

# Shamanic Healing:

## *Linking Mental, Physical & Spiritual Health*

By Mara Bishop, MS, ThM, CSC

The benefits of mind-body medicine are well documented. To work shamanically is to engage the third aspect of the classic mind-body-spirit equation. In shamanic healing, the spiritual body is the root of health for the whole being. The spiritual body infuses and connects the mental and physical bodies. By helping us understand and navigate the interrelationship between spirit and matter, shamanism provides a link between our physical, mental, and spiritual bodies.

For my thesis on shamanic healing, I conducted an experiment related to how spirit could affect matter. I tested whether people could affect their body temperatures by asking for a change while they were in a shamanic journey. To a statistically significant degree they could. Intentions, states of mind, even visualizations can directly affect measurable characteristics of our physical bodies. Shamanic practitioners engage the spiritual level; however, the end result is often that clients feel better mentally and physically as well.

One important aspect of my shamanic practice is helping clients reframe their traumatic experiences by understanding the nature and the needs of the spiritual body. When the physical body experiences trauma, the mental and spiritual bodies react in varying degrees as well. When we have mental or emotional trauma, our bodies have corollary reactions. The spiritual body responds to the stimuli received by the physical and mental bodies. With a deeper awareness of this interrelationship of mind, body, and spirit, we are better able to thrive, regardless of what situations we face.

Sometimes, when the effects of trauma have built up in the energetic system, a threshold is reached, where even relatively low levels of stress read to the body as high level attacks. I regularly see clients who have had years of intense stress and have functioned well, with varying degrees of personal and professional success, until they hit their limit. Then things changed and became unmanageable.

When this trauma threshold is reached people respond in a variety of ways. Because our physical and nonphysical bodies are integrated, a combination of physical and emotional symptoms surface, such as headaches, gastrointestinal issues, muscle aches, or chronic fatigue syndrome. Sometimes anxiety, depression, anger or grief set in. Confusion, lack of focus, or difficulty making decisions can become problematic. When stress builds to such an uncomfortable level the pattern can be hard to break.

Shamanic energy healing can provide a "pattern interrupt" that allows the physical, mental and spiritual bodies to reset themselves and begin to recalibrate. When I see people who have reached this "full" state I know we need to start with some energetic balancing that will help channel some of that built up energy off in a healthy way. Many new clients report that after the first session of this kind they feel more relaxed and in less mental and physical pain than they have in a long time. Once the systems start to unwind, each of the three bodies are generally more receptive to moving into deeper work that ultimately leads to a greater sense of health and satisfaction with life. k&h



*Mara Bishop is an intuitive consultant, shamanic practitioner, teacher, author, and artist. In her Personal Evolution Counseling™ practice in Durham, she combines intuitive consultations, shamanic healing, and energetic healing. She works with clients locally, nationally, and internationally.*

*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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