



Summer 202
Issue 16

Spirit Talk

Connecting to the Land

**Karen Kelly Interviews
Jane Shutt**

What role does nature play in your practice? What about in traditional societies?

I have to ask, 'What isn't nature?' I hear the phrase 'out in nature' often and, although I know that it often means 'somewhere uncrowned with trees and grass', I am very aware that I am 'in nature' everywhere – in my front room, in the centre of London or on the moors. It is, therefore, impossible to separate nature, of which I am a part, from my practice, which is a part of me.

Every now and again someone will say to me something along the lines of, 'I know that being a shaman is the right path for me because I have this deep connection to nature.' I can't comment on the validity of the path for any individual but I do feel that this state of being in a connection with nature is not indicative of being a shaman, it is indicative of being part of nature, of being human. It is a very natural state for people in native societies to be in and to be aware of being in. It is also a very natural state for us to be in. Sadly, it isn't always easy to

know that the connection is there.

But it is there. If it were not then we would not feel that surge of happiness when we wake up to sunshine. We wouldn't seek out special places – whether those be the shore of Derwentwater or the night view over central Hong Kong – to make us feel glad. Yesterday I overheard a woman, while watching a peacock displaying, say to her husband, 'Darling, isn't nature the most wonderful thing?' In that moment she was fully aware of her connection, to the peacock, to the lawns, gardens and woodlands around it and to her husband. And, judging by the smile she gave me as she turned around, to everyone else who had appreciated the sight.

Is a connection to nature vital for any shamanic practice?

Absolutely. How else? I cannot

Contents	Page No.
Connecting to the Land	1
A Sense of Place	6
House and Home	8
Where the Powerful Meet the Vulnerable	11
Editorial	16

think of any traditional/native shamanic practice that is not in close communication with the local land spirits. That connection is always there – we are part of nature, part of the land. Sometimes our awareness of that connection fades. Christianity and many of the eastern religions that are popular now teach that, at worst, this world is illusion; at best it is a place of suffering, to be left behind with relief. Of course, it can be a place of suffering for many. I don't want to suggest that life



can be easy if you just make up our minds for it to be so, but the causes of suffering – war, famine, flood – are largely human made. It therefore lies with humans to learn the lessons necessary to end the causes. To see this world as somewhere from which to escape as soon as possible is to weaken our connection with it and, incidentally, to turn from the many lessons and experiences it has to offer us.

How can I enhance my awareness of my connection to nature?

Find a power place. Somewhere near your home that you can visit in both Ordinary and Non-ordinary realities. Then get to know it, in all weathers and seasons. The place is part of the greater web of all things. By strengthening and becoming more aware of your connection with it you will strengthen and become more aware of your connection with all else in the

web of life.

Get to know the names of the parts of nature that you want to grow closer to. I know that these names are human-given, but they help us to differentiate between individuals and to recognise them. Learn the differences between oaks, ashes and beeches. Distinguish between spruce and fir. Find out what different birds look like and recognise that the raven that visits your suburban garden is likely to be a carrion crow.

Be aware of nature when you are not 'out' in it. See it in your home. Not just the house plants and spiders but the bricks that are made of clay, the floorboards of wood from trees, the paint on the walls, made from oil that is made from the bodies of millions of tiny creatures. Our homes, our food, our clothes all come from nature. We have no other resource.

When Christine (my partner, Christine Mark) worked full time it was possible for her to spend five days a week indoors except for the few moments spent between the house and car and the car and work. A situation like this dulls our sense of connection. Be aware of nature while you are indoors but also get outdoors as well. There are parts of nature that we need to be outdoors to be with. Trees, most animals, rain and wind. Go outside. Just be.

Feel the elements, inside and outside of you. Feel them in the obvious ways – get drenched in the rain, have a bath, drink a glass of water – and also in the more subtle ways – there is moisture in the air that we breath

and water trickling through the soil beneath our feet.

You talk about 'land spirits'. What can you say about these? Are they, in your experience, different from other spirits you might encounter?

Maybe the term 'Middle World spirits' might be better. I tend to use 'land spirits' for the spirits of anything that has its home in this reality. That includes houses, trees, factories, rivers, wind, rain etc. Spirits of things that you can relate to in both realities.

