



# Indie Shaman

for independent spirits

Issue 46

£2.50

*Imagination*

*A tribute to  
magical storyteller,  
Martin Pallot*

*Chemistry  
and Shamanism  
Death as a Gateway  
to Life  
Transcendent Wisdom  
of the Maya*



## Indie Shaman

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ISSN 2050-568X (Online)

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Indie Shaman is a member of the Pagan and Heathen Symposium <http://pagansymposium.org/> and registered as Made in Derbyshire <http://www.madeinderbyshire.org/>

## Cover Features



Chemistry  
and  
Shamanism



Death  
as a  
Gateway to  
Life



Transcendent Wisdom of  
the Maya

# Contents

## Features

- 5** Imagination
- 7** Chemistry and Shamanism
- 10** Death as a Gateway to Life
- 13** Transcendent Wisdom of the Maya: Initiation as a Form of Death
- 17** Egg Medicine: The Art of Diagnostic Egg Reading and Healing
- 23** A Lockdown Plant Odyssey
- 27** Northern Plantlore: Mistletoe

## Regulars & Snippets

- 4** Editor's Letter
- 31** Story Teller's Corner: A Samhain Tale
- 35** Columnist: Shaman Moon by Yvonne Ryves
- 38** Lucky Draw Competition - 'Broken Skies'  
  
Shay Mann
- 39** Book Reviews
- 42** Lucky Draw Competition and Review - Earth Pathways Diary and Calendar
- 43** Events Calendar

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Proofreading - Isobel Davy  
Printing - Minuteman Press, Bristol  
Distribution - [indieshaman.co.uk](http://indieshaman.co.uk)  
Indie Shaman logo courtesy of Cat Hawkins

WEBSITE: <https://indieshaman.co.uk/>  
DISCUSSION GROUP: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/indieshaman/>  
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# Editor's Letter

Welcome to Issue 46 of Indie Shaman.

It is with great sadness that I begin with the news that Martin Pallot passed on this July. Martin became proof reader for Indie Shaman in 2013, we first published his poetry on the back cover of issue 21 in 2014 and more recently he had also taken on the role of sub-editor. But he is probably best known as 'The Storyteller'; publishing his first story for Indie Shaman, *A Deer Hunt*, in our 10th anniversary edition back in 2016. And we are fortunate that he always kept me well supplied with stories 'in advance' so I can continue to share these with you for a year or so.

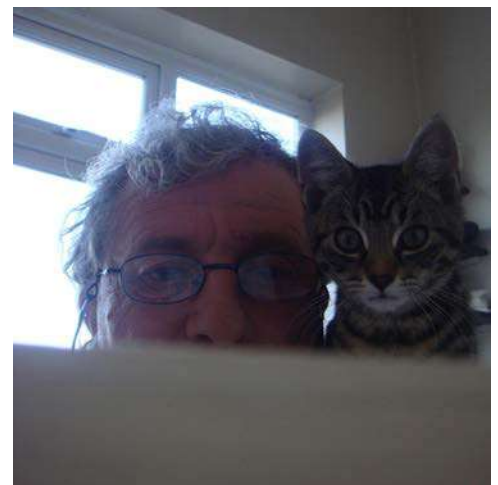
I first met Martin via Facebook in March 2013. We never met in person (one of those things that you assume will take place one day; not that it actually mattered) but we found we had quite a few things in common as well as our mutual belief in animism, including a connection to Croydon, odd eyes and a similar sense of humour. Martin and I chatted a lot over the phone during the weeks of 'lockdown', usually starting by talking about Indie Shaman, ending having 'put the world to rights' and having found something to laugh about along the way.

This edition has been a very emotional one to produce; I've worked for more years on the magazine with Martin's help and friendship than I've worked without. At times I've had to stop what I'm working on and walk away from it for the day. But I can feel Martin peering over my shoulder; modestly in denial (while secretly pleased) when I give praise where it's well due ... and letting me know if I accidentally put in an Oxford comma. On the morning I drafted Martin's Samhain story into the magazine and updated his biography, I received a phone call from Isobel Davy volunteering as proof-reader. Then while eating lunch later that day I saw that Susan Latchford had posted on Facebook that the bear she had drawn, which I had seen earlier and which reminded me of Martin, was actually inspired by him. There are some wonderful people in this world! It all left me feeling strongly that he was still around lending a hand. And I know he would have loved the synchronicity of the articles sent by other authors for this issue, something we often commented on when working on the magazine, especially Brian Anderson sending me *Death as a Gateway to Life* a mere two days after I heard of Martin's passing. If ever there was a message!

As I write this in mid-September there is a celebratory ceremony planned, organised by Martin's local friends, to take place in Epping Forest hopefully next Spring. I am unlikely to be able to attend in person but will give my thanks for him to the Hawthorn at the bottom of our garden and they will pass them on via the great plant network to the trees of Martin's beloved Epping Forest, so my voice will be with his on the breeze and my drum will sound among those of his friends.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Indie Shaman which is both a tribute to and inspired by a wonderful, kind, generous and very talented man who was great in bear-spirit. With many thanks to friends old and new: to Kat, Suzi, Kate and most especially to Lynne, for taking time within their own grief to share and support others; to Isobel for lending a much-appreciated hand and to Yvonne, who's been good for 'ear bending' since the beginnings of Indie Shaman.

Many blessings  
June



Martin Pallot  
aka Moonmad Antlerman  
January 1956 - July 2020



# Imagination

*Martin Pallot*

*Artist: Susan  
Latchford*



## **Editor's Note:**

*While working on Indie Shaman magazine Martin and I were considering writing something together; the main issue with this being that I personally never actually got down to writing anything. So we had begun to exchange thoughts and short articles – responding to the thoughts sent by the other - in order to encourage me to actually put pen to paper ... or fingers to keyboard. And it worked, briefly, as witnessed by my one article in the magazine this January (thank you Martin).*

*The following article comes from two pieces of writing Martin sent me. Both date from around the time I wrote my article 'When I Was Young'; the main article 'Imagination' was in response to that so would have been written in early 2020. And it seemed to me that there is far too much wisdom in these writings for them to now simply sit, wasted, in a folder on my computer so here is my edited amalgamation ...*



I am an only child; but I was never a lonely child.

Growing up on the edge of open country, I would play in the woods and had invisible friends, mainly Bear and Crow but others too. Because I was into faerie tales in a big way I always guess I thought - although I didn't really think about it - of these beings as coming from me in some way and not really being 'out there'. Then, when I was about eight, I went down to Cornwall with my folks and we stayed with relatives. My uncle was the local gunsmith and had to take a shotgun back to a local farmer so my dad and I went with him. This guy was having his fields dowsed for a water course (this was 1964/5) and the dowser saw I was interested and let me try. The first pass nothing happened. I think it was because I was an 8 year old in front of a group of adults because when I tried again and the dowser distracted me by telling a funny story, the Hazel was literally yanked out of my hands by the water.

That was when I began in my childish way to see that there was stuff out there that you couldn't see but was still real nonetheless and as time passed I began to see that maybe some of my invisible friends were 'out there' too.

If there is a place we call the 'Otherworld' and if it be filled with those beings we believe it be filled with, then to them, this world is the 'Otherworld' and may be just as full of magic and mystery ...



I believe, as I think did many of our ancestors, that the imagination is a bridge; a bridge between the 'here and now' on one side and the 'there and then' (where and whenever that may be) on the other.

As a child you cross the bridge often; you create pathways and tracks on the other side, meet with strange and marvelous beings who live in either magical realms or mundane places that, in everyday, you might not normally have access to. You add each of these meetings to your personal '*mappa othermundi*' and in so doing you add to that greater globe which is known by those sweepingly general, generic names of 'Faerie', 'Spirit', 'Dream', 'Otherworld' or whatever. That world that writers, artists, mystics, shaman, children and all other transpentine travelers have visited and still visit.

The problem is that when you're a kid - a little kid - it's all "Oh, he's got such a wonderful imagination" or it's "Oh bless, she's always off in a world of her own". But then you get older and suddenly it's "Oh don't be stupid, it's only your imagination" or it's "You want to try living in the real world young lady"! And it all gets taught, churchied or even slapped out of us; all the magic, all the paths, all the places and all the people we knew; fade and are gone. The writers and artists get dismissed as fabricators of fiction or as mad, bad and dangerous to know; the shaman and mystics get dismissed as primitive or drug addled or (worst of all) uncivilized; the children get 'grown' up. And so the barriers come down across the bridge, the paths get overgrown and the people slowly, sadly, slip away. Although sometimes, in a dream, we might catch a glimpse of a pair of eyes between the leaves, except now we think we've had a nightmare or that we shouldn't eat cheese before going to bed. So that whole world is lost to us, even when it's as close as the bottom of the garden ...

Or maybe not ...

Here's the thing; you have to learn to trust the bridge again; to ignore the gaps in the footway (there only *appears* to be nothing below you but you still don't want to go there just yet, not this early in your exploration).

First you have to get those barriers shifted, which might be difficult since they could be very set in their ways and you need to determine what they're made of and why they're there. Here you need to remember that old truth about the land of Faerie reflecting back on the traveler the light that he or she brings to it; these barriers will be made of something you brought to them. It might be fear or education, or habit or religion, or a death, or some combination of these or other things. Anything that might have contributed to making you 'grow up' (as the saying goes).

Whatever caused those barriers to happen, the thing to remember is that *you* allowed their existence... yes, you did ... even if they were built by someone or something else, it is *your* bridge and ultimately it is *your* responsibility. Fortunately however, this means that, ultimately, it is also your right and responsibility to *disallow* their existence.

This may require several visits and great patience to gradually unpick, unravel and deconstruct the various bits of each barrier. Or it may require a phrase spoken from the heart - a kind of 'open sesame' or perhaps 'I'm sorry' to remove the obstacle. Then of course there are all those years of neglect and dismissal to deal with and clear away ... but don't be despondent, look on it as a great adventure, a rediscovering of the forgotten pathways of yourself.

When you do finally reach the other side of your bridge, you may find there is a gate keeper or guardian, possibly an 'imagined' aspect of a favourite toy or an invisible friend; or some, possibly small, being that has kept the faith and believed in what may have become the half-remembered, half believed fairy tale of *your* return.

Enjoy the reunion and then, safe in the knowledge of their trust and strength of purpose, go and find the rest of the magic.

#### **Editor's Note and Artist Information**

'Magician Bear' was created by artist Susan Latchford who said "*This bear was inspired by the wonderful Martin Pallot - a poet and storyteller who, sadly, is no longer shining his light in this world but has gone on to light up the cosmos. My idea was that the individual snowflakes were all the different poems and stories; the markings on the bear is all the magic that Martin made with his talent.*"



# Chemistry and Shamanism

Dr Eleanor Johnson



*Calcium*

Artist: Lies Van Hee

As a child, I loved writing stories. I revelled in listening to them and being transported to other places reading them. Even now as an adult, I will still seek out the storytellers at festivals and sit on the grass cross-legged in front of them. I soak up the sounds, images and feelings as they wash over me. It's a visceral experience, scientifically proven to create long-term memories. Storytelling is the oldest form of imparting knowledge by millions of years. Text books just aren't the same.

Like many students, I found chemistry hard. I stared out of the window in many lessons, not connected with the content the teacher was imparting. I relied on friends to copy from or explain in stifled whispers what I needed to do. Missing so much theory made it difficult to understand the subject further down the line. In the end I memorised the text books, regurgitated what I could remember, and got through the exams.

Having a strange determination to work on that which I don't understand, I chose to study Chemistry for A Level and then a master's degree after leaving school. I knew it would be a way for me to make a positive impact on the environment further down the line. It was challenging, long hours and at times excruciatingly difficult. Over the four long years it began to flow more easily and not content

with giving up I took on a PhD in Sustainable Chemistry. Collaboration, working with other disciplines and finding different ways to looking at problems, was essential. Huge microscopes allowed me to look deeper into the fabric of material reality. I was starting to enjoy myself. The project had a purpose I believed in – cleaning up chemical waste streams.

Although my research was incredibly rewarding, I never felt completely at home in the scientific community. During my PhD I began to seek out ways of looking at reality that were outside of the 'norm' for that environment. I experimented with discussing these ideas with colleagues and soon learned it was something one didn't talk about – not because scientists have dogmatic views, although that mind-set does surface occasionally – but because they simply did not have the tools or language to be able to communicate in this way. When I moved to an off-grid community after university, I remember being struck by how the people I met there seemed to speak a different language. A language I did not yet understand, that came from being connected to their emotions and rooted in themselves. Having gone through 8 years of higher education, I felt this was what I really wanted to learn.

I came back to chemistry when I became a tutor a few years later; I realised I had a shaky basic understanding of the subject and had to re-learn all the fundamentals. But this time it was for a reason. I wanted to help my students, to reassure them they weren't the only ones who found it difficult. That it was the way chemistry is presented that makes it inaccessible, not a shortcoming of their intellect.

Over time, I became more and more interested in shamanism. It sat well with me as a practice that did not require belief but exploration, discovery and finding out things for yourself. The day a surprise and exact sum appeared in my bank account I booked onto the one year training with Northern Drum, where I met and became part of a wonderful circle of people.

There were many parts of the course which were deeply challenging. Standing in the circle in the beginning, waiting to say my name, my heart was pounding hard in my chest. I was sure other people could see my fear and would find me lacking. It took a lot of work and courage to feel comfortable speaking in front of a group. However, I found the journeying came easily. Perhaps years of daydreaming had helped me in some way. Nature began to come alive and I understood that many aspects of the Universe can be communicated with, learnt from and inspired by.

With this realisation I began to experiment with journeys to the chemical elements of the periodic table. I started with Calcium. The room was set out in a ceremonial fashion, as we had been taught. There was a candle, sage, my drum and me. Everything had to be done properly. The familiar steady drum beat washed over me. I was nervous as I stepped forward and said: "I am Ellie. I am here to meet the Spirit of Calcium. I would like to ask some questions so I can share your answers with the students I teach, so they may better understand you".

And there she was. Here is her story.

*"Calcium materialises softly, a beautiful shimmering body wrapped in a fine purple mist. She shows where she resides on the Earth: from the strong bones of the elephant, the deep green leaves of spinach, to the vast expanses of chalky rock and limestone covering the land.*

*Calcium has been here since the Earth formed, in the first magma which raged and flowed for eons. Gracefully the lava cooled and slowed to form rock in the Earth's crust. Just as rocks once burned with intensity, Calcium viscerally shows that bones are not just static and solid but full of life. Calcium is timeless. She embodies earthly strength, pragmatism and abundance. She urges us to eat leafy green vegetables to replenish our life force. This will keep the fire burning within us all."*

#### *Pragmatism – Strength – Grace*

The sense of wonder I felt was awesome. This meeting had changed everything. I was so excited; I told anyone who would listen. The way I, and many others before me, have looked at chemistry completely shifted in that moment. Suddenly there was another way.

I began visiting more elements. They were just as forthcoming, totally unique and wonderful in their own ways. There were so many stories to tell, so much wisdom to impart. Chemistry itself began



to come alive. Fully alive, in the way the nature does when you allow it to communicate with you. A journey of rich experiences was unfolding. Asking the elements the same four questions gave a consistency to the stories. The wisdom each element holds is enormous. Many of them invite us to spend time with them. Some are deeply connected to humanity and have most likely been communicated with before. A few have warnings for us. They can all be learned from, in their own way. Once I had a collection of the first twenty elements I began dreaming of sharing them with the world. I had a sense that this was a life's work, that I would continue working with it for a long time. I felt it would have a positive impact with children and adults alike. It also brought together two sides of myself that have until now been separate.

I began entertaining the idea of self-publishing and when Lies Van Hee saw the little notebook of stories and suggested illustrating them, I was overjoyed. I knew she was the perfect artist to do the elements justice. Her work on this project is absolutely incredible. Lies connected with the elements in a way that continually surprised me. Each painting captured their essence in a beautiful way. I was reassured that she could sense them. There was a commonality between our experiences in working with the elements. Our work sparked many conversations, opening up avenues of exploration between the roles of 'scientist' and 'artist'. We continue these fruitful meetings in an effort to more fully understand each other, as collaborators and as friends.

Committed to becoming a secondary science teacher, I left the shamanic training year filled with purpose. During teacher training I used some of the chemical elements stories with my classes. I invited students to write their own story or make their own artistic interpretation of a chemical element of their choice. Their work was overwhelming. Just a few stories read in class had inspired them to write incredibly insightful things. Their creativity was awesome. They were so engaged, their work was on another level; innocent, touching and raw. And the best thing – they had all researched their element themselves. They had taken ownership of their own learning. There was science woven into the narratives. Their understanding of chemistry had deepened, through this one invitation to express themselves in a different way.

The scope for involving shamanism and storytelling in education is far-reaching. I believe it is absolutely essential. I dare to imagine a time where the elements that make up everything are held in the highest regard. Where they can be listened to, learned from and invited to impart knowledge. Knowledge on how we can live healthy, harmonious lives which support life on the planet. Where we think twice about mining elements or using them for warfare. A time when scientists and engineers work with nature rather than against it. It's a big dream, but as Carbon so aptly explains, we can embrace our collective power and together, change everything for the better.

