

Shamanic Diagnosis: *Seeing in the Dark*

By Mara Bishop, MS, ThM, CSC

When we are suffering, we want a solution to alleviate our pain. We hope a diagnosis will define the cause of our symptoms, and illuminate a clear path for treatment. This can be the case; however, how a diagnosis is delivered, and whether it fully explains what is happening holistically for a patient, is also important.

I use several methods with clients to diagnose how to proceed with treatment. I listen to their issues and analyze what is happening on an energetic level. Valuable information comes from my intuitive scanning and from trusted sources of spiritual guidance. Often I perceive energetic disturbances visually, and even feel what's happening for a client in my own body.

However, my focus is not on my client's imbalances or trauma, but rather on the state of health we intend to restore. If I concentrate on the trauma so does my client, but if my attention is on the healing possibilities, their attention shifts there as well. Shamanic practitioners can affect the energy of a client in the session, but also plant seeds of healing with their words. Clients have come to me after hearing discouraging words. "Nothing more can be done for you," and "You have to learn to live with your pain." These are not healing words. As practitioners we have a responsibility to communicate in a way that enhances, not diminishes, our clients' capacity and openness for self-healing.

Energy medicine practitioners train extensively to receive information from non-physical sources. However, most people can expand their range of perception. Our bodies are naturally equipped to shift modes to heighten perception in different situations.

When looking at the night sky, have you noticed that you can see more stars out of your peripheral vision than when you look straight on? Averted vision works because there are no rods (cells which detect dim light and black and white) in the fovea,

the center of the eye. The fovea contains only cone cells, which perceive bright light and color and are not as useful during the night. Using different ways of observing allows us to see a more complete picture.

This dovetails with what I call "shamanic sensing" or "seeing in the dark." Seeing in the dark refers to the shaman's ability to see beyond the physical. Your intuition (in conjunction with your reason and your research) is a valuable asset in making decisions about your health. Choose practitioners and treatment options that feel right for you and be open to how you are guided through the process.

Sometimes information comes in interesting and unusual ways. Dr. Larry Burk is conducting research into dream diagnosis. He's documented cases of women who have had dreams that led to the diagnosis of breast cancer. These cases could have gone undetected if it weren't for the specificity and recurrence of the information conveyed in the dreams, and the willingness of the women to advocate for themselves despite their doctors' initial disagreement with their diagnoses. (More information at www.letmagichappen.com.)

Several upcoming classes teach the skills of becoming connected to your own sources of information, and learning which vision will help you diagnose what is needed in different circumstances. Refining Your Intuition teaches a variety of techniques for engaging your innate intuitive sense and Shamanic Journeying will connect you to ancient methods of tapping into guidance and insight.

Whether in seeking accurate diagnoses for health issues or guidance about our personal lives, having flexibility in the way we receive and process information can lead to a greater understanding of what we need to be healthy. ❧



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She holds master's degrees in Energy Medicine and Theology and a bachelor's degree in Art and Communications. She is a graduate of the Foundation for Shamanic Studies Three-Year Program in Advanced Shamanism and Shamanic Healing, Sandra Ingerman's Shamanic Teacher Training program, and advanced training with Betsy Bergstrom. Mara is the only Harner Certified Shamanic Counselor® in North Carolina.

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