Learning from shamanic cultures: Returning the spirit to education through the arts

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LEARNING FROM SHAMANIC CULTURES:
RETURNING THE SPIRIT TO EDUCATION THROUGH THE ARTS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies

by
John Dwight Fisher
June 2000
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Approved by:
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Joseph Gray, Education

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ABSTRACT

This project suggests that one deficiency in education is that the American public school systems have neglected to address issues of the “spirit.” Evidence is presented to suggest a similarity between addressing issues of the spirit and participating in creative processes through the arts. When teachers promote an interest in artistic processes, students benefit by increased motivation, skill development and academic comprehension. The arts can be used as both an instructional tool and as a discrete discipline to enable students to practice creativity. Practicing creativity empowers and rewards individuals and communicates positive awareness. To present the argument that creative processes address the needs of the spirit this project examines cultures that profess and live according to their concept of “spirit ways.” In many Indigenous cultures it is through shamanic practices that the cultures connect to the spirit. This thesis suggests that teachers can learn about “spirit ways” through shamanic practices and implement techniques for improvement in education through the use of the arts. The arts are important in education because they can return the “spirit.”
IN MEMORY

of my mentor

and friend

Richard Bates
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ............................................................... iii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION ................................. 1

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

   Introduction ....................................................... 9

   1. What is the Spirit? ........................................... 11

   2. Is there evidence that education lacks the Spirit? .... 23

   3. Is there a connection between Art in education and the Spirit? 33

   4. What is the connection between art and the Spirit in shamanic cultures? 43

   5. What can we learn from shamanic practices? ............. 58

   6. How can the Spirit be returned to education through art, the teaching of art and through using the arts to teach? 73

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

   Introduction ....................................................... 85

   Methodology ....................................................... 86

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSIONS ................................. 97

APPENDIX A: The Shamanic Practice of Remembering: Examining the Origins of this Project 123

APPENDIX B: Interview with Richard Stewart .......... 142

APPENDIX C: Shamanic Healing/Self-transformation .... 145

APPENDIX D: The Despacho ....................................... 151

APPENDIX E: The Vision Quest Account ................... 155
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Many of the problems we have encountered in our culture and society today have been blamed on inequities in education. Yet, it is society that decides the norms to follow in the rearing of its children. It is true that education has contributed to the problems and, just possibly, reforms and changes in education can contribute to some of the solutions. However, first, as is indicated by many of the contemporary educational reformers, perhaps our culture/society will also need to change.

If varying approaches to education have promoted varying degrees of success over the years, which approaches, which learning strategies and which curriculum emphases were successful; and what has happened over the years that has allowed for such rampant decay of the things our culture has formerly prized? To understand even a part of the answer, as presented through the efforts of this project, even, avid educational reformers will have to allow their paradigms to shift. Currently, one argument is that it has been the “modernist” paradigms that have led culture into this self-destructive mode.
The public school classroom teacher in our culture represents a professional adult that deals directly with the results of our cultural paradigms within the classroom setting. Educators, writers and speakers like Parker Palmer, Dwayne Huebner, John Gatto, William Doll and many others all speak as if the shifting, reforming stage is upon us. Our questioning, researching and probing new approaches and ideas is the process of the shifting of this paradigm.

Educational experts and researchers like Ernest Boyer, Elliott Eisner and Susan Gablik confirm the value of the use of the arts in education as a possible solution to some of the problems we face. Teaching art and using the arts to teach provides experiences in and knowledge of creative processes. Many educational reformers in studies done by groups like the California State Subject Matter Projects are finding there are more to the arts besides subject matter. This project presents information and commentaries based on research that asks us to go beyond just the literature and classroom observations.

To go beyond contemporary efforts to “fix” education, this project also attempts to study causes of reality-based outcomes. If current concepts of each individual’s role in
creating reality are believed, as professed by David Bohm and Fritjof Capra, then our power to create, and empower, might best be achieved by giving children/students exposure to processes resulting in a realization of their own creative power. Our culture and society would benefit by having members that understand their power to create the world, for better or worse. One message that rings clear today is the urgency for some positive action in the direction of taking responsibility for the condition of our world.

What we notice most is that there are extreme amounts of violence, unhappiness, uncertainty and destructive activity. How do we begin to restore, or achieve, a reality that is more harmonious, more beautiful and more peaceful, promoting less violence and unhappiness? This project suggests that through the use of the arts in education, we could achieve some of these higher goals.

Today, emphasis on teaching and learning creative processes has been usurped by attention to processes used in achieving material gains or meritorious recognition based on applied academics. Our current efforts to reform our methods have mostly addressed academic skills and disciplines that can be easily measured by objective testing. So far, this
approach has had very little effect on how students view themselves and view their world. Most educational researchers will admit that when we attempt to create improvements we must also examine new or different processes and approaches that may result in greater student awareness.

Other cultures view art differently than we do in our Western culture. If we view life and art from other cultural points of view we will notice that for some there has always been an awareness of the connection between art and the spirit. The arts demonstrate this awareness, promote and celebrate this life and the life of the spirit. We are not lacking in spirit when we participate in life and celebrate its connection to the spirit. More and more we notice that our popular youth culture seems to “celebrate” life’s more destructive tendencies.

The spirit is present when people are there to recognize, honor and celebrate it. Art is one aspect of culture that seems to be able to do this. Contemporary religions claim to do this, but only in exclusive ways and often use “their” spirit postulates to discount the beliefs of others. In the “spirit way” through the arts, the spirit is invited, it is allowed to become part of the participation
in creative activity, and it promotes celebration, happiness, and reflective material on which to build more creativity. These are lessons learned from experiences evolving from the spiritual pathways of many of our world cultures. Today, there has been much attention paid to messages from Indigenous Cultures. This research looks into some of those other cultural points of view. These messages are surfacing in all aspects of research because there is a need, and perhaps people in desperation will take heed.

The primary inquiry into the educational practices that might be used to return the spirit to education took me to the study of shamanism. Through this research an effort was made to discover what of shamanic practices and processes might be used by educators to address this loss of spirit. Shamanic cultures and practitioners are noted for professing their connections to the spirit world and knowledge of spirit ways. Who better would be able to share concepts that might be useful if our intent is to return the spirit to education? Through their eyes, their paradigms, we examine our own. Is it possible that, from shamanic cultures, we can learn answers or ways to help us solve contemporary educational problems?
What became immediately obvious to me was that the actions and practices of shamans of the world very closely resemble what we call art in our own culture. Shamans create objects with meaning; they create dance, song, music, poetry and dramatic representations or rituals, of life and the spirit. Shamans use all of life’s gifts in equal ways to create a better life. If we begin to see ourselves, our students and even the more sorted aspects of our culture as potentially providing us opportunities to create a better life for all, we might begin to reintroduce the spirit to our educational systems and our culture.

Conclusions presented in this project are based on the study of concepts that have been presented by and about Indigenous Cultures that have spirit ways embedded in their systems. This report includes presentations concerning some of the practices of cultures that profess an understanding of spirit connections. Finally, I have included evidence that the major part of this project involved my own participation in shamanic practices and how I have used insights and understandings based on my project to implement changes in my own approaches to my teaching practices. While the conclusions lack specific data that provides evidence of
improvement in educational outcomes for the students, they do offer ample evidence of an improvement in the understanding and awareness of the subject of this project, myself as a teacher learning from Shamanic Cultures.

Chapter Two will provide a Review of Literature covering a broad spectrum of ideas and observations of educators, authors and artist/writers. Most selections are derived from recognized sources that have consistently provided support for improving education through the arts. Other sources, based on developing new paradigms and exploring new avenues of research, deserve to be carefully scrutinized. Evidence presented in this chapter supports the hypothesis that using the arts in education improves teaching and learning practices and that we can learn and use practices from shamanic cultures to initiate improvements in education.

Chapter Three describes the methodology used in researching the practice of shamanism and presents descriptions of how the practices affected the subject of this project. Those methodologies, beliefs and observations that led to the conclusions of this project are of the qualitative, participant/observer variation. Specifically, the methodology includes documentation of my experiences
connected with shamanism and my subjective impressions of the implications of those experiences for the process of improving education.

Chapter Four summarizes the conclusions of this project, focusing primarily on recommendations for returning spirit to education through the arts. The recommendations are based on the review of the literature and my experiences integrating shamanism into my life and teaching.

The Appendices are presented as a partial narrative of the development of this project and of the "adventures" and professional self-discovery I encountered in my pursuit of the study of shamanic ways and beliefs. Both the body of the project and the appendices are consistent with the theme of the arts in education. The appendices describe my actuation activities through shamanic "arts" and the application of insights through the teaching "arts." There is, in this project, the implication that the reader likewise must participate in the processes to develop a complete understanding.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This review of the literature will present evidence of research into possible reasons that our efforts to educate people in America have resulted in concerns over outcomes. If we agree that the results of an educational system are partially, if not wholly, related to either the curriculum, or its delivery system, and if we examine evidence indicated by the results and outcomes of our educational system, then we see the need to consider some transformational efforts. This project suggests that one of the causes of the diminished "quality" of a peaceful and harmonious, less-stressed life is that teachers, schools, and society in general, are not modeling a life that includes "spirit." It also suggests that, if spirit is lacking, and that if lack of spirit contributes to a lesser quality education and life, perhaps we should try to discover how to return the spirit to education.

The first section of this review addresses the need to define "spirit" and identify what might happen if it is reintroduced to education. The second section identifies the evidence of how education lacks spirit and how this might
explain some of the problems we are facing today. In order to identify ways to reintroduce the spirit to education, the third section examines how one aspect of our curriculum, the arts, includes concepts and processes that are consistent with a spiritual vocabulary. In this third section, art is identified as a discipline that involves activities, experiences and dialogue connected with spirit ways. The research, in section three, then expands into a discussion of the nature of art as a spiritual discipline identifying art as processes used in creative activities.

The fourth section shows evidence that Indigenous Cultures, and specifically Native American cultures, incorporate concepts of “spirit ways” in all aspects of thought and perception and actuate spirit concepts by making or doing things similar to “things” contemporary cultures call “art.” This section connects what is commonly understood about artistic activities and processes to the activities and processes used by shamans of Indigenous Cultures. Examining the history and nature of art takes us directly to its origins in shamanic practices. In theory, then, teachers can learn about spirit ways by observing and participating in shamanic practices.
This review of literature is meant to lead us to the conclusion that we can learn from shamanic cultures and that through doing art and teaching with art, we can model a life that includes spirit ways consistent with the shamanic worldview, yet appropriate to our cultural heritage. The fifth section identifies what shamanic practices are and what doing shamanic practices would mean to the teacher. Finally, in the sixth section, evidence is presented to identify how the spirit can be returned to education through the teaching of art and the use of the arts to teach.

1. What is the Spirit?

Spirit has been defined in many different ways. From the Western cultural point of view, the subject of the spirit has been addressed primarily by religious authorities. Many Non-Western cultures embrace spirit ways in most aspects of their lives. In these “other” cultures, spirit is not separated from thought, word and action, nor reserved for more logical or rational discussion. This section will trace only some basic understandings of spirit, its nature and definition. The purpose is to compare cultures that exclude spirit concepts from the curriculum and delivery systems of
education with those cultures that embrace spirit ways as fundamental to all personal and social activities.

In Western Judeo-Christian beliefs, it was their God who "breathed" the spirit into the first created human. It is this "breath of life" that then has become identified as the "soul" of humans. An acceptable definition, as indicated by Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary (1979), for religious believers, is that spirit is the "life principle," the "thinking, motivating force" for human existence. Language usage also assigns connotations of the word spirit as describing a "disposition," like "vivacity," "courage," "enthusiasm," or a "vitality of life and being," or "loyalty." Webster's also includes a definition often dismissed by "logical-rational" observers, that "spiritual" is "other than material." (p. 1750) From a modernist viewpoint, if it cannot be observed, it does not exist. Therefore, it is not a surprise that discussions of the spirit would be left out of our modernist-based educational system.

For the purpose of identifying the term "spirit" as it is referred to in this project, thinkers like Hegel, Huxley and Wilber will be quoted. These men are philosophers
representing strong influences on the ways of thinking of most of contemporary Western culture.

Through the modern research source, the internet, we find a website dedicated to the works of Georg Hegel (1770-1831). At this website, J. B. Baillie translates Hegel's work, *Phenomenology of Mind*, which presents concepts of the spirit as a process identified at various levels of experience by people trying to develop an understanding of the spirit. Using reason, we approach an understanding through a greater awareness of the subject-object relationship. "Reason is spirit, when its certainty of being all reality has been raised to the level of truth, and reason is consciously aware of itself as its own world, and of the world as itself." (Baillie, [On-line] 1999, p. 457) Hegel’s discussion leads us into acceptance of the possibility of understanding the Spirit Nature. The many translations of Hegel’s philosophy and efforts to explain it, objectify the concept of the spirit which defeats his efforts to dissolve our Western duality by taking this duality to its extreme. "The self-contained and self-sufficient reality, however, which is at once aware of being actual in the form of consciousness and presents itself to itself, is Spirit."
So, Western thinkers connect Hegel’s beliefs to Ancient Greece and Renaissance Europe, reminding us that to know the spirit, we must know ourselves. "... Spirit, so far as it is the immediate truth, is the ethical life of a nation: - the individual, which is a world." (Baillie, [On-line] 1999, p. 460)

Is the spirit just "the way we are," or is there more to it? Are we the spirit manifest, or is the spirit also outside of us? How is the spirit manifest; how do we know spirit is there, here, with us? Hegel, again says "... Spirit is the immovable irreducible basis and the starting point for the action of all and every one." (Baillie, [On-line] 1999, p. 460)

These actions are the actions that people intend, originate, create and participate in. They are actions that demonstrate the participation of us all in the action of the spirit.

The ethical world, the world rent asunder into the 'here' and the 'yonder,' and the moral point of view, are, then, individual forms of spirit whose process and whose return into the self of spirit, a self simple and self-existent, will be developed. As these attain their goal and final result, the actual self-consciousness of Absolute Spirit will make its appearance and be their outcome. (Baillie, [On-line] 1999, p. 461)
It should be noted that Hegel connects the spirit to art. Hegel identified the nature of the spirit realizing itself through the highest levels of rationalism and logic and related that experience of recognizing Absolute Being to the creation of art. "Art grasps the Absolute in material forms, interpreting the rational through the sensible forms of beauty. Art is conceptually superseded by religion, which grasps the Absolute by means of images and symbols."

(Baillie, [On-line] 1999, p. 462) So, even as Hegel asks the observer to see him/herself in the world and the world in themselves, he separates not only the self from the observed, he places a hierarchy on things like religion and art. As will be argued later, other cultures such as many Indigenous Cultures make no such distinction.

As Hegel identifies the levels or natures of spirit awareness, his literary presentation outlines the logic used by individuals trying to grasp the concept of the spirit. Hegel might identify the spirit as Absolute Being, but, more than a hundred years later, Aldous Huxley reminds us that before the rationalists’ discourse on the nature of the spirit, there were primarily metaphysical approaches to its explanation. Huxley does not identify the spirit by
definition, but selects to label the process by which people approach the discovery of the spirit. He calls this life-long search for the truth of the spirit, the Perennial Philosophy, a term borrowed from philosopher Godfrey Leibniz (1646-1716). Aldous Huxley describes the Perennial Philosophy as being impossible to describe fully. In Bridging Science and Spirit (1994), Norman Friedman makes a concerted effort to "bridge" the gap caused by dualistic thinking processes and efforts that are used to describe the spirit. Friedman (1994) provides proof that Huxley believed that we lacked the language to discuss the nature of the spirit:

The difficulty lies in the fact that the mystic is confined to a language geared to a level of reality different from that of the experience. Huxley himself states this very well when he notes that a truly correct expression of the Perennial Philosophy is not possible. He says: 'Nobody has yet invented a Spiritual Calculus in terms of which we may talk coherently about the divine Ground and of the world conceived as its manifestation. ...So far, then, as a fully adequate expression of the Perennial Philosophy is concerned, there exists a problem in semantics that is finally insoluble.' (p. 97)

Huxley is not arguing that we cannot grasp the concept of the spirit. He merely suggests that it is language that limits our ability to communicate the nature of the spirit. As Friedman points out, there is a belief or hypothesis that
suggests that spirit must be experienced and perhaps does not conform to literal understanding of verbal or written "teachings." This is a concept that perhaps we do not appreciate as we continue to look outside ourselves for answers.

As stated by Huxley, the basic premise of the Perennial Philosophy is that the eternal self is one with the Absolute, and each individual is on a journey to discover that fact. Each individual’s path through life is to fulfill his/her destiny and thereby to return to his/her true home. This is accomplished through remembering our true nature rather than through learning. (Friedman, 1994, p. 97)

Huxley presented a less dualistic approach, less rational, more experiential treatment of spirit than Hegel. More recently, Ken Wilber goes further by presenting a post-modern approach to the concept of spirit. In his dialogic discourse, A Brief History of Everything (1996), he first presents Alfred Whitehead’s comments on what we need to prepare us to approach an understanding of the spirit. Whitehead establishes a venue for us to understand concepts of the spirit with, “the ultimate metaphysical ground is the creative advance into novelty.” After using Whitehead’s quote to establish the “playing field” for understanding, Wilber connects creativity with spirit, with these words:
Well, what is creativity but another name for Spirit? If, as Whitehead said, creativity is an ultimate - you have to have it before you can have anything else - what is an 'ultimate metaphysical ground' if not Spirit? Spirit is 'self-transcending creativity.' (Korman, [On-line] 1998)

For the purpose of this project, it needs to be pointed out that Western culture has made efforts to discourage pursuits of spirit knowledge. In his presentation, Wilber delves into possible reasons Western culture has apparently lost its understanding or interest in concepts of the spirit. Wilber paints a picture of a Western Culture that, through religious dictates, confronts people who had identified themselves as being knowledgeable of the spirits or of spirit ways:

And so, anybody who had a direct pipeline to God was thus pronounced guilty not only of religious heresy, or the violation of the legal codes of the Church, for which you could have your heavenly soul eternally damned, but also of political treason, for which you could have your earthly body separated into several sections. (Korman, [On-line] 1998)

This bias of Western Culture may account for confusion and misunderstandings that resulted in people not trying to understand the spirit and professing that it shouldn't be part of an educational upbringing. Furthermore, if explorers, coming from a culture that professes that spirit connection
is evil, encountered whole nations of people who live, solely by the spirit, they would "logically" choose to persecute those people and try to wipe out their belief system.

In presenting a definition of spirit in a world of an integrative emergence of people and cultures, our modern mandate as educators is to include observable differences as concepts for comparable study. One concept that is observable in a large proportion of non-Western cultures is a more natural, holistic and experiential version of spirit concepts. Therefore, if American Public School systems reflect Western beliefs, and we observe that the outcomes are less than desirable, by observing the spirit beliefs of other cultures and the results of their systems, we may find ways to contribute to developing solutions.

Therefore, a complete definition of spirit for this project needs to include more than just the Western point of view. Researching cultures that promote and expound on the concept that "spirit" exists, leads to the presentation of a dominant "other" belief system found particularly in certain Indigenous Cultures. General observations of these "other" cultures reveal a particular theme, or metaphorical personage referred to as "the shaman." It must be noted here, that
Indigenous Cultures may be more specifically identified by other characteristics of their particular culture, but that many have similar beliefs systems based on shamanic concepts. A complete definition of spirit would also have to include spirit as defined by the “other” cultures.

In shamanic thinking, every element of the world around us, whether human, animal, tree, or rock, is imbued with spirits. Spirits are conscious, often anthropomorphic, and can also be interpreted as representing the essences that underlie surface appearances. (Vitebsky, 1997, p. 34)

The spirit, to cultures that have not replaced spiritual beliefs with rational arguments, is “true nature” and “nature’s ways.” Shamanic cultures believe that all things are living and all things are the spirit. All things in our realm of perception and all that is not are imbued with “spirit stuff.” Shamanic cultures refer to all things as living. The world is “alive” and is made up of “tree people,” “rock people,” “water, rain, river people,” “sky people” and yes, human “people” albeit, “two legged,” “four legged,” “winged,” “creepy-crawly,” and so on. These “people,” or beings, that are in the material and their counter-parts that are not in the material, are often referred to as spirits.
Indigenous Cultures refer to themselves as "the people." People are of the spirit and the spirit is with them (us) or at least, it is waiting for us to call on it for "its" purpose. "Its" purpose is, "life and the prolonging and enhancing of life for all spirit beings." This purpose, "its" purpose is生命和生命的延长和增强, is the purpose of all the people. Many Indigenous Cultures refer to themselves as "the people."
material sources, the "world of function," are called Existential Impulses.

Applying concepts of New Science as well as conforming to multiple religious and non-religious belief systems, London (1999) approaches some of the concerns that are addressed in this project, suggesting, that, perhaps we need to begin to look at our world in a different way.

We are capable of cooperating with Essential Impulses and 'seeing' more directly what is needed. Indeed, spiritual transformation can be thought of as the movement from a way of perceiving the world in which we do not consciously cooperate with Essential Impulses to a way in which we do. (p. 10)

In this project, the purpose of identifying the spirit, for the sake of understanding and teaching about the spirit is based on the belief that returning the spirit to education will aid in creating a better world. It is not to be construed that either Western or Non-Western belief systems, or any other cultural belief system is superior. However, a culture that embeds spirit beliefs in its systems and standards of behavior, and one that has a belief system that encourages participation in spirit processes, may be one that can help us address the problems we face today, therefore justifying the intent to return the spirit to education.
2. Is there evidence that education lacks the Spirit?

Teaching about the spirit, teaching about religions as well as "other" belief systems, is rarely a part of modern public education in the United States. Even if teaching about spirit was a part of our educational system, teaching about spirit does not necessarily imply learning about spirit. As defined by Western Cultures, spirit is usually a concept restricted to discussions of religion. Much has been said and done to emphasize the separation of religions from state concerns like education.

