

## Awakening the Shaman Within: An Interview with Linda Star Wolf

by Corinne L. Casazza

Linda Star Wolf, founder of the Venus Rising Institute for Shamanic Healing Arts and the Shamanic Breathwork process, has been creating the foundations of Shamanic Breathwork in her three decades of service work. Her latest book, *Shamanic Breathwork: Journeying Beyond the Limits of the Self*, relates the story of how she came to do this work, how it evolved over time, and how it is changing lives.

Shamanic Breathwork is a breathing process and journey. The process itself seems to magically take you where in consciousness you need to go for greater healing and transformation. The mechanics of it uses the healing power of circular breath to chakra-attuned music. It's typically done with a facilitator and a group. The facilitator does focused bodywork on the group during the session. At the conclusion, she helps participants integrate their experience into the outer world by allowing them to talk about it. Star Wolf also encourages the creation of art including mask-making, drawing and writing about the journey.

"This journey is geared toward bringing transformation. It's about bringing what's going on beneath the surface to the surface. We're seeking to bring the unmanifest to the manifest. **Our memories get trapped in the cells of our body like a Kodak moment.** The breathwork experience can be about healing our past, past lives, or we can be in a totally blissful ecstatic state with connection to a higher power or nature," says Star Wolf.

One of the primary purposes of Shamanic Breathwork is to bring to our sacred purpose to our conscious awareness by removing waking-life obstacles. "The only thing that stands in the way of a seed growing is it not being nurtured. All things are growing toward the light (of our true being)." Star Wolf feels that whatever woundings happened to us in childhood or even in utero are important. These woundings cause patterns in our psyche and physical body that begin to block the True Self. "It's never

too late to till the soil and remove old patterns of dysfunction. Shamanic Breathwork opens us to our deeper sacred purpose that each of us came here with.”

In this Age of Aquarius, personal accountability is key; we must find our sacred purpose ourselves. “We’re leaving behind the Piscean Age where we looked to a guru, sage or shaman to help us heal or do it for us. It’s time for us to become the adults on the planet. We need to grow up and acknowledge our Divinity. So, instead of looking outside ourselves for the mother ship to show up, we must take responsibility for our own healing. We understand there is no one or no thing that can heal us. **Instead, we step into, ‘I can honor others – Shamans, medical doctors, alternative practitioners – but my healing is my responsibility.’** We need to stop giving our power away.”

Surrender is a necessary part of our healing journey. If we don’t surrender, we won’t change. If we don’t give up our ego identity and attachment, we can’t transform ourselves and the planet. “We’ve developed a shadow that gets hidden in our unconscious. So much is in there,” says Star Wolf. “We need to look in and see the light and the dark. If we can’t surrender the ego’s control, we can’t honor our gifts and we can’t know who we are in our wholeness. We can’t heal, transform, or bring our sacred purpose to the world. We need curiosity, open-mindedness and trust.”

Star Wolf sees things starting to shift. People are beginning to wake up. “What I see in my groups now is that there’s a quickening in the DNA. Something inside our evolutionary patterns is growing; we’re gearing up to produce fruit. Surrender is more organic now. People used to wait until they had a health challenge, addiction, or lost a loved one to surrender. Not anymore. Surrender is about opening and trusting and letting go and learning from wisdom rather than woe. We are learning to be proactive and open to flow. We’re learning that we can surrender and we don’t need such a strong ego anymore.”

Letting go of ego is not for the faint of heart. Star Wolf tells prospective clients, “If you don’t want to know who you are, and you don’t want to evolve your consciousness, don’t do this work.”

People must be truly committed to this process because it requires leaving your comfort zone far behind. Once you activate your inner Shaman, your inner wisdom keeper, it may make you feel uncomfortable. Your ego may be happy where it is. "Your Shaman may send you to India, Peru or ask you to shift jobs, or give up your relationship. Are you ready for this? Are you willing to go through this discomfort? The shamanic journey is about being willing to die to whatever is not working in your life. You'll have to give up whatever's holding you back even if you think it's benign like watching TV or having caffeine or sugar."

This journey is all about listening to your inner guidance and developing a very strong connection to your vibrational core, what Star Wolf calls the Shaman within. "Once you cultivate a relationship with your inner wisdom it's incredible. **It's like having an instant Google in your consciousness. You ask a question; you get the answer.** I know what I need to do, where I need to go, who I need to call and what my next right action is. I'm very seldom confused."

Star Wolf has found over the years that having the courage and strength to do the work becomes a joy. "I almost don't want to call it Breath Work. I want to call it Breath Joy. Your priorities shift. For me, inner and outer work is the only thing that holds my attention. It's what I enjoy the most in my life."

Star Wolf's message to us all is that it's not too late to change ourselves and the planet, provided we do our inner work and relate from our soul's purpose, instead of our ego agenda. We're coming to the critical place. "Right now on the planet we're all headed down the cosmic birth canal. Are we going to step into our divinity? This is our challenge and our opportunity. It's within our DNA to do it. It's a matter of us opening our hearts, surrendering and knowing it's time to step up and become Isis, Hathor, Buddha and Christ. This is what Christ meant when he said, 'Greater things than I will you do.' It's time for us to do it ourselves. **Breathe America. Breathe World. Stop, look and listen, not from the ego, but from the Shaman within that's connected to our deeper soul purpose. And it's not too late.**"