Discovering the Magic and Wisdom
Of Your Original Power Animal

An Online Video Workshop in the Series
ENTERING THE LODGES OF SHAMANISM
With Shaman Healer and Teacher
Lynn Andrews.

"Guide to the Teachings:
Working with Power Animals"

© 2013 by Lynn Andrews and Lynn Andrews Productions. All Rights Reserved. No part of this Workbook may be disseminated without written consent.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I. Your First Meeting with Your Original Power Animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Finding Your Original Power Animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>B. First Steps: The Sacred Wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>C. Forming a Bond with your Original Power Animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>II. Working with Power Animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>B. Grazers, Predators, Song Birds, Whales &amp; Dolphins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>C. Learning about Your Original Power Animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>D. Learning from and Accepting Yourself with Your Original Power Animal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>III. Prayer of Thanks for the Animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>IV. Conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

My intent in bringing you these "Online Video Workshops" is to help you find your own creative soul, the joy and the destiny in your life through the ancient teachings of shamanism.

When I began my apprenticeship to Agnes Whistling Elk and Ruby Plenty Chiefs thirty years ago, I had no idea that they were part of a very private and anonymous gathering of elder women of high degree from various native cultures around the world known as the Sisterhood of the Shields.

With Agnes and Ruby, I traveled to Australia to apprentice with Ginevee, an Aboriginal woman of high degree. I traveled to the jungles of the Yucatán to apprentice with Zoila, a curendera of Mayan descent. I traveled to Nepal to apprentice with Ani, a Nepalese hill woman of immense power and wisdom. I have traveled all over the world to study and work with indigenous women healers from many different cultures, all members of the Sisterhood of the Shields.

The teachings of shamanism come from Mother Earth, herself, the greatest schoolhouse we will ever have, and from Father Sky and life force of the entire universe. Shamanic cultures the world over have observed and charted the natural world for millennia, becoming one with it as they extracted vital information about the rhythms of life and the interaction of all things, from the movement of the stars and planets across the skies, to the winds and waters across the face of this earth, the plant and animal kingdoms of Mother Earth, and what each tells us about how to live in harmony. And they have passed this wisdom down for thousands of years, expanding and growing with it, from shaman to apprentice, from mother to daughter and father to son, in an unbroken chain. Their's is a world whose people have always known that they live in Oneness with all that is, that they are all part of the great One just as that great One is part of each of them. It is a world that has always sought to live in harmony and balance with the natural world, to learn from it and give back to it in the sacred ways of their Ancestors.
To me, shamanism is a powerful and beautiful world view, born of the interconnectedness of all living things in the universe, both seen and unseen. What an exquisite way to know sacredness, that we are all part of the great One and the great Oneness of life that flows through all living things, plant and animal alike, the winds, the seas, the rains, the world of spirit and the world of the physical, even other universes, connecting all that is in the great dance we humans call life.

The word “shaman” is actually Tungusic in origin, from the indigenous Tungusic peoples of Siberia who conceive of the universe as a living organism: šamán, “one who knows,” one who is able to divine the hidden and use the powers of the spirit world to heal.

Although they are called differently and work in somewhat different fashion across the world, the šamán – those who know and enter the spirit world at will, who go into the great mystery of the unseen to bring back the power and magic of healing wisdom to the physical world, the shamans – have been a vital part of the fabric of humanity in every corner of this earth for tens of thousands of years, continuing in the present day.

Ancient wisdom is as important and timely today as it ever has been. There really is no difference between people now and someone who lived 5000 years ago who needed to survive, to understand his or her place in life, be happy, have a harmonious and productive relationship with the world and experience the beauty of life in one way or another and feel a sense of Godness and of creating power and abundance in the world. All of these things have always been part of the human experience, no matter what time period we were born into.

A shaman is one who has dedicated his or her life to understanding what the harmonies and the energies of this earth really are and how to find the gift within yourself to realize that magic happens every day of your life. If you do not believe in magic, your life will not be magical. To find that magic, all you need do is open yourself to the beauty and power of possibility, the beauty and power that is in the world around you and is also within you, even when you feel at your lowest. The great beings of light throughout this universe are around you always, waiting for you to open yourself to discover and ask them for guidance, for wisdom, for understanding and love.
Working with power animals is one way of tapping into that source of spirit, beauty and power that is around you and within you always. The shamanism of my teachers is the shamanism of the spiritual warrior and warrioress who knows that Mother Earth gives us life force, the life blood of our sacred body, and that the plants and animals, the four-leggeds, fish and winged ones give us nourishment and healing both in the physical realm and in the realm of spirit. As spiritual warriors, we do commerce in the world with the integrity of our own life and spirit. Our tools are the shields of awareness, personal integrity, the symbols of ancient truth and the sacred give-away.

