MY JOURNEY FROM SWOOSH TO SHAMAN

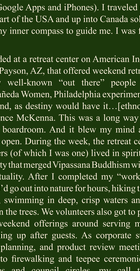
My dear friend ***Kate~MorningStar~Redmarski****, a transpersonal coach, shamanic practitioner, and creator of* ***5 Stepping Stones****, is deeply tied to the power and high-frequency energy of Gaia. Here, she tells us her remarkable story of stepping into her role as a shaman from the corporate world of Nike and gives us fascinating insights into plant wisdom and her channeling capabilities with Gaia in a Q&A that follows. —J.J.*

Several of my clients over the years who serve in executive C-level roles have asked me how I moved from the E-Suite to become a shaman, so I'm happy that I can begin to put this into expression.

I've been a shaman essentially forever. And here's the thing: we are all shamans if we choose to tap into the powers bestowed. What is a shaman, anyway? A shaman describes those who feel a deep connection to and respect for the elementals (earth, fire, water, air), Mother Earth, and all her beings and walks a deep nature spiritual path; and a shamanic healer is one who heals the spirit or the spiritual aspect of dis-ease. I had to awaken to my calling to the shamanic path in this lifetime, though I kept putting it off until I could no longer resist or deny it.

As I reflect back to my youth, I have always been connected to spirits and nature. I grew up an only child in a neighborhood with no other children and didn't feel lonely because I had "invisible friends," angels, fairies, dragons, and a whole host of others that I spoke with all the time. They played and talked with me, providing great pleasure and joy. I grew up Catholic and liked going to church because I had fabulous conversations with all the stained-glass windows and statues. I told no one this, of course, as I would have been told that the only way I could talk to spirits was through a priest (I knew better at this very young age). So, I just kept my spirit relationships to myself. When I was about 6, I remember telling my mother it was going to storm and she said, "It's sunny…I don't think so, dear." And later when the winds blew and the thunder, lightning and driving rains came, my astonished mother asked how I had known it was going to storm. I explained that the squirrels and birds told me as I observed them seeking cover and chattering about.

Fast forward to college and my rapidly advancing post-graduate corporate career, first in RD&D as a Sports Scientist, then Product Manager, Brand Executive, General Manager and President. My busyness superseded my connection to nature as I strived to revive struggling brands, and with it my shamanic path took a back seat…more accurately, got buried. But true callings have a persistent way of getting one's attention one way or another.



My first burnout came after building Nike's women's business from #3 in the World to #1. Success and the intra-me politics that came along with it took its toll on all of my bodies (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual)…leading to my first sabbatical. I took a year away and left the maniacally paced, highly creative work and team leadership behind to hit the road in my 4x4 SUV with my dog, tent, duffle bag of clothes, box of books and an atlas (this was pre-Google Apps and iPhones). I traveled the western part of the USA and up into Canada solo, allowing my inner compass to guide me. I was free, free, free.

I landed at a retreat center on American Indian land near Payson, AZ, that offered weekend retreats with fairly well-known "out there" people like the Castañeda Women, Philadelphia experiment abductees and, as destiny would have it…[ethnobotanist] Terrence McKenna. This was a long way from the Nike boardroom. And it blew my mind and heart wide open. During the week, the retreat center volunteers (of which I was one) lived in spiritual community that merged Vipassana Buddhism with Nature Spirituality. After I astonished my "work" for the day, I'd go out into nature for hours, hiking the mountains, swimming in deep, crisp waters and getting lost in the trees. We volunteers also got to partake in the weekend offerings around serving meals and cleaning up after guests. As corporate structures, strat planning, and product review meetings gave way to firewalking and teepee ceremonies, sweat lodges and council circles, my call to nature reemerged. And McKenna opened me up to the world of entheogens, namely Grandmother Ayahuasca and Sacred Children (Psilocybin) and put me on my path toward experiencing these medicines years later.

One thing Terrence admonished, and I felt land directly in my heart, was to experience these medicines where they grow naturally (not in an apartment in Brooklyn). I knew then that Grandmother Medicine called me, I just didn't know when and how it would unfold.