## Biographies

**Dr Eleanor Johnson** began her studies in Chemistry at the University of Bath. After completing a Masters in Chemistry she began a doctorate in Sustainable Chemistry. Researching Enzyme Fuel Cells, she developed clean methods for removing waste from chemical plants. By harnessing the power of nature this waste can be converted into fuel. Eleanor's research inspired a passion for empowering a growing sustainable scientific industry. Throughout this time her fascination with spiritual practices grew and since graduating Eleanor became drawn to exploring shamanic cultures. Training with Northern Drum gave space and time to explore chemistry as she never had before. Through drum journeys she was able to connect with the Chemical Elements of the Periodic Table and 'interview' them one by one. Bridging the gap between science and spirituality has always been a key personal focus; Eleanor's aim is to inspire future generations to take the opportunity to know and understand the chemical elements and to see them as precious gifts to be respected. She is currently working as a Science Teacher in Devon, UK.

**Lies Van Hee** is a Belgian artist, currently living and working on Dartmoor, UK. She brings together different art disciplines into a practice dedicated to the world of embodied soul. Her fascinating body of creative work vibrates with simplicity, authenticity and clarity. Lies' visual work is a reflection of her own on-going journey in aligning the body, mind and soul. When Lies was invited to collaborate on Journeys to the Chemical Elements it ignited a passion to journey deeper into the fabric of existence. With a profound respect for the natural world, she approached the Chemical Elements as sentient beings enabling her to translate this meeting in colour and movement.

**Journeys to the Chemical Elements** aims to connect people to the elements of the Periodic Table through storytelling and art, bringing the Arts, Science and Spirituality together. To order please visit <https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/chemistryjourneys> or visit the Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Journeys-to-the-Chemical-Elements-109525874156957>

# *Death as a Gateway to Life*

*Brian Anderson*



Even when it is anticipated at the moment the great 'huntress', as death is sometimes spoken of, touches us on the shoulder to claim us, she comes as an unannounced visitor. Can we really imagine a world without us? From the moment we are born we step into the world and our life unfolds breath by breath, as a result with each breath we naturally come closer towards death - both are inevitable. Our Death is a natural part of life and one we are destined to meet as the circle of our life completes. Our own physical death is one of the very few certainties that we carry around this circle.

I have always had a curiosity and wonder of death ever since I was a small child. Around the age of two I had an encounter with death through an illness. Although I have no conscious memory of it, I have explored this time in shamanic journeying and among a number of lessons that I learnt was an opportunity to hold in life a strong awareness of my own destiny of death, which has proved to be both a challenge and a blessing.

I had another encounter in my late twenties where death was close by once more. It was a time that I was very lost in life and I was being helped by an art therapist whose name was Megan. At this time very little was consistent in my life such as my unmanageability. However, each week I would attend sessions with Megan at the hospital I was under. One week I attended as usual and Megan was not there, the sessions were for a number of us and the group went ahead with the other therapists. I sat wondering where she was and at some point they announced that Megan had died during the week. I later found out that over the year she had been supporting me she had been living with cancer. I too, for very different reasons, was close to death and on some level was very aware of this although handling it in a quite different way to Megan. Her death touched me deeply. She had shown such dedication and kindness to me and somehow her death and way in life inspired me to live; it offered a gateway for me to step through. It was soon after this experience in November 1999, in that same hospital room, that my own spiritual awakening occurred and I turned away from a meeting with death towards life.

Death is a very powerful force and the ripples of its presence will touch and weave around us in so many ways. We each may have un-processed grief sitting within us which will awaken as new grief comes. And how we respond to our grief will affect our life in the years to come. Family dynamics and unresolved issues will rise up as each of us deals with death in the way we can. It can be a time of coming together and of breaking apart.

In my own Irish heritage we have the practice of keening, where professional keeners were paid to lead the wail of death to express the pain and grief as a way of paying respect which was also thought to help the deceased cross over. This raw and chaotic expression I feel captures the sound of grief and is a beneficial and healing way of expressing this emotion.

As a shamanic practitioner my experiences with psychopomp inform my own understanding and beliefs. When my father died, I very soon realised that the way I view death was very different to my family and others who were touched by his life and grieving, as we each dealt with this in the way we could and were able and willing to.

On the day I found out that he had died I made a conscious choice that I wanted to experience all of



this and as a result my process through grief was deeply raw and painful, yet also filled with moments of great beauty and joy; a deeply rich and honest experience. Ongoing ceremony and a final pilgrimage home to Ireland served as a way to honour and celebrate his life as well as being a container and healer for my own grief process.

I took responsibility and the role of organiser in my family during the immediate weeks after my father's death and arranged and put all in place. The process was rich and illuminating and yet the funeral rite, while beautifully offered by the celebrant, was lacking in real meaning for me. Once this time was done, I let go of my role and retreated back into my own personal path of honouring this man that gave me life.

How we come to our beliefs around death and what happens afterwards will be shaped by our personal and cultural experience as well as our willingness to face this subject. The media is full of stories of death but in some way I think we have become de-sensitized and disengaged from this natural force. In my own learning to be a Celebrant I seek to offer a meaningful and personal space after the death of a loved one for the living to say farewell. And as with a birth and the provision of maternity leave, I would welcome a significant period of 'death leave' to work through the process of our grief. I once worked with a colleague who was "strongly encouraged" to return back to work, giving them no space to grieve their father's death. A year to the day of his death they broke apart leading to months off work - what would have happened instead if a supportive space had been given to work through their grief?

Within my father's death I claimed this space and over four or so months moved through the process until after my pilgrimage and retreat to return his ashes to Ireland. The intensity of the initial phase was complete and I could return to life, changed but able to fully engage once again in a more significant way as a result of having had the space to grieve.

I have my own understanding of what happens once we die. Which I am willing to suspend as I know clearly that, as in life, there is a great mystery and beyond the veil of our death cannot fully be known until we cross the threshold. I have brought questions to the spirits in my journeys and the resulting guidance has led me to understand that what occurs at death is a change of form; death does not actually exist beyond the physical absence that is left when another dies. Having seen a number of dead bodies it seems clear to me that the animating force of spirit has left, leaving only the physical matter.

What I do know of death is that walking hand-in-hand with an awareness of Her brings a great power that can support us - this knowledge of the inevitable can deeply feed life. In my daily practice every morning I take a moment to honour the ancestors by way of prayer and acknowledgement to the altar I have for them in blood, tradition and of the land. On this is a bone I gathered from a beach in Shetland; I hold this to acknowledge this may well be my last day alive on Earth and then I too will be an ancestor with them. And, of course, if I continue with this practice one day I will be correct in this statement. This practice helps me in some way appreciate life in a deeper way and helps loosen the grip of day-to-day life.

Death is very much part of life and we all experience 'little deaths' each day as we move through life. While on my shamanic practitioner training the intensity of each of the five days was a process of death in many ways; the transition back into my everyday life as I integrated these worlds of spirit and remembering these ancient ways led me into a new relationship with life. Grief is a very powerful emotion; whether it is addressed or not it will have an effect. As life is a fluid force and is constantly moving, both out on the land and within us also, how are we to navigate and move through our grief in a way that honours both the living and the dead? We live largely in an uninitiated society and as such have limited maps for life transitions; death being only one of these that is no longer supported by tradition and the elders beyond the modern funeral.

Seeking the creative impulse and guidance of spirit can bring me back to this wisdom. As a result of this, I have been able to create meaningful ceremony that leads me through the death process in a fluid way thus moving into and beyond my grief. It has been a great support in this for me to remember and work with the ceremonies that acknowledge the seasons as we move through the births and deaths in the wheel of each year - death is ever present.

When my father died and I made that promise to myself to experience all of this deeply, I could not

imagine what an amazing journey I was about to undertake and in this any remaining fear around death seems to have loosened even more of its grip on me. Over a period of the last 20 years I became very close to my father while alive and the things that we needed to talk about were spoken and resolved as such that when he died we were at peace with each other. I know from my work with others that there are many ways in which this peace and healing can be found through creativity, ritual, ceremony, honesty and courage even after death.

My father was the first person that ever brought me to the land and on hearing of his death that is where I went. That time was just beautiful - I had a real sense of peace and a number of interactions with wildlife in my local wood as if the land knew of his death. There is an ancient practice of telling the bees that someone has died; maybe it is understood that each one of us is affected upon death and the whole universe has changed with the absence of another.

In the evening I drummed with the fire to honour his life, I felt the ancestors close by - a circle sat behind me that my father was now part of. The next day I woke sobbing and was held in an embrace by my wife. Then I took the journey to our family home some 10 hours away. On this journey and for about six weeks afterwards I would tell people - even strangers - that my father had died. In some way it made it real for me but also I was sharing my grief with others, strangers became companions in this. It's in my nature to be open with people. Of course, people responded in their own way but this openness allowed for many beautiful synchronicities and powerful sharing with others, as we are all touched by death in some way and at some time. When a space is given to talk of death people seem to jump in and open up. In my openness I was supported, challenged and became witness to other's sharing.

Everything changes once someone dies. As I entered our family's house someone I'd never met before immediately said: "Oh you are just like your father". No-one had ever said this to me before and yet in the weeks to come it was said a number of times. Although I was the youngest child, in many ways I took on the role my father would have played and somehow this could be seen. People respond to grief in their own way and the dynamics in our family were very difficult. It was then I became grateful and recognised the strength I found from my spiritual life, both in the spirit world and in the human world. This gave me something that I could lean into and receive support from because I really needed it as, once again, I became the object of my family's unresolved issues. I trusted the spiritual world and my own trusted spirits gave me love and support. I was also really touched by the love and support from my human community in often unexpected ways. When death arrives and we meet our grief the support seems to come close to us if we can reach out and accept it.

My wife is Italian and when my father-in-law died, I spent three days sitting with his body in the hills of Calabria. People came and told stories and paid their respects; this experience was beautiful. I learnt things about him I would never have known. It was a very healing process for me and my wife and I am sure for others as well - the respect for life and death was beautifully tangible. Death is a shared community experience and we can offer space for the grief and memories to be shared.

As our spiritual and physical worlds weave in and out so too does this dance with life and death. From my curiosity, experience and research I have developed a three-day course to explore this, which I offer each Samhain, 'Contemplating our Death'. Its aim is to clear a path in a safe, supportive and creative way, towards a deeper and richer life. The more we are accepting of death the more we can become willing to engage with life. I know as I enter the autumn of my own life, I am grateful to have had this relationship with death as a companion in the complexities that each day and year brings.

Having crossed the threshold that my father's death offered to me, now, three years on, I am aware of the knowledge of his death in that physically I can not see him on the earth, yet I feel his presence around me and while I feel sad at times I also feel deeply connected to him. In many ways he has been able to give to me in death something he was unable to in life.

Death is a powerful force and if we meet it fully, a powerful threshold opens for us to step through to where life and death, the living and the dead, are served in power, healing, grief and beauty with integrity and honour. Thank you, death, for walking and being a companion with me in life.

### **Biography**

12 Brian sees shamanism offering a new hope and vision for individuals as well as our society as a whole. He offers shamanic healing for individuals and regular workshops as well as free sacred activism events. Brian has over 30 years' experience in the helping professions and since 2004 has been working with individuals and groups with shamanic methods. He trained with the Sacred Trust, Foundation for Shamanic Studies and Sandra Ingermann as well as indigenous shamans from the Americas and his heart's home Ireland. He lives and practices in Perth, Scotland and is currently researching and learning about traditional healing practices of this land. Website: <https://oakenleaf.co.uk/>



# Transcendent Wisdom of the Maya: Initiation as a Form of Death

Gabriela Jurosz-Landa



Maya leader Don Tomás officiating the 2012 closing and opening of the new Maya era.

*My heart and gratitude will always go to Don Tomás Calvo Mateo, the Quichéan leader, who invited me to the 2012 celebrations and many others thereafter, took me on official encounters with the Guatemalan government and Maya regional leaders, granted me physical and spiritual protection, and, though we could only talk through our hearts or interpreters, taught me how to be grateful in the first place. Don Tomás passed on in October 2017. May he rest in peace.*

## Death and Suffering in Initiation

Present anthropologic knowledge often portrays initiation as a crisis. It tells us that during the initiation ceremony the novice is supposed to die as a regular person and be reborn as a shaman-priest/ess. There are initiations which terror, crisis and death do not need to be part of. First of all, human beings undergo many unseen and unrecognized crises during their lives. Secondly, I am not convinced that nowadays things have to be as dramatic as in ancient times. After all, the Maya do not sacrifice human blood any longer and chickens are now sacrificed instead of humans. There is such a thing as a 'civilized ritual procedure' today. The forms of symbolic death in ritual differ tremendously across cultures and have been integrated into modern society.

An initiation is the re-enactment of death. Separating the true initiation event where one is being transformed by a numinous being from the formal initiation ceremony, my research and experience show that there are formal initiation ceremonies which do not presuppose terror. In those cases, the formal initiation may substitute the enactment of a brutal death with a smoother form of passage. If the divine beings have accepted less dramatic sacrifices than human blood from a still beating heart, why should a shaman-priest not spare his novice a cruel death imitation and instead lead him or her to the other side in a gentler way? Death in ritual can be only symbolic after all. In rites of passage, the re-enactment is nothing but a way to express transformation. While a ritual is based on experience, contemporary societies tend to live more rationally. They have voluntarily moved away from the bodily experience of spirit toward an experience of spirit that is not felt through the body in a drastic way and is, rather, symbolic.

Many people, when dying, sail over to the other side quite peacefully. So why should an initiation ritual portray death only in the sense of suffering? Personally, I do not believe that death in consecration must incorporate imagined shock and suffering. There may be as many different frequencies of intensity as there are frequencies of temperament in different people and cultures. Suffering in itself has different levels of intensity. The abstinence of food, sexuality and company can be strenuous to a non-shamanic person while to the shaman it is a minor sacrifice required to be able to reach the level of sensibility that makes one capable, not so much of finessing willpower, but of becoming receptive to communication with the numinous beings.

I once spoke to a Canadian woman in Florida, who had had several near-death experiences - in an accident, while giving birth and during a severe illness. She had also been in the Fort Lauderdale airport shooting in early 2017 but fortunately she was only injured. One may call it 'bad fate' but the Maya, as other cultures do, see such incidents as typical indicators of being called for spiritual service. If the person doesn't answer the call, bad luck in life and business or even death may occur.

Because of the Conquest, much of the Maya belief system has been lost and is now left to be filled in through inspirational imagination. In fact, much more needs to be imagined than is actually being portrayed in the processions, dances and devotions, which are really metaphors for hidden facets of truth. For example, the syncretized world of Christian saints who double for and mimic celestial occurrences is a network of relational secrecy in itself.

### **Initiation as a Process**

The fact that the true transformative initiation and the formal ceremony may occur in separate occasions, leads us to seeing initiation as a process rather than a singular event. For some, the 'death' or other form of crisis and the following rebirth may be a sudden incident during the initiation ceremony. Others may have experienced it long before the formal initiation process. Many *ajq'ijab* (Maya daykeepers (shamans)) go through a lot of illnesses in their childhood and others have a near-death experience as adults. One *ajq'ij* confessed to me that he had wanted to commit suicide because his business was going badly. He tried to hang himself in his house but the attempt was unsuccessful; his assistant discovered him and came to his rescue. That incident, together with his birth sign and constant dreaming, disposed him to becoming an *ajq'ij*. Today, his business is going very well and he hosts many traditional dancers for the various holidays that without him would not be economically possible in his town. We should not look upon the illness or similar as a sign of a calling, rather I suggest, it is one part of many in the process called initiation. I would consider the initiation-related events before and after the formal consecration act already initiations in themselves; especially the meeting of one's spirit who takes one to the over- or the underworld where then one's specific and personal shamanic transformation occurs.

We put way too much emphasis on the initiation occurring at a specific moment. The notion of immediacy aims to exalt drama just as the enactment of death does. But the Latin term *initium* translates as 'training' or 'beginning', which suggests that we are looking much more at a process than a moment. Similarly, the Maya apply the Spanish term *encaminarse*, meaning to 'start walking' or to 'get on one's way', to initiation because they also perceive it to be a process rather than a single moment or event.

The change resulting from the initiatory training affects the whole life of the disciple, so it seems rather unlikely that only momentary initiation must occur. On the contrary, changes do not always underlie an instant act of rapture but happen in a gradual process that comes into sight only over time. Perhaps that is why, in contemporary societies, we quite often cannot observe our passages as we are going through them. As a matter of fact, even traditional societies set up the spectacle of an initiation



mostly to mark a border. Not every African boy that goes through the painful initiatory experience of having ants crawl all over his body becomes a man in that instant. And not every Maya man or woman becomes an adult on the day that they turn a '13 x 4 person'<sup>1</sup>, meaning fifty-two years old, the age the Maya traditionally consider someone an adult.

### **Significant Stations of Initiation**

Besides the actual transformation and the transfer of sacred knowledge, as well as the formal ceremony, the process requires other important conditions. Initiation first and foremost means permission. For the Maya shamans, nothing happens without permission. The doorway is opened by the numinous powers. It is not the shaman-priest who initiates the novice, but the *nawales*, the 260 vivid day-energies, and ancestors. Once permission is given and there is 'enough heart' within the novice, things can begin to happen.

'Lifting one's heart' and 'thankfulness' to a high frequency are the two most valuable concepts in Maya teaching. They link people back to the mythical substance they share, reminding them that all came from the Creator. Love may be the ultimate common substance. Without 'heart' humanity can still function - but like a machine.