We know that to walk on this earth with sacred feet, one must always give back in kind what one takes. This is a sacred process of give and take. As a being of truth, you are aware of the life force that you take from the universe, and you give back that energy in like kind. You pray, for example, for the spirit of the plants and animals that have given their lives so that you may eat and feed your family. Any time a prayer is answered, any time your power animals or other beings of light come to share their wisdom with you and show you how to access your wisdom, you give back with a prayer of gratitude, thanking the Great Spirit in whatever way you understand God, to Mother Earth who gives us life, to the powers of the four directions, your power animals and all the spirits and great beings of light that are around you always.

With one foot rooted firmly in the world of the physical and the other always in spirit, the spiritual warrior chooses the target carefully, takes aim, pulls back the bow and shoots the arrow with the total commitment of the warrior’s spiritual and physical being. We look to Mother Earth, Father Sky and to the inner universe for guidance.

Working with the power animals of your life is a vital and vibrant way to discover the teachings of spirit which you came into this lifetime to find. Any time an animal shows itself to you in an unexpected or repeated way, whether in your dreaming and visions or in physical form, that animal has come to you as a messenger of spirit that has something important to tell you.

One of my apprentices told me that even before he discovered the amazing world of power animals, he had a series of very peculiar experiences with a gray lizard crossing the path in front of him that he quickly understood was of great significance to him. He was in the process of moving from a major urban area to the Southern California coast and one afternoon he had two very important appointments: one to look at an apartment and one to look at a Land
Rover he was interested in buying. As he was climbing the stairs to look at the second-level apartment, a gray lizard came out of nowhere and ran across the step ahead of him. As soon as he saw that lizard, he was struck with the immediate sense that this was not the apartment for him. And sure enough, when he walked around to the far side of the building, he discovered three motorcycles which the rental agent told him belonged to the tenants who shared the other half of the duplex. He told me, "Nothing against motorcycles, I intend to buy one. But right then I was taking on a very high pressure job where I would be working partly from my home at very irregular hours, and I knew it would not work to have motorcycles coming and going beneath my windows." He did not take the apartment; in fact, he found another, much quieter area more to his liking that was closer to his employer.

Later that same afternoon, he again had an encounter with gray lizard as he and a car salesman were walking across the lot to look at a Land Rover that had just come in, which he was interested in buying. Again a gray lizard came out of nowhere and ran across the ground directly between him and the car. A few minutes later, as he put the car into gear to go for a test drive, he detected a slight hesitation and a faint noise as the vehicle shifted, and it turned out upon inspection that the car had an undisclosed transmission problem when it was traded in.

He realized that again gray lizard had shown up to tell him, "Look closely and pay attention." And since that time, gray lizard – which he now knows is actually not his original power animal – gray lizard has shown up often to tell him to look very carefully before he makes any decisions, to search out the "unseen" before he acts.

Lizards, by the way, are often great allies of shaman healers because of their extraordinary healing powers. The lizard vibrates at such an extremely high frequency that it is capable of growing back its tail if it is injured. And my apprentice does, indeed, carry lizard healing powers.

Through your original power animal, you look into a mirror that reflects back to you your own original nature, the person you are at your core since the day you were born. The mirror of your power animal reflects back to you powers, abilities and personal attributes which you possess but have likely been unaware of, your innate qualities of being and the way you look at the world when you look through your own eyes (and not the eyes of someone else).
We are born knowing who we are. Just watch the way a baby asserts herself in the world if you have any doubts about that! But in modern societies, we tend to forget who we are amid the confusion and clamor of daily living. We become conditioned to be someone else at a very early age, to give up the "illusions" of youth, that time in our lives when we knew exactly who we were even if we didn't yet have the language to express it. And then we spend the rest of our lives trying to find ourselves, who we are, where we are going and what we really mean to be in this life. We give up the tremendous power of that self-knowing and too often end up moving further and further away from our own true selves.

When I was talking about power animals in my book *Writing Spirit*, I asked:

"How can our communications in life be real and true if we are living from a counterfeit self, a self devised by the designs of others? I teach the journey of the power animal because I know that to truly express yourself with honesty and integrity, from the voice of your spirit, you must know your original nature.

"When your power animal comes to you, you will understand something very key about your own nature that perhaps you never saw before. The language of each animal is unique, and it is vital to know if you are predatory by nature or if you are a grazer. People with predatory power animals, like a wolf or a puma, have a tendency to communicate very directly, sometimes pinning others with their eyes and their direct, emphatic statements. A grazer, like a deer or an elk, is much subtler in communication and will often speak softly and seemingly tentatively. Yet never doubt the power of any animal.

"It is also useful to know the power animals of others while communicating. Knowing your own power animal will help you learn how to discern the energies of the animal powers that animate another person's being. If you study the way animals live and then see a particular animal energy in another person, you will learn how to approach that person. If the person is predatory, you will know that you can speak openly and directly, whereas with someone who is a grazer you may need to take a softer, less perceptually threatening approach.

