



Shamanic Reiki Master Teacher and Life Empowerment SPIRIT GUIDES

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Working with Spirit Huacas, Spirit Guides

This information is supplemental to what's written about Spirit Huacas and Guides in *Shamanic Reiki, Shapeshifting into Higher Consciousness* and *The Good Remembering*.

In Indigenous shamanic traditions, there are some very specific ways to acquire spirit guides, and these methods are typically taught in contemporary shamanic trainings and other types of spiritual workshops. As powerful as these are, there are endless ways of connecting with spirit guide — such as in the simple, folksy ways we may have connected with spirit presences when we were children. We don't necessarily need a specific practice to bring our guides in, as they are never separate from us. As they are just waiting for us to become conscious of them, we simply need to become aware of them. In most Indigenous traditions, it is believed that every child has guides that are with them from birth. And other guides may come in throughout life. Again, the most obvious and wonderful thing is to establish a conscious relationship with our guides.

To do this, think back on the relationships or the 'inner knowing' or sense of things 'beyond the material' that you may have felt as a child. For instance:

What animals were you drawn to?

What was your favorite stuffed animal?

Did you have an "imaginary" friend?

What figures filled your dreams and imagination?

What of nature drew your attention most?

Our guides can also come to us or make us aware of them in the dreamtime. Guides may come to us while we're sleeping, to transmit energy, power, or wisdom while we are very receptive to this, in the dream-state. When this occurs, a spiritual knowing that was dormant in us, and waiting to come to the surface – wakes up (read more about this in TGR). Such transmissions help our evolution as human beings as they link us to our spiritual essence. They can also imbue us with the qualities and spirit of the guide – making these accessible in daily life.

Another interesting aspect to reflect upon is the religious or spiritual icons you grew up with. For instance, someone raised Catholic relates with transcendent figures like Jesus, Mother Mary, angels, saints, etc. Although ideologies that surround these beings may not resonate for the person as an adult, he or she can still journey with these beings, connect with them as spirit guides, and even *shapeshift* into them and create a fresh relationship – one that makes sense for that person today. As an example, when Christian missionaries infiltrated shamanic cultures in South America, the indigenous people took on the Christian deities as spirit guides and they also transformed and disguised their own deities into those that would be recognized and acceptable to the Christian religion. This is a good example for us – if we feel a connection to a saint or other icon, we can relate with the being in a highly personal, intimate, and alive way. We don't have to adopt religious associations, dogma, or anyone else's ideas about this being. That means that you can also journey to, or even *shapeshift* with, any being or icon or transcendent being that calls to you, whether that be Christ, the Buddha, Allah, or whatever. Remember: shamanism encourages an 'alive' and direct relationship with spirit and nature, unrelated to politico-religious agendas. In fact, our relationship to our spirit guides may lead us in directions that may challenge our religious and social status quos.

Your first memory of a spirit guide may be from childhood. It's a great practice to look back upon your childhood for clues, to see how everything that's occurred in your life is ultimately related. This will help you better understand the journey that brought you from then to now. When we find ways to integrate the past longings, spiritual relationships, and affinities with nature we may have felt as children – we

begin to see how everything is related to who we are now. Then, we can consciously honor those relationships which greatly enriches our adult lives and supports us in being all that we are meant to be.

As children, we may have connected with guides in various ways: in hearing the voice of a being sing or speak to us; in feeling a loving presence nearby; in smelling an unworldly scent in the air; in having a 'big' dream, or through some other way. We may have traveled 'out of body' with our guides or met them when we were sleeping, in the dreamtime.

Well-meaning parents often try to convince their children that such experiences aren't real, as contemporary culture teaches us to deny and psychologize natural spiritual experiences.

Our childhood connections with guides may have been ongoing, or only become apparent at heightened times in our young lives, when we really needed support. If the latter, it can be years before the guide is connected with again. But, our guides are always with us, never far away.

