

Phoenix Publications presents...

An Interview With

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What is a shamanic practitioner?

A shamanic practitioner is one who is trained in the art of the Shaman – one who has the skills to travel to other dimensions of space and time in order to retrieve information; who has the ability to ‘see’ and diagnose soul or ‘essence’ loss in another and then to help the person retrieve the missing parts of their energetic body. A shamanic practitioner uses the tools of the trade – the drum, rattles, feathers, smudge, etc., in ceremony and ritual to assist the client to heal themselves. It takes many years of training to be able to hold protected space for a client, while traveling into another dimension to see and clear energetic blockages, ‘fight’ discarnate and discordant entities, release trapped energy and create an environment in which the client feels safe to do their portion of the work to heal.

You describe yourself as a “metis”. What does that mean?

Metis is a French Canadian word meaning ‘mixed blood’. The Canadian government has recently agreed to recognize the Metis people in Canada as a ‘tribe’. That hasn’t happened here in America. Since I’m actually my own ‘five civilized tribes’ (Okanagan, San Poil, Nez Perce, Haudanosaunee [Iroquois], and Tsalagi [Cherokee], I definitely qualify as a ‘mixed blood’. I also have French Canadian and Welsh heritage.

It could be said that your unique cultural heritage allows you to walk in two worlds. What has that been like for you?

I think I walk in many more than two worlds! (laughing) And, culturally speaking, I have studied with teachers from many different indigenous nations, so I’ve had to learn several disparate traditions, cosmologies, sets of protocol, etc. . . . and . . . I’m also a good, old-fashioned, liberated American woman.

*So I take the ancient teachings of each culture, look for the similarities that, taken together, weave the tapestry of observable ‘truth’, seek the ‘unusual’ – the one piece of the common puzzle that is unique to each tribe – weave that ‘spirit bead’ into the weft, discard the extraneous, and then step back to look at the image as a whole. That’s what Sandy and I have done with *Path of the White Wolf* – the book is the embodiment of much that we have learned from indigenous teachers all over the world.*

Personally, I have lived in two worlds. Matter of fact, nearly twenty years ago, I attended one of my tribe’s Winter Dances. After 4 nights of dancing, the Medicine Man came to me and told me to ‘watch my dreams’ for the next four nights. My intent in

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attending the dance was to pray for guidance and a new and deeper direction in my life. At the time, I was facilitating a women's drum circle; I was in training with Grandfather Misha Duvan of the Ulchi tribe in Siberia; I was a SunDancer . . .and I wasn't sure where all this was leading me.

Well, I definitely dreamed. The first night, I saw a huge, golden window frame, empty, except for the night sky on the other side. The second night, I saw the same pulsating, golden window, and on each star there stood an Ancestor – some from my spiritual lineage, and some from my physical heritage. The third night, I saw myself standing on this world's side of the golden frame, watching and conversing with all my Ancestors, asking them what's next in my life. On the fourth night, I saw myself with one side of my body over the window's sill – the side that had climbed into the next world was dressed in my Native regalia (doeskin beaded dress, moccasins, eagle feather fan, braided hair). The side of my body that remained in this dimension was wearing a Nordstrom's suit, high heels and a briefcase in my hand!! Pretty graphic depiction of my choices, eh?

And, yes, I still have one foot on each side of the golden frame . . . as of this moment, I still have a 'day job' - Ms. Corporate America - which I really enjoy. It keeps me grounded both financially and physically. And I do ceremony, shamanic healing work, drum circles, workshops, etc., when I'm away from the day job. So I guess that vision was pretty darn literal . . .

This is one of the things Sandy and I do in common. Sandy also holds a full-on day job, and I know she loves what she does. Perhaps one of the greatest things we both have to offer is that we have learned how to ground and hold space in the busy modern society in which we live, and to traverse other worlds and dimensions without losing our commitments to the daily structures in our lives.

And, at some point in the future – just a few years from now – I want to let my corporate side retire, and allow my shamanic self to emerge fully as the elder and wise-woman that I hope to become.

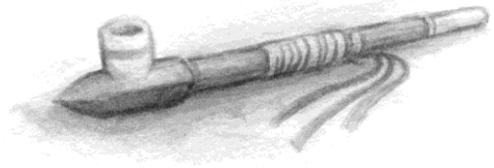
You and Sandy bring different experiences and perspectives to this project. What did you draw upon for this book? (areas of study, journals, personal experiences, etc.)

