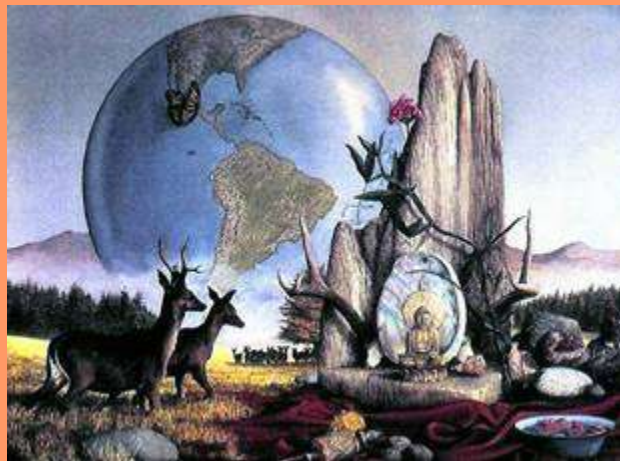


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Virtue is one of the passive qualities of power. When you pull back the bow, preparing to set the arrow and define your target, you use the strength, the will and the focus that you have collected within that part of yourself called virtue. Virtue is where you find inner truth. It is a place of illumination, and as that radiance grows within you, it becomes integrity. Without virtue, there is no inner balance. Virtue comes from the unknown, quiet things you do for the world and other people. With each act, your spirit shield becomes stronger and more beautiful with the symbols of your inner life. Like the deer, they are quiet symbols. Virtue marks your path on the other side. Like the one who walks last, the virtuous person is in a position of power. Power often comes quietly. Walk in beauty and virtue. ("Virtue Card," [The Power Deck](#))

Dear Friends,

When I was in Nepal with Agnes Whistling Elk, Ruby Plenty Chiefs and Ani, a Nepalese hill woman and healer of very high degree who is a dear friend and

member of the Sisterhood of the Shields, we were talking one day about the dedication that all of the women of the Sisterhood have to Spirit and to the work that each of us is doing in our lives. I spooned some sugar into my cup of tea and as I watched the sugar dissolve, disappearing into the tea water, I suddenly burst into tears.

*"That is what I feel about the dedication of my life to our work, to healing the earth and her people. I feel that my work is lost in a torrent of ignorance. How can I â€“ how can anyone â€“ ever make a difference?"* I cried.

"Pray," Ruby said to me. "Prayer can change the world. Your light will affect all of those around you and give them the strength and the inspiration to go on and celebrate the magnificence of what they are."

Shamanic prayer is different in many ways from the traditional forms of praying that so many of us have learned. In shamanism, we pray to the Great Spirit, but we also pray to other aspects of power besides God. If we hold a ceremony for rain in the face of drought, for instance, we pray not only to the Great Spirit but also to Mother Earth and to the powers or guardians of the rain, approaching rain as a being in itself. Rain is something we consider as having life. It is an energy form, so prayer for rain becomes an exchange of energy, a direct communication with the spirit of the rain.

When you pray, pray for the grace to open yourself to the energy of what you are seeking so that it can come into you, and be grateful. It's not all about asking the Great Spirit to do something for you, get you out of a difficult or frightening situation, although we certainly give many, many of these prayers in our lives. What is important is having an ongoing, daily dialogue with the Divine. But especially when you are in difficult straits, ask the Great Spirit to help you understand the world around you, understand what is going on that is so difficult, and ask for the blessing of being able to be of useful good in spite of it. As you do, you will experience your heart opening. That is when become receptive to new ideas, new wisdom about this situation.

Prayer as my teachers and I practice it always entails an opening of the heart. Prayer arises from a sense of gratitude for all that is, for the magnificence and the miracle of life. Prayer can be sitting on top of a mountain, sitting in a sacred circle somewhere in the wilderness, or sitting in your own home silently, in a state of introspection and serenity, and simply experiencing the bliss and the power of the universe in harmony all around you. Prayer is always bringing the balance of the universe into harmony. This is about harmony of all living things. Prayer reminds you of your essence and life force.

In a world filled with by-rrote endeavor, we so often perform the rituals of everyday life almost without thought. This is like riding down the freeway oblivious to the magnificent mountains and the diaphanous clouds above us. Because of our focus on our destination or on our own thoughts, we forget that life is a process and that this moment is all we will ever have.

Sitting in the center of your own truth can bring you bliss and comfort. If you are not alive and aware and conscious now, you may never be. Prayer allows you to establish contact with the moment. It helps you travel the bridge between the physical world and the world of sacred vision. With prayer, you can change your life.

Shamanism, as I understand it, is having a sense of the Oneness of the universe so that when you pray and ask for power or guidance from the Great Spirit or from one of your power animals or the spirit beings that are around all of us, all of the time, when you pray and ask for guidance from these great beings, you are also understanding that within yourself as a person of power this great being makes up the oneness of the entire universe. You are praying to this being of light and praying to the Great Spirit at the same time. You are praying to the light that is within you, and with each prayer you amplify your light that it may shine in your life and into the world a little more brightly.

We are all energy forms on a giant matrix of energy lines that run throughout the world, throughout the universe. If I make a prayer in California, it affects the other ends of those energy vectors somewhere around the earth. In prayer, we can make a difference on this planet. In prayer, Mother Earth can be healed and we can change. I believe in the goodness of life and the goodness inherent in each and every one of us. But we need consciousness. We need awareness. We need to reach across cultural boundaries everywhere in the world with our hands open and receptive to the dignity and the integrity of all cultures in all ways of thought that support the light.

