

THE GIFT OF THE STONES  
A Journey of Enlightenment in Shamanic Reality  
by  
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An essential and underlying theme of my entire life, including during childhood, has been a search for the experience and meaning of enlightenment. I was always drawn to the Shamanic pathway because it wasn't an organized religion (which I actively avoided), and it allowed me to commune with things spiritual through natural means. When I began formal Shamanic training, I learned I had been implementing most of the techniques all of my life - I merely hadn't known that there was a name for what I was doing. I began incorporating journey work<sup>1</sup> into my life as a regular practice - to problem-solve, to heal myself and others, and to deepen my relationship with the Divine in everything. It especially had a dramatic impact on my experience with my dying father several years ago, so I know of the life-changing power of journeying into expanded worlds of reality.

But my journeys had always been out-of-body, mental and emotional experiences. Except for a few profound instances of transforming my physical body into something else during Shapeshifting<sup>2</sup> rituals, I had never "taken" my physical body into alternate realities while journeying. That is, until I went to England in May of this year.

I created a transformational trip to the Sacred Sites of England for women for the spring of this year, thinking of it as both a spiritual experience for everyone, as well as a personal opportunity to finally walk upon the land of my British ancestors. When we arrived, we toured many sites, such as Avebury and Stonehenge<sup>3</sup>, and did personal and group rituals in several. Soon after our arrival, however, I became ill and was bedbound for several days, so the group was "leaderless". That bothered me until I realized the energies of the place were so powerful that we would all be taken care of in exactly the ways we each needed. As it turned out, all of the members of the trip either were able to enhance or

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<sup>1</sup> Simply put, Shamanic journey work involves moving into a non-ordinary state of consciousness, by imagining an entrance to the earth, sky, or intermediate realm between, and going into or up to it, where one calls forth the presence of a Power Animal or Guide. The Power Animal or Guide leads the journeyer to deeper expanded states of awareness, where healing, inspiration, insight, and enlightenment may be realized and integrated into ordinary consciousness when the journey is completed.

<sup>2</sup> Shapeshifting is a term for an extremely deep state of being, where the Shaman takes on the energies and consciousness of an animal, for instance, so accurately that s/he *becomes* that animal in the expanded state of awareness s/he is in. Many times, observers who are in ordinary reality may also experience the Shaman appearing to be the animal. Doubtters and ordinary-minded scientists have tried to explain this phenomenon as hypnosis, brainwashing, charlatanism, or just plain good acting. The proof, however, is in the very palpable and *real* results issuing from a Shaman's Shapeshifting experience.

<sup>3</sup> We found Stonehenge to be curiously devoid of the strong and powerful energies we had expected it to have. We were told by a seer in Glastonbury that the energies had been moved some years ago to the Avebury stones by certain groups because of the disrespectful misuse, particularly by the British government, of the Stonehenge site.

finally acknowledge their potentials and talents as leaders and healers in the world, so my illness was a gift to us all. The illness gave me to opportunity to release my feeling of responsibility and need to be in charge, and that profoundly changed my work when I came back to the states. I even met a wonderful British therapist with whom we stayed and who was going through the same stripping away of the last vestiges of his role as “authority” or “leader”. We mirrored each other’s process beautifully.)

I didn’t know it at the time, but the illness and all of my challenges were preparing me for the following Shamanic enlightenment experience:

On one of our last days of our 13-day trip, we visited an ancient stone circle in Cornwall, called Bosca-wen-un. The day was cloudy and the moor we hiked to the circle was misty and hauntingly quiet. The vegetation was lush. There were masses of bluebells and yellow broom everywhere.

When we entered the copse surrounding the circle, we silently began exploring each stone, especially the one in the middle, which was a tall, narrow one, leaning toward the sea. I sensed it had been placed in its tipped position for a purpose. I pressed myself up against it and began listening. I entered a deep state of consciousness and the stone told me of how it served as a symbol of the Whale, which was a sacred being to the ancient people, who revered it as a Shaman. They were guided by the Spirit of the Whale in their needs for sustenance from the sea, as well as for spiritual inspiration and learning. The stone told me the people listened to the Whales’ direction and even followed them to the western hemispheres.

