

Shamanic healing – ancient spiritual practice for modern problems

Increasingly it seems as we advance technologically so does our need to connect, not just with each other via social media, but with a wider community, with a sense of spirituality, with a spirit of what is known in the Zulu community as *Ubuntu* – a concept of a person only being a person in relation to other people. “Sawubona” – “I see you.” “Ngikhona” – “I am seen because you see me.”

Shamanic practice views all things as having spirit and being interconnected – trees, stones, animals, people – all connected, all living, all with spirit. This is the essence of my practice. Honour all living things, listen to them, see them, truly. Connect with your guides – power animals, and helpers in human form, met through journeys to non-ordinary reality, to seek guidance, insight and healing. Some may call that fanciful; a vivid imagination, a sham. Well, I see it as enriching, soothing, powerfully revealing, balancing, healing. All spiritual practices have their naysayers and believers. In a world where we are increasingly distanced from nature, and encouraged to value and listen to our rational, left brain, we miss out on the proven healing power of nature and the calming, empowering practice of engaging our multiple intelligences – heart, gut, brain – through mindful awareness of our being. This embodied wisdom can be accessed more readily in the presence of one of nature’s powerhouse shamans – the horse. My clients and I find the horses help in bringing awareness to the present, engaging all one’s senses and slowing down – being, rather than doing. Such a gift to journey shamanically and subsequently to reflect on the journey with horses! This experiential learning helps to anchor the feelings in your body, to create new neural pathways that assist in getting in touch with that state of ease back in one’s busy day to day life.

Shamanic practitioners see trauma as a cause of soul loss; a piece of your essence, spirit sent away to protect it from traumatic experience, such as surgery, accidents, severe illnesses, trauma. Psychology knows this as dissociation. All dis-ease is viewed as the same in shamanism, be it emotional, mental, physical or spiritual. If you are ill, troubled, unable to make headway, you may be suffering power loss – and so your power animal must be retrieved, or a journey taken on your behalf to request assistance from a power animal. I recall a time fairly recently when a lot had been going on in my life: a lot of unwanted change, a series of events, accidents and illness that left me feeling exhausted, down, running on empty. I gratefully received an energy healing session from a friend. As she entered my field from a distance she asked “what are you feeling?” “Nothing, I am numb from the upper chest down.” I was so depleted and it hit me that I had given away or lost all my power. She said “It’s like Judy has gone.” I realised then I needed to call in my power animals – fast. I did – and during that healing session as I called them to me they returned, and over the next days and weeks I felt them re-integrating and I celebrated their return and nurtured them. Your power animals are there to protect you and keep harm away, but you need to take care of them, dance with them, honour them or they may leave, which in turn can leave space in your spirit for unwanted entities, spiritual intrusions. As a practitioner I know I have to be feeling power-full in order to effectively work with others, or to journey on their behalves, otherwise I run the risk of negative energies permeating my field.

If you feel power loss, if you feel overwhelmed, tired, in need of joy, play, rejuvenation, courage – then perhaps an experimental journey into shamanism may help. It certainly can’t hurt. Everyone has an inner shaman – we all have the ability to heal ourselves. I’m not talking miracle cures, but healing of psyches, our spirits, our *chi*. Come and try a guided shamanic journey to meet your power

animal/s and helpers. Join me and Soo Broster with the wonderful, sage healers of Eureka Horse Wisdom to experience *Journeying Home* and *Coming Home*. Workshops to be held 26 November, 22 January and 25-26 February. Details can be found at www.eurekahorsewisdom.com.au or find out more at the Mind Body Spirit Festival Stand B44 27 – 30 October Sydney Olympic Park, or contact me at www.mindfulhorsemindfulleader.com judy@mindfulhorsemindfulleader.com