Public school teachers, at times present evidence of spirit concepts in discussions of history, literature, science and the arts, but primarily, they are presented from mainstream religious points of view. In the case of "other" cultures, beliefs in the spirit are embedded in their standards of culture and society. In the education of "their" youth, spirit is not adjunct, it is the primary force that drives history, literature and the arts.

Currently, research seminars and discussions concerning the neglect of the spirit in American education are sponsored by spiritual leaders, usually not by publicly supported educators. Presenters and participants in these discussions
of our concerns for an education lacking the spirit begin to identify the source of this situation.

Modern schooling does not serve the spiritual unfoldment of the child. It serves capitalism, nationalism, and a reductionist worldview. It serves a society that is completely committed to meritocracy, where there's fierce competition between individuals to reach the top of a social hierarchy. (Miller, [On-line] 1997)

According to Miller, it was certainly not the established educational system that points out these shortcomings in education. The educational system is being supported by a political organization that models the modernist's "machine" metaphor and controls the outcomes of public education through mandates and funding to support its own system.

In a book that was critical of American Public Schools, Dumbing Us Down (1992), John Gatto identifies this history of separation of religion and education as one of the main reasons for the decline of culture. He argues that the struggle over the territory of young minds by teachers with religious doctrinal orientations were governed by rules that did not allow these doctrines to bias the nature of the knowledge being given in educational institutions. According to Gatto, history then shows us that the division between interests in the spiritual and the material knowledge
progressively widened because of shifts and disruptions caused by migrations and industrialization. Our legacy, that of the American Public School system, has been to steadfastly maintain this separation and to champion the cause of material mastery. Religion and Spiritualism was left to the home and to a family that was rapidly deteriorating because of these social and economic changes.

Gatto not only points out that the American justice system has tied the hands of educators by not allowing them to teach the spirit ways, but points to this lack of spirit in education as a reason for the decline of our culture.

The Supreme Court Everson ruling of 1947 established the principle that the State would have no truck with spirits. There was no mention that 150 years of American judicial history had passed without any other court finding this fantastic hidden meaning in the Constitution. ... But even if we forego an examination of the motives of this court and grant that the ruling is a sincere expression of the rational principle behind modern leadership, we would be justified in challenging Everson today because of the grotesque record laid down over the past 50 years of spiritless schooling. Dis-spirited schooling has been tested and found fully wanting. I personally think that that's because it is a liar's game that denies the metaphysical reality recognized by men and women worldwide today and in every age. (Gatto, [On-line] 1997)
Gatto (1997) goes further in his admonition of American educational systems by suggesting that these conditions were not caused by efforts to uphold rights of individuals and promote justice for all, but were actually calculated to promote, not democratic ideals, but the development of an elitist culture controlled by capitalists. He suggests that the purpose of our educational system is to make people dumber and more easily duped into a less individualistic, non-spiritual, materially oriented life.

The net effect of holding a child in confinement for 12 years and longer without any honor paid to the spirit is an extended demonstration that the State considers the Western God tradition to be dangerous. And, of course, it is. Schooling is about creating loyalty to an abstract central authority, and no serious rival can be welcome in a school that includes mother and father, tradition, local custom, self-management, or God. (Gatto, [Online] 1997)

At the peak of the "enlightened," pre industrialized Western world, teaching was actually considered an "Art." Young teachers listened to lectures about education and approached their task as if it were a mission to promote the highest values. At Cambridge University, J. G. Fitch (1882) gave a series of lectures to student teachers. His advice was:
Look forward to the life of your pupils, and ask what recollections they will have - what recollections you would like them to have, of you and of your teaching. Those recollections will not all be of the lessons you have intentionally given. They will depend much upon the spirit in which your work was done, on the motives which were seen to actuate you and on the degree in which you were known to love that knowledge of which for the time you were in the scholar’s eyes the chief representative. (p. 435)

Gatto (1997) suggests that the industrial growth period at the turn of the century was also a period of reconfiguring our educational goals. Children were to be sent to compulsory education to prepare them for a future place in this society.

When schooling is able to displace education, as happened in the US just about a century ago, a deterministic world could be simulated. We can entrap children into becoming organic machinery simply by ignoring the universal human awareness that there is something dreadfully important beyond the rational. We can cause children to mistrust themselves so severely they come to depend on cost-benefit analyses for everything. We can teach them to scorn faith so comprehensively that buying things and feeling good becomes the point of their lives. (Gatto, [On-line] 1997)

As Gatto implies, American culture did not need thinkers, did not need spiritual dreamers, it needed workers. Modern culture did not need to bow to anything natural or anything sacred, it needed raw materials and machinery to
make more material products. Money replaced the spirit. What have we lost; what have we gained?

From my rough impression of the Western educational system, although it is very impressive to see the high standard of the intellectual facilities and also many other resources, and the perfection of many other aspects of intellectual development, one thing that is becoming quite apparent is that the dimension of enhancing and developing the heart is lacking. (Dalai Lama, [On-line] 1997)

Often, we may notice how "people of the spirit," such as the Dalai Lama or some Native American spokesmen use other terms in referencing the spirit concepts in the Western context. Words like "heart" and "soul" speak to the Western ear in terms that perhaps we can understand. In a culture that lacks a vocabulary of spirit knowledge and spirit ways, we grope for a connection to meaning. Have we been lacking in our curriculum to allow ourselves a connection to meaning? Just as our student populations are directed and mandated to conform to a spiritless education, teachers are likewise stripped of the "vocabulary" to express some of their deepest concerns. In an article on Parker Palmer, Nichols quotes him with a description of this frustration.

But if you're in that [any] classroom, either as a teacher or a student, you know that there is more to it. You know that there is a spiritual side to teaching. You know that there are mysteries that
have to be unlocked. And you want to explore those mysteries, talk about them, make connections with other people. (Nichols, [On-line] 1998)

In a conference on Spirituality in Education at The Naropa Institute, held in May 1997, contemporary educational practitioners and philosophers concluded that we severely lack spirituality in education. Parker Palmer, a participant in this Spirituality in Education conference, gave us a suggestion for how we can begin to view the processes involved in returning the spirit to education. “We all know that what will transform education is not another theory or another book or another formula but a transformed way of being in the world.” (Palmer, [On-line] 1997) At the same conference, having followed Gatto, Ron Miller adds: “We also need the prophetic outrage that is so well expressed by John Gatto. ... he sees so clearly the terrible damage that modernist education has inflicted on the human spirit.” (Miller, [On-line] 1997)

Outside of the educational arena, yet still addressing concerns over the lack of spirit in our culture, Eliot Cowan (1995), in his book about addressing healing through Plant Spirit Medicine, states:
Our children have all the luxuries of food, shelter, medical care and recreation, and they receive every conceivable form of education and therapy, but amid this affluence no one confronts the appalling, dangerous poverty of spirit. (Cowan, 1995, p. 37)

Not that all children share in this affluence, but the message is clear: we do not address their needs for knowledge and experiences in the spirit ways. Although this project examines Indigenous Cultures as examples of cultures that honor spirit ways, it is not essential to try to copy or emulate Indigenous cultural ways to return the spirit to education. Our Western cultural ways also, at one time were likewise imbued with spirit ways. We have but to rediscover those ways and begin to utilize them in our daily efforts to improve our lives (and education). This review of literature is not referring to a spirit or spirits claimed by specific religions, or any religion, but the spirit of life that we all share and are compelled to honor. In the following quote, John Gatto clarifies the issue of the spirit being “owned” by exclusionary organized religions.

In Western spirituality, everyone counts. It offers a basic, matter-of-fact set of practical guidelines, street lamps for the village of your life. Nobody has to wonder aimlessly in the universe of Western spirituality. What constitutes a meaningful life is clearly spelled out: self-
knowledge, duty, responsibility, acceptance of aging and loss, preparation for death. In the neglected genius of the West, no teacher or guru does the work for you, you must do it for yourself. (Gatto, [On-line] 1997)

Just as this project attempts to point out the lack of spirit in Western Education, it recognizes that some have suggested not only ways to return the spirit through education but, what it might look like if we did. What might education be like if the spirit was to be acknowledged and honored as the very fabric of our existence? How do we accomplish this?

The practice of a totally unreserved awareness is the road to absolute inner acceptance. This acceptance unblocks the space where selfless love and fearlessness are revealed. And the inner peace from which they arise is the way to effective outer peacemaking. (Jones, 1992, p. 290)

At The Loyola Spirituality Conference in 1995, William Doll, an outspoken advocate for educational reform and a proponent of a post-modern approach to accepting a substantial “paradigm shift” in our thinking about what is important in education, spoke about the importance of addressing this lost spirit.

There is a spirit in education today; a spirit which says that education in any deep and meaningful sense is more than just learning, more than acquired factual knowledge; indeed it is a
journey into a land, a different land, a strange
land. As Duayne Huebner says, ... 'The process of
being educated is always a consequence of
encountering something which is strange and
different, something which is not me: That which is
'other'. ' (Doll, 1995, p. 7).

At this conference, participants did not just talk
about, write about, spirituality in education, they
participated in music, dance, ritual and reflection to awaken
the spirit, before they then shared in their reflections.

Doll (1995), in his introductory comments goes on to say:

He [Huebner] did not advocate an integration of
religion and schooling, nor of incorporating values
into curriculum design—not at all. Rather, he
suggested we bring a sense of the spiritual to our
approach to life; and that we let this sense of
life infuse our teaching, our being. Life is
spiritual and education should be one with life—too
often our sense of teaching and learning excludes
life itself. (p. 10)

Speaking for himself, Huebner goes on to suggest that it
is the teachers that have to model right living, thinking and
acting. That the school culture, as a whole, needs to be
addressed by adults that do more than teach.

The problem of the schools is not that kids are not
being taught moral and spiritual values, the
problem is the schools are not places where the
moral and spiritual life is lived with any kind of
intentionality. ... It is also quite clear to me
that it is futile to hope that teachers can be
aware of the spiritual in education unless they
maintain some form of spiritual discipline. (Huebner, 1995, p. 32)

He goes on to say that teachers need to align with "communities" of people who follow spiritual paths, with those who take part in and aid in "... the continuing transformation necessary in the vocation of teaching." In addition, teachers need to develop the sense of "... an imagination that has room for the spiritual." (Huebner, 1995)

3. Is there a connection between Art in education and the Spirit?

During the last decade of the twentieth century the California State Board of Education expanded its Subject Matter Projects to include the Arts. These Subject Matter Projects and the California Arts Project are designed to encourage, educate and inform classroom teachers in their particular subject disciplines. In The California Arts Project teacher/participant-observers learn for themselves the value of the arts, having been guided as adult learners through actual arts experiences. The California Arts Project, within a most "spirited" professional context, stressed that their participants observe with an emphasis on "what" was
being learned through the artistic processes they experienced. It was because of my participation in the California Arts Project, searching for this "what was being learned," observing spiritual messages in art, that I became obsessed with the question: "What is the relationship between Art and the Spirit?" This project is the result of that quest for understanding and its application.

To answer the question about art, education and the spirit, this section first establishes that, to artists, regardless of culture or time, art is specifically related to spirit. Many artists, writers and arts educators had concurred that there is more to art than can be identified by logic and reason. This mysterious attraction of the arts, even to non-artists, is the true value realized by participants in the arts, in any capacity.

The spiritual life, to which art belongs and of which she is one of the mightiest elements, is a complicated but definite and easily definable movement forwards and upwards. ... If the emotional power of the artist can overwhelm the "how?" and can give free scope to his finer feelings, the art is on the crest of the road by which she will not fail later on to find the "what" she has lost, the "what" which will show the way to the spiritual food of the newly awakened spiritual life. This "what?" will no longer be the material, objective "what" of the former period, but the internal truth of art, the soul without which the body (i.e. the
"how") can never be healthy, whether in an individual or in a whole people. This "what" is the internal truth which only art can divine, which only art can express by those means of expression which are hers alone. (Kandinsky, [1914] 1977, p. 9)

In our culture, we have not been shown the connections between life and the spirit, let alone how art is used to make those connections. Contemporary education in America and the West seems to suggest that we aspire to "mastery" over life and our world. The Arts are rarely mentioned as a path to either personal or material success. Native American educators and spokespersons like Gregory Cajete (1994) point out that "greed" in our culture has blinded us to the truth and we have made art the enemy of our materialistic aspirations. Even the assignment of art as having material value distorts the true meaning and value of art. "Other" cultures see values in art that have not been made apparent in the Western educational environment.

Art allows us to symbolize knowledge, understanding, and feeling through image, thus making it possible to transcend a finite time and culture. Art becomes a primary source of teaching since it integrates and documents an internal process of learning. (Cajete, 1994, p. 40)

This question of the importance of art in education has been addressed by many. There is not only a history of public
school educators discovering the benefits of the arts in education, but there is also a proud list of educational philosophers and political advocates who recognize the value of the arts in education. Their voices may not be commonly heard, but they profess that art will do precisely what they know it will do: solve some of the problems of a culture out of control. Almost fifty years ago at an international symposium on the importance of Art in Education, sponsored by UNESCO, Herbert Read (1953), English author, professor, and President of the Society for Education in Art, advised us that:

... not education in art, nor the place of art in education, but education by means of art. It is claimed that the experience involved in the process of artistic creation (and here it is necessary to emphasize the word “creation,” for sometimes it is confused with the secondary process of appreciation) is in itself an educative one, and that art is therefore an essential instrument in any complete system of education. (p. 25)

There is ample evidence that the arts have had a loosing battle to wage. More recently, at an Annual Meeting of the International Council of Fine Arts Deans, in 1977, Ernest L. Boyer, the U. S. Commissioner of Education presented a paper expressing the need for the federal government, specifically the U. S. Office of Education, to promote the cause of the
arts as "... an essential part of the common core of education ..." Boyer expressed concern for our culture's, and government's, lack of support for art in education by quoting from various reports from sources like the Rockefeller Panel on the Arts in Education and the Health Education and Welfare's annual report. In his presentation, Boyer (1997) quotes Lorin Hollander, a concert pianist who had just spoken at Columbus for a conference on the arts and education:

We don't socialize our children to the arts. We have made a gruesome mistake in educational policy planning. We are the first society in human history to make that mistake. And now we see the results - violence, destruction, despair. We know all this. But how do we make them know all this - 'them' who wield the power and the money? (p. 6)

After emphasizing his point by using an artist's voice, Boyer expresses the belief of a non-artist, educational expert. His own presentation of commitment to art in education perhaps gives us an understanding of the educator's point of view. "The arts, in short, give expression to the profound urgings of the human spirit. They validate our feelings in a world that deadens feeling. They organize our perceptions and give meaningful coherence to existence." (p. 9) In his conclusions, he identifies his hope that making the
arts more important in education will help students achieve what he has called "the educated heart."

The educated heart means to me a deep respect for excellence wherever it is found. The educated heart means: an expectation of beauty, a tolerance of others, a reaching for beauty without arrogance, a courtesy toward opposing views, a dedication to fairness and social justice, precision in speech and thought, and a love for graceful expression and audacious intellect. (Boyer, 1977, p.18)

Elliot Eisner, a renowned Professor of Education and Art at Stanford University, and an outspoken advocate for arts in education has addressed these issues. He points out that the arts help train "our sensibilities," leading to a "more mature consciousness." (1996, p. 8) The arts help us to develop visual images and "the subtleties, complexities, and richness that our perceptions - our trained perceptions - have made possible in the first place." Eisner states that the arts "help students stretch their minds beyond the literal and rule-governed." "In the arts, choice is always multiple;" Eisner warns us that:

The absence of attention to the arts in our schools will result in an inability for most of our citizens to deal with more than [just the TV] 'Wheel of Fortune,' 'As the World Turns' and 'Dallas.' ... 'through them [the arts] children find meaningful access to their cultural heritage. Without such literacy that heritage itself will molder as skeletons in the unopened closet. The
The arts require a seeing eye in order to live. The arts exhibit a life, 'a spirit' of their own, and we rob our children of their heritage by not including the arts in education. (1996, p. 8)

Our cultural heritage, how it has been manifest in symbols and rituals through the arts over many generations, is closely identified with what we believe to be our spirit. The arts have been our chosen way to perpetuate this spirit. Why have we not been able to see the value of the arts in education for preserving the goodness of culture? In the aforementioned UNESCO symposium (1953), when discussing the importance of the arts in education in a world of changing cultural values, an educational advisor to the government of India, K. G. Saiyidain identifies his perception of what contributes to the problems.

The education administrators themselves were more preoccupied with the achievement of tangible results and the teaching of subjects which could be easily measured by the mechanical yardstick of the examinations. Being themselves the products of an educational system which was soulless and artistically barren, they were not able to appreciate the true value of art education or know how to encourage it in schools. Thus, in consequence of the inexorable chain of administrators without vision, teachers lacking in skill, creative ideas or training, and children obsessed with examinations, art continued to be the neglected part of the curriculum. (p. 79)
In our materialistic world, those that place high value, even critical survival importance, on learning through creative processes are learning to speak in a language recognizable to the critical mass. In a more recent symposium sponsored by the Harvard Educational Review, Maxine Greene (1991) entices us to leave that comfortable “shelter” we think art provides and take the challenge of placing art in a more strategic role in our life and culture.

I am trying to say that one of the functions of the arts is not only to make us see (as Joseph Conrad wrote) ‘according to our deserts,’ not only to change our everyday lives in some fashion, but to subvert our thoughtlessness and complacencies, our certainties even about art itself. (p. 9)

In this symposium that focused on art's ability to bridge gaps in our perception of the relationships and value of multicultural contributions to an evolving world, Greene cleverly chides those without artistic sensibility with:

We do, however, want to learn ourselves - and enable them to learn - what it is to make judgments on the grounds of lived experience and, at once, in relation to community norms. Trying to open persons to the new and the multiple, we want ourselves to break through some of the crusts of convention, the distortions of fetishism, the sour tastes of narrow faiths. (Greene, 1991, p. 11)

And, for the rational thinkers, she relates higher level thinking with the practicality of creative experiences in a
way consistent with the very argument proposed by both the post-modernist thinkers and the neo-shamanists. She suggests that the arts assist us in creating and co-creating our own worlds.

This leads back to my argument for a pedagogy that integrates art education and aesthetic education. Yes, it should be education for more informed and imaginative awareness, but it should also be education in the kinds of critical transactions that empower persons to resist both elitism and objectivism, that allow them to read and to name, to write and to rewrite their own lived worlds. (Greene, 1991, p. 12)

By placing the responsibility directly on the educators as the agents who can provide our students with the tools to gain understanding, Greene plants the seeds that will grow into the creative wonder that all participants will experience. This creative wonder that only can be learned through art experiences is the missing element that will be re-discovered when art is used in and for education. In this way, art can address the problem of the lack of spirit in education.

If we can enable more young persons to arouse themselves in this way, to notice, to make sense of what they see and hear, to attend to works in their particularity, they may begin to experience art as a way of understanding. (Greene, 1991, p. 13)
In simple educational terms, "Teachers need to give children the opportunity to construct their understanding." (Miller, [On-line] 1997)

In a book that identifies an even higher purpose of art, Alex Grey (1998), a contemporary visionary artist, speaking with the artist's voice states:

Art can be a spiritual practice. Not all artists consider this to be true, but with the proper motivation and focus, it can be so. A spiritual practice is an activity that enables you to develop the qualities of mental clarity, mindfulness of the moment, wisdom, compassion, and access to revelations of higher mystic states of awareness. (p. 207)

Grey's work and his life-long, "lived" experience of art taught him not only to learn about and from the world of art and cultural expressions, but also to begin the practice of "seeing" as the artists before him. He too extols the shortcomings of our contemporary culture for its lack of recognizing the "spirit" nature of art and our lack of an insightful understanding of the practice of art as the work of the spirit in its attempts to create a better world. Our ancient, and not so ancient, ancestors knew and used art as a means to achieve continuity, to honor and celebrate our culture.
...art is a mighty instinctual force implanted in the hearts of people. Art is a people's collective mind. Art is not a mere amusement, distraction, or fashionable investment. (Grey, 1998, p. 230)

4. What is the connection between art and the Spirit in shamanic cultures?

In the previous section the effort was made to show the connection between art and the spirit using the observations of artists and art educators. To answer the question concerning the connection between the arts and the spirit as identified in shamanic cultures, we research perspectives from both the Western and Indigenous Cultural experts. The question of why people make art has occupied the minds and time of Western thinkers for more than two millennia. Indigenous Cultures have not questioned this "art" activity with such scrutiny and suspicion. Because of a serious interest in why pre-historic people made art, science and archeology experts such as John E. Pfeiffer (1982) present evidence that, since prehistoric times humans have used the arts to pass on their culture and have related to the spirit world through the arts. "Art ... became an essential aspect of prehistoric living, as essential as subsistence and reproduction for the survival of the human species." (p. 18)
The first part of this section compares and contrasts the Western social scientist’s explanation of the activity of art making with the Indigenous Cultural perspectives on art and its connection to the spirit. Furthermore, it addresses the modernist criticism of using “archaic” (or worse yet, “primitive”) paradigms to solve contemporary problems. As we approach the answers provided by Indigenous Cultures, the argument against Western Modernist ways becomes more critical. Therefore, a brief explanation of the role that modernism has played in concealing this side of the issue will be presented. Finally, a glimpse into the post-modern observations will reveal that the possibility of using art to return the spirit to education may not be so far off.

Social scientists such as Pfeiffer (1982) and Hughes (1995) suggest that it was during a certain period in prehistory that we began the march toward the human experience we know today. This period, the Upper Paleolithic, coincided with the migration of Homo-Sapiens from the Middle East to the Central European area. It also appears to have coincided with one particular cultural practice that had not been in evidence before this time, the creation of art. In a recent article in Time magazine, R. Hughes (1995) identifies
the physiological difference between humans that make art and their predecessors as:

... a more advanced brain, equipped with a large frontal lobe 'wired' for associative thinking. For art, at its root, is association – the power to make one thing stand for and symbolize another, to create the agreements by which some marks on a surface denote, say, an animal, not just to the mark maker but to others." (p. 54)

Although we generally recognize the images made by the people of that time, for centuries we have tried to understand how and why they did what they did. While the debate over this issue is being hotly contested, anthropologists seem to agree that regardless of the motivation or inspiration, the artwork was done as a spiritual practice or ritual for purposes derived from spiritual beliefs. (White, 1998, p. 23-27) "This spiritual journey through relationship [the arts] was the beginning of the first religions of men." (Cajete, 1994, p. 95) It seems appropriate to conjecture that shamanism, as a common thread through the religions of these, so-called "primitive" cultures, was and is at the root of this spiritual activity.

