

Protection

Before we look at protection, let's look at potential dangers! I'm going to look at the area of protection twice- once from the source, once from the technique. Because it is important.

The most likely dangers, in order are;

- Yourself, and other people you are working with.
- General picking up of energies, often to help another.
- An entity attaches itself to you. (Rare)
- True black magic attack from another practitioner. (Very rare)

(My understanding of an entity is it is something that is non-physical with a consciousness. Often, we may perceive these as 'evil' because their actions harm us, though most are neutral. Harming us is just a by-product of how they are).

So how dangerous is shamanic work?

I appreciate reading a whole document about protection, and why you need protection, could be un-nerving.

On the whole shamanic work is perfectly safe, with arguably the biggest danger being rogue teachers holding huge events, often at a high-ticket price, with no consideration of the needs of the individual attendees. As with most things people are the biggest risk!

If you (or someone you are working with) has complex mental health needs, perhaps particularly connected with psychotic episodes, then shamanic work can be dangerous as it can be hard to find the line between the mundane world, the shamanic world, and the psychotic episode. It can also be very helpful- as long as the practitioner knows what they are doing.

It can be hard to decide if a shamanic journey is dangerous, or hard. I have had some really disturbing journeys that were a part of my personal and spiritual growth. Tune in, trust yourself and your guides. You will 'know' deep down if an experience is for your good or not, regardless of how difficult it may feel in the moment. Unless you have built a deep and personal relationship with someone (and even then- probably not) don't 'push through' what feels wrong to you.

This course is meant to cover all the tools I can teach. By weaving practical protection into your work it means if you come across something dark you will be using your protection in such a habitual way it will be second nature.

I think of it like using mirrors when driving. I always check my blind spot when pulling out, 99% of the time there is nothing there. But when there is a vehicle in my blind spot- my habitual use of mirrors is a life saver.

So please don't read this thinking shamanic work is all dark and dangerous. I mean much of mine is- but that's because I love it that way!

The real dangers...

Yourself, and other people you are working with.

Let me very clear, this is the single biggest danger! This could include.

- You aren't in the right mind to do the work or push beyond what is right for you at this point-meaning you may be triggered, get stuck, or re-traumatise yourself.
- Mental health issues making it difficult to distinguish between shamanic world, mundane world, and your mind.
- You don't fully ground afterwards and struggle to integrate back into the mundane world.
- Whoever is holding space may not do a good job, or you may pick up energetically from what others are doing.
- Be careful who you trust to hold space and always check in before journeying.
- Be responsible for being grounded, and work with your guides even if someone else is holding space.

General picking up of energies, often to help others.

This is very common, and there may be times you choose to do this as a temporary fix. This might include stuck energy- from a person, land or place. But if you do it without realising it can really become draining.

If you are grounded and aware you can usually channel any energies to ease a situation but not burden yourself. Otherwise ensure you cleanse well afterwards.

Entity that means to attach itself to you.

This is VERY rare but can happen. You are off having a great time in the shamanic space, and something has snuck into the space you have left available.

Ensure you open and close sacred space, setting a boundary around your physical body and soul space.

You may be bored of hearing it- but- a good awareness of what you are doing -so you come back from a journey and **fully ground** if you feel uneasy during a journey.

Usually your guides would warn you- even if it is an odd feeling of unease- trust yourself. If it doesn't feel right don't journey or come back sooner.

If you do feel an entity has attached then the sooner it is removed the less damage it will do, the worst damage an entity can do is you become used to it! (At this point I'm not covering entity removal here, you may already have a technique, or you can book in with me or another shamanic practitioner.)

True black magic attack from another practitioner.

This is exceedingly rare. If another magical practitioner is choosing to interfere in this way I would reach out for help and advice, because you probably need to work with cloaking and magic to defend yourself. But I can't repeat enough how rare this is.

At this point- over 10 years of working professionally, I have only encountered this when removing work that another practitioner has put on. My guides ensure my identity is hidden (face covered, often lent a sword, not called by my name) and that has protected me from any come-back.

Please don't worry about entities and a magical attack, if you carefully work on your grounding, awareness, and building a working relationship with your guides IF this ever happens you will be well protected (and you can always book in with me to double check!)

Problems usually happen for five reasons.

- Badly held event where you are trusting the person leading.
- You are drunk, on weed/drugs, **and** not taking practical steps to ensure your basic awareness/grounding is in place.
- You are trying to fix or help, without regard for your spiritual health.
- Mental health issues that mean you (or your client) isn't in the right space to do the work.
- You are pushing beyond the advice of your higher guidance/spirit guides.

Protection tools

There are many tools and techniques for shamanic protection, and I'll try to cover as many as I can. **But at heart there are a few core ones that really matter.** As each culture will have their own traditions this can never be a complete list.

- Being grounded, and able to ground.
- A good working relationship with your guides.
- Awareness of you, and what you are doing.
- Opening and closing sacred space

If you use these four every time you work, they can protect you from any potential issues.

Being grounded, and able to ground.

I don't think enough importance is placed on this, and in fact I think many teachers actively discourage grounding because in the short term it can lead to euphoric highs- its just not so great long term.

If you aren't well grounded you can; pick up attachments, over identify with other people's energies, spontaneously journey without control. In time it can lead to serious mental health problems.