"Always remember that no animal is more powerful than another, and that no power animal is more powerful than another. Each is a reflection of the Great Spirit. Sensing and communing with your power animal will give you access to your essence and awaken you to a remembrance of who you truly are."
Through working with your original power animal, you begin to claim and reclaim your power, your destiny and your healing in a most incredible way, that takes you into your heart as you merge with your power animal and experience unconditional love and a whole new way of seeing your life.

I teach with the mind and the heart and I teach to open your heart to love, because it is love that heals us all. Love is the most powerful force in the universe. Know that. Believe that. Love is the life force that pulses between all things in the universe. The world of the power animals is the world of unconditional love, for your power animal loves you dearly, just as you are.

Your power animal also knows and respects all other power animals, and this animal can help you understand the power animals of other people toward having a better relationship. Power animals are intimately connected through a bond that is born of Divine love of spirit. One of my apprentices tells me that in her shaman spirit lodge, where she goes to do her most deeply personal work and connect with the Divine spirit of all that is, there is a great basket for her power animals to relax in. She says that on any given day, dozens of other power animals come to this basket to rest and play, also, and she often ends up on the floor in the middle of her lodge amid a great tangle of joyous fur and feathers and tails. She has fought through a lot of depression in her life, but she says, "How can anyone stay in sadness and disillusionment from the vagaries of the day when you have such a magical place to go as you drift off to sleep?"

Your original our power animal also has a deep and abiding love for and connection to Mother Earth and the world she gives us, and you can learn a great deal about how to respect, learn from and live in harmony in your world from your power animal.

Come, your original power animal awaits you! It is time to go with me to the realm of the power animals.

Please make yourself very comfortable in the place where you will be doing the meditation work of this Workshop. Smudge yourself and your workspace with sage and sweetgrass if you have it. Smudging is a way of honoring the spirit of what you are about to do; it is a way of honoring your spirit, the spirits of place and the spirit of the power animal which you are going to ask to show itself to you. There is great power in honor and especially in
honoring the spirits that are around you always, come to bring you insights and messages of great love, wisdom and power. If you don't have any smudge, sprinkle a few drops of water in the corners of your room and place a small bowl of corn meal before you to honor the spirits of place. Let them know that a very important ceremony is about to take place: the ceremonial discovery of your original power animal!

Go back to the "Power Animals Teaching and Download Page" where you retrieved this "Guide to the Teachings: Working with Power Animals," turn on the speakers of your computer and click on the download of the "Basic Power Animal Meditation" or whatever media player you have downloaded it to, close your eyes and enjoy.

After you done this meditation and your original power animal has shown itself to you, wrap your arms around this magnificent being and dance it into your life. Then take out your journal and write down the power animal that came to you, and record any other images, symbols and insights that might have come to you during this meditation.

But before reading any further, come and dream your power animal dream with me! Your power animal awaits. Then come back to this page and journal about this wonderful being of light in your life. Sit with your power animal and talk with it, and ask it what it has come to teach you.
I. Your First Meeting with Your Original Power Animal

A. Finding Your Power Animal

As I say in the meditation, if no power animal presents itself to you from all four sides, do not be alarmed. It does not mean you don't have a power animal or that your connection to your power animal is weak. Even people who have been working with power animals for years will do a meditation seeking a particular power animal and no animal will present itself. But if they stay in their meditation space and remain open to possibility instead of jumping into worry over what must have gone wrong, they become acutely aware of a presence on the fringes of their awareness. Sometimes the overpowering scent of a particular animal washes over them or a memory of a dearly loved pet; sometimes they close their eyes and the image of an animal is standing there, just inside their eyelids.

So if no power animal came to you during the meditation this first time, close your eyes and breathe deeply two or three times, exhaling fully with each breath. With each inhale, visualize yourself breathing in the breath of life. Cycle that breath through your body and on exhale, visualize yourself breathing your spirit back into the universe, returning the breath of life, in kind.

Then sit quietly and visualize all of the animals that you saw when you were in the domain of the power animals. Does one in particular stand out to you? If not, think of an animal of which you are particularly fond, perhaps a loved animal friend, perhaps an exotic animal from a distant land that fascinates you or you've dreamed about often. Put your arms around whatever animal is with you at this instant and embrace it. Dance with it and ask it to help you find your original power animal the next time you do this meditation! It may turn out that it is your original power animal; it is at least a gatekeeper to guide you to your power animal, so continue with your work. The more you explore and learn, the more you to open to the great mystery and to other ways of seeing than your eyes. Not everybody has clear visual images during guided meditation. Sometimes we are filled with an unquestionable sense of knowing, or a scent or a sound comes, or a particular memory, and we follow its trail to find a magnificent animal waiting for us!
So, if your original power animal hasn't yet shown up, know that you haven't been abandoned, and begin to pay very close attention to the animals you see as you go about your day, the animals that come into your dreams or jump into your thoughts! Accept these animals into your life and know that they will lead you to your original power animal.

