount that was removed from the other world has to be put back to make up for the wound caused to the divine. Human ingenuity is a wonderful thing, but only so long as it's used to feed the deities that give us the ability to perform such extravagant feats in the first place.

So, just to get the iron, the shaman has to pay for the ore, the fire, the wind, and so on — not in dollars and cents, but in ritual activity equal to what's been given. Then that iron must be made into steel, and the steel has to be hammered into the shape of a knife, sharpened, and tempered, and a handle must be put on it. There is a deity to be fed for each part of the procedure. When the knife is finished, it is called the "tooth of earth." It will cut wood, meat, and plants. But if the necessary sacrifices have been ignored in the name of rationalism, literalism, and human superiority, it will cut humans instead.

All of those ritual gifts make the knife enormously "expensive," and make the process quite involved and time-consuming. The need for ritual makes some things too spiritually expensive to bother with. That's why the Mayans didn't invent space shuttles or shopping malls or backhoes. They live as they do not because it's a romantic way to live — it's not; it's enormously hard — but because it works.

Western culture believes that all material is dead, and so there is no debt incurred when human ingenuity removes something from the other world. Consequently, we end up with shopping malls and space shuttles and other examples of “advanced” technology, while the spirits who give us the ability to make those things are starving, becoming bony and thin, which is one reason why anorexia is such a problem: the young are acting out this image. The universe is in a state of starvation and emotional grief because it has not been given what it needs in the form of ritual food and actual physical gifts. We think we’re getting away with something by stealing from the other side, but it all leads to violence. The Greek oracle at Delphi saw this a long time ago and said, “Woe to humans, the invention of steel.”

Jensen: Why does this theft lead to violence?

Prechtel: Though capable of feeding all creation, the spirit is not an omnipotent force, as Christianity would have us believe, but a natural force of great subtlety. When its subtlety is trespassed on by the clumsiness of human greed and conceit, then both human and divine nature are violated and made into hungry, devouring things. We become food for this monster our spiritual amnesia has created. The monster is fed by wars, psychological depression, self-hate, and bad world-trade practices that export misery to other places.

We inflict violence upon each other as a way to replace what we steal from nature because we’ve forgotten this old deal that our ancestors signed so long ago. Instead, we psychologize and objectify that relationship as a personal experience or pathology, rather than a spiritual obligation. At that point, our approach to spirituality becomes rationalist armoring, a psychology of protection for the part of us that creates the greed monster, which causes us to kill the world and each other. As individuals, we become depressed, because the beings of the other world take it out of our emotions.

If the modern world is to start maintaining things, it will have to redefine itself. A new culture will have to develop, in which neither humans and their inventions nor God is at the center of the universe. What should be at the center is a hollow place, an empty place where both God and humans can sing and weep together.

Jensen: How so?

Prechtel: When we no longer maintain a relationship with the spirits, the spirits have to eat our psyches. And when the spirits are done eating our psyches, they eat our bodies. And when they're done with that, they move on to the people close to us.

When you have a culture that has for centuries, or longer, ignored these relationships, depression becomes a way of life. We try to fix the depression through technology, but that's never going to work. Nor will it work to plunder other cultures, nor to kill the planet. All that is just an attempt not to be held accountable to the other world. If you're to succeed as a human being, you've got to live meaningfully, passionately, and fully, so that even your death becomes a meaningful sacrifice to the spirits, feeding them. Everybody's death was a meaningful sacrifice until people started to become "civilized" and began killing everybody else's gods in the name of monotheism. As you grow older, your life becomes more and more meaningful as a sacrifice, because you give more and more gifts to the other world, and the spirits are better fed by your speech and prayers.

Jensen: How do you respond to someone who says that the notion of paying a debt to the spirit world for making a knife is just inefficient, which is why we've wiped out all those cultures. In the time your group spends making one knife, my group will make three hundred knives and cut all your throats.

Prechtel: If you take up that strategy, then you will have to live with the ghosts of those you've murdered — which means you've got to make more and more knives, and you will become more and more depressed, all the while calling yourself “advanced” to rationalize your predicament.

Jensen: What are these ghosts?

Prechtel: Before we talk any more about ghosts, we have to talk about ancestors, because the two are related.

Often, you'll hear that you have to honor your ancestors, but I believe it's much more complex than that. Our ancestors weren't necessarily very smart. In many cases, they are the ones who left us this mess. Some of them were great, but others had huge prejudices. If these ancestors are given their due, then you don't have to live out their prejudices in your own life. But if you don't give the ancestors something, if you simply say, “I'm descended from these people, but they don't affect me very much; I'm a unique individual,” then you're cursed to spend your life either fighting your ancestors, or else riding the wave they started. You'll have to do that long before you can be yourself and pursue what you believe is worth pursuing.

The Mayan way of dealing with this is to give the ancestors a place to live. You actually build houses for them — called “sleeping houses” — and put your ancestors in there. The houses are small, because the ancestors don't take up any space, but they do need a designated place, just like anything else. Then you feed your ancestors with words and eloquence. We all have old, forgotten languages that our languages are descended from, and many of these languages are a great deal more ornate. But even with our current language, we still have the capacity to create strange, mysterious, poetic gifts to feed the ancestors, so that we won't become depressed by their ghosts devouring our everyday lives.

If we can get past the prejudices of the last ten thousand years' worth of ancestors, then we can find our way back to our indigenous souls and culture, where we are always at home and welcome.

Jensen: My ancestry is Danish, French, and Scottish, but I live in northern California, so how can I find my way back?

Prechtel: The problem is not that your ancestors migrated to North America but that, when they died, their debts were not properly paid with beauty, grief, and language. Whenever someone dies, that person's spirit has to go on to the next world. If that person has not gone through an initiation and remembered where she came from and what she must do to go on, then she won't know where to go. Also, when a person dies, her spirit must return what has been taken out to feed her existence while she was on earth. All of the old burial rituals are about paying back the debt to the other world and helping the spirit to move on.

One of the ways those who remain behind can help repay this spiritual debt is simply by missing the dead. Let's say your beloved grandmother dies. Some might say you shouldn't weep, because she's going to "a better place," and weeping is just pure selfishness. But people's longing for each other and for the terrain of home is so enormous that, if you do not weep to express it, you're poisoning the future with violence. If that longing is not expressed as a loud, beautiful wail, a song, or a piece of art that's given as a gift to the spirits, then it will turn into violence against other beings — and, more importantly, against the earth itself, because you will have no understanding of home. But if you are able to feed the other world with your grief, then you can live where your dead are buried, and they will become a part of the landscape in a way.

Many old cultures had funeral arrangements whereby the dead were annually fed by the living for as long as fifty years, with the living giving ritual payments back to the world and the earth for the

debts incurred by the deceased. When that grief doesn't happen, the ancestors' ghosts begin to chase the culture.

It's difficult enough when you have only a few dead people to mourn, but what happens when there are too many dead, when there is no time to mourn them all? When you get not just one or two ghosts (which a shaman might be able to help you with), but hundreds, or thousands, or millions of ghosts, because not just your ancestors, but the beings who have been trespassed against — the women who have been raped, the animals who have been slaughtered for no reason, the ground that has been torn to shreds — have all become ghosts, too?

Jensen: Are you speaking metaphorically here?

Prechtel: No, I'm talking literally. The ghosts will actually chase you, and they always chase you toward the setting sun. That's why all the great migrations of the past several thousand years have been to the west: because people are running away from the ghosts. The people stop and try to live in a new place for a while, but the ghosts always catch up with them and create enormous wars and pain and problems, which feed the hungry hordes of ghosts. Then the people continue on, always moving, never truly at home. Now we have an entire culture based on our fleeing or being devoured by ghosts.

Jensen: What can we do about the ghosts?

Prechtel: On a finite planet, we can't outrun them. We've tried to develop technology that will keep us safe: medicines to numb our grief, fortresses to keep the ghosts away. But none of it will work.

In a village, if a family is beset by a ghost, the shaman will capture the ghost, break it down into its component parts, and send them back to the other world one at a time. Then the shaman and the family will set up a regular maintenance program, to get back on track in their relationship with the other world. This is the maintenance way of living.

I'm not sure how Western culture could do this. How can members of a culture that considers the earth a dead thing possibly repay all that debt? How can they possibly get away from all those ghosts? With everything that has gone on for so long, can they ever really be at home again?

To be at home in a place, to live in a place well, we first have to understand where we are; we've got to look at our surroundings. Second, we've got to know our own histories. Third, we've got to feed our ancestors' ghosts, so that the ghosts aren't eating us or the people around us. Lastly, we've got to begin to grieve. Now, grief doesn't mean sitting around weeping every day. Rather, grief means using the gifts you've been given by the spirits to make beauty. Grief that's not expressed this way becomes a kind of toxic waste inside a person's body, and inside the culture as a whole, until it has to be put in containers and shipped someplace, the way they ship radioactive waste to New Mexico.

This locked-up grief has to be metabolized. As a culture and as individuals, we must begin feeling our grief — that delicious, fantastic, eloquent medicine. Then we can start giving spiritual gifts to the land we live on, which might someday grant our grandchildren permission to live there.

Jensen: What's the relationship between grief and belonging to a place?

Prechtel: In the Guatemalan village where I lived, you don't belong someplace until your people have died there and the living have wept for them there. Until a few of your generations have died on the land and been buried there, and your soul has fed on the land, you're still a tourist, a visitor.

While I lived in this village, one of my sons, a baby, died of typhoid. When I lost a child, I mysteriously and suddenly became a true, welcomed resident of the land. It wasn't as if I owned the land, but I was an honorable renter who'd paid with grief, artistically expressed in ritual. My child had merged with the land, so now I was related to the rocks and the trees and the air in a bodily way

that I hadn't been before. And since the other villagers were all related to these same rocks and trees and air, that made us all relatives.

Now, you might say that all your ancestors from Denmark, France, and Scotland have been put in the ground in North America, so why aren't you welcome here? Why aren't you related to the rocks and the trees and the air?

It's because your ancestors who died are most likely still ghosts, still uninitiated souls who have not yet become true ancestors, because their debts were not paid with grief and beauty. Once they become true ancestors, you merge with the region, and you begin to help this world live. At that point, you'll find that you have less need for toasters and machinery and computers — less need for everything. You'll finally be starting to live well.

For us to get to that stage, we have to study eloquence, grief, and sacrifice. I'm not just talking about the type of sacrifice where somebody takes three days off to work in the neighborhood, although that may be part of it. I'm talking about giving to the nonhuman, as well as to the human.

Some of the rights and wrongs that nations have fought and died to defend or obtain are not even relevant concepts to traditional Tzutujil. This isn't because the Tzutujil are somehow too "primitive" to understand right and wrong, but because their lives aren't based on absolute states or permanence.

Jensen: So you're saying that we need to deal with the ghosts, and once we've dealt with them ...

Prechtel: Then we have to talk about maintenance, which is far more important than corrective measures. This culture is based on fixing things, as opposed to maintaining them. But once we start to maintain instead of constantly fix, the problems that vex us will become much easier to solve. It will no longer be a matter of fixing something as we think of it today. Right now, fixing something means getting our way. It should mean asking: "What do I need to do here?"

Our culture also emphasizes individual freedom, but such freedom can be enjoyed only when there is a waiting village of open-armed, laughing elders who know compassion and grasp the complexity of the spirit world well enough to catch us, keep us grounded, and protect us from ourselves.

If the modern world is to start maintaining things, it will have to redefine itself. A new culture will have to develop, in which neither humans and their inventions nor God is at the center of the universe. What should be at the center is a hollow place, an empty place where both God and humans can sing and weep together. Maybe, together, the diverse and combined excellence of all cultures could court the tree of life back from where it's been banished by our literalist minds and dogmatic religions.

Jensen: Speaking of dogmatic religions, how did the Mayan traditions survive the influx of Spanish missionaries?

Prechtel: The Spaniards came to our village in 1524, but they couldn't get anybody to go to their church, so they demolished our old temple and used the stones to build a new church on the same site. (This was a common practice.) But the Tzutujil people are crafty. They watched as the old temple stones were used to build the new church, and they memorized where each one went. As far as the Tzutujil were concerned, this strange, square European church was just a reconfiguration of the old. (When I was learning to be a shaman, I had to memorize where all those damn stones were, because they were all holy. It was like being a novice taxi driver in London.)

The Catholic priests abandoned the village in the 1600s because of earthquakes and cholera, then came back fifty years later and found a big hole in the middle of the church. "What is that?" they said.

By then, the Indians knew the priests destroyed everything relating to the native religion, so the Indians said, "When we reenact the crucifixion of Jesus, this is the hole where we put the cross."

In truth, that hole was a hollow place that was never to be filled, because it led to another hollow place left over from the temple that had been there originally, and that place was connected to all the other layers of existence.

For four and a half centuries, the Indians kept their traditions intact in a way that the Europeans couldn't see or understand. If the Spaniards asked, "Where is your God?" the Indians would point to this empty hole. But when the American clergy came in the 1950s, they weren't fooled. They said, "This is paganism." And so, eventually, they filled the empty place with concrete.

I was there when that happened, in 1976. I was livid. I went to the village council and ranted and raved about how terrible it was. The old men calmly smoked their cigars and agreed. After an hour or so, when I was out of breath, they started talking about something totally unrelated. I asked, "Doesn't anybody care about this?"

"Oh, yeah," they said. "We care. But these Christians are idiots if they think they can just eradicate the conduit from this world to the next with a little mud. That's as ridiculous as you worrying about it. But if you must do something, here's a pick, shovel, and chisel. Dig it out."

So some old men and I dug out the hole. Then the Catholics filled the hole back up, and two weeks later we dug it out again. We went back and forth this way five times until, finally, somebody made a stone cover for the hole, so the Catholics could pretend it wasn't there, and we could pull the cover off whenever we wanted to use it.

That's how the spirit is now in this country. The hole, the hollow place that must be fed, is still there, but it's covered over with spiritual amnesia. We try to fill up that beautiful hollow place with drugs, television, potato chips — anything. But it can't be filled. It needs to be kept hollow.

Jensen: Why is a hollow place holy?

Prechtel: The Mayan people understand that the world did not come out of a creator's hand, but grew out of this hollow place and became a tree whose fruit was diversity. Human beings weren't on that tree, but everything that was on that original tree eventually went into human beings. You have gourd seeds in you, and raccoons, and amoebas — everything.

When the tree finally grew to maturity, flowered, and bore fruit, the fruit was made of sound, and every piece of it that dropped to the ground sprouted and gave birth to the diverse kinds of life. Then the old tree died and became humus consisting of ancient sounds, out of which all things flourish to this day. Everything we feel, touch, and taste is actually a manifestation of that original diversity, which means that the tree isn't really dead, but dismembered, and it's constantly trying to "re-member" itself.

Every year in my village, when it was still intact, the young men and women who were to be initiated into adulthood went down the hole into the other world to try to bring the parent tree back to life. They put the seeds of their holy sounds and their tears into that hole where the old tree used to live long ago. And the tree grew back. But the rest of the year, the village devoured the tree's diverse forms, creating an annual need for new initiates to re-member the old provider tree back to life. The initiates were able to go down into that hollow place and restore the tree to life because they knew how to be eloquent, how to grieve, and how to fight death instead of fighting and killing other beings.

Jensen: When you say "fight death," do you mean they resisted or denied its inevitability?

Prechtel: No, on the contrary, I mean they *wrestled* with death. In order for there to be life, there has to be a spiritual wrestling match with death; otherwise, it becomes a literal battle that can kill you.

The problem with death is that its gods are rationalists. The Mayans have thirteen goddesses and thirteen gods of death. These deities have no imagination, which is why they have to eat and kill us — to get our souls, our imagination. Once death has your soul, it is happy and stops killing for a while. But then you must go down and ask death — with all your eloquence — to please give back your soul. When death refuses, you’ve got to gamble with death, because death obeys only one rule: the rule of chance. And so you use gambling bones and try to beguile death with your eloquence. That’s what we call “wrestling death.” You can’t kill death, of course. The best you can hope for in such a match is to bring death to a standoff. Then death will say, “OK, I’ll tell you what. I’m going to give you back your soul if you promise to continue to feed me this eloquence on a regular basis, and to die at your appointed hour.”

During initiation, when the young men and women wrestle death, what they’re doing, essentially, is signing a contract that says, “I give up the idealistic notion that I should live forever.” Your soul is then returned, but you must ritually render a percentage of the fruit of your art, your eloquence, and your imagination to the other world. That’s the only deal you’re going to get from death. If you try to strike a better bargain, you’re going to end up killing a lot of people. When an entire culture tries to make a better deal, or refuses to wrestle death with eloquence, then death comes up to the surface to eat us in a literal way, with wars and depression.

Jensen: Tell me more about the indigenous soul.

Prechtel: Every individual in the world, regardless of cultural background or race, has an indigenous soul struggling to survive in an increasingly hostile environment created by that individual’s mind. A modern person’s body has become a battleground between the rationalist mind — which subscribes to the values of the machine age — and the native soul. This battle is the cause of a great deal of spiritual and physical illness.

Over the last several centuries, a heartless, culture-crushing mentality has enforced its so-called progress on the earth, devouring all peoples, nature, imagination, and spiritual knowledge. Like a bulldozer, it has left a flat, homogenized streak of civilization in its wake. Every human on this earth, whether from Africa, Asia, Europe, or the Americas, has ancestors whose stories, rituals, ingenuity, language, and life ways were taken away, enslaved, banned, exploited, twisted, or destroyed by this mentality. What is indigenous — in other words, natural, subtle, hard to explain, generous, gradual, and village oriented — in each of us has been banished to the ghettos of our heart, or hidden away from view on reservations inside the spiritual landscape. We're taught to believe that our thoughts are actually the center of our life. Like the conquering, modern culture we belong to, we understand the world only with the mind, not with the indigenous soul.

And this indigenous soul is not something that can be brought back in “wild man” or “wild woman” retreats on the weekend and then dropped when you put on your business suit. It's not something you take up because it's fun or trendy. It has to be authentic, and it has to be spiritually expensive.