When we first seek out our power animal and then our spirit Teacher we go with the intention of finding those spirits who will work with us and for our greater good. In the Middle World there is more of a tendency to seek out a spirit who can help us with a specific query or task.

Middle World spirits have had more to do, on a day-to-day basis, with humans than most Lower or Upper World spirits have. They know us. This can help us in our transactions with them. If they have had good experiences of humans, if they have had deep love and care from humans, they are often more than willing to help us. I have found this with the majority of the spirits that I have met in the Lake District, for example. The Lake District is filled with people who love it, people who have chosen to live and work there or people who get away for weekends there whenever they can.

It can also work against us. Not every bit of land is loved as Borrowdale is. Some places, that have been polluted or otherwise damaged, that have experienced

humans as creatures that take without thought, will not be keen to help. We have to allow that spirits sometimes have their own agendas that do not always mesh with ours. And if, sometimes, such spirits lump all humans together and view us with suspicion and antagonism, can we really blame them?

Some teachers are cautious about Middle World work for

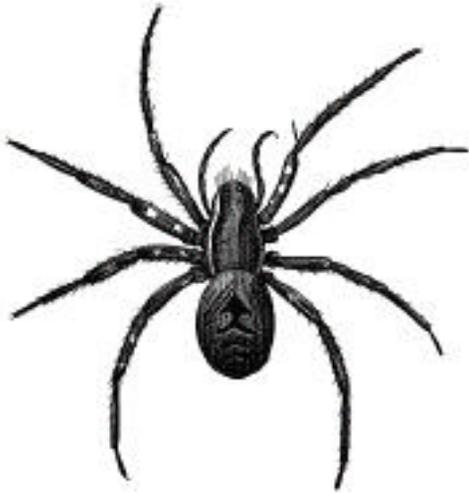
beginners. Do you feel it is okay for beginners to talk to land spirits?



I would advise the basic cautions that are a good idea when working with any spirits. Word your intention carefully – if you state 'I am going to find a spirit who will help me with ...' then that is what you will find, and take your power animal with you. These are fundamental to any Journey. But yes, talk to land spirits. After all, we live here. Here is where our work manifests. I have only been doing this work for just over thirteen years, teaching shamanism since 1997, but, in my brief experience, I have noticed that some people Journey most easily to the Lower World, some to the Upper World and some to the Middle. Some people are clearly intended to do most of their work in the Middle World. One practitioner I know works almost exclusively in the Middle World. He had great difficulty getting to the other worlds to meet spirits, until he

made a Journey to the spirit of a place he There he met the spirit of the tree there, who is now his Teacher.

So yes, talk to land spirits. But use the same common sense that you would in talking to anyone that you had just met. Go with an open mind and take along a spirit that you already know and trust. Get that spirit to introduce you.



If I feel drawn to doing healing work with land spirits where would you suggest I begin?

Firstly I would say that there are two different aspects to doing healing work with land spirits. One is using land spirits to help you heal people and the other is healing

the land.

To take the first of these – land spirits, particularly, I have found, plant spirits, can be incredibly generous with their healing powers, giving healing unselfishly even when it leads to the death of the individual plant. If this is the type of healing you are drawn to talk to your spirit Teacher who helps you with healing. Ask first whether this type of work is appropriate for you. If the answer is yes, then go ahead. With your spirits help and advice seek out the plants that want to help and find out exactly what it is they are willing to do. This kind of work comes into most courses on shamanic healing and I think it's a good idea to attend a workshop in this. As well as having a this-reality teacher to guide you through this process

you will have other students' experience to help you.

If you want to heal the land then, again, ask your Teacher if this is appropriate work for you. It isn't for everyone. And bear a few things in mind – has the land asked for your help? Is it within your capability to give the help? Does your Teacher say you should?

If the answer to each of these is 'yes' then go ahead. Find out what is wrong, find out what your Teachers say is needed to put it right. Do it. I do advise attending a workshop in land healing. It enables you to benefit from others' experience and lets you know how others are working in this field.

Do you think using shamanism can make a physical difference to places? Have you done this? What effect did you get?