**B. First Steps: The Sacred Wheel**

Dialogue with your power animal. If it has a name, write that name down.

What color is it? Later on, as you get further into these Workshops and my teachings, you will discover that the color of your power animal has enormous significance in your life. For now, write down whether it is an animal of the south (red tones), of the west (shades of black), north (shades of white), or east (yellow gold or golden brown tones).

On the sacred wheel of life that is used by the Sisterhood of the Shields:

- **South** is the home of the physical world, physical manifestation and your physical body, and its color is red. Sometimes green is associated with the south. It is also the home of the child within, and of trust and innocence.

- **West** is the home of your passion and of the sacred dream for your life and Great Dreaming Bear, and its color is black. Sometimes midnight blue is associated with the west. It is also the home of your emotions and your feelings; the adolescent within; death, rebirth and transformation; and it is the home of the sacred feminine with its gifts of intuition, receptivity and introspection.

- **North** is the home of Spirit and its color is white. Sometimes purple is also associated with the north. It is the home of White Buffalo Calf Woman who came to earth to teach the people to pray. It is also the home of the adult, and of inspiration, courage, wisdom and strength.

- **East** is the home of the mind and the Golden Eagle of illumination, and its color is golden yellow. It is home of the Old Wise One, and of the Sacred Clown who tests all the situations and institutions of your life to find what is real and true for you. It is also home of the sacred masculine, goal-oriented and active with ability to go out into the world with enough force to get the job done. East is also the home of your creativity.

- **Center.** You are at the center of the sacred wheel.
In later Workshops, as in my other teaching modalities, we will go into greater deal about understanding and working around the sacred wheel. I give you a basic outline of this wheel now so that you will begin to understand the significance that the color of your power animal plays.

This is a knowing which will grow with you throughout your life and will become a great source of joy and wisdom in your bond with your original power animal. The direction in which your original power animal lives gives you important information about your own self, where your strengths and weaknesses are.

For example, when I did my basic power animal work with Agnes Whistling Elk and learned that I am a wolf, she told me, "Lynn, you are the black wolf instead of the white because you wear the black cloak of contemplation, which lives in the west of the sacred wheel. If you were the white wolf, you would be more outward, more extroverted. As the black wolf, you track through the forests for what you want and then come back to the pack and curl up in the sun and think about it."

C. Forming a Bond of Honor with Your Original Power Animal

Before you leave your space, turn and face each of the four directions with your power animal within you, holding it in your arms, and say a prayer of honoring and gratitude to the powers of each direction. Come back to the center and say prayers of honor and gratitude to Mother Earth and to Father Sky. Honor yourself and your power animal.
II. Working with Power Animals

A. Background

Like so many of us, I had a basic awareness of power animals, what many call the animal totem, for some time before I met the Sisterhood of the Shields. I have always loved Zuni animal fetishes and felt a special kinship with these exotic carvings, but I had no real understanding of their extraordinary spiritual connection to the spirit of the animal and its actual physical existence on this great earth.

Now I know that native peoples create fetishes to connect them with the animals they would stalk in a hunt to garner the food source of life for their community. The fetish reminds the hunter of the physical qualities of the animal, its habits and how it moves in the world so that the hunter can be better informed in the hunt, and it also reminds the hunter of the sacred give-away, which teaches us that what we take from the universe, we must give back in like kind, that the prey is every bit as sacred and important to the Creator as the hunter and must only be taken and used with sacred intent.

These fetishes are also used to heal both the individual and the world in which we live, connecting the healer with the physical reality and the spirit of that which is sought to be healed. After you discover your original power animal, it would be good if you would create or find a fetish that symbolizes this animal.

Beyond being a connection to what you would seek in this world, Agnes Whistling Elk and Ruby Plenty Chiefs taught me that your basic power animal is symbolic of your original nature, that is why you are able to merge so deeply with it. Knowing your original power animal is a way of knowing yourself in a very intimate and profound way. Carrying around this fetish reminds you to look through your power animal's eyes in a situation that confounds you and open yourself to its wisdom, which is the wisdom that you carry in your own body-mind but we so often forget to access.

Every person has a spirit animal, a counterpart which helps you understand yourself, your innermost nature. All of your power animals are your helpers, and if you can learn to contact the wolf or bear or whatever your medicine is within you, it helps you on your way. You begin to
see who you are. One of the most important things of all is to see who you are as a person. There are many ways to do that. Discovering and learning about your power animal is one of the most powerful. Then you create a fetish for that animal, and you remember who you are every time you pick it up.

