

Preparing for your Shamanic Spiritual Guidance Session

Checklist

- Your appointment will be 1.5 hours long. Be sure you have a place where you can be for that length of time without interruption.
- Schedule your appointment online at www.gaiashamanism.com or by email.
- Please email anna@gaiashamanism.com with your journey intention and questions, as well as your preference: Skype, FaceTime, BlueJeans, or phone (US only). Do include your screen name and/or phone number so we can connect.
- Be ready to record our session for future reference and use.

A more extensive preparation process is elaborated below, should you have the time and interest.

Tandem Journeys

For those who already journey for themselves, I encourage you to journey at the same time as me. For those who would like to learn how to journey, I will teach you how to do so.

The idea of going on tandem journeys was inspired by the practice of going on tandem jumps when learning to skydive. While you won't convince me to skydive anytime soon, I have found that jumping into unseen realms together is a lot of fun and assists the novice journeyer in several ways.

Tandem journeys help to demonstrate how you connect to Spirit (e.g. feeling, seeing, hearing, and moving), give emphasis to particular aspects of the journey, and can support you in deepening your shamanic practice with a more vivid experience of the spirit world.

In the practice of journeying at the same time with the same intention together, tandem shamanic journeys can also help to demonstrate that the spirit world is an actual place.

It is not unusual to see the same places or things when journeying together, to receive complementary pieces of the same story, or to have feelings that track the narrative arc of the journey that I undertake on your behalf.

Tandem journeys are a compelling way of arriving at a felt sense of the reality of the unseen realms and can give us a taste of the miraculous.

If you are interested in doing a tandem journey during your shamanic spiritual guidance session and we are connecting with each other from different cities, you will need a bandana or eye mask to cover your eyes and a recording of a shamanic drumbeat to play for your journey.

The recording that I use is Shamanic Drumming by Michael Drake available on iTunes for \$9.99

Several recordings of Shamanic Drumming by Michael Drake are available on You Tube.

While I make beginning instruction and tandem shamanic journeying available to you in the session, please do not feel that you *have* to journey. This is an opportunity, not an obligation.

Setting your intention

Intention is everything, for what you look for in the journey of life determines what you find.

Shamanic journeys address questions about real problems and offer practical advice, but they also nudge us out of the mind's singular focus on problems into a broader perspective—that of the soul.

The soul prioritizes growth, choice, and experience over getting things “right.” Looking and feeling good are less important to the soul than progressing to a life of greater internal freedom and meaning.

Shamanic journeys tend to address the big picture aspects of what you are experiencing, give next steps or homework for developing your capacity for expanded awareness, and nudge you to self-understanding and acceptance.

It helps to be honest and forthright about your questions. The more clarity you have about your intentions, the more clearly the imagery and symbolism of the shamanic spiritual guidance session—and life's journey itself—can speak to you.

You might think about the questions you wish to ask before going to sleep at night and then write your journey intentions upon awakening. Or you might create or do something— doodle, wash dishes, play music, chop wood, weed the garden—while mulling over your questions.

However you gain clarity, do that.

Once you have formulated your shamanic spiritual guidance intentions, email them to me before your session.

Creating Sacred Space

The intention-setting process for the shamanic spiritual guidance session can be a regular practice for your life journey as well. Setting intention and carrying questions in your heart with awareness creates a sacred space within you.

Bringing your thoughts and attention inward as you contemplate and chew on your questions about life re-collects your focus and life energy.

No longer scattered, but instead held with purpose and intention, your thoughts create a sacred space within. The purpose of ceremony and ritual is to facilitate this state of gathered inwardness, but you can dispense with the intermediaries altogether and simply walk about the world in a state of ceremony.

It does help, however, to create a sacred space outside of yourself as a reminder that life is indeed a sacred journey and to prompt you to practice a few moments of gathered attention.

Not much space is needed for your altar: a windowsill, a place on a bookshelf, or a spot outside that you pass by often will do.

Clearing a space and leaving it empty, or only putting one thing there like a cloth, an empty bowl, a candle, or a picture is a good start. The point is to signal the subconscious that you are making room for the sacred. The less clutter the better.

Now, with your sacred spot created, keep your eyes open for things you might want to add to your altar.

This is a powerful practice in the days leading up to your shamanic journey and the days immediately following, but it is also a lovely spiritual discipline to maintain over time. It helps you to stay present and on the look-out for gifts of beauty and meaning on your life's path each day.

Paying Attention

Before and after your shamanic spiritual guidance session pay special attention to your environment as you go about your life.

Are birds of a certain kind now visiting you, or calling out to you? Are honeybees buzzing all about or landing on you? Are squirrels following you and giving lectures? Or is there a recurring theme of juvenile or injured animals showing up in your life needing help? Perhaps mice or ladybugs have taken up residence in your home?

Each animal guide, be it in this world or the spirit world, has a signature energy and collection of possible messages for us.

Looking up the symbolic meaning assigned to these animals is helpful, but it can also be instructive to learn more about each animal, be it their mating habits, gestation season and length, the features of their natural habitat, what they eat, how they hunt for food, what distinguishes them from other animals, what senses are most acute in each, etc.

It takes time to understand how to apply this information to your life in terms of spiritual growth and development, but the book *Animal Speak* by Ted Andrews does an excellent job of that if this is an interest of yours.

There is also a symbolic language that is being spoken in and through the events of our lives. Do you have a car tire that always goes flat? Do people always stop and ask you for directions? Do you have a recurring dream or a recurring occurrence of some kind? These are all indications of messages from the spirit world seeking to get through to you.

Do expect things to get louder and more insistent before your shamanic spiritual guidance session as well as afterwards. The work of shamanism is to read the world as a sacred text. Because this life is a waking dream, the messages that seek us out are symbolic in nature, as in our nighttime dreams.

Our task is to honor the messages, remember them, and carry them with us until we feel we have reached a deeper understanding.

The more we practice, the easier it gets to read the living letters of life.