If it didn't make a difference I'm not sure what the point of it would be. Several years ago, when I first moved to Rosedale, I became aware of a particular tree. A rowan, it had no flowers or berries the first year I knew it and its leaves were yellowed and blotched with black. Concerned I went to speak to it and to my Teachers about it. The rowan asked for my help and my Teachers and I retrieved a soul part that had been missing for some time. This was in June, when healthy rowans have lost their flowers and are starting to form their berries. A few days later I climbed the hill to visit the tree. It had one spray of healthy, creamy white flowers – of which there had been no sign the week before – and new leaves were coming out from the tips of the

branches. In September the flowers turned to a spray of orange-red berries and the leaves began to turn red. Winter came and the leaves fell. The following spring the tree was covered in flowers and healthy new leaves.

There are a couple of points to make here that apply to any kind of shamanic healing. One is that it is no good bring a soul part back to the same situation that made it go in the first place. If the woodland that you are fond of is having a road cut through the centre of it, causing soul loss to the trees that are left then write letters to your M.P. and go out to demonstrate but don't do a soul retrieval yet. Leave that until the cutting and building is over and the heavy machinery has gone. (Although you can certainly use shamanism to bring comfort and symptom relief as an interim measure if your Teacher thinks that is okay.) This situation exists in case of on-going pollution, for example. You don't want to make things worse by your actions.

The other point is that, in any shamanic healing we are treating the spiritual cause of the situation. The pollution (for example) is a symptom of the spiritual dysfunction.

In one of the coastal towns near us there has, for many years, been a pipe pumping raw sewerage into the sea. The sea has been too polluted to swim in. Christine and I have done many years shamanic work in this town, much of it involving 'clearing

energies' – showing the energy spirits new paths to cross fences, busy roads, pedestrian precincts, things that had been built with the intention of blocking and diverting. Other work involved giving new purpose to the town spirits now that the fishing fleet has almost gone and tourist's needs are changing.

Over the years that we have been doing this something has changed in the town. Some sense of liveliness has returned that is obvious enough for friends who know the town well but have no interest in shamanism to notice and comment on. And the council has built a sewerage works. The beach now has a blue flag. Of course, these things might have happened anyway, although our Teachers say not.



What ethics apply to work with land spirits?

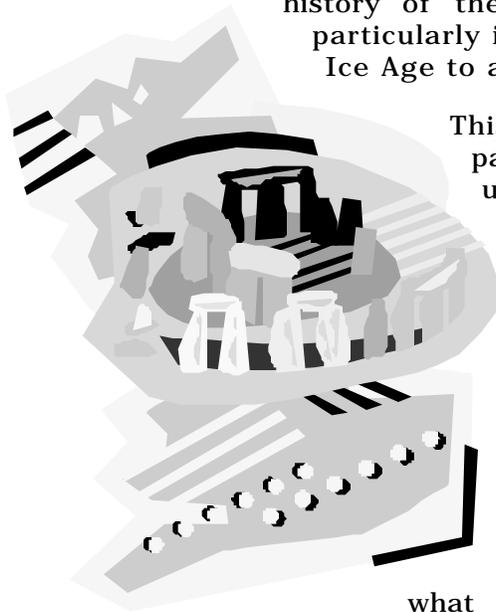
I can't see that the ethics needed for work with land spirits are any different from those needed to work with anyone, spirit or human or anything else. Honesty, integrity, an awareness of boundaries, seeking permission before doing work on someone/thing/where and keeping in mind that everything has its own path of which their soul knows more than we do.

Jane E. Shutt is a shamanic practitioner and teacher. With her partner Christine Mark, she runs the North Yorkshire Shamanic Centre (see workshop listing for details of forthcoming workshops).

A Sense Of Place

Mark Gough

For most of my life there has been a fascination within me concerning the development and history of the human species, particularly in Europe from the Ice Age to around 1000AD.



This transpired into a particular desire to understand and learn more about Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age Britain.

This, in turn, led me to study paganism and later to practise what is usually termed 'hedge witchcraft': one who practises

what is essentially witchcraft but who does so alone as opposed to within a coven.

After moving from the West Midlands to Hull in East Yorkshire, I came across an advertisement for the North Yorkshire Shamanic Centre and attended my first beginner's workshop soon afterwards. I had always felt that witchcraft had grown or splintered from shamanism, and in the four years that have followed since that first workshop I have learnt many core shamanic techniques and had life changing and enhancing experiences and challenges, which continue to develop me, expanding my knowledge and understanding of

many, many aspects of life.