Lifting one's heart can be achieved through prayer and spiritual practice, including spiritual fasting. By lifting one's heart, one raises one's frequency up to where spirit is in order to harmonize with the spiritual world to make communication possible. To the Maya, people are in this world to show thankfulness to the forces that created us. We did not give life to ourselves and we have only been given physical life by our parents.

The Maya perceive life as a give and take; an exchange. They see it as a contract between God and humans: God gives us life and we cherish him and his many manifestations. Lifting one's heart enables one to communicate with the celestial forces. It is not a choice but a duty to keep this communication alive. Let us take care that our hearts do not harden.

The *ajq'ijab* who are in service to this connection between worlds made a vow to dedicate themselves to fill this relationship with life. Practicing thankfulness cultivates the heart and makes it soft, humble and sensitive and therefore, more loving. And cultivating the heart means cultivating oneself. Nobility comes with self-cultivation.

Looking at it from a Western perspective, the idea of cultivating oneself through art, music and theatre is certainly noble. But by Maya standards, without the spiritual depth and link to the Creator in a dialogue of reciprocity, it would be considered art for the sake of art, not the cultivation of spirit. Jewish people who seriously hold Shabbat, know this. So do the Muslim believers and of course Christians and all other believers in Asia and Africa, who are serious about practicing spirituality. The ancient rules, practiced by parishioners of these religions today, are no mere leftovers from ancient days. Shabbat requires one to disengage from anything practical, especially when it comes to the use of one's hands. For one day of the week such disengagement keeps one free to be receptive to Spirit. There is nothing wrong with working but as many religions teach, absolute rest in meditation is essential at times to remind ourselves that there are things that rule the world besides computers, cars, TVs, theatres or books, which distract us from interacting with God and our fellow humans. The Maya don't practice a specific weekly day of rest. Nowadays, however, many Maya keep the Christian tradition of reserving Sunday for attending church and gathering with family.

While industrialized society, with its forced action and efficiency that often drive man toward a machine-like existence, frowns upon inactivity, the Maya consider sitting and 'doing nothing' a tribute of respect to the numinous world. The body needs disengaged time to be filled with energy from the source. Not eating and 'not doing' are ways to lighten the spirit and separate it from the body, letting it ascend and enhance spiritual communication with one's source. Many of the Maya carry out their work in the consciousness of the spiritual 'higher-ups'.

### **Life, spiritually connected**

It is undeniable that the Western business and employment model lacks the link to indispensable spirituality. Let us not forget that rationalism came into being in a century that followed extreme

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1      *Thirteen refers to the thirteen frequencies. Four refers to four cycles as well as the four corners of the world.*

religiosity. It was embedded into a spiritual environment that no longer exists. Therefore rationalism today is a very different thing from that which the Enlightenment brought to the Western world. For the Maya, on the other hand, spirituality is not separate. It is tied into the work process like a thread is tied into a completed piece of woven material.

Technology seduces and distracts us from active life and many are addicted to the escape it provides. Sadly, much in our society and media encourages such abuse rather than reporting about and cultivating activities that tie people to their community and to Earth and the heavens. For many people in Western societies the idea of 'practicing', as in 'practicing yoga', consists purely of the physical aspects of the exercise - like perfecting yoga poses. For the Maya 'practice' is not practice unless it also includes staying in communication with one's source on a deep spiritual level. Because they view the world this way, many Maya ask the numinous powers for permission for everything. Nothing is done without first calling upon the ancestors and asking for permission and blessings. Their link is real and existent. The Maya are aware that people on Earth have a limited view of things and need assistance. If an *ajq'ijab* tries to heal a person without permission from the ancestors or *nawales*, the patient might die. If a person consults the visionary *Tz'ité* seeds without having been initiated, he or she may become ill.

Don Tomás consulted the ancestors for every major decision, be it related to government, the undertaking of a journey, or a healing. Permission ceremonies take place on the day that corresponds to the appropriate *nawal* energy (on its specific *Cholq'ij* calendar day) of the problem presented. Don Tomás never acted on impulse; he waited for that day to come around, even if it had just passed within the twenty-day calendar and it will take nineteen days for it to come around again. Only if and when permission is given, did he proceed. The shaman-priests from North America to South America work with this caution, as do the African, Australian, Middle- and Far Eastern or Siberian masters. Time is a factor to be respected.

Permission for an initiation means the door is open. Still, you don't just make your way in; you ask for permission every step of the way. One must lift one's heart and make offerings for as long as it takes to get permission. Only when you have it, do you proceed.

You burn offerings to connect with the spirits.  
You pray to remove all negative energies.  
You lift your heart to reach a state of purity.

### Meaning of the Formal Initiation

The formal ceremonial act marks a border and sometimes is the true encounter and transformation by spirit. It is also meant for the society to see and accept the novice as its future shaman. After all, every Maya *ajq'ij* will tell you that what really matters is not so much the formal initiation but that you perform your obligatory ceremonies afterward. Performing a minimum of one ceremony every twenty days plus one on each of the days *Toj*, *B'atz'* and *Ajmaq*, as well as the day of one's own *nawal* (birthday) is considered essential so that the 'deal' between the *ajq'ij* and the numinous powers is not interrupted. With each ceremony, the relationship grows and the mission becomes stronger. As this happens, one effectively feels a calming effect and the calmer one is, the stronger the relationship and mission become.

### Biography

Gabriela Jurosz-Landa is an anthropologist and Mayan shaman-priestess initiated by her teacher Tomasa Pol Suy in Guatemala. She has researched Guatemala for more than 20 years, living there for 6 years, during which she participated in ceremonies with Maya spiritual and political authorities, including the 2012 New Era celebrations. The founder of the Forum of World Cultures, she writes and lectures internationally. She lives in Connecticut. Website: <https://gabriela-jurosz-landa.jimdofree.com/>

This article is an edited excerpt from TRANSCENDENT WISDOM OF THE MAYA by Gabriela Jurosz-Landa. Inner Traditions Bear & Company (2 May 2019). ISBN: 978-1591433347. Reprinted with permission.



My friend, Josefa Xijol and me in 2015.

**Editor's Note:** *Transcendent Wisdom of the Maya* was reviewed for issue 42 of Indie Shaman and this review can now be read online at: <https://shamanismbooks.co.uk/transcendent-wisdom-of-the-maya/>

# Egg Medicine: The Art of Diagnostic Egg Reading and Healing

Itzhak Beery



The ingenious characteristic of shamanic healing is in its usage of the most commonly found objects and elements in the natural world, including spirit - what we call energies containing consciousness, either in the seen or unseen worlds. By observing and implementing the qualities and behaviour of the four elements - plants, herbs, trees, minerals and animals - shamans can determine ways of establishing the root causes of illness and adverse conditions and devise ways to heal or cure them.

Chickens originate from a prehistoric group of dinosaurs called the Theropods and they are still one of the most plentiful animals across the world; a bird that helps us control ticks and mosquito populations, gives us plenty of feathers to warm and decorate us, nutritional meat and eggs to eat ... and also eggs for healing.

Egg healing is an old practice used for millennia by healers, grandmothers, mothers and novices alike on every continent. It is fast, low cost, readily available in every home and a very effective method of removing headaches, stomach pain, fear, fatigue, nervousness, bad luck, curses and envy. It helps us to return the client into peacefulness, harmony and balance.

This practice is similar to the High Andes practice of using white, green or black candles for negative energy removal and for diagnosis by reading the flame, wick and wax. The good news is that you don't have to be a shaman to practice it; any layperson can do it. You can't make mistakes, just let the egg or your candle do its thing - absorb.

All life begins with an egg; it contains the essence of life and the promise of a new time within it - which is the shaman's intent as he applies this powerful life force energy on the client's body. The egg is a representation of the universal life structure. Some cultures believe the universe itself was born from one Cosmic Egg, who had two yokes. The one on the top was the upper-world and the one on the bottom the lower-world. When they separated, it created our middle-world; what we call our reality or the seen world.

Every cell of our body has a nucleus, plasma and a protective membrane. Bird eggs are the biggest single living cells in nature. The Earth, too, is made of its inner core and outer core and is surrounded by the invisible shield of our atmosphere. Shaman know that there is an egg-like energy orb surrounding our physical body, encasing our energy body. And that this is shielded by an invisible energy shield, just like an egg. The egg we use absorbs the negative energies that are infiltrated and got stuck in that sphere and in our physical, emotional and spiritual bodies.

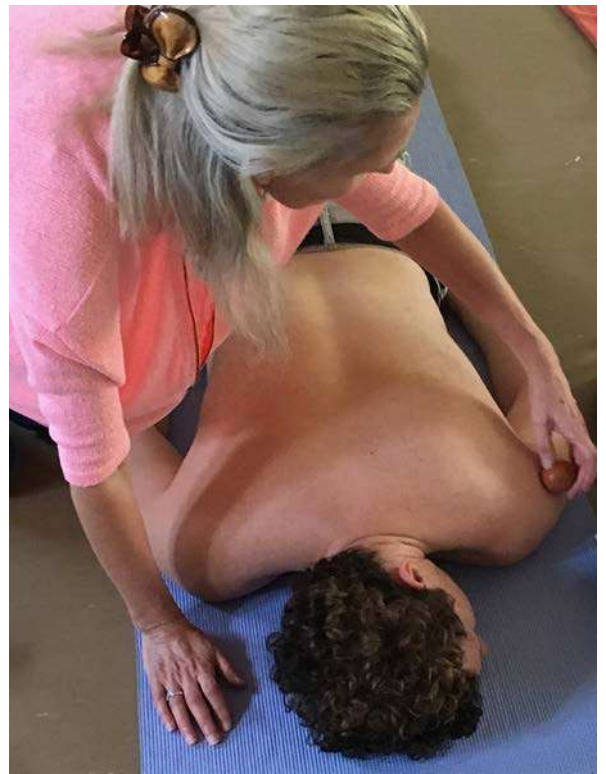


## What are negative energies?

In the High Andes, *Mala energía* (bad or negative energies) are considered heavy or dense energies whose purpose is to slow down the *Rio de luz* (River of light) flow and even stop it, as in death. Positive energies however, are described as energies that stimulate and open the flow of life energy in our bodies. Physical or emotional traumas, curses, envy, jealousy, evil spirit attachments or possession all create energy blockages in our physical, emotional and spiritual bodies, causing us illness.

Eggs are excellent tools for releasing and healing those energy blockages and energy dams which create aches and pains. Eggs are also excellent for doing energy extractions, by sucking on them. The egg absorbs the bad energy through the roughly seven thousand pores of its mostly calcium shell. These pores allow the developing embryo to keep the right temperature needed while exhaling carbon dioxide and inhaling oxygen. In some Arabic traditions, an egg is hung over a newborn child to absorb bad energy. Try it.

A fresh white or brown egg is rolled or rubbed softly all over the client's body to accumulate the physical and emotional energies. Afterward, the egg is cracked open into a glass cup with water and we let it settle. Observing the textures, forms, bubbles, filaments, colors and consistency of its parts floating in the water, the shaman used her intuition and some guidelines (see below) to decipher its meanings and share these with the client.



## Andean Egg Healing Ceremony

Healing with eggs can be done as a stand-alone ceremony or as part of the more multifaceted *La Limpia* (The High Andes purification energy cleansing) ceremony.

The following ceremony is truly magical and powerful. However, you can also perform a more straightforward ceremony, without waters, flowers and chanting and while your client is fully dressed.

1. Prepare a wood or ceramic bowl with pure water, drop some Aqua Florida (citrus cologne) in the water, and add a handful of red (feminine) and white (masculine) carnations petals. Mix it while praying or singing. Place two eggs in the water. One masculine shape (pointed) and one feminine form (rounded).
2. Ask the client to remove as many of her/his clothes as they feel comfortable with, as they are going to get soaking wet. Lay the client on a mat on the floor. Smudge, burn Palo Santo, put four candles at the four directions (head, toes, left and right). Sit at the client's head and pray.
3. Start by singing your soul song (Icaro) or your chant; keep singing throughout the ceremony. It will help you concentrate and get you out of your logical mind. It will also put your client at ease and into a relaxing state of mind (there is no need to play recorded music). Now, pass your two palms carefully over the client's entire body. Start from the crown of the head downwards to the toes; do it meditatively and slowly, close your eyes. Feel the client's body's rising energy and receive intuitive messages from spirit concerning your client's condition. Pay attention to any temperature fluctuation in the different parts of the body and organs. A cold temperature could mean fear or trauma. Hot could mean injury, inflammation, pain or poor blood circulation. Ask your spirit guide to help you understand it better.
4. When you have finished collecting information you may share it with the client to verify it. Take the two eggs from the bowl of water and starting with the crown of the head, start rolling them softly on your client's body. Concentrate longer on the body parts and organs that you now know need more attention.
5. In cases of pain, energy blockage or energy attachment, you can lay the pointed side of the egg on that area, put your mouth to the egg and vigorously suck the bad energy out. Do not swallow it. Spit it into a prepared plastic bag and place the egg there too, then tie or seal the bag.

## **Egg Healing Stories: "It's a Miracle"**

The undeniable cracking sounds coming from the egg I was holding in my right hand shook me out of the trancelike healing mode I was engulfed in. Before I could do anything, the egg exploded loudly. I opened my eyes. In my hand were pieces of broken shell. The bright yellow yoke and the liquid egg white were splashed all over my client's arm and were dripping down to the red, white and blue Lakota patchwork blanket at his feet. "What a mess," I was thinking, praying my client would not notice.

I stopped. My client, sensing that something unusual had happened, opened his eyes wide and turned his head toward me. We both looked at each other in astonishment. To my sheer surprise Aaron responded, "You know this is the elbow I broke in a car accident I had last year," he said in his soft voice as if he was trying to comfort me. "I forgot to tell you before we started," he apologised. I grabbed some paper towels and cleaned up the mess on his hand and the blanket below.

"Close your eyes," I asked him and I continued rubbing another egg on that wounded elbow and went on to finish his *La Limpia* healing ceremony. "It felt like a lightning bolt piercing through my elbow," Aaron said later, as we sat down to talk about his experience. "Let's see what happens in the next few days," I suggested.

Aaron, a tall and lanky dancer in his early forties, was also a healer himself and curious to know why I was using eggs. "It's an old technique used in the Andes, but not only there," I told him and continued to explain how it works.

"Can I use it myself at home?" Aaron asked.

"Yes, of course, you can. You can roll, rub or vigorously shake them up and down your body to stimulate it and to release trapped energy or concentrate on special acupressure points or areas that need special attention," I told him.

"I'll try," he promised.

"Have eggs exploded while you've worked on other clients?" Aaron asked.

"Oh yes, many times," I laughed. He was curious, so I went on. "One time, an egg exploded on a man with shoulder pain. But let me tell you about this client from the Upper Eastside. I asked her to remove her white fluffy angora sweater before the ceremony began. I told her it might get ruined by all the fire, smoke, alcohol and whatever I use. She preferred to leave it on as she wasn't wearing anything underneath. As I was working on her neck, the egg on my right hand exploded to pieces and the butter-like contents spilled all over her sweater. I rushed to clean it up from her and profusely apologised. All the while, she stood there quietly with her eyes closed. Then I continued with a fresh egg. At the end of the ceremony, I apologised again and explained that sometimes the egg explodes where you have too much tension. "Oh, I forgot to tell you that I had a stiff neck when I came to see you?" she said. "Don't worry about my angora sweater". We laughed.

But the best one was when an egg flew into the air because it had so much energy. I managed to catch it before it hit the floor. There was another time when I was working on a guy with an addiction. Whenever I rolled the eggs over his solar plexus, he screamed with pain. It took eight eggs to remove his heartache."

I was surprised to hear from Aaron the next morning. He called with great enthusiasm in his voice. "You would not believe what happened; I can stretch my arm all the way. I finally have a full range of motion again. It's a miracle." I was thrilled to hear the news. "I have been going to physical therapy for the whole year and had some improvement but I wasn't able to open my arm; now I can dance again." Aaron was elated.

## **Egg Healing preparation and instructions**

### ***What do you need to prepare?***

- At least 2 fresh, uncooked eggs (organic is best), at room temperature
- 1 white candle
- 1 glass of water (clear, with no markings)

- Sea Salt
- Smudge/sage/incense.
- An additional person to practice on – or yourself.

### **Egg Healing**

1. Set a sacred space in a quiet room.
2. Light a white candle and smudge to purify the area.
3. Your client can be either dressed lightly or undressed (not entirely).
4. The client can lie on the floor, be standing, sitting or on a massage table.
5. Pass your two palms over the client's entire body start from the head downwards. Close your eyes and feel the client's energy and the different temperatures in different organs. Cold could mean fear. Hot could mean injury, inflammation, pain, poor blood circulation etc.
6. Cleanse the egg. Blow Rum or Agua Florida. Wash in saltwater or smudge. Check the egg consistency by shaking them close to your ears.
7. Pass an egg on your client's entire body. You can rub, shake or roll lightly.
  - Start from the crown of the head down to the toes. Rotate and move the egg surface on all sides for full negative energy absorption.
  - Notice the areas you feel need the most attention (you can ask your client beforehand too) - areas that hold pain, inflammation or energy blockage, usually the heart, the gut, lower back, shoulders, head, neck and knees.
  - As you work with the egg, chant your soul song (Icaro) or pray to let the egg absorb all the negative and stalled energies. In your mind, visualise that bad energy streaming into the egg. (Singing helps us transcend by circumventing our fearful ego and making us less critical of our performance).
  - Sometimes the egg might explode into pieces as it is unable to contain the surplus energy which is absorbed. In this case do not worry, clean up the mess and continue with a fresh egg. There are times the egg could fly into the air - try to catch it. When you hold the egg feel its weight, it could become heavy as a stone or liquefy. Both show the effect of negative energy absorption. The watery state shows more of emotional instability and could be a possession.