Like the house of the body, the house that a person sleeps in must be very beautiful and sturdy, but not so sturdy that it won't fall apart after a while. If your house doesn't fall apart, then there will be no reason to renew it. And it is this renewability that makes something valuable.

Jensen: Let's talk for a moment about co-optation. There are two common positions on the wider use of indigenous traditions. One is that there's nothing wrong with making a sweat lodge in your backyard for weekend retreats, while continuing to be a stockbroker on weekdays.

Prechtel: The consumer method.

Jensen: The other, which I subscribe to, is that we must respect the privacy of indigenous traditions and not mine them for our own purposes.

Prechtel: I've made a huge effort never to do that. The truth is that I never wanted to write books about Mayan traditions in the first place. On the Pueblo reservation where I grew up, it was taboo to write, because writing freezes knowledge, and also because much knowledge becomes useless when it is not kept secret and used only under sacred conditions. And often the things that are the most sacred are the most simple and ordinary. When this ordinariness is framed in subtle, time-honored ways, it becomes extraordinary and maintains its spiritual usefulness.

Jensen: The traditions you write about are not your native Southwestern traditions.

Prechtel: No, but I lived in Santiago Atitlán, in Guatemala, for many years and made my life there. I was married, with children. Then, when the U.S.-backed death squads came, more than eighteen hundred villagers were killed within seven years: shot, beaten, tortured, poisoned, chopped up, starved to death in holes, beheaded, disappeared. This took place in a village where, prior to 1979, most people had never heard a gunshot. I had a price on my head and was almost killed on three different occasions in the 1980s. I returned to the U.S. and brought my family with me. My wife later went back home, taking our two sons with her, and we separated. The boys soon returned to live with me and are now grown men.

Then, in 1992, there was another massacre, and I had to go back to Guatemala. Some young Tzutujil men met me in a pickup truck, which was strange in itself: before, nobody had owned an automobile. They put me in the back with a bunch of squash, under a tarp. Whenever we came to an army roadblock, the soldiers saw just the squash and let us pass. They didn't look very hard. (Most of the soldiers really don't want to kill anybody: they have to be goaded into it. But they do kill.)

When we'd gotten past all the roadblocks, I got to sit up front. The other passengers were all kids. This was only eight years after I'd left, and already they had forgotten the name of my teacher, who had been one of the greatest and most famous shamans around.

As we drove, they'd ask, "Do you know the story of that mountain over there?"

"Yeah," I'd say, "that's called S'kuut. It was originally in the ocean and was brought up on land by the old goddess of the reptiles."

"Who's she?"

Pretty soon the truck was going about three miles an hour because they were rediscovering, through their ancestors' ancient stories, every mountain, ravine, and boulder along our route. After about two hours, I asked, "How come you don't know any of this?"

"Well," said one, "these two are Christians, so they're not allowed to know, and the rest of us don't have parents. They were killed in the 1980s."

So there I was, this blond half-breed from the U.S. — not even any blood relation to these kids — telling them their own people's stories. I realized then that these children, as well as my own two sons, would never know the richness of village life. They were losing their connection to this place. I had to write down what I knew, but I couldn't write down the specifics — that we went to the lake and did this and put this offering there — because then those rituals could be expropriated.

My decision to leave out the details of the rituals has irritated many people in the U.S. They insist I tell them "how to do it." I always respond, "It's not technology."

Jensen: You've said explicitly that the power of shamanism is not in the specific words or the prayers.

Prechtel: My teacher always said that, if there is to be any hope whatsoever of living well on this earth, we have to take the ancient root and put new sap in it. That doesn't mean we need to do something new, but to do something old in a new way, which takes great courage.

I decided that if I could write these books such that the oral tradition is evident to readers, memories of their own indigenous souls might begin to arise. Of course, I tell people not to get on a plane and go to Guatemala. That would bring nothing but more heartbreak and plundering. The answer must be found in your own backyard, where you live. The only reason to explore another culture is to be able to smell the poverty in your own. Even if you go to another culture and are accepted in some way, you still have an obligation not to abandon your own culture, but to return to your homeland and try to coax its alienated indigenous traditions back into everyday life and away from tribalism, fundamentalism, and corporatized, nihilistic greed.

This is true whether we're talking about traditions or natural resources. Right now, "genetic prospectors" are going to Brazil to study plants used by indigenous peoples. Why? So they can save rich, white North Americans from diseases caused by the stupidities of their own culture. They're mining other peoples' traditions to fix, mechanically, illnesses that would be much better addressed if they stayed home and dealt with their own culture's lack of imagination and grace, grieving collectively about the inescapable reality of their mortality.

People should also be aware that many things that are touted as indigenous are not. Many of the sweat-lodge ceremonies, for example, are about as Jesuit as you can get. No Indian had ever heard of the Great Spirit before the 1850s. That's all from the Jesuits.

Jensen: You've said that one problem with Western culture is its use of the verb *to be*.

Prechtel: When I was a child, I spoke a Pueblo language called Keres, which doesn't have the verb *to be*. It was basically a language of adjectives. One of the secrets of my ability to survive and thrive in Santiago Atitlán was that the Tzutujil language, too, has no verb *to be*. Tzutujil is a language of carrying and belonging, not a language of being. Without *to be*, there's no sense that something is absolutely this or that. If two people argue, they're said to be "split," like firewood,

but both sides are still of the same substance. Some of the rights and wrongs that nations have fought and died to defend or obtain are not even relevant concepts to traditional Tzutujil. This isn't because the Tzutujil are somehow too "primitive" to understand right and wrong, but because their lives aren't based on absolute states or permanence. Mayans believe nothing will last on its own. That's why their lives are oriented toward maintenance rather than creation.

"Belonging to" is as close to "being" as the Tzutujil language gets. One cannot say, "She is a mother," for instance. In Tzutujil, you can only call someone a mother by saying whose mother she is, whom she belongs to. Likewise, one cannot say, "He is a shaman." One says instead, "The way of tracking belongs to him."

In order for modern Western culture to really take hold in Santiago Atitlán, the frustrated religious, business, and political leaders first had to undermine the language. Language is the glue that holds the layers of the Mayan universe together: the eloquence of the speech, the ancestral lifeline of the mythologies. The speech of the gods was in our very bones. But once the Westerners forced the verb *to be* upon our young, the whole archaic Mayan world disappeared into the jaws of the modern age.

In a culture with the verb *to be*, one is always concerned with identity. To determine who you are, you must also determine who you are not. In a culture based on belonging, however, you must bond with others. You are defined by where you stand and whom you stand with. The verb *to be* also reduces a language, taking away its adornment and beauty. But the language becomes more efficient. The verb *to be* is very efficient. It allows you to build things.

Rather than build things, Mayans cultivate a climate that allows for the possibility of their appearance, as for a fruit or a vine. They take care of things. In the past, when they built big monuments, it wasn't, as in modern culture, to force the world to be a certain way, but rather to

repay the world with a currency proportionate to the immense gifts the gods had given the people. Mayans don't force the world to be what they want it to be: they make friends with it; they belong to life.

Jensen: You've spoken a lot today about the importance of maintenance. How does that relate to the Tzutujil practice of building flimsy houses?

Prechtel: In the village, people used to build their houses out of traditional materials, using no iron or lumber or nails, but the houses were magnificent. Many were sewn together out of bark and fiber. Like the house of the body, the house that a person sleeps in must be very beautiful and sturdy, but not so sturdy that it won't fall apart after a while. If your house doesn't fall apart, then there will be no reason to renew it. And it is this renewability that makes something valuable. The maintenance gives it meaning.

The secret of village togetherness and happiness has always been the generosity of the people, but the key to that generosity is inefficiency and decay. Because our village huts were not built to last very long, they had to be regularly renewed. To do this, villagers came together, at least once a year, to work on somebody's hut. When your house was falling down, you invited all the folks over. The little kids ran around messing up what everybody was doing. The young women brought the water. The young men carried the stones. The older men told everybody what to do, and the older women told the older men that they weren't doing it right. Once the house was back together again, everyone ate together, praised the house, laughed, and cried. In a few days, they moved on to the next house. In this way, each family's place in the village was reestablished and remembered. This is how it always was.

Then the missionaries and the businessmen and the politicians brought in tin and lumber and sturdy houses. Now the houses last, but the relationships don't.

In some ways, crises bring communities together. Even nowadays, if there's a flood, or if somebody is going to put a highway through a neighborhood, people come together to solve the problem.

Mayans don't wait for a crisis to occur; they make a crisis. Their spirituality is based on choreographed disasters — otherwise known as rituals — in which everyone has to work together to remake their clothing, or each other's houses, or the community, or the world. Everything has to be maintained because it was originally made so delicately that it eventually falls apart. It is the putting back together again, the renewing, that ultimately makes something strong. That is true of our houses, our language, our relationships.

It's a fine balance, making something that is not so flimsy that it falls apart too soon, yet not so solid that it is permanent. It requires a sort of grace. We all want to make something that's going to live beyond us, but that thing shouldn't be a house, or some other physical object. It should be a village that can continue to maintain itself. That sort of constant renewal is the only permanence we should wish to attain.

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APPENDICES

¹Charles Swindoll on Attitude

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude to me is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company.....a church.....a home. The remarkable thing is, we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past.....we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is plan on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude.....I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you.....we are in charge of our attitudes.

²Earth and Sky Chakra System

Earth Chakras

The five lower chakras, from the root to the throat, are nourished primarily by the earth, by our Mother and, like our organs, they all have their own function. The first and second chakras digest emotional energies and can turn physical and emotional traumas into power and light. The lower chakras return all the heavy energies that they were not able to digest to the earth. If the root chakra is disconnected from our Earth Mother, the lower chakras are unable to discharge or expel emotional waste. These wastes turn into toxic sludge that build up in the chakras and causes disease of body, mind and spirit.

The Five Earth Chakras Include:

Chakra One:

Name: Root or Base

Location: Base of spine, between the genitals and the anus

Color: Red

Use: Elimination, survival, safety, chronic fatigue, pro-creation, abundance, violence

Chakra Two:

Name: Sacral

Location: Between the navel and the pubic bone

Color: Orange

Use: Digestion, kidneys, sexual potency, back pain, money, power, family, compassion, fear

Chakra Three:

Name: Solar Plexus

Location: Between the navel and the diaphragm

Color: Yellow

Use: Courage, power, stomach, gastro-intestinal, liver, self-expression, autonomy, sorrow, pride, anxiety

Chakra Four:

Name: Heart

Location: Center of the chest

Color: Green

Use: Circulatory, heart, breast, lungs, asthma, forgiveness, love, resentment, grief, compassion

Chakra Five:

Name: Throat

Location: Front of the throat

Color: Blue

Use: Throat, mouth, neck, personal power, self-expression, addictions, faith

Sky Chakras

The sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth chakras are nourished primarily by the sky energies, a more subtle energy and once again each chakra has its own function. Their primary function is the development of the transpersonal. The sky chakras are supported by the earth chakras, just as a tree is supported by its roots. They are not separate parts but different parts that work collectively. The sky chakras hold attributes that are sometimes hard to understand and although some of their

attributes may seem to be the same, there is a subtle difference, somewhat like the love you have for your parent as opposed to the love you have for your spouse. It is the same love but each offers a very different experience.

The Four Sky Chakras Include:

Chakra Six:

Name: Brow or Third Eye

Location: Just above the eye brows in the center

Color: Indigo

Use: Brain, eyes, truth, intelligence, enlightenment, delusion, depression, stress

Chakra Seven:

Name: Crown

Location: Top of the head at the crown

Color: Violet (some say white)

Use: Universal ethics, wisdom, brain, illumination, psychosis

Chakra Eight:

Name: Wiracocha (South American Tradition, pronounced: viracoshier)

Location: Above the physical body but still in the auric field

Color: Gold

Use: Timelessness, transcendence, cosmic horror, templates of disease

Chakra Nine:

Name: Dwelling place of Spirit (God)

Location: Higher than the Wiracocha, reaching out and beyond

Color: Translucent white light

Use: Infinity, liberation

Different belief systems may have slightly different colors or names, but they are pretty much the same all round. There are actually a lot more uses for each of the chakras than what I have included. It is through the understanding of chakras and their associated issues that we are able to facilitate a deeper healing.



CHAKRAS & COLORS



7 Centers of the Energetic Body Our Energy Centers (Chakras)

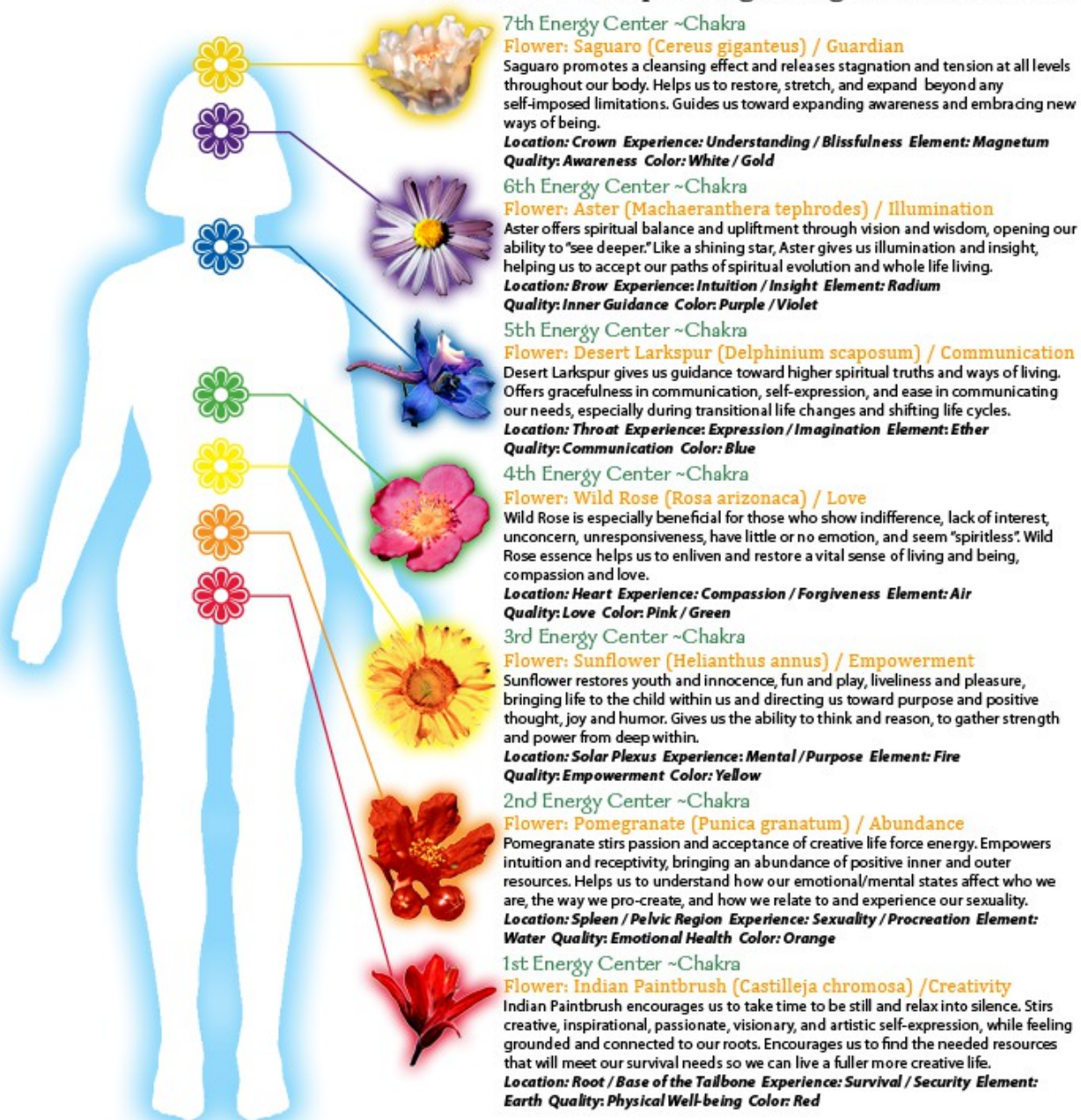
Essential Oils Lavender Ylang Ylang Jasmine Magnolia	Gemstones Amethyst	Immune System Pituitary, Left/Right brain synchronicity Spiritual, clearing, power of transcen- dence.	VIOLET Spiritual Integration	Music Notes: Will to Be B TI	Foods Eggplant Plums, Kale Broccoli Grapes	Herbs Gotu Kola Valerian Vervain Meadowsweet
Frankinsense Myrrh	Quartz Crystal Tanzanite	Will to See	INDIGO Intuition Autonomic	A LA	Eggplant Broccoli, Grapes & other foods of blue & violet color	White Willow Bark, Skullcap Passionflower Valerian, Vervain Hops, Lobelia, Bilberry, Kava
Thyme Chamomile Mint Cypress Tea Tree	Sapphire Lapis Lazuli Sodalite Blue Agate	Will to Express	BLUE Respiratory Inspiration	G SO	Blueberries Plums, Fish, Bramble Berries, Asparagus Potatoes	Chamomile Evening Primrose Oil, Thyme, Fennel Witch Hazel Eucalyptus, Hyssop
Lemon Rosemary Fennel Geranium Pine Rose Bulgur	Emerald Aventurine Jade Malachite Peridot	Will to Love	GREEN Unconditional Love	F FA	Avocados Broccoli Cucumber Green Salads Peas, Beans, Green Squashes	Echinacea, Pine Sage leaf Wild Yam Root Hyssop, Yarrow Hawthorn Alfalfa leaf Rose Hips Augustifolia Rt
Lemon Rosemary Fennel Geranium	Citrine Amber Gold Topaz	Will to Think	YELLOW Intellect, Cleansing, Elimination	E ME	Lemons, Corn Melons Bananas, Eggs Olive Oil Yellow Peppers Grapefruit	Ginkgo, Milk Thistle, Yarrow Dandelion Ginger, Parsley Lemon Balm Dandelion Root Lemon Balm Nettle
Melissa Bergamot Orange Neroli Lemon Grass Juniper	Carnelian Copper	Will to Feel	ORANGE Elimination Emotional Self Creativity	D RE	Oranges Apricots Peaches Mangos, Melon Carrots Mandarins Radishes	St. John's Wort Licorice, Vits. C, E & A Papaya Antioxidants Grape Seed
Cedarwood Sandlewood Vetiver Cinnamon Cedar	Ruby Red Tiger's Eye Bloodstone Garnet	Will to Live	RED Life Force Reproductive	C DO	Beets Watercress Strawberries Cherries Meat Cayenne Pepper Tomatoes	Noni, Clover Goldenseal Ginseng Iron, Suma Echinacea Ginger Root Cayenne Pepper Dong Quai Yucca, Damiana



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 PDFs: newswire, special reports, books
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Thanks to Joy Fanning, Desert Dove Designs, Charlotte,
 NC for the basics of this chart! I've added info from dozens
 of other sources! — Jan Jensen

the human energy system as Chakras and their corresponding Living Flower Essences





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³Ascension Eating - High Vibrational Food (HVF)

HVF means:

- Nothing cooked or steamed.