In our societies today, we are very far away from the experience of our original nature as individuals. Our conditioning transforms our lives in ways that are not consistent with the life our original nature intends for us. Discovering your power animal is a journey that leads you home to your true self. Most of us grow up and become the person our parents wanted us to be, or we take on a persona that society dictates. Sadly, very few of us live authentic lives within the circle of power that is our true nature.

Everyone also has many power animals which are around us all of the time. You have a basic power animal which is symbolic of your own individual essence, your basic nature. Usually this power animal does not change during the entire course of the lifetime you are presently living, although do not be distressed if the animal does change as you learn and grow. It does not have any negative connotation whatsoever.

There are different power animals which live in each of your seven chakras, to help connect you with both the physical reality and the spiritual significance of that chakra in your life and help you become aware of the unequivocal power and wisdom that you already carry in your body-mind, once you learn how to access it.

There are power animals that live in each of the four directions of the sacred wheel.

You have a power animal which is intimately connected to your creative nature that you can call in to guide and assist you through the most difficult phases of every creative endeavor.

And there are power animals that show up at different times in your life, sometimes in physical form in a very unexpected way, or you suddenly begin to see this animal over and over again where you've not noticed it before. Sometimes power animals show up through your dreams and visions, or in a sudden of awareness of a particular animal when you are trying to
figure something out. Pay very close attention to these power animals, they are messengers of
spirit that have come to give you very important information that you need in the present
moment.

In our work together as in your own life, you meet many different power animals that
come to assist you in different aspects of your life. Sometimes these animal helpers will have
similar qualities to your original power animal, for example, a wolf and a lynx, both of which are
predators although they hunt in very different ways. It is important to study the differences
between them and see what that tells you about yourself. Sometimes these animal helpers will be
totally different, like a deer (which is a grazer) and a hawk (which is a winged one and a hunter)
- just like the different things you accomplish in life often require different approaches and
different energies to be complete. So when a power animal shows up that is completely different
from your original power animal, look at the similarities and the differences to see what they are
telling you; you may be missing something your original power animal is trying to tell you,
which you are able to see in a totally opposite kind of animal.

Often when a power animal comes to you "out of the blue," you have an immediate
understanding of what that animal has come to tell you because of what you know about its
habits. One of the examples most often given is of the hawk, who is noted the world over for its
very keen, far-reaching vision. What is it that you need to truly see at this moment? Open your
eyes and focus, and do it now. Perhaps you haven't been paying attention as you drive down the
road, your mind's been distracted and you may be unaware of what is coming your way.

Other times, you will need to spend some time learning about the natural attributes of this
new animal. Perhaps you learn it has a very keen sense of hearing. Is there something you are
refusing to listen to in life that you probably should be hearing?

As soon as possible, sit across the council fires with this magnificent and wise power
animal that has shown up in your life and ask it what it has come to tell you. And always, always
thank it for its presence in your life, thank the Great Spirit and Mother Earth and all the beings of
light that love you for sending you this much needed voice of wisdom and counsel.

We've all had these power animal encounters throughout our lives. Now it's time to
become consciously aware of them and learn from them. This is how you grow into the person
you've always dreamed and known you can be.
B. Grazers, Predators, Songbirds, Whales and Dolphins

1. **Grazers**: Deer, elk, moose, horses, antelope and all those related beings that graze to survive. People who are themselves grazers are wonderful at research, academics, perusing history, facts and journalism. They find green pastures, and eating they reform the information back out. Grazers listen well and adapt quickly. Perfecting your own style can be hard for you.

2. **Predators**: Predators are great hunters that are normally carnivorous. They kill to survive. This is a much more assertive person who never stops sniffing the wind for prey, e.g., wolf people hunting to eat and to learn. Wolves are the original teachers who bring back information to the pack and teach it to their young. Cat people, pumas, lions, panthers hunt to eat and hunt to play. Eagles and hawks watch for a long time and then dive, snatch and eat later. A predatory writer has an insatiable hunger for knowledge, a good story, excitement, often danger and a good challenge. Predators work off the elements and choose their prey or story carefully. They’ll often leave a fight of resistance and go on to the next thing. These writers have great ideas but need to follow them through to the end.

3. **Songbirds**: Songbirds are hunting for seeds. They flit and fly, mate and create nests or stories. They are more fragile than grazers and predators. But they are enormously agile. All birds, if they see trouble, simply fly above it and away. Romance writers and storytellers are often songbirds. They sing their hearts out and entertain everyone around them with their color and their music. Research, detail, academics are more difficult for them. Finding flowing style is important, moving slowly with their writing to complete their thoughts and ideas.

4. **Whales and Dolphins and other denizens of the deep seas**: These are brilliant, quiet explorers of the unconscious and psychological world. Whale and Dolphin people often write science fiction or deep psychological or emotional explorations into unknown worlds, worlds that are hidden from normal view and are difficult to describe. Oftentimes they swim together for fun and to share. These writers can become too obscure. They need to discern what they’re really trying to accomplish and then stick to it. They can migrate all over the map searching out new feeding grounds and swimming away too soon from their original ideas.