### **Egg Diagnostic and Consultation:**

1. When you feel you are ready, crack open the egg into a clear glass of water (not plastic and without decoration) and let it sink. Wait at least 10 minutes to let it settle down.
2. Reading diagnostic and *La Platica* (consultation):

Before you start 'reading' it is good to remember that the language of shamanism is a language of poetry. It uses our sixth sense: like intuition, feelings, knowing, hearing and visions. These sometimes come in unfamiliar symbols, metaphors, colors and images; sometimes in a form of physical sensation or pain in your own body. They frequently are not in a linear and coherent presentation as they are not supposed to be 'logical'. They come to unearth meanings. So pay attention and trust that what you are receiving comes from spirit and is essential for your client.

Please share them with your client and interpret them together.

Start sharing what you see and perceive with your client immediately. Do not wait or doubt yourself, as you will get stuck in your self-consciousness. Any thoughts that pass through your mind and intuition feelings are messages from spirit. You don't have to make sense of the messages or the images, as they are not meant for you. You don't need to be smart as you are only a messenger. Do not censor, go with the flow. It is a dialogue between you and the client, so ask your client for feedback.



### **What to look for:**

- In case you have a double yoke that could mean good luck and success in general, fertility and maybe the birth of twins.



- Black spots on the egg's yoke is an indication of disease or inner organs issues (kidney/liver, etc. - consult with your spirit guides). Red spots on the egg's yoke is an indication of inflammation or bleeding in inner organs (consult with your spirit guides)
- The yoke position in the cup represents how your client feels in the world: centre – balanced; left - more feminine, emotional; right – masculine; on the bottom – grounded; floating - not grounded, shy, fearful.
- Cloudy, foggy or dirty water under the yoke or above - emotional confusion, cloudy mind, unable to make a decision.
- Small air bubbles along the white filaments going upwards like 'towers', means bad, stalled energy - a need for good Limpia energy cleansing. If there are many, it is a sign that you have carried that negative energy for a long time. Many bubbles around the yoke means that good spirits are protecting you.
- A white blanket covering the yoke may represent other people's spells, envy or curses that hold you back. If you see blood in the water or smell a bad odor, it can mean evil spirit possession. If you see an eye on the yoke, it is a sign of Evil Eye.
- If you see translucent white spikes going down from the yoke it is a sign of anger.
- Gaze/vision into the white clouds and filaments and journey into it. You might 'see' human or animal faces, ancestors, traumatic events, feeling and messages from spirit or your gut. It is similar to clouds gazing and reading. Share all of these with your client.
- Cobwebs could mean people try to trap you due to envy or jealousy.

After the cleansing and reading, sprinkle sea salt into the water to absorb the negative energies, flush the content of the glass into a toilet or bury it in the soil.

In case of severe pains, repeat for three consecutive days, three times (3x3 times).



**Notes:** Consult with your doctor (GP / MD) in case of consistent pain or other conditions. The information in this article should not be used as a substitute for medical care and or advice from your healthcare provider.

### Biography

Itzhak Beery is an internationally recognized shamanic teacher, healer, speaker, community activist and author of three Amazon bestseller books. Born in an Israeli Kibbutz, he had a fine art career and was the owner of an award-winning boutique Ad agency in New York City. A midlife crisis led to his transformation from a skeptical atheist and business executive into a passionate believer, aligned with his life purpose. Since 1995, Itzhak bridges the spiritual and practical wisdom his indigenous and Western teachers entrusted in him. He was initiated into the "Circle of 24 Yachaks of Imbabura" by his Quechua teacher in Ecuador and by Amazonian Kanamari Pajè in Brazil.

Itzhak is the founder of ShamanPortal.org, The Andes Summit and co-founder of the New York Shamanic Circle; he is on major global spiritual centers faculties. Itzhak received the 'Ambassador for Peace Award' from The Universal Peace Federation and the UN.

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# *A Lockdown Plant Odyssey*

*Ruth Emsley*

*"Do you think the plants have their own consciousness?"  
"Do you think they know what's going on now on the planet?"  
"Do you think they are proactively trying to connect with humans?"*

My last significant act, on the Saturday before the UK lockdown came into force, was to go to the Central Library and take out all their available books on foraging. I decided, if nothing else, I would 'teach myself foraging' during this approaching period of social withdrawal, reduced work and possible food insecurity. I think I've always had an unacknowledged embarrassment that as an 'English shaman' my plant, tree and wild bird identification is limited. I love being outdoors but that's not extended far into practical knowledge. I am lucky that while living in an urban setting, I am within easy cycling distance of several nature reserves and parks, as well as the River Isis. Through the days of confusing media coverage and intense conspiracy theories, the process of learning different plant identities became consuming. This developed into an iterative process of reading books, watching YouTube videos and spending time taking my "one piece of outdoor exercise" in the available green spaces. I would go in search of certain newly learnt plants but also certain plants would catch my attention and I would make notes, take photos, bag up a leaf sample or two and later try to identify them.

Yarrow<sup>1</sup> was the unknown plant that called the loudest and most insistently. I first spotted it growing in the meadow grass at one of the nature reserves. I immediately felt drawn to it; compelled, in fact, to discover its name and learn about it more.

Yarrow, I discovered, is prolific. However, not, I think, all that widely known. Sometimes it grows knee-high with long, thick, feathery leaves that make me think of bushy caterpillars, furry Velcro or fat pipe cleaners. Its leaves have a central stem with tiny individual leaves growing in a row down each side, tapering in size towards the end. Its Latin name, *Achillea Millefolium*, points to this profusion of leaves. Sometimes, often where soil has been disturbed and denuded, it grows in flat starfish shapes, reaching out its limbs to knit together the bare spaces.

Once I had a name, I immediately started reading about its properties. As well as it being an edible, if bitter, plant I was immediately struck, gathering as I was under the shadow of a coronavirus, by claims that it is highly effective at reducing fever. Over the coming days and weeks, I began to work with Yarrow both intuitively and intensively. At the start of lockdown my guides had come through and asked me to stop reading. Somehow this depth of stillness, without the written word or much social interaction, opened me up to a clarity of communication from this extraordinary plant.

According to the herbalists, as well as helping to reduce fevers, Yarrow aids in healing the digestive tract and the arteries, supports the body to assimilate nutrients and was used on battlefields to staunch and heal wounds. Plant essences describe its ability to protect and clear, particularly from 'black magic' and to help with establishing clear and healthy boundaries. Biologists describe how it

<sup>1</sup> Article Image: Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). Ryan Hodnett / CC BY-SA (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)



secretes substances into the soil which help keep the plants around it strong and healthy. What I came to experience personally encompassed some of these qualities, and much more.

Early on in this process, I began consuming quite large quantities of the plant and realised I'd spent a good two weeks sleeping deeply, both at night and also sometimes during the daytime. I felt I needed this rest and reset but was also slightly alarmed, wondering if there was something wrong with me. I then discovered a scientific paper that described Yarrow's effects as largely indistinguishable from diazepam - but without the side effects or addictive qualities. I cut back a bit on the amounts after this but this period of sleep allowed my body to rest and recuperate after years of hard work and various life stresses and created space for the plant to start working on me.

Although I've worked for several years in private practice as a shamanic healer, I didn't start this relationship with any formal process of 'journeying' or 'connecting'. Instead, I followed a fascination, allowed images and words to arise in me spontaneously, surrendered control and let the plant lead and guide. I felt that Yarrow sought me out and began communicating on her own behalf as soon as there was space and receptivity in me. I began to see her. She was young, strong, both compassionate and fierce. She wore a sword at her hip.

My sense is that plants, at least some of them, are seeking out any avenues into connection with human consciousness. Talking to a woman in a park one day, she asked, "Do you think the plants have their own consciousness?"

When I said I was convinced of that, she thought about my answer, and then asked, "Do you think they know what's going on now on the planet?"

I said I did and told her about an experience I'd had in the Amazon. I'd been out on boat trip with local indigenous people and we returned home in the dark. I lay in the bottom of the canoe, listening to the swish of the paddles and the sounds of the forest, watching stars come to life in the thin strip of sky between the overarching trees. As I was propelled along through the growing darkness, I had the strongest sensation of being assessed, read and scanned by the trees; that information was being extracted from me about the state of the planet in my part of the world. I gave them the information gladly but with a somber heart.

After telling her this story, she went on to ask another question. "Do you think they are proactively trying to connect with humans?"

In working with the late Roger Woolger, I once had a very deep visionary experience of meeting a giant lizard in the dreamtime, who told me humans had been dreamt into being by the plants and animals and that it wasn't "our fault"; that we were extraordinary beings but currently mostly lost and deluded.

I've cherished that encounter, in part for the shift in perspective it brings. Humans are trained to consider themselves, far beyond being apex predators, as being the apex intelligences on earth. Shamanism, I think, offers the potential to really revolutionise that view, to see ourselves perhaps as *nouveau arrivistes*, living in a neighbourhood of far more ancient and wise intelligences.

I'm aware for some, this will be obviously true. For some, this will be absurd, unimaginable - literally unthinkable. For those deeply attuned to nature and for those who have had any entheogenic plant experience, this foundational assumption of the Western world view, that plants are alive but without any form of consciousness, will probably already have been challenged at least to a small degree and maybe radically unseated. However really trusting that other intelligences could intervene of their own accord and come to our aid and education may take time to really embed and trust.

The woman in the park made off soon after this, looking alarmed and I wondered if this was too much for her to take. To be fair, science is starting to explore the idea of plant consciousness. Monica Gagliano, in her book *Thus Spoke the Plant*<sup>2</sup>, describes a series of groundbreaking experiments which demonstrate a range of cognitive abilities in various plants, including learning and memory. The New Scientist<sup>3</sup> describes her experiments and quotes her as saying "Plant memories are decentralized - the whole plant is a total brain." What the New Scientist article doesn't describe is the scientist's experience of being given the experiments during ayahuasca journeys, as the plants wanted to aid her

2 Monica Gagliano. *Thus Spoke the Plant*. North Atlantic Books, U.S.; Illustrated Edition (20 Nov. 2018)

3 The New Scientist. Issue 3205 (24 November 2018)

work in starting to demonstrate their own sentience. (Rune Soup podcast has a great interview with her if you want to hear more about her work<sup>4</sup>.) The idea is gradually extending out through human consciousness, like tendrils and roots winding through the jungle of human minds.

What did Yarrow say to me? She said, repeatedly, "I am Yarrow, and I will heal you."

She also said, "You are my child."

I felt her leaves, like pipe-cleaners, start to move through my physical system, gradually clearing and restoring. And also through my energy body, perhaps clearing the subtle energy channels. I went through a period of intense emotions arising and gradually releasing as this went on.

I felt her presence gradually bring in a new way of being or experiencing. The energy she brought felt powerful. I recognized her old familiarity with battlefields but she conveyed that the healing of wounds ran much deeper than that of physical injury. Her medicine had been hiding in clear sight – 'wound healing' just needed a more resonant and metaphorical understanding. My own mother, I'm sure for reasons beyond her control, had been cold and distant when I was child. While I felt like I'd healed much of that wounding, Yarrow brought in a fresh energy; an experience and a felt sense of a protective and powerfully caring mother. This felt extraordinary and something that can perhaps only be received as a gift of grace.

One day, in meditation with Kuan Yin, the Buddhist bodhisattva associated with compassion, she said to me of Yarrow and other plants I came to work with closely, "These are my expressions." I felt indeed that there was a divine quality to the love and total acceptance which Yarrow began to open up within me and a practical grounding of that energy into a physical being I could consume. This felt like a form of sacred Communion.

Unusually, I experienced slight heart palpitations while taking Yarrow. This seems a rare side effect although, as with most plants, a small number of people are allergic. One day, aware of this symptom, I heard her say, "I want to work with hawthorn". The phrasing of this was interesting. She didn't say, "I want you to work with hawthorn"; the emphasis was on her relationship with another plant and drawing on this as part of her work. This was the start of several 'partnerships' which Yarrow initiated – and is still initiating. I came, through this, to recognize her as a master healer, a kind of foundational presence who, when I was willing to surrender, I experienced as an orchestrator and organizer of my healing process.

I began foraging hawthorn leaves and drinking them in a tea and hawthorn, great healer of the heart, eased any palpitations I'd been experiencing. Beyond that, I felt her lend her aid to the heart; illuminating and cherishing work already underway, opening a deeper gateway into the mystery of the English landscape and the presence of the sacred feminine in nature.

The next plants Yarrow steered me to were several of the coniferous trees – firs, spruces and pines. I devoted serious study to learning their respective identifications. Pine, in particular, came to be a strong ally. Pine needles provide one of the highest food sources of vitamin C; a great, free boost for the immune system. Pine needles can easily be harvested, at any time of year, dried if you wish to store them and consumed as a tea. They can even be ground into a powder and taken as a supplement. Pine bark and pine pollen also have potent health benefits, if you want to pursue this research. Spruce and Fir have similar properties but more care needs to be taken with Spruce. It shouldn't be boiled, due to its turpentine content; needles need rather to be gently steeped in hot water.

Pine needles, as a tea, a decoction or vaporized as an essential oil, are reported to have the property of drawing out mucous from deep within the lungs. My first few weeks of drinking pine tea I wondered if I had a cold, as my nose ran repeatedly. I was otherwise fine and came gradually to feel much clearer, physically and mentally, after this period. Once again, I was struck by its potential practical usefulness in a cold, flu or coronavirus situation.

As well as health benefits, needles from all three kinds of tree can be dried and burnt as a clearing and sacred incense.

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4 <https://runesoup.com/2019/03/talking-plant-cognition-and-communication-with-dr-monica-gagliano/>

There was a point on my journey during which I started to make a number of tinctures and plant essences. I made an essence with a stand of Monterey pines that particularly delights and energises me, sitting for hours in meditation with them. This family of trees are venerable. According to Wikipedia<sup>5</sup>, while the first trees appeared about 390 million years ago conifers evolved about 300 million years ago and pines as a distinct group perhaps around 153 million years ago. I felt, as I sat with them, that I experienced their ancient wisdom, creativity, bliss, visionary quality. There is something about their presence which lifts my heart with a feeling of excitement, potential and hope. Just before writing this, I discovered the pine cone is sacred to Cybele – the pagan Mother of the Gods and primal nature Goddess.

At the other end of the size spectrum I was called to Creeping Cinquefoil. This plant is mostly regarded as a pesky garden weed but I feel it radiates positivity, good cheer - a sheer joy in community, existence, life. With its small yellow flower, it radiates a solar strength. It's edible and reputedly helpful for sore throats but my focus with this plant was on making an essence providing support and radiant summer sunlight, to weather the turbulence I felt would grow through autumn and winter in our society. I lay next to it for several hours, watching clouds cross the sky, taking in the unfolding of the firmament and imagining the plant's view running over weeks, months and whole seasons.

The final significant plant to emerge for me so far has been Woad, who Yarrow described as her "sister". While there have been several articles debunking the 'myths' about its use as body dye by Celts going into battle, there is something intensely war-like in her energy. Although pretty pungent Woad is part of the cabbage family and the leaves are edible. Herbally, its properties are striking. In Chinese medicine its roots and leaves are made into two closely related tinctures, both of which are regarded as powerful agents to prevent viruses from attaching to human cells and from replicating within the human body. This is the most recent of the plant tinctures and plant essences I made. I feel the essence is to be used with care, only after other healing work has been done. She brings hidden anger and suppressed issues to the surface and strengthens the will centre. It's easy to end up in arguments or feel tremendous rage working with Woad. Held in partnership by Yarrow though, I felt she mostly brought energy, determination and strength to the process.

I've got instructions for the next plants to turn to and some of the essences have begun making their way out into the world, with Yarrow as the leader guiding the process.

The promise of Shamanism is, I think, that we need not and do not walk our path alone. There is support from many realms available to us. To really fully open to this reality may mean a sustained releasing of ingrained patterns of belief, allowing ourselves to really experience the fact that other non-human beings can seek us out with the potential to heal and guide. Shamanism, I think, can also offer experiences which allow us to know directly that the contemporary Western brand of human consciousness - rooted in pre-frontal cortex, ego-oriented ways of perceiving the self and experiencing the world - is limited. Indeed, it is only one of many ways of experiencing existence. The plants, I think, are showing us that while it generates much creativity and beauty, the human mind is also leading us into a dark night. We need to open ourselves to a greater humility about our status as cogent beings and start awakening directly in relationship with those extraordinary beings who choose to assist us.

I am filled with awe and gratitude for the care, love and healing intervention from these elder beings and I approach life now with a much greater sense of belonging and mystery. While I feel that Yarrow personally is my 'totem' plant, I also think she is stepping forward, reaching out with an extraordinary capacity to bring healing for those open to engaging. I think if you have read this far, Yarrow also is reaching out into your curious mind and heart, soul and body, with an invitation to meet with her in the wild places and begin your own adventure.

