

The Visible Face of Spirit

Susan Oliver

Once upon a time, a long time ago, we knew who we were. We knew that we were Divine beings inhabiting human bodies. We knew that we were all related. We knew that the animals, trees, birds and the flowers, the fishes and the stones were our brothers and sisters. We knew that the Earth was our Mother and that we were the Children of the Sun. We lived in harmony with our world. We knew we were Spirit. We were connected: One.

And this knowing still is.

Somewhere along the line, though, we forgot who we are. We began to believe that we were separate; apart from Spirit. We forgot that we are all related. We forgot that the Earth was our Mother and that we were the Children of the Sun. We forgot our Selves. In our illusion of separateness, we became selfish. We learned Judgement, and judged ourselves above our brothers and sisters. We judged ourselves wiser than our Earth. We took control of our environment rather than working within it and, in doing so, we forgot that we are 'One'.

We lost our Power.

In western society, we live in a world of logic, process, form, and function or *first attention*. As humans, with our limited perceptions, we give precedence to what we can see, hear, touch and feel. In indigenous cultures, *first attention* perceptions exist in balance with *second attention*, or our unconscious, intuitive natures. Indigenous cultures have a perceptual range far beyond what can be touched, seen, or

heard and therefore have a different set of beliefs as to what is real. They pay attention to perceptions outside what we in western societies consider relevant or possible. These perspectives exist; it is just that we have simply never thought to perceive them. What if we did? What if we allowed our inventory to include what exists beyond our known perceptions? What then might become possible? In allowing ourselves to step beyond our inventories of what is already known, we become free to experience the unknown, where everything is possible.

If what we believe becomes, then everything in our world is a belief reflected outside us. We can examine *outside us* in order to understand what we believe *inside us*. One way to do this is to pay attention to what our internal dialogue is chattering on about. We can listen to what it says from a detached perspective, as if we were listening to someone else. In that way we can understand our beliefs from a different perspective. We can also examine our physical world. Everything exists because we believe it. If we have a bad job, for example, it's because we already believe in having a bad job. When we are able to stop our inventory, and access perceptions beyond our limited beliefs, our whole world changes. We are free to choose what we believe.

One of the perceptual beliefs that indigenous/shamanic/sorcerer cultures have, that western society has forgotten, is the knowing that nature is essentially the Visible Face of Spirit. Everything is alive; we are all related,

connected and One. All animals, birds, rivers, mountains, trees, insects, and people are the Visible Face of Spirit. From this perspective then, we can also examine nature in order to understand our relationship with Spirit. This one shift of perception opens up a vast new world rich with information to explore. We can seek within nature what we need to understand about ourselves.

So how do we do this? First we need to believe it's possible. We need to understand that what we perceive is limited, and that there exist possibilities beyond what we already know. If everything outside us reflects a belief, then nature, as the Visible Face of Spirit, is also reflecting what we believe. We can access Spirit by paying attention to nature. When we focus on what we seek to know, we can simply ask Spirit. We can *intend*, and that intent focuses our conscious awareness on what is already there in front of us, waiting to be perceived.

Here's how it works. First of all, we focus our intent. In other words, we need to know exactly what it is we want to know. We must formulate a specific question to ask. Once we have a specific question, or intent, we can then seek outside ourselves and within nature for the answer. Let's say, for example, you want to know how to improve your career. You might want to know what you can do to have the career you really want. Your question might be something like 'How can I create the career I want to have', or 'What is preventing me from having enough money?'. Be as clear and

specific with your question as you can be, as a muddled question will get a muddled answer. Now that you have intended the question, whatever hooks your attention becomes your answer. The trick, of course, is in understanding how that answer relates back to your question. Again, the wider your perspective, the easier it is to understand your answer.

Every being within nature has a predilection: a specific trait or distinction that is unique to its species and breed. Some birds fly very high, while others don't fly at all. Some animals climb, some dig into the Earth, and others live on the ground like we do. Everything has its own Medicine, including us. In understanding how an animal lives, what it eats, how it breeds, we begin to understand its Medicine. There are some excellent books available on the subject and I highly recommend them, however, what an animal means to you is exactly that; what it means to you. There is no right or wrong in this. An animal's Medicine is what you believe it to be. Armed with this information, we can begin to understand ourselves by experiencing nature, the Living Face of Spirit.

In my world, an idea remains knowledge until it becomes wisdom. In this respect, knowing something is an intellectual exercise only. Wisdom lies in experiencing your knowledge. In other words, there is a really, really, big difference between knowing something, and actually living it as experience. This is where you get to live it, to experience nature as the Living Face of Spirit. How exciting!

Begin by finding a quiet place outside - somewhere you won't be disturbed.

Make yourself comfortable and relax your body by taking a few deep breaths. Quiet your mind by focusing on your intent and your question.

Think about what you want to know and formulate a specific question.

Ask your question as clearly as possible. Keep it simple and speak from your heart. There is no need to justify yourself; Spirit doesn't judge you - you do. Whatever hooks your attention is your answer. Whatever attracts your interest, that particular something you see, something you hear or something you feel represents the answer to your question. It's that simple.

So there you are, sitting outside under a tree and you've asked a specific question. As you sit there staring out at nature, wondering if this stuff really works or if it's crap, a tiny ant bites you on the foot. That's your answer. It hooked your attention. But what does it mean? And how does an ant biting your foot relate to your question? This is where the fun begins.

First, we need to understand what an ant means to us. If we study the life of an ant, we can understand that ants work as a team and can carry objects many times greater than their own weight and size. In fact, they can patiently move a mountain, a grain of sand at a time. From this perspective, we can understand that Ant means patience, perseverance and perhaps working together as a team.

Then we can try to understand what being bitten on the foot means. What does your foot mean to you? Is it how you move forward? Is it what you stand on? Are you being told to be patient in your direction, that you will achieve your goal with persistence and teamwork?

What if you saw a butterfly? Or you heard a kookaburra laughing? What if you noticed all the bees in the clover you're sitting on? Or a magpie landed in the tree above you? What if you felt the sun on your back or the wind in your face? Again, whatever you notice, whatever hooks your attention is the answer to your question. Your job is to understand what that sign means to you and in what way it relates to your question. In my experience, the answers arrive very quickly. If you're having trouble understanding what you perceive, then try the buddy system. Do this with a friend and in doing so you can help each other notice and translate your answers.

This process can be done anywhere, anytime. There are many animals that live in highly developed inner city areas, and there are many animals that are awake at night. All you need is a question to ask and the ability to perceive what is outside yourself. In this way we become our own teachers and healers connected directly to Spirit.

Susan Oliver follows the Toltec Path to Freedom and is a Master NLP Practitioner. Her book, "Hunting for Power" is available by emailing: info@impeccable.com.au



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