- Nothing processed, so no oils, butters, cheese, meat products, fish products, eggs etc.
- Organic if you can.
- Raw nuts and seeds, which means NO salted or honey coated nuts.
- Nuts straight from the shells are even better.
- Ensure foods are adequately washed.
- Fresh lemon juice for dressing, NO salad cream, mayonnaise, dressings, oils, vinegar etc.
- Fruit – Fresh fruit ONLY! No dried fruit (unless it has been sun-dried WITHOUT oil or other additives).
- Beverages: Black Coffee* – NO milk or sugar or substitutes, if you can go without the coffee that is even better. No more than 3x per day. OR
- Herbal Tea / Black Tea* – The same with tea, nothing added, NOT even honey* and no more than 3x per day.
- Water – Where possible, drink spring water or at least filtered water.
- Alcohol – NONE (Unless used for medicinal purposes).

***Traditionally These Were Used for Medicinal Purposes.**

- Coffee: Heart stimulant.
- Black Tea: Regaining strength after or during illness.
- Cane Sugar: For instant energy and for use on prolonged journeys with limited food.

- Un-Processed (Raw) Honey: For applying to wounds or sores to accelerate healing, can be used to boost energy during or after illness.

These were NOT meant for long term use.

High Vibrational Foods

Raw Salads and Vegetables	Fresh Fruit	Raw Nuts and Seeds ++
Lettuce	Lemons	Almonds
Spinach	Apples	Cashews
Rocket	Bananas	Macadamia
Watercress	Oranges	Walnuts
Seaweed (Naturally Dried Kelp)	Grapes	Hazelnuts
Cucumber	Avocados	Pine Nuts
Radishes	Blueberries	Peanuts
Beetroot	Blackberries	Brazil
Tomatoes	Raspberries	Chestnut
Onion	Red Currants	Pecans
Sweet Peppers	Black Currants	Pistachio
Cauliflower	Mangoes	Flax Seeds
Courgettes	Pineapples	Chia Seeds
Broccoli	Melons	Hemp Seeds
Asparagus	Star Fruit	Sunflower Seeds
Celery	Fresh Dates	Pumpkin Seeds
Garlic	Strawberries	Sesame Seeds
Carrots	Peaches	Fresh Coconut & Coconut Water
Cabbage	Nectarines	Naturally Dried Coconut
Kale	Mandarins	Naturally Obtained Coconut Cream
Bok Choy	Papaya	Honey Naturally Obtained from Hive
Sweetcorn	Pear	Freshly Made Peanut Butter

Peas	Kiwi	
Sprouted Grains	Passion fruit	If it is edible in its raw state,
Herbs/Spices (Not needing cooking)	Dragon fruit	it belongs on this list.

A selection of the above washed, chopped and mixed gives you an appetizing meal. Simply squeeze some lemon juice over it sprinkle a few nuts or seeds to garnish and you will be surprised how nice it looks **AND** tastes.

Medium Vibrational Foods

Fruit / Salad / Vegetables	Drinks	Nuts and Seeds
Badly Bruised Fruit / Salad / Vegetables	Bottled (Flat) Spring Water (Because it isn't straight from the source)	Nuts with Oil
Old Fruit / Salad / Vegetables	Bottled Pure Juice (Because it isn't freshly squeezed)	
Herbs & Spices (That require cooking)	Unbleached Herbal or Green Teabags made with boiled tap water	
This is a somewhat ambiguous	group, but it allows you to see	where things are going. It simply
reflects that the foods are not quite	<i>In the High</i> group but not in the	<i>Low</i> group either.

Low Vibrational Foods

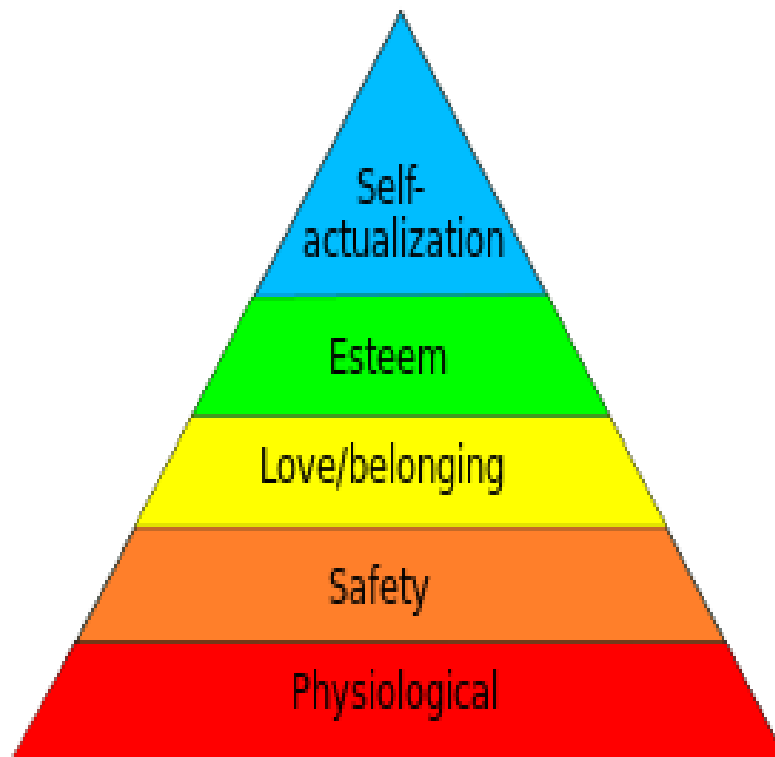
Table of	Foods Best	Avoided
Cooked Fresh or Dried Fruit	Boiled Spring Water (The heat has lowered the vibration)	Cooked Nuts
Dried Fruit with Additives & Preservatives	Tap Water (Treated with chemicals)	Roasted Nuts
Cooked Vegetables	Bottled Sparkling Water	Salted Nuts
Vegetables in Brine or Oil	Pure Juice with Additives and Preservatives	Honey Coated Nuts
Cooked Salad Foods: Tomatoes / Onions / Lettuce / Celery etc	Pasteurized Milk	Nuts with Additives or Preservatives
Salad Foods in Brine or Oil	Dried Milk	Processed Nuts (Commercial peanut butter)
Green or Herbal Tea Bags with Additives, Preservatives, Flavoring, Coloring	Long Life Milk	Cooked Coconut
Green or Herbal Tea made with Boiled Water (Tea should be brewed naturally in a glass jar in the sun)	Milk with Additives and Preservatives	Commercial Processed Coconut including Water and Cream

Black Tea (Unless for medicinal use)	Soya Milk	Commercially Dried Coconut
Black Coffee (Unless for medicinal use)	Cream	Coconut with Additives or Preservatives
Cooked Rice / Pasta	Butter	Oils
Pulses / Grains	Cheese	Stock
Flour	Sugar	Salt
Bread	Processed Honey	Commercial Sauces
Deserts	Artificial Sweeteners	Fizzy Drinks
Biscuits / Cakes	Ice-Cream	Drinks with Additives
Prawns	Mouse	Alcohol
Fish	Jellies	Pasties
Chicken	Cornets	Pies
Turkey	Wafers	Salad Creams
Pork	Sweets	Mayonnaise
Duck	Chocolate	
Snails	Crisps	
Eggs	Popcorn	
All Meat and Meat Products	Sweet or Savoury Spreads	Basically, if it is cooked or
Pork Scratchings	Sausage Rolls	processed it belongs on this list.

All processed foods are low to non-vibrational – AVOID.

If you already have your body in a diseased state of any kind, then ask your doctor to monitor you.

⁴Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

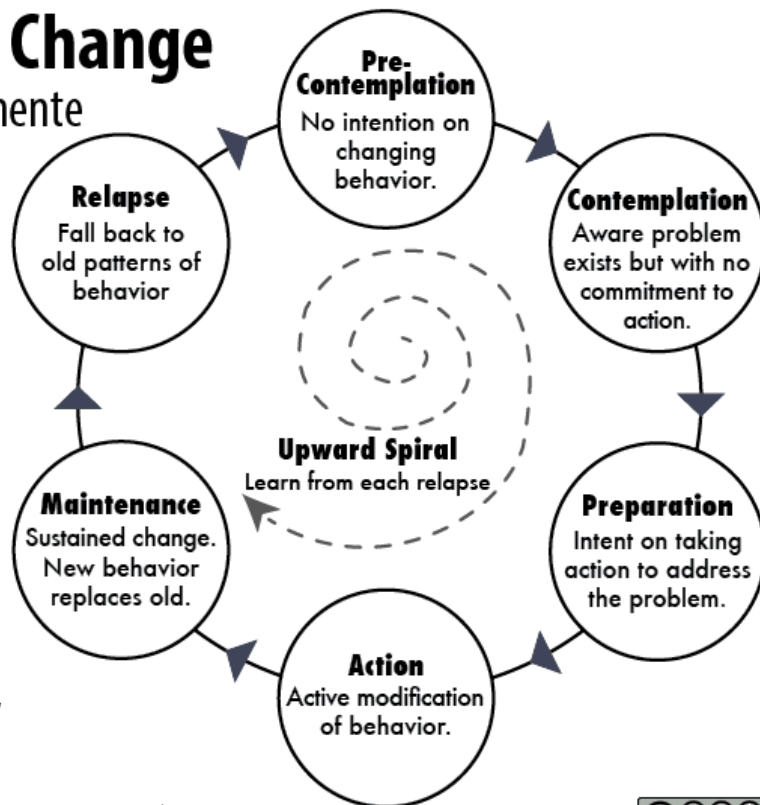


(Borrowed with permission from Gallery Hip @ gallerhip.com)

The Cycle of Change

Prochaska & DiClemente

- **Precontemplation:** A logical starting point for the model, where there is no intention of changing behavior; the person may be unaware that a problem exists
- **Contemplation:** The person becomes aware that there is a problem, but has made no commitment to change
- **Preparation:** The person is intent on taking action to correct the problem; usually requires buy-in from the client (i.e. the client is convinced that the change is good) and increased self-efficacy (i.e. the client believes s/he can make change)
- **Action:** The person is in active modification of behavior
- **Maintenance:** Sustained change occurs and new behavior(s) replaces old ones. Per this model, this stage is also transitional
- **Relapse:** The person falls back into old patterns of behavior
- **Upward Spiral:** Each time a person goes through the cycle, they learn from each relapse and (hopefully) grow stronger so that relapse is shorter or less devastating.



The Cycle of Change
Adapted from a work by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) | Ignacio Pacheco
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⁵Transcript of Symbolism in the Truman Show

From YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvWRDwJcwyU>

Published on March 22, 2015

An analysis into Peter Weir's Truman Show. All footage and music used are exclusively the maker's property, and is being used for review purposes.

Category: Film & Animation

Transcript:

(T) = Truman

(M) = Meryl – Dialogue in brackets.

“Ok, I know two Jim Carrey movies in a row is a bit odd considering the man himself, but trust me this one is also really good. The Truman Show, like *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, is a concept movie. Concept movies basically explore big premises but on a small scale with very human characters. *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* took the concept of removing memory and applied it to a couple. The Truman Show, directed by Peter Weir, takes the big concept of what if our life was actually a television show and projects it onto a simple everyman character, and that's perhaps what makes these movies such great films as well as great social satires, because at the core they are much more human than movies which use big concepts on a big scale. But I digress.

The Truman Show follows Truman Burbank, your average American man, who is unknowingly the star of a reality T.V. show about his life. The movie uses this setup to explore how mass media and consumer culture are becoming ever more pervasive in our modern lives. It's a very clever satire. Truman symbolises the American everyman figure, his job is vague and set in a clichéd environment, he has a stereotypically beautiful blonde wife, he lives in a normal American home. However, this life is a façade. It has been scripted by those around him, pushing him towards specific avenues in life. Truman begins to question his reality when mass media continually tries to push him down paths he doesn't want to go. This is brilliantly explored through Truman's relationship with his wife, Meryl. While Truman wants an honest family relationship, as he is symbolically named True-man, Meryl is only there as an actor and when questioned about how she feels, can only respond with the more scripted dialogue, shown in this scene:

(T) Why do you wanna have a baby with me? You can't stand me.

(M) That's not true. (Pauses). Why don't you let me fix you some of this new Mococoa drink?

All natural cocoa beans from the upper slopes of mountain Nicaragua. No artificial sweeteners!

(T) What the hell are you talking about? Who you talking to?

(M) I've tasted other cocas. This is the best!

(T) What the hell does this have to do with anything? Tell me what's happening!

(M) Well, you're having a nervous breakdown, that's what happening!

(T) You're a part of this, aren't you?

The director, Peter Weir, uses a combination of dialogue and camerawork to show us just how artificial we have become. When we see Truman speak, Weir uses very stable camera angles, not unlike how we would view most other movies. This, rather ironically, makes Truman seem real. However, when his wife Meryl begins her product placement the camera zooms in to mimic an infomercial. This highlights the disconnect between Truman and his wife. While Truman wants reality, wants truth, his consumeristic society divides the ideally loving relationship that should exist between man and wife. All of this creates the entrapment of the everyman.

While Truman experiences a seemingly idyllic lifestyle, symbolized by clear blue skies and sea, and bright, colorful shots, he's actually trapped within a false world. This false world is enforced through Weir's use of angles where he uses fisheye lens to visually imply that Truman is trapped as a fish is in a bowl. This is representative of the individual in the modern world. While we're presented with an idyllic world containing the values mass media and consumer culture want us to accept, this idyllic world traps us rather than benefits us.

Christof, the elusive producer behind the show, is perhaps the most obvious commentary in the film. With Christof, the show's creator at the top and Truman, the created, at the bottom we again revisit the theme of every psycho movie ever, playing God. In this scenario corporations and mass media have reached such a powerful state that they don't just distribute the news they shape the collective conscious of this generation. This harkens to reality shows like the Kardashians. These shows are created stories with real people merely the puppets for a wider audience, and this results in great detriment, not only to the people involved in this show but to everyone watching. These shows ultimately enforce shallow, hyper-consumeristic values under the guise of being normal. That puts the human race behind an inescapable facade.

However, *The Truman Show* does seem to show us a way out of this despair. When Truman finds real love, or perhaps just real attraction, to a girl named Lauren in his class, she is removed from the set. From that point on, Lauren acts as a symbol for truth for Truman, who begins to reconstruct her from newspaper and fashion magazine clippings. This reconstruction allows Truman to find truth from lies, and this is symbolically what we must do to find truth in a world of mass media that forces certain views into being accepted by the public. Indeed, as Truman sails out of the set, Weir uses a POV shot of the completed picture of Lauren to symbolize how Truman has successfully reconstructed fact from fiction, and has gained direction in his life.

In fact, Weir uses pretty strong Biblical imagery to suggest this. As Truman overcomes his fear of the ocean, which the show created by faking a death scene for his father, Christof attempts to drown Truman by raising the weather conditions. As Truman emerges from the water, he is positioned to allude to a crucified Jesus. His immersion in the water also seems to symbolise a sort of baptism. It symbolises Truman's transcendence from the world of illusions to the world of reality. Truman, the television show character, may die but the real Truman is reborn. Like Truman, to unlock the truth

inside us and escape from the pervasion of mass media, we must have the ability to find truth in lies and to confront the fears mass media places inside us.”

6Prefrontal Cortex

In mammalian brain anatomy, the pre-frontal cortex is the cerebral cortex which covers the front part of the frontal lobe. Many authors have indicated an integral link between a person's will to live, personality and the functions of their pre-frontal cortex. This brain region has been implicated in planning complex cognitive behaviour, personality expression, decision making, and moderating social behaviour. The basic activity of this brain region is considered to be orchestration of thoughts and actions in accordance with internal goals. The most typical psychological term for functions carried out by the pre-frontal cortex area is executive function. Executive function relates to abilities to differentiate among conflicting thoughts, determining good and bad, better and best, same and different, future consequences or current activities, working toward a defined goal, prediction of outcomes, expectation based on actions, and social “control” (the ability to suppress urges that, if not suppressed, could lead to socially unacceptable outcomes). Frontal cortex supports concrete rule learning. More anterior regions along the rostro-caudal axis of frontal cortex support rule learning at higher levels of abstraction – Wikipedia

7What Does Einstein's Famous Equation Really Mean?

by Robert Lamb

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/science-vs-myth/everyday-myths/einstein-formula.htm>

$$E=mc^2$$

Einstein's equation $E=mc^2$ pops up on everything but what does his famous equation really mean?

For starters, the **E** stands for **energy** and the **m** stands for **mass**, a measurement of the quantity of matter. Energy and matter are interchangeable. Furthermore, it's essential to remember that there's a set amount of energy/matter in the universe. The **c** stands for the **speed of light**, a universal constant, so the whole equation breaks down to this: Energy is equal to matter multiplied by the speed of light squared.