## Biography

After continuously poor performance at school, even being labelled 'remedial' at one point, Ruth Emsley went on to study PPE at Oxford and then worked in Charity Administration and Management for many years. Ruth has been fortunate to experience and train within a variety of different shamanic traditions, principally Peruvian and also had spontaneous shamanic experiences and initiations since childhood which she feels are her true grounding and authority to work. Ruth is an initiated Curandera, a Sacred Prayer Carrier and a Medicine Wheel Holder. Her website is called Ankita Healing - <https://www.ankitahealing.com/>.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pine>



# EOGHAN O'DINSSON



## Quick Facts

**Latin/Linnaen:** *Viscum Album*

**Family:** *Santalaceae*

**Old English:** *Mistel*

**Synonyms:** European Mistletoe or Common Mistletoe, Birdlime Mistletoe. Herbe de la Croix, Mystylidene, Lignum Crucis.

**Action:** Intracutaneous injections cause local inflammation which can lead to necrosis. Cytostatic, non specific immune stimulation. Note: The blood pressure lowering effects and the therapeutic effectiveness for mild forms of hypertonia need further investigation.

**Parts Used:** Younger branches with flowers and fruits.

**Indicated For:** For treating degenerative inflammation of the joints by stimulating cuti-visceral reflexes following local inflammation brought about by intradermal injections. As palliative therapy for malignant tumors through non specific stimulation.

**Dosage:** Unless otherwise prescribed: according to directions of the manufacturer.

**Preparation:** Fresh plant, cut and powdered herb for the preparation of solutions for injections.

**Cautions:** Contraindications: Protein hypersensitivity, chronic progressive infections. Side Effects: Chills, high fever, headaches, angina, orthostatic circulatory disturbances and allergic reactions.

**Other Uses:** N/A

## Description

*Viscum album* is a species of mistletoe, also known as European Mistletoe or Common Mistletoe to distinguish it from other related species. It is native to Europe and western and southern Asia. Witches' Broom looks similar but is an abnormal growth of the tree.

It is a hemi-parasitic shrub, which grows on the stems of other trees. It has stems 30-100 centimetres (12-39 ins.) long with dichotomous branching. The leaves are in opposite pairs, strap-shaped, entire, leathery textured, 2-8 centimetres (0.79-3.1 ins.) long, 0.8-2.5 centimetres (0.31-0.98 ins.) broad and are a yellowish-green in colour. This species is dioecious and the flowers are inconspicuous, yellowish-green and 2-3 millimetres (0.079-0.12 ins.) diameter. The fruit is a white or yellow berry containing one (very rarely several) seed embedded in the very sticky, glutinous fruit pulp.

It is commonly found in the crowns of broad-leaved trees, particularly apple, lime, hawthorn and poplar.

## Cultivation

**Hardiness Zone:** 6-8

**Soil pH:** N/A

**Soil type:** N/A

**Cultivation:** You can try to plant the seed of mistletoe in a healthy mature tree by placing as deeply as possible into the bark.

**Sunlight:** Full sun-partial shade

**Habitat:** Native to Asia and Europe, not to be confused with *Phoradendron Leucarpun* (American Mistletoe), which has different properties.

Mistletoe is a parasitic plant which grows in the branches of apple, oak, pine and fir trees. If grown in a healthy mature tree, mistletoe should not have a significant impact on the tree. Mistletoe is not self fertile and needs a male and female plant to produce berries.

## Historical Notes

Mistletoe was held in great reverence by the Druids. They went forth clad in white robes to search for the sacred plant and when it was discovered one of the Druids ascended the tree and gathered it with great ceremony, separating it from the Oak with a golden knife. The Mistletoe was always cut at a particular age of the moon, at the beginning of the year and it was only sought for when the Druids declared they had visions directing them to seek it. When a great length of time elapsed without this happening or if the Mistletoe chanced to fall to the ground, it was considered as an omen that some misfortune would befall the nation. The Druids held that the Mistletoe protected its possessor from all evil and that the oaks on which it was seen growing were to be respected because of the wonderful cures which the priests were able to effect with it. They sent round their attendant youth with branches of the Mistletoe to announce the entrance of the New Year. It is probable that the custom of including it in the decoration of our homes at Christmas, giving it a special place of honour, is a survival of this old custom.

The curious basket of garland with which 'Jack-in-the-Green' is even now occasionally invested on May Day is said to be a relic of a similar garb assumed by the Druids for the ceremony of the Mistletoe. When they had found it they danced round the oak to the tune of "Hey derry down, down, down derry!" which literally signified, 'In a circle move we round the oak'. Some oak woods in Herefordshire are still called 'the derry' and the following line from Ovid refers to the Druids' songs beneath the oak:

"... *Ad viscum Druidce cantare solebant...*"

Shakespeare calls it "the baleful Mistletoe", an allusion to the Scandinavian legend that Balder, the god of Peace, was slain with an arrow made of Mistletoe. He was restored to life at the request of the other gods and goddesses, Mistletoe was afterwards given into the keeping of the goddess of Love and it was ordained that everyone who passed under it should receive a kiss to show that the branch had become an emblem of love and not of hate.



## Historical Medicinal Uses - For Entertainment ONLY

**Parts Used Medicinally:** The leaves and young twigs, collected just before the berries form and dried. Constituents: Mistletoe contains mucilage, sugar, a fixed oil, resin, an odorous principle, some tannin and various salts. The active part of the plant is the resin, *Viscin*, which by fermentation becomes a yellowish, sticky, resinous mass that can be used with success as birdlime.

The preparations ordinarily used are a fluid extract and the powdered leaves. A homoeopathic tincture is prepared with spirit from equal quantities of the leaves and ripe berries but is difficult to manufacture, owing to the viscosity of the sap.

**Medicinal Action and Uses:** Nervine, antispasmodic, tonic and narcotic. Has a great reputation for curing the 'falling sickness' epilepsy and other convulsive nervous disorders. It has also been employed in checking internal haemorrhage.

The physiological effect of the plant is to lessen and temporarily benumb such nervous action as is reflected to distant organs of the body from some central organ which is the actual seat of trouble. In this way the spasms of epilepsy and of other convulsive distempers are allayed. Large doses of the plant or of its berries would, on the contrary, aggravate these convulsive disorders. Young children have been attacked with convulsions after eating freely of the berries.

In a French work on domestic remedies, 1682, Mistletoe (*gui de chêne*) was considered of great curative power in epilepsy. Sir John Colbatch published in 1720 a pamphlet on *The Treatment of Epilepsy by Mistletoe*, regarding it as a specific for this disease. He procured the parasite from the Lime trees at Hampton Court and recommended the powdered leaves, as much as would lie on a sixpence, to be given in Black Cherry water every morning. He was followed in this treatment by others who have testified to its efficacy as a tonic in nervous disorders, considering it the specific herb for St. Vitus's Dance. It has been employed in convulsions delirium, hysteria, neuralgia, nervous debility, urinary disorders, heart disease and many other complaints arising from a weakened and disordered state of the nervous system.

Ray also greatly extolled Mistletoe as a specific in epilepsy and useful in apoplexy and giddiness. The older writers recommended it for sterility. The tincture has been recommended as a heart tonic in typhoid fever in place of Foxglove. It lessens reflex irritability and strengthens the heart's beat, whilst raising the frequency of a slow pulse.

Besides the dried leaves being given powdered, as an infusion or made into a tincture with spirits of wine, a decoction may be made by boiling 2 oz. of the bruised green plant with 1/2 pint of water, giving 1 tablespoonful for a dose several times a day. Ten to 60 grains of the powder may be taken as a dose and homoeopaths give 5 to 10 drops of the tincture, with 1 or 2 tablespoonsful of cold water.

Mistletoe is also given, combined with Valerian Root and Vervain, for all kinds of nervous complaints, cayenne pods being added in cases of debility of the digestive organs. Fluid extract: dose, 1/4 to 1 drachm.

Country people use the berries to cure severe stitches in the side. The birdlime of the berries is also employed by them as an application to ulcers and sores.

It is stated that in Sweden, persons afflicted with epilepsy carry about with them a knife having a handle of Oak Mistletoe to ward off attacks.

### Biography

Canadian born Eoghan Odinson is an award winning journalist and author with a lifelong passion for the knowledge of our Northern forefathers – or 'folk lore'. Literally, the knowledge of our people. Graduating from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland with his Masters of Science degree, he subsequently taught for the University. In addition to his academic background, Eoghan also holds a Black Belt in Chito-Ryu Karate and has taught Martial Arts in Canada and the USA. Eoghan is now back in his native Ottawa Valley where he lives with his wife, son and three dogs. Eoghan is a professional member of the Canadian Authors Association.

# A Samhain Tale

Martin Pallot



Artist: Cathy Leigh Tsoukalas



It was the season of Samhain.

In the hall, away in the west, the Lord and his folk had feasted well with fine beef and pork and had drunk well too, with good ale and wine. The Harper had sung his songs of old loves and wars and legends to great acclaim and now, as the hearth fire settled to a warming glow and the rush lights glittered, the cry went up, "A tale! A tale from Tarolan! A tale for Samhain!"

The tale-teller gently shook his head and gestured politely to the Harper who still sat in the tall chair by the Lord's Table. But the Harper rose and gave his place, so Tarolan rose also and taking his wine cup walked to the chair where, having bowed to the Lord and clasped hands as honoured equals with the Harper, he took his place and made himself comfortable while the shouts and table pounding slowly faded. He stared into his wine for a moment then lifted his eyes and looked around; all eyes were on him, all faces turned towards him – all save one – one of the Lord's most trusted men still gazed into the fire, his feet stretched towards it. Ideas flowed and Tarolan raised a strong voice, "Padda was always a lazy oaf!"

A shout of laughter from wine warmed throats greeted this remark and raised the one so named from his reverie; he sat up and glared at Tarolan who immediately raised his hand for silence.

"I apologise, you misunderstand me! I do not speak of our brave and noble hearth companion".

A shout greeted this statement too but one of approval this time accompanied by much thumping of fists on tables, which brought a smile to the man's face. Tarolan let the cheers fade; he could wait now he had their complete attention!

"No", he began, "This Padda was a foolish and ungrateful youth who lived many years ago away in the north, beyond the hills we know. He was the bane of his parents and sisters; took advantage of their care and provision, was disrespectful, self serving, always looking to make a coin without lifting a finger to earn it, despising of those who took honest labour. Eventually after wasting much patience on the lad, his father, a wise and trusted man with an otherwise even temper, became so despairing that he took the boy by the neck of his jerkin and threw him from the house, telling him the door would be barred against him until he found a place and work.

So Padda found himself walking the cart ruts and tracks of his world; bemoaning the injustice of his fate, begging his way where he could ... or stealing it where he could not.

Then one morning, a rich man's servant found Padda sleeping in his master's stable and dragged him before his Lord as a suspect thief and vagrant. Now Padda, like many a wastrel, had a glib tongue when needed and fearful of the lash he spun a tale of a foolish father, an evil stepmother and her unkind daughters and of a poor lad cast out into the wicked world with barely a rag to his back.

The Lord, who was no fool and could see through the tale like a clear stream on a summer's day, declared that since Padda had been found in the stable then he could earn his way by working in the stable and sleeping there too. But he would be kept under watch and if he proved honest and reliable, well then favour might follow and if he did not, well then the whip still waited.

So Padda worked and - mainly from fear - worked hard too for a little while; he had a clean shirt for his back and food in his belly but he was ever resentful of his fate, always thinking he deserved better. And from his lowly place at the table he would steal glances to where the silver cups gleamed in the firelight and wonder how such things felt to the touch and how much they might be sold for.

Then, most unexpectedly, his fortunes changed.

Late one Samhain eve a boy came running with a gasping tale of the Lord's charioteer hurt, a horse lamed and an axle tree broken; so the stable-master and those under him were called out to give all aid. By the time they had reached the place, bound the injuries of man and horse and placed leather straps to carry the chariot as best they might, the sun was sinking. And Padda found himself, with a satchel of tools and gear, at the back of a line of men intent on reaching home and hearth before dark set in on this darkest of nights and who were making their hurried way along a track that ran between the lengthening shadows of the evening forest.

So into Padda's head came thoughts of flight and of selling the gear he carried, which was the best of its kind and using the money to make good his escape from those he saw as his persecutors. He

slowed his pace to see if any watched and discovered that none did; so, when a bend took him from their view, he jumped the ditch and disappeared among the trees. He waited a while, listening as his fellow mortals left him. And so it was, as he stood in silence and as the full moon began to rise above the earth, that he came to hear as if far off, what sounded like a baby crying.

Now Padda, having taken his opportunity, was like others of his kind, already fearful of its consequences and fearful too of what might lurk between the trees as darkness grew. But here was his answer - if he found a babe that was lost and saved it from the woods and wolves then he had reason for leaving, reason for returning and reason, he hoped, for recognition and reward too and if the babe stayed lost, well he still had the satchel and its contents to sell. So Padda began to search.

Several times the sound faded leaving a darkening silence. So he would stand and swing about and, just as he was giving up, it would come again. And as it led him on, the way seemed made of brambles and branches that scratched his face and pulled the bag and his clothes as if to hold him. Until at last, hot and angry, he pushed through and almost fell into a clearing where the cry came loud and close and where, looking down, he made out a stone laid flat upon the ground half hidden in bindweed and nettles. The cry came again from under it and Padda, in his greed thought to himself that this must be the child of great wealth to be so hid and with the gleam of golden coin blinding his eye, he threw aside the bag, fell to his knees and began to tear at the overgrown stone ... never thinking why it was so overgrown or how it was so overgrown and the child still alive beneath it.

The green life seemed to resist him; it cut and bit at his hands but the golden pile that buried his senses grew with the rising moon and slowly he cleared an edge of the stone, eventually got his fingers under it and, as the moon rose above the trees and shone into the clearing, raised it up and flung it over. His breath heaving in his chest, he looked down into the shadowed place beneath.

Then he would have risen.

Then, whip or no whip, he would have run; run to his home or to some sacred place where such things might not be.

But the Otherworld had laid a darkness on him and he could do neither. Yet what lay there did not seem large; no bigger than the babe that first begins to find its way upon its own two feet;

But this was no babe.

Gray matted fur, or maybe hair, covered a body that seemed to change between animal and human in the moonlight. A face that might have been a muzzle - or might not - was turned towards him. And a hand, that may have been a paw, came up to shade its yellowed eyes, as if the moon light was too bright. Then the arm stretched out and the hand rose from this unseelie place. A hand, slimed and scabbed with rotten flesh, set its claws into Padda's skin and this thing that had lain so long bound under the cold stone rose above him. Eyes that had seemed weak glittered, jaws that had long been closed opened and mouth flesh tore agape becoming a muzzle with lips curled back, so Padda smelt the foulness from within this moon-bane thing. All this rose above him and then came down upon him.

And darkness bit to blood and bone and the banishment of his Spirit's blessing.

He awoke and did not know where or what he was. But the smells of the earth and of the creatures of the earth were strong in his head and there was a hunger for them in his belly and he was lying by a den that reeked of kith and kind.

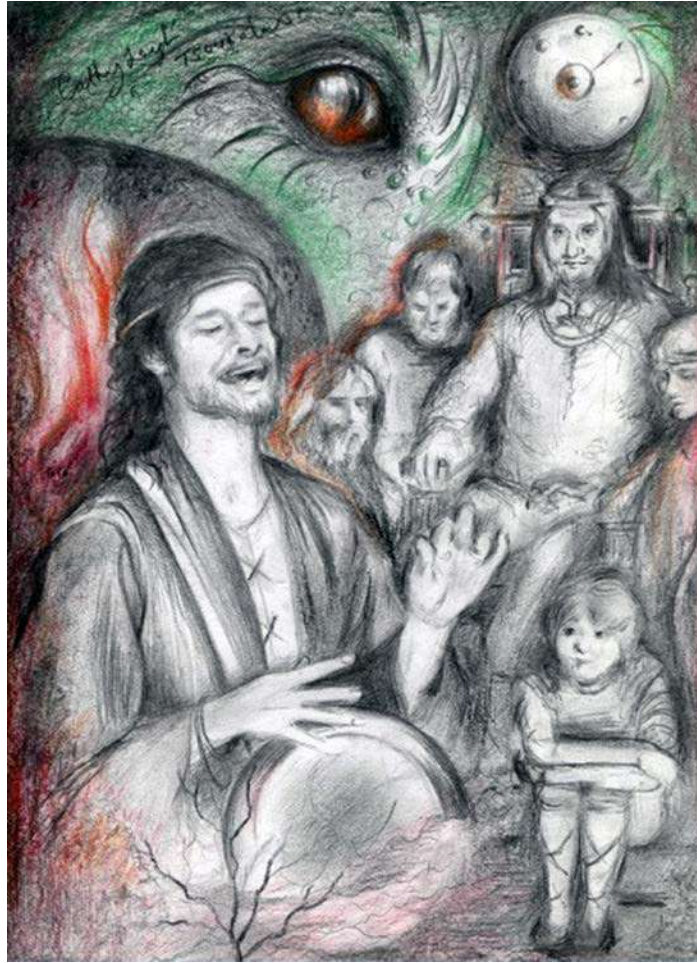
So then he rose.

Then he ran.

And the Moon was like the Sun above him;  
And he felt his four strong paws that tore the earth beneath him;  
And his mind thrilled to the work before him."