Seven years later…on another break from the corporate world, this time after turning around and successfully selling a women's athletic footwear brand as its President, I made a pilgrimage to Peru to hike the Inca Trail through to Machu Picchu with three of my friends. Synchronistically, one of my former Nike colleagues and a Kellogg Fellow was working in the Peruvian rainforest on an ecotourism project with a native community. I asked her if she knew the Shaman/Ayahuasero. Yes, she did. So, I asked if she would make the request to him to guide me on my first Ayahuasca journey. A month passed before she responded that Don Ignacio agreed to guide me. I felt his connection with me for the weeks that passed before we made it to the Peruvian jungle. This, btw, was in 1999, before going to South America to partake of sacred plant medicines was trés en vogue.

I became very sick on the Inca Trail (and remained ill for months after) but was made into the rainforest after completing our 4-day trek to Machu Picchu. Next came a 3-day journey by pencil boat to a remote National Geographic outpost built for ornithologists studying macaws and parrots, which delightfully glided by us throughout the day. I became deliriously feverish on the journey into our rainforest destination. Truthfully, I would have died if not for shaman Don Ignacio, who accompanied us the entire way from his community to the outpost lodge, all the while sitting silently next to me in the boat.

It was then and there that I received my first shamanic Limpia healing and my first Shamanic near-death initiation, both of which I did not realize for years during my own shamanic apprenticeships. The native plant brew he made for me, combined with the shamanic healing I received, brought me back from death. It would take another 3 days of lying in my mosquito net-covered hammock before he would deem me ready for a Grandmother Aya ceremony.

I experienced a memorable, remarkable, and very long introductory journey with this special medicine, details of which I won't share here, except this one incident. As the journey progressed into evening, the medicine took hold and the purging phase completed, Don Ignacio sang his Icaros and shook his *chakapa*, and I heard very distinctly in a thunderous male voice (which at the time I thought was his): "Be the Shaman. Be the Shaman. Be the Shaman….you can do this. Shake the chakapa. Take it now. Be the Shaman."

I dismissed the calling then. It would take more than a decade and several moves to Portland, San Francisco, and New York) before I accepted my call to "*Be the Shaman.*" I just found the whole thing unfathomable. But, after a series of undeniable synchronistic happenings, participating in a medicine circle group in which I received guidance from the sacred plant teachers I ingested and experienced "sickness" from several death and initiation cycles, I finally relented. "OK, I'll be the shaman," I declared during one of my post-ceremony integration circles as my witness.

Things began to move quickly after that declaration. My teachers appeared, I made journeys to Ecuador where I met more of my guides and teachers, took more medicines, led groups of women there and was initiated by several shamans into their lineages. Along the way, I left the corporate world and started my own practice as a transpersonal coach and shamanic practitioner.

It was a journey of lifetimes and it continues to unfold as I now fully accept and celebrate my path as Shaman or Helper as one of my teachers, Bear Claw Soaring Eagle, refers to what it is we do.

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MY JOURNEY FROM WOOSH TO SHAMAN

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J.J. Tell us more about who you are, what you do, and what kind of shaman you are.

K.B. My name is Kate-MorningStar Bednarski/MorningStar is my Spirit name, given to me by my teacher and brother, Bear Claw Soaring Eagle. I serve as a Shamanic Practitioner, Transpersonal Coach and Conduit (or Channel), guiding and helping people through big transformations in life as they move to more Spirit-led lives. This can involve clearing of old terms, programs, energies, and curses. My role is to get out of the way, hollow the bone, and allow my Spirit guides to work through me. I do not heal, rather, it is all done through me with my permission. I allow only those beings of the highest light and love frequencies to work in, as and through me.

I am initiated into the Yachak lineage of ceremonies from the Imbabura region of Andean Ecuador. Most specifically, the La Limpia (cleansing ceremony, to remove negative energies and illnesses) and the medicine carrier of sacred tobacco (Rapés), Nihos Sacrados, "sacred tobacco," or palo santo, and Grandfather Huachuma (San Pedro) plant medicine teachers. I use sound as healing with the gong, drum, rattles, chimes, bells, whistles, and flutes. Finally, I am also a certified interfaith spiritual director and serve as a spiritual guide which weaves throughout all the ways I serve others.