For many people it has been through the messages and reports from our scientists, lecturers, writers and teachers that we have arrived at our cultural perceptions of art.
Again, not afforded the opportunities to experience art ourselves to determine the meaning that suits our needs, but told “what it is” as if that information was all we needed to know its truth. When inquiring into the origins of art, Pfeiffer (1982) relates:

The old tradition of not quite knowing what to make of art persists in some circles. Some archeologists still tend to think along Puritan lines; for them art is an activity, useless at best and potentially almost sinful, pursued by childish grown-ups with nothing better to do. One investigator who has made notable contributions to human evolution told me recently that ‘the people who painted in caves had a more leisurely life, time to think about such inessential things.’ (p. 102)

In contrast, when Pfeiffer (1982) gives us his concept of the importance of what others refer to as the “inessential thing” called art, he points out that there was a need for change encountered by Upper Paleolithic people which was also reflected in the radical changes depicted in their art.

They were too involved, too swept up in concerns of the daily grind, to act in such a calculating manner. But they saw their world changing, a crumbling of traditions, bands meeting and sharing and fighting more often than ever before, perhaps children acting more on their own and paying less attention to the advice of their parents, and they felt the need to come together more often and more intensely, to reestablish common interests, common goals. (p. 102)
As the pre-historic cultures tried to address their problems, the use of art, ritual and ceremony became the process used to embed knowledge in the learning generations. They used more and more elaborate rituals and artistic activities to accomplish this. As described by Pfeiffer, art was used to satisfy the need to imprint larger quantities of information in the form of remembering and mnemonics. Cave art and ritual was employed to add emphasis to these efforts to pass along information important for survival.

This was not art for art’s sake, no play, nothing casual. It was bare survival-necessity. ... The same ingenuity and attention to detail, which we apply today in planning political campaigns, the design of buildings and machines, and theatrical productions went into the uses of art and special effects in the caves. (Pfeiffer, 1982, p. 127)

One hypothesis is that the caves were used for teaching, for initiation into culture. The more mysterious and frightening, the more filled with wonder, as in the cave, the more impact was made on the learner. More cognitive impressions were fixed in the learner’s memory to enable them to make more associations for a better understanding of the living experience. These art practices were used to instill a sensibility into the generations that were to carry life and their cultural traditions forward as a sacred trust, giving
purpose and responsibility to all members of that society. The shaman became not only the teacher and guide he/she became the practitioner of the arts to maintain a balanced world through the use of "spirit ways." In Native American cultures, "art is an element of life," not separate. (Dufrene, 1991, p. 3) In these cultures they have no word for art; art is life. Furthermore, practices and activities that we call art are both religious and healing practices. Therefore, art is the manifestation of the spirit.

Spiritualism is the highest form of political consciousness. The native peoples of the West are among the world’s surviving proprietors of that kind of consciousness. They are here to impart that message. It is important to use it wisely and well as we go into the twenty-first century - a time of bridging ancient wisdom into the creative tapestry of contemporary times. (Arrien, 1993, p. 11)

Multitudes of concept/process theories are changing our beliefs and ways of thinking. Many suggest acknowledging concepts of the past that helped cultures to flourish and maintain balance and harmony in the world. Native Cultures that, according to the research done for this project, are and have been in touch with the spirit, those who have survived the onslaught of "civilization" have not been idle in their efforts to bring us out from under this self-
destructive spell. Authors like Gregory Cajete (1994), Jamake Highwater (1981) and Angeles Arrien (1993) identify thoroughly their observations and suggestions through which they hope may result in a profound reverence for art; even an adamant insistence that we take heed, before it’s too late.

Art was a monumental evolution in the development of human learning. Art, which is the transformation of raw materials into a form that reflects meaning to both artist and user, is equally a reflection of an elemental transformation. Indeed Art, in its highest forms of expression, is a kind of magic. And in this magic of creation, the artist becomes immersed within his media and the mind of creation. (Cajete, 1994, p. 148)

Researching available material on the Native American belief systems and other Indigenous Cultural beliefs and perspectives connects us to probable sources of our own origins. Whether we are Eurasian, African, New Worlders or Islanders, we can all trace our ancestry to shamanic cultures. These cultures focus on nature and humankind's role in maintaining balance in nature: physical, individual, familial, social and metaphysical. We are now being taught to be politically correct by not using the descriptor, "primitive." However, from the Western point of view, the distinction has often been between civilized and (so-called)
non-civilized. The distinctions have commonly been reported from the "civilized" Western points of view.

... cultures cannot be understood from the perspectives of an 'objective' science, because comparisons are inevitably made with the value judgments of a single outside culture. What is needed is an overview that possesses the discursive perspective as well as the visionary imagination of both cultures involved in the comparison. Clearly, information and statistics are not enough. Good will is not enough. And objectivity counts for nothing since it is, to begin with, an exclusively Western notion. (Highwater, 1981, p.20)

So, what happened when Western Culture attempted to systematically wipe out belief systems that did not conform to theirs? Are modern intellectuals simply continuing the egocentric/ethnocentric exploitive ways of our recent cultural past by looking to Indigenous Cultures for answers? The Western Culture, too, was once an Indigenous Culture, before this "spell of history" and its "dominator" persona transformed the nature of our ways. A modern anthropologist-turned-visionary, Jose Arguelles (1990), describes the results of the "spread of civilization" over Indigenous Cultures for "new age" believers.

... the dreamspell of history. ... The priests successfully diverted the power of universal water and established civilization through irrigation, writing, warfare, and the calendar of twelve. ... the power of spirit was channeled through metallurgy [science], horse
and chariot warfare, and the building of imperial cities. The domain of the warrior priests was extended. Twenty-six centuries ... captured by the male priesthood. (p.5)

Whether this description is meant to be historical or metaphorical, Arguellas suggests that the spirit was being monopolized by scientists and priests and the people were placed under a “spell of history” manufactured to control them and keep them from accessing spirit knowledge. As this “spell of history” is being broken under the scrutiny of the post-modern discernment, we are learning of the many systematic attempts by religions and governments to villainize Indigenous Cultures and eradicate natural spirit beliefs, like shamanism.

Can we discover the spirit connections in our own ancestral heritage? Writing about the exploitation by the New Agers of “laying claim” to Indigenous Cultural ways and mis-representing them, Diane Bell (1997) relates, “There is a bitter irony in turning to Indigenous Peoples to solve problems of affluent urbanities.” (p. 53) However, she quotes Ines Talamantez, of the University of California, Santa Barbara, with a note of tolerance based on the need of the
times, "'If the impulse is for respect and sharing, then come stand with us in our struggles. ...'" (p. 53)

One goal in studying shamans has been to illuminate the values, beliefs, and world views of the societies in which shamans live and work. ... scholars must become more sensitive to the ethical implications of studying shamans in other cultures. They must realize that the debate about appropriating or borrowing spiritual and religious traditions places them in the midst of cultural controversies that far exceed the boundaries of academe. (Glass-Coffin, 1998, p. 56)

With a "clarity of intent," not just the New Agers, but American/Western trained scholars are now listening to the voices of Indigenous People. Books like Cajete’s (1994) *Look to the Mountain*, and Highwater’s (1981) *Primal Mind*, have kindled interest in the study of Indigenous approaches to education and the emphasis that is placed on the role of the spirit, or spirits in our lives, our culture, and our world. These and other sources have aided in verifying that the use of creative processes both lead to an understanding of spirit ways and are the result of practicing those ways.

Those first religions were wholly Nature centered. They evolved through an abiding respect for natural entities, the understanding that all natural entities had a spirit and shared breath with human beings. Art was a tool to express the nonverbal, the innermost reflections of the dream, the understanding of relationship to the natural world that those first shamans and first hunters

52
experienced. The origins of art among the first shamans document the original attempts by hunting men to express their relationship to their natural world. As communities became more sedentary, this tradition of art and this way of relating to the natural world expanded to form the expressions of sacred art we find worldwide today. (Cajete, 1994, p. 95)

We, as Western practitioners, tend to be complacent in the roles we have chosen. Our culture does not challenge us to look beyond the observed reality. Having come from a cultural perspective that dismisses spirit concepts as superstitious, concerned teachers, who want to facilitate learning in a broader, more inclusive sense, may need to do more than research Indigenous shamanic concepts. By doing activities like shamanic practices, we could tap into that creative spirit identified by shamanic cultures and answer the question for ourselves, about art and the spirit.

If the spirit exists as described in shamanic systems, the spirit is either within us or can use our intuitive potential to enter in and manifest creativity through our actions. We could be opening the door for a more universally "in-tune" entity to pass on knowledge far greater than we are capable of understanding. "We must deautomatize consciousness in order to approach that celebrated pronouncement of William
Blake: 'If the doors of perception were cleansed, man would see everything as it is, infinite.'" (Highwater, 1981, p. 81)

Gregory Cajete uses a paradigm of science, that life is an ecology to affect a shift to a concept now available for most Western thinkers, at least for the scientific-minded. This concept of viewing life as an ecology helps us to relate concepts of changing paradigms to more pragmatic modernist thinkers. As Native Americans view art not as a separate subject but as a part of living ritual, "modernist" thinkers still need to adjust to this concept.

Modernism as an all-encompassing intellectual movement has outlived its usefulness, yet it lives on as a, if not the, force in curriculum practice. We are in a new stage of intellectual, political, social development. It is time to do more than reform our methods and practices. It is time to question the modernist assumptions on which these methods and practices are based and to develop a new perspective that simultaneously rejects, transforms, and preserves that which has been. (Doll, 1993, p. 11)

Modernism, based on Newtonian scientific and Cartesian philosophical paradigms, given the social organizers of industrialization and technocracy, bases our beliefs on the concept that there are finite explanations for our perceived reality. Government organized educational systems promoted and embedded these concepts in its "product," the
certificated prodigy. Schools were based on the metaphor of the machine, and students were manufactured for the industrial, consumer/capitalist economy through a system of meritocracy. (Doll, 1993 p. 45) In his explanation of the sources of our current dilemma, Doll (1993) also presents the current antidote to the problems generated by this century of modernism: post-modernist thinking. "This paradigm change appears to be a megaparadigm change, one bringing about new ideas in cosmology, epistemology, metaphysics." (p. 11)

If the modernist point of view of the world being "like" a machine is compared to the world view of Indigenous Cultures we would see that there is a striking difference. If Western scientific efforts try to map the "Great Mystery," Non-Western beliefs suggest that the contemplation and celebration of "the Mystery," not the mastery over it, is one of the primary "rules" of Nature's Ways. Within the parameters of post-modern paradigm shifting, this project looks into the possibility that by participating in practices, identified by various Indigenous Cultures as shamanic, teachers can re-formulate or transform the modernist's "ecology" to help themselves adjust to this shift.
Without being specific about what this paradigm shift will be, educators and intellectuals only recommend our attention to process. Those who are addressing an urgent need for change to promote a better life for all are spreading the word of this shift. Faced with overwhelming problems in culture, society and education, we can no longer insist that our "ways" are "right." To tell students that there is only one right answer is a misrepresentation of what we know about reality and, we know from contemporary educational research, is death to the learning process. Doll (1993) gives us the new paradigm for learning processes:

The intent is not to prove (even to oneself) the correctness of a position but to find ways to connect varying viewpoints, to expand one's horizon through active engagement with another. This engagement is a process activity, which transforms both parties, be they text and reader or student and teacher. (p.151)

Educational reformers now look to the post-modern scientific paradigms to explain both the student's and the teacher's new role for learning. In an effort to explain the origins of our recognition of the need for an effective method of change, which sounds so reminiscent of messages from Indigenous Cultures, Sam Crowell, Geoffery and Renata
Caine (1998) offer us an explanation of Fritjof Capra’s description of the Quantum theory:

In the very act of observing the world, we participate in its creation. Understanding that we are an integral part of the universe, we can view ourselves in a larger, more interdependent and participative context. This view is called self-reference. Whenever we alter the way we view the world, we do in fact change the world we are viewing. This seems almost counterintuitive, but it is part of the new landscape of reality that we are coming to know. (p. 68)

Ritual actions, dance, music, telling and acting out stories, creating objects of and for contemplation and reflection are the activities of the arts. The creation and contemplation of art has always been a process-learning activity. In our Western Culture, we call this art. In Indigenous Cultures this is the way people interact with the spirit. As we participate in these forms of creativity, we get to know ourselves and the world around us in an intuitive way. These practices allow us to participate in the actualization of the will of the spirit to create a better world.

To suggest at this time that turning to shamanic practices would enlighten educators to techniques and processes that would return the spirit to education, and that
it would be accomplished through the arts, forces us to
examine the nature of this new (or old) paradigm. If the
spirit is working toward this end, it would infuse our
culture with messages and pronouncements of this approach. An
explanation of shamanism presented by Carlos Casteneda (1998)
directs us to reconsider our old paradigms that discount
shamanism as inappropriate for "modern" solutions.

For the rational man to hold steadfastly to his
self-image ensures his abysmal ignorance. He
ignores the fact that shamanism is not incantations
and hocus-pocus, but the freedom to perceive not
only the world taken for granted, but everything
else that is humanly possible to accomplish. He
trembles at the possibility of freedom. And freedom
is at his fingertips. (p. 284)

5. What can we learn from shamanic practices?

Studying, observing or participating in shamanic
practices teaches us a new perspective on the relationship of
our self and everything else through processes of actuating
intent. Processes used to actuate intent are very similar to
processes we use and teach through the arts. Do shamans have
a better understanding of this and are therefore worthy of
our study? Berggren (1998) identifies the role of the shaman
in culture as:
... ensuring the survival and well-being of the community by maintaining its connection to the sacred world through healing and ritual. In filling this role, the shaman is typically the teacher and keeper of the myths. If there comes a time when the community’s mythology is no longer serving its well-being, it is the shaman who steps forward to help the tribe revision a new, more adequate mythology. (p. 212)

One does not choose to be a shaman. One is assigned. The one who assigns is the person who sees themselves as shaman or is seen by others to be shaman and is worthy of the assignment. My involvement in this project has taught me that to be a shaman is to become a shaman. It is a process that delineates the connections between that which is done to actualize intent and the results. The results are observable, but only from the point of view of the shaman according to his/her intent. What others observe may or may not be the intent of the shaman. Their intent and their ability to actualize it create what they observe. The shaman realizes his/her intent to create reality. Actualizing intent is the practice of the shaman. Carlos Castaneda (1998) describes what is done by the shaman that connects to the spirit.

In the universe there is an immeasurable, indescribable force which shamans call intent, and absolutely everything that exists in the entire cosmos is attached to intent by a connecting link. Warriors are concerned with discussing,
understanding, and employing that connecting link. They are especially concerned with cleaning it of the numbing effects brought about by the ordinary concerns of their everyday lives. Shamanism at this level can be defined as the procedure of cleaning one’s connecting link to intent. (p.258)

Castaneda’s use of the term “warrior” refers to the shaman. Other more renown experts on shamanism like Michael Harner might use the term “healer,” or others the term “visionary” or “teacher.” In shamanic cultures, both men and women shaman place equal emphasis on their participation as “spiritual warriors” helping their communities and people. Research into the literature as well as personal interviews (Appendix B, p. 142), identify one of the fundamental flaws of contemporary culture as the belief that one person is above anyone or anything else. “Self-importance is man’s greatest enemy. What weakens him is feeling offended by the deeds and misdeeds of his fellow men. Self-importance requires that one spend most of one’s life offended by something or someone.” (Castaneda, 1998, p.230)

Being a shaman means that one does not waste one’s time being distracted by the illusions created by “the self.” This characteristic alone could affect the teacher’s attitude when having to confront the frustrations presented by the
educational system or the attitudes of the student participants. Being a Spiritual Warrior not only protects the teacher it gives him/her an image to present for others to perceive. Working for the intent of the spirit diminishes the importance of the ego and results in a more clear perception of reality. "We perceive. This is a hard fact. But what we perceive is not a fact of the same kind, because we learn what to perceive." (Castaneda, 1998, p. 235)

The implications of this project challenge the "self importance" of every teacher. The one thing the teacher needs to give up, according to Angeles Arrien (1993, p.110), is attachment to outcomes. She claims that "detachment" means "the capacity to care deeply from an objective place." It is from this objective place, the "separate reality," that the teacher actualizes his/her intent. This project does not imply in any way that teachers should take the path of Carlos Castaneda, Fred Wolf, Michael Harner or the numerous other scientists that went physically into the primal culture to experience their reality. But, the information and knowledge based on personal experience can greatly benefit our efforts to understand. It does suggest, however that teachers recognize that becoming a shaman and benefiting from this new
paradigm requires that we give up much of what we have learned through processes that were meant to create "personnel" and not persons. Teachers are just as much a part of the problem, just as affected by loss of spirit as the culture and educational system itself. For teachers to see themselves as if they are suffering from loss of spirit, hence "ill," and need to be healed, begins the process of becoming shaman. Our students may also be victims of "soul loss" and as shaman our job is to "heal" them.

... as shamans have long recognized, disease is inevitable if life loses meaning and one forgets the feeling of belonging and connection (disharmony). Similarly, a chronic sense of fear will cause a person to lose the love, joy and trust which are basic foundations of health and without which the force of life itself seems to begin withdrawing from the body. ... Soul Loss ... is regarded as the gravest diagnosis in the shamanic nomenclature, being seen as a major cause of illness and death. (Achterberg, 1998, p. 22)

Seen as the healer, how can a teacher be expected to do the work of the healer, unless he/she has experienced lessons learned through self-healing, self-transformation? Common themes in shamanic belief systems involve wounding, suffering, alienation, dying (to our old self) and resurrection into a new self. Perhaps our society/culture is experiencing this process now. For teachers to experience
this process, even through metaphorical participation in shamanic practices, teaches us how to participate in "healing." We can also "teach" students how to heal themselves, or better yet, teach them how to not suffer "soul loss" in the first place.

J. Achterberg (1998), in an article presenting the possible applications of shamanic healing practices for modern medicine, points out how some of our beliefs concerning health, based on our empirical observations, could benefit from understandings offered by shamanic points of view. Shamans believe that the source of all our health problems is rooted in the spirit world. How we see ourselves in this world and how we feel connected or disconnected from the spirit world determines our health conditions.

This project views our educational systems as an entity that likewise has not considered itself as part of the spirit connection. We have believed that this human activity of education can be primarily reliant on addressing symptoms and outcomes with solutions based on empirical data reported from non-spiritual points of view. We too might benefit from Achterberg's recommendations to address this human and spirit connection. Achterberg (1998) presents us with a shamanic
paradigm to measure the possible success of our efforts to affect improvement through “healing” ourselves and/or our system.

From my study of both the shamanic and Western healing paradigms I would concur with Twylah Nitsch, a Seneca medicine woman who suggests that in this journey there are four basic guidelines the healer must ask: (1) Am I happy in what I am doing? (2) What am I doing to add to the confusion? (3) What am I doing to bring about peace and contentment? (4) How will I be remembered when I am gone—in absence and in death? (p. 24)

Shamanic practices result in a shift of “assemblage point” or the learning of the processes that affect a shift in one’s self or others. (Castaneda, 1998) Shamanic practices constitute a self-healing, a self-transformation. As the shaman transforms or heals him/her-self, the reality around the shaman, or within their sphere of influence, is made better through the will of the spirit. How do we know that the spirit wants things to be better? Because the nature of the spirit is “being” and “better” implies the promotion and perpetuation of “being” (by becoming).

Not to fix the spirit is to seek death, and that is the same as to seek nothing, since death is going to overtake us regardless of anything. To seek the perfection of the warrior’s spirit is the only task worthy of our temporariness, and our manhood [womanhood]. (Castaneda, 1998, p. 95)
Modern-day researchers, students (now, "participant/observers") that report on their findings concerning shamanism, such as Castaneda, Harner, Arrien and Wolf, identify many concepts that relate to an understanding and appreciation of shamanism. The bottom line on any discussion of shamanism is "Do!" Actuate your intent through specific, "meaning-filled" patterns of behavior and/or thought. Each researcher of shamanism identifies concepts like purity of intent for the benefit of all, respecting and honoring the process and acceptance and awareness of the results of our actions.

The shaman is an archetype character and maintains a stabilizing constant through which perceptions can flow, be filtered, or re-directed. He/she participates in the world of the spirits, called "The Spirit Way" or "Nature's Way." Professor, author and lecturer, Angeles Arrien (1993), identifies a "four-fold way" of the shaman: the warrior, the teacher, the healer and the visionary. These archetypes are founded in the "roots of humanity" and each addresses certain responsibilities for the living world. (p. 7) Arrien presents an outline to follow when observing ourselves in a shamanic way: being in the present, paying attention to heart and
meaning, being truthful and non-judgmental and being open and
unattached to outcome. (p. 9) The researchers also
acknowledge without reservations, the existence of the spirit
as an interactive force for good.