Yet despite this, core shamanism can often be a set of techniques to heal, journey, psychopomp, retrieve soul parts, etc, especially if you have felt apart from the community in which you live, as I have often chosen to do. With a belief that I had very little in common with most people of today, I built the barriers between my world and theirs very high indeed.

My love of history and archaeology and the love and wisdom of my spirits are showing me that I am a useful part of the community; a community with which I have a great deal in common.

I have believed for a few years now that Britain and much, if not all, of the European mainland, was once full of shamans. Shamans working for the benefit of their communities and interacting with many spirits to ensure the safety of the community and the success of the hunting or farming activities throughout the year. I believe ancient shamans worldwide, whether consciously or unconsciously, set in motion the seasonal observances that have become the festivals of every religion.

Recently, new archaeologists, who are willing to speculate and theorise, are looking to the practices of surviving tribal societies to help them understand a little of the mindset of the cave painters, the hinge and megalith builders, those who built the burial chambers and burial mounds and who carved spirals, lozenges and other shapes in rock formations. What

they are arriving at is a theory that these societies were shamanic or shamanistic, and these remnants are evidence of journeys, ancestor worship, things they experienced when in trance states.

In Britain there is a great wealth of prehistoric structures in various states of condition; a wealth I fear the relevant government departments do not appreciate enough.

Not far from Hull is the village of Rudston, famous for its monolith. Upon further research, inspired by Julian Cope's wonderful book *The Modern Antiquarian*, I have realised that Rudston stands at the centre of a sacred landscape, in its own way as impressive as that of Avebury or Stonehenge.

The monolith itself stands upon a hillock, which is now surrounded by roads and buildings. The monolith even has to share the mound with a church and cemetery. In prehistoric times it would have been very different, with the monolith's mound boxed in by four cursuses.

A cursus is a long strip of land marked apart from the surrounding land by a ditch and inner bank, which are dug all around the perimeter of the strip of land. The remains of the longest cursus at Rudston run for one and a half miles, with the ditches about sixty yards wide. The purpose of a cursus is unknown, but it seems the land within the ditches was special and so separated from the surrounding land.

Another structure of note in the surrounding landscape is Willy

Howe, an enormous late Neolithic earth mound. Like Silbury hill, it is devoid of burials, but now has a deep cleft in it caused by the collapse of a Victorian excavation. Sadly, the Folkton round barrow, which contained the fabulous chalk drums (now in the British Museum), has been completely ploughed away, but there are many other surviving round barrows dotted around the landscape.

So here I am at the Winter Solstice of 2001, with a realisation of a link back to shamans who worked for the community around Rudston that built or shaped the wonderful structures there thousands of years ago to myself, a shamanic practitioner living within a human, plant, animal and earth community to which I know I can contribute. The walls will take time to come down, as I have much personal development and work to do on myself in order for this to happen, but I also have much more exploring at Rudston to do. The East Riding of Yorkshire finally feels like home, and not just where I happen to live.

Mark Gough is a shamanic practitioner living in Hull.

House and

Home - stories of middle world spirits

Karen Turner

It is well known that some shamanic practitioners do not recommend journeying to middle world spirits, as they regard these to be particularly dangerous. However, it seems both discourteous and short-sighted to ignore the spirits who surround us every day, and provided that we approach them with the same healthy respect that we would show any other spirits, they have a great deal to teach us.



A good place to start might be to meet the spirits of your house and garden, and to ask what you can do for them. When I journeyed to meet the spirit of our house, a huge green dragon appeared, curled around the house with her tail in the back yard and her head somewhere around the front upstairs windows. I asked how my partner, Mark, and I could honour her, and she taught me a song, and specified a ritual for us to carry out once a week. We light a candle and some incense in every room, greeting each room spirit by name, rattle round the room and sing the song that the house spirit gave us. This is very fulfilling in itself, but also offers a good opportunity to connect with the individual spirits

in each room on a regular basis to make sure that they are still happy and comfortable.

One thing that seems to make them very unhappy is decorating. It seems that house spirits like their homes to be clean, tidy and clutter-free, none of which is possible when stripping wallpaper. In my naivety, I simply started decorating the bathroom, without any explanation or apology to the spirits. I soon found that tools went missing, filler wouldn't set, wallpaper wouldn't come off, and so on. Once I had explained to the spirits what I was doing, they reluctantly allowed me to continue, but made it quite plain that they were hating every minute of it, and in some instances were grieving for the loss of old fixtures and fittings.