And Tarolan the tale-teller raised his wine cup in salute to his Lord; then drank deeply of the dark, red goodness as the drum of hands upon the tables rose around him.





## Biographies

**Martin Pallot** (1956-2020) lived on the drifting edge of Epping Forest in north east London. He described what he did as 'writing pictures'; using inspiration from nature, myth, folklore and his animist beliefs to create poetry, short fiction and 'dream tales'. Martin has been published both online and in print, here and in America, was featured in the anthology, *Moon Poets* (published by Moon Books) and had two books of poetry, *Whispers in the Wood* and *Around the Corner of my Eye*, published by Veneficia Publishing UK (these can be purchased at <https://www.veneficiapublishing.com/>).

Martin was a proof reader for Indie Shaman from 2013, first published a 'back-cover poem', *Litha*, in 2014 and became the Storyteller in Issue 29 (the 10th anniversary edition of Indie Shaman in 2016) with *A Deer Hunt*. Prior to his passing Martin had already sent several more of his stories to Indie Shaman for publication and agreed the publication order. It is our pleasure to be able to continue to share these stories with everyone who enjoys them.

**Cathy Leigh Tsoukalas** is an international artist specialising in traditional portraiture and spirit art. She lives with her family in Greece. Cathy's artwork is available on commission and her online gallery can be viewed at <https://cathyleightsoukalas.smugmug.com/>.

# Shaman Moon



## Yvonne Ryves

I don't really know that much about fairies as I have spent my life managing to avoid them. However, the thing I have always remembered being told most clearly about fairies in general, is that it is best to stay away from them at all costs. In other words, to always pretend you haven't noticed them beckoning to you, offering you food, riding toward you on a white horse or playing you enticing music ... all of which I understand they do and then some.

I should explain here that I have no prejudice towards fairies whatsoever but I have never, not even as a child, seen them as something light, pretty, fluffy and a species that you would want to go hang out with. I could never understand why pictures of fairies depicted them as tiny sprite-like beings, dressed in outfits made of flowers or something floaty, with pretty, often sparkly, delicate wings. Fairies, in my mind at least, had teeth, played tricks, captured you by fair means or foul and were inherently dangerous to play with. OK some were tiny delicate beings but others ... why they were huge! I once went to see a performance of *Midsummer Night's Dream* by the Royal Shakespeare Company where all the fairies were slightly menacing and wore Doc Martins. This, I thought while I was watching, is exactly what fairies are supposed to be like!

I am of Irish descent, live in Ireland and connect with a land that is full of standing stones, stone circles and barrow mounds; places that we know to be entrances to the Otherworld, places where the veil is thin and it is possible to slip easily through the veil. No-one here would take the fairies, or *Sidhe* as we call them, for granted nor assume they are benevolent.

Much of the reason for this may stem from the Tuatha dé Danann who, in Celtic mythology, descended to Ireland in a cloud of mist, ruled there and eventually disappeared into the hills when overcome by the Milesians. The Tuatha dé Danann were warriors but also knowledgeable, civilised, cultured and skilled in magic and the occult. It is the Tuatha dé Danann who have become associated with the fairies that have always been said to inhabit the Irish landscape.





*The Tuatha dé Danann*

Much of it may also be down to folklore relating to fairy abductions and some of the stories show the use of ritual magic as well as the use of elements such as altered state of consciousness and shapeshifting.

There is still, naturally, an amount of folklore about fairies here in Ireland today. There are instances of roads being diverted around places known to have connections with fairies and there is at least one business in the very recent past who ignored local warnings, built on what locals knew was a fairy fort and who suffered greatly as a consequence.

Many who work with fairies through Celtic Shamanism or similar are aware of fairies as guardians of nature who have links to the ancestors. They are aware of 'glamouring' - that all that we are shown is not necessarily as it is and that fairies may play havoc with us and be dangerous to us if we are not careful. They understand that relationships with the fairies and good and trustworthy guides are important for all journey work.

I have a stone circle in my garden and have worked in both stone circles and fairy forts. I am aware of the spirits that reside there, fairy or not, and that in order to work with them I must have permission and abide by the rules that they set. I am comfortable with my own stone circle and know I am safe there; a safety that comes from my close connection with the land and the spirits of place. I am safe to perform ritual, to drum and

to undertake shamanic journeys. In other such places I am extremely careful, circumspect and would never take it for granted that even when accompanied by my own guides and allies, even when I have worked there before, that I will be allowed to do so again.

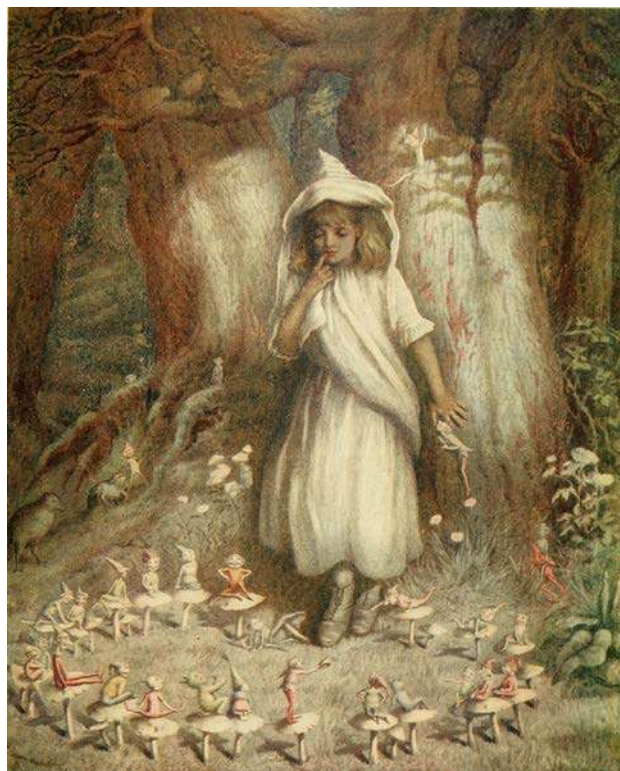
It has always bothered me when reading about working shamanically with fairies that some authors, even when talking to those beginning to undertake shamanic journeys, say that it is ok to just "go and play with the fairies". This to me has never felt safe.

It is refreshing therefore to read the author Morgan Daimler who in the introduction of her book entitled *Fairies* says:

*"As we begin it is probably best to be clear that if you are expecting friendly little flower fairies or ephemeral nature spirits this book is not going to give you what you are looking for".*

and who in the same book quoted the ever wonderful Terry Pratchett who in *Lords and Ladies*<sup>1</sup> wrote:

*"Elves are wonderful. They provoke wonder.  
Elves are marvelous. They cause marvels.  
Elves are fantastic. They create fantasies.  
Elves are glamorous. They project glamour.  
Elves are enchanting. They weave enchantment.  
Elves are terrific. They beget terror.  
The thing about words is that meanings can twist just like a snake, and if you want to find snakes look for them behind words that have changed their meaning.  
No one ever said elves are nice."*



*Kate Greenaway: 'The Elf Ring'*

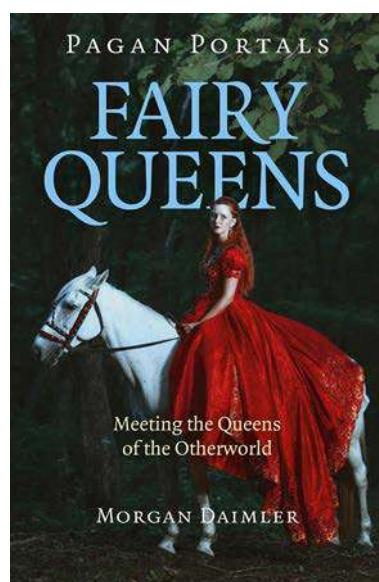
<sup>1</sup> Terry Pratchett. *Lords and Ladies*. Corgi (14 Feb. 2013). ISBN-13: 978-0552167529



Although none of Daimler's books are written from a shamanic perspective nor are they about shamanism, if you are considering working with fairies at any point - or if you would like to learn more about them in case you should ever meet one - she has several books about fairies that would give you more than a good grounding and may even keep you safe.



Arthur Rackham for 'Irish Fairy Tales' (1920)



#### Featured author/books

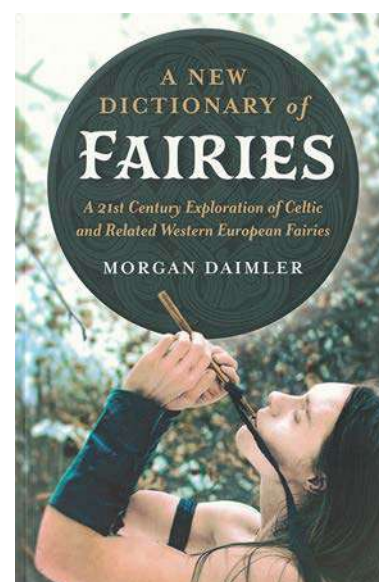
Morgan Daimler, published by Moon Books:

*Fairies* (2017). ISBN-13: 978-1782796503

*Travelling the Fairy Path* (2018). ISBN-13: 978-1785357527

*Pagan Portals: Fairy Queens* (2019). ISBN-13: 978-1785358333

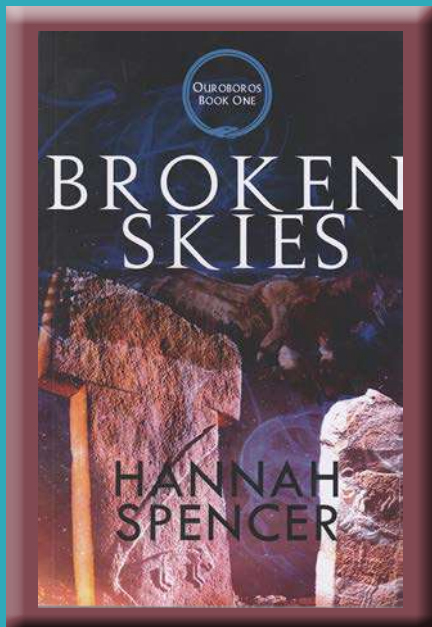
*A New Dictionary of Fairies* (2020). ISBN: 978-1789040364



#### Biography

Yvonne Ryves is 'proactively transitioning' from working full time as a shamanic and energy healer and is the author of *Web of Life*, published by Moon Books as part of their Shaman Pathways series. Yvonne still offers distance work such as Shamanic Counselling, Spirit Guide Readings, Auragraphs and Chios Training. She lives in Ireland and otherwise divides her time between her travels, art and training as an Ovate with OBOD. Yvonne can be contacted via her Facebook page @YvonneRyvesHealing.





## Indie Shaman Lucky Draw!

**Win a copy of 'Broken Skies' by Hannah Spencer!**

To enter simply email [junekent@indieshaman.co.uk](mailto:junekent@indieshaman.co.uk) with the email title 'Broken Skies'. Deadline for entries is 9 a.m. Tuesday 1st December 2020 (UK GMT).

Winner chosen by random draw and notified by email by Indie Shaman. Entries also accepted via <http://shamanismbooks.co.uk>, Lucky Draw email mailouts, Facebook page and Facebook group. For full competition terms and conditions visit <http://shamanismbooks.co.uk/competition-terms-and-conditions/>.

*Editor's Note:* To find out more about 'Broken Skies' read my review in the last issue of Indie Shaman or online at <https://shamanismbooks.co.uk>

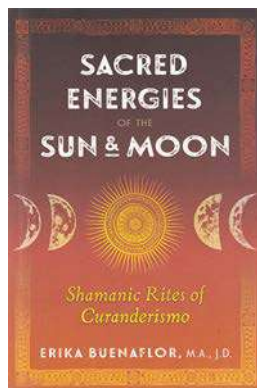
## Shay Mann



# Book Reviews

## ***Sacred Energies of the Sun & Moon***

This is an exceptionally detailed book about how to work with the sacred energies of the sun and moon, based on ancient Latin American shamanic healing practices in which day and night are divided into specific intervals depending on the movements of the sun and moon.



Throughout the book author, Erika Buenaflor, provides detailed and easy to understand explanations and step by step instructions on how to use each specific time of day and night to connect with ethereal energies for purposes such as: recharging the physical body; strengthening personal power; spiritual wisdom; transformation; connecting with spirit animal guides; promoting shamanic dreamwork; connecting with ancestors; making offerings and bringing about personal healing at the deepest of levels.

Interesting, detailed chapters on how the energies of the sun and moon are intertwined with ancient Mesoamerican belief systems and culture and their solar and lunar deities engage the reader's interest from the start. Indeed, the book goes on to exceed expectation with carefully organised subsequent chapters detailing a vast number of rites; each with further learning through recommendations for specific herbs and their preparation, the use of specific crystals and even how to use these with corresponding chakras - and always in relation to their associated rites. To add even more interest, there are also insightful case studies at the end of each chapter.

There is so much to be learnt from every page of this book that it is very likely to be viewed as a treasure by anyone who has the pleasure of reading it. The understanding that by consciously working with the rhythms of the sun and moon and their sacred energies, we can enhance our wellbeing in a traditional holistic sense is completely remarkable and will be of appeal to anyone; especially those who are drawn to a more connected way of life with celestial energies in relation to solar and lunar phases or those interested in or already on a shamanic path.

*Reviewed by Badrunnisa Patel*

## ***Journey to the Chemical Elements***



There is so much that has been written about shamanism now that something truly original is a rare gem, so *Journeys to the Chemical Elements* is a delight. Sustainable chemist turned science teacher, Dr Eleanor Johnson, began using shamanic drum journeys to communicate with the elements of the periodic table while studying to be a teacher and her collaboration with Belgian artist, Lies Van Hee, led to this wonderfully illustrated book of stories about the chemical elements.

The author and artist aim to connect people to the elements through storytelling and art, bridging the gap between science and spirituality. I would say they have succeeded perfectly!

Dr Johnson's credentials as a scientist are without doubt, she studied at Bath University and has a Masters in Chemistry plus a doctorate in Sustainable Chemistry. As her passion for empowering a sustainable scientific industry grew so did her fascination with spiritual practices and training in shamanism gave her space to explore chemistry in a truly innovative way, 'interviewing' each of the chemical elements of the periodic table through shamanic journeying.

*Journeys to the Chemical Elements* is also physically a beautiful publication and large enough to be a 'coffee table' book - although that seems to do it a disservice as these are frequently believed to be only of ornamental value and that is certainly not the case here. But it certainly calls (and deserves) to be left on a table or somewhere similar, where everyone can notice it, pick it up and enjoy it - and the content is guaranteed to inspire conversation.

*Reviewed by June Kent (editor).*

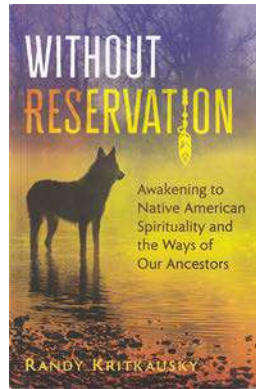
Dr Eleanor Johnson. *Journeys to the Chemical Elements*. Deltor Communications Ltd (30 May 2020). ISBN: 9781916163805

Erika Buenaflor. *Sacred Energies of the Sun and Moon*. Bear & Company (July 2020). ISBN: 9781591433781.

# Book Reviews

## Without Reservation

*Without Reservation* is a personal account of Randy Kritkauský's search for his Native American ancestry and of his relationship with Mother Earth. It is a tale of self-discovery which weaves stories from an oppressed group with stories of a natural world that is also being treated appallingly. Randy's search started later in life when he began to think more about his ancestors. The reader is given the privilege of going along with him on his journey, which contains such sadness as his mother's death as well as the discovery of an artist with a talent for portraying Native Americans.



Randy was born in the United States and was bought up as a white American with European roots. His Native American roots were suppressed, as they had been for many people. The context of his journey, then, is the way in which Native Americans have been taken over by European settlers and encouraged to forget their native ways. One chapter, entitled *Asa's Indian School Story*, tells of schools that were set up to teach Native Americans a different way of life – to make them forget their own ways and become just like white Europeans.

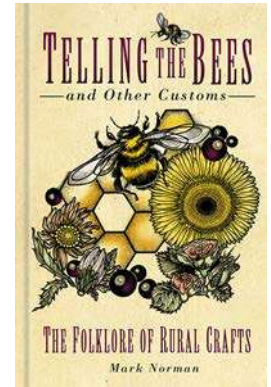
Other chapters tell of Randy's discovery of the Native American way of life and how his ancestors fitted in with this. A lot of what he finds out are stories of oppression: of one group's attack on another. In many places you can really feel his anger at the way the Native American people have been treated by the dominant white society.

This same anger comes through in the stories of how Mother Earth is being oppressed by the dominant society for the sake of its greed. The chapter entitled *What Coy-Wolf Taught Me* is a powerful description of how things have changed over time for the natural world from the perspective of the coy-wolf.

In the introduction the author describes himself as a somewhat lapsed fire-keeper rekindling connections and I think that is a great description of what this book does. It is an account of self-discovery that is tinged with justified sadness and anger.

Reviewed by Karon Lyne

## Telling the Bees – and Other Customs. (The Folklore of Rural Crafts.)



The title, *Telling the Bees*, comes from the old custom of informing your hive of important family events (deaths, marriages, births etc.); otherwise it is believed that they will leave or die out completely. Beekeeping, along with other traditional crafts, was often entwined with folklore, superstitions and stories, which is thoroughly investigated in this book.