Because art is related to spiritual “stuff,” in order to
implement art and creative processes in our educational
strategies, I suggest we can best understand the depth of
meaning of what is implied by this, if we see ourselves in
the role of shaman in society. Michael Harner, quoted in The
Circle of Life: Rituals from the Human Family Album, states:
“Westerners can easily become initiated into the fundamentals
of shamanic practice” he cautions that “the ancient way is so
powerful, and taps so deeply into the human mind, that one’s
usual cultural belief systems and assumptions about reality
are essentially irrelevant.” (Cohen, 1991, p. 168) Using art
to educate in the “spirit ways” gives us a safe “medium” to
work the “magic” of the shamanic healing: “returning the
spirit.” D. H. Lawrence, in describing the “religion” of the
Native American, placed before us this challenge to our
beliefs:

It was a vast old religion, greater than anything
we know; more darkly and nakedly religious. There
is no God, no conception of a god. All is god. But
it is not a pantheism we are accustom to, which expresses itself as ‘God is everywhere, God is in everything.’ In this Indian religion everything is alive, not supernaturally but naturally alive. (Highwater, 1982, p. 82)

Examining other cultural concepts might at least provide us with further information to reinforce our conviction in our own original beliefs. But, as we were reminded earlier, we must examine our own with the same scrutiny that we use to examine others. So when examining creative experiences like the arts, or the actuation of intent as in shamanic cultures, we are observing from an established viewpoint based on our own lived experiences. A search of the internet reveals that many people are exploring their own interests in shamanism. Dean Edwards (1996) reassures us we do not have to give up our original belief systems:

The presence of shamanism in a nation or a community does not mean that shamanism is central to the spiritual or religious life of the community or region. Shamanism often exists alongside and even in cooperation with the religious or healing practices of the community. [On-line]

Some contemporary Western beliefs are that the spirit is reserved only for our own designated “holy” men and women or members of particular faiths. Those who would believe this would also believe that our children can not benefit from the
spirit unless they adhere to doctrines of those faiths. This project proposes that teachers could believe and behave not only as if our students have rights and responsibilities relating to the spirit, but also as if they have a destiny to use their spiritual power and the knowledge we give them to accomplish positive improvements. Creative processes when actualized through the medium of spirit ways, will help to restore balance and harmony to the world.

The spirit manifests itself to a warrior at every turn. However, this is not the entire truth. The entire truth is that the spirit reveals itself to everyone with the same intensity and consistency, but only warriors are consistently attuned to such revelations. (Castaneda, 1998, p. 261)

When asking ourselves how learning from shamans can help solve educational problems, it seems important to discuss of the use of “ritual.” Using and teaching rituals can aid students in controlling their own minds and egos. Rituals are metaphorical activities that actuate intent. Rituals promote the creation and maintenance of new thought and action patterns that contribute to the design of a more beneficial reality. It works. Quantum physicist, Fred Wolf, became a shaman. In an interview with Wolf, Richard Leviton (1992) observes:
Wolf, unlike other physicists, is willing to extend the power of intent into daily experience. According to his shamanically influenced vision, intent is the hand that moves synchronicity, that weaves events into a tapestry of coherence. In shamanic physics, intent and synchronicity join hands. If intent is absent, you can’t see meaningful connections between events, and the world appears random, capricious, even chaotic. 'Events become meaningful to you only as a result of an intent, a vision as to what goal, pathway, or direction you’re intending to move in. When my intent is clear, pathways appear as if by magic, taking me from one place to the next. Certain connections get made; key phone calls come in.' (p. 51)

Shamanic cultures indicate the need for us to identify our intent and act in accordance with that intent. Leviton (1992) concludes: “Intent is one of the shaman’s carefully guarded secrets. ... intent is the machinery of the world.” (p. 51)

Rituals are one method of actuating intent that delineates a particular creative process. In fact it is the creative process in action. The creative actions of shamanic practices are similar to the creative actions used in making art. Learning creative processes can empower all learners. Experiencing any activity that actually results in a creative product that shares or communicates the experience to another, or even produces a like reaction in terms of the
other, can be deemed art, and in shamanic cultures, the spirit way.

Taking part in ritual, alone or with others, teaches people to be able to take part in ritual and to create ritual artifacts (art objects) that are imbued with intent. Participating in ritual activities teaches us the processes and the value of the creative activity. As we begin to observe the improvements in our perceived reality we acknowledge the power of the spirit and are reinforced by the power of the spirit to perpetuate being in harmony with the will of the spirit. As the spirit is in, or can be returned to, all of us, it recognizes itself through celebration, elation and states of ecstasy. Leviton (1992) asks Wolf, “Why do we have to remain here on Earth?” Wolf replies:

We chose to have this experience for only one reason: to remember who we really are—spiritual beings from mythos who have chosen to experience time. We have to remain here as the ultimate consequence of going unconscious toward ourselves as pure spirit. With what destination? To continue, either to wake up or fall further asleep. (p. 51)

In shamanism, the state of heightened awareness, or ecstasy, is the state of mind while cognizing on the observations of the spirit way; “seeing” from the point of view of the awareness of the shaman, “in the spirit way.”
Leviton (1992) describes the use of heightened awareness in shamanic practices:

Overall, for the shaman the means is heightened awareness, the goal is individual healing, and there's no such thing as an objective observer. Wolf eventually realized that consciousness itself is the bridge between the time-space of physics and the mythos of shamanism. Only in the living consciousness of an integrated man or woman can the vital overlap between the worlds be found. All parallel universes converge in human consciousness. (p. 51)

This passage leads us to believe that doing shamanic practices causes us to become more conscious of the world around us and helps us relate that world to the students we encounter. When asked what good this all does for us, Fred Wolf answers with a new paradigm for us to contemplate.

... What do we really want out of life anyway? We don’t want to understand life. Joseph Campbell once said, ‘we want to experience it as richly as we possibly can.’ I don't want to pass from this domain with out knowing I’ve lived it soulfully, as fully and with as much feeling and caring as I can. That’s more important than anything else I could do. That’s the message from the shamans I think we all need to pay attention to. (Leviton, 1992, p. 51)

We want to teach our learning populations this lesson. Both ritual and participating in the creation of states of heightened awareness can result in a healing, a returning of the spirit to all and to its place in our cultural patterns.
Our cultural patterns indicate to us now that we are in desperate need of healing, or the world as we know it will die. It is not just frustrated educators that look for answers. Our students really are looking for answers too. They too need to actualize their intent. They really do want the same things all people want. They too will have to learn that fulfilling material desires without regard to others, or the spirit, will lead to self destruction; or, at least a real unhappy life for all in his/her sphere of influence.

We take the initiative to spark a process, knowing that its success is not in our hands but in the hands of the kind of forces we invoke into our lives. So the force field we create within a ritual is something coming from the spirit, not something coming from us. We are only instruments in this kind of interaction between dimensions, between realms. There is ritual each time a spirit is called to intervene in human affairs. (Phoenix & Arabeth, [On-line] 1998)

Leviton (1992) quotes Fred: "'It's just a movie, Fred,' he repeatedly reminds himself. 'The viewer makes sense of the film because life is how we see it.' And how we see the world is how we intend to see it, because intent is the key." (p. 51) Throughout the process of this research, I have found that when you look for the spirit it finds you. (see Appendices pp. 122-190) Every page you turn has more evidence
of our return to spirit ways. The spirit is where you will find it, even if you wish only to find it in the youth we serve. If the spirit is in them, and that we can’t deny, we must act in accord. I have found in my experience, training as a shaman, that the message of shamanism for education includes: do as the spirit by honoring the life we share with each other, our earth and cosmos. Heal ourselves and we can heal our world. Believe in truth and beauty and we can create our times just as we create our art. Practice creativity and co-create the world community of life in peace and harmony.

6. How can the Spirit be returned to education through art, the teaching of art and through using the arts to teach?

The focus of this project is on the arts and how we can use the arts to return the spirit to education. To explore this possibility as a solution to current educational problems, recognizing that former efforts have not provided complete solutions, we have examined information made available by people from cultures that use shamanic practices to access the spirit. However, now we must examine our beliefs in the value of arts in education to accomplish this task of returning the spirit. Our fundamental belief systems
are embedded in not only our outward behavior patterns, but also in how we view ourselves in our reality. Joanna Macy (1992) in her essay, The Greening of the Self, challenges certain basic beliefs in our culture that are not in the "other" cultures that embrace spirit beliefs:

The crisis that threatens our planet, whether seen from its military, ecological, or social aspect, derives from a dysfunctional and pathological notion of the self. It derives from a mistake about our place in the order of things. It is a delusion that the self is so separate and fragile that we must delineate and defend its boundaries, that it is so small and so needy that we must endlessly acquire and endlessly consume, and that it is so aloof that as individuals, corporations, nation-states, or species, we can be immune to what we do to other beings. (in Welwood, p. 267)

If we look critically at how we have tended to self-generate solutions from old paradigms for addressing problems of education, we might begin by looking at the teachers and those who make educational decisions. Information and knowledge teachers pass on to their students is fashioned by their own thoughts and words. They cannot help but pass on their own interpretations that were formed in and through the processes that provided them with the subject matter they once "learned" and are now teaching.
Questions about successful learning processes seem to occupy most of contemporary educational researchers. This section presents evidence that researchers that examine other cultural points of view as well as our own, believe that if teachers choose to teach learning processes rather than information, they would equip the students with the ability to use processes for learning and creating. If those teaching efforts were orchestrated to insure the learner’s ability to succeed in realizing creative potential, the learning activity would in fact help students recognize successful creative processes that they can use for all learning. The findings of this project support the notion that teaching paradigms need to be examined from more than just our own cultural point of view.

One educator who is very closely related to Native American cultural concepts and their point of view is Professor Gregory Cajete (1994). He proposes the use of a totally new view of education to address the needs of our Native American population and their desire to include the spirit in their education. Cajete’s descriptions and explanations offer guidance for all educational reform efforts:
American education must rededicate its efforts to assist Americans in their understanding and appreciation of spirituality as it relates to the Earth and the place in which they live. It must engender a commitment to service rather than competition, promote respect for individual, cultural and biological diversity, and engage students in learning processes that facilitate the development of their human potential. (p. 27)

As Cajete describes appropriate approaches to the facilitation of learning processes more in line with the spirit way of life, we begin to see that this cultural approach does not separate the spirit from life. Furthermore Cajete uses our own advocacy of a desire to develop higher level thinking skills in our students by identifying for us that, “Spirit denotes qualities of Being that we associate with the highest level of thinking, acting, and being human.” (p. 51)

By teaching creative processes through art and by modeling right action as a result of connecting to spirit ways through shamanic practices, we can better prepare our students for their responsibilities in a co-created world. Learning through creative processes empowers each participant to create their own learning/self-transformational healing. Creativity and learned appreciation of the process and its outcome, gives all equal opportunities to gain in levels of

76
awareness, understanding and an ability to reflect that understanding as shared responsibility for our co-created world.

If we can shift our attention from cynicism to possibility, we can access the creative potential in all of us to imagine a better world and to participate in bringing it into being. (Crowell, Caine & Caine, 1998, p. 17)

We can learn/teach through our participation in the “doing” of art, through creativity and its process. It is when we interact with the process or the object created that we learn about the process. But it is the act of doing and creating that teaches us how to co-create with others, therefore, how to make a shared world, a better place. Young people can learn these processes and teach us how to celebrate this life. We can teach each other. Ciel Bergman is quoted in Susan Gablik’s book The Reinchantment of Art (1993), as prescribing this new paradigm of thought:

Art may not change anything, but the ideas we have about ourselves we project into the world. ... Negative images have a way of coming alive just as positive images have. If we project images of beauty, hope, serenity, imagination and harmony, this will have a positive effect. Imagine what artists could do if they became committed to the long-term good of the planet. The possibilities are beyond imagination. If all artists would ever pull together for the survival of humankind, it would be a power such as the world has never known. (p.155)
As shamanic practitioners, teachers “give away” to their students their world. When their students have accepted this process as part-and-parcel of our shared purpose in life, they reciprocate by giving to us, our world. Both teacher and student must co-create in the spirit of reciprocity in order to create harmony in any learning situation. In the classroom teachers not only teach the use of art, they model its use. Shamanic practices give you experiences in the creative process. Although the intent of the teacher is not to teach shamanism or any belief system to the student, teachers can learn from the “spirit ways” and practice them in the classroom to benefit the intent to create a better world.

If ‘world making’ is the principal function of mind, then social reality does not just ‘happen’ in the world but is constructed from the way our private beliefs and intentions merge with those of others. A world view in this sense is not something found ‘out there,’ but is something individuals construct and create. (Gablik, 1993, p. 22)

How do we help our students “construct and create” a life for themselves in a harmonious way? A practical point of view was expressed, a century ago, by educators who had not yet experienced the removal of the spirit from education. Fitch (1882) recognized the power of the teacher over the
lives and learning of his or her students. He suggests we become knowledgeable about this power and how to use it. Fitch’s description could certainly be applied to the use of the arts and creative processes in education.

Every piece of knowledge honestly acquired turns out to have unexpected relations with much other knowledge. Every kind of mental power, once evoked and applied to a worthy purpose, becomes available for other purposes, and is capable of being transformed into power of another kind. Only take care that what you evoke is really power, ... that the subject you teach is so taught as to stimulate, to broaden, to reach out into regions beyond itself; ... (p. 424)

As teachers we can use the arts to help students create their own self-image. We do not impose our concepts on them, we model processes for self-empowerment. Further, we do not forget that we are also at a point in our own personal evolution; ever changing, growing and transforming. Do we examine the roles we play in our students’ (or others’) lives? Do we forget to respect the role they play in our lives?

In an interview with Richard Stewart, an Owen’s Valley Paiute, Artist and Medicine Man, he told me, “It is not the ‘teacher as shaman,’ it is the ‘shaman as teacher.’ ... The main characteristic of the shaman as teacher is that he would
be in the present.” (Appendix B, p. 142) Watching and changing ourselves in relation to changes in our environment (including the environment within our classrooms) and responding to these opportunities to facilitate learning demonstrates the practice of the shaman as teacher.

Our children are in motion. We happily note their changes and herald them as growth. In ourselves we seem less willing to notice, but we too are in motion, evolving and changing through our lives. (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 89)

Teachers willing to promote change that would lead to improvements in education will first need to examine change in themselves. Educators who have not been exposed to the use and benefits of arts in education might examine how including the arts in their efforts to teach could transform the environment they create for their students. Appropriate for all persons as well as teachers is to be reminded “not to push the river,” to respect students in their growth processes and always try to provide them with nurturing through educational processes and a fertile environment in which to grow and reflect. Gregory Cajete (1994) suggests we replace modernist modes of teaching with an “environment” that promotes a more universal purpose in life, for the teacher and the students.

80
... American education must move from a focus on specialization to holistic knowledge; from a focus on structures to understanding processes, from objective science, to systemic science, and from building to networking. (p. 27)

Today's students seem to have a way of experiencing school as "an interference" in their lives; not seeing it as an experience "of their lives." Many contemporary secondary students have already been programmed to expect certain behavior patterns from their teachers. They respond to the images and models they are shown. Of course, teachers have to model the use of processes that create new meanings for the classroom participants, as well as for themselves. The teacher's job is also to provide appropriate information and experiences for students to make the choices that will determine their paths through life. It would, therefore, be educationally sound that they present the "other" culture's points of view as a responsibility of utilizing all instructional techniques. Since the arts are an integral part of "other" cultural approaches to life and education, this suggests that teachers could use the arts to teach and in so doing, perhaps incorporate processes that return us to a more spirit-connected way.
Art allows us to symbolize knowledge, understanding, and feeling through image, thus making it possible to transcend a finite time and culture. Art becomes a primary source of teaching since it integrates and documents an internal process of learning. (Cajete 1994, p.40)

The shaman as teacher can be seen as the teacher who teaches the arts and uses the arts to teach. As the prime facilitators of "spirit connection" in Indigenous Cultures, we can learn from shamanic processes to return the spirit to education. Although the arts in Western cultures connote just one aspect of our culture, in Indigenous Cultures, it is embedded and is treated as a means to connect to the spirit.

The shaman was the first dreamkeeper, the first artist, the first poet, the first hunter, the first doctor, the first dancer, singer, and teacher. While the shaman personified the archetypal visionary and artist, these are potentials that abide in each and every one of us, every man, every woman and every child. Tribal people understood and honored this potential, this calling as an integral part of learning, being, and becoming complete. (Cajete 1994, p. 141)

Teachers are the givers of the tools to help the students slowly reveal themselves and create their assigned meanings to things in life. Most importantly, teachers need to show their students a world that accepts them as they are, as part of our co-creation; one that is willing to work with
them and celebrate with them the liberation that learning brings.

If we can build a climate of trust and community in which both inner and outer are recognized as authentic and meaningful, then perhaps our students will focus more on connectedness and relationship, rather than division and power over others. (Crowell, Caine & Caine, 1998, p. 73)

Have we been taught to believe that we are alone and separate in our being and destined to battle the world "at all odds?" "Art puts us in touch with the other. Without art we are alone." (Highwater 1982 p.13) We must now empower our students by letting them know that they, all, are integral components in the whole of creation. First, they must know that we care about them, and all in our world. We need to consider a curriculum that allows all our participants to discover and practice their own involvement in the creation of a world of fulfillment and happiness. We can put them in touch with the spirit by teaching through creative processes. Everyone has an empowered identity to discover or create. Returning the spirit to education may be our only hope.

An artistic approach to the world teaches us about the essence of wonder. There seems to be a growing awareness that there is much more to the arts than we have previously realized. The arts go beyond
mere entertainment; they virtually allow us to experience the world differently. ... Using the arts to respond to our need for creative expression builds a bridge from our inner self to the external world. In responding to that world, we are connected to it. We find part of our own humanity in the process. We become part of the wonder and awe that captures our imagination and brings creativity to life. (Crowell, Caine & Caine, 1998, p. 83)

The purpose of presenting these ideas through this project is to argue in favor of the use of the arts to return the spirit to education. Art connects us to the spirit. Teachers can use art in the classroom to return the spirit to education. The practice that shamans contend is the key to the creation of this world, and all that is in it, the mandate of the shamanic belief systems, is for all to assume responsibility for creating the world. Art is an universal language and widely recognized as a process for learning creative activity. For a person, teacher or student, to participate in creative activities, is the same as participating in activities like the spirit ways of the shamanic cultures. To address the real problems we face today, like violence and disrespect for nature, the spirit can be useful if allowed to enter our lives through the exercising of our own creativity.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The methodology for this study includes two components that represent different views of the world. The first component represents a traditional approach to a project; that is a review of the relevant literature that informed my theoretical framework for the project and conclusions. The second component is based on my interpretation of an approach consistent with a shamanic view of the world. In this chapter I will briefly outline the traditional methodology, and then present observations concerning methodology I have made having participated in shamanic practices and its relationship to my teaching. The latter part has presented a particular challenge for me as I am sure it will for the reader.

The key to understanding the concepts that connect art to the spirit and for the diagnosis that our education lacks spirit has been this study of the shamanic cultural belief systems in comparison with contemporary American public educational belief systems. The review of literature supplied me with both traditional statements and conclusions based on quantitative research and those based on qualitative
research. As a product and practitioner of the American public educational system, and a student in a program of Integrative Studies, my efforts were to present both approaches and invite the reader to enter into the debate.

Methodology:

The Integrative Studies coursework, education, art and anthropology provided the structure for this research. A plethora of contemporary educators, writers and philosophers provided abundant observations and opinions concerning the direction of the reform movement in education. My art courses were mostly independent study and involved studies and practices in collage and assemblage, modeling methods and techniques observed in shamanic cultures. My anthropology course aided me in my research of shamanic cultures and provided me with the opportunity to do an ethnographic study with a Native American informant. Additionally, I consider my work and involvement with the California Arts Project, and numerous Staff Development experiences as opportunities to enhance my research for this project.

For this project a review of literature was completed to answer the following questions: Is there spirit and is it relevant for education? Is spirit lacking in education today?
Would returning the spirit be beneficial to improving educational outcomes? Is the hypothesis that art relates to the spirit and can be used to return it to education valid? In order to answer these questions, research was done in areas of spirit, education, art education and art and spiritual practices of shamanic cultures.

The question of "is there spirit?" needed to be answered to validate the hypothesis that it is missing from contemporary American education and that spirit is of a nature that returning it to education would be beneficial. I believe that the review of literature shows that intellectuals, philosophers and many respected educators, as well as large populations and cultures around the world believe and depend on the existence of the spirit and its benevolent nature. Discussions of the value of returning spirit to our culture through education have been presented. We have also been shown that it is this lack of spirit that has contributed to the general decline in the quality of living in our country, especially in the lives of the younger generations.

Although the debate is still on-going, concerning the value of returning the spirit to education, there is ample
evidence that teaching art and using the arts to teach is most effective in improving the learning environment and its meaning-making practices. Through the presented insights and observations of Native American spokespersons and Western scientific "participant/observers" evidence has been presented that art and shamanic practices are, if not synonymous, at least parallel in their intent to enhance spirit and cultural connections. Finally, before embarking on my own research as participant/observer, I researched many accounts of the results and effects of shamanic practices on its participants. The final outcome of this project has been to implement changes in my teaching based on my "self-healing" through shamanic practices and to observe how these changes affect an improvement in the learning environment.

The more I researched concepts expounding on the processes of the participant-observer as a valid and reliable form of research, the more I was convinced that the true way to test my hypothesis was for me to begin to involve myself in shamanic practices.

Indigenous cultural paradigms suggest that shamans are not self-made, but rather "called" to the position by spirit intervention. I learned that I had to ask myself if my
interest in shamanism was honest, within my own personal arena of possibilities, and was my intent in line with the will of the spirit. Was my interest neither ego gratification, nor mere curiosity? The answer for these questions came to me through my personal interest and commitment to art. My dedication to Art allowed me to enter into the practice of shamanism to determine if there were similarities between the action of shamans creating objects, songs, dances and rituals, and the actions of artists. There had to be the assumption that if there was a connection between the spirit and art, and that shamanic practices would inform me of those connections, my participation in art would also connect me to the spirit. However, shamanic practices do involve more reliance on the actions of the spirit and less on the “self” of our own contemporary “art making” paradigms.

One of the first practices of shamanic intent is to very carefully examine one’s personal history through memory. I examined my memories and carefully sorted out particular evidence that supported my claims that my interests in shamanism were genuine. Actually, using the process, I discovered that my interests have deep roots in my past from the time I first heard about concepts and practices of Native
Cultures. Likewise, my interest in art had been long established, not to mention art as my chosen field and personal passion. Finally, the actual selection of the topic of this project was the challenge of developing a topic from "pure" integrative origins. The topic for this project was determined by "chance" selection of four unrelated objects of cultural significance that combined to determine the focus and approach. (Appendix A, p. 123)

I then researched practices said to be shamanic practices such as patterns of diet and behavioral and perceptual adaptations. I adjusted my diet and daily exercise habits. I began to visit "medicine" sites in the desert and mountains and practiced ritual art in and out of the studio. I took a weekend class in Basic Shamanic Journeying from Michael Harner and practiced the techniques for the duration of my study. I did an ethnographic study with a spokesperson for the Owens Valley Paiute. (Appendix B, p. 142) My questions referred mostly to the processes, purpose and meaning of Indians making fetishes, songs and ritual art. I ritualized my personal life and began to incorporate shamanic practices in my work. I was teaching ceramics at the time and found it extremely conducive to ritual and spirit talk. The
students just thought they were learning about ceramics and art. And they were, only with the spirit included as part of the curriculum by intent.