More About Spirit Huacas or Guides

Guides take many forms. They can be animals, angels, trees and other nature beings, elementals, saints and angels, cosmic forces and star beings and balls of light, human figures, stones, symbols, the elements, etc.

Our guides come in when we are most receptive to hearing, seeing, feeling and/or sensing them. This can be early in the morning as we're just waking up, or when we're just falling asleep in a nap or at night. They can come in through our dreams or when we're sick, etc. They have transcendent as well as very practical uses — and in making physical representations of our guides (like finding a small statue or drawing a picture of our guide so we have a living, material representation to work with every day) we invite them to be a tangible presence in our lives. Indigenous people all over the world do this, as they have effigies or talismans that they speak with in a folksy manner, as a friend or family member, and make offerings to every day.

Depending on the culture, shamans may offer tobacco, cornmeal, liquor, salami, chicken, chocolate, milk, bread, butter, etc. to their spirit guides and talismans. You can make offerings to your drum, as well, and to your other shamanic tools. If you work with Stone People, you may like to rub some walnut oil into your stones. Try mixing that walnut oil with a tiny bit of melted beeswax for a nice sheen. Shamanic people revere and respect their spirit guides. They speak to them in very practical and loving and human ways and ask that they help the person stay on their path.

One example of how to engage practical, everyday relationships with our guides is to ask them to help us remember things we need to attend to, for support to complete a task at hand, or to watch over our children. This is very similar to how Roman Catholics ask saints for support and to find lost items.

Spirit guides who assist your healing sessions can also be down-to-earth and practical. For instance, they may laugh when you get stuck in your head or attached to specific ways of enacting things in a healing session; they may remind you to get out of the way, or of something you need to pay attention to; and they also have their own healing work to do – such placing etheric stones and hands onto your client, or an endless variety of other things, which you and your client may or may not perceive. As your spirit guides do their work, you simply do yours. We are never working alone when we do energy and shamanic work. In fact, so much of the work we do with people as healers is guided and enacted by our spirit helpers. That is why people describe feeling so many hands on them at times when yours are the only physical ones in the room!

The more energy and attention we give to these spirit beings, our spirit guides, the more real and visceral and rich these relationships become. When our connection becomes very strong, spirit guides can even materialize. This is true of the master spirits of the sacred volcanoes in the Andes, who are not only vivid and real to the ancient Quechua people, they sometimes appear in physical form; step through the veils.

Our relationships with spirit helpers can also be playful and creative.

You can journey with your guides and notice which ones are prominent. You may have many guides – animals or other kinds of spirit helpers, some coming in for

specific purposes or projects, some for specific life passages or time periods, and some coming in solely to help with your healing work, as mentioned above. Others are for your personal evolution, alone. You may begin to notice that what you think of as your 'intuition', or 'gut knowing', or 'hunches', or 'instincts', or the answers or directions that show up for you in powerful dreams, are actually your spirit helpers illuminating the way for you. We are never alone!

We all see, sense, and feel our guides in different ways. The best thing we can do to connect with our guides is to get out of our own ways, and get out of our heads, and see that sensing the spiritual reality all around us is a very ordinary thing.

You may work with one or many spirit guides, or even a council of guides. There may be guides that you work with in specific locales in nature or that you can connect with more easily while drumming or rattling, or while listening to the water of a river flow to filter out all of the mental and sense-related distractions, so you can hear your guide clearly. We all have similar, and also different and unique ways of connecting with and being with our spirit guides, just as we have different ways of relating to each of our friends, as each person is unique. There are no rules, and there are no right or wrong ways. If you feel a presence you can ask it how it would like you to relate with it and how you can deepen the relationship. Or, you can sense this. Follow your heart and body wisdom.

