

Personal Empowerment from the Spiritual Realms

by J.P. Tindell, M.S.

"The knowledge that life is power is the realization of the shaman. Communion with the purveyors of power is the work of the shaman. Mastery of that power: this is the attainment of the shaman."¹

My personal study of Core Shamanism applied to modern living began by going where I felt drawn in reading and experiential learning in mid-life. I emerged from a lifetime of spiritual seeking at this point finally acknowledging a gift to serve others as a healer and living the responsibility to use what I had learned to survive and thrive after two rounds of cancer treatment.

Through both personal healing work and in behalf of others, I have learned that caretaking of one's "personal power supply" is essential. Diminishment of it leads to human illness and vulnerability manifesting in harmful ways. There are very effective ways to stay "powered up" from the shamanic tradition.

The Life Force "Battery"

The spirits often teach me through metaphors. Early on in the study of the stages of healing and the root causes of illness in the spiritual realm, I was provided the symbol of a car battery as useful in understanding and explaining the dynamics of personal power. Batteries that are used but not recharged eventually are depleted. Their stored "juice" can leak away.

Living human life requires energy. Certain energetic demands and patterns of thinking/feeling/acting can rob us of our life force/personal power supply and make us vulnerable to intrusions (misplaced energies in our personal Luminous Energy Field²) or soul loss, the gravest level of power loss. Staying connected spiritually and energetically to what keeps us "powerful" can be taken for granted and have limited effect if we conceive of power solely at the physical level.

The shamanic healing practitioner can provide a spiritual assist in response to personal power loss. Divining the nature and extent of such loss, including where and how power can be boosted, is usually the first step I take in working with healing clients.

The power referred to here is the Primordial Life Force. The ability to access Non-Ordinary Reality/the Spirit World gives us access to the same forces that led to the "Big Bang", the limitless field of pure potential. What an extraordinary opportunity we have to tap into what enlivens the entirety of Creation/the Great Mystery! Once we understand Personal Power as our individualized supply of Life Force, it becomes obvious how essential it is to protect, preserve and recharge.

Causes and Results of Personal Power Loss

Going back to the origins of the practice of shamanism in traditional societies, pain and suffering are the effects of power loss. In this body of knowledge, it has a number of typical causes³:

- Attack
- Spirit or energy intrusions
- Breach of social taboo
- Fear
- Disharmony with the spirit world created by individual behavior

The results of power loss can manifest as pain, suffering and illness at multiple levels (physical, mental, emotional). A fear based existence puts unrelenting stress on one's personal power supply. Staying powered up can enhance protection from attacks by others both consciously (in the practice of sorcery) and unconsciously by wounded beings, human or nonhuman.

Shamanic Practices to Enhance Personal Power

Following are methods I regularly use in forms tailored to individual needs and situations, as diagnosed and directed by both my own and clients' spirit helpers. I also make use of them in my own behalf to stay energized and vital at the age of 59. They can be used for healing benefit in the shamanic practice of **Power Augmentation**.

- **Connecting with Personal Helping Spirits:** Shamanic Journeying into the Spirit World to come into relationship with our own personal helping spirits is where this connection can start. Returning regularly with the intent for personal empowerment and healing should be a consistent practice. The shamanic healing practitioner can act as a bridge between a client and these spirits.
- **Power/Soul Retrieval:** On behalf of clients, and only with their permission, it's possible to bridge the delivery of power. As the healing practitioner, I journey to request power for a client and then serve as an escort in the Spirit World for its delivery to the client at their physical location in Ordinary Reality. This work can be done long distance. I recommend that this kind of work be done before or following particularly demanding or stressful events, such as major surgery. I find that getting through the surgery and recovery goes particularly well following this "power escorting" process.

Soul Retrieval is the cure for soul loss and involves specialized awareness and training, and a calling to serve others as a "Soul Catcher." ⁴

- **Extracting Energy or Spiritual Intrusions:** This process involves relying on the practitioner's helping spirits and sometimes using objects to facilitate the removal of distortions in the Energy Field. For example, I am sometimes guided to use a decorated

wood stick that I accepted as a power object. I place one end of it inside the Energy Field of a client without the need to touch physically so that the energies in need of removal can be transferred into this tool rather than into my Energy Field, thereby protecting me from picking up any of the extracted forces with negative effect. I use a flame, rock salt, rocks or a bowl of water to transfer these energies into. Then they can be disposed of or cleared following a healing session.

- **Going to Places of Power in Ordinary and NonOrdinary Reality:** Shamans have made use of the powers of Nature by physical immersion for many thousands of years. This is a doorway into the mystical and magical realms of spiritual power. We can all locate places of personal power in Nature.

I live in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California, which as a region I find feels physically/energetically/spiritually very powerful. I am calmed, de-stressed, energized, healed, empowered and en-joyed by walks in the forests and along the rivers in the area. While there, I draw on the spirits and power of Nature for both teachings and healings.

In *The Journey to the Sacred Garden*⁵, Hank Wesselman describes going to a specific place in the inner worlds that is our place of personal power and healing in those realms. When I am seeking personal healing, this is the place in NonOrdinary Reality that I go to. Here I can ask for relief from physical, mental and emotional depletion, distress and disharmony. I stay in the shamanic journey until I feel a shift and then return to Ordinary Reality feeling better (that is, healed).

- **Breath and Movement:** In my personal experience, Holotropic Breathwork⁶ and the "Breath of Fire" practiced in Trance Dance⁷ are very potent practices for clearing a lot of blocked and misplaced energy. Hyperoxygenating our bodies is one of the methods known to enable stepping through the veil into potent transformational awareness, release and healing. These modalities are also conducive to "getting out of my head", which can be an impediment to direct experience of spiritual power.

Bradford Keeney has written *Shaking Medicine* to reintroduce "... the value of trembling, vibrating, quaking and shaking as a medicine for the body, mind, and soul..."⁸. I think of these as means to vibrating in concert with the pulses of the Universe that are inherently transforming and healing.

The type of Power we work with in Shamanism is not sourced in the human realm. In our collective dream of the human realm, we can make a profound error in understanding--that real power ultimately does not come from anything material or outside ourselves (such as other people, material wealth or social position). The ultimate source of power that can heal and prolong human life is found in the spiritual realms.

References

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J.P. Tindell, M.S., has been a student of both classic and contemporary shamanism since 1995, serving others as a healing practitioner for fifteen years. She is founder and leader of The Shamanic Healing Collective (www.shamanichealingcollective.org) in Auburn, California, offering teaching and healing in the tradition of classic shamanism.

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