I was drawn to another stone, which was the only one made of quartz in this circle of granite. It was quite beautiful and I began running my hands over it to feel and memorize its energies and physical qualities for future use. I rested my third eye (the energy point in the center of the forehead) on it and began having extraordinary light experiences. I straightened up again and everything was bathed in light, even though the physical area was still shrouded in fog. The lights began taking the forms of classical Celtic Knots (an ancient art), which I was told symbolized the ways that light energy configures through and around everything. The ancient ones apparently could naturally see these light patterns and learned much about the natural world by doing so. The knots were their representations of the energy patterns and were used in ceremonies as well as in everyday life.

As the lovely stone revealed important information about my life, I was touched to my core by the profound communion between us. It told me to think of it as my Sister Stone and that I could call upon its energies for healing or divination anytime, anywhere.

Wiped tears of gratitude, I rose and realized everyone had left me alone to complete my experience in privacy. I thanked all the stones and left. But outside of the circle of bushes around the stone circle, everything looked completely unlike the way it did on the way in. I tried two different paths, but nothing looked familiar

and I returned to the circle entrance, knowing by then I was lost in an entirely new reality. The lush vegetation was gone and I could see only a vast expanse of flat, plantless moor. No bluebells, no bushes. *Nothing* recognizable except the stones.

Because of my disorientation, I didn't fully comprehend how dramatic a shift this was until later reflection. While I was trying to find my way back to my group, I experienced a wide range of feelings, from euphoria to panic. Old movies of people getting lost and dying on the moors kept intruding in my mind. I began to sense this was the first time, after years of Shamanic journey work, that I'd ever traveled into an expanded reality in *both* my mind *and* my body.

I decided to strike out once again, this time to consciously explore this new and unnerving landscape. My inner child was close to hysteria, but I talked her through it because I knew it was an important event in my life as a Shamanic healer.

I tried communicating with the nature spirits, my own spirit guides, and any spirit who would listen, but everything was eerily silent. I knew I must fully trust my own inner guidance and the clear fact that I was being initiated into another, deeper reality than I'd ever experienced.

After wandering for quite a while, I suddenly saw one of the members of the trip just standing several yards away in the mist. She didn't say a word, didn't smile, didn't wave. She just stood looking at me. It shocked me and felt like an experience Carlos Casteneda might have written about in his first three books on learning the Shamanic way and traveling in alternate states of reality.

I just stood, looking back at her. I questioned myself as to whether this was her ordinary self or her energetic double. I wasn't sure what I was seeing but something pushed me from behind and I began moving toward her. In the moment of moving my foot forward, it was a step through what felt like a misty veil. As I completed the move through it, everything reverted to the way it had been earlier. The vivid colors of the flowers, the smells of the musky earth, the sounds of birds awakened my attention. I looked back from where I'd come and I knew the veil had closed the other reality because the flowers were now surrounding me and the flat plain was no longer in sight.

As I followed my friend back to the van, I began realizing what had happened to me. I knew it was the first time my physical body had been actively and consciously included in journeying to another state of reality, and my guides began telling me that I had visited an ancient time when the moor actually *was* bare and sparse, with very little vegetation. I was shown how everything, including my "rescuer", appeared to be different because I was observing from within a totally unrelated reality - i.e., the Celtic Knot of light held a different pattern and frequency than in present time. And, because I had been told for some time before the trip that I would be learning about my ancestors and using the information in my work, I wasn't surprised that I had been given this experience. I felt awed by the gift the stones, the moor, and the spirits there had offered me. I

sensed I'd never again be the same.

Upon arriving home, I was surprised that, unlike other similar spiritual experiences, this one did not diminish in vibrancy and meaning after time. In fact, it has become even stronger. Through regular communion with the Sister Stone and feeling its dynamic energies, my attitude toward people and life itself has been changing dramatically. I feel a part of every living being and can appreciate the light patterns in nature much more easily than ever before. In creating future trips, I now know the most important element is to offer whatever is needed to help participants prepare for the wisdom and enlightening power of the stones. I feel a sacred spring of gratitude within my heart and Soul for having been blessed with this amazing Shamanic journey.