



During the Journey

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Classical Journey Method Summary

1. Preparation: singing, dancing, drumming or rattling; remember that you are a soul.
2. Intention (repeat 3x) + Entryway, Hole, or Opening:
Lower world — rabbit hole, cave, base of tree, pond, Dupont Circle escalator ...
Upper world — up tree trunk, climb ladder, float up, helping spirit carries you up ...
Note: Many people do not experience any entryway or other portal; they simply put out their intention to their known helping spirit(s) and are suddenly "there," as if by automatic transport or as if "beamed" there.
3. Transition: Tunnel (lower world), Membrane/Mist (upper world), or straight out (middle world)
4. Landscape: Anything is possible! Your intention guides the journey; repeat intention as needed. Remember that the spirits speak in metaphors.
5. Call Back:
 - Four Drum Rolls — Alerts you to the end. Time to thank your guide.
 - Fast Drumming — Draws you back; Retrace your steps and come back.
 - Four Drum Rolls — Settles you back into your body, back into the here and now.
6. Take notes, phrases preferred over sentences; drawing is good. Act on the guidance.

Journey Formula: Control/Will + Connection (to self and Source) + Percussion + Intention

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Shamanism is a path of knowledge, not of faith, and that knowledge cannot come from me or anyone else in this reality. To acquire that knowledge, ... it is necessary to step through the shaman's doorway and acquire empirical evidence. — Michael Harner

Power Aspects

Remember that you have choice and control over what you say and do in the journey; you can approach or ignore any form or situation. The spirits need your permission even to bring you healing. However, you do not control what your power animal or teacher says or does.

Confusion During Journey

If you're unsure of something or feel confused or frustrated, try the following tips:

- ask your guide for help;
- ask another guide for a "second opinion" on your question or for a "translation" or different metaphor to help you understand what the spirits are trying to show you;
- try re-phrasing your question; wording is important;
- remember that some things it's not our destiny to know; and
- the spirits are *not* stubborn and don't act out, so don't think you're being punished or abandoned. They have *only* the deepest compassion for you.
Always.

Feeling Unable to Journey

Honor those seasonal “dry spells” when you can't journey; usually you can still journey for others, just not yourself. These may be silent “gestation” times. If so, use this time to meditate or walk in woods, and remember that you can always ask someone to journey for you. These may also be times when action, not journeying, is needed. We need to act on our journeys to bring journey wisdom or healing through to the Middle World. If your journey block concerns you, you can check with a shamanic practitioner to see what's going on.

- See thoughts as clouds passing; gently repeat your intention over and over until your journey resumes; you can pick up where you left off or start over
- sing, dance, drum (many traditional shamans sing, dance, and drum for 3 days, then do a short journey)
- prep work helps: be mindful of food (not being too full or hungry), be rested, etc.
- connect with your infinite soul-self and leave your ego behind
- pull your awareness out of your head and into your heart, breathe into your heart
- start by shaking out what's on your mind
- be here and now, focus on this moment only
- for some, being too comfy means you fall asleep; others need to be comfortable
- drum or rattle for yourself (live drumming or rattling)
- silently lip-sync sing your journey like a narrating reporting “live on the scene”; if you're not in a group, you can sing your journey aloud as you go
- set the intention that any sounds in the room during the journey will take you deeper into the journey; tell yourself that with any cough or sound you'll go deeper

Structure and Tools May Help. Having structures or unique signals tell your brain this is not anything else but Journey Time. Special journey tools include a blanket you only use for journeying, singing a special journey song, or wearing an eye curtain or special regalia or ritual items. Ritual and structure cultivate a Pavlovian response; they entrain the brain to a powerful “good” habit.

Try “Zero Point Exercise” Before You Journey. Go to the space between things, invoke the state of nothingness, no gravity, the space between the beats of a drum.

Dance & Sing. Dance and chant before you begin journeying to help you open and connect to Source. Explore rattling or drumming for yourself. Try a journey cd with or without headphones; see which works better for you.

Be Patient & Willing to Explore. If you don't think your journey was “successful,” don't get discouraged. Shamanism is about establishing a deep relationship between you and Source. It's not instantaneous; be patient with yourself and with your process. Try saying or singing your journeys into a recorder. Try longer journeys; try shorter journeys. Try rattling or drumming for yourself.

Additional Tips

Remember that you can call your guide to you in ordinary reality any time, even when you're not journeying.

Consider chanting or dancing (or both!) each morning. Even two minutes a day will make a difference in your life and well-being.