I had a lady reach out about my shaman circle, she loved the community feel I described. She came for a 1-2-1 and I was disturbed to realise her top chakras were super charged, her lower ones hardly there at all. I balanced as best as I could.

She emailed a couple of days later, her Reiki teacher had been furious at my work. Apparently, she was trying to raise the vibrations of her students, not swamp them in earth energy. I tried to talk to her about the importance of being grounded- but to no avail.

A few weeks later I had a phone call from her husband. The mental health team had come based on his concerns, and she had locked herself in the bathroom saying she would only speak to me in person. This was a tough call for me. My kids were much younger then, and I didn't feel comfortable leaving them, or equipped to deal with this

situation. I offered to talk to her on the phone, but she refused. She was sectioned and had to step away from all energy work, a cautionary tale on the value of grounding!

Some shamanic journeys can be so delightful, so entrancing, it can be difficult to choose to return. Some so challenging it is too easy to get lost.

Taking the time to ground at the start, then at your axis mundi creates an energetic imprint that will make it far easier to return.

I fully believe the root and crown chakras are connected, so the more grounded you are, the easier it is to connect via your crown.

Grounding really is a win-win solution.

When we are fully grounded, we are not dissociated, we are completely filling our energy space. It is hard – though not impossible- for entities to enter if we are fully grounded. I know mine entered in a moment of despair and dissociation. And I could probably fill my books with an advert based on, “did you do weed and a weird YouTube meditation, and now feel that something is off?”

If you build a solid grounding practice- which could simply be earth breathing- at the start and end of every journey- you will guard against most potential problems.

A good working relationship with your guides.

As a shaman this is a core part of how you work, and how you ensure you are safe.

It can take a time to build a good working relationship with your guides (and we will be looking at this throughout the course).

But even if you don't know who your guides are at this point- they are still communicating with you. It may be a nudge, a whisper, or just a knowing in your heart.

Ask them at the start of every journey to guide you, thank them at the end of every journey. And learn to tune in and trust. Please remember you don't need to know your guides name, or to see them. They know you. Ask and be mindful of any messages.

It was a small group journey, and I felt from almost the start that something was off. I tuned in and felt that everyone was safe so continued with the journey but made it shorter than usual.

When we talked it through one of the women was quite cross. She'd been happily walking along her path when a boat came up and she was pushed onto the boat and taken back to the door and room. When I asked her how she felt it was 'annoyed, but oddly that this was right'. I suggested there was a clear reason why her guides didn't feel she should journey on that day. She rang the next week- she was pregnant, like me she didn't feel comfortable journeying whilst pregnant.

Awareness of you, and what you are doing.

One of the reasons I encourage you to journey using the same core path, and to ensure you spend time journeying to your axis-mundi, is it is far easier to spot when something is wrong if you really know your own soul space, and your own journey.

It may be old fashioned, but practice makes a huge difference. It is likely your soul space will change, that's perfectly OK. What matters is you know it's changing, and that it feels comfortable to you.

If there is a distinct change (which might just be in colour or feel) and it **doesn't feel right** then check in with yourself, take some time. Possible reasons include.

- Personal growth.
- A new guide, especially a teaching guide.
- A spiritual shift of some form.
- An entity, attachment, or picking up another's energy.

Trust your intuition, and your guides. If you feel the need to reconnect, ground, and reflect then do so. Journal, talk to someone, if it is growth that will become clear, and you can continue the work with confidence.

I went through a strange and disconcerting stage where when I journeyed, I couldn't see anything. I really tuned in- should I still be holding groups/working with clients? The guides said yes. I had gone from full Techni-colour to a whispered description. It was very frustrating.

Then I had two mind blowing journeys. In one I became water. I could experience all water at all times, everywhere. It was hypnotic, as if my very soul was dissolving. It was a struggle to come back and left me very reflective. Water has long been my hardest element to connect with. Later I had a deep journey to meet the Norns. I remember drumming for the group, then Frey said "you'd better give me the drum, you can't drum and experience this" and I was led to meet the Norns. Again, the water element, entering the well and experiencing it.

Afterwards my journeys shifted back. It was as if I needed this pause to learn to connect with water on a deeper level.

Opening and closing sacred space

At its simplest form magic is simply focused intent, so consciously creating a safe space before you work- and closing it with gratitude when you finish just makes sense.

This was covered in the last module; remember it only needs to be a moment of conscious clarity- or it could take 40 minutes and include robes and poetry- the focus of intent is what makes it work.

Magical symbols

If this appeals to you, they can be used very successfully. It could be a rune, bind-rune, any symbol that is meaningful to you.

You might have it already marked on something that you have with you when you work, make the shape with your body, draw it in the air, or on the earth.

You don't need magical symbols- but if you feel drawn to them, they can be a fascinating addition to your work.

When I am opening and closing a group space, I often make runic shapes with my body, as I chant in the energy of the rune.

My opening and closing ritual includes me visually making the shape of a Thors hammer as I connect with the sky, then the earth, then open out to energy of space and the ancestors. Embodying such a powerful protection symbol has helped me to ensure my group spaces are safe.

Tools

Tools and symbols are an extension of your focused intent. You could choose to light a candle/s, use a crystal, have a medicine bundle, cleanse with sage or other herbs, sweep an area before working, have ritual jewellery or clothes that feels empowering.

Its important to understand the tools are an extension of you focused intention, and not to place too much importance on them. But if having ritual tools helps your focus they can be a useful addition to any protection work.