The author Mark Norman is a keen folklorist and host of *The Folklore Podcast*, which is a wonderful resource if you are interested in any aspect of folklore. For a well-researched, almost academic book, Mark Norman's writing style is lively, engaging and accessible and will appeal to anyone who picks the book up.

There are 5 chapters: *Wool, Thread and Cloth*; *Bees and Beekeeping*; *Blacksmith and Metal work*; *Beer and Brewing*; *Milling and Baking* - each chapter packed with all manner of fascinating information from anecdotes, snippets of old songs and unusual folk stories to noteworthy medicinal uses. I particularly enjoyed learning some of the origins and mythology surrounding each craft, especially singular world myths, which is a refreshing and positive aspect to an already well-crafted piece of work. Although difficult to choose, my favourite section was knitting (in the *Wool, Thread and Cloth* chapter) which Norman links to knot magic, used by sailors to raise a wind and commonly cast by witches in sea faring communities. He then brings everything up to date with a feature on Yarn Bombing as a form of peaceful protest. At the end of each chapter is a list of sources, which is extremely useful should the reader want to further their own investigation into that particular subject.

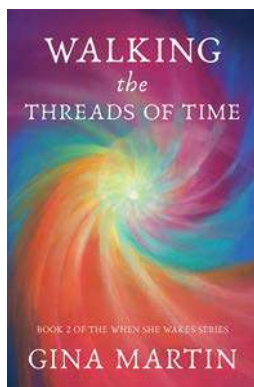
*Telling the Bees* is a well written and articulate book that will interest everyone, layperson or enthusiast, who wants to understand our rural crafts and the folklore that grew up with them.

Reviewed by Thea Prothero



# Book Reviews

## *Walking the Threads of Time*



*Walking the Threads of Time* continues the stories of the Thirteen Companions introduced in the first of author Gina Martin's series, *Sisters of the Solstice Moon*, as they are reincarnated through history. The Thirteen are now separated and scattered throughout time but she who was High Priestess of Isis, Atvasfara, remembers and seeks out the others in lifetime after lifetime. Through following their lives the reader is taken through medieval Europe, Egypt, China, and Ghana and from the Cree community in Canada to the French battle fields of the First World War.

*Walking the Threads of Time* demonstrates how Martin has honed her craft and how, as the groundwork has been laid, a second book can surpass the first (which as I said in my previous review was a remarkably accomplished novel from a new author). The well-researched and richly imagined exploration of the lives, thoughts and feelings of actual ancients like Hildegard von Bingen is wonderful. Martin's writing flows, seemingly effortlessly, through history, herstory and the stories of the Thirteen as they seek to save Her wisdom until they are reunited.

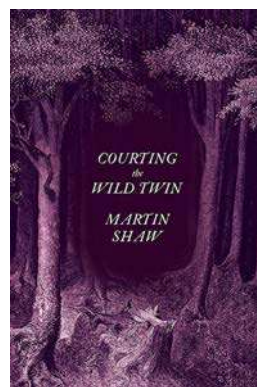
This is a book I started off 'reading for review' and ended up carrying around with me until I had finished it, then found myself missing the characters and thinking "now what?"

*Walking the Threads of Time* is book 2 of the *When She Wakes* series; I am very much looking forward to book 3.

*Reviewed by June Kent (editor).*

Gina Martin. *Walking the Threads of Time*.  
Womancraft Publishing (20 July 2020). ISBN:  
9781910559598

## *Courting the Wild Twin*



Martin Shaw is a renowned mythologist and professional storyteller who spends copious amounts of time in the wilderness listening and learning. *Courting the Wild Twin* is based on the premise that we are all born with a curious and untamed twin who is "thrown out of the window" at birth, taking much of our liveliness with them. In this slim volume, Shaw encourages us to find our hitherto unknown sibling – the wild, uncivilised but vivacious and very much alive alter ego and bring them back into ourselves.

Using the power of tales, especially the fairy kind, Shaw enables us to transform and heal our disconnectedness from the wild, both within and without. Beautifully written in his own unique prose-like style, we are guided through the realms of two enchanting, sad and perfect tales, *Lindworm* and *Tatterhood*. Each of these is uniquely qualified to tear and rip away the urban layers of a life lived in sterile banality, revealing that raw wildness underneath - our true, original selves; part of rather than separate from the rest of the world. Shaw believes this is the key way we can save the earth from destruction by our own hands. He challenges us to wake up.

The depth and sheer wonder of this book is limitless, the magic Shaw creates, is engulfing. The message is sobering and honest. The book will reach the parts of you that you didn't know you had and take you into the long forgotten deepest forests of your soul. It is a treasure.

*Reviewed by Thea Prothero*

Martin Shaw. *Courting the Wild Twin*. Chelsea  
Green Publishing. ISBN: 978-1603589505

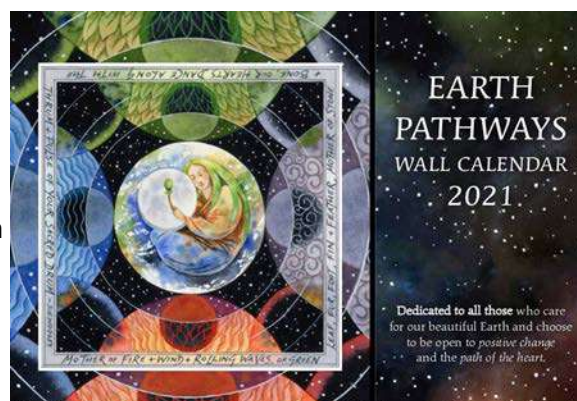


# Reviews

## Earth Pathways Diary and Calendar

*Earth Pathways* diaries and wall calendars never disappoint and the 2021 versions are no exception; superbly practical and stunningly beautiful.

The calendar features full page-size artwork and begins with Shirelle Young's fantastic owl in flight, *Silent Flight*, featured for January. I also adored Sue Wookey's *Badger Queen* with Clare Dubois' *Daring to Love Deeply* (March). One of Sharon Turner's fantastic drums is featured for August and Susan Latchford demonstrates the versatility of her talent with a poem for November. To end the year on a highlight December featured the inspiring poem *We are the Ones* by Jehanne Mehta with the amazing image *Prayer* by Rosa Davis. The calendar also features star sign Astrology for the year.



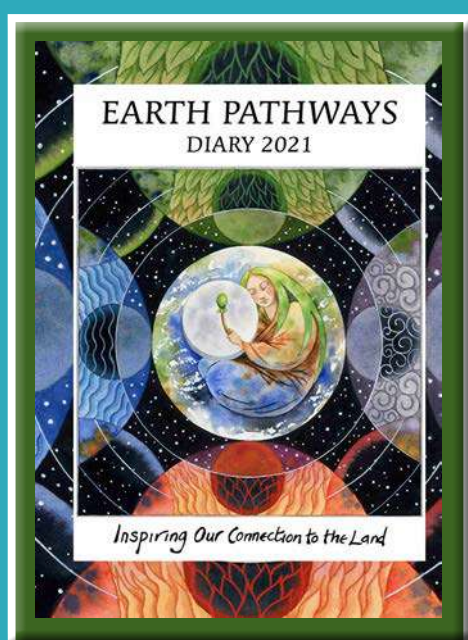
The A5 size diary begins with a great first page featuring colourful art with a call to "smile at everyone you meet" by Annie b. Each month of the year contains a snippet of wisdom or thought in prose or poetry, illustrated by art or photography. Following these is a page-per-month calendar for 2021 and a seasonal calendar for 2022 so you can plan ahead, together with space for your own notes.

As it says on the back of the diary this is "more than just a diary, it is a networking resource and inspiration for the growing community of people who are willing to actively create positive change in their lives for the benefit of the earth". And at the current time we need the inspiration, the coming together in the spirit of community and the power of beauty more than ever.

Produced by a not-for-profit co-operative based in Derbyshire's Peak District the diary is in a week to view format and the calendar is month to view. Buy direct from <https://www.earthpathwaysdiary.uk/> as a percentage of profits goes to 'seed-fund' projects that benefit the Earth and buy early, as they are popular. Makes a fantastic gift although very hard to give away so buy one for yourself as well!

*Reviewed by June Kent (editor).*

Earth Pathways Diary and Calendar 2021. Earth Pathways Co-operative Limited (2019). ISBN: 9780995768628 (Diary); 9780995768635 (Calendar).



## Indie Shaman Lucky Draw!

### Win an Earth Pathways Diary or Calendar

To enter simply email [junekent@indieshaman.co.uk](mailto:junekent@indieshaman.co.uk) with the email title 'Earth Pathways'. Deadline for entries is 9 a.m. Tuesday 1st December 2020 (UK GMT).

Winner chosen by random draw and notified by email by Indie Shaman. First person drawn wins first choice of prize. Entries also accepted via <http://shamanismbooks.co.uk>, Lucky Draw email mailouts, Facebook page and Facebook group. For full competition terms and conditions visit <http://shamanismbooks.co.uk/competition-terms-and-conditions/>.

# Events and Workshops

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, most physical events due to take place in 2020 are now cancelled or postponed. We have left some listings online where appropriate so you can check with the event holder whether future events are still planned, cancelled or whether alternatives have been put in place such as online events etc.

Ongoing events and drumming groups are listed here as well as online so potential new attendees can see what is usually available and contact group and event holders to plan ahead.

## ONLINE EVENTS

**Eco Shamanism Online – The Twelve Days & Nights of Christmas**, with **Mandy Pullen & Jane Embleton**. Divine the coming year through the art of omen walking and dreaming. Contact email – [info@ecoshamanism.org.uk](mailto:info@ecoshamanism.org.uk). <https://www.ecoshamanism.org.uk/learn/twelve-days-of-christmas.html>

**Online Shamanic Circle** with **Fotoula Adrimi**. Monday nights. A shamanic circle for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Fee £10. Contact Fotoula Adrimi, [fotoula@isis-school.co.uk](mailto:fotoula@isis-school.co.uk). <https://www.theisisschoolofholistichealth.com/>

**Sunday evening distance drum healing group**, on Facebook with **Renata & Steven Ash**. To join or add names to the list please visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/181194739151270/>.

**Online (Zoom) Free Shamanic Healing Support Group**, with **Itzhak Beery** at 11 am -12:30 (New York-EST) on Tuesdays and Fridays. (Please check your local times). Email [ibeery@gmail.com](mailto:ibeery@gmail.com) to get a Zoom link a few minutes before the session begins and join many people from around the world.

**Monthly webinar** with sangoma **John Lockley**. Times: Tuesdays at 6 pm South African time, 5 pm UK (London), 12 pm New York, 9 am Seattle. Also recorded. Monthly subscription of \$25, you can cancel at any time. Email [info@johnlockley.com](mailto:info@johnlockley.com). <https://www.johnlockley.com/events/>.

**Online Shamanic Drumming Circles plus Online Shamanic Classes**, with **Jonathan Weekes of Heron Drums**. Facebook Live and Zoom. For more information please visit <https://www.herondrums.co.uk/> or email [jonathan@herondrums.co.uk](mailto:jonathan@herondrums.co.uk)

## EVENTS DIARY 2021 (PHYSICAL EVENTS)

**Eco Shamanism Two Year Practitioner Training** – with **Mandy Pullen**, from January 2021 – GLOUCESTERSHIRE, England. Annual fee – £1900 or £2050 with Certificate. For more information email [info@ecoshamanism.org.uk](mailto:info@ecoshamanism.org.uk); phone 01594 541850, text 07805 800313. <https://www.ecoshamanism.org.uk/learn/eco-shamanism-training.html>

**Indigenous Plant Medicine & Otherworld Magic**, with **Davyd and Emma Farrell**. MID-WALES. 5 Foundational training weekends in advance of the Way Of The Warrior Healer 2 year intensive course. Dates tbc. Email [Emma@plantconsciousness.com](mailto:Emma@plantconsciousness.com). <https://www.plantconsciousness.com/training>

**Way Of The Warrior Healer**, with **Davyd and Emma Farrell**. 2 Year Shamanic Healer Training Course starting 2021. A 9 module graduated path to becoming a contemporary healer with the wisdom, plant medicine and magic of the ancients. MID-WALES. Dates tbc. Email [Emma@plantconsciousness.com](mailto:Emma@plantconsciousness.com). <https://www.plantconsciousness.com/training>

**Advanced Shamanic Ecotherapy Facilitator Training** from April to December 2021 with **Elizabeth Meacham**. Location: Lake Erie Institute, Gates Mills, OHIO 44040, US. Participation in an introductory three-month immersion is a prerequisite for the facilitator training. Email [Liz.E.Meacham@gmail.com](mailto:Liz.E.Meacham@gmail.com). <http://www.shamanicecotherapy.com/training-courses>

**Pilgrimage to NEPAL and TIBET**, 10 Aug-02 Sept 2021 with **Fotoula Adrimi** and Nepalese Shaman, **Bhola Banstola**. We will practice and share ancient teachings through story, Buddhist and Sanskrit philosophy, Mala practice and ancient Himalayan shamanism. Contact Fotoula Adrimi, [fotoula@isis-school.com](mailto:fotoula@isis-school.com). <https://www.theisisschoolofholistichealth.com/pilgrimage-to-nepal-tibet>

## ONGOING EVENTS

**Introduction to Shamanism days**, with **Therapeutic Shamanism**. Experiential and covers the basics of shamanic practice. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk>

**Sacred Circle Dance and Drumming** with **Michael Meredith, Keith Barrett & Barbara Moorby** in CAMBRIDGESHIRE. Every 3rd Saturday afternoon in the month plus "Wheel of the Year" Drumming Days every 3 months. <http://www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops>

# Events and Workshops

**Shamanic Sundays**, with **Mandy Pullen**. FOREST OF DEAN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE. Monthly journeying circle. Regular Introduction to Shamanism workshops. Contact details: Mandy Pullen Tel:01594 541850 or Email: [info@mandypullen.co.uk](mailto:info@mandypullen.co.uk). [http://www.mandypullen.co.uk/Workshops\\_Groups.html](http://www.mandypullen.co.uk/Workshops_Groups.html)

**Monthly Cacao Ceremony**. Held every month on the new moon, INVERNESS, SCOTLAND. Using plant medicine teachings, ceremony, meditation, sacred space and guided invocation, music and more. Email [SpiritKraft@mail.com](mailto:SpiritKraft@mail.com). <http://www.spanglefish.com/SacredVisionsSanctuaryServices/index.asp>

**Drum Birthing Days** with **Nicola & Jason Smalley, The Way of the Buzzard**, near Chorley, LANCASHIRE. Cost from £190. Contact Nicola or Jason on 01257 233909, [contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk](mailto:contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk). <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/drum-birthing-day/>

**Shamanic Ceremonies & Women's Circles** with **Maria Fotiou (Maia)** in LONDON on/ around the New/ Full Moon and the Holy Days marking the change of the Earth seasons. For next dates, email Maia at [mfotiou12@gmail.com](mailto:mfotiou12@gmail.com). <https://www.thefeminineway.online/>

**Birth your Healing Drum** with **Melonie Syrett**. Create a frame drum and beater and journey to find its guardian. Cost £180. Workshops held in LONDON or if a group of 4 can be gathered I will come to you. Contact [Msyrett@aol.com](mailto:Msyrett@aol.com) 07462615299. <https://www.meloniesyrett.org/drum-birthing>

**Shamanic day workshops & weekend retreats** in the PEAK DISTRICT, YORKSHIRE DALES, LAKE DISTRICT, FOREST OF BOWLAND and the WEST PENNINE MOORS with **Nicola & Jason Smalley, The Way of the Buzzard**. [contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk](mailto:contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk), 01257 233909. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/workshops/>

**Monthly Shamanic journeying circles**, 3rd Friday of the month, just outside of GUILDFORD, SURREY, UK, with **Hat Sa'Re**. For more information email [harriet@invitethelight.net](mailto:harriet@invitethelight.net). <https://www.invitethelight.net/events>

**Monthly Open 'Warrior' Soul Rescue Circle** with **Shirley Flint and Kieron Morgan**. St Michael's Church, Ewell Village, SURREY. 7.00 pm. Rescuing the lost souls of those who have fought in war. Enquiries Shirley Flint on 07889 018713 or [shirley.flint789@gmail.com](mailto:shirley.flint789@gmail.com). <http://www.ravens-wing.uk/events-warriors-soul-rescue-circle.html>

**Crystal Space Events**. Meet up at 'Our Space'. Plus events including drum making. SILSDEN, WEST YORKSHIRE. <http://www.crystalspace.co.uk/>

**Munay Ki Network**. YORKSHIRE <http://crystalspaceally.wix.com/munay-ki-network>

**Walking the Sacred Way**. Near PERTH, SCOTLAND, with **Brian Anderson**. This 3 hour workshop offers a practical and effective method of healing that you can use in your life as and when needed. Email [oakenleaf@zoho.com](mailto:oakenleaf@zoho.com). [http://www.oakenleaf.co.uk/?page\\_id=42](http://www.oakenleaf.co.uk/?page_id=42)

**Sacred Activism Events Monthly**. Near PERTH, SCOTLAND, with **Brian Anderson**. [http://www.oakenleaf.co.uk/?page\\_id=44](http://www.oakenleaf.co.uk/?page_id=44)

**Monthly Full Moon Fires**, near LEWES in EAST SUSSEX, UK with **Ali Rabjohns**. Gather us together to re-connect inwardly and with each other. The ceremony originates from the High Andes in Peru. More Info: [enquiries@alirabjohns.com](mailto:enquiries@alirabjohns.com), phone 07528 614747. <https://alirabjohns.com/>

## DRUM CIRCLES - England

**BEDFORDSHIRE**. Shamanic Quest Drum Circle. Monthly on Mondays. Email [melanie@shamanicquest.co.uk](mailto:melanie@shamanicquest.co.uk). <http://www.shamanicquest.co.uk/>.