One of the most important things I have learned is that middle world spirits apparently live only in the present - they seem to have no ability to see what things could look like in two or three weeks time. All they can see is what is in front of them at that particular moment which, in the case of replacing the kitchen units, can be very traumatic for them. However, once any improvement works are finished, the spirits are generally very appreciative. The spirit of our kitchen appears as a very large spider, and for weeks after the new kitchen was installed, some of the biggest spiders we had ever seen came sprinting from the general direction of that room. Mark took this as a sign that the kitchen spirit might be trying to attract our attention, and journeyed to see her. It seemed that she was so pleased with her new-look kitchen that

she was sending us presents of as many spiders as she could get her hands on - quite formidable for the lifelong arachnophobe that I am!

Having spent the last six months decorating various rooms, I have now established a 'best practice guide'. What I have now taken to doing, before starting any home improvements, is journeying to the spirit most likely to be affected, saying 'This is what I'm going to do, it's going to be horrible and you're going to hate it; what can I do to make it easier for you?' Our living room spirits insisted on cake and beer every week until the work was finished, but still tried to hinder work in progress by hiding paintbrushes in the strangest of places.

When we planned to have our old wooden front door replaced with a upvc one, I thought it would be polite to journey to the old front door and explain what was going to happen to it, and to thank it for protecting us for such a long time. I asked to see the spirit of the door and a huge giant appeared. He sat on the floor with his legs outstretched, and patiently listened while I explained what was going to happen. 'So where will you go?' I finished. 'I?' he said, 'I? Go? I'm not going anywhere.'

I said, 'But if the door goes, doesn't that mean you have to go with it?' He seemed nonplussed, and asked, 'What have I got to do with the front door?' I was becoming a little exasperated, and said, 'If the door goes, and you're the spirit of the door, then don't you have to go together?' 'Oh,' he said, understanding at last, 'I'm not

the spirit of the door, I'm the spirit of the doorway.' I said, 'But I asked to speak to the spirit of the door.' He said rather dismissively, 'Oh, I ate that years ago.' After a stunned silence, I questioned him further and it emerged that he felt there wasn't room for both of them, and in any case he was hungry and so he ate it, and what was more, he fully intended to eat the spirit of the new door as well. Ever since that conversation, we make a point of being especially polite to the spirit of our doorway.

The improvements are at long last complete, and the house spirits have settled down, having pronounced themselves very happy with what we have done. Unfortunately, this is not the case for the house on the opposite side of



the street to ours. The man who lives there seems to start stripping a room in preparation for decorating, but then goes no further with it. Similarly, half the paintwork on the outside has been stripped, and half the porch has been built, and half a wall has been knocked down in the back yard. Concerned for his house spirit, I journeyed to meet it and found a female dwarf sitting on the roof, kicking her feet against the tiles. She had a suitcase by her side, and said, 'Either he goes or I do. I aren't stopping here to see him do any more damage to my house. He's took the plaster off the walls, he's took all the skirting boards off, all the doors off, and he's took the bathroom out. It's

damp, filthy, smelly, and I hate it and I hate him. And his dog.' I asked if I could do anything to help her, and she said it was neither my business nor my problem, and unless I could arrange for him to be taken away, she wasn't interested in talking to me. I came back suitably rebuked and humbled. A few months later, a possession notice appeared in the window, the occupant moved out, and the For Sale sign is swinging in the breeze. I suspect that the house spirit is now exhibiting a certain amount of triumph.

Gardens are, naturally enough, no different in terms of contacting the spirits who live there. Our garden is very small but quite densely planted, and whenever we journey to meet the garden spirit, we are surrounded by little people jumping up and down in great excitement, tugging at our legs and shouting 'Look at us! Aren't we pretty? Aren't we growing big?'

My own spirits gave me the rather challenging task last year of journeying to meet the spirit of each and every plant in the garden. At the last count, this was something in the region of two hundred and fifty, and one summer turned out to be not quite long enough, so the task is set to continue this year. The result so far is a large number of healthy, happy plants, and many passers-by who stop to admire them. The most common request from garden spirits seems to be 'Feed us, water us, talk to us, love us.' More or less the same requirements, in fact, as any other member of our community.