(From *Writing Spirit*, by Lynn Andrews)
C. Learning About Your Original Power Animal

In order to understand fully what this power animal has to teach you about yourself, you must first learn as much about it as you can.

Begin your discovery of this animal in its own natural environment. It is time to do your homework. This is how you bring honor and understanding, knowledge and wisdom into your bond with your power animal.

- Look the animal up in an encyclopedia, read about it in science books and nature magazines. Seek out science and nature programs that focus on your power animal in its natural environment and watch and listen closely.

- Learn as much as you can about it, its habits, whether it lives in a pack or herd or whether it is solitary except during mating season. How does this equate with the best living situation for you?

- Is it a migratory animal? What are its migration patterns and habits? How does this comport with your own need to travel and explore the world, or to build your nest and make it your kingdom?

Birds that migrate also have astonishing powers of physical perception. They are sensitive to the earth's magnetic ley lines, and they are able to land and take off in dense numbers without ever bumping into one another.

- Does your original power animal set boundaries and mark its territory, or is it a wanderer in search of food and water?

- Is it a winged one, a four-legged, a swimmer? Where does it live geographically? Does it live in trees or on the ground? Does it burrow underground? Does it create its own den, or does it borrow the dens of others?

Does it live in the desert? Many desert dwellers have certain distinct characteristics that are unique to the desert; all are masters of disguise and the ability to become invisible.

Does it live in the water, or mostly in the water? If it spends time both in the water and on dry land, what are its characteristics when in the water and when on land?

- Or does it come from another realm, like the thunderbird? If it is a mythological animal, you might want to explore the world of mythology and discover if, for example, you learn or communicate through the power of myth.
• What are its habits in its own environment? How does it move in the world? Is it nocturnal or diurnal? Is it a predator or a grazer? What sounds does it make? What does it use its voice for? Does it growl loudly to warn others to stay away, marking its territory through sound? Or, like the wolf, does it circle its territory, marking it with scent that is unmistakable to other four-leggeds?

The animal kingdom are masters of communication, and the meerkat is a wonderful example. It has a wide range of sounds that it makes, including different squeals to alert the gang of danger. It has a warning yelp for a predator circling overhead, a different squeal if the airborne danger is near, and yet another squeal if there is a ground predator nearby. If it spots a ground predator in the distance, it will chatter nervously to warn the group; if the danger is closer, the meerkat sentinel will stare directly at it, showing the group by body language where the danger is. When danger is approaching, the sentinel meerkat will run into a "bolt-hole" as a diversion while the rest of the group seek a different cover. And, of course, there is a different yelp, altogether, for letting the 'baby sitter' know that some of the kits are trying to make an escape.

Song birds also have specific calls for a predator in the area, one for airborne and another for a climbing danger, a different one for a predator near the nest, another for calling together in song.

How does your power animal express itself and its needs vocally? How does this comport with the way you communicate most effectively?

• What is its scent, both its sense of smell and its own aroma? Is its aroma part of its protective armor? Does it mark its territory by scent? How do you 'mark' your own territory?

• What are its mating habits? Some birds and animals have very elaborate mating rituals; this will become important for you to know as you begin to court your own acts of power, whether in the choice of a mate or the choice of a profession, career or the creation of a great work of art. Be true to yourself, and the energy that you need to accomplish the task before you will come to you.

Some animals mate for life; many don't. Which is your power animal? When you understand this aspect of your basic nature, you will be able to make better decisions and become more comfortable with the decisions you have made about your choice of partners in life.

How does it raise its young, if it does?

• What other questions come to you as you learn about your original power animal? What do the answers you find tell you about yourself at your core essence?
Get a journal that is devoted solely to learning about your power animal, your dialogues with this being of light, and your experiences and work with it. This is lifetime process of growing and learning, give and take and sacred give-away, and I certainly don't expect you to learn everything there is to know about your power animal within the two weeks of this Workshop. But begin your quest now, and after the Workshop is over, continue this marvelous journey of discovery. With each new trait that you discover about your power animal, ask yourself, how does this relate to the way I am or prefer to be in my own life?

And don't forget that you can each ask me two questions about your work with power animals during our work together here. Afterwards, through my website, you will discover many other ways for us to remain in communication.

As you learn as much as you can about your power animal in its own natural environment, also spend some time looking into what the people who are indigenous to where that animal lives have to say about it. What senses and powers do they ascribe to it? These native peoples have studied everything about their environment and all the life forms that live there with commitment and impeccability. They have built up a tremendous store of knowledge and wisdom about their environment that has grown and been applied and handed down through generations. What powers and significance do the people who are indigenous to the part of the world where your power animals ascribe to this animal? What role does it play in their spiritual beliefs? Does this teach you anything about your own spiritual nature? It may speak to you in your heart and your shaman center, or it may not. But it is worth pursuing.

