

SHAMANISM

What is Shamanism?

Shamanism is the oldest spiritual and healing tradition known to humankind, This ancient tradition has survived tens of thousands of years and is currently being practiced today in nearly every country around the globe. The word shaman comes from the name given to tribal healers of the Tungusic people of Eastern Siberia and it roughly translates as “one who has knowledge.”

A shaman may be described as someone who acts as an intermediary between the natural world and the supernatural world. One of the basic beliefs of shamanism is that everything has a spiritual component. The shaman is a master of dreams, visions and trance work. Through journeying and by entering altered states of consciousness, the shaman communicates with spirit helpers to gain information regarding the spiritual aspects of illness and to learn the best healing method for the individual. His interaction with spirit gives the shaman insight into methods that may be used to bring peace and harmony to the community. The shaman recognizes the interconnectedness of all things and can easily identify imbalances and loss of connection with spirit.

The shaman is said to walk between worlds – the world of “ordinary reality” and the world of spirit or “non-ordinary reality.” There are three worlds that comprise non-ordinary reality:

The Lower World is earthy and typically filled with mountains, jungles, lakes and streams. This is where we meet with our power animals and other spiritual helpers to gain knowledge that will assist with our personal spiritual growth and to bring back information to help others with their healing experience. The lower world is where we connect with our subconscious self.

The Middle World is a parallel plane that mirrors our physical world, but it is the spiritual aspect of our known reality.

The Upper World is the area some may call heaven. This is the home to angels, ascended masters and spirit guides. It is bright with a sense of light airiness, like walking on clouds. The upper world is where we obtain guidance and wisdom of a higher vibration.

The drum is an essential tool of the shaman. Its rhythmic beat is used to induce a trance-like state. Within this altered state, the shaman journeys to the upper, lower or middle world to connect with spirit guides in order to obtain information or to help facilitate healing for an individual, a group, or a community. The interaction with spirit can result in positive change in ordinary reality and improved balance in everyday life.

Other tools used by the shaman include rattles, feathers, stones, plants and all of the elements, especially fire and water. The shaman may use the actual physical item or the spiritual aspect of the tool.

Shamanic practitioners believe that every physical ailment has a corresponding imbalance in the spiritual world. Illness from a spiritual perspective is about separation – from ourselves, the world around us and the Creator. Our feelings of separation cause disturbances in our life force energy. In Shamanism, the spirits are fundamental in understanding the spiritual aspects of illness and the process used to alleviate suffering.

It is important to help the client to move away from identifying with the disease and seek instead, to understand the healing needs of the soul. This understanding, combined with a re-establishment of connectedness with spirit and all things, will bring about balance and harmony, restoring the body's natural ability to heal itself.

The practice of shamanic healing identifies three main causes of illness and disease:

1. Loss of power
2. Spiritual intrusion
3. Soul loss

Shamanic healing typically involves one of two things:

- Putting something back that has been lost and needs to be recovered
- Removing energy that has been taken on and needs to be released

Loss of Spiritual Power

Loss of power is best understood as separation from our power animals or spirit helpers. Each person is born with at least one power animal or guardian spirit that provides protection, assistance and guidance. Other power animals may come into our lives bringing special gifts as needed. When the relationship with these spirit helpers has been lost, the individual is left unprotected and may be subject to disharmony or illness in their life. Symptoms may include, fear, low self-esteem, accidents, chronic illness and lack of creativity and enthusiasm for life.

In order to restore power to the individual, the shaman may perform a power animal retrieval. This healing ritual re-establishes the connection between the individual and the spirit helper, resulting in an opening of the heart center. The integration creates a returned sense of empowerment as well as feelings of inner peace and joy. Instruction will be given on how to honor the power animal and acknowledge its gifts.

Spiritual Intrusion

Spiritual intrusion can be thought of as negative energies that become trapped in the body. These intrusions are typically brought into some level of existence, because they are invited or self-generated. They may also be the result of psychic attack. Spiritual intrusions may manifest as physical illness, pain or mental/emotional imbalance.

The shaman works to identify the type of trapped energies or blockages and performs an extraction in order to transmute and remove the intrusion and to return the body systems to a place of balance and harmony.

Soul Loss

The soul might be described as our life force energy. When we suffer an emotional or physical trauma a part of our soul leaves the body in order to help us survive the experience. Soul loss often happens when we are quite young, so we are unaware of the patterns that keep repeating in our lives as a result. In some cases, the individual indicates he/she has never been the same since a particular event occurred. This spiritual disharmony keeps us constantly looking for the missing pieces in an effort to recover the lost soul piece and to feel whole again

Possible Causes of Soul Loss

- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Addiction
- Divorce
- Co-dependent relationship
- Surgery or illness
- Death of a loved one
- PTSD/Serving in a war
- Natural Disasters
- Sudden or unexpected loss of a job or home
- Witnessing a traumatic event
- Giving your soul to someone else or allowing them to steal it

Symptoms of Soul Loss

- Loss of energy and vitality for living
- Feeling like you don't belong
- Feelings of disconnection or disassociation
- A variety of physical symptoms that are difficult to define
- Depression or suicidal tendencies
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Feeling stuck
- Difficulty focusing attention
- Grief that is on-going
- Alcohol and drug addictions
- Loss of memory
- Low self-esteem, lack of self confidence
- A feeling that you are constantly struggling for perfection

- You feel like a victim of circumstance
- Always feeling disappointed

SOUL RETRIEVAL

The shamanic practitioner journeys with the help of his/her animal spirits to the world of non-ordinary reality to locate the lost soul. The soul piece may sometimes be found in the company of an animal spirit or a guardian angel. It may be found in the world of non-ordinary reality where other disconnected souls are present. I have, on occasion, found a lost soul in the middle world of dream residing in a place that provided a sense of security. Once found, the soul is invited back to be reunited with the individual. The soul may be reluctant to return which may result in some negotiation. When the soul is recovered by the shaman, it is blown into the recipient and sealed with the use of a rattle, drum, and chimes. The soul is integrated into the recipient using rattles, drums, chimes and perhaps chanting or song.

Tools used in Shamanic Healing

- Power animals and spiritual helpers
- Shamanic Journey
- Ceremony and ritual
- Drum
- Rattle
- Stones/crystals
- Feathers
- Elements (earth, air, fire, water)
- Healing plants, flowers and herbs
- Pendulum
- Song/dance

Healing Rituals

Healing rituals are customized based on the individual's needs and desires. Any of the above tools may be used in the healing session.

To schedule your shamanic healing session or for more information contact:

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