The test for both myself and for my research was to see if I could succeed in causing a “transformational self-healing” and have it realized in an improvement in relevant conditions. Would shamanic practices make “things” noticeably better? Remembering that the shaman is not self-appointed but is chosen by spirit selection, I soon found myself in a situation that could qualify as “spirit intervention.”

Through a tragic but not abnormal human experience that was accepted by me as an indicator of a more profound intervention, I experienced a significant cognition on the nature of reality. It was hard to say whether the information was arriving through the experience, or whether the information was creating the experience, even though most of the catalyst for the shamanic experience came from outside my realm of influence. Things happened: a sequence of events in my life occurred that caused me to believe that they were the results of shamanic practices. (See Appendix C, p. 145)

Immediately following the event that marked a realization of the results of involving myself in shamanic
practices, I attended an event that taught me about the Q’ero Indian practice of “Despacho.” (Appendix D, p. 151) The two shamans told those in attendance that we should continue to make offerings and “prayer” petitions to local Natural Spirits inviting them to help us in our efforts to create a better world. After demonstrating the “Despacho” ritual, they answered questions. One answer they gave regarding teaching, was that it was important for us all to practice “reciprocity.” “We must empty ourselves before we can receive any gifts or blessings.” We must “give away” before we will ever receive. I applied this lesson in my approach to teaching. All my efforts, now are to constantly “give” to my students. Even when they think they don’t want me to, I do. Essentially, every effort to teach is a gift.

I continue to practice despacho rituals and have established spirit connections to many of the main nature spirit helpers in my particular location. When I travel, I make efforts to make offerings to those nature spirits in the locations that I visit. My classroom is a location in which I practice periodic cleansing rituals, however, so far, I petition help outside of the classroom setting because I find healing and strengthening experiences mostly out-of-doors.
The classroom setting is still where I work. What I bring into the classroom is my attitude and point of view, which has been influenced by shamanic practices.

During the school year of 1996-97, I continued my practices outside of the classroom and followed practices of "being in the moment" in classroom interaction and made observations that were recorded in my journals. The coincidental and synchronistic events were overwhelming, including numerous monumental personal experiences. Changes in my diet and personal habits produced outward, noticeable changes, which carried into all aspects of my life and profession. I made every effort to fashion my behavior using the "models" of the "Spiritual Warrior" and "Teacher" as described in the works of Michael Harner (1990), Carlos Castaneda (1998) and Angeles Arrien (1993).

I believed that the way to process according to shamanic practices was to proceed to an actuation event where I could "celebrate" through creative expression, the insights I had experienced. Outside of the Shamanic context, this practice had been first introduced to me through the California Arts Project's institutes as a "personal portfolio project" using our art discipline to produce personal insights reflected in
our work. Art would be my tool to process this learning/healing.

One shamanic practice that seemed appropriate to conclude a year of “medicine work” was the Vision Quest in which I partook to inform and focus my attention on my “pathway” and my destination. (Appendix E, p. 155) This practice not only focused my awareness on accomplishments and possibilities, but it provided me with the inspiration for The Juniper Medicine Project (Appendix F, p. 185). The Juniper Medicine Project was meant to be the material manifestation of the work I have completed for this project. Juniper Medicine was a metaphorical healing ritual for the healing of the earth. In shamanic traditions, as we heal ourselves, we heal the world around us.

One practice not mentioned in my conclusions as a possible practice teachers could use was the making of “power” objects or “medicine” objects. In an effort to find out if this activity actually produces beneficial effects, I was convinced, in fact, “making medicine objects” actually did work. However, my experience left me with the feeling that this particular shamanic practice would not be the type of practice that would be commonly used in classroom teaching
situations. Making medicine is reserved for the most critical and life threatening situations. Many other aspects of shamanism that I researched also gave me the impression that, although teaching was a worthy arena for these practices, there were far more critical problems that require these more drastic approaches.

I chose instead, to inform my students, on occasion, by demonstrating rituals and suggesting that our learning activities could be seen as rituals. They were asked to do certain projects applying metaphorical themes and creating assemblages to identify their own meaning to the project. I established criteria on an individual basis and applied portfolio and self-evaluation processes. What I found to be the most important lesson I learned from shamanic practices is to recognize the action and interaction of the spirit in everyone and everything.

My research also included studies of educational efforts to resolve questions about the spirit. I was encouraged by the efforts of the Integrative Studies Program at California State University, San Bernardino. Two professors in the program, Sam Crowell and Joseph Gray, gave me numerous opportunities to use rituals, art activities and techniques
derived from the study of shamanic practices in their course programs. When trying to distinguish shamanic practices from very common and acceptable art practices, the distinctions become virtually imperceptible. My research for this project has lead me to a firm conviction that teaching art and using art to teach can connect both the teacher and the participant to the spirit.
CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSIONS

The primary source of data for this project has been my experience exploring the relevance of shamanism in my life as it pertains to the improvement of the educational experience. These experiences were outlined in the methodology chapter and are identified more specifically in the Appendices. Therefore, in this section, I will briefly summarize the conclusions of the review of the literature and will discuss in greater detail what my experiences with shamanism suggest for teaching.

It is my belief that the review of literature adequately contends that:
1. There exists spirit available to all to draw on to affect a change for improvement in education and life in general.
2. Our Western Culture has contributed to a general decline in the quality of our connection to the spirit.
3. Art and art activities can be used by participants to make themselves available to spirit ways to actuate intent and facilitate more beneficial outcomes.
4. Art and the use of the arts to instruct and provide a venue for participant-observers can be used in education to teach
creative processes and spirit "power" activities that will inform in the ways of the spirit.

5. Cultures that recognize and support persons in the role of the shaman and shamanic belief systems can provide us with information and models that could benefit us in our efforts to promote improvement in education and everyday culture.

6. Teachers can actively participate in the return of the spirit to education through the arts, by learning about, observing and participating in shamanic practices.

Conclusions from my experiences studying shamanism are derived from research for this project that began with myself as an art teacher interested in integrating art with other subjects to improve the overall outcome of our education. Doing art teaches us about our own creative abilities. As an art teacher who participated in shamanic practices, I began to recognize the similarities of shamanic practices to creative art activities. I concluded that it was learning the "creative process" that teaches us how to control and use positively our creative powers. I then learned that by utilizing his or her creative powers connecting with the spirit, a shaman "makes medicine" to heal someone or some situation. Indigenous Cultures connect "medicine making" to
practicing spirit ways. If doing art teaches us about our creative powers and according to shamanic cultures, making “medicine” connects us to the spirit ways, one way to learn about spirit would be to practice creativity by doing art activities. Wanting to test this hypothesis and learn more about spirit ways, I began my research of shamanic cultural belief systems.

As an Art teacher learning from shamanic cultures, I made observations that: students experience for themselves what it is like to focus on the process of accomplishing a goal while doing art; the actual art product is not an end in itself, only a tool for more learning; and it is easy for students to see what effect their behavior has had on the outcome of the project. To honor the spirit by teaching art and using art to teach, a teacher would try to arrange for opportunities for many of these experiences and would model the practices used in “making things happen.” One example is that I included my students in all aspects of my staff development research. I let them know that I was in the process of learning how to be a better teacher, and that they were helping me.
My experience, and lessons from shamanic cultures, suggests that the essential requirement for addressing the lack of spirit is that the participants, in this case, the educational community, must first recognize the lack of spirit in the educational process and admit the need to return it. These lessons suggest that changes need to take place in the attitude and/or perspective of educators. One way to initiate this type of change in personal perspective and attitude is by having teachers engage in shamanic practices that would expose them to belief systems that connect with spirit.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will describe various types of changes that might affect an improvement from the teacher's point of view based on my studies of shamanic cultures. First, I will suggest the types of changes that a teacher could implement in their efforts to produce beneficial outcomes. These suggestions include perspectives that the teacher can practice and model for the students, such as: focusing on nature's ways; recognizing and pointing out that every action is the action of the spirit; practicing the discipline they are teaching; allowing students to be part of the decision making process (as all creative
processes contribute to learning); and observing how their point of view affects the outcome of any actuation.

Second, throughout my conclusions, I will describe perspectives that teachers can share with their students including: promoting the belief that objects have power and need to be respected; advising students that not everything is meant for public display or scrutiny and that personal “medicine” is sacred; respecting and trusting students in their processes; and pointing out that the spirit is in everything and our personal religious beliefs, or non-beliefs, support this concept.

Third, I will outline shamanic practices that teachers can use in the classroom, including: teaching and modeling the actuation of intent through ritual, verbal/aural participation and making things; pointing out to our students that our world around us provides us with opportunities to actuate intent and provides us with spirit helpers (metaphorical or actual); advising our students that our offerings can be private and within our own personal context; modeling the use of “mesas,” and metaphorical meaning-making practices; advising that participants in spirit ways have,
prepare and maintain, special places of honor and reverence; and modeling respect for the "Great Mystery."

Fourth, I will identify a common art practice that can be employed by all teachers as an integrative tool that closely resembles practices of "medicine making" and can be shared across the curriculum. I will describe the use of the "collage" or "assemblage" as a learning/assessment process that integrates the skills, knowledge and appreciation of art and uses the vocabulary of art to create a product that represents a personal understanding of the integrated subject. Like poetry, song and ritual movement the classroom and all the activities at the time of the learning activity become the "mesa." The events of the day become the ritual drama or dance of the spirit, and all of our actions, reactions and movements become indicators of "being in the present" and of the presence of the spirit in us and around us. If the teacher has learned "spirit ways" through the practice of shamanism he/she might know if the spirit is present.

The primary limitation of any suggestions I make in this chapter is the subjective nature of my experiences. Any subjective research deserves particular scrutiny. References
to the spirit are primarily cultural and individual, and
certainly must be seen in that context. However, because the
conclusions of this paper are based on my experiences
exploring shamanic practices and those that I have
researched, it is from the point of view of the shamanic
practitioner that these suggestions must be seen. The project
of becoming the shaman, either actually or metaphorically, is
to affect a healing change in life and in the life of the
participant by creating a new meaning. One must first
recognize the need to be "healed," that he or she is "ill,"
or is "not quite right." According to shamanic cultures, once
we choose to address the prospect of our own healing, whether
we choose to participate in shamanic practices or not, we
begin to acknowledge that it will be with "spirit" help that
we may accomplish this healing. It is through shamanic
practices that we begin to participate in the subjective
experience of the "spirit."

Through my experience and practice it comes to me to
suggest that we heal best by observing lessons that have been
passed down through generations from "the earth" and that we
are to test the knowledge created by humans against the
messages we receive while practicing "nature's ways." These
messages have been preserved in many Indigenous cultural practices and we too can access them. The material presented in this project suggests that the spirits of various aspects of nature decide, according to our intent, what is best for us and for the world around us. Seeing things from this point of view would teach us more about life and ourselves by having us become more active observers of ourselves and the results of our actions. It is possible to observe the outcomes of a practice of spirit ways.

In the classroom, this knowledge of the interaction of our intent and the results we create through our actuation, can result in a different approach to teaching. The teacher can give up the burdensome responsibility of “making” everything “happen” and can concentrate on modeling how people behave and respond to the world and others around them when connected to the spirit through “natures ways.” One example is the “giving away” of knowledge as a gift to all that ask or are in need. Teachers demonstrate that they once received this knowledge as a gift from a teacher, and now they must give this away to as many as possible, planting the seeds that we hope will return the love we must have for learning. The message is that the process of giving away all
that we have and emptying ourselves, enables us to receive more blessings from the spirits. "Natural" cultures point out how nature always gives abundantly and always lets go of life in the process. Nature does not hold on to and hoard the gifts of nature for selfish gain, nature lets them go to do more good.

Further lessons in nature's ways are learned by studying/participating in practices that shamans use to create objects through actions of intent. Nature provides us with the materials; we can fashion those materials into objects of purpose, beauty and metaphorical meaning. These practices are similar to what people do when they create works of art. Learning from the practices used to actuate intent, one can discern the "right action" that would result in "healing" our world. Shamans believe that participating in appropriate activities with the intent of promoting beneficial outcomes, will actuate the will of the spirit.

By using the arts to promote a better understanding of our creative processes, and having observed the results of shamanic practices, I have recognized and tried to demonstrate the similarities of the processes and results of shamanic and creative practices. I have tried to suggest that
the arts use the same vocabulary and processes that are used by shamans to promote beneficial outcomes. So far the practices that I have tried to identify have been mostly related to perception, attitude and awareness. In my opinion, these suggestions alone could begin the process of self-learning and self-healing for any teacher. However, there are many simple ways teachers, or anyone, can begin to do shamanic practices that might benefit them and their teaching/learning situations.

For example, one method is to begin by choosing natural settings and using natural materials and events as much as possible for students to experience creative processes. Teachers can make a lesson of how to process creativity within the particular environment in which they must conduct the learning activities by demonstrating a serious and concerned appreciation for the materials that nature has provided. Once, while teaching a group of young students art lessons in an out-of-door setting, in the mountain community of Idyllwild, a rattlesnake slithered by the learning pad and was seen by all the students. Of course this provided an ample opportunity for the students to process all sorts of interest, wonder and fear. As the teacher, my lesson plan was
immediately shifted to the moment at hand. We had already talked about the origins of ideas for art, and this provided a perfect opportunity to allow for spirit intervention into the lesson. The products for several days following the sighting were, of course, engrossed with snake images and "meanings."

From a shamanic point of view, at the time teachers encounter their students, they need to accept that the spirit has provided them with everything necessary to do the work, or will, of the spirit through education. From this point of view, the snake that "appeared" during the outdoor art lesson was "material" for the lesson provided by the spirit. We can know this by the outcome of the event. The occurrence can be turned into an art lesson from which design ideas come and how they are meaningful to the creator; or, the teacher can turn the event into a lesson of carelessness, needing to have more control over nature, fear, danger or repulsion. Pointing out to students their "part" in the participation in the process of learning within a particular environment begins to create the actuation of intent. We let our students know that they can make things turn out the way they intend them.
Another time, in a warm, spring ceramic classroom, a wayward "mud-dauber" wasp was found trapped inside the room. As one student tried to kill the wasp, I merely walked over to the window and let it out. Our dialogue began immediately about wasps, clay and treatment of nature’s wonders. Although I knew the wasp had probably just accidentally entered the room, I used this as a lesson of how the wasp uses clay to make a nest. From that time on, observations were made comparing "mud-dauber" nest building with making clay pots by potters. Students even decided to take on the "mud-dauber" wasp as a logo for their class.

From the shamanic point of view, teachers teach by modeling behavior with the intent of respecting the will of the spirit; this includes respecting all the student participants as well as the many possible spirit interventions in the form of outside influences that are generated in the learning environment. By using art activities and processes we can elevate any and all materials to levels of meaningful appreciation. The materials, within their context, the students, with all their abilities and problems and the occurrences of each actuation event must be
acknowledged as part of the will of the spirit and incorporated into each learning experience in the classroom.

Another application for teaching from a shamanic point of view is that teachers can treat their every action and interaction as significant and meaningful. When we see ourselves as performers of ritual, our movements as dance, our words as the breath of the spirit, we begin to create a life of art and an appreciation of life. Making our daily teaching activities rituals and performances, creates more awareness among our students. When describing the definition of "line" as an element of art, the teacher can draw a large "swooping" infinity symbol in the air. He/she can ask the students how the hand is demonstrating a line as the recording of "a point moving through space" which becomes a discussion of how line records movement and direction. The teacher then points out that he/she could be a musical conductor making music that is also linear in nature. The teacher as a performer gives students a view of how they can perform to help understand and explain to others what they have learned.

If teachers use themselves as models for learning processes then ask students to identify the "processes" they
have used to accomplish learning, students learn how these processes are used to learn more. Teachers can learn and teach processes used in their discipline by participating in the disciplines themselves. In a modernist view, teachers do math, study grammar, or practice painting techniques to be able to teach better. A new way has teachers calculating mathematical formulas, writing essays and poems and painting pictures to learn first-hand the intrinsic results of doing the discipline.

Part of the California Arts Project's process for helping art teachers to improve their teaching is to require that each participant become deeply, personally and professionally involved in the processes of their particular discipline. This type of involvement in the discipline, not only helps teachers teach better, but also helps teachers begin to understand why and how people benefit from knowing or using the discipline. A common writing prompt in evaluating arts activities (or any discipline) is to ask the student to describe the process used in the making of the product.

Another way teachers can use knowledge from shamans is to use what can be referred to as a "mesa of intent." Shamans
use a "mesa of intent" to actuate the ordering of their understanding of intent. The use of a mesa is one process that can be an actuation ritual to create beneficial results. For people, teachers and students, to "actuate" their intent for better things to happen, is participation in the discipline of learning how to make things happen, to create. On the "mesa" one places objects, each of which is imbued with meaning. By putting them in specific locations on the mesa and in particular relations to other designated objects (or in designated areas), then by re-arranging the objects, an actuation of intent has been ritualized.

There is nothing unusual or mysterious about this activity. We do this automatically. Our desk at work or at home, bulletin boards, work areas and student book bags, are examples of common mesas. Everyone has objects to which they assign personal significance, even if they are not in the material realm but in the form of a thought or belief. For people to pretend or suppose that how we order and care for our special objects is not important, is a dangerous denial of the spirit nature of our actions. We especially order our thoughts and beliefs.
If people begin to place and "order" the placement of their special objects (thoughts or beliefs) on (or in) the mesa in a meaningful pattern and adjust the pattern to be a metaphor for change or interaction, or to create a beneficial outcome, our intent becomes actuated. Even our thought processes become creative acts. I have collected specific natural objects of meaning from each of my California Arts Project's Summer Institutes. Each time I am involved in presenting my own staff development projects, I place these objects strategically on my mesa with the intent to be true and effective in presenting beneficial learning experiences for the participants.

Shamans use "power" objects or medicine objects in "bundles" which are small personal "mesas." Often a shaman or person using shamanic practices may wear fetishes or medicine bundles as metaphors for empowerment. The significance of these or their meaning is rarely shared with others and the discussion of their use is strictly a personal matter. However, to celebrate and give thanks for beneficial outcomes based on the use of mesas or fetishes should be seen as a "sacred" or shamanic obligation. One may give a special gift to someone who needs "a healing."
One suggested practice is to begin all work with a "please" and end with a "thank you" for our spirit helpers. Having been an art and crafts teacher, I have discovered that audio-visual material presenting Native American artistic practices inevitably refer to their initial offerings to the spirits before beginning a project. Likewise, when asked about their work, they commonly refer to the blessings of the spirit that helped them accomplish the final product.

From a shamanic point of view, recognizing the "spirit" or "spirits" in everything and honoring spirit within the context of our behavior begins the process that leads to beneficial outcomes. The shaman often will make offerings to the spirits. We acknowledge the spirit's interest, ability and desire to help us. Anyone of any particular religious belief can easily attribute this connection to their identified "god," or system of "blessings." According to shamanic beliefs, not acknowledging the spirit will lead to non-beneficial outcomes. If our culture is an example of a culture that does not acknowledge spirit connections through our educational practices, we might ask ourselves if what we have today is primarily the result of a spiritless education.
Another shamanic practice is that of making offerings on a regular or cyclical basis, usually "honoring" some natural occurrence, place or celebration. Contemporary religions use cyclical, ritual traditions extensively. These offerings are made to the spirits that inhabit the space adjacent to our living activity, making any personal or local God/god an appropriate choice. Shamanic practices include making ritual offerings to anything believed to be worthy, to the embodiment of a creative power or potential, or making metaphorical gestures in response to something great that nature displays. The offering (or the ritual) makes the connection to the spirit.

For example, the offerings can be made to the land on which the school was built, the local mountains or rivers, the trees that populate the campus, people that came before with a common purpose that deserve to be honored, the weather, a new or full moon or seasonal changes. Of course, cultural holidays and made-up celebrations provide ample opportunities to exchange gifts or create a written "offering" to a person or a cause. Poster contests for beneficial causes provide very tangible opportunities to make offerings with intent.
From a shamanic point of view, the teacher as shaman does not have to make these offerings in the presence of the students in order to receive the benefits. In doing shamanic practices, I systematically visited special sites on specific days to make offerings to specific spirits, thanking them and petitioning help to aid in healing education. If, for instance, teachers discover that "things" seem to be getting better when, or because these rituals are performed, that perhaps would be an appropriate time to share with their students this lesson in actuation.

Teaching the arts and using the arts to teach exemplifies sharing lessons in actuation and creative processes. From something as simple as recycling classroom materials to a ritual "ofrenda" made to a deceased student during a lesson about "Dia de los Muertos," teachers can remind their students daily of the importance of ritual. All creative processes involve ritual. Wedging clay before use, preparing paints for paintings, gathering, sorting or precision cutting and pasting of images in collage making are all examples of the embedded ritual in art processes. It seems to go without saying that the performing arts are all ritual.
Once a student reported that he would be missing a week of school and would need a make-up assignment for the time he would miss. When asked where he would be going, he said that he and his father were going on their annual bow hunting trip for wild pig. Since the class was beginning a sculpture project, I gave the student a small piece of soapstone and told him to carve the stone for his makeup work. I told him that the night before he was to go out on the hunt, that he should carve a likeness of the pig he hoped to kill. As it turned out, he did the carving, very well, I might add, and he was the only one of his group that was successful in killing a pig. When he told me of his work on the sculpture and how everyone on the hunt contributed to his effort, I simply told him that he had just experienced the power of creativity.