Again, nearly all of my studies have been 'hands-on' with the elders. I've read voraciously throughout this lifetime – everything from Shaman's Drum magazine to Shamanic practitioner's case studies – and the things that have taught me the most, increased my respect and validated my own internal experiences, have been the ceremonies, traditions and teachings of my elders.

From the writer's perspective, how did you manage the collaboration process?

Now, THAT was fun!! Sandy and I would each agree to do a chapter. We'd work on it, then email what we had completed to the other. When I received Sandy's work, I'd read it

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over, add whatever I wanted, suggest deletions or make a correction (hardly ever necessary!). What we found during the process is that Sandy and I have worked together so long, taught workshops, etc., and blended so well, that our writing was seamless! After we'd written perhaps half the book, we re-read it and often couldn't tell who had written what!!

To me, it's a fabulous compliment to both of us; a true acknowledgement of how close we are in understanding, wisdom, preference and presentation.

Why did you feel it was important to write this book?

Oh, my! Well, first of all, each elder who 'saw' me and decided they wanted to share their teachings with me, told me that the day would come when they would want me to share this information with the world ~ because the time would come when we would all need to sift our perspectives, perceptions and actions, in order evolve to a new and higher vibrational level so that we can be what we want to see in our world.

That time has come. WE are the ones we've been waiting for!! All the ancient indigenous prophecies speak to this. Whether I was leaning from my SunDance Intercessor or a Hawaiian Kupuna; whether I was working with Grandfather Misha and Grandmother Mingo from Siberia or with Gagadju from Australia – the elders all told me the same thing. I am a bridge, precisely because I carry so many different bloodlines, and cross so many different cultural boundaries. As a bridge, I have the ability to speak to people from my heart, in a way that transcends barriers.

*The old ones say that this is a time of **great** change. The world as we know it will become totally different over the next few years. All the prophecies target the year 2012 as the jump-off point to a new world vision. **NOW** is the time when we must change . . . we are the only ones who can stop global warming; turn the tides on the extinction of thousands of different species; restore the rainforests; learn to live in balance and harmony while retaining our cultural diversity ~ unto the Seventh Generation.*

When Indigenous people came into council to make decisions that would affect the tribe and the world, they brought the seers in with them, and asked them to portray the effects of any decision they might make. If the seer saw that their decision would create harm to the next generations, that choice was never taken. That was an integral part of the evaluation process.

Humans today, because of the fear and greed of the masculine paradigm from which most operate, have forgotten how to 'see' the results of their actions before they are taken – and often don't even care to look! We need to re-awaken the Divine Feminine: She, Mother Earth, who nurtures and feeds us all. We need to act from the paradigm of the Mother, who always seeks the best and highest good for all her children.

Path of the White Wolf incorporates the foundational teachings that will empower each person and allow them to find the purpose they incarnated for at this time in our history.

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The intention of the book, and the reason Sandy and I decided to bring it out now, is to assist each one of us to dismantle dysfunctional patterning, programming, belief systems ~ and to integrate a new and deeper understanding of ourselves as the children of a beneficent Mother. Children whose objective is to create harmonious interactions with others; to respect, honor and value each other and our Mother; to work toward healing the Earth and All Our Relations.

What is the single most important message or lesson you hope the reader will take from this book?

That's easy . . . Sandy and I pray that each person who picks up our book will come to understand that the Medicine Wheel is a universal, transcendental, foundational tool for the Self— self-healing; self-actualization; self-reclamation; self-transformation. The Medicine Wheel transcends religion, and can be used by devotees of any religion. Because it is universal and doesn't 'belong' to any one culture, it is a way that can be followed by any and all.

Are you planning to write more books?

(laughing) Well, let's see . . . I think I have at least three in process right now! There's the Path of the White Wolf Daily Meditations©, which will probably be both an e-book and in print. I'm writing another one about what the world needs now . . . (laughing) isn't that part of an old song?? Sandy and I will also be co-authoring a second level book on shamanism over the next year or so . . . and I'm in progress on a novel about my people. Always provided I can find time to write in between all the other fabulous facets of my life!

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