Come with me now, on a journey to the magical islands of Hawaii. We are on a boat with a number of shamans. You know many of them, some may even be your guides or ancestors. We are all in a joyous, celebratory mood. The boat lands on a white sandy beach. The ocean is a clear, turquoise blue. You can see green, tropical foliage, and the cliffs rise high above the beach. While a circle of the shamans create a ceremonial fire pit and place a sacred circle around it, I take you on a short hike into the rainforest.

All around you, you can feel and smell hibiscus flowers, soft drops of dew as it slides off huge ferns, and the earth is so fecund and rich you can actually smell the soil underfoot. Everything is alive and filled with life. You feel vibrant and we bounce along the trail, almost giddy with excitement.

At the end of the trail, a woman approaches us. She is neither elderly nor young. She places a wreath of flowers around our necks and beckons us to follow her. We turn a corner in the trail and come upon a small cave set into the mountain. As we follow her inside the cave, we remove our shoes. Walking barefoot along the cool stone floor, you begin to realize that the farther back in the cave you go, the warmer the floor is.

The woman stops us before an altar. I hand you a small object and indicate that you should place it on the altar, and you see the wise woman smile. She gestures for us to be seated on rock benches. You notice that there is a dip in the floor,

with steam rising from a small vent.

“Daughter,” the woman addresses you, “I need you to breathe in very deeply. Breathe in the beauty you have seen, breathe in gratitude for all you have been given, breathe in the spirit of love.” You and I take deep breaths together. You watch in wonder as you see emerald green light move into your heart center. You feel energized, revitalized, and greatly loved.

“Now, breathe out any negativity, any guilt, remorse, anger or pain. Just let it move down into the fissure here, allow the fire in the earth to transform this energy for you.”

You breathe out all of your cares and worries, all of your pain and anger, and you see it moving down into a muddy brown river through the vent holes into the earth. You see the steam rise in a puff of white smoke. You hear the hiss of the molten lava below and you know that everything you have released is now transformed and purified by the fires deep within Mother Earth.

“What are you grateful for?” asks the woman. “Always remember, that your gratitude has the power to transform negativity. Being in a state of gratitude can enable you to open you to your own receptivity, open to new ideas, creativity and your connection to Spirit. Always remember to breathe in the breath of Great Spirit and breathe out all negative thoughts any time you feel sad or distressed about something. Always move into gratitude. Every day, think of at least five things for which you are grateful, even if it is something you think is very small or minor, it makes no difference. Find things to be grateful about every day. To be grateful is to be receptive to the many gifts that are here for you on this earth walk.”

Feeling lighter than before, you thank the wise woman and we walk arm in arm down the trail back toward the beach. As we reach the circle of men and women, a celebration is in full swing. We pray, drum, rattle and chant. We eat delicious foods, and tell stories around the circle until nightfall in the way of the Ancestors. As twilight approaches, we return to the boat and head back home.

*Great Spirit, Mother Earth, powers of the four directions, my ancestors, and all those who love me, hear me now.*

*This is a prayer of thanksgiving for the miracle of life. When I awaken in the morning, Great Spirit, and I take a breath of morning air, I look toward the sky, searching the morning light for your face. And when I find it, a radiance comes to me, so beautiful and blissful that I cannot put words to the gratefulness that is in my heart.*

*There is much pain and confusion in this world. Oftentimes I lose my way, and I know not what to do. Then I sit in silence. I listen to the high north wind in the pine trees, and you sing to me. I open my eyes and I look at the flowers and the miracle of beauty that they are. Again I see your face, and I wonder at my ignorance.*

*So days go by, and I follow my path of heart, and I pray to you, Great Spirit, grateful and strong from your grace. The four-leggeds and the winged ones bring joy to my life, and I thank you for their presence all around me. Their purity of being reminds me of you, and I know that they are mirrors, shiny and brilliant with your reflection.*

*I know that much gives away so that I may live. The sacred give-away I receive and return, ever grateful for your flowing power within me. Without you, I could not see the beauty that you have given us. I feel the sun on my face, and I know your warmth, and I know that somehow everything is perfect. I give thanks as I walk my path of beauty. For you I live all the days of my life. HO!*

Have a fabulous Fourth of July weekend and enjoy this time of being out in the exquisite grace of Mother Earth.

In love and spirit,  
Lynn

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**August 5 – 18, 2011: Online Master Tutorial with Lynn Andrews: "The Hoop of Air : Luminous Fibers, Building Energy As You Learn How To Move into Higher Levels of Consciousness."** In this third Master Tutorial, you will begin your journey into conscious dreaming as you discover your dream body and learn how to work with your luminous fibers.

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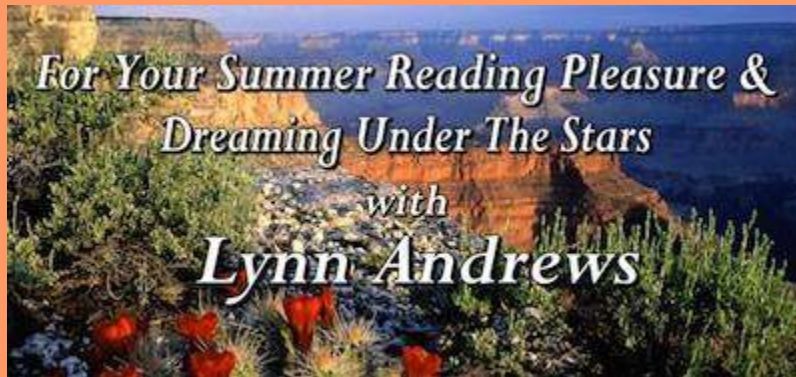


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