There are also many delightful and often quite insightful resources on the internet and in books stores today about the spiritual significance and powers of various animals. Always remember, however, that sometimes what these resources have to say about your power animal is
more about the way the writer sees that animal through the writer's own filters than it is about how this animal lives and acts in its own natural environment. Never allow anyone else to tell you what your power animal means to you or signifies in your life. Trust your own personal knowing and the impeccability of your own research.

Resources such as this can give you wonderful guidance when working with any of the many of power animals that will come to you from time to time. Often they will give you things to think about that you've not thought of before. But they can also distance you from your original power animal if you do not first get to know this animal as it is in its own natural environment and as its habits and instincts equate with your own. Whatever someone else has to say about this power animal, always sit across the council fires from your power animal and find your own personal truth and relationship with this animal. Ask it what this other person's perceptions have to do with your relationship with each other.

D. Learning From and Accepting Yourself with Your Original Power Animal

Talk to your original power animal often. Talk to all the power animals that are part of your existence, whether for a minute or a lifetime.

Especially with your original power animal, ask it to let you see through its eyes, and ask it to see through your eyes, as you prepare for a difficult situation or look for solutions to something that is confounding you. Don't limit your search for an understanding of your basic power animal by taking short cuts. You are only cheating yourself, and you may well be cheating yourself out of the very essence of your own life.

Over the coming days and weeks, have many dialogues with your original power animal. If possible, go to a place near you where you have perhaps seen this animal in its own environment, and just observe it.
➢ Take long walks with your power original animal and talk with it as you observe the world. Ask it what it sees in the world around you and then tell it what you see. Ask it to let you look through its eyes when you see two totally different things, and ask it to look through your eyes and tell you what it sees about you and the way you are interacting with your environment.

➢ Then, on your way back home, notice if you are seeing anything differently from the way you saw it a short while before. What is different? What does this teach you? How does what you learn from your relationship with this power animal relate to how you are living your life: to how you think, act and move in the world, how you would like to move in the world? Perhaps your power animal is a predator. Have you ever looked at the predatory side of your own nature? Or have you kept it hidden, buried it beneath the surface for one reason or another? Allow this power animal to help you bring out your predatory nature and understand how to use it in positive, constructive ways in your life.

So often we end up questioning every little thing we think, say or do in life. We've all made mistakes and bad decisions in our lives. Sometimes this tends to run away with us and make us doubt everything we do, perhaps to the point that we become totally paralyzed and begin to hoard life rather than experience it. We form all kinds of habits and addictions that we often don't realize we have until they block us from pursuing our dreams.

As you work with your original power animal, there comes a day when you begin to see your own true way of being with no doubts, no reservations. Your behavior or your response to a situation is the mirror image of how your original power animal moves in the world. And then you will know that this is coming from who you are at your center, regardless of how others tell you that you should be acting. You can trust the wisdom and knowing of your power animal, you can trust yourself. And a new sense of self-acceptance and your own personal power begins to grow within you.

Power animals can assist you in many ways, and you don't have to wait for a power animal to show up to reach out for guidance. Do you remember the woman I talked about in the Video Lecture, who was cleaning out her garage so that she could move more things in every time we drove by her house, who was the only one surprised to discover that her original power animal is a squirrel?
Animals have an innate understanding of the sacred give-and-take of life and the need for balance, and they don't take needlessly or recklessly. If you have a squirrel power animal, or any of the other animals that gather and store food for the winter months, do you clean out your storage regularly or is your home so cluttered with the things you "squirrel away for a rainy day" that there is no room for you to breathe, move and grow. If you store clutter, please know that this clutter is not part of your hibernating power animal's energy; it comes from a different place entirely. Squirrel knows how much it will need for the winter and it brings what it needs and nothing more into its nest.

So if your house is filled with clutter, even if you don't have squirrel or another gatherer as a power animal, you can call on squirrel and ask it to help you understand what is vital for you to keep and what it is time to let go of. Don't smother your world or your house or your life with clutter. Squirrel can help you with this, even if squirrel is not one of your power animals!

What obstacles does your original power animal face in life, and how does it deal with them?

**Always remember, it is vitally important to look at the adaptive qualities of your power animal.** Every life form on this earth has its own marvelous adaptive behavior; human beings do, too, but we are unique in our demand that everything must change to fit our perceptions.

Over the milleniums, the big cats, for example, have developed incredible adaptive powers rather than over-crowding or fighting to the death. They have devised many ways of sharing the same territory, dividing themselves into nocturnal and diurnal feeders, dividing themselves into what food groups they will stalk and what they leave alone. They have devised ways of separating themselves the sheer force of geography, some preferring the jungles and marshes, others needing dry land.