Karen lives in Hull, England and is a

*shamanic
practitioner.*

Bone Song



Caitlin Mathews

I was gorse on the track
beaconing the way,
I was seal in the sea, braving
the swell
I was wind-cuffer mounting the
bitter winds,
I was cloud billowing higher
than Hoy.

I was the stillness of midwinter
sun,
I was the gleaming in the
causeway stone,
I was the narrow waist between
two lochs
I was chaff from the quern
when oats were spun.

I was prey clutched in the
eagles' claws,
I was mist rainbowed over
squall,
I was yellow flag over the black
bog,
I was the fish between the
otter's paws.

All these have called to your
dancing round,
IN fire's gleam in star's seed,
when you sleep sound.
Before I was led to the
ancestors' home,
Listen the song of my
splintered bone.

(From a sequence of songs
given by the Tomb of Eagles).

Where the Vulnerable Meet the Powerful

John Ketarkus

In many or most countries, the helping/teaching professions have a code of ethics to guide them. These codes have appropriate and enforced sanctions for non-compliance. Examples of those professions include doctors, psychologists, schoolteachers, college professors, the clergy, etc. These codes of ethics recognize that when those seeking help/guidance/instruction interface with those who provide such services, that there is a hierarchical relationship.... "that the playing field is not level for all participants" ... "that the vulnerable are meeting the powerful"... "that the issue of consenting adults is not a factor"and, "that the power differential is both sacred and a matter of integrity."

Shamans, and the people who guide others to shamans, do not operate under a code of ethics. As a result, accounts of people being taken advantage of are, all too often, the norm. People with health, addiction, relationship, emotional, and other problems place their hopes and trust in shamans. Too often, these people's experiences range from simple "flim-flam" to being conned out of considerable sums of money, to rape. Many times "positive" results are often short-lived and solely emotionally based.



As with any referral source, responsibility for these tragic outcomes needs to be shared by the guides and group leaders who take people to visit shamans lacking in integrity. Unfortunately, these guides and group leaders often engage in the same unethical behaviours themselves. Guiding vulnerable people, "seekers", is a sacred trust. Vulnerable people, by definition, cannot give consent to be taken advantage of.

What can you do to protect yourself? Here are some suggestions;

1. Be aware of your vulnerabilities, particularly a need to have your ego stroked. Do not consider any shaman as necessarily "spiritual" or "ethical". By elevating a shaman you may be simply putting yourself in a one-down position...in more ways than one. Many writers describe shamans as "technicians of ecstasy"...and, like any other technician, they

are simply human.

2. If you elect to have a shaman perform a cleansing or "healing" ceremony, ask if yours will be private or witnessed by others. Ask if you will be required to disrobe. Ask if you will be put into a group or "production line" ceremony.
3. Ask if the shaman makes his or her living solely by doing "healing" ceremonies. Many legitimate shamans work at a



regular occupation ...just like you. Ask if any part of the shaman's income from doing ceremonies benefits the local community directly...and, ask what evidence there is of any claim made regarding helping others.

4. If you can, ask other people, particularly other non-tourist people about the effectiveness and integrity of the shaman. Do not necessarily take the group leader's word about these important matters.
5. Regarding the price for any "healing" ceremony... Be sure to establish this BEFORE the ceremony takes place. Does the shaman charge tourists and native people differently.... in other words, charge "what the traffic will bear"? Does the group leader get a percentage or other benefit as a result of bringing people to the shaman? Does the emphasis seem to be mostly on money? Often people
6. Note if the shaman is a marketeer... selling CDs, books, postcards, paintings, crafts, etc. When the emphasis is on marketing and business it is seldom on long lasting healing and spirituality.
7. Do not ingest any mind-altering substances without having a trusted and completely sober person with you during the entire experience. Unfortunately, shamans have taken sexual advantage of their clients were "under the influence", drugged. Beware of shamans who flatter and use suggestive/seductive behaviours. Women who have had sex with shamans almost always end up regretting that experience when the reality hits that the shaman and/or guide were only seeking sexual satisfaction, and nothing more.
8. Beware of shamans who do not have the integrity to tell people that they do not need a "healing" ceremony...not every person does.
9. Know that shamans often produce "credentials". These credentials are often nothing more than documentation of having paid a fee to protect their turf from those who would intrude. These "credentials" are no assurance of integrity and are

seek out shamans because they choose not to interact with clergy who perform ceremonies for hire... and, that is simply what many shamans do.

not issued by organizations that have an enforceable code of ethics.