Why would you need to multiply matter by the speed of light to produce energy? The reason is that energy, be it light waves or radiation, travels at the speed of light. That breaks down to 186,000 miles per second (300,000 kilometres per second). When we split an atom inside a nuclear power plant or an atomic bomb, the resulting energy releases at the speed of light.

But why is the speed of light squared? The reason is that **kinetic energy**, or the energy of motion, is proportional to mass. When you accelerate an object, the kinetic energy increases to the tune of the speed squared. You'll find an excellent example of this in any driver's education manual: If you double your speed, the braking distance is four times longer, so the braking distance is equal to the speed squared [source: UNSW Physics: [Einsteinlight](#)].

The speed of light squared is a colossal number, illustrating just how much energy there is in even tiny amounts of matter. A common example of this is that 1 gram of water -- if its whole mass were converted into pure energy via $E=mc^2$ -- contains as much energy as 20,000 tons (18,143 metric tons) of TNT exploding. That's why such a small amount of uranium or plutonium can produce such a massive atomic explosion.

Einstein's equation opened the door for numerous technological advances, from nuclear power and nuclear medicine to the inner workings of the sun. It shows us that matter and energy are one.

⁸Native American Indian Medicine People – A Shaman NOT a Healer

Jamie Sams *Sacred Path Cards – The Discovery of Self Through Native Teachings*

A Medicine Person (A Shaman not a Healer) firstly, must be a Counselor. The Counselor must have knowledge of how to assist others in using their personal talents, their personal Medicine and finding a productive life-path. The Counselor must know how to assist a person in their gifts in relation to the Medicine Wheel of the Tribe. The Counselor must be able to impart Traditional solutions through Tribal Law and wisdom.

Second, the Medicine Person must be a Historian of Earth Records. This includes the Creation and the first Four Worlds as well as the prophecy of the future Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Worlds.

Third, the Medicine Person must be an Herbalist/Healer. This includes knowledge of the use of healing herbs and natural healing cures that come from the Earth Mother. The Herbalist also knows the Medicine of the Creature-beings and the manner in which they assist Two-leggeds in finding spiritual or mental cures. This requirement also includes the ability to recognize and diagnose illnesses of the body, mind and spirit.

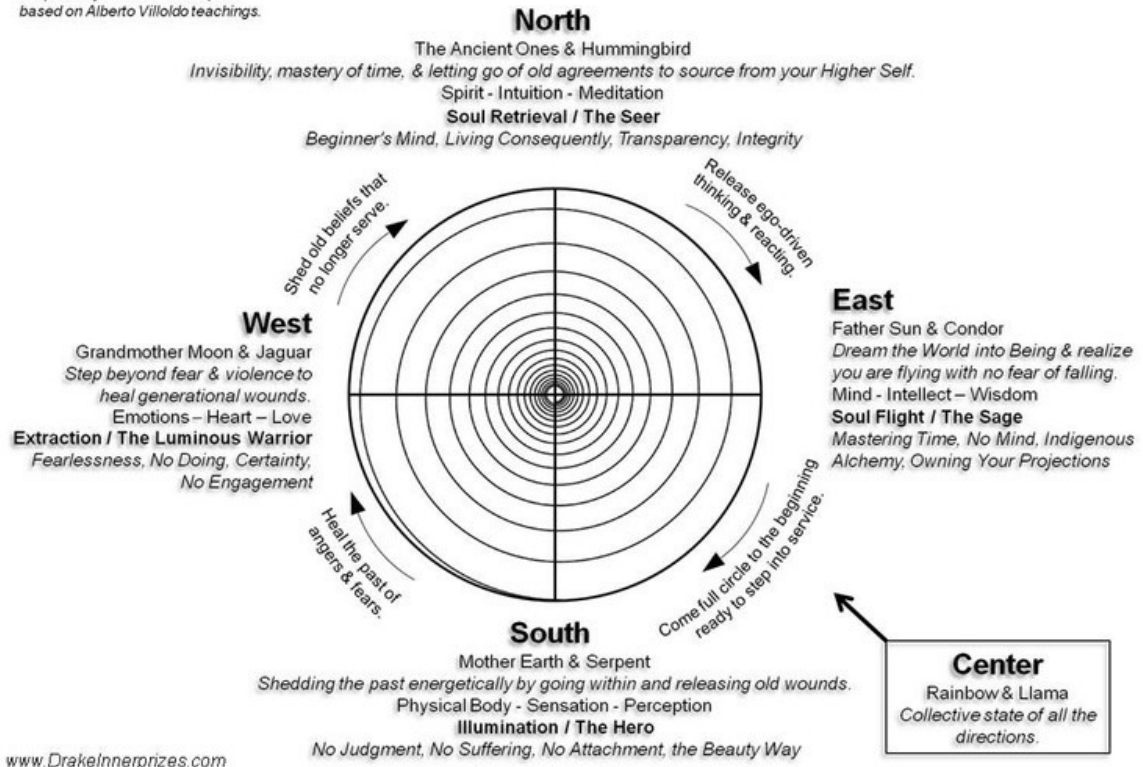
Fourth, the Medicine Person must have a personal talent or ability, the Gift of Prophecy. This means the Medicine Person must be a Seer, a Dreamer, or in some way be able to connect to the Spirit World at will, as the need may arise at any moment. This is not to say that Medicine People will not take all the time they need but rather that their training must ensure that they are able to access the needed information on cue. Clarity and focus are honed to precision until this gift is fully developed within the Seer.

The final requirement of a true Medicine Person is the teaching of all aspects of the wisdom and knowledge to others. It is fairly obvious that such understanding would cover many years and

would grow with time. The expertise of a Medicine Person must be shared for the Medicine to live and assist future generations.”

The Medicine Wheel of Transformation

Graphics by Drake Bear Stephen
based on Alberto Villoldo teachings.



Brain Waves

ALPHA



BETA



THETA



DELTA



1 sec



¹⁰ Anomalous Organization of Random Events by Group Consciousness: Two Exploratory Experiments

Journal of Scientific Exploration, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 143-168, 1996 0892-33 10196

1996 Society for Scientific Exploration

Anomalous Organization of Random Events by Group Consciousness: Two Exploratory Experiments

Consciousness Research Laboratory, Harry Reid Center, University of Nevada,

Las Vegas, NV 89154-4009

Abstract - Two experiments explored the hypothesis that when a group of people focus their attention on a common object of interest, order will arise in the environment. An electronic random number generator was used to detect these changes in order. Events judged to be interesting to the group were called periods of high coherence and were predicted to cause corresponding moments of order in the random samples collected during those events; uninteresting events were predicted to cause chance levels of order in the random samples.

The first experiment was conducted during an all-day Holotropic Breathwork workshop. The predictions were confirmed, with a significant degree of order observed in the random samples during high group coherence periods ($p = 0.002$), and chance order observed during low group coherence periods ($p = 0.43$).

The second experiment was conducted during the live television broadcast of the 67th Annual Academy Awards. Two random binary generators, located 12 miles apart, were used to independently measure order. The predictions were confirmed for about half of the broadcast period, but the terminal cumulative probabilities were not significant. A post-hoc analysis showed that the strength of the correlation between the output of the two random generators was significantly related ($r = 0.94$) to the decline in the television viewing audience.

Introduction

When a person is asked to direct his or her attention towards a random system, with intention to mentally influence the stochastic behavior of that system, there is substantial empirical evidence that the system complies (Radin & Ferrari, 1991; Radin & Nelson, 1989). To align its behavior with the person's intention, the random system is usually obliged to move towards a state of increasing order. We can detect this trend because we are specifically looking for negentropic changes in systems with well-understood statistical characteristics.

There is additional evidence suggesting that intentional effects on random systems are independent of the distance between the person and the random system (Dunne & Jahn, 1992), that effects can be detected in so-called silent or hidden physical targets (Berger, 1988), that "bonded" couples working together produce somewhat larger effects than individuals (Dunne, 1991), and that focused attention, without explicit intention, causes changes in remote living systems (Braud & Schlitz, 1989, 1991; Nelson, 1995; Radin, Taylor & Braud, 1995). A related, but somewhat more controversial claim, is that groups of meditators can cause changes in mass social-behavioral indices (Dillbeck, Banus, Polanzi & Landrith 111, 1988; Gelderloos, Frid, Goddard, Xue & Lliger, 1988).

As a whole, the cumulative evidence for direct mind-matter interaction (MMI) suggests that the mainstream view of consciousness (an epiphenomenal aspect of brain functioning, or as Francis Crick (1994) tersely put it, "nothing but a pack of neurons") is at best incomplete, and at worst it completely overlooks one or more fundamental properties of consciousness.

Properties of Consciousness

Whatever else consciousness may be, let us propose that it has the following properties, which are derived from a combination of Western and Eastern-oriented philosophies (e.g., Forman, 1994):

Consciousness extends beyond the individual and has field-like properties.

Consciousness is negentropic, that is, it injects *order* into systems in proportion to the "strength" of consciousness present. This is a refinement of Schrodinger's observation about one of the remarkable properties of life, namely an "organism's astonishing gift of concentrating a 'stream of order' on itself and thus escaping the decay into atomic chaos - of 'drinking orderliness' from a suitable environment (1967, p. 77).

Strength of consciousness in an individual fluctuates from moment to moment, and is modulated by something like concentration or focus of attention. Some states of consciousness have higher focus than others. Compared to peak states, mystical states, and other non-ordinary states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), we postulate that ordinary awareness has a fairly low focus of attention.

A group of individuals can be said to have "group consciousness." As in an individual, group consciousness strengthens when the group's concentration or attention is focused on a common object, creating coherence among the group. If the group's attention is scattered, then group coherence is also scattered and any negentropic effects attributed to the group would be reduced.

In the limiting case, when individuals in the group are all attending to different things, then the group consciousness or coherence strength is effectively zero, producing what amounts to background noise. We assume that maximum degree of group coherence is a function of the total number of individuals present in the group, the strength of their common focus of attention, and other variables including psychological, physiological and environmental factors.

Everything responds to a consciousness field by becoming more ordered. The stronger or more coherent the consciousness field, the more the order is evident. Inanimate objects (like rocks) will respond to order induced by consciousness as well as animate ones (like people, or the toss of dice), but it is only in the more labile systems that we have the tools to readily detect changes in order.

Following these postulates, we would predict that the stochastic behavior of a random physical system will respond to fluctuations in group consciousness, or coherence, by showing similar fluctuations in statistical order. Note that the random system does not need to be in close proximity to the group, nor does the group even need to be aware that a random system is being monitored. All that matters is that the sequence of random events are *linked in time* with the sequence of attentional events in the group.

This postulate overcomes a problem in interpreting what happens in a MMI experiment involving a random number generator (RNG) or any other physical target. The problem may be stated as: How does a physical system targeted by an observer "know" that the observer is focusing his or her attention on it?

In the typical experiment where an RNG and the observer are in close proximity, and the observer is presented with real-time feedback about his or her performance (e.g., Jahn & Dunne, 1987), this question usually does not arise because the observer-target link is obvious.

However, the simple assumption that a target responds because an observer is allowed to witness its behavior, which is central to some quantum mechanical models of MMI (e.g., Jahn & Dunne, 1987), breaks down because of empirical evidence suggesting that hidden, unobserved physical

targets also respond to mental intention, and that remotely located targets respond as well as targets near the participant, even without feedback.

TOWS: A Model of Mind-Matter Interaction

One solution to the puzzle presented by the existence of MMI in hidden and remote targets is suggested by a common element underlying all MMI studies:

Consciousness, specifically the act of attention, is focused on *an object*, not necessarily the explicit target object, when MMI occurs. This observation, plus the six postulates listed above, leads to a preposterous model of *psi* that we call the "Theory Of the Whole Shebang" or **TOWS**. In this model, mind and matter are the same, that is, *mind* = *matter*. Note that this is not exactly the same as philosophical Identity theory (Churchland, 1984), in which the mind is equal to matter in the sense that matter *gives rise* to the mind, or that mind is an epiphenomenon of matter. Instead, in TOWS mind and matter are equivalent and are bi-directionally causal (as in Sperry, 1987).

That is, the *matter* side of the equation is what the cognitive neurosciences and psychopharmacology typically focus on, and what is considered by most neuroscientists to underlie the "explanation" of consciousness (e.g., Crick, 1994; Dennett, 1991). The arrow of causation for them goes in one direction, from matter to mind. The *mind* side of the equation is what psychologists and the cognitive sciences typically study. For them the arrow of causation (if the question arises at all) goes from mind to matter. **MMI** experiments study the rest of the equation, that is, the equals sign.

One of the implications of this equals sign, given that a fundamental property of matter is that it persists across time, is that some aspect of mind (specifically some form of attention) must also

persist across time, for according to our postulate, without one the other would not exist. Thus, although the mind equals matter equation appears to be static, TOWS is actually about on-going *processes*.

Returning to the case of an individual who is actively trying to change the behavior of an RNG

using mental intention, TOWS says that we see the MMI effect not because the RNG is *the* object of focus (the usual assumption), but because (a) the individual had *an* object of focus (any would do), (b) the act of focusing consciousness created order which spread out everywhere, and affected everything, (c) the experimenters (E) were able to link the RNG's behaviour in time *with the specific moments* of the individual's focus, operationally via the experimental design protocol, and (d) E knew how order would be expressed in the RNG, and then measured it.

In the case of hidden and remote RNGs, TOWS offers the same prediction:

We see **MMI** effects because an individual has a specific object of focus, *and* we know when the moments of focus occur, *and* we know how order manifests in an RNG. We see order even in hidden and remote RNGs because TOWS says that *any* RNG, *anywhere*, would reveal anomalous order in time-correspondance with moments that consciousness, located anywhere, was focused and coherent. This order would not be casually noticed in measuring instruments world-wide for several reasons, including (a) no one is looking for it, (b) the magnitude of the "imposed order" depends on the degree of consciousness coherence, which is usually quite small, (c) the time-sequence of fluctuations in consciousness coherence must be known to compare against fluctuations in instrument readings, and (d) anyone lucky enough to detect anomalous order would probably

interpret it as a random stochastic fluctuation, because there was no obvious local "cause" for the order.

In this article, we describe the results of two experiments exploring the TOWS predictions.

Experiment 1: Altered States Workshop

Holotropic Breathwork™

Holotropic Breathwork is an approach to self-exploration and healing that was developed by psychiatrist Stanislav Grof (1988). Grof used the word "holotropic" to mean aiming for totality or moving towards wholeness. The technique arose out of Grof's early experimentation with LSD as an adjunct to psychotherapy. His study of LSD-facilitated altered states of consciousness led him to a view of the psyche which is radically different from the standard Western view but more compatible with traditional shamanic and mystical perspectives (Harner, 1980).

Grof developed Holotropic Breathwork partially because federal law in the United States in the 1960s severely restricted the legitimate psychotherapeutic use of LSD, and partially because he sought a method of inducing profound inner experiences without the side-effects and addictive dangers of psychoactive drugs. The technique combines insights from modern research on altered states of consciousness, depth psychology, pranayama breathing, and various spiritual practices. The approach mobilizes the innate healing potential of the psyche by invoking non-ordinary states of consciousness.

During a Breathwork session, participants often experience strong emotions and physical tensions which build up to spontaneous release and resolution.

The internal experiences have many levels of meaning, including biographical, perinatal, archetypal, and transpersonal. Some of the more dramatic states of consciousness reported include transcendence of space and time, and experiential exploration of alternative realities, such as the classical shamanic worlds (Grof, 1988). The Breathwork technique was selected for this experiment because of its reputation for inducing powerful altered states of consciousness, and for the large energetic effects that are sometimes associated with these altered states.

Method

The Holotropic Breathwork session lasted from 9 AM to 6 PM, Saturday, March 4, 1995, in Las Vegas, NV (USA). Twelve people were present: the first author (DR), two workshop facilitators (one of whom was the third author [MC]), and nine participants. During the morning introduction, DR mentioned that in addition to the normal workshop activities, an experiment would be conducted to see whether shifts in group consciousness might be detected by an electronic device. It was explained that the device produced random noise, and we were postulating that when group consciousness shifted from ordinary to non-ordinary states that those shifts might affect the random noise. Nothing more was mentioned about the experiment.

During the morning session, five participants engaged in Holotropic Breathwork while the four others sat with them. The four "sitters" switched with the "breathers" during the afternoon session. The facilitators and first author watched over everyone during the breathing session and provided guidance as needed.

Data Collection

A computer-controlled, truly random RNG was programmed to generate samples of 400 random bits every six seconds over the entire 9-hour period, resulting in just over 5,500 samples. This RNG, powered by the controlling computer, consists of two independent Zener diode-based noise sources. The two analog outputs of the diodes are converted into digital form, transformed into two independent random bit streams, combined into a single binary sequence, then transmitted to the computer through the serial port in the form of random bytes.

The raw output of each RNG sample was the sum of "1" bits in the group of 400. This number was transformed into a standard normal deviate using the formula $z = (X - 200)/10$, where X was the raw output, 200 was the expected mean, and 10 was the expected standard deviation. Every six seconds, the computer monitor displayed the sample number, the z score for that sample, and a timestamp. The same output was continuously stored to the hard disk.

To conserve power, the computer display was instructed to automatically go blank if the keyboard had not been used in the prior three minutes. Data collection continued automatically for the duration of the experiment with no further interventions by the experimenters. The notebook computer and RNG were placed in an unobtrusive spot on a table in the workshop room. During the session, the first author noted in a logbook whenever an event occurred, to the nearest minute, along with the content of that event. An event was defined as a clear change in the group's activity. As it occurred, each event was assessed as being of high group coherence, such as when the group engaged in meditation, or low group coherence, such as when the group took a lunch break. After the workshop, the third author (one of the facilitators for the workshop) was asked to independently rate the group's coherence for each of the noted events. Her ratings were the same as the first author's.

Approximately every 45 minutes throughout the workshop, the first author glanced at the computer monitor to make sure that data was still being collected properly. For the vast majority of time, the computer just continued to collect data on its own, without observation. After the workshop, an identical data collection period, again lasting 9 hours, was run using the same equipment, alone in a room, unobserved. This data was used as a matching random control sequence.