When you are faced with something in life that won't budge, look at your own beliefs and behaviors about being adaptive, and then look at the adaptive powers of your main power animal. What does this tell you about your need to be flexible and open to new ideas? Life has never been intended to be a battleground. We make it that way when we become rigid,
unyielding and set in our expectations and demands. Adaptability is a great gift which the animal world constantly reflects back to us. How often do we see it?

One of my apprentices shared with me the story of a camping trip that she and her family took, a much longed-for retreat into the woods. On the second day they were there, another family with three very noisy children set up tent in the unit across the way from their campsite, and immediately her campsite became their "short cut" to anywhere on the campgrounds they wanted to go, any time of the day or night, talking and laughing as if there was no one else around. The parents watched their children doing this and said nothing at all to them, and my apprentice and her family were becoming increasingly upset.

One afternoon when everyone else had gone to the lake to fish and swim, my apprentice found herself walking the perimeters of her campsite, around and around. All of a sudden she was aware of a warm and familiar presence walking with her, one of two great wolves that had come to her in spirit many years before. As she walked the perimeter with this great wolf, she realized, "I am marking my territory. That's what I am doing. I am marking my territory."

And amazingly, that night at dinner and after they went to bed, no one from the other campsite clamored through hers. Nor did they invade her space the next day. But late that afternoon, one of the children asked if he could sit and talk with my apprentice at her table, and from this young boy she learned about a family in crisis. By the end of the camping trip, she had spoken privately – at their request – with every member of the family, including the toddler, allowing each to give voice to the upheavals which were tearing at the fabric of the family. By the end of the week, they were laughing, talking and sharing food together and they parted good friends, everyone well-rested after a beautiful week in the woods.
Prayer of Thanks for the Animals

Please join me in a prayer of thanks for the animals. Great Spirit, Mother Earth, powers of the four directions, the Sisterhood of the Shields, our guardians allies and all the beings of light that love us,

This is a prayer of thanks for the animals, and it is a prayer of thanks for all of the power animals and the great wisdom, beauty, love and joy they bring to us.

When I need the greatest solace, I go to the animals for support. All animals are sacred. They live in a state of purity. A donkey cannot be other than a donkey. A winged one cannot be other than a bird. And some might say that a human cannot be other than a human.

But to me, that is not so. We humans have a kind of choice in our lives that animals do not have. And because of that, their kind of ignorance is bliss. They have a wisdom in their eyes, if we would only sit within the circle of our own truth and listen from our hearts.

We owe an extraordinary debt to the animals. We use them and we eat without an understanding of the sacred give-away. This is a prayer, Great Spirit, of gratitude. This is a prayer of honoring for all the animals – the winged ones and the four-leggeds and the swimmers – who travel this earth. They give away so often so that we may live, and we, in our kind of ignorance, do not understand what we do.

Oh, magical and sacred horses, whose hoof beats can be heard in the night, unicorns that run through our dreams and take us away into other dimensions of higher consciousness, horses, who give us their backs so that we may ride them, they give over their will to ours, and yet so often we misuse our power.

Great Mother Eagle, circling high in the skies above, floating on the air drafts of pure perfection, eagles, feathers glistening in the sun, your screams echo through the mountain canyons filling me with awe and inspiration.
South Ones, whose noses are closest to the ground, Field Mouse, whose life is so tender and sweet, you live close to Mother Earth, one of her special ones, tiny, darting, waiting, yours is the art of listening. If only we could listen as well in the art of shamanism. Many speak about what they know. They will tell you endlessly about their powers, and you know, instantly, their flaw. They don't know how to listen like the field mouse.

Sacred cats, you test your claws and move with stealth and cunning through the jungles and the mountains and the plains of the world, you are a predator. You know how to survive. You are strong and sleek.

You are a warrior beyond compare, great dreaming bear of the west, you who gather knowledge and wisdom throughout the year, and hibernate in the long winter, holding close what you have learned, practicing your art of silence and slumber, but when you awaken, you are a power to be reckoned with. Your eyesight may be limited, but the vision from your power center is beyond measure, and your wisdom lives in the sacred dreamtime.

And dogs, sacred puppies, in this world you absorb our pain and our grief. May you be thanked properly by those who keep you. May you be loved and trusted for the magnificent beings that you are.

This is a prayer for all of the four-leggeds, the swimmers and the winged ones, may we not misuse our power against you. May we live in balance in all the four directions of the earth and of the spirit, to support you and join you in your pure reality.

Ho!
Conclusion

Thank you all so much for joining me on this wonderful journey into the realm of the power animals. I am deeply honored.

Thank you to the power animals that came to be with us on this journey and share your extraordinary wisdom with us, that will be there to guide each and every one of you and help you for the rest of your lives.

I hope this will be the beginning of a great adventure in living in harmony, joy and abundance for you and for you and your power animals. I love to hear people's stories about their relationship and work with their power animals, and I look forward to the opportunity to follow many new trails with you.

In love and spirit,

Lynn