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**. Shamanic Drummers MK, Milton Keynes, Every Friday 12-3pm. Cost £6. <https://www.facebook.com/shamanicdrummersmk/>. Email [shamanicdrummersmk@gmail.com](mailto:shamanicdrummersmk@gmail.com).

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE**. Cambridgeshire Wellbeing Drumming Circle. 2nd Saturday afternoon each Month. [www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops](http://www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops)

**DERBYSHIRE**. 'The Shamans Drum' Monthly Drumming circle Holbrook, Nr Belper. E-mail: [dunnwooddrums@live.com](mailto:dunnwooddrums@live.com). Phone: 01332880984. <http://dunnwooddrums.com/#/drumming-groups/4533077917>

**DEVON**. Monthly Shamanic Drumming Circle. Totnes Natural Health Centre, Totnes. <http://www.southdevonshamanism.co.uk/workshops/>

**HANTS**. Kki Sounds - Inspiring Inner Stillness. 1st Friday monthly, The Kingsley Centre GU35 9DN. From 7.15 - 9pm. £15, £12 concessions. Contact: Nikki Marianna Hope, E [nikki@kkisounds.net](mailto:nikki@kkisounds.net), T 0791 871 5011. <http://kkinaturally.net/sounds.html/>

**ISLE-OF-WIGHT**. Dragon Isle Drums. 1st Thursday of the month, Doors close 19.25. Cost £5.00. Shalfleet Village Hall Shalfleet, Phone Steve 07867900475 or email [info@serenitysounds.co.uk](mailto:info@serenitysounds.co.uk).



<https://www.serenitysounds.co.uk/>

**KENT.** WhiteBuffalo Sacred Drum/Dance/ Circle. Monthly Near Maidstone. Contact: theresamatthew@gmail.com for full information.

**LANCASHIRE.** 'The Buzzard Circles', Chorley Clan 2nd Tuesday of the month. The Bay Horse pub, Heath Charnock, Chorley, PR6 9ER, 7.30pm. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk, 01257 233909. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/buzzardcircles/>

**LANCASHIRE.** 'The Buzzard Circles', Lancaster Clan 1st Thursday of the month in Halton Mill, Mill Lane, Halton, Lancaster, LA2 6ND, 7.30pm. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk, 01257 233909 <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/buzzardcircles/>

**LANCASHIRE.** 'The Buzzard Circles', Cuerdan Clan 2nd Monday of the month at The Barn, Berkeley Drive, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5 6BY. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk. 01257 233909 <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/about-our-circles/>

**LONDON.** Healing Women's Drum Circle, 3rd Thursday of the month at Balham Spiritualist Church, 211 Balham High Road, SW17, 7:30-9pm. Contact Melonie Syrett, email msyrett@aol.com, phone 07462615299. <https://www.meloniesyrett.org/women-s-drum-circle>

**LONDON.** Closed Women's Drum Circle. Currently Balham, SW17 and Richmond. We meet every 2 weeks. Contact Melonie Syrett, email msyrett@aol.com, phone 07462615299. <https://www.meloniesyrett.org/>

**NORTHUMBERLAND.** Walks with Horses Drumming Group meets monthly at Core Music, Hexham, NE46 3NT on Saturday afternoons 2-4pm. Cost £5. For dates contact Gwen at gwen.a.brown@btinternet.com

**NORTHUMBERLAND.** Hummingbird Gatherings Drumming and Journey Circle at The Sound Lodge, Hexham, , Saturday afternoons 2 – 4.30, starting 9th September. Cost £15. Enquiries: johanna@soundtouchforlife.com Tel:01434 606159 or visit [soundtouchforlife.com](http://soundtouchforlife.com)

**SUSSEX.** Kki Sounds - Inspiring Inner Stillness. Midhurst, West Sussex. 1st Monday in month from 8 – 9.30pm at The Old Town Hall, Market Square GU29 9DN. £15 or £12 concessions. Contact: Nikki Marianna Hope, E nikki@kkisounds.net, T 0791 871 5011. <http://kkinaturally.net/sounds.html/>

**YORKSHIRE.** Evening Shamanic Drumming Circle 1st Wed in month. £15, 7.30 - 9pm Baby Moon Camp, Dunsdale, North Yorkshire, TS14 6RH. Contact Elaine McKeown phone 07933 718368 or via <http://www.innerpeacehealing.org/>

**WILTSHIRE.** White Bear Drum Circle. 2nd Sunday of the month at 11am-1pm, £8 at Heart Song, 1 New Cottage, Stock Lane, Aldbourne, SN8 2NU. Contact Evelyn Whitebear 07464861129, email [Heartsonghaven@icloud.com](mailto:Heartsonghaven@icloud.com).

### **DRUM CIRCLES – Scotland**

**EDINBURGH.** Shamanic Circle: Celtic Ways One Sunday per Month, 6:30-8.30 Dates: Jan 27, Feb 17, Mar 24, Apr 21, May 19. Location: Beetroot Sauvage, 21 Ratcliffe Terrace, EH9 1SX. Contact via website link or email [info@nadurra.co.uk](mailto:info@nadurra.co.uk).

**EDINBURGH.** Spirit Tree Visions Shamanic Drumming Circles: 19 Windsor Place, EH15 2AJ (monthly £17.50/£12.00 waged/unwaged) and The Ecology Centre, Kinghorn, FIFE, KY3 9YG (fortnightly. £10). Contact Liz Harris: email [willowtree1957@gmail.com](mailto:willowtree1957@gmail.com) Tel 0758 260 8317. <https://www.facebook.com/pg/spiritreevisions/events/>

**GLASGOW.** The Way of the Drum Shamanic Circle, Monday nights, 19:00-21:00. Fee £13 or £10 concession. Contact Fotoula Adrimi, [fotoula@isis-school.com](mailto:fotoula@isis-school.com). <https://www.theisisschoolofholistichealth.com/glasgow-shamanic-circle>

**INVERNESS.** Shamanic Drum Circle Gathering, . We meet at full moon / dark moon around Inverness. Outdoors £3.00 indoor £5.99. Email – [SpiritKraft@mail.com](mailto:SpiritKraft@mail.com). <http://www.spanglefish.com/SacredVisionsSanctuaryServices/index.asp>.

### **DRUM CIRCLES – Wales**

**TORFAEN, SOUTH WALES.** Sacred Drum Community Circle in Talgarth and Cwmbran. Twice a month, dates vary, contact us for details. Suggested donation £5 or just come and join us, we would love to see you! Contact details: [angelagigante@outlook.com](mailto:angelagigante@outlook.com)

*For full details plus more events as they become available please visit  
<https://indieshaman.co.uk/community-resources/>.*

*To have your event listed on our website email  
[junekent@indieshaman.co.uk](mailto:junekent@indieshaman.co.uk).*



# Shamanism: Course Providers

**New!** If you are looking for a shamanic course, workshop or training in shamanism you can now find information on our 'Course Providers' website list in the Community Resources' menu at <https://indieshaman.co.uk/>. If you are a course provider running shamanic courses or training in shamanism, consideration for inclusion on our list is one of the benefits included with an Indie Shaman subscription. For more information email [junekent@indieshaman.co.uk](mailto:junekent@indieshaman.co.uk).

## ONLINE/HOME STUDY

**Elizabeth Meacham – Shamanic Ecotherapy Immersion.** Experiential, 3 Month, online spiritual development course through the *Earth Spirit Dreaming* shamanic ecotherapy method. Email – [Liz.E.Meacham@gmail.com](mailto:Liz.E.Meacham@gmail.com). <http://www.shamanicecotherapy.com/training-courses>

**Fotoula Adrimi – The Isis School of Holistic Health.** Shamanic circle; The Path of the Eagle, a 4 module workshop; Women's rites, Magic of the Sacred Blood; and Shedding Skin, a 9 module workshop. Email [fotoula@isis-school.com](mailto:fotoula@isis-school.com). <https://www.theisisschoolofholistichealth.com/>

**Jan van Ysslestyne - The Art of Classical Siberian Shamanism.** Master your drum skills, enter into and out of liminal states of consciousness, dream work principles, sing the journey and the nature of spirits. <https://www.2pathfindercounseling.com/>

**Jason and Nicola Smalley – The Way of the Buzzard.** Unlock the secrets of ancient wisdom for a more connected, creative, empowered life through our Mystery School. Also free online gatherings. Email – Nicola Smalley at [nicola@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk](mailto:nicola@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk). <https://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/>

**Paul Francis – The Three Ravens College of Therapeutic Shamanism and Animism.** Exploring spiritual and psychotherapy practices which can help us heal our disconnection from the natural world. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk/>

## UK – ENGLAND

**BEDFORDSHIRE. Steven and Renata Ash – Sacred Drumming.** A variety of courses in Austria and the UK including their Sacred Drumming Practitioner Course, Clophill, MK45 4BT. **Also** at Windhof, Innerneuwald 50, 2870 Aspangberg/**St. Peter, AUSTRIA.** Email [info@sacreddrumming.co.uk](mailto:info@sacreddrumming.co.uk). <https://www.sacreddrumming.co.uk/>

**DEVON. Suzi Crockford.** 9 Month Shamanic Apprenticeship – DARTMOOR. Introduction to Shamanic Journeying – in Moretonhampstead, DARTMOOR or can be booked as a one-to-one day at my home. Email – [suzi.crockford@googlemail.com](mailto:suzi.crockford@googlemail.com). <https://www.suzicrockford.com/>

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE. Mandy Pullen – Eco Shamanism.** A variety of eco shamanism workshops plus Eco shamanism year course, Forest of Dean and Eco Shamanism Two Year Practitioner Training. Email [info@ecoshamanism.org.uk](mailto:info@ecoshamanism.org.uk). <https://www.ecoshamanism.org.uk/>

**LANCASHIRE. Nicola & Jason Smalley – The Way of the Buzzard.** Events and workshops including: weekend retreats; 'free to attend' ceremonies at sacred sites, drum birthing; annual micro-festival Space to Emerge. Email – Nicola Smalley at [nicola@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk](mailto:nicola@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk). <https://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/>

**SOMERSET. Sharyn Turner – Shamanic Art.** I entwine the powers of shamanism and artistic creation. You will be held in a sacred and nurturing space allowing you to heal your soul wounds whilst expressing your creativity. Glastonbury. Email [info@sharynturner.com](mailto:info@sharynturner.com). <http://www.sharynturner.com/>

## – SCOTLAND

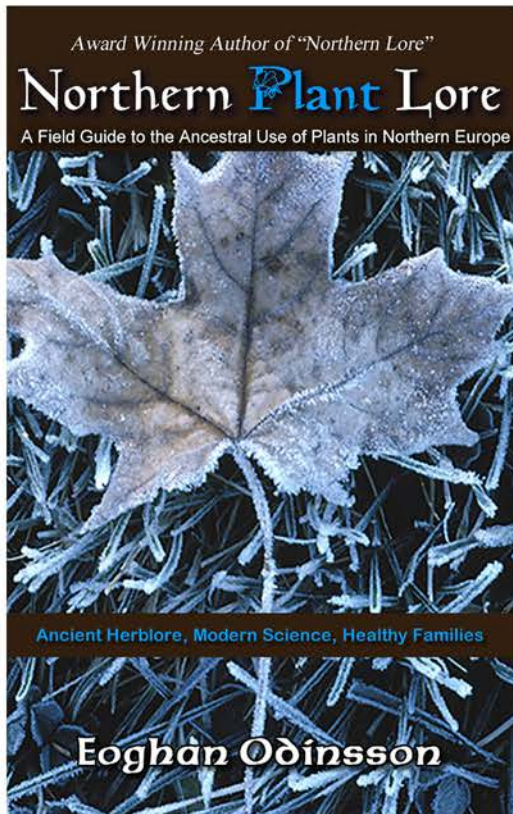
**GLASGOW. Fotoula Adrimi.** Shamanic Practitioner Course for a year and a day. Pilgrimage to NEPAL and TIBET, 10 Aug-02 Sept 2021 with Fotoula Adrimi and Nepalese Shaman, Bhola Banstola. Email – Fotoula Adrimi at [fotoula@isis-school.com](mailto:fotoula@isis-school.com). <https://www.theisisschoolofholistichealth.com/>

## – WALES

**MID-WALES. Davyd and Emma Farrell – Plant Consciousness.** Indigenous Plant Medicine & Otherworld Magic, 5 Foundational training weekends. Way Of The Warrior Healer, 2 Year Shamanic Healer Training Course. Email – [Emma@plantconsciousness.com](mailto:Emma@plantconsciousness.com). <https://www.plantconsciousness.com/>

## UNITED STATES

**Elizabeth Meacham – Shamanic Ecotherapy Training Courses.** Advanced shamanic ecotherapy facilitator training. Location: Lake Erie Institute, Gates Mills, OH 44040. Shamanic Email – [Liz.E.Meacham@gmail.com](mailto:Liz.E.Meacham@gmail.com). <http://www.shamanicecotherapy.com/training-courses>

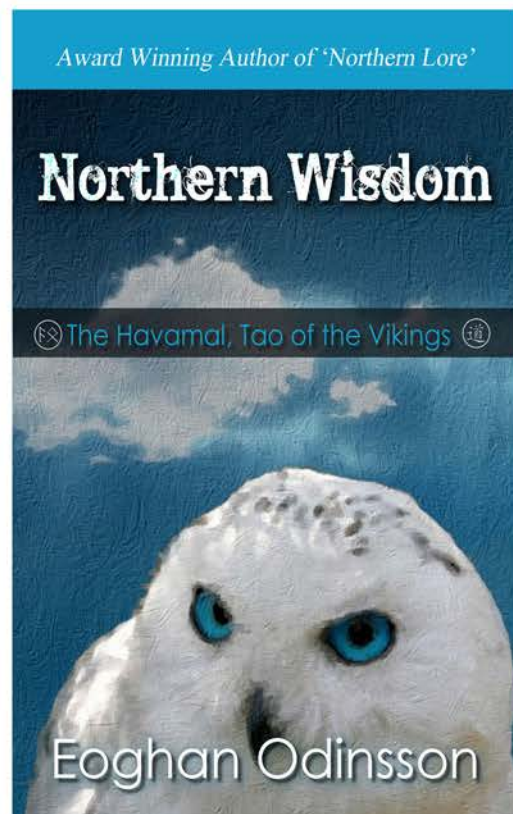


Northern Plant Lore explores the plants and herbs used by the Anglo Saxons for medicinal purposes, and compares them to the list of plant and herbs proven effective by modern medical science.

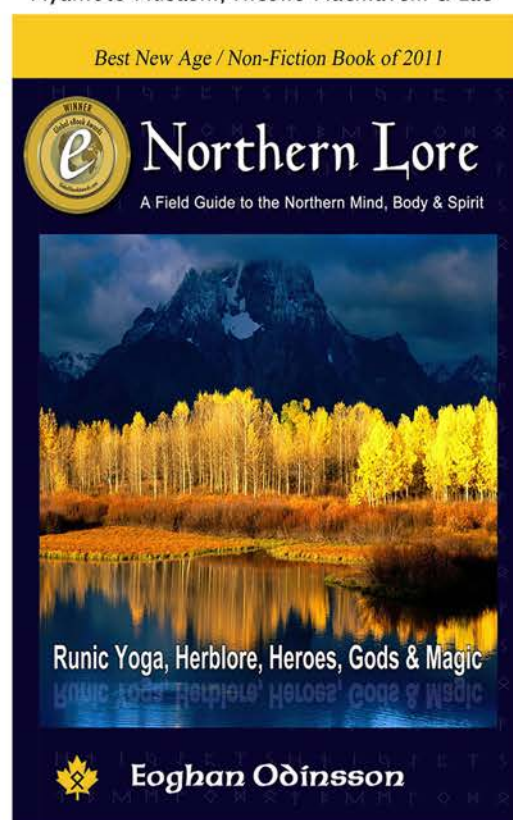


In 9 minutes you will be using the runes for personal development and exploration.

Of course you aren't going to master the runes in 9 minutes, but you can start!



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Northern Lore is the ultimate Field Guide to the Northern Mind, Body & Spirit! Learn Runic Yoga, Ancient Herblore, Meet your Animal Spirit Guide, or Fylgia, Explore Modern Holidays & connections to Ancestral Festivals Unlock the Mysteries of the Runes



# Litha

This path leads to  
The songs of moon dream woods.

The many blessings  
Of the sun  
Are long remembered  
In the roots of trees.

But deep within  
The emerald dappled glades  
Of oak and ash and thorn,  
There waits a sylvan magic,  
Where tales and visions  
From the shadow lands  
Between the dark and light,  
May sometimes last  
Beyond the bounds  
Of shortest night.

While in the circle  
Of the standing stones,  
The sunlight pauses,  
Warming earth's old bones;

As if unwilling to obey,  
The distant call of shortest day.