10. BEFORE going with a guide either individually or in a group to visit a shaman, always ask for a comprehensive "unfiltered" list of previous clients and solicit as much feedback as you can about those people's experiences.
11. Learn to trust yourself. Pay attention to and trust your gut reactions and instincts regarding shamans. Do not get emotionally attached to a shaman. Do not let your ego lead you astray. Again, be honest with yourself about your vulnerabilities. Do not give your personal power away. You definitely do not have to do what a shaman tells you to do...you have a choice.
12. Read all you can about shamans and how they heal. There are many good, non-"air-fairy" books available both from scientific and non-scientific perspectives.
13. Be alert to shaman "tricks". Not unlike many T.V. evangelists, shamans often "play the percentages" in their diagnostic "readings". They will often speak in generalities, hoping that you will supply the specifics, while they are watching your every reaction to what they say. For example... "The candle flame tells me that something happened to you at ages 7, 14, 21, etc.... give or take a few years either way". A complete no-brainer! Almost every person will

resonate, to varying degrees, with these developmental age milestones. Even Shakespeare knew this! There are countless examples of shaman's "tricks". They have been and are students of human nature.

14. Many shamans are offering training programs or apprenticeships geared to stroking egos while emptying wallets and purses. It is interesting how many shamans will report that it took years for them to become a shaman...and yet will tell the public that they can become one in 6 or 9 weekends... for a price. Many people have been fleeced of hundreds of dollars just so that they could brag that they were a "shaman's apprentice". This is not to say that valuable helping skills cannot be learned in a weekend workshop...but, it is the simple truth that not everyone can obtain the same degree of healing or helping skill...no more than any doctor or psychologist can.

Wonderful, ethical, authentic shamans can still be found, though usually they are not on the tourist circuit. Many previously ethical shamans have lost their skills to facilitate long lasting healing... and, that has often coincided with shift to a strong focus on the acquisition of material wealth.

For all professionals, ethics are either internally imposed because the course of action is the right thing to do...or externally imposed because the



profession needs to be seen as credible. The later option in shamanism is almost unknown.

A great and famous shaman once said, "By their works shall ye know them." He did not say, "By their words..." Check out the long lasting effects of any work a shaman does. Don't be misled by their words.

Lastly, within each of us there is a shaman waiting to be awakened...awakened to a higher level of healing service to our fellow life travellers. The shaman's candle is simply a metaphor for our own inner light striving to shine in the darkness of today's world.

John Ketarkus lives in the Andes of northern Ecuador. He can be contacted through www.jambi-ecuador.com

Forthcoming

Events

JULY

5-7 **Doorway Of The Drum**

Chris Luttichau

During the course the wider cultural context of shamanism will be explored, and there will be an emphasis on how to apply and translate the direct, personal shamanic experiences in the contemporary world without losing the roots of this ancient path.

Venue: Cornwall residential-camping
Contact: Lu Wray 01736 796660
Price: £150

6 **Shamanic Work With the Land Part 1 of 3**

Jane Shutt

Develop your relationship with the land and its spirits. Working as described in the article in this issue.

Venue: North Yorkshire
Contact: 01751 417795
Price: £35

10-14 **Shamanic Dance, Shamanic Song**

Chris Luttichau

Shamanic cultures all over the Earth have used dance and song as a way to connect with the spirit world and to let the world of the known and the unknown come together. This course is an introduction to these old practices.

Venue: Cornwall residential-camping
Contact: Lu Wray 01736 796660
Price: £250

19-21 **The Shaman's Journey**

Jonathan Horwitz

During this basic course, participants will be introduced to some of the core ideas and methods used by shaman around the world, for thousands of years. The main emphasis of the course will be on the shamanic journey to the other, non-ordinary reality to gain power and knowledge for oneself and others.