Analyses

To analyze the results, two methods were planned in advance. In each case, the measure of order induced in the RNG was the variance of a sequence of z scores (z as described above), formed as $V = \sum z^2$, where V is chi-squared distributed with the same number of degrees of freedom as the number of z scores used in the sum.

There are two simple ways that order might manifest in a random sequence.

Recall that in this experiment, a single sample is a sequence of 400 random bits, and a single statistic (a z score) is used to summarize the statistical order in this sample sequence. In the first case, order might affect the random bit stream by producing say, too many 1s, resulting in a large deviation from the mean expected number of 1's. This deviation would result in a large z score, and if the same "ordering" trend continued over a series of 400-bit samples, the resulting variance V for that series of samples would be larger than expected by chance. A large V score here means "too much order" for a given collection of samples, or equivalently, unexpectedly high order for a given segment of time.

In the second case, the random bit stream might be affected so as to produce a near-identical number of 1s as 0s, possibly by alternating 1s and 0s. This would result in z scores near zero, and therefore V for this sequence of samples would be smaller than expected by chance. Thus, a too-small V score also means "too much order" for a given collection of samples.

Both cases require no specific knowledge about the random system to cause them to become ordered, but they do require changing the distribution of bits from truly random into less random. Throughout these studies, we assumed that order would manifest by affecting the random bit stream according to the first scenario, i.e., the RNG was influenced to produce V scores that were too large, thus the probabilities used were one-tailed.

Predictions

Method 1: Determine the overall variance of the entire set of 5,500 samples for the experimental (E) and the control (C) datasets.

Prediction 1: Variance of the E dataset [hereafter, $V(E)$] will be significantly greater than chance expectation; $V(C)$ will be in accordance with chance expectation.

Method 2: Determine $V(E)$ for each event during the workshop. Because the C dataset is the same length as E, determine a matching $V(C)$ for each event.

Prediction 2: Combined $V(E)$ variances during events judged to have high group focus or coherence will be significantly greater than chance expectation; combined $V(E)$ variances during events with low group focus will be in accordance with chance. - Time-matched "pseudoevents" determined from the C dataset will be in accordance with chance, regardless of the type of event.

Results

Result 1. Results of the first analysis, shown in Table 1, confirm the predictions.

Overall, $V(E)$ is non-chance and $V(C)$ is in accordance with chance.

TABLE 1

	Experiment	Control
V	5843.15	5425.08
N	5528	5528
z	2.960	-0.979
p	0.002	0.836

Overall results of variance tests for experimental (E) and control (C) data, where V is the variance score, N is the number of samples and degrees of freedom, z is a z -score equivalent for V (Guilford & Fruchter, 1973, p. 517), and p is the one-tailed probability of z .

Result 2. Table 2 summarizes the predictions and the results for high and low group coherence in the experimental and control datasets. The predictions were confirmed.

TABLE 2

Predictions for Group Events Rated High vs. Low Coherent	V	N	z	p (one-tail)
$V(E)_{\text{high coherence}} > \text{chance}$	4485.19 ^l	4195	3.12	0.0009
$V(E)_{\text{low coherence}} = \text{chance}$	1373.43	1333	0.79	0.215
$V(C)_{\text{high coherence}} = \text{chance}$	4167.09	4195	-0.30	0.618
$V(C)_{\text{low coherence}} = \text{chance}$	1261.08	1333	-1.40	0.919

Summary and results for Prediction 2.

Table 3 lists the noted events in detail, the experimenters' assessment of group coherence for each event, and the V score for both E and C datasets.

TABLE 3

Start of event	End of event	Duration (minutes)	$V(E)$ $V(C)$	N samples	Coherence Assignment
start session, people entering	begin personal introductions	14.5	155.84 130.94	145	Low
start brief introductions	end introductions	6.1	68.35 39.23	61	Low
discuss Breathwork	begin mediation period	24.8	275.93 235.91	248	High
begin meditation period	bell rings to end meditation	3.0	32.38 22.85	30	High
bell rings to end meditation	begin stretch break	2.0	32.34 14.42	20	High
begin stretch break	back in room, settling down	18.8	191.68 198.56	188	Low
back in room, settling down	lights out, prepare for session	6.1	48.56 60.09	61	Low
lights out	begin relaxation instructions	2.1	17.18 18.59	21	Low
begin relaxation instructions	session begins	4.1	44.34 38.67	41	High
first session begins	session ends	150.1	1574.42 1569.21	1501	High
first session ends, begin lunch	lunch break ends	71.6	753.53 672.46	716	Low
lunch over, start second session	session ends	144.1	1517.31 1405.81	1441	High
second session wind-down	group takes a break	27.0	293.88 286.35	270	High
end of break	reconvene group	7.0	72.87 63.58	70	Low
discuss experiences	final remarks	64.4	717.59 593.87	644	High
final remarks	end data collection	7.1	65.42 77.63	71	Low

List of events in chronological order, duration, $V(E)$, $V(C)$, and assessed degree of group coherence.

Discussion: Experiment 1

This experiment confirmed the TOWS prediction that a group engaged in similar-focus, coherent work introduces anomalous order into the environment. During periods in which the group was engaged in high coherence tasks, such as when using the Holotropic Breathwork technique, the RNG output showed an anomalous degree of order. During periods in which the group was engaged in low coherence tasks, such as a lunch break, the RNG output behaved in accordance with chance. The 9-hour control sequence, produced using the same RNG equipment, analyzed using pseudo-events that mimicked events of the same length as those recorded during the workshop, showed that the RNG behaved according to chance expectation throughout the entire control sequence.

There were three **TOWS** predictions that were not tested in this first study:

We did not test whether the ordering effect was distance-independent,

We did not test whether the ordering effect existed everywhere, simultaneously,

and

We did not test whether the effect was independent of the experimenters' expectations.

The next experiment was conducted to test the first two predictions listed above.

Experiment 2: Academy Awards Broadcast

Method

Participants. Participants in this experiment were the estimated 1 billion people in 120 countries who viewed the live television broadcast of the 67th annual Academy Awards on March 27, 1995. To assess the fluctuations in group coherence during this broadcast, the experimenters (the first two authors) independently kept minute-by-minute logs of events shown on the broadcast, and both experimenters judged whether they thought each noted event was interesting and would attract the attention of the viewing audience, or uninteresting and likely to bore the audience. We called the interesting, high focus, high attention segments "high coherence," and the uninteresting, low focus, boring segments "low coherence."

Data Collection. Two truly random number generators (RNGS) were used as the physical targets. One was located in the first author's home as he watched the television broadcast (call this RNG₁), and the other was alone in one of the laboratory suites of the Consciousness Research Laboratory at the University of Nevada (call this RNG₂). Both RNGs were programmed to produce a continuous 6-hour sequence of truly random bits, generated in samples of 400 bits, once every six seconds. This resulted in two independent random sequences of 3,600 samples each. The first and second authors simultaneously started both RNGs about two hours before the 3.5 hour television broadcast, and both RNGs continued to collect data continuously up to about a half-hour after the broadcast ended.

As in the first experiment, the raw output of each RNG sample was the sum of "1" bits in the group of 400 random bits. And as before, this number was transformed into a standard normal deviate or z score. The controlling computers displayed the sample number, z score, and a timestamp for each sample, and the same outputs were continuously stored to hard disks. No feedback about the behavior of the RNGs was provided to the experimenters during the entire data collection period. Immediately after the 6 hour experimental dataset was recorded, another 6-hour sequence was run as a control using RNG. The RNG/computer system was programmed to operate alone and unobserved in the same place it was located during the broadcast.

Hypothesis 1. The main hypothesis was that the variances of the two experimental random data streams would be significantly deviant during those events during the broadcast judged as high coherence, and in accordance with chance during events judged as low coherence events. Moreover, we expected that a random control sequence [C], also 6 hours in length, would be uniformly in accordance with chance when matched in time with both pseudo-high coherence and pseudo-low coherence events of the same length as recorded during the actual broadcast.

The main statistic was the variance of a sequence of z scores produced by each RNG, V as described previously. We use the notation V , for the variance produced by RNG. Thus,

Prediction 1. V , and V , for broadcast events judged as high coherence would be significantly deviant from chance expectation, while V , and V_b for broadcast events judged as low coherence would be in accordance with chance. V , for pseudo-events matched in time to the length of the original high and low coherence events would be in accordance with chance.

Hypothesis 2. The second hypothesis was that the statistical behavior of the two independent RNGs would be affected in the same way, at the same time, due to the TOWS prediction that order is simultaneously created everywhere, with the degree of order fluctuating in strength according to the focus of attention of the viewing audience. Thus,

Prediction 2. The correlation between time-matched RNG outputs, using V , and V_b , would be significantly positive. Time-matched "pseudo-events" between V , and V ., and V_b and V ., would produce chance correlations.

Results

Assignment of Coherence. Table 4 lists the events recorded by the experimenters during the broadcast and the accompanying subjective assignments of high and low audience coherence. Table 4 shows that the second author noted

TABLE 4

Time (PST)	Broadcast Event	JMR rating	DIR rating	Coherence Segment #
6:02	Opening scene	High	Low	Low 1
6:04	Director of Motion Picture Academy speaks	Low	Low	
6:08	Scenes of films	High	Low	
6:12	Singing, opening number	Low	Low	High 1
	Introduction of David Letterman	High	High	
	Boystown joke	Low	High	
	Schwarzenegger joke	High	High	
	Clip of hailing cabs	Low	High	
	Talking with cab drivers	High	High	
	Taxi Jokes	Low	High	
6:23	Announce supporting actress	High	Low	Low 2
	Thanking people	Low	Low	
6:34	Letterman talking	High	High	High 2
6:35	Keanu presents first nominated film	High	High	
6:41	Renee Russo introduces 1st song	Low	High	Low 3
	Randy Newman singing	Low	Low	
	Commercial	Low	Low	
6:45	Return to program	Low	Low	
	Clips of comedians in films	High	Low	
	Presents make-up award	Low	Low	
6:51	Letterman unrolls rug with Hanks	High	High	High 3
	Sound effects presentation	Low	High	
	Acceptance speeches	Low	Low	
6:55	Steve Martin	High	High	High 4
	Winner's thank you's	Low	High	
6:58	Commercials	Low	Low	Low 5
	Return to program	High	Low	
	Letterman announces Anna Pacquin	High	High	
7:03	Thank you's	Low	High	High 5
	Matt Dillon nominated song	Low	Low	
7:08	Oprah Winfrey	High	High	Low 6
	Quincy Jones clips	Low	High	
	Quincy Jones talking	High	High	
7:11	Quincy Jones plea for NEA funding	Low	High	
	Commercials	Low	Low	
	Paul Newman	High	Low	
7:18	Winner: Legends of the Fall	Low	Low	Low 7
	Tim Allen	High	Low	
7:22	Oscar presented to British actor	Low	Low	
	Bugs Bunny & Daffy Duck	High	High	
7:33	Oscar to Bob's Birthday	Low	Low	High 7
	Gregory Peck presenting	High	High	
7:39	Letterman announcing Saradon & Robbins	Low	High	High 8
	List of nominees	Low	Low	
	Steven Segal presenting	Low	High	
7:45	Oscar to Forrest Gump	Low	Low	Low 9
	Acceptance speech	Low	Low	
7:48	Letterman	High	High	High 10
7:54	Start singing "Circle of Life"	Low	High	
8:00	Commercial	Low	Low	Low 11
8:09	Letterman's Janet Reno joke	High	Low	
	Ellen Barkin presents nominees for Sound	Low	Low	

TABLE 4 (continued)

Time (PST)	Broadcast Event	JMR rating	DIR rating	Coherence Segment #
8:13	Nicholson presents honorary Oscar	Low	Low	
	Film Clips	Low	High	High 11
8:18	Commercial	Low	Low	Low 12
8:21	Letterman	High	High	High 12
	Comedy clips	High	High	
8:23	Hugh Grant and Andie McDowell	Low	Low	Low 13
8:31	Letterman	High	Low	
8:36	Commercial	Low	Low	
8:40	Sylvester Stallone presents	High	Low	
8:43	Annette Benning	High	High	High 13
	winner Elton John	High	Low	Low 14
8:46	Screen writing	High	Low	
	Winner Pulp Fiction	High	High	High 14
8:55	Commercial	High	Low	Low 15
8:57	Letterman	High	High	High 15
	Irving Thalberg award	Low	High	
	Clint Eastwood clips	High	High	
9:00	Clint Eastwood accepts	High	High	
9:04	Tom Hanks presents best actress	High	High	
	Acceptance	Low	Low	Low 16
9:13	Denzel Washington	Low	Low	
	Shawshank Redemption	Low	High	High 16
9:15	Holly Hunter	High	High	
9:21	Steven Spielberg	High	High	
	Winner Zimeckis	Low	High	
9:25	Commercials	Low	Low	Low 17
	DeNiro and Pacino	High	High	High 17
	Winner Forrest Gump	High	High	
	Sign off			

Time, events, subjective assessments, and joint assessments (see text).

subjective changes in the broadcast somewhat more frequently than the first author.

The two subjective assignments of audience coherence were combined into a single assignment in the following way: We assumed that because the broadcast had a massive audience, there would be some statistical inertia in the group's attention and interest levels. That is, we assumed that from the perspective of an "average audience," periods of high entertainment, attention, and focus would persist through brief moments of lesser interest. For example, say for ten full minutes the program held the audience's interest. If at this point the interest level dropped off for 30 seconds or so, the audience as a statistical entity would probably maintain its general interest, hoping for something more interesting to happen. Thus, for each event e and corresponding subjective coherence assignments a_1 and a_2 as noted by the two experimenters (assignments coded as 1 for high and 0 for low), we created a single average coherence value consisting of the average of three values: a_1 and a_2 , for event e plus the previous average assignment for event $e - 1$.

This simple method smoothed out rapid changes in estimated audience coherence. The resulting mean coherence for each event was then transformed into a joint coherence assignment by calling it high coherence if the coded mean for that event was greater than 0.5, and calling it low coherence if the coded mean for that event was less than or equal to 0.5. Table 5 illustrates how the experimenters' original assignments of coherence were coded into a new, inertial-smoothed joint estimate of audience coherence.

TABLE 5

JMR Coherence	DIR Coherence	JMR code	DIR code	Mean Coherence	New Joint Estimate
High	Low	1	0	0.50	0
Low	Low	0	0	0.17	0
High	Low	1	0	0.39	0
Low	Low	0	0	0.13	0
High	High	1	1	0.71	1
Low	High	0	1	0.57	1
High	High	1	1	0.86	1
Low	High	0	1	0.62	1

Translation of original audience coherence estimates into smoothed estimates. The first mean coherence estimate, shown in the first line as 0.50, is the average of JMR's assessment of High coherence (1) and DIR's assessment of Low coherence (0). This 0.50 average is coded into 0 to form the combined estimate of Low coherence for the first event. The next estimate is the average of the first event's estimate of 0.50, plus JMR's assignment of the second event and DIR's assignment of the second event. This results in 0.17, which is coded into 0.

Agreement between the two experimenters' original audience coherence assignments ($N = 84$ events) resulted in a correlation of $r = 0.29$, $p = 0.004$, indicating a fair degree of agreement between the two authors' subjective feelings about the broadcast. Correlation between the new, inertial-smoothed joint estimates of audience coherence and the original assignments resulted in $r = 0.45$ for the second author and for $r = 0.84$ for the first author. Of the 84 events, there were seven cases where the joint subjective assignments differed from the first author's assignments. Because of the close agreement between the first author's original assessments and the new joint assignments, we decided for the sake of simplicity to use the first author's assignment of events and audience

coherence in the primary analyses." This resulted in a total of 17 periods of alternating low and high coherence periods, with the sample lengths of the various periods shown in Table 6.

Result 1. Figure 1 shows three curves: (1) The cumulative probability of the variance V for RNG, for the entire sequence of 3,600 samples, (2) the cumulative probability of V for periods assigned as High audience coherence, and (3) the cumulative probability of V for periods assigned as Low audience coherence. The High/Low curves begin at the start of the television broadcast, about

TABLE 6

Low Coherence Sample Length	High Coherence Sample Length
119	110
120	30
130	30
10	49
30	50
30	70
150	30
30	30
30	30
9	110
140	40
30	20
199	30
30	60
20	110
60	110
30	60

Length of events, in samples of 6 seconds each. Thus 120 samples equals 12 minutes. Note that the actual sequence of events alternated between assignments of low and high coherence, beginning first with a low coherence event (119 samples), then a high coherence event (110 samples), and so on until the last high coherence event (60 samples). The cumulative time sequence was 2,136 samples, or about 3 hours, 33 minutes.

two hours after the beginning of the data recording (sample 1,048), and stop at the end of the broadcast (sample 3,184). This figure shows that the cumulative variance was more deviant (i.e., resulted in a lower probability) during the periods of high audience coherence compared to low audience coherence, although the terminal probability of the high coherence segments does rise above the $p < 0.05$ level just before the end of the broadcast.

The High/Low curves in Figure 1 display gaps because any given period of time during the broadcast was exclusively either assigned as High or as Low audience coherence. Thus, although the High/Low curves appear to overlap at times, this is an illusion caused by the limited resolution of the markers on the graph.

Figure 2 shows the same information as in Figure 1 for the output of RNG. This graph shows that overall the cumulative variance was more deviant during high coherence segments compared to the low coherence segments, at least up to about sample 2,700, when the probability of the variance for the high coherence segments drifted well beyond the $p < 0.05$ level.

Figures 3 and 4 summarize the same information shown in Figures 1 and 2, showing only the cumulative probabilities of the RNG variances for periods of High and Low audience coherence. The 17 events in these figures relate to the 17 High audience coherence and 17 Low audience coherence segments listed in Table 4. Figure 5 shows the cumulative probabilities of the control sequence variances for 17 pseudo-high and pseudo-low coherence periods.