In the classroom, the shaman as teacher might have places of honor and respect to demonstrate pride and belief in some system of spirit connection. As teachers, one basic belief we can model is our belief in the “Great Mystery.” We can constantly model, for our students, our love of learning and respect for each person’s efforts to understand their purpose in life. Why else would our students want to come to
our classes unless we demonstrate our belief in our ability to learn things that will be important to us? Isn’t that what teaching the “Great Mystery” is all about?

Common examples of “places of honor” within each teacher’s classroom are simple things like bookshelves, bulletin boards or displays on walls and windows. Even without making a “big deal” about it, teachers can display a protective reverence and a custodial fastidiousness to the “place.” When questioned by students about the teacher’s demonstration of “honoring the spirit” of meaningful objects or images and their placement in the learning environment, the teacher can take the opportunity to encourage the student to question the nature of actions and intent.

What does the teacher accomplish by having an organized classroom, lesson plan, “learning wall” or even a consistency of vocabulary and inflection? The teacher wants the classroom to be a sacred space for the actuation of our noblest intents. Being aware of what is going on at all times will model the teachers belief in the importance of what we do. The wall behind my desk has become an ever-changing collage of images all relating to the subject at hand, the discipline
and the process that I intend to actuate through teaching and learning.

I will suggest one curriculum tool that can be used to accomplish both learning objectives and assess the developed awareness of creative processes; that tool is the "collage" or "assemblage." Many art teachers cringe when they see the results of their colleagues' efforts to include a "hands-on" art project to enhance their curriculum. Often, students create gaudy or meaningless products and are unaware of the process or its connection to meaning making. Of course, first of all, the collage or assemblage, as a project, can and should be taught as an art activity. The elements and principles of visual perception, the techniques of drawing and designing, and skills of making the object should all be part of the lesson. Just gluing a bunch of stuff down, or disregarding the known visual (or tangible) aesthetics, would never model appropriate behavior or an acceptable approach to creating meaningful metaphors for living. Instruction in and demonstration of the techniques and processes of collage making also introduce further myth and mystery in ritual.

The project, once the student is given the tools to do it using appropriate techniques and "with intent," would be
to collect objects or images, each of which have specific recognized or assigned meaning and assemble them in a composition where together, they begin to create new meanings. This is a project that can conform to any curriculum such as history, literature, math or science, as well as art, culture or belief systems. The student gives meaning to the images, words, phrases or objects that he or she assembles, then identifies the new meaning represented by the project. Finally, each student assesses his or her processes, efforts and accomplishments. The teacher can assess the students accomplishments based on prearranged criteria.

A sample project within this context would be to first have students research a topic and, in the process, collect samples of writing, art, images or accounts of events that are related to the topic. Then, replicate, enhance, manipulate or distort the samples they have collected in a way to identify or imply the meaning of the symbols or materials. Next have the students be specific about the meanings of their selections, then have them assemble these materials to create or imply a new meaning that relates directly to their understanding. Finally have the project
shared with the class for the purpose of provoking a
discussion of this student's interpretation of the topic and
the presentation in aesthetic terms. Treat both the topic and
its presentation as meaningful points of assessment. Often
times we might discover more insight in the student's
understanding (or misunderstanding) by the presentation than
by the student's explanation of content.

From my experience, it seems effective to hold the
belief that the students we encounter bring with them their
own meaning to their participation in the learning process.
We as teachers can honor this realization by considering our
classrooms as "mesas." We can consider our daily activities,
our interactions with our classes and our students as
rituals, offerings and metaphorical assemblages. In this way,
we model, for our students, how we respond to the events and
occurrences of the class. We have intent: to achieve
curriculum and learning objectives. Yet, our greater
objective is to help the students learn how to learn so that
they can take their places as accomplished and concerned
learners, likewise, modeling correct behavior.

In shamanic cultures, modeling correct behavior is
practicing the way of the "Spiritual Warrior" by "being in
the present.” We “invite” our students and others to join us in our learning processes. We respond to disturbances in a calm, reflective manner and model patience and understanding for processes used in learning and creating. We celebrate the successes of each student. We honor them for their accomplishments and we “humor” them into changing their negative behaviors. Teachers are also students when we honor the way of the “Spiritual Warrior.”

In summary, only through my own participation in this research and in uncovering my own role in perpetuating problems in my teaching and learning experiences, have I begun to take seriously the effectiveness of doing shamanic practices as a possible pathway to a solution. Art has always been my “way” of processing my own “healing.” My classroom is a stage, or place of ritual actuation of intent. The intent is no longer strictly my intent, but the intent of improving life in the world for all, which includes the intent of each and all my students, fellow staff members, administrators and the public we serve. The learning activities I present to my students invite them to participate in their own learning processes. The products they create are individual statements that represent the spirit involvement in their lives. The
spirit waits to aid us in our efforts to improve life for all. Let us let the spirit do its will through us by promoting art in education.
APPENDIX A: The Shamanic Practice of Remembering: Examining the Origins of this Project

Developing and presenting a project is a process. Knowing about the process helps us to understand our own processes. Every idea we have is born of a complex series of learning events. This appendix is the effort to share my memories of how this idea came about. One of the first shamanic practices is to examine, very carefully, one's memory of the things that have happened in our lives. The spirits were preparing us with clues to help us discover our purpose in life. Our schools and our teachers are prime suspects when we try to discover who we are.

One particular memory reminded me that I was living in Ohio when I first got the idea that there was something I wanted to find out about in this life. My friend and I had a fort down the street in the woods that ran along the creek. It was a real "Light in the Forest" time of life. Young boys could successfully fantasize about being native in this land their forefathers captured. Not knowing the price that true natives had to pay, we still were in awe of the ways of those first Americans.
This is where the fourth (or was it fifth?) grade social studies lesson gave me more to think about. The teacher was delivering a lesson on what the Native Americans contributed to our lives today. She once commented that when the Indians planted corn they placed a dead fish in the ground with each seed of corn. That lesson might not have stayed with me these so many years, except it coincided with the death of my pet gold fish. The death was of less consequence than the not knowing what to do with the carcass. After all, it was just one of those goldfish kids get at school carnivals, but flushing it down the toilet was not an option for me. Also, it must have been spring, because I had already begun to think about my garden for the coming summer.

I chose colored Indian corn that my mother had used as a Thanksgiving decoration, the same type that was used in a necklace made for me by my friend, to plant that year. I planted five kernels (only one got the fish), but I watched those cornstalks grow all summer and was anxious to see if it would make corn. There were ears with silk, but none became corn. Or, did I lose interest as the warm summer of ’58 wore on. I know it was also the summer I went to summer camp, blacked myself out for the first time, saw an alien ship land
in the field by our cabin, with colored geometric shaped lights flashing, and learned lessons about nature from Chief Looks Into the Sun. Those events of my life remained memories until I had the dream, and began the study I have pursued unto today.

My second memory that connected to the previous event, although many years later, was about a particular vivid dream that I had. Many years had passed and my interest in things Native American had continued. My brother and I had been involved in scouting and camping with many adventures in the forests, lakes and rivers of the mid-west. Our summers were spent with nature as our playground and our playmate. My family moved to the West Coast replacing forests and streams with the glorious Pacific Ocean. Trips to the mountains, deserts and beaches kept me in touch with the breadth of natures experience and potential.

Woodland arrow point discoveries were matched by mountain granite “mono and matate” glimpses of the regional native cultures that came before us. My undergraduate studies included a course in Indians of the Southwest that took me to the Valley of Fire Petroglyphs in Nevada, where I worked on a research project. It was there that the mysteries of the
"Kachina Bat Woman" were added to my matrix of learned and experienced education concerning Native Cultures. Exploration of Chachuma pictographs and Coso petroglyphs and trips to desert sites began to entice me into more studies and discoveries. About the time I started using Indigenous images in my own art, some events occurred that until I began this study, did not make sense to me.

Again, years later, after I had begun my teaching career as an Art and Crafts teacher, I had this particular dream. In the dream, I found myself in a secluded desert roadside stop, admiring the work of an elderly Native American man and when I thought I had found the piece of jewelry that was very attractive to me, he said, "That is not what you want. This is what you want." He opened a blanket that was in front of him on the floor and in it were five perfectly formed golden ears of corn. I was puzzled by his direction, but was truly moved by the gift that he showed me. I admired and handled the ears of corn and placed them back in the blanket and returned them to him. Or, did I wake up?

At the time I really didn't think too much about it, but other things were also soon to attract my attention and inspire wonder. Not long after I had the dream, while working
on pottery, I took a break to fashion a small kiln god for my next firing. My normal process was not to have any preconceived notion of what form this clay figure will take. When finished, much to my surprise, I had fashioned the very face of the Indian in my dream. Finally, that same summer, our family took a trip to Lake Powell for a week. While there, we encountered and acquired some particular natural artifacts considered “strong medicine” in Indian terms. I wondered about the stories of the “spiritual power” in these objects and, it was then that I believed that I needed to find out more about this culture of magic and mystery.

I had always been one to collect artifacts: any material of unusual physical appearance, bones, rocks, feathers, shells, driftwood or relics of man-made objects, arrowheads or pottery. My early childhood experiences at my grandfather’s home in the woods of Missouri taught me to look for such treasures. Later in life, I had been in the habit of stopping at yard or garage sales almost every weekend; mostly, to find materials that could be used in teaching my art or craft classes. Occasionally, I would come across some rare artifact or material that had some “magical” attraction.
I found that I was slowly gathering materials of significance. I began to assign meaning to many of these objects and began to arrange them in a specific order on my tabletop. Before long I added candles and incense to my "mesa" and found myself doing periodic rituals concerning the placement and rearrangement of these various objects. I developed a belief that, based on my intent, I could enhance relationships and events to create more beneficial or harmonious outcomes. After all, I was the kid who always wished for "world peace" with every birthday-candled cake and every deceased turkey's wishbone.

I didn't realize it at first, but I was doing shamanic practices. When a good friend of mine (who is highly educated and in the mainstream of the "New Age" movement), began to introduce me to some of the concepts heralding the paradigm shift, I felt like, actual or not, I needed to exercise my powers to participate in the co-creation of a better world. My beliefs had not yet entered my professional world of teaching nor my personal artistic world. Following the celebration of the Harmonic Convergence, in 1986, my introduction to the "Mayan Calendar" concepts presented by Jose Arguellas, various divination tools and visits to Sacred
sites, I began to realize my interests were beginning to become part of my life. I was intrigued and “self-realized” by that which I encountered.

My professional life had also taken a remarkable turn. After years of being in an art program that maintained a more regimented discipline-based curriculum and suffering from the ever-increasing demands of overcrowding, I was beginning to select myself out of the profession. I arranged for a part-time teaching schedule and opened a small business on the side. But, when there were personnel shifts in my department at school, placing me in charge of our program, I took the challenge to see if I could make a difference. I joined in the activities and training opportunities of the California Arts Project, one of the California State Subject Matter Projects, a network of Arts educators providing staff development opportunities.

This experience was responsible for bringing me back to teaching with a renewed interest and empowerment for the purpose of improving not only teaching, but life for my students. The California Arts Project (TCAP) re-connected me with my original enthusiasm for teaching/learning, showed me ways to actualize my intent and introduced me to people and
concepts that spoke of the need for changing paradigms. I learned to empower myself through my art. Though an artist when I entered teaching, the demands of work, time and creative energy, drained me of my personal passion for my art. Through TCAP, I learned that it was this very creative spirit that could empower me and guide me in my efforts to help my students and help myself. Art was the key to achieve a successful shift into a better future.

Was it coincidence or synchronicity that placed me in my first (and second) TCAP Leadership academy that were held at Walker Ranch in Marin County. This location happened to be a recent “healing place” for reformed substance abusers. It was also the location of a very sacred and powerful “medicine” rock, one that was marked by centuries of shamanic activity. It was there that I received messages of my future with both “raptor” medicine and deer medicine. These experiences, embraced by the professional development of our Arts Project seemed to embed in me the connection between my interest in shamanism and my profession as an art teacher.

Then came my decision to join the Masters Program in Integrated Studies. On the first day of the course in Integrative Studies, by Dr. Sam Crowell, when I heard the
words from a recorded translation of Chief Seattle, from a speech given to his people in 1857, "[because you are taking our land]... living ends and surviving begins," I knew some deep running current of educational thought was beginning to rise to the surface of my consciousness. I knew my effort might be to return to, and help others learn to return to, "living," not just "surviving." I also remembered my first choice to become a teacher was based on my belief that I was mandated to model a Christian life by being a teacher, as Jesus was a teacher. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

I set out to discover how to do that. I wondered why I had spent all my life in "just" a survival mode. I knew I had witnessed and experienced what I would call "life," but, I always felt compelled to return to those things that were more "important" according to society, my culture and the professed beliefs that I had been given. Now, by involving myself in the co-creation of the future of educational processes, I felt empowered to go forward to find the answers to this "wondering why."

I soon discovered that much of our current educational thought was thoroughly involved in re-defining what we are
doing as educators and what we might think about before executing any further innovations in education. I was fully convinced that many of the new ideas were verifiable and true and for the first time was exposed to the concepts of deconstructing the Modernist epoch and constructing a new paradigm. I was a willing learner and participant in creating proposals for healing our world through education. My own path of study rather parallels much of what I hold to be self-evident as researchers present their findings, but my own learning matrix created the formula I was to use.

My "Integrative Study" was to be about how Art played a roll in the efforts to improve education. I knew that for thirty years, I had been using, successfully, techniques that help explain concepts of other subjects with art; and using other subject examples or concepts to help my art students understand art concepts. My questions became: Why has art been such a successful tool for learning? What happens when people do art? Was there something special about art or the doing of it that could lead us to a better understanding of all learning? Now, my task is to determine the most positive way to present a combination of my own self-knowledge with
the accumulated knowledge of our esteemed writers, thinkers, philosophers and educators throughout history.

The Integrative Studies Project:

I decided to challenge the concept of integrative studies by allowing my subject for this project to be determined by chance discoveries. My approach to the selection of a topic was going to be a search for meaning. I was going to take one of my regular Saturday "yard-sale-ing" outings and look for meaningful artifacts to compose the inspiration for my project. Of course this was my first thought and I was willing to adjust to the possibility that nothing in particular would come of this approach. However, I soon found out that the spirit was just waiting for this opportunity to work through me to create its message of guidance and its own integrative approach to facilitating learning.

At the time, the four artifacts I chose were not selected, with this particular project in mind, however I was attracted to them for the purpose of general educational usage. To have these particular objects presenting themselves for me to find created one recognizable step in the "spirit way" of the learning process, the phenomena of synchronicity.
These four objects lead me to formulate a project that embodied the following themes of: pre-modernist educational practices; a look at the truth of what Native Americans hold ready to offer to American Culture; a reinforcement of my infatuation with Indian Cultural practices; and, the universal use of ritual as a process to implement and celebrate change in the human condition.

How would these chance-found objects contribute to the project of repairing education through artistic processes inspired by shamanic practices? The four objects I found were all books, which I usually buy along with interesting objects of art, crafts and materials to use for making art projects. That day, I did not see any other materials that could be of use in my classes or for this project.

The first book I found was *Lectures on Teaching*, by J. G. Fitch, published in 1882, in Cambridge. It was a book of lectures given at Cambridge University to teachers and prospective teachers. In this book, Fitch presents his lectures given during the Lent Term of 1880 because he believed they (these lectures), "might properly be placed within reach of a somewhat wider circle of students." In the lectures, Fitch spoke of teaching in a way that inspired both
personal commitment and academic responsibility. He professed and demonstrated the belief that no subject can be taught alone and out of context with the other disciplines; as well as the need to relate each lesson to the students learning and projected needs for the future. Likewise, he alluded to the "real" curriculum of each and every class and how the learning environment is created. (See quotes in the body of this project.)

I didn’t remember learning much about these philosophies when I went through my credential program in the late Nineteen-sixties. Perhaps my enthusiasm for using integrative techniques came from my choice to back up my Art Major with a Social Studies Minor. I had learned to love the study of history when, as a lower division Liberal Arts Major, I had inadvertently enrolled in a Western Civilization class during the same semester I was also taking a course in Art History. This was followed the next semester with a course in Music Appreciation. Therefore making connections between the arts and history was what helped me in both classes. This book by J. G. Fitch reinforced my earlier beliefs that twenty-eight years of public school teaching, with its persistent
deferment to structural rigidity, had succeeded to
discourage.

The second book that attracted my attention, a copy of
The Mentor, March 1924, published monthly, by the Crowell
Publishing Company at Springfield Ohio, focused on the formal
social cultural accounts of the Indians of the Northwest by
Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance.

In all my travels and experiences among the Indians of
our Northwest Country, British Columbia, and Alaska, I
have found those Indians that have been the least
associated with civilization to be the best morally and
physically. They suffer less from the ailments and the
disturbing influences of the incoming race, and they
retain those moral attributes that have in the past
causd the Indian to be worthily designated “The Noble
Red Man.” (Long Lance, 1924, p.1)

The Mentor presented the Indians as “noble,” proud and
sensitive to their heritage, possessing strong belief systems
and a recognition of their responsibility to persevere in the
face of the white man’s decimation of their culture. Although
written by a Native American of the Souix Nation, the
articles were restrained in style and format. Long Lance was
a graduate of Carlisle, St. John’s Military Academy in New
York, was appointed to West Point by President Wilson, but
chose to enter the War instead in 1916 where he was decorated
and commissioned. He later became a journalist.
The periodical was obviously aimed at the liberal educated white upper/middle class; and, did not want to force any recognition of the white man’s personal blame-by-default or our disregard for the Native American’s cultural wealth. It told a brief history of the American intrusion in their lives and their responses. There were many tales of the individual heroes of various tribes, and some stories of how the white man apparently misunderstood or chose to misinterpret their Red Brothers.

In selecting the third book, I was attracted by the full color cover of a fierce, horse-riding, Plains Indian warrior, rifle held high in hand. This image represents the antithesis of Long Lance’s message (although at the time, I was not aware of the contents of the Mentor). The choice to get this book was based on the memories of a young boy in Ohio, who, opening a colorfully wrapped gift one Christmas morning, finds a book that leads him further into one of his favorite subjects, Indian Lore. In this book by Ben Hunt, he describes the skills used in fashioning artifacts, costumes, dances, life styles and lore of various Native American tribes and nations.
Ben Hunt, a white man, presents the Native American Cultures and Lore in a time-honored way. The colorful image on the cover of this book, its flamboyantly "Hollywood-like" vision of the fierce warrior, was not the original cover found on the book I had as a child, which my memory tells me was a collage of illustrated Indian artifacts. Hunt's book appealed to the "Boy Scout" in all of us more from the Native American, personal practicality point of view and less from the "militaristic" duty-bound conformity which typifies the American Cultural point of view prevalent in the Boy Scout Organization.

I was in the Boy Scouts when I got my very own Ben Hunt book and remembered not just reading/looking at the pictures, but also doing the projects. Of course as an impressionable young boy in the later years of the 1950's, my "Wonder Years," and as mentioned, my "Light in the Forest" years, the book by Ben Hunt became one of my first "technical" manuscripts. I learned the lore, practiced the rituals, created the artifacts, and developed a life-long intrigue in all things Indian. Trips to the Southwest, stopping at many Navajo roadside "trinket" stands also fed my appetite for a more thorough exposure to the Native American Culture. It was
finding this book that brought the meaningfulness of this project to a "heart and soul" personal level for me. The first step in beginning Shamanic practices is to thoroughly explore our own memories for clues to our purpose in life.

The fourth book was a "Coffee Table" book on the "Rites of Passage" from around the world, The Circle of Life: Rituals from the Human Family Album, 1991, by David Cohen. Its content was totally that of beautiful illustrations of birthing rituals, male and female puberty rituals, religious indoctrination, marriages and deaths and clever quotes about life, none of which addresses specifically the theme of this project. The Forward and the Afterward both centered on the beauty of the photographs and the uniqueness of the people and the lives presented. The descriptions by the author were more like journal entries and the quotes were mostly general universal axioms. There was one representation concerning Shamanic initiation that provided me with these two thoughts: "While the rites of passage from childhood to adulthood connect people with their society, shamans allow the initiate to transcend the secular human condition and connect with the spirit world." And "While a shaman experiences more intense spiritual ecstasy than the rest of this community, the energy
he draws on and the process he uses are more or less available to most people. (Cohen, 1991 p. 168) I accepted the Circle of Life book as a direction to explore the use of ritual as a practical tool for educational processes, honoring the traditions of all humankind, but especially replacing lost ritual traditions from all the cultures that make up the American cultural tapestry.

These four books convinced me that my “far out” concept of catalyzing change through the presentation of shamanic practices, supposedly confronting established concepts of teaching, was actually justified by the urgency of social need and the promise of maintaining a more successful paradigm. Lacking the authority and the security that authority brings, I searched my memory for other connections to validate my decision to use this theme.

One day in one of my Masters classes, we were visited by a panel of professors who each contributed their own expertise and endorsement to the concept of integrated studies. This event brought back to me a memory of one of the last significant learned concepts of my former university experience. Thirty years ago, I had read most of Herman Hesse’s work and the last book of his that I read was
Magister Ludi or, The Glass Bead Game. I remembered it had instilled in me a strict reverence for academic pursuits and awakened in me a fervor for the integration of studies.

I re-read this literary work to find that it still held this fascination for me. Herman Hesse had already cracked the foundation of modernist, western, dominator, capitalist/materialist concepts and began looking to other cultural paradigms. Siddhartha, Demian, and The Steppenwolf were culturally popular but with The Glass Bead Game, he approached the citadel itself, the bastion of higher education and elitist hierarchy. Through his use of metaphor he presents the most idealistic, fantastic, albeit now, believable objective. Hesse’s description of The Glass Bead Game is also a virtual description of his life and literary genius: “The Glass Bead Game is an act of mental synthesis through which the spiritual values of all ages are perceived as simultaneously present and vitally alive.” (p. 9, quoting Theodore Ziolkowski from his Forward to the Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1969 edition)

Integrated studies, from the point of view of this Secondary Art/Social Studies teacher of 29 years continues to take on new meaning.
APPENDIX B: Interview with Richard Stewart

The visits I made to interview Richard Stewart were both academic and personal. I had heard Richard speak of the ways of his people, the Owens Valley Paiute, in the spring of 1994 during a California Arts Project, RIMS Invitational Institute being held in Lone Pine, Ca. When he spoke of the use of shamanic powers I became curious to hear more. I had been involved in the study of shamanism from a more personal perspective and had not related it to possible educational applications. Never finding the time to discuss these issues further with him, I did not anticipate I would have the opportunity in such a mutually beneficial way.

