



# Before You Journey

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## Guiding, Overarching Principles

- ❖ The real teachers and healers are in non-ordinary reality, not here, and at least one helping spirit is always with you. Always.
- ❖ Shamanism is a system of direct spiritual revelation of "spiritual democracy." You are your own spiritual authority, and the revelations come from your helping spirits.
- ❖ We always journey with a purpose or intention; the goal is to bring through the power of wisdom or healing.
- ❖ Shamanically, power is
  - the ability to shift consciousness to make things happen, that is, to bring through wisdom or healing from the spiritual realms (usually called the Upper and Lower Worlds) here into the material/physical realm (also called the Middle World); and
  - the ability to use energy to create transformation in ourselves, others, and the planet.

## General Tips

1. Reclaim power with vocalization and movement - singing, dancing, and drumming. Merge with your egoless helping spirit during dancing before journeying. Let egoic, Middle World helpers dance along with you.
2. Be the one experiencing the journey, not just "watching the action."
3. Remember that not everyone is visual; you may just "know" and see little or nothing.
4. Give yourself permission to "just make it up," much as you would a daydream.
5. Find and stay with the structures that work best for habituating you for journeying, as changing these can be distracting.
  - a. position: standing, dancing, walking, sitting
  - b. "horse," rattle, song, waterfall (Celtic), and droning sounds
  - c. opening/doorway/portal: tree, cave, lake, rabbit hole, mist, cloud, etc.
  - d. timing: short, 5-minute journeys or a series of short journeys, 10-minute, 20-minute, 30-minute journeys
6. Ask your known helping spirits for help; learning to ask for help is part of empowerment, and they won't help you without your permission.
7. Explore all three (upper, lower, and middle) worlds, if that's part of your cosmology.
8. Explore the "levels" of the upper and lower worlds (note: these levels aren't "real," just mental constructs that some find helpful).
9. Practice "checking in" with your helping spirit(s) when you're not in trance to be able to get answers without journeying.

## Question Guidelines

- ❖ Ask only one question at a time; otherwise, you may not know which one is being answered.
- ❖ Add in a time context: "What do I most need to know about ... at this time?"
- ❖ Use caution with Yes or No questions:
  - The spirits see life as an adventure and may say "yes," even though you'll be "hurt" by a lesson. They protect you from "needless" harm but not from "lessons", which are "good."
  - Non-journey divination tools can be used for yes/no questions, but be careful not to give your authority away to the spirits.
- ❖ Begin with What, Where or How; not When or Why. Example questions:
  - "**What** do I most need to know about (my role in this issue, this issue in general)?."
  - "**What** will I learn if I ... (form a close relationship with this person; take this job/workshop; study with this teacher)?."
  - "**Where** is my power in (this situation/relationship/issue)?"
  - **Where** (geography) questions: try the Sunbeam journey from the Labrador Naskapi shamans. Visualize a map of the places in question and look to see where the sunbeam in your journey is shining down. Look for a beam, not just sunshine.
  - "**How** can I heal my end of this relationship?" This question can help you see how you've given away your power and show you how to come from a place of true power (compassion) rather than a place of either "victim" or "perpetrator."
  - "**How** can I heal/resolve the "button" in me that got pushed?"
  - "**How** can I let go of this memory (or change this habit, etc.)?"
- ❖ Why not "Why" questions? The answers can pull us into story and away from needed action. Also, sometimes it's best to live our lives as adventure and let go of the desire to know.

## Journeying For or About Others

- ❖ If you're journeying about a relationship issue, ask "How can I heal my end of my relationship with this person?" Do not ask "What does this person need to change?" or "How can I get this person to change?"
- ❖ Never journey or do any shamanic work with the intention to harm another or yourself.
- ❖ Always make sure you have consent/permission if journeying for another (if they are in a coma, meet their soul first thing in your journey and ask permission to journey for them).
- ❖ If someone asks you to journey or send healing to them, send the energy of your helping spirits/Oneness, not your own will or energy. The real healers are the spirits, not us.
- ❖ Remember that learning to ask for help is part of the healing process.
- ❖ Honor that people are entitled to their illnesses, addictions, etc.
- ❖ Do not assume that you know what's best for another person; we can't know their life lessons.