Venue: Sweden
Contact: 00 46 031 775 2630

20-21 **Shamanic Healing Part 2 of 3**

Jane Shutt

Working With the shamanic view of health and some of the ways that you and your spirits can

deal with illness.
 Venue: Yorkshire inc. basic
 accommodation
 Contact: 01751 417795
 Price: £90

23-28 **Spiritual Healing & Ecology**

Jonathan Horwitz
 We will focus on communicating directly with the Spirits of Nature, learning from them and allowing them to teach us to help others, and ourselves, to come into harmony with our surroundings. We will learn from our spirit teachers and helpers how to sense, identify, and safely remove power intrusions, as well as how to find and use spirit-medicine. Much of the course time will be spent in nature.

Venue: Sweden
 Cost: 4300 SEK
 Contact: 00 46 031 775 2630

21-25 **Shamanic Dreaming**

Chris Luttichau
 Venue: Cornwall residential-camping
 Cost: £250
 Contact: Lu Wray 01736 796660

AUGUST

2-9 **Shamanic Walking**

Chris Luttichau
 Venue: Finnish Lapland
 Cost: 425 euros
 Contact: Lu Wray 01736 796660

16-22 **Shamanism and Peacemaking** **Myron Eshowsky**

We live in a world of separation, a world whose greatest wound is the illusion of separation from the great web that connects us all. It is the task of our times to heal a long history of war, trauma

and suffering that spans the generations and whose seeds live in soil we stand. We are asked to hold the great task of the shamans, to hold the balance of the world and to work for the great work of healing the world soul.

Venue: London
 Contact: Karen Kelly
 01223 562838
 Price: £75-£120

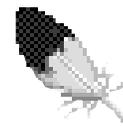
16-22 **Core Shamanic Counselling Training** **Jonathan Horwitz**

Shamanic Counselling is a spiritual counselling method based on classic shamanism. The aim of shamanic counselling is to put people into contact with their own spiritual power by teaching them the basic techniques of the shamanic divinatory journey.

Venue: Sweden
 Contact: 0045 32 54 28 08
 Price: DKK 5500

30-1 **The Shaman's Journey**

Jonathan Horwitz
 See July course for details
 Venue: London
 Contact: 0208 459 3028
 Kathy Fried



Editorial Policy

Spirit Talk is a grass roots networking newsletter for people interested in and working with core shamanism.

What draws us together is our work with the spirits: the focus of Spirit Talk is therefore on personal experience and the gifts of our spirit kin rather than being tied to any one tradition or teacher. Let this newsletter be a shining thread that draws us closer.

Disclaimer

Spirit Talk does not knowingly publish any material that is inaccurate or libellous. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor. Whilst making every effort to be accurate, the editorial team will not be responsible for any errors omissions or inaccuracies appearing in Spirit Talk.

Publisher

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Editorial

In April, I went out to Shamanic Circles' Gathering at Oracle in Arizona in April. It was inspiring to see so many shamanic folks gathering together to work unselfishly for this Earth we are all part of. The part of the gathering that touched me most deeply was the All Night Dance of Renewal.

I went out to Oracle feeling tired. I think its fair to say that my practise has been through a low point recently, thus the long interval between this Spirit Talk and the last. I love the spirits, I love the beauty and the challenge that working with them brings me and I love this birthing community.

At the same time I have been feeling burnt out by it all. Last summer my friend David Scott who ran the London Drumming Group with me for years, decided to emigrate to Holland to be with his partner. I thought I had to carry on alone and whilst I had asked two friends Malcolm and Shenoah to step into facilitating with me, I wasn't really letting go. At the same time last autumn I finally let go of working with the man who had been my teacher for years. And I was struggling (am struggling) to find a way of practising that is honest and real with who and where I am.

The result of all this was that I arrived in Oracle feeling like I had to do it all alone. In my head I knew that was rubbish, but somehow that was how I was feeling and acting.

In the long night of dancing, the drums beat all night, the dancers circled the fire all night. It was the kind of ceremony that normally I would have felt that as one of the organisers I had to be dancing all night.

In the end, I slept for several hours in the middle of the night, knowing with utter certainty that the circle would hold and that the dance would continue without me. I have returned feeling somehow softer with myself, feeling more able to let go and trust. And somehow knowing that in that long dance of renewal, of giving for the Earth, I myself was renewed.

We are all part of the dance, of the Earth. As we destroy her, we destroy ourselves. As we turn to healing, we heal our own bodies and souls.