

Journey Checklist

(Mary "Tyrtle" Rooker, <<http://www.ShamanicSpring.com>> 2/9/09)

Framing Your Question

- 1) Avoid asking more than one question
- 2) Avoid When questions: prophecies can be off by centuries
- 3) Avoid Why questions:
Some whys are too big; we are just to live our lives as adventure and let go of need to know.
- 4) Avoid Yes or No questions
 - Bones and other tools can be used for yes/no questions, but be careful not to give your authority away to the spirits.
 - Spirits see life as an adventure and may say “yes,” even though you’ll be “hurt” by a lesson; the spirits protect you from harm but not from “lessons”; “lessons” are “good”
- 5) For Where questions, try the Sunbeam journey (Labrador Naskapi shamans). Visualize the places in question and look to see where the sunbeam in your journey is shining down. Look for a beam, not just sunshine.
- 6) If you’re journeying about a relationship issue:
Don't ask “What does this person need to change?”/“How can I get this person to change?”
Ask “How can I heal my relationship with this person?”
- 7) Never journey or do any shamanic work with the intention to harm another or yourself.
- 8) Always make sure you have consent if journeying for another (unless coma).
Asking for help is part of the healing process.
People are entitled to their illnesses, addictions, etc.

Controlling Mind Chatter

- thoughts as clouds passing; Gently REPEAT YOUR INTENTION over and over till 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, rest, etc.
- get out of your head! breathe into your heart
- 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, forget traffic to get here, errands or evening plans
- for some, being too comfy means you fall asleep; others need to be comfortable
- you drum or rattle (live drumming or rattling)
- sing your journey aloud as you go
- sing your journey aloud as you go into a tape recorder
- 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 (Sandy trick)

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 to cultivate a Pavlov response; they entrain the brain to a powerful “good” habit.*

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

Try Earth Merger Exercise. Merge with the Earth. As you become one with Earth, connect your heartbeat so your heartbeats are one. Once you are in this connective state, embrace the Earth energies with the understanding that you and the Earth are one --- one organism, one heartbeat. From this place of connection, ask your questions, do your healing work, or meditate.

Interpreting Your Journey

Remember: the spirits speak in metaphors and symbols

- Did the journey feel easy or difficult?
- What was the weather, time of day/ year?
- What was the mood? Any colors or smells?
- How was the tunnel: dark or bright, damp or dry, warm or cold, jagged or smooth?
- Who came through during dancing?
- If this had been a movie, what would background music have been?

Filters. Your helping spirits will present the "answer" or "healing" using metaphors that make sense to you, that are tailored to you. So don't interpret another's journey, and don't ask anyone else to interpret your journeys for you. The filter works both ways:

- 1 - the spirits are tailoring the image or words or symbols, etc. to you, and
- 2 - we tailor the image, words, symbols, etc. to fit into our boxes, our reality.

It's also possible that you're distorting the answer (in a less helpful way) because it's coming through your filters. For example, someone occasionally perceives their power animal or teacher as being upset with them; this is just not possible to my knowledge. The perception is possible, but not the reality. The compassionate helping spirits are not stubborn and don't act out, so don't ever think you're being punished or abandoned or whatever; the spirits have only the deepest compassion for you --- always.

Expanding Your Journeys from the Basics

Learn to ask the spirits for help.

Be the one experiencing the journey, not just "watching tv."

Shapeshift into your power animal.

Explore other openings, entryways, or starting points

(Enter through a picture or mandala; Celtic openings: fog, mist).

Explore other "horses": rattle, didjeridoo, song, waterfall (Celtic), and droning sounds.

Explore other positions: lying down, sitting, standing, dancing, walking.

(Caution: you can't polish/habituate/entrain if you keep distracting yourself with changes.)

Explore to find which opening, horse, position works best for you; stick with it. Once your practice is solid, try other entryways again.

Experiment with longer journeys ... and with shorter journeys!

Explore all three (upper, lower, and middle) worlds.

'Explore the "levels" of the upper and lower worlds (caution: these levels aren't "real," just mental constructs that some find helpful).

Be able to journey alone (cd, drum, rattle, didj ...) At home or anywhere!

Be able to call your power animals or teachers to you when you're not journeying.

Practice "checking in" with them when you're not in trance to be able to get answers without journeying.

Deepening Your Connection to Source

--- Journey to your power animal or teacher and ask them what would deepen your connection to Source at this time.

--- "Honor" and connect with your Self before journeying by moving or singing a special song to call yourself here and now ("calling up your song"; not necessarily "Power Song"; one is Your song, other is Source's song).

--- "Honor" and connect with your power animal/teacher before journeying by dancing with them or singing a special song to them.

--- We've lost a lot of power by giving up singing, dancing, and drumming. We can reclaim that power by vocalization and movement. Merge with your power animal and any teacher during dancing before journeying.

--- Do special journeys now and then to thank your power animal/teacher (take them food, have a picnic ... no question or request or work).

--- Make regalia or masks or eye curtains of your power animal or teacher.

--- Journey to ancestors and descendants.

--- Connect with the land when you travel; introduce yourself and say why you're there.

--- Have one or more vacation spots in the journey realms.

--- Ask your power animal or teacher to show you their home(s) in the upper and lower worlds.

--- You could build a house for yourself in the upper and lower worlds.