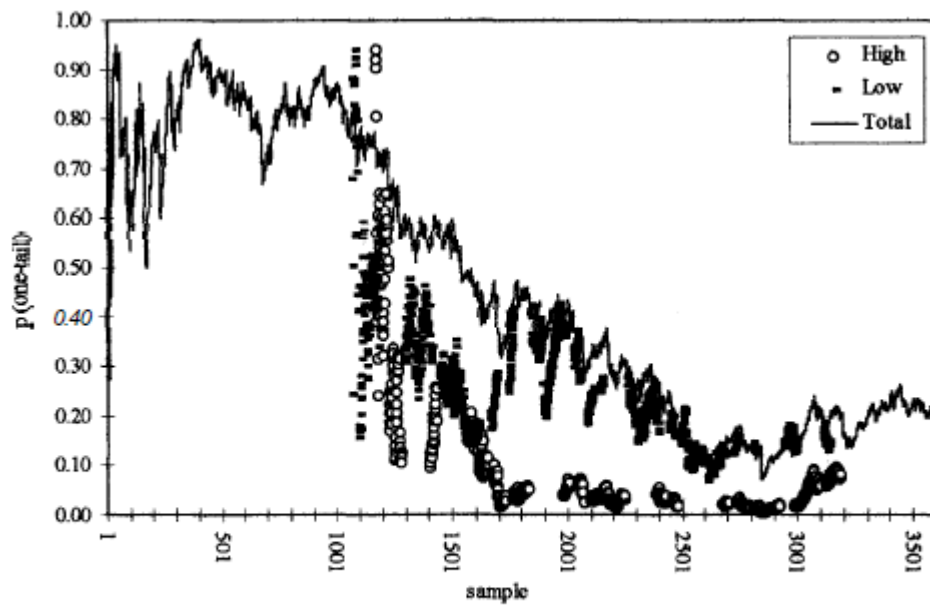


Fig. 1. Cumulative probability of variance in RNG, for complete dataset and for segments of subjectively assigned high and low audience coherence during the television broadcast. The cumulative probability for the high and low events begins to cumulate at sample 1,048.

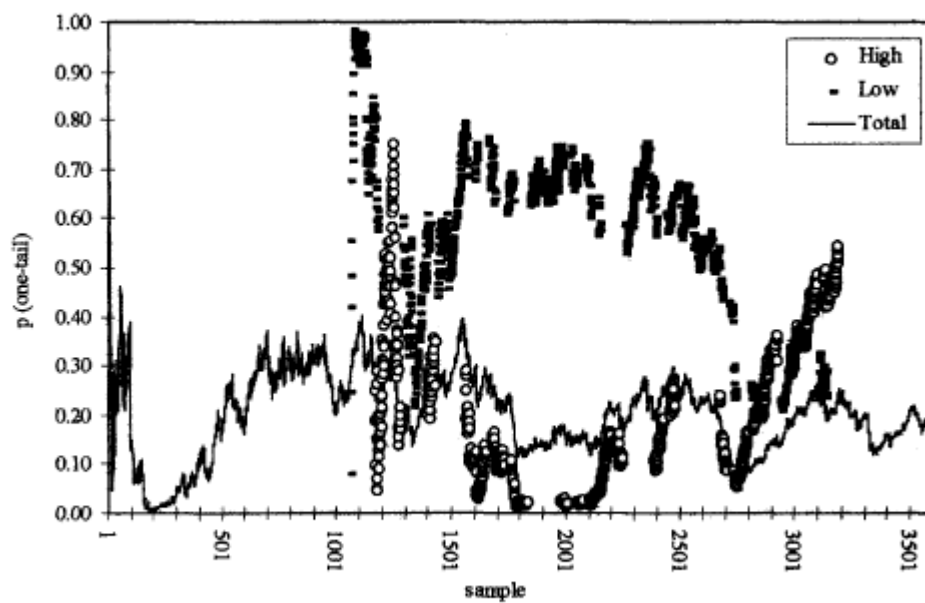


Fig. 2. Cumulative probability of variance in RNG, for complete dataset and for segments of subjectively assigned high and low audience coherence during the television broadcast.

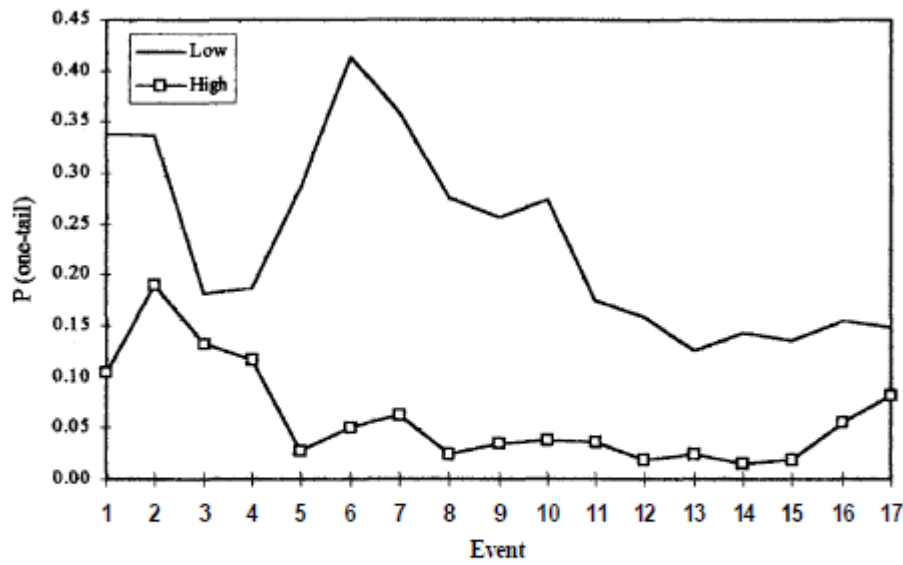


Fig. 3. Cumulative probability for high and low coherence events in RNG, .

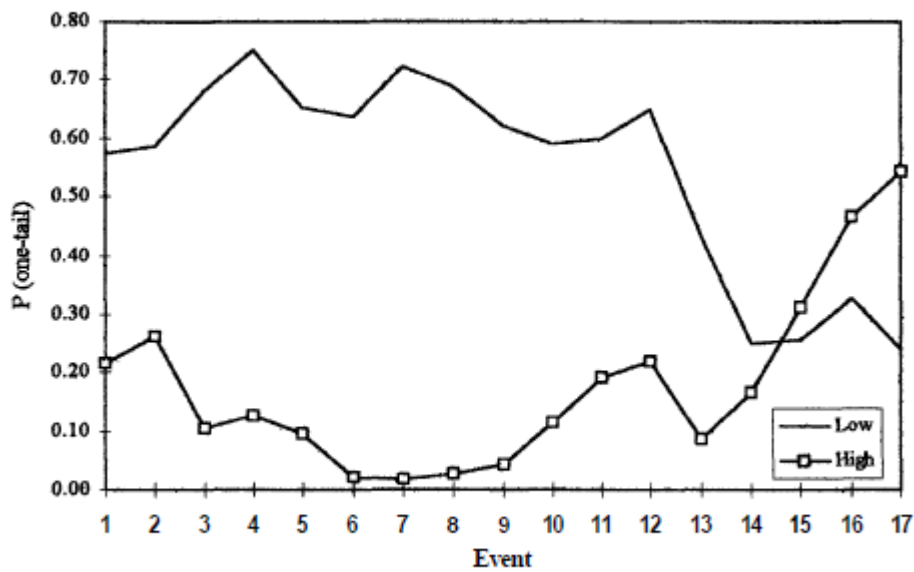


Fig. 4. Cumulative probability for high and low coherence events in RNG,.

The above analyses were performed using the subjective assignments of the first author. To see whether the same results would obtain using the joint assignments developed from both authors'

subjective assessments, the same analyses were conducted again. The joint assignments resulted in a total of 13 high and 13 low coherence periods, and the overall result (combining the cumulative probabilities from both RNG, and RNG,) is shown in Figure 6.

Analysis of control data showed results that were essentially as those seen in Figure 5. Because the joint assignment analysis was virtually indistinguishable from that using the first author's assignments, the next analysis was conducted using the latter assignments to increase the number of datapoints in the correlation.

Result 2. Prediction 2 was that the correlation between V_t and V_b during time-matched events would be significantly positive, while time-matched "pseudo-events" between V_t and V_c , and V_b and V_c , would be at chance levels. To create this correlation, a chi-square variance measure was formed for each of the 17 low and high coherence events, these measures were transformed into standard normal deviate z scores, then a weighted z score was formed for each event $asw = z N$, where N was the number of samples.

Weighted z scores were used to reflect the fact that the events were of different time lengths. The correlation was calculated between the 34 RNG, weighted z scores versus the 34 time-matched RNG, weighted z scores. The null hypothesis predicts a correlation of zero. Figure 7 shows the resulting correlation, $r = 0.28$, $t = 1.65$, $df = 32$, $p = 0.05$ (one-tail). The equivalent correlations between the matching control sequence RNG, and RNG were $r_c = -0.19$, $p = 0.13$, and between RNG, vs. RNG,, $r_c = -0.09$, $p = 0.32$. Thus, as predicted, there was a significant correlation between the two independent RNGs running during the television broadcast, and no significant correlations between the matching control RNG sequence and either of the two experimental RNG outputs.

Another way to examine the correlation between the two RNGs is to calculate the cumulative probability of the correlation between RNG, and RNG, over the course of the broadcast. This correlation is formed between all individual samples in RNG, and RNG, per event (e.g., there were 119 samples in the first event, which was Low coherence, as shown in Table 6), and then after a separate correlation is formed for each event, a cumulative correlation is calculated along with its corresponding probability. Figure 8 shows the result, which suggests that the cross-RNG correlation during the high coherence periods was significant up to about event 10, and then the correlation broke down. The correlation during the low coherence periods was not significant at any point.

Discussion: Experiment 2

Both predictions were confirmed for approximately the first half of the television broadcast, partially supporting the **TOWS** model proposal that moments

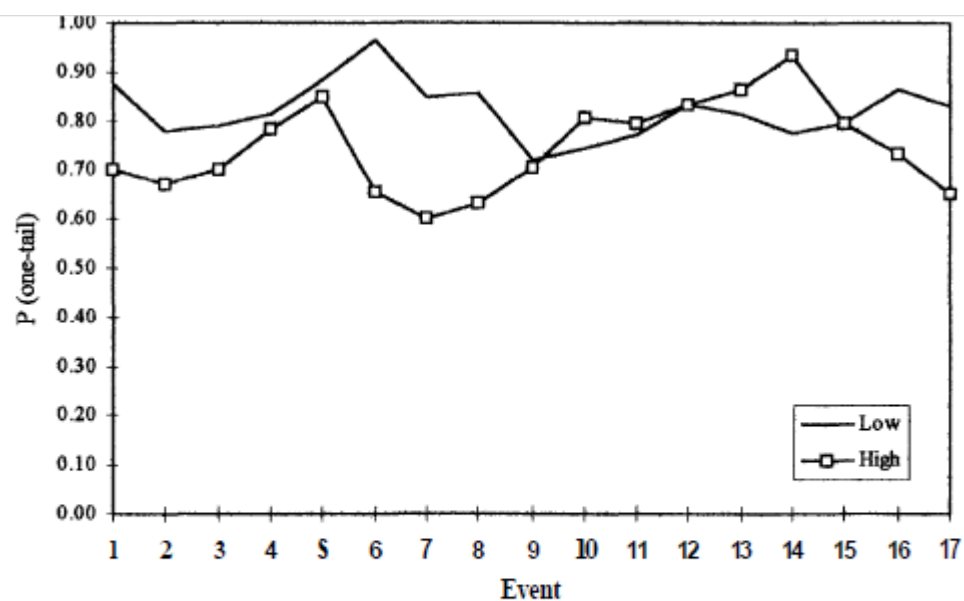


Fig. 5. Cumulative probability for pseudo-high and pseudo-low coherence events in the control RNG.

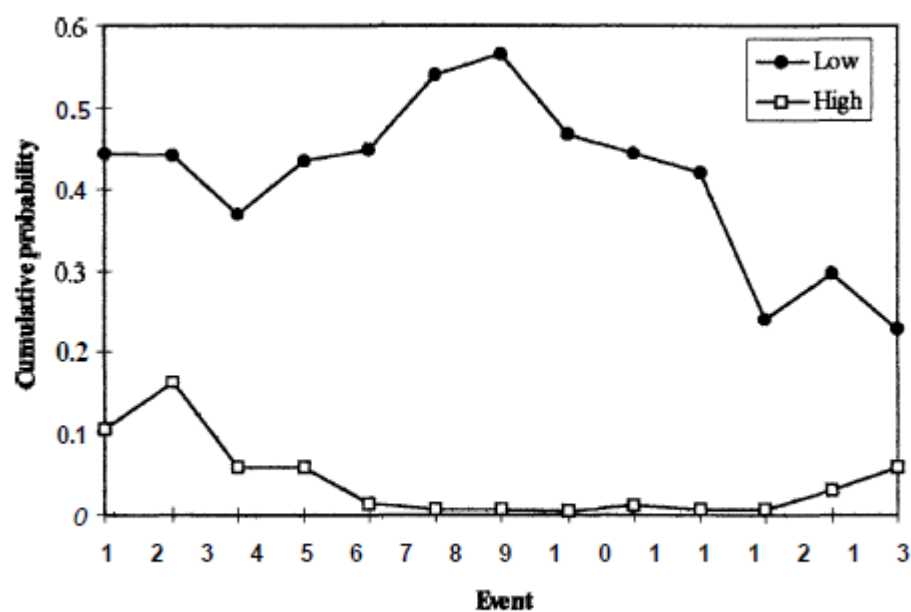


Fig. 6. Cumulative probability for the 13 joint subjective assessment events, for both RNGs combined.

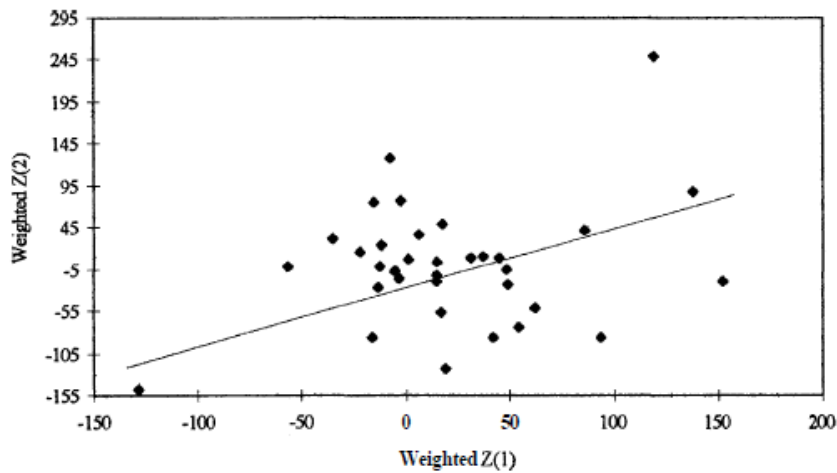


Fig. 7. Correlation between weighted z scores in RNG_a and RNG_b .

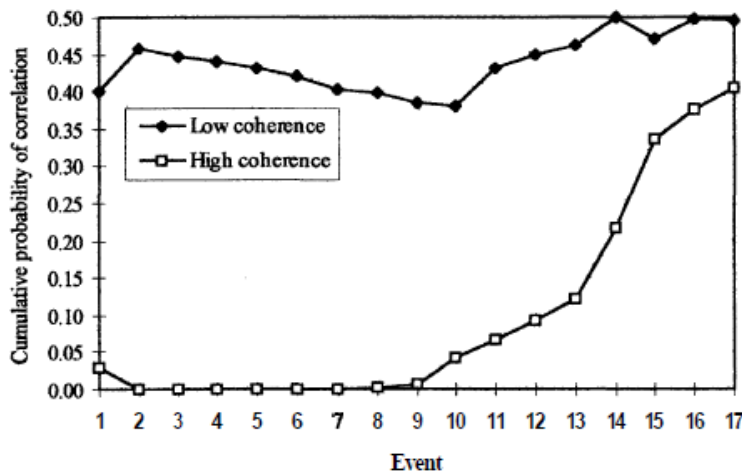


Fig. 8. Cumulative probability of correlation between RNG_a and RNG_b for Low and High coherence periods. The smallest cumulative probability is $p = 0.0001$ at event 4.

of *coherent attention* among one billion people introduced an anomalous degree of *order* into the environment. This order was detected by two independent RNGs, operating autonomously, without feedback, and located 12 miles apart. Comparison with a matched-length control sequence showed no tendency for the RNG variances to drift from chance or to exhibit unexpected cross-correlations.

When we presented the results of this experiment at a conference,¹² we speculated that the declining correlation between the two RNGs during the high coherence periods (shown in Figure 8 as a rise in cumulative probability), and the drift towards chance variances in the individual RNGs (as shown in Figures 3 and 4), might have been due to the fact that the television audience for the Academy Awards declined over the course of the broadcast.

After presenting this speculation, someone in the conference audience suggested that we could test the "declining number of people" postulate by obtaining the Nielsen TV ratings for the Academy Awards broadcast (Beville, 1985). We thought this was a good idea, because the **TOWS** model postulates that the strength of the ordering effect is a function of both the degree of common focus in a group *and* the number of people in the group (among other variables).

Therefore, we contacted ABC Research in New York City and obtained the half-hourly Nielsen ratings for the broadcast. To test the possible effect of the changing audience size during the broadcast vs. the degree of order simultaneously detected by both RNGs, we calculated two correlations: The first was between the broadcast ratings per half-hour vs. the natural log of the cumulative probability of the cross-RNG correlations during high audience coherence. The second was the same except for the low audience coherence time periods. We used the natural log of the cumulative probability to help normalize the probability (because the range of cumulative probability was so skewed, as seen in Figure 8).

Results of the correlation for the high coherence periods, shown in Figure 9, were surprisingly strong, $r = 0.934$, $p = 4.1 \times 10^{-6}$. A similarly evaluated correlation for the low coherence periods, shown in Figure 10, resulted in an unremarkable $r = -0.185$, $p = 0.476$. These correlations suggest, post-hoc of course, that the size of the group may be related to the magnitude of the ordering effect.