J.J. What services do you offer, both for individual clients as well as the collective?

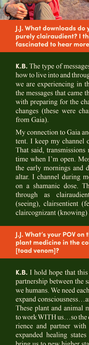
K.B. My services include transpersonal coaching; spiritual guidance; Ceremonies (La Limpia, Sacred Medicine, Cacao), Sound Healing and Baths. Every healing is not individual but rather groups that I offer releases energies and entities from the participating clients, but also frees the collective. I serve Gaia as a channel for her. She often channels through her energies in ceremony and is currently channeling a codex of symbols & Oracles, which provides guidance and activation for humans (us) to live in the New Earth (she is changing and ascending). Currently she is revealing what she calls "Gaia's Galactic Garden" (activated by and through galactic plant medicine loads (I didn't know what those even were a couple of years ago).

J.J. Tell us about Gaia from a spiritual and energetic standpoint (a lot of people are not aware of the Earth's "frequencies" and how it is changing). Can you give us a little bit of background on this as well as where is she right now energetically?

K.B. [As channeled] I, Gaia, the divine spirit of our Mother Earth, am going through GREAT transformative changes and actually birthing new. With this, old ways of being must stop as we witness some massive shifts such as severe weather events, quakes, ing, new earth mass formations from volcanic activity, melting, etc. While these events are taking place, I am releasing the most beautiful healing frequencies, in the form of codes, plasma-like energy frequencies, and Galactic Gardens (which I need my human (children) to nurture) to hold New Life.

J.J. How do you personally connect to Gaia: what are some modalities and techniques that you use?

K.B. I made some big life changes to increase my connection to Gaia. I moved from living in urban centers to reside in nature in the mountains at an altitude of 7,200 feet (anything over 6,000 feet (higher than mass consciousness frequencies). This allows me to hike or spend time out on and in her lands every day. I made a bold habitat in my home to invite a diversity of winged ones close to me…I hear their birdsong and talk to them all the time. I sit on the porch. I connect with all that grows on and in her! I ask her how I can better serve her in prayer and meditation. I walk on her surface in bare feet (this is called "earthing"), swim or soak in her waters, gratefully breathe her air and support transformation with blessed fires. I pray to Grandfather Sun every morning when I rise and connect with the sacred mountain here in Taos, New Mexico, where I make my home base. I seek to maintain awareness of my connection to Gaia consistently as my way of life. I am a master gatekeeper and go out on the land to specific locations when I am guided to work on energy points, opening gates or portals, and clearing them. This work is guided and unplanned by me.



J.J. What downloads do you receive and are they purely clairaudient? I think people will be fascinated to hear more about this.

K.B. The type of messages I receive have to do with how to live into and through the tremendous changes we are experiencing in this now. A few years ago, the messages that came through me had to do more with preparing for the changes, particularly Earth's changes (these were channeled messages directly from Gaia).

My connection to Gaia and the elementals is consistent. I keep my channel open as much as possible. That said, transmissions may come through at any time when I'm open. Most often, I receive them in the early morning and during prayer times at my altar. I channel during medicine ceremonies while on a shamanic dose. The downloads may come through as clairaudient (hearing), clairvoyant (seeing), clairsentient (feeling) and most so now claircognizant (knowing) visions or messages.

J.J. What's your POV on the recent obsession over plant medicine in the collective, especially Bufo (toad venom)?

K.B. I hold hope that this "obsession" resolves into partnership between the sacred plant medicines and us humans. We need each other (plants + people) to expand consciousness… and that's a beautiful thing. These plant and animal medicine teachers are here to work WITH us…with the desire for sovereign freedom and partner with these medicines and the expanded healing states they provide promise to bring us to new higher states of being.

That said, a danger exists that people will seek the medicines for big outward experiences from (escaping reality and seeking ways out), rather than using sacred teachings to expand oneself inwardly and do the integration work. Dangers exist to abuse these plant teachers. These are sacred medicines from our Mother, Pachamama. In many cases the obsession is leading to over-harvesting, and we are now losing some of these to extinction and greed. This concerns me and many other practitioners.