I started work on a Master’s in Integrative Studies in the fall of 1994. I found myself deeply involved in Postmodernist concepts and the search for pathways to, at first, a corrective and then more creative path to greater world harmony and peaceful balance through education. Because of my earlier studies of shamanism, the role of the shaman in maintaining community balance, and the properties of artistic activity as community building and self-transformational tools, I began my research on the theoretical project of “The Teacher as Shaman.”
The course that presented me with the opportunity to meet again with Richard was a course of independent study in ethnography from Professor Jose Hernandez. My plan was to research desert art and rock alignments to determine the origin, processes and purposes of those original creations. This plan, however, was translated into a course in utilizing the processes of ethnography to seek information that might lead to a better understanding of the cultural origins of the desert art. Why do Indigenous peoples, at least those with whom I made contact, make petroglyphs, pictographs and rock alignments? Are those cultural artifacts the same types of activities that result in what our culture calls art?

The tapes are becoming a memory and now it is becoming what I tell my friends about my visit with Richard Stewart. The first thing he did was to pull out a coyote penis, or more commonly known as a greasewood stick the size and shape of a large phalus. He quickly told the story of the stick used to break the teeth of the “toothed vagina” of a young maiden, which resulted in the birth of the first ancestors. In addition, he opened his medicine bundle to me. The tape recorder was still in the car. After a brief 15-20 minute sharing, I quickly went out to my car and wrote these notes:
Medicine Bundle - Richard had been giving a presentation to a group just within the week - mentioned that questions came up about shamanic work - connected to Mary Austin - and, he began to share more about medicine objects - opened his medicine bundle - two feather wands, eagle claw w/ beaded band; antler fetish 4 1/2" w/ blue jay feather, hishi beads and red cloth; medicine pouch w/ two crystals from his childhood; stick his father found in Hoopa, otter stick w/faded surface carving of otter features; hand polished, flat rounded rectangular rock, about the size of an envelope that was smooth, granite-like, w/polished textured surface.

Throughout the day, we made reference to the various objects, their meaning, material and magic. He also spoke of another eagle claw and various other objects. I asked him questions to help discern the nature of the power of the object or the creation of the power of the object by shamanic involvement. His answers were often in story form some Zen, others Indian.
APPENDIX C: Shamanic Healing/Self-transformation:

It was the summer of 1996 after having researched shamanism and its relations to teaching and the spirit, I had applied for and been accepted to an advanced course in Shamanic Counseling. I had previously taken a workshop by Michael Harner in basic shamanic practices that included journeying, divination, and identification of spirit guides. I was interested and having learned some of the practices, attempted some of them, between my normal everyday life, work and graduate level education courses. When I applied for the advanced course it was understood that I had mastered the basics and was a practicing shaman. Which I wasn’t. I requested acceptance based on my interest in shamanism as an educational enhancer.

I really felt I was not ready for the advanced course so when school got out for the summer I had intended to go fervently into the practice of shamanism before going to the workshop. As the events of the summer unfolded I found that I would be unable to attend the workshop after all. It did not deter me from my original intent to pursue a rigorous practice of shamanism. However, I spent most of my summer, rather, in pursuit of art. I, as part of my graduate program,
had signed up for a course, self-directed, in doing collage art projects, which I believed is a shamanic tool most useful for meaning-making in education.

This work resulted in a modest contribution to a small art show in Idyllwild. However, this had been only the second time that I had ever put my own art work on display in forty years of being an artist, a practice that I require of my students all the time. This experience of doing my art and putting it on display proved to be a profound experience. Practicing what I teach. Then in lieu of my not going to the workshop, I decided that this year, in taking my traditional "before returning to school" fishing trip to the Sierras, I would make it a Shamanic trip. My usual family and/or friends who would customarily accompany me, could not make it. I went alone with a sole intent: to do shamanic practices until something happened or it was clear something would not happen.

Well, something did happen. That trip turned out to be the pivotal point of my life. I went up to the Sierras wanting to effect a self-transformational healing, and returned to a world that has never been the same since. Although apparently having nothing to do with my profession,
I discovered I am my profession. I am everything that I do. What I do is me. My students have always known that. I, we, as teachers, have chosen to ignore that fact. And, because I have changed, so has my teaching. For the better, I believe so; it remains to be seen. What caused this change? Although it can easily be described as an unusual sequence of events adding up to profound effects, I could say it was caused by my asking the spirit, through shamanic practices, to guide me into a self-healing transformation.

To do this I used my recent art experiences as a jumping-off point. As part of my art studies and work with collage I had concluded that the next step was to develop some theories on how assemblage was an even more powerful tool for meaning making. I had been working with an American Indian Artist/teacher/"medicine man," Richard Stewart of Big Pine. I had been trying to discover if the making of artifacts, fetishes and so-called "medicine bundles" was an activity that actually brought on "power" or results, to the maker or its intended. Through my own efforts, I made available to myself various objects, each of which either had inherent meaning or I had imbued with meaning and brought
with me on my trip for the purpose of making "medicine" for healing; for my healing and the healing of the world.

With such lofty intent, I went about my business of shamanizing. With a lifetime of interest in native cultures and decades of readings about ritual, magic and the spirit world concepts, I entered into these practices. They included solitude, fasting, sleep deprivation, shamanic journeying and mentally and emotionally communing with the spirits of nature around me. I observed the many signs and symbols presented by trees, plants, rocks and animals, birds and rivers that surrounded me. I began work on a medicine fetish. For a multitude of reasons going back to my childhood, and for reasons only obvious to practitioners of shamanism, I cannot recount all the details, I worked with intent to create "Owl Medicine."

The Owl, alone, has meaning in the hearts of us all. No matter who is reading this account, you have assigned some meaning to the owl as an object, particular type of bird and as a myth or symbol. However, owl also has its own meaning. And, short of a separate dissertation on the meanings of owl, suffice it to say that owl is known as the "Night Eagle" and represents the shadow side of our perceptions. Owl offers
deep wisdom often harsh with reality. Owl sees into our hearts and further; owl deals with deception and its antidote, disclosure. No one of us can escape the knowing medicine of owl. It can heal, but it can hurt.

Little did I know how this medicine would work on me. I began to find out when after four days of solitude I finally phoned home to be greeted with the news of the death of one of my dearest friends. Needless to say, I entered a state of shock and did not return from that state until I had dismantled my camp, drove the three hundred miles home, spent a sleepless night of contemplation and attended his memorial service the next day. I then spent the remaining days of my summer vacation discovering just how much my world had changed. Or, was I discovering how much I had changed. Without a doubt, I had gone up to the Sierras that summer a different person than the person I became and I am today.

Why was this such a profound experience and what does this have to do with my project? The significance of the event could be compared to any relevant learning experience. It had all the components necessary to initiate change in me, the learner. Was it just a series of experiences and events that happened to coincide to create a meaning-filled
cognition? Would that describe what we try to do for our students? Certainly not with such gravity but, in smaller ways are the learning experiences we provide for our students meant to prepare them for "the big ones?"

As I write this portion of my project, it has been almost six months since this experience. Since that time I have continued to involve myself in further shamanic activities. I have also transformed many of the relationships I have had with others, including my students, colleagues, friends and family. They seem to see me differently. I feel different.
APPENDIX D: The Despacho

"The Q'ero shamans are making despachos - offerings - to facilitate the mastay, the bringing of order and harmony to the world." Joan Parisi Wilcox, Stepping Outside of Time, Magical Blend Magazine.

On September 30, the night of the full moon and lunar eclipse, a very unusual event occurred in my hometown. Two Incan Shamans came to the University of Redlands as a stop-over on their way to meet with the Hopi Elders. Their translators said that they were going there to discuss the synchronized efforts of the high priests of the belief systems of the Indigenous Cultures around the world to affect changes that would help the world through these difficult times. Their friend that made this possible, their first trip ever out of their country, was one of the University of Redlands professors. They wanted to do an offering in gratitude for the opportunity to be here. It was announced in the paper just the night before and my wife and I decided to attend.

We came upon a modest gathering of people in a small outdoor amphitheater where a Peruvian and an American Anthropologist gave a brief history of the guest shamans and
translated their comments. The focus of the evening was on a very particular ritual offering called a "Despacho." The purpose was to honor the spirits of our two local mountains, Mt. San Gorgonio and Mt. San Jacinto. A Despacho is used to send messages to the spirits, in gratitude and in petition for blessings.

The process was to add various articles that the shamans had brought with them, each imbued with meaning. The materials had to be of a prescribed nature and the purpose was to represent those elements or aspects that honored the spirits and represented our wishes. The articles were placed in a small cloth that would be used to wrap them. With each addition of material or object, certain prayers and incantations were said by the priests.

When the bundles were complete further prayers were said and the breath of the spirit was blown across each bundle. They were then placed in a fire, that was built by the shamans and we watched them until they were totally consumed. The shamans said that the mountains were very happy that we had done this offering and that they would like us to do offerings to them more often. The shamans answered questions and encouraged the observer/participants to do these
offerings often and for us to bring this message of taking the path of the spirit/nature to all we encounter.

The proximity to my own personal experience, my academic research and the timeliness of the message for the world struck a deep chord in my being that has affected my vibratory patterns ever since. I resolved to practice this ritual and honor the spirit way for at least the duration of my teaching year that had just begun, and for the duration of my Masters work. I have now made offerings to various spirit sites on each of the new and full moons. I use these occasions to express gratitude for the blessings I have received and to “order” my intent. One belief I had was that this practice was to become part of my healing process and had been brought to me by my efforts in Shamanism.

My intent was to follow the shamanic path to try to determine if it resulted in any change or improvement in my life, health or professional presence. I resolved not to teach or preach shamanism, or even make my work public until I had given it time to allow me to make observations and perhaps draw some conclusions. The point was not to teach shamanism, it was to become a shaman and observe how it
affected my reality and the learning environment created by me.
APPENDIX E: The Vision Quest Account

(Journal entry: June 22, 1997)

I was heading north on 395 just pulling out of Kramer Junction when it hit me. I had forgotten the special fetish that Jo Ann had given me for the quest. I could visualize it in my medicine cabinet lying snugly on the Eagle Bundle. The sinking feeling of disappointment deepened when I also saw my own crystal medicine pouch, the one that I always wear when doing medicine work, also, still in its sacred place on the Eagle Bundle. Regret turned to remorse with a tinge of fear. The first thought of “Should I go back (the hundred or so miles)?” immediately transformed into, “Why? Why would I have forgotten medicine so important on this, the culmination of my year of self-healing/ transformation?” What could be the significance of my forgetting?

I remembered standing in my study for minutes trying to remember what I might have forgotten. I had spent days preparing for this vision quest (not to mention the three months of fasting and abstaining), and had returned to my medicine materials often. My crystal had been a major part of my sweat lodge purification just the night before. I had removed it and hung it over the door to my sacred Owl
Medicine Lodge. This trip was all about Owl Medicine and my crystal had protected me through a most strenuous Year of the Night Eagle. Passing Kramer Junction was like the first portal to the Sierras; the second was my usual stop at Coso Junction Rest Stop.

I had to be reassured for my quest and not doubt my strength and security. As I accepted this reality, one thought came to mind. I had packed, not planning to use, but taken along for emphasis the Fallen Eagle Heart Medicine. I was heading up to the Sierras to do my most Sacred Offering as thanksgiving for this entire year of healing and in petition for the blessing of a vision of intent. Of course, Eagle had been there waiting to protect me and give me vision. I realized with proud conviction that this gift of medicine that had been prepared for me by my friend Richard Ambro was to be my guiding and protecting medicine for this trip. I could not have been more pleased to make this realization and was even more comforted to think that I had two powerful transmitter crystals placed so strategically on top of the Eagle Bundle, safe in my medicine cabinet behind the Stone Mesa at home. With this small bundle hung around my
neck for my Vision Quest, I would be directly connected to the power of Eagle Medicine.

As these contemplations of the empowerment I had gained over all these years of being the "Keeper of Eagle Medicine" began to sink in, my spirits were lifted to low flight height as I continued my drive through the most beautiful, clear day up the Owens Valley. My journey was interrupted only by a stop at the Paiute, Shoshone Cultural Center in Bishop to meet with Richard Stewart. We spoke briefly just to reconnect and my invitation to join me at camp some evening this week for storytelling, was warmly received without specific acceptance. My thoughts of, perhaps acquiring some obsidian points from Ervin Lent got me on the phone to his home and he agreed to come to the center with some of his work.

His arrival brought, also, some of his latest accounts of his medicine work and I was pleased to find two perfect obsidian points and a scrapper to take with me for mine. I learned of several ways I might contribute to his intent and my plans to include both Richard S. and Ervin in future Indigenous Cultural Workshops were developing as I left Bishop on the last leg of the journey to Rock Creek.
As expected, very little was the same in the East Fork Campground. The winter always rearranges things. I visited the campsite I had occupied last August when this medicine work began, but it was alien to me, a carcass from which the spirit had departed. On the way in, however, I had noticed many former campsites from my many previous stays. Already I could feel the warm waters of melancholia filling my body and already began to accept that this trip would be a bountiful harvest of old memories and impassioned emotions.

I selected the campsite that I had occupied once, about this time of year several years ago. It was on a return trip that had brought me from a Leadership Academy in Marin, and visits with Dave S., Richard A., Trish, Roger and finally Kathy. The whole trip had been a good experience and I remembered this site as one that was good for reflective activity. It also overlooked the upper loop of East Fork (similar to last August’s camp) but from the northern end. There was a very large split, or twin, Juniper right above the picnic table. It provided both companionship and shade.

Camp was routine and the days passed quickly in anticipation of my quest. I had already begun fasting days before and was into a rather regular pattern of tea in the
morning, nuts or trail mix and fruit during the day, and rice, beans or dehydrated soup at night. I made little of eating, but each meal was sacred. My days were spent exploring and acclimating to the altitude. I knew I needed to prepare for the trip up to Little Lakes. Also, I was gathering medicine for the work I was to do following this trip.

I tried a little fishing on Wednesday evening but my heart was not really into it. I used fishing as a camouflage to look like I’m just a regular camper. The burning of sage, the drumming at the campfire at night, the occasional sound of the temple bell and my sprinkling tobacco and cornmeal around my camp certainly would not give away the fact that I was doing shamanic work. However, Thursday afternoon, I did catch two nice fish that I knew were to be my meal on returning from Little Lakes. At that time, I could feel the attraction of the location and was getting into my being there.

One notable side trip was my work with Juniper tree medicine. Last August I had connected with a Juniper that seemed to be at the heart of the “Marching Forest” (designated by a trip I had taken the summer before that I
had re-tracked). I had entered the forest to the South East of East Fork and found myself drawn to an old Juniper that gave me shelter and succor on that day last year. I had been moved by the tree in very spiritual ways and felt this need to make meaningful contact with it. As I sat close under the tree, meditating, I realized that I wanted to take part of the tree with me. I concluded that with the thick fibrous strands of the bark, I could make a furry mat covering for the papier mâché deer I had found at a yard sale not long before.

I knew that to take anything from a “tree person” of such grandness I would have to leave an offering of like grandness. Not having any offering material with me, neither tobacco nor cornmeal, not even food, I gave the tree some of my water. But, I knew more was needed, so I decided to offer my intent to learn more about this and the other pine trees like it. At the time I thought it was a cedar of some sort. The offerings I made were accepted and I was able to gather some very nice bark from the tree and it waits to be added to my assemblage of “Juniper the Wounded Reindeer.”

The following morning, a friendly neighboring camper asked me if I knew much about the Juniper trees in this
valley. He was pointing to the large Juniper that was right next to me in my campsite. I said that I didn’t and he proceeded to tell me several interesting things about them. At that time, he pointed to a very large old tree at the top of the ridge on the western side of the valley just up from where I was camping. He said that that was probably the mother of all the trees in this particular grove and was probably over 1500 years old. I immediately felt compelled to visit the tree. He was also the fellow who told me that I needed to go to Little Lakes. Of course, that same morning I got the news of Dick’s death and left ... to start this medicine journey.

Needless to say, Thursday morning I left early to watch the sunrise from the western ridge and spend the morning with Great Grandmother Juniper. I took offerings for her and blessings from all the “People,” from her children and all the plant people, from the animal, fish and bird people and offered up my intent. It had been a grueling climb up an almost vertical slope. It truly taxed all my strength and gave me a preview of the trip I planned to take the next day. That evening I prepared myself for my Vision Quest Journey up to Little Lakes.
(For the remainder of this account I will include what I had written in my journal when I got back from my quest.)

This day (Sunday), perhaps the fishing is a grounding for me. The two fish I caught on Thursday, made a perfect meal with the roasted potatoes last night, the perfect meal to celebrate the return from Little Lakes. "Have you been to Little Lakes?" "Well, I have now." I can say that now as I sit in camp gazing through watery eyes out from under my Monterey Bay Cap’s visor to a sun-frosted campground having just finished cleaning my catch for this early morning Sunday of the Planetary Dog. Still returning on momentary lapses to what started all this questing; and, was my quest given blessing for all my intent? Yes, enough.

(Following a brief meditation, I wrote:)

What we write about, is not. We are not the first to write this nor will we be the last to understand this. Writing and telling, is not. We write and tell about memories. Today our memories are distant and clouded and confused by the complexity of this quest. Our heart still longs for our sacred place, of being there. Writing about our experiences makes them more untrue. We hope to capture
quickly, at this time, as close to, and as much of the truth as we remember it to be. Knowing that what we write will not be it.

Fasting had continued with a cup of couscous and black beans, a cup of Breathe Easy tea and an early to bed. I was to depart early Friday and had already prepared my back pack and my medicine bundle. I woke about midnight and began my vigil. About 3:00 (AM) I decided to put together a CD journey (Michael Harner’s Drumming CD) and was hoping for a totem animal to accompany me on my trip that day. So alone, I was, and remained, deer just in the background and I kept finding myself in the middle world, here with all the day helpers around me. Even Great Grandmother Juniper was there but did not show herself. A persistent warmth came over my body and for a long time I felt too warm, even in an overall sweat. I recalled my sweat lodge of Monday night and heard the drums again. Later Friday night I recalled the warmth I generated on my CD journey and borrowed some of that warmth.

I finally got up, somewhat reluctantly and apprehensively, hoping I had done enough to prepare myself for the quest. I resigned myself to accepting whatever was to be. I left camp about 6:15 and immediately knew what was in
store for me. Pains and toil set in with a vengeance. I began systematically to design efforts to ward off any thoughts of turning back. I had a long way to go and couldn’t let the pains and fatigue get to me. Even when I got lost in a dense part of the forest east of Lower Coral Marshes looking for the trail to Rock Creek Lake, it only made me more insistent on going ahead.

I found myself in a maze of entanglements and entrapments with hoards of mosquitoes covering my every movement. I finally crossed back over the marshy meadow and found the faint path through the woods and over an old corduroy bridge. I then found myself climbing a piercingly steep fractured granite stairway and switch back to finally drag myself into the Rock Creek Lake store for extra water. I was beat and broken and already beyond my limits of endurance. I resolved to take the road from here on, to at least be out of the mosquitoes, although in the heat.

I established a pace, stopping at convenient shady spots. Silent suffering and frustrated determination became my mantra. Just about half-way up the longest and steepest part I stopped for a break, water and nourishment. It was good to rest and I really did have plenty of time. My only
concern was to not completely expend myself before reaching my destination. Those few handfuls of trail mix were my last food until the quest was over. I suffered in silence until I was through Mosquito Flats and up the first grade into Little Lake Valley.

My first view of the Mack Lake elevated my spirits to new heights. The vision matched almost to mind-altering proportions, a dream I had had several nights before (mentioned earlier in my journal). Looking down into the depths of the emerald green water surrounded by massive white granite boulders and feeling a cooling breeze refreshed me into going on further into the valley. I only knew that by looking at a map, my destination would be around the far side of the last lake, Long Lake, but I was anxious to examine all the possible sites on the way. I knew I was in Little Lake Valley and nothing could stop me now.

As I proceeded, still in pain and weak from exhaustion, I remembered my song and began to sing as I walked. I could feel that this was a power activity and even through the pain and fatigue, I knew I would make it. The path was no less rugged and just as difficult as before; I was going purely on determination. I passed Marsh Lake, then beautiful Heart
Lake, that I am determined to return to, and Box Lake. I knew I was approaching Long Lake because the map showed a river crossing. I stopped just before the crossing and had my last drink of water and said some friendly words to a passing couple.

I was headed for the southern end of the lake, deep into the valley just past where the main trail veers east up to Chicken Foot Lake and out of the valley. It was a narrow trail edged by snow drifts along the steep eastern side of Long Lake. It wasn’t long before I could see the far southwestern end of the lake where I intended to go. I was amazed as I saw a massive granite ledge and cliff looming over the lake where I planned to stay. I could not have known this when I picked the spot on the map, but I could not have been more pleased at my choice. I was headed for the “stone mesa” to spend the night alone with my medicine intent.

As I approached the southern end I could see that a swiftly cascading river was emptying into the lake. I had to climb up a steep, pine studded rocky pass that had several thick drifts of snow, again reminding me of a snowy passage I experienced in my dream. I came over the rocky pass to a small meadow where I was able to jump across several small
tributaries to the other side. I was now not far from my destination and was glad that the last obstacle was there to keep the casual hiker from going any further.