General Discussion

Time-Shifted Control Test

To test the possibility that our analysis methods might have spuriously created periods of deviant variance in the random sequences, we calculated what would have happened in the Academy Awards experiment if we had started

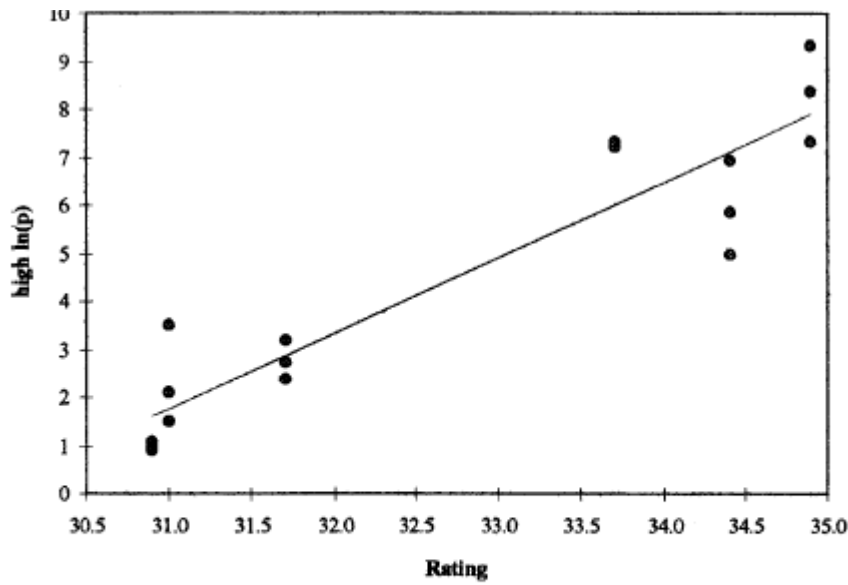


Fig. 9. Correlation between the half-hour Nielsen rating of the Academy Awards broadcast vs. the natural log of the cumulative cross-correlation between the two RNGs during periods of high audience coherence, $r = 0.934$, $p = 4.1 \times 10^{-8}$.

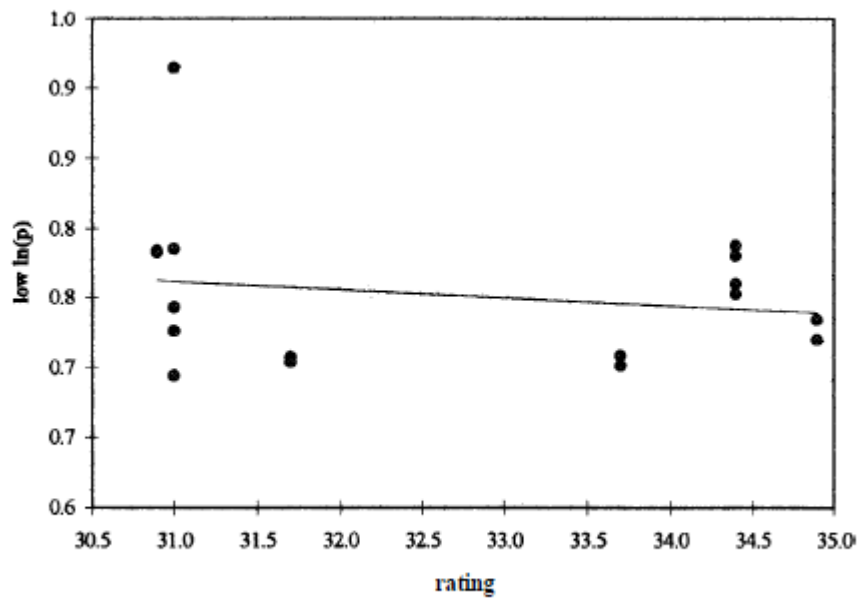


Fig. 10. Same correlation as in Figure 9, for periods of low audience coherence, $r = -0.185$,

recording data 90 minutes *later* than when we actually began. To do this, we shifted the original dataset 900 samples ahead, matched it against the original time-course assignments of high and low audience coherence, and recalculated the cumulative probabilities. Figures 11 and 12 show that for

both RNGs, neither of the cumulative probability curves reached a significantly deviant level at any point.

This post-hoc control suggests that the experimenters' assessments of high and low audience coherence, in their *original* time sequences, was an important factor. This is in accordance with the TOWS hypothesis that the RNG output variances were influenced by on-going, real-time fluctuations in mass attention.

An Extravagant Speculation

Given the field-like, extended properties of consciousness postulated by TOWS, ordering effects produced by mental coherence should include the group comprised of all consciousnesses on Earth (and presumably beyond, but that is untestable). Thus, when we monitor labile systems that are exquisitely sensitive to changes in entropy, such as truly random RNGs, in a way what we are observing is the electroencephalogram (EEG) of the "mind of Gaia" (Lovelock, 1979). Under ordinary circumstances, Gaia's consciousness is scattered, its attention distributed over billions of different objects. Gaia's normal EEG is thus essentially random, and the billions of tiny ripples of order created by Gaia's elemental consciousnesses remain unsynchronized. Any random sequence observed in any RNG, anywhere, will look like background noise.

Just as a billion poorly reflecting mirrors may cast a greater light than one tiny shard, a billion minds may reflect more of the Mind of Gaia than one single mind. As each mind twinkles and glitters over the course of day, each moment of coherence in each mind affects all other minds and all matter, but collectively the six billion human minds (and countless animal and plant "minds") on Earth cast no more than a soft glow, reflecting the usual condition of randomly aligned mirrors.

Tows speculates that under exceptional circumstances, when many minds are focused on the same object, unbeknownst to the individual minds a momentary grand alignment occurs. During these brief, shining moments, the fractured mirror reassembles into Gaia's Mind, and the unity of Mind-Matter is brilliantly manifest. At such uncommon times, Gaia is in effect, awakened, and strange things may occur. One wonders if something like this may be responsible for unusual, large-scale anomalies such as the simultaneous sighting on May 13, 19 17, of the Virgin Mary, at Fatima, Portugal, by tens of thousands of witnesses (including skeptics). One also wonders what impact global television may have on present and future world events; after all, what used to be exceptionally rare moments of global coherence are now commonplace through live planetary-wide broadcasts. Today the majority of the Earth's

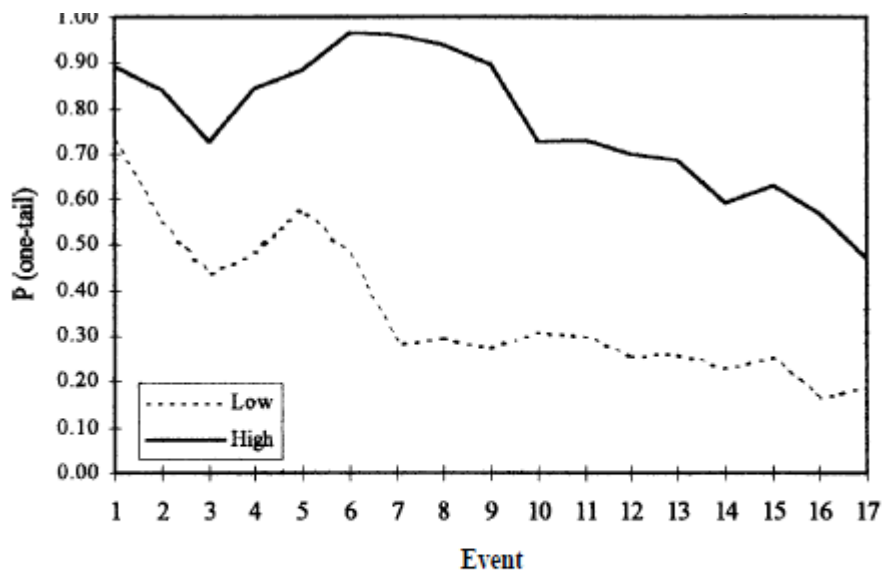


Fig. 11. Control test for RNG, after shifting equivalent of 90 minutes into the future.

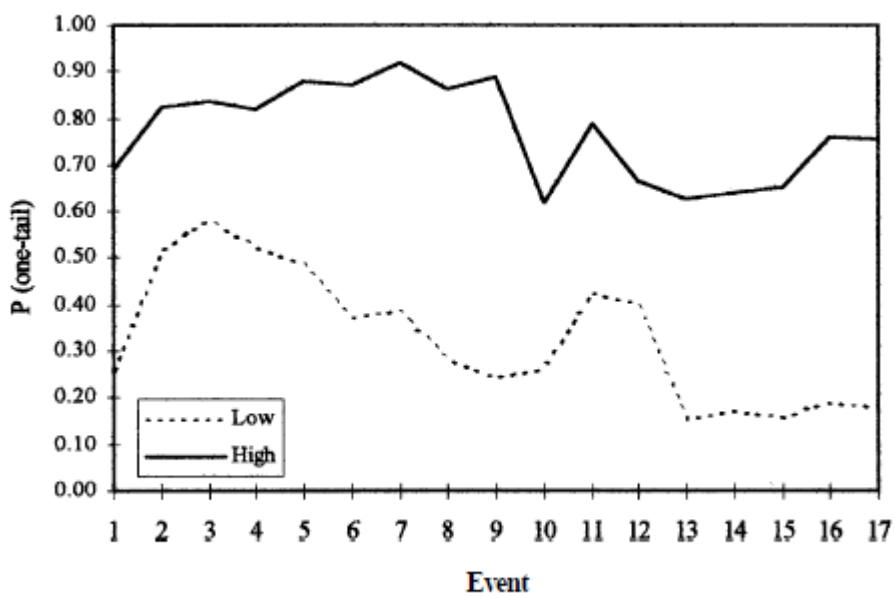


Fig. 12. Control test for RNG, after shifting equivalent of 90 minutes into the future.

population can participate in a single object of focus, for extended periods of time. Does this portend Gaia's awakening?

Next Steps

The present experiments did not attempt to test many important elements of TOWS. For example, experiments must be conducted to eliminate experimenter expectancy effects as a possible cause of the anomalous ordering effect.

Better subjective and more objective ways of measuring group coherence should be explored. In its initial formation, other than providing operational descriptions, TOWS is deficient in not providing explicit definitions of either "order" or "group coherence." TOWS cannot easily account for *directional* effects in MMI, although perhaps TOWS can be poetically thought of as describing the orderly wakes produced by the vessel of attention, sailing through an ocean of chaos, and *steered* by intention.

In addition, a wide variety of MMI-type anomalies studied in the laboratory such as retroactive MMI effects (Schmidt, 1987), and observed in the field such as poltergeist events (Roll, 1977), are not clearly accommodated by TOWS. Finally, it is not clear how TOWS might account for perceptual anomalies such as telepathy (Bem & Honorton, 1994). Clearly many more replications of this sort of experiment are necessary.

While TOWS may be way off the mark, it is interesting that the present experiments, the "field random event generator" studies by Nelson (1995), and a corroborating study by Blasband (1995), all provide evidence suggesting that random physical systems can be unintentionally affected by both individuals and by groups.

Conclusion

The experiments described here suggest that (a) focused attention orders random events, (b) the effect of this ordering extends remotely, (c) the strength of the ordering effect increases when many individuals focus on the same object, even without explicit instructions to create order, and (d) the order is detectable as predictable fluctuations in the behavior of truly random events. These results viewed in conjunction with substantial previous evidence supporting the existence of direct mind-matter interaction in laboratory tests, as well as recent corroborating studies on consciousness "field effects," suggest that consciousness extends beyond the body, and that mind may be more than "nothing but a pack of neurons" (Crick, 1994).

"Case Studies

Case 1: Grief

L. is a middle aged woman who came to see me for help with her grief. Her husband K. had died one year previously and she hadn't quite managed to move on. Her doctor had sent her for bereavement counseling shortly after his death, which helped in the short term but not the long term. Following that, L. decided to try Reiki healing to see if that would make a difference. Other than giving a general feeling of relaxation and bringing up a few tears, she did not consider that Reiki had done much for her.

A few months after his death, L. went back to her doctor who prescribed her a mild antidepressant as she still felt teary, depressed and uninterested in life.

When L. visited me, she presented as someone who was going through much grief and loss although she reported as not feeling suicidal. L. explained that her daily routine was difficult; that she had no interest in life let alone having to get up and do daily chores. Her eating habits had become a little erratic, going up and down along with her mood.

L. felt that the antidepressants were of no use and reported that she had ceased taking them three months ago. L. reports having felt no worse since stopping them.

Prescription:

I prescribed for L. a course of shamanic healing which would be used alongside informal psychological therapy. Each session would begin with some brief therapy; we would look at how she was feeling, what differences there had been since the last session and how she felt the sessions had helped her. This would be followed with a shamanic healing session and would finish with a brief look at what went on for her during the healing session and would also be a time for any goal setting. I suggested an initial four sessions with a view to ongoing sessions if required.

Session: 1 - Duration: 2 Hours

This session we talked mainly about L.'s husband K., their relationship and what she missed the most about him. This session was very much patient led and L. was given the time and space to share what she needed to share. It was a very tearful session as much grief came up.

During the shamanic healing aspect of the session we worked mainly on her heart chakra, we worked on removing the energy of grief via way of extraction, we also used colors and imagery to remove emotional pain and grief and also to fill the void with love and light.

L.'s reluctance and resistance to let go of her husband K. was very apparent. Halfway through the session she said she could feel him in the room. After explaining to L. about the need to let go of loved ones so that they can move on with their own spirit journey, we invited husband K. to stand at

the left side of L. L. felt she had not been given the opportunity to say goodbye properly as K. died so quickly.

I asked L. if she was ready to say goodbye and to let her husband K. go. She said she was.

Through many tears and deep sobs I encouraged L. to speak out to husband K. anything that she needed to say to him, any forgiveness, any words of love, anything at all that she felt she needed to say before he went.

L. took about five minutes to say her goodbyes. It was an extremely painful time for her which was accompanied by an enormous amount of grief and despair. L. was encouraged to listen and share (if she wanted to) any dialogue from husband K. When the time felt right, I asked L. if she had finished, and whether she was ready to let go. L. was ready. I said a few words to K., thanking him for his presence and his help before telling him that he needed to go to the light.

L. watched in her own mind's eye and saw and sensed K. becoming fainter and fainter, but before he had completely gone, L. reported feeling something pulling on her. She described the feeling as being like a cord connecting the two of them together. I encouraged and directed L. on how to sever the cord. Sometimes I sever the cord myself, but on this occasion I felt it was important for L.'s healing that she severed it herself. She cut the umbilical type cord that kept them connected and watched K. disappear.

The remainder of the session was focused on 'cleaning up,' it was about re-filling the void, the emptiness that L. was feeling inside. It was about bringing healing and light to an area that had been occupied for many years; it was about cleansing her luminous energy field or aura and rebalancing her heart chakra. I used much imagery, colors and sensations such as warmth to rebalance her emotions.

When the time felt right, I encouraged L. to slowly sit up. The end of the session was focused on ensuring that L. was fully present and safe before leaving, and also about ensuring that she had some understanding of what happened.

L. reported feeling 'different'. She was shocked at all that had happened and was unsure whether her dialogue with her late husband was real or imaginary, which doesn't really matter. What matters is that L. couldn't believe how much better she felt, how much lighter, and as if a huge burden had been lifted off her shoulders. L. reported that she felt a little sore where the cord had been attached but felt free. For the first time in a year, L. found herself smiling and had a twinkle now and again in her eye.

I told L. that over the next few days, she may feel surges of emotion come up and that she needed to let it out. She was instructed on the importance of self-care and the necessity of food and rest in order to help her through the healing. L. was told that she could phone me at any time should she feel she needed too. Another session was booked for the following week and the session was closed.

Session: 2 - Duration: 1 ½ Hours

L. was looking much lighter in appearance, the heavy look of grief and loss was not so deeply etched into her face. L. reported that she went home after the last session and slept for fourteen hours. Over the last week, L. reports that she had only two moments of intense tears and that each time she was able to let them out freely. L. reports being able to get through the day much more easily and has found it easier to get up and do what needs to be done. L. reports being able to spend time reminiscing over the past, at some of their good times. She still misses him but has been able to see what a difference the first session made.

The shamanic healing aspect of the session focused more on L.'s solar plexus, sacral and root chakras. L. was holding onto lots of fears around survival and being able to manage on her own. The loss of her husband K. also brought up old memories and fears to do with when her dad died many years ago; L. was only seven and although she was sheltered to some degree of the issues which that brought up for her mum, L. was well aware of the impact it had on her as a little girl. L. was able to let go of many fears around seeing her mum crying, knowing dad had died and mum didn't work. Many things came up for L. this session, things that she was not aware existed for her, yet with guidance and support she was able to face and deal with it all. Many of the things simply needed acknowledging, comprehending and releasing. The biggest thing this session was feeling once again 'let down' because the closest male to her had 'gone and left her'.

Much of this session was about understanding how things connect, why we feel certain ways sometimes and being able to release such things. It was a very successful session and although it brought up past hurts and pains, L. was able to release more grief and loss. As she let go of the grief and loss that she had held onto so deeply within her, she was able to open herself up to the idea that she could support herself.

The session was once again ended with a reminder that she could phone me anytime if she needed to.

Session: 3 – Duration 1 ½ Hours

L. was coming on in leaps and bounds. She was eating properly, sleeping much better and feeling generally more able to cope with the loss. L. reports feeling much lighter, and feels more able to think clearly about what she would like to do with her life. L. was also able to think about what work she would like to consider doing. One of the big changes L. was able to report was that she

actually managed to go out to meet a friend for coffee. Over the last year, she has let friends come around but had never taken any of them up on their offer for L. to go out with them. Now she is starting to feel that she is able to meet people again. L. reports that she still gets very lonely. She misses K. enormously and cannot imagine ever re-marrying. L. has been making enquiries about a couple of part-time jobs as she feels it is time to start to move on and feels that despite her missing K., she is now ready to start the rest of her life.