As for Bufo (SMo-DMT), this is a most potent medicine which can immediately reveal your true Self and heal your heart. IMHO, this medicine requires the receiver's respect and reverential preparation. First, I say to receive Bufo it must be invested from a frog who lives in the desert and offers his medicine as sacrament. Secondly, this medicine, the "Spirit Molecule," unlocks all the keys to unlock your holding. The healing potential and revelations are beyond description here. One must prepare body for the tremendous expansive experience and the responsibility for ingesting and integrating it.

J.J. In which special corners of the earth have you had the strongest hook-ups and feelings/sensations?

K.B. My strong grid line runs from Northern New Mexico through Sedona, AZ, to Mount Shasta, CA, then up in the southern Oregon Coast through the Redwoods of the Northern California coast. I worked with potent Gaia forces in the Shawangunk and Catskill mountains of Upstate New York and elsewhere. Also, for me, the Ecuadorian Andes mountains near Otavalo, Ecuador, are super strong. Then there are the sacred sites I've been called to that carry very big sacred Gaian energies—Machu Picchu, Thailand (Jungles and Jim Thompson's house), Bali (Mount Agung), Avila, Spain; Chartres, France; Newgrange, Ireland; Stonehenge; Table Mountain, Cape Town in South Africa to name a few.

J.J. Tell us a little bit about what makes Shasta, Taos, and Sedona so special, and if there are other locations on the earth's magnetic grid that are meaningful to you.

K.B. Shasta, Taos, and Sedona are on a grid line that connects with the master crystals and connect to the Arkansas crystal beds. They all have huge crystalline structure beneath the mountains and towns built atop them. Galactic activity is great in these places (as is military activity) and they attract lightworkers and starseeds. Energies are high and strong. Native communities continue to dwell here, honoring and protecting the sacred mountains and other sites in powerful ceremonies.

J.J. Is connecting with Gaia an integral part of one's spiritual practice? Why should people do this? What are the benefits? How have you seen people/clients change?

K.B. I certainly recommend connecting with Gaia as regular practice. We live on her surface. We eat the foods she provides. We heal from her medicines. And so, we mutually benefit from connecting consciously with her in gratitude. She is abundant in her offerings. Also, when you build a strong relationship with Gaia and you listen intently, she will guide you. You become one with her.

J.J. What led to your own spiritual awakening?

K.B. I heard voices and felt spirits calling me…and I fascinated me. Then, I burned myself out driving and pushing in my corporate work, in exercise and diet, and in my relationships. I broke down and broke through. I want to see my first massage therapist to relieve the physical pain I accrued from pushing myself so hard when I worked at Nike. One day, she handed me a book saying "Here, I think you need this book…" It was Bringers of the Dawn: Teachings of the Pleiadians channeled by Barbara Marciniak. I had NO idea who/what the Pleiadeans were then, nor had I read any channeled books. And that massage therapist was so right…I needed that book and began to wake up in the reading of it over 30 years ago. The journey continues today. And ironically (or not), I now channel serving as a conduit…and lift higher to awaken to my True Divine self…a path we are all offered if we say YES to it.

And if you are ready, be ready for deep change in your life and to be surprised…in beautiful ways.

J.J. What is your deepest discovery you are thrilled about? Do you want to talk about Galactic Candelilla? I just think we need to talk about how you TALK TO PLANTS!!!!

K.B. Haha …Yes indeed, I do talk to plants. And they talk to me, too. And now I just keep finding myself in Gaia's Galactic Garden, which is packed full of beautifully coded plants of the new Earth. Candelilla is there in her Opulent glory, coded with the spirit of Opulence. Desert Lily is present with its codes of Pure Joy and so many others that haven't yet introduced themselves to me. Our Earth Mother is beaming and beaming with so much glorious beauty and many joyful messages. I've found that the more you tap into her frequency and energy, the more opulence (true beauty and true wealth) you receive.

Ready to take your spiritual practice to the next level? Do you want to talk about Galactic Candelilla? I just think we need to talk about how you TALK TO PLANTS!!!!

Contact Kate-MorningStar Bednarski at katemorningstar@gmail.com