Even before I made the unknown crossing I was realizing the perfection of this experience I was to have. I made the crossing and slowly approached the location of mystery. Just as I had imagined it would be. No one was around. No one saw me approach my spot from across the lake. I came upon a rocky monolithic, split cliff, from above (actually from behind) and examined the features and the terrain carefully; examining and getting the feel of every possible location. I could see that this was not a large flat topped chunk of granite but a worn ridge of solid granite that had small meadow outcroppings between about three, or so broken layered ridges. The last ridge loomed over the lake below (I might estimate about a 40-50 foot overlook).

As I approached the final ridge I felt like I was entering someone’s home. It was a lodge-sized area of small flat meadow sparsely covered with thick tough green clumps of meadow grass. There was about a three to four foot wall of granite to the left (west) and an outwardly sloping ledge of granite protruding to the edge that dropped off to the lake.
These low granite walls framed a large backyard pool-sized meadow. Standing there, I was virtually hidden on all sides but the south, from which I had approached. Immediately I was drawn to where the granite walls tapered to the Northern end. The granite on the left rose higher and the cliff on the right became hedged by a row of stunted pine trees.

As I entered this vortex of converging granite and pine I saw a perfectly formed alcove walled by granite on the left and the horizontal growth of a majestic old pine tree. Its short thick trunk immediately branched off to the right framing a large crack in the granite cliff through which the lake could be viewed. My first impulse was to crawl into this alcove and rest. Immediately I was accepted into this spot as my place of being. This place became my place and as happens during such episodes, I did become one with the location. I was finally able to rest, the tree gave me comfort and protection.

Immediately the blessings of visions began. Real world visions, but each one a lesson and a memory. Each movement, each action became right; all the right things. I was humble and grateful and tried to show my appreciation in every thing I did. The tree was actually growing out of the large crack
in that granite monolith; the crack that went all the way to the lake. The tree had been there forever with many growings; branches grew down through the crack and up again. From my alcove I could look the length of this "living room" of a meadow to the south, and look through the branches of the pine to the lake.

In time I explored all the granite ledges of this cliff. I felt no fear of the height and when I saw no one on the other side of the lake to see me, I stood on the very edges and granite perches to peer deep into the depths of the lake and watch the breezes create moving patterns across its surface. From my lookout I could see the northern point of land beyond the western meadow of Long Lake and I could see the complete curve of its southern end and the confluence that kept others from coming on my side.

I made it my task to keep an eye out for anyone else that might plan to join me camping on this, "my side." I observed the comings and goings of all hikers. I noticed none that had full camping gear with them. When I saw them across the lake, I blended into the shadows or behind the hedge of scrub pines that lined the eastern wall of my living room. I went beyond the crack and discovered more sandy ledges
overlooking the lake, but none so perfect as my living room. I relived my dream and meditated with my back to an ancient, but stunted, pine tree that was just above the ledge over my alcove.

But, before all this exploration I had opened my medicine bundle and created an altar for offerings in the alcove. I left my backpack in clear view in case anyone should happen by. I made it look like a camp from the outside, but on the inside, I made very few changes. I offered tobacco and cornmeal and spoke to the trees and rocks for their approval. I felt welcomed there. I wondered what I was doing and I reflected on all that had brought me to this spot; how I had found it on the map when I first saw it and how, all along, not knowing, I knew this was the place I would be. My life was on this altar now.

I watched the lake all day. There were very few people passing on the far side. And as I sang songs and watched the sun go behind the western ridge behind me, I knew that my evening was beginning. I watched the shadow creep across the lake and reach the other side. Still no other people showed up. The last group of hikers had gone long ago. The cool breezes were becoming cold, so I put on my sweatshirt and
lined Levi jacket. It was also about the time that the mosquitoes discovered I was the only living thing on the lake. I put on my wool stocking hat and my sweatshirt hood over my head but still they took great pleasure in what little exposed skin was available, as well as some unexposed. They were constantly a part of my journey.

Nevertheless, with daylight subsiding, I began my shamanic work. My intent was to make a despacho as my final conclusion to the medicine journey that began last August, my making of owl medicine, my healing and self-transformation, a metaphor for the healing of the world. I proceeded to make this despacho and planned to bury it somewhere on this site. This will always be my holy spot, my power spot. This will be the place of my memories and my dreams. This will represent my prayers, my offerings and all my efforts to bring forth some knowledge, or wisdom that I could give to others so that together we can realize and co-create a better world. I was placing these messages in it with offerings to Great Spirit and Great Mystery to ask them for their help through this vision quest.

To complete owl medicine I took the second claw (foot) and fashioned it like the first with an obsidian point, five
white trade beads with red string and a blue glass bead. I snipped the upper part of both feathers on the first claw fetish and attached them to the second. I made offerings of: quartz, hematite, turquoise, tourmaline, seed from a sweat lodge gift, a small replica of musical instrument, a package of nail parings and hair clippings folded in half the paper map that I used to find the lake, old purple string used on medicine switches in former sweat lodges, a split half of my sacred object of brotherhood, redwood bark, tobacco, cornmeal, sweet grass, sage, sacred herbs ... and all my intent. These were all bundled in my despacho cloth with sacred string and placed in a green leather pouch. Then for reasons unknown to me I took all the change out of my pocket and hurled it into the lake.

I gathered twelve small stones and completed a small medicine circle just in front of my alcove. I blessed the circle with offerings of sage, tobacco and cornmeal and placed the despacho in the center. I placed my large quartz crystal on it and my eagle fetish (the stone fetish given to me by Richard A.) on top of that to protect it. All the while I was doing the mosquito dance and it was beginning to get
dark. I turned the dance into an eagle dance by putting on my large black gloves as eagle wings.

I returned to the altar and emptied my medicine pouch to discover a charcoal and book of matches (something I hadn’t planned for and overlooked because of the ban on fire in the wilderness). I was pleased to use them to try to start some sacred smoke that could also keep the insects at bay. With effort and luck, down to the last match, I finally got the sage wand started that Cloe gave me for this quest. I made love to the wand with my sacred breath and (since the charcoal would not light) used the glowing end on which to sprinkle all the sacred incenses that I had brought. The smoke filled my alcove and bathed my end of the “living room” (“lodge”).

I smudged each item, fetish and despacho with all the sacred smokes and danced the eagle dance and let the sacred Fallen Eagle—His Voice whistle blow out four loud calls. One reached the ears of eagle. I was exhausted and knew that the moon would take its time to appear and it was almost dark. I moved the altar stone and placed all medicine safely back in the medicine pouch. I left the despacho on the center of the medicine wheel circle with the large crystal on top of it,
but placed the eagle fetish in my shirt pocket close to my heart and to the Fallen Eagle Heart Medicine that I wore around my neck. I arranged a sleeping spot in the lap of this alcove and wrapped myself in my blanket hoping that visions would come quickly.

My first dream was of white cats. White bobcat-like cats coming to see what I was doing; coming to offer me help but vanishing as I woke, because I did not need their help. The next thing I remember, I woke with the brightest light shining in my eyes through the pine branches. The moon was here. As I looked around the shadow of the pine, I was almost blinded by its whiteness and its closeness. I was humbled and in awe. I believed it was time for me to do some questing.

Huddled in my "womb" I began to meditate. First I gazed as long as I could at the crystal in the center of the medicine wheel on top of the despacho; I gazed at it as long as I could then closed my eyes to meditate, then again and again. Throughout the night each time I opened my eyes I would look at the crystal. As I watched the moon passing over the southern end of Little Lake Valley, I watched its transmission of light through the crystal. The crystal glowed all night, a cool blue-green. When the moon left the sky,
darkness fell over the valley, my meditations became efforts to get warm; the cold was most intense.

The mosquitoes didn't let up once; the most persistent was always one arriving on the end of my nose causing me to wake or come out of my meditations, stare at the crystal, go into a vision, be awakened from the vision by a mosquito on my nose. Later when I crawled closer into my hovel with my blanket tighter around me and tried to cover my head, one would find its way to my ear and wake me. I then would sit up again and meditate or walk around until I got too cold and retreated to my hovel for warmth again. I finally wrapped myself in the thermal blanket that I used as a ground cover and noticed how, because of its metallic coating, at once my body was wrapped in the glow of the moonlight.

Very late that night, I felt like I had become the glowing crystal, and with that image in mind, I slept until dawn. I realized I had made it through the night. Day would soon arrive and I would be breaking camp and on my way back to the life I had left behind. I had been to Little Lakes and now, I know.

When I was first awakened by the moon shining in my eyes, I got up to examine how my world had been transformed
into a night landscape. The surroundings glowed with the intensity of the moonlight. I walked over to the precipice of granite rising above the lake. The granite was almost as white as day, but the lake, reflecting the mountains not yet lit by the moon behind them, was pitch black. It looked like the lake was just a void. But, as I moved closer to the edge, I then saw the night sky in the lake and then, the moon’s brightness scribbling in a rapidly changing calligraphic pattern of intensity.

I was like a deer caught in the headlights. I was transfixed by the light moving on the surface of the water, blackness all around. I looked for recognizable shapes but each one, so close, quickly transformed into nameless images. I couldn’t imagine myself here long believing that my questing was to take place in my spot. As I turned to go back down the rock, my full-length shadow was cast on the white rock. As I gazed at the blackness of my shadow, the retinal burning of the moonlight from the lake became a glowing presence in the very heart region of my form. I realized I was experiencing the shadow side of myself, just as I have discovered myself through the shadow mesa and Owl Medicine this past year.
The glowing center in my shadow became a glowing thunderbird shape. The one like the one on my beaded band, the one like the one I saw in the sunrise from the Santa Barbara mountains. The thunderbird was emblazoned on my shadow's chest like a printed T-shirt design. Knowing it was just me, I went on down the rock to return to my medicine work of meditation.

Shortly after gazing at the moonlight in my crystal from my blanketed lotus position in my hovel (my womb), I closed my eyes and saw a person that had been next to me (or my shadow self) get up and go over to the medicine circle and gather up all the blessings that were there. They were bundled in his arms and were full and spilling over, falling to the ground like red glowing sparks. He brought them over to me and let them fall all over me and I was pleased. The buzzing and touch of mosquito on my nose woke me.

I then stared again at the crystal and closed my eyes to meditate. There was, then, an old woman working on a hand made item, not a pot, but a basket, or gourd or leather container. She was applying designs to it and trying to show me how to do the designs, but I could not see them. She then got up and walked over to the circle and began arranging
things from the container on the circle. She was showing me how to arrange things, but I could not see them. She stopped and said that it was ok that I would learn how some day and she would be my teacher. She made me feel OK. A buzzing and a light on the nose woke me.

I stared again at the crystal and then closed my eyes. I began to hear the voices, all asking for my intent; all the hearts and good thoughts that were ever sent my way from all the people I have ever known. I heard them then, praying for me in that very moment, praying with me for the greater intent. I did not wake to the mosquito, I woke to a burst of tears and tried to see the crystal through water lenses. I thought of each of the people I loved and cared for and all the times they have inquired of me and how many words of encouragement they have given me. The tears flowed and I tried to pour my love out to them and I spoke words out loud thanking each of them and promising to pray for their intent. I felt so loved and so blessed I returned to my womb, to the fetal position, and sought the warmth I had felt in the sweat lodge.

I must have slept, although never quite warm and when I felt I had just the right position and all my parts tucked
in, I would hear a buzzing in my ear and wonder just how that insect could have gotten into my cocoon. I woke to reality as the moon was three-quarters across the night sky. At first I thought I was awakened by the moon, but then I noticed the most permeating, fragrant smell I had ever experienced. I couldn’t get enough of it. I drank it in with breath after breath. I kept trying to place it and to figure out where it was coming from though never could really place it; it was all around me. The smell was so clean, faintly sweet but spicy, filled me with all the senses of goodness.

As I looked around, the moon illuminated the most fluffy and friendly owl that was right here with me in this hovel. The white owl, with eyes wide and wings out-stretched looked at me with curiosity and friendliness. The entire large horizontal branch of the ancient pine that was the eastern wall of my hovel became the owl. I was so completely reassured and comforted. I gazed on him/her for awhile and thanked him/her for being here/there with me and rolled over so my back was to the tree and felt comforted and warmed.

I don’t remember any more visions although several times that night I sat up to see the crystal, always it was in the same spot and only twice did I get any glimmer of shooting
light from it. I realized that the crystal was pointed away from me and if I turned it around, I might get total reflective properties, however, my intent was to realize my intent through the empowerment of the despacho and was not inclined to try to create any "light shows" for myself. The crystal had its purpose, the vision quest was just a by-product.

The time before and after I decided to use the thermal blanket as a wrap and not just a ground cloth, was mostly spent wondering about and believing I heard passing bears or other such animals. I envisioned myself attacked in many ways and thought of my possible strategies to protect myself or escape. When I realized I would not want to do anything to hurt a bear even if it was attacking me, I looked through the open window of my hovel to the dark lake below and realized that if I heard a bear, I could just "bail out" through the window.

As I noted before, I had slept until the first light of day and because I still was not warm enough, I got up early to move around. When I saw the crystal in this early morning light, I saw that its work was done and in a sacred way, I picked it up. It was charged with the most power I’ve ever
felt in it. It was burning cold and as I slipped it into my pocket, the coldness cut through to my body. I decided then to return it to my medicine pouch and begin the dismantling of my living mesa. I saw that the despacho was full and richly empowered. I folded my blankets and sorted my belongings. I made offerings of thanksgiving to the hovel and womb. Replaced the original altar stone that I had moved to sleep. I left no trace that I had been there. I walked the “lodge” to look for artifacts and found a digging stick. I located a sacred spot for the burial and dug a test hole for practice and exploration, practicing also, the technique of removing the surface and replacing it as if it had never been disturbed. I then approached the medicine circle with the despacho in the center and in a sacred way entered and lifted the despacho to the four directions. But, to the west, I made my intent in a loud voice. I thanked the Great Spirit, Great Mystery, Almighty God Father, and Lord Jesus; and commended my offering to them asking them for the power to bring messages and teachings to the world to help all realize their intent for the purpose of healing the world of its ills and bringing peace and harmony to all beings.
I thanked the animal spirits, the trees, rocks, lakes and the great mountains that housed this wonder. In a sacred way I left the circle with my offering and buried it where hopefully, never it will be found. And, if by chance it is, that whomever would find it would be blessed and would be transformed into a person that would likewise carry on this intent. I returned to the circle, made one last offering of holy water (my last task is to bring back water from the lake). I dismantled the twelve stones from the circle and scattered them around the lodge.

I completed packing until I was ready to go. The sun had already begun to light the highest peaks and I watched it begin to liven everything up and watched it creep down the wall of rock ledges and cliffs behind me to the west. I again walked around inspecting the whole mesa and saw that all was in order. I looked around the lake shore but did not see anyone or any animals, only the marmot making her way to her burrow.

I waited until the sun reached my granite mesa, watching it crawl towards me then, I turned around to face it as it pried its way between the dark silhouette of the craggy mountain ridge and the luminous pale gray sky of morning.
light. I had already been singing my song as it marched to meet me and reserved this moment for silence. I let the myriad slivers of rainbow light streak into my retina and allowed the splendor of this pure sunlight fill me until blindness. I then closed my eyes and felt its warmth come over me until the entire length of my body was light.

As the sunlight covered the granite boulder I took one last trip to the edge of rock to watch the lake become the deeply mysterious endless emerald of the day before, and thanked the lake. I donned my pack and headed down the western side toward the north end, new territory for me to explore. In my weakened state, I signaled the end of my quest with some sips of water and just as I stopped twenty minutes from my spot, at the lake’s edge to fill my holy water bottle, I realized I had left my hiking stick behind on the mesa. It had been such a friend to me. I left my pack and everything by the shore and made my way back, retrieved my stick and said one last good-bye to the place. It looked as if no one had been there, yet, I felt that there will always be a part of me there.

I will now switch to a new sketch book [this was the end of the one I was writing in] and begin the always beginning
story of my continued quest. Perhaps as time goes on I’ll begin to remember all the forgotten visions that are still on the mesa at Long Lake of Little Lake Valley. (Written Sunday June 22, the day after returning from the quest. The trip down from Little Lakes took about four and one half hours of very painful walking.)
APPENDIX F: The Juniper Medicine Assemblage

"It is not the object of power, nor is it the creator of the medicine fetish, it is the Dream of the maker of the fetish." (Stewart 1996, Appendix B, p. 142) The summer-long project of the assemblage of Juniper Reindeer Medicine had beginnings that went back several years. A happy find on a yard sale hunt, turned up a slightly damaged papier mâché reindeer about the size of a medium-large dog. I recognized its generic form from the type found at some Woolworth stores (or one of those holiday decoration supply stores). It had been partially coated with wood chips either by accidentally falling over while wet with glue onto a sawdust-covered floor, or on purpose in an effort to give it a rough wood coating. It was this unappealing surface that gave me the idea of how it might look good to try to do an efficient job of covering this papier mâché reindeer with an overall wood textured material.

The cartoon-like reindeer resided in the corner of my study. Its feature-less form and scruffy coat sentenced him/her to soon be overlooked in favor of other more well-defined projects. It wasn't until more than a year later, while gathering "medicine" in the Sierras that my thoughts
returned to the small paper deer. I was doing meditation and medicine work in the company of a large ancient Juniper tree in a wooded upper-alpine meadow south of East Fork campground in Rock Creek valley. As I encountered the thick, fibrous, rich, orange-brown bark of the Juniper, I saw it was falling away in large pieces. As it was possible to strip the bark into thin broad strips that were somewhat flexible, I envisioned this material being used as the covering for the papier mâché deer. The entire concept of the Juniper Reindeer came to me and I knew that I had been given a vision of a future medicine project.

I made sincere and abundant offerings to the great old tree and thanked it profusely for the privilege of taking some of its bark to use for this project. I established the intent of the work to be a healing of our corrupted outlook on our relationship with nature. Juniper would stand for an awakening of our culture, contemporary American culture in general, to a more Spiritual "way of nature." I had yet to begin involving myself in the scope of the shamanic mysteries that I was soon to encounter, or was this one of the catalytic forces that joined in my early lessons? Now, I look back and see this whole process as an inevitable concurrence.
Deeply rooted insights into the workings of the spirit have joined with synchronistic occurrences that have impacted my life and the world around me.

It was the White World Bridger day on the Mayan calendar. On the Gregorian calendar, it was November 5, (1997), a difficult time of year. The veil that separates the two worlds is thin and has a tendency to part now and then. The sudden death of my friend and compadre, Bud, the announcement of the expectancy of my next and future grandchild, my efforts to renew my shamanic practices after two months of neglect, the Dia de los Muertos project for my students transforming myself and my students with wonder at our accomplishments, all signal a time ready for important things to happen. Now it begins. The arrow had finally arrived. This would be the tool to be used in the wounding of Juniper Reindeer. Apprehension begins to fill the air. Fear strikes the heart of both the victim and the Shaman. I am reminded of my role in this drama of healing the world. All has been peaceful since last August; or, has it just been dormant? Pain will be felt. Blood will be spilled. Then the actors will assume their places. The shaman will do the
“healing” and the Children of the Future will carry out the plan.

Juniper the Wounded Reindeer will be the metaphor for the Teacher as Shaman: Returning the Spirit to Education. The act of creation, the ongoing process of witnessing ritual and reenacting the story and events of the creation of this medicine work will be the legacy of this Masters project. Each step in the process, each action, object, meaning assignment and relationship will reflect the nature of the task we have before us: to save our world from our own self-destructive tendencies.

The Juniper Story and Invitation to Actuate Intent:

Juniper came from the collective consciousness of the people of the world. As the waves and vortexes of chaos collided and combined in multitudes of patterns and as humans became concerned about the results of their ways, some change was needed to turn fear into hope. It was then, that the gentlest of God’s creatures was assembled. Juniper decided to come into this world as an ornamental reindeer.

For several centuries Juniper grew as a tree in the Western Sierras of the United States of America. One of the oldest trees on this granite slope, Juniper knew the world
was changing and causing a threat to the lives of those to come. People of the world, everywhere generated a consciousness to be born in one person, John, who came to Juniper one day to get this message. The Juniper Reindeer Assemblage was the result of this message. The people of the world assembled Juniper Reindeer to become the "medicine" that was to heal the world. They all added their intent for this purpose.

The world at this time had much suffering in it. Juniper Reindeer, in order to be able to heal the Earth and to do its work for future life, had to know the wounding that had caused this suffering and fear. Knowing that the source of this illness was human people and their ways, Juniper watched as helping spirits worked through caring humans who wanted this healing. Several people were called to bring this assemblage into reality. The arrow of "greed and fear of loss" would be used to wound the gentle Juniper Reindeer in preparation for healing. The strength of Earth's Spirit would work through caring humans to manifest this healing.

Through the work of a "spirit man," Ervin, a "thunderstone" was created, as a powerful symbol of intent. Next John fashioned the mighty redwood "heart" into an effigy
of the human spirit to be used to actuate this healing power. Finally, the gentle and nurturing cottonwood gave up its root to create the “doll” of the universal child through whom this learning will be manifest.

This healing assemblage involves giving life to a “man made” model of pure nature spirit in the form of Juniper Reindeer. But, “man” must enact his own destructive behavior by wounding gentle Juniper. Then the spirit inspires and guides caring people to assemble the elements of healing, through their understanding of the use of good “intent.” Their intent is given as an offering to the Spirits and the assemblage is complete. Juniper Reindeer now has the task of taking the healing messages into the Spirit World to become a symbol of people’s commitment to actuate intent to heal our ways and heal the world for life to come.

You may also become part of the healing of the Earth for future lives to enjoy. If you believe you have intent to add to the healing of the world, write your intent on the back of this paper, on the lines provided on the “Arrowhead of Intent.” Detach your written intent and place it in the basket, offered by Richard for the burden of intent. Juniper will take your message to the spirit world where they will
actuate its manifestation. Then, we can all go forth into a more peaceful world.

Please consider carefully what you wish to write down about your intent. Intent based on personal need to prove yourself "right" or to impose any humanly originated concept of "better life" negates the purpose of allowing the spirit to interpret its choice for realization. This is not about what others should intend or what you think I am supposed to intend for my actuation. This is about what you can do to contribute to the co-creation of a better world for all "people" in the future: the plant people, the rock people the sky people the water people and all the living people and our Mother, the earth.
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