The shamanic healing session was very different this week. Although we did some basic rebalancing, cleaning up and refilling with love and light energy, the main focus was for L. to see how she truly felt about a couple of jobs she had enquired about. Through the use of shamanic counseling and/or journeying and visualization, L. was able to see and feel what path she needed to take. She was able to meet a Spiritual Guide who gave her lots of encouraging words. This session was more of a confirmation for her really but it did help her immensely. The session was ended and an appointment made for the following week.

Session: 4 – Duration: 1 Hour

This was the last session. L. was aware that she could come back whenever she wanted to and she was also aware that I offer on-going e-mail support for my patients/clients. We both felt that L. would benefit from a break from shamanic healing as it would give her time to consolidate everything and permit her the time and space she needed to deal with this next leg of her journey.

The shamanic healing aspect was focused on ensuring that she was balanced and not hanging onto unnecessary baggage. It was more of a final clean up and grounding session and I ensured that L. felt confident in grounding herself should she start to 'have an emotional wobble'.

L. could not thank me enough. I reminded her that it was alright for her to phone me if she needed to and to at least keep in touch via e-mail to keep me updated on her progress.

It was quite an emotional ending for L., as she recognized the difference the sessions had made, and although she knew she needed time to do things on her own, she also recognized the loss she was once again feeling about our parting.

I didn't hear from L. for about three months, despite e-mailing her one month after her last session. L. had been too busy and forgotten to reply to my mail. She was working in the job she had enquired about and was considering going full time. She had made new friends and was able to go out more often with her old friends. Her eating and sleeping habits had settled down and she had bought herself a dog as a companion. L. reported that there are many sad times, usually at night when she is alone, but she is able to cope with them better. They no longer leave her feeling full of despair. Her dog Monty has been a great comfort and great therapy for her as she also has to go out to walk him.

L. is a lovely example of how shamanic healing, when coupled with psychological therapies, can have an amazing result in such a short time. I think it is important here to remember that L. had tried some healing prior to coming to see me and had not found it that helpful. As always, I think it is important to remember that as multi-faceted beings we have to bring healing on more than one level. By using the two different methods, I was able to bring healing on all levels.

Case 2: Post-Traumatic Stress

G. was a lovely young girl, very bright and presented as a happy, balanced girl getting ready to enter into her teens. Yet despite what shows on the outside, within was a very different story.

G. was involved in a tragic accident several years earlier and although she had received much psychological support to help her come to terms with it and work through it, it had still left her with post-traumatic stress and in shamanic terms, it had left her with an imprint in her luminous energy field. G. was deeply scarred emotionally and psychologically, and was in need of soul retrieval for PTSD.

According to shamanic practice and my own experience, quite often when tragic or traumatic events occur in our lives, a part of us can split off and flee. It is these very parts, these aspects of ourselves that need to be recovered or retrieved, healed and reintegrated into ourselves.

PTSD was still very evident in G. The anxiety, the tears, the original wounding so easily revealed itself. It was time for G. to find the lost part of herself.

Prescription:

I prescribed for G. just the one shamanic healing session, which would commence with some informal psychological therapy. The session would begin with some brief therapy; we would look at how she was feeling and what difference there had been, if any, since we last talked. This would then be followed with a shamanic healing session and would finish with a brief look at what went on for her during the healing session to ensure she had some sort of understanding. Although I only suggested one session, G. knew the door was open if she wanted to come back for ongoing sessions. I suggested only one session because she was so young. I informed her mother that later on G. may require more sessions, but as she was at school, I felt more than one would be too much for her to deal with at once.

Session 1: Duration 2 Hours

As G. was so young, I decided to use a galvanic skin response (GSR) monitor. The monitor measures activity via sending out minute electrical impulses into your fingers (which are not detectable to the individual), which react with the minute changes in perspiration related to stress and anxiety. By using the GSR monitor, I was able to measure and direct the shamanic healing in correspondence with G.'s anxiety levels to affect a more comprehensive healing.

I was also aware that she would have limited experience at defining how she was feeling or what she was experiencing on a spiritual level, so through using the GSR monitor I was able to perform a healing session that was not only successful, but also required less participation from G. It permitted me to visually see when her anxiety was going up which then permitted me the opportunity to be able to elicit from her what was going on.

Traditionally, or at least within shamanism, soul retrieval is done by the shaman alone, which is fine, but I feel we also need to think about how effective that actually is. Sometimes people need to be part of their own healing, they need to be part of the experience, the journey. They sometimes need to be in control of claiming back parts of themselves. If soul retrieval is performed by an experienced shaman and with extreme caution, this does not pose a threat to the individual.

It is alright telling someone that you have retrieved a lost part of their soul, but if they have not experienced it, have not felt it, then the healing is purely based on what you have told them rather than any changes felt; so when the next wind comes along and they start to wonder or doubt whether you really did bring back a lost part of their soul, then the shadow self can kick in, with fear and doubt raising its ugly head. In time, they will probably undo all that was done. Not just because they didn't believe but also because they will be replaying unhelpful, negative mind loops.

It is my experience that people need to personally experience and personally be part of their own healing journey and not just told they are healed. Being part of their own healing can be very empowering for them.

I guided and accompanied G. on her deep decent into the lower world, often known as the subconscious, where she needed to go in order to find her lost part. Although her decent into the lower world was relatively easy, it took quite a while before G. was ready to actually 'meet' that part of her, as it also meant she would momentarily relive what that part was feeling at the time, including fear, anxiety and trauma.

I spent much time preparing G. for this meeting, and waited until her anxiety levels had reached a certain low, which was then reflected on the GSR monitor. The Divine had already instructed me as to what level would be safe and productive in order to introduce her to her lost part. Had I introduced her too early, she was at risk of reliving all of the trauma without receiving the healing. NOT what we wanted!

With guidance, journeying and the use of much visionary, G. eventually was able to meet her lost part. As the shaman, I held the space for her to ensure she was safe. G. spent quite a while assisting that part to heal and building a relationship with it via direct dialogue and nurturing. 'It' needed to feel safe in order to agree to return with her. If it didn't, it may not have come back with her and could have split off again at any time.

'It' did feel safe, and although very apprehensive, we were able to get that part back and reintegrate it into G. It then became a very integral part of G., which it needed to be. G. knew she was going to need to really look after and nurture the 'returned part' in order for it to complete its healing and become a fully healed and integrated part of her.

G.'s session was very intense but her understanding of what was happening was really good.

G. was given much reassurance that things would now be different. She could feel a difference and she reported feeling very different. G. was told she could ring me anytime if she needed someone to talk to, or some extra support. I also explained to G.'s mother what we had done and what we had accomplished. G.'s mother was very open and she was reminded to ring should she have any concerns.

I saw G. about a month later. She came into where I was working to say thanks for all my help. Since the shamanic healing session, G. had noticed a major shift in her emotions. She noticed she was much less stressed, able to manage her school work and not breaking down in tears.

Case 3: Emotionally and Psychologically Overwhelmed to the Point of Suicidal

It was late in the afternoon. M., a fifty-nine-year-old, had come to see me because life was becoming too overwhelming, to the point of having suicidal thoughts. Her constant tiredness and weariness coupled with the hurts of the past and present were all taking their toll on her. M. was not taking any form of medication.

Prescription:

I suggested that M. came for a few sessions, so that we could slowly work through all that needed to be worked on. Each session would commence with some psychological therapy, brief therapy, so that we could ascertain where she was within her healing and how far she had come since we first talked. I also let M. know that she could call me any time if she needed to.

Although this could cause a problem with many people calling, I have found that when that service is offered to genuine people who really appreciate your help, that they don't actually call unless they really do need to.

Session 1: Duration 2 Hours

I spent quite some time assessing M.'s needs, or at least trying to. There was so much going on for her and in her. She was all over the place, flitting from one thing to another. It was hard to keep up with her. After about twenty minutes, I asked her to lay on the couch. I could feel her apprehension but I could also feel her hope that this session would bring some release to what was becoming a never ending life of pain, both physically and emotionally.

After tracking her chakras to see which ones were mostly compromised, I commenced a cleansing of her luminous energy field and chakras. As M. started to relax, the pressures of life started to fall away. The relief which this was bringing also made a way for her to release some of her hurts of the past and the present.

Tears slowly began to fall down her cheeks as quiet sobs came from the depths of her heart. She was finally finding some release, release from all the hurts, the let downs, the disappointments, relief from the accusations and abandonment. So much pain and heartache in such a tiny body. Where she had gained the strength from to keep going only she knows. Many would have already given up, but not M. She had an inner strength that kept her hanging in there, she had someone and something to keep going for.

The healing had been going on for nearly an hour. I had cleansed all that I had seen and felt, but yet, I felt very strongly that there was a crystallization that I had not yet found – a crystallization is a collection of negative energy that had been there so long it had crystallized on a spiritual level. The

energy or crystallization can take a form, but the form is only metaphorically speaking and is not literal as in the physical.

I asked M. how she was feeling and she said, while sobbing, that she felt she had a stake sticking in her. This was the information I was looking for. M. said it was in her diaphragm area.

Via several shamanic techniques, I was able to loosen the stake and remove it from her. As the stake was removed, you could physically see the relief on her face. I continued working on the area, bringing healing until the wound was fully closed up.

I continued on with the rest of the shamanic session, cleansing her luminous energy field again and rebalancing her chakras etc., using several techniques until it felt that the session was complete.

Although I have a set time for shamanic healing, I never end the session until I feel the work is complete for that session. After the healing, M. required much time to process what had happened. It was a huge healing that she had been through. The look of relief on her face was noticeable. Something which had been affecting her for a very long time had now gone, and she knew it. For the first time in a long time, M. said she felt she was taller. The load had been so heavy she had felt quite short, now she was able to hold her head up high and walk tall.

M. left a different person that day.

M. came back for several other sessions so that we could slowly work through the chakras and luminous energy field and remove any other issues that were embedded within her. M. went from strength to strength. She had such a major shift her son came for shamanic healing.

Case 4: Depression & Anxiety

M. was an easy going thirty-six-year-old on medication for depression and anxiety, which he reported was not working and, judging by his sallow, depressed expression, I was inclined to agree with him. He was a man who had had many challenges in his life, challenges with his family, friends and his work life. M. had a brother that he was especially close to, someone that he looked up to and admired a lot, despite his brothers self-created difficulties. One day, M. was informed that his brother was dead; an accidental, drug related death. This had a major impact on M. The only person he looked up to was now gone. Time went on and M. found himself feeling the same feelings his brother had been feeling – very lonely, insignificant and as if the world could not accept him as he was. Such feelings were leading him deeper into depression and deeper into the habits that his brother had been caught up in, causing a negative cycle of self-destruction. When M. came to see me, he felt he had nowhere else to go. The medication hadn't helped, the support with his habits was not really working and he felt that all was lost and the only way out was to die and join his brother.

Prescription:

I suggested to M. that he came once a week for a month for shamanic healing and that we would reassess how he was feeling after the four sessions.

Session 1: Duration 2 Hours

As I commenced work on M. I could feel that his brother was in the room with us. The connection between them was strong. I asked his brother if there was anything that he wanted to say to M. and there was, so I relayed the message to M. which was about getting on with life and letting go. I asked M. if there was anything he would like to say to his brother and M. spent quite a few minutes

talking to him, telling him how much he looked up to him and how much he missed him. They had quite an intimate time together but they both knew it was time to say goodbye.

When the time felt right, I guided M. to say his farewells and explained to them both that there were spirit beings, helpers, waiting to take his brother to the light. As I watched, a bright light appeared and the brother started to ascend with the beings. I could see that the brother was looking back at M. but I wasn't sure why. Suddenly M. started to feel that there was a cord that was attached between him and his brother at the third chakra, and the higher his brother went, the more M started to feel as if the cord was pulling him up off the couch. They still hadn't let each other go, even though they had both said their goodbyes. I quickly cut the cord that was keeping the brothers connected and M. suddenly felt as if his whole back had suddenly come back down onto the couch. The connection was broken. M. was now able to look and see his brother as he ascended with the spirit beings to the light. The remainder of the session was about ensuring M. was safe and clearing his heart chakra.

Sessions: 2 – 4 Duration 1 Hour Each

During these sessions, the focus was on systematically working through the chakras to clean them up and rebalance them along with the luminous energy field or aura. M. reported that his feelings of being lonely and insignificant had gone. He was once again starting to feel like his own self and starting to look forward to the rest of his life in the knowledge that his brother was safe. M. no longer felt he wanted to die to be with his brother and consequently came off his medication under the supervision of his doctor, and started to get on with the rest of his life.

I saw M. periodically from then on. M. was a completely different person. He looked bright and cheerful and was truly embracing life. M. even trained in Reiki 1 to continue on with self-healing.

Case 5: Unexplained Crippling Back Pain

P. had come in for a massage. He had been suffering with severe back pain for several years which was incapacitating him. P. had seen doctors, surgeons, specialists, but no-one could find anything wrong with him; all they knew was that he was getting worse and soon he would be in a wheelchair.

Prescription:

I suggested to P. a massage and to see how things went. I was apprehensive about giving too much massage or too deep a massage as we didn't know what the problem was and I didn't want to aggravate the condition.

Session 1: 1 ½ Hours

I commenced the massage as I usually did, with relaxing music playing in the background and working on the lower limbs. Knowing that he suffered great pain I took care to give him a deep but gentle massage. I worked on his back for quite a while and moved as I always did, up towards the head to do some healing. I placed my hands on his head, closed my eyes and allowed energy to flow through me. After a couple of minutes I opened my eyes and to the right of me, or the left of P., I could see this little girl. She looked about two years old, with blonde curly hair and a beautiful face.

I heard God say, 'Ask him who she is,' so I did. P. went on to say that that was his little girl. He was a truck driver and was getting ready to leave for another journey. His wife and little girl were outside, ready to say goodbye to him. Unbeknown to them both, whilst they were saying their goodbyes the little girl had gone around to the front of the truck and sat down in front of the wheel. They did not realize this until it was too late. As the engine roared, the large wheels of the truck

slowly edged forward and crushed her; she was dead. It was the worse time of his life, P. reports. Once hearing this I knew his unexplained back pain which was crippling him so much was due to this incident. P. had been carrying around so much grief, so many guilty feelings, blaming himself and feeling that he had killed his little girl. All these negative emotions, all this emotional pain, was taking its toll on him. This guilt had been slowly creeping up his spine causing pain and was slowly crippling him. He really needed to forgive himself.

I talked to P. about forgiveness and reassured him that it wasn't his fault. We looked at that perhaps we all have a designated time on this earth, and that something will remove us all one day. I stayed with P. awhile, while he talked some more and we talked about his feelings. He was pretty taken aback by the fact that I could see her and describe her. That was the evidence he needed. It was then that he knew he needed to forgive himself in order to be able to walk properly again, pain free. P. got up off the couch and to his amazement, he actually said he no longer had any pain. He was quite surprised about this and began to move around and do the things he knew he couldn't normally do. To his amazement, he could do them. He was healed. He had found the key to unlock the door to his healing process – self forgiveness. I continued to offer him advice on how to remain healed and he recognized that it was his grief and guilt that was crippling him. P. left a changed man that day, a healed man, and that was the only time I ever saw him.

Case 6: Sixty-Nine-Year-Old Ulcerated Leg

C. was a sixty-nine-year-old woman from a poor country. She presented with a 2 ½ inch ulcer on her lower right inside ankle. Her foot was very dark in color and there was much swelling. C. was on ibuprofen, which she had been on long term, but complained of pain daily from the ulcer. C. had had the ulcer for nine years. She had seen doctors, she had had a skin graft that had fallen out and

she had even tried a bush doctor, all to no avail. So C. was managing it herself, washing it daily, applying an ointment and bandaging it up. C. came to see me because she was tired of having it and hoped I could help. Family history reflected that ulcers were an issue and that they appeared to be from poor circulation.

Prescription:

I suggested to C. that she comes daily for ten consecutive days for acupuncture and I said I would also incorporate some healing and use of essential oil.

Session 1: Duration 1 ½ Hours

I used ten 30x30 needles as I wanted to give the leg some good stimulation. The needles were used in close and distal proximity but in the lower leg only, from the knee to the ankle. The acupuncture treatment lasted for forty minutes. The wound was already cleaned prior to arrival and myrrh essential oil was placed on the ulcer and a clean bandage applied. A few minutes of healing was also given but patient not too open to healing at the moment. I encouraged C. to start to take three ten-minute walks a day to encourage circulation, to take 1–3 cups a day of ginger tea and to ensure when sitting that her legs were raised.



Session 1 – Photograph of a Sixty-Nine-Year-Old's Ulcer

Session 2: Duration 1 Hour

On arrival C. complained of having more pain than usual that morning and also said she had been feeling extremely grumpy that day. I explained that that is what I expected due to the sudden movement of trapped and stagnant qi and blood.

This session, I used five 30x30 needles and five 18x30 needles as I wanted to continue the stimulation. The needles were used in close and distal proximity but in the lower leg only, from the knee to the ankle. The acupuncture treatment lasted for forty minutes. The wound was already cleaned prior to arrival and myrrh essential oil was placed on the ulcer and a clean bandage applied. About ten minutes of healing was also given. C. was encouraged to try the three ten-minute walks as she hadn't done them and to continue taking the ginger tea.

Session 3: 1 ½ Hours

This session I had C. lay front down on the couch so that I could commence with a basic light massage of the entire leg as well as her back. The needles were placed in the ankle area when I had finished massaging the leg. I used only four needles in the ankle, two 18x30 and two 30x30. I massaged the back and shoulders briefly and placed sixteen 30x30 needles between the shoulders and coccyx.

The acupuncture treatment lasted for forty minutes. The wound was already cleaned prior to arrival and myrrh essential oil was placed on the ulcer and a clean bandage applied. C. was encouraged to try and complete the three ten-minute walks as she had only managed one and to continue taking the ginger tea.



Session 3 – Photograph of a Sixty-Nine-Year-Old's Ulcer





Session 1



Session 3