You can do a shamanic journey to greet and learn more about your spirit helpers, or, you can speak with them aloud, as you would to a friend. For instance, you can say good morning to your guides (or directly to effigies of them) every day, just as you do with your families. And, just as you would make sure that your friends and family are nourished, you should feed your spirit guides and helpers, whether a statue of your guide or the helping spirits of stone people, with offerings. This opens an ordinary magic; it's powerful and transcendent to work intimately with invisible guiding energies, yet we don't need to make it separate from ordinary life — 'mystical' in a way that separates us. Indigenous people work with these presences every day in very ordinary ways. Just make the connections and deepen them.

If you're having a hard time connecting with your guides, start with the medicine cards... choose one every day. The card you choose is a reflection, a mirror, and we

ultimately don't need external tools (or shamanic 'toys') but tangible tools offer external ways to work with the energies in order to gain insights and develop a relationship with the invisible forces all around us all the time.

We may not even realize how we are already tuned in to our guides!!!

Dream back to your childhood and reflect upon what your connections and experiences were then, as a child. A simple time of daydreaming back to childhood can help you reclaim those places and times when you were naturally in tune with the spiritual support all around you, perhaps those allies that you even came into this life with — and you will also remember your connection with the Earth. Your helping spirits can feel very palpable to you if you close your eyes at night before going to sleep (and upon just waking) and feel them close to you. Feel this as if these forces are part of your own fabric, not an idea or concept separate from you, but as living presences right next to you; as close as a dear friend or family member. This is a beautiful experience and certainly makes the reality of your guide palpable.

Discernment, Fear, and Power

If you ever have concerns that a spirit you're relating with may be trickster energy, just ask it, and then feel it in your heart and body, and trust what comes to you. If you ever think you're just making up voices, spirit guides, entities, simply ask and then absolutely trust the answer that your heart and body wisdom reflect. It can happen that our discursive thought patterns and unresolved wound material can make it hard to filter genuine messages from spirit. A meditation practice or a relaxation practice can help you learn to relax idle mind chatter and distinguish unresolved unconscious material from authentic guiding forces. If this continuously occurs, it's a signal that you could benefit from healing work and/or psychotherapy, to address the un-metabolized wounds that keep showing up for your attention. In this case, trust your body and the compassionate spirit help that is trying to get your attention to heal yourself!

Be discerning but generally, in most instances, don't overthink things. Ask and feel your way to your truth. The more we ask yet don't relax and trust and honor what we receive, the more we become our *own* trickster. You can also connect with the Earth and make declarations to dispel anything that isn't for your highest good. If

something feels off, just connect with the Earth and release it. The more we fine-tune our ability to relax the mind and open the heart, the more our heart frequency naturally filters out confused energies. Like attracts like. Use your heart and your body as guides.

It's possible that there will also be times that you feel afraid of an energy or an ally that has come to you, yet have an intuitive sense that it's important to touch your fear.

True guides are never "bad", but some are fierce, even terrifying as they hold deep lessons and help us access our true power. It can be that fierce medicine is needed to confront something, or to navigate a pivotal time in life, or great life changes. Or, learning may come in the form of an illness or an obstacle that slows us down. When we slow down, we can let go of holding so closely to fixed ideas and not 'push the river', so a clearer direction has the space to show itself; make itself apparent. Many of our illnesses are themselves 'Dark Allies' manifesting with so much purpose, mirroring, and insight, so much to teach us.

A "Dark Ally" can be scary like a huge or threatening animal, or it may come in another frightening form. These Dark Allies will appear in our dreams when we are not consciously recognizing the signs around us in our waking state that are pushing us into power.

In the Amazon, the Dark Allies are linked to the notion of *Arutum*. Terrifying spirit guides come to us when we really need to access the power of *Arutum* (read more in SSHC). We must feel our fear in these cases – face what terrifies us and sometimes even merge with that energy, as it is pure power. Doing this opens a surge of energy – *Arutum*.

The more we relax into the experience of our spiritual helpers and open the space in our schedules and in our hearts to perceive and play with our allies, the more we allow the mythical reality that interweaves the mundane reality to come alive and be accessible to us. This is part of